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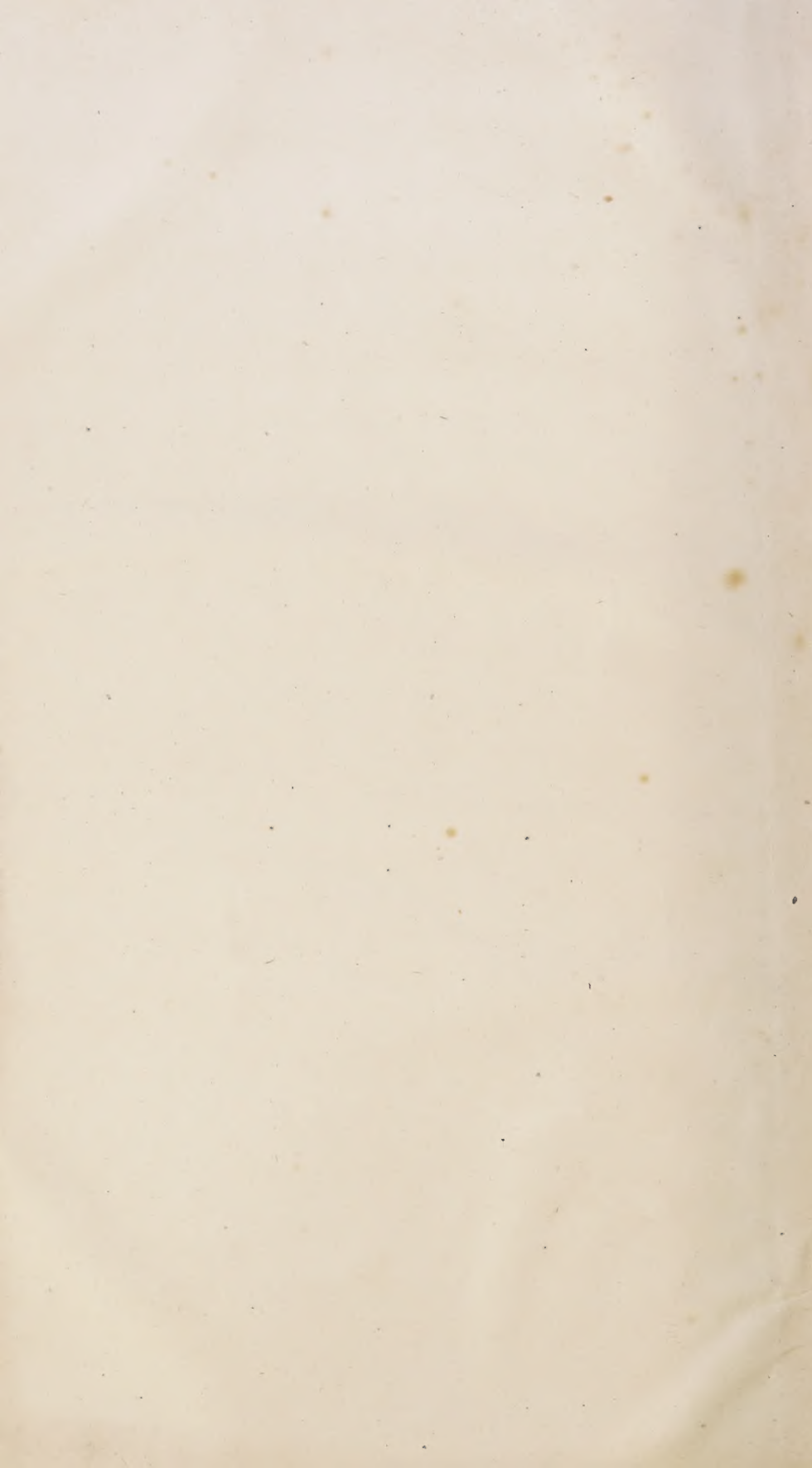
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THE

HOLY BIBLE,

CONTAINING THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION;

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES, PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,

AND

COPIOUS MARGINAL REFERENCES.

BY THOMAS SCOTT,

RECTOR OF ASTON SANFORD, BUCKS.

FROM THE LATEST LONDON EDITION, WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS
AND IMPROVEMENTS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A CONCORDANCE

TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

BY THE REV. JOHN BROWN, OF HADDINGTON.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:

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1866.

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PREFACE;

CONTAINING ESPECIALLY

A COMPENDIOUS VIEW OF THE EVIDENCES THAT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, AND EVERY PART OF THEM, AS THEY STAND IN OUR BIBLES, WERE GIVEN BY INSPIRATION FROM GOD.

WHOEVER seriously reflects on the powers and capacities of the human mind, regarding them as the work of Him who doeth nothing in vain, and comparing them with those of the inferior creatures, will readily perceive that man alone was created to be religious. Of all the inhabitants of this earth, none else are capable of obtaining any knowledge of their Creator, or of rendering him worship and praise. Man alone possesses the capacity of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, between moral good and evil; and of receiving instruction in social and relative duties, with the obligations under which he lies to perform them, and the advantages of doing it. He alone is capable of being governed by a law, and of being influenced by the proposal of rewards and punishments; of acting as under the eye of an invisible Observer, and with reference to a future season of retribution. From these premises we infer with absolute certainty, that the all-wise Creator thus constituted our minds, and conferred on us these distinguished endowments, in order to render us capable of Religion, for the purpose of his glory, and of our own felicity in the most intimate connexion with that of our fellow-creatures.

When further, we consider what this word RELIGION implies; and understand it, according to its most general acceptation, to be such an habitual regard to the one, true, living, and eternal God, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all, as influences us to seek his favour, to do his will, and to aim at his glory, in the temper of our hearts, and the regulation of our actions, both in the worship which we render to him, and the duties which we perform to man, for his sake and according to his will; we shall be constrained to allow, that it is most reasonable and excellent.—Doubtless the exercises of true devotion, form the noblest employment of the human mind, which in them emulates the angelic nature. A conscientious regard to the all-seeing eye of a righteous and omnipotent Judge is the best bond of human society, and regulator of our relative conduct; inasmuch that if this principle of action were universal and complete, human laws and tribunals would be entirely unnecessary. This would likewise most effectually moderate our appetites and passions; and produce the greatest possible proportion of peace, contentment, and felicity, personal and social, of which our nature, in its present state, is capable. And when we look forwards, beyond the grave, to that immortality and future state of recompense, which reason itself pronounces at least highly probable, the absolute necessity of religion to our felicity appears evident beyond all dispute.

Hence, we determine with certainty, that religion is that great business, to which all men ought to attend; and that blessing after which all men should seek, whatever else be neglected, or superseded, or postponed.

While, however, it is demonstrable, that man is capable of religion, and in duty and interest bound to it by the most indispensable obligations; stubborn facts, in every age and nation of the world, undeniably prove, that left to himself, man would never be truly religious. According to the statement above given, where shall we find religion on earth, in any age or nation, which has not possessed, in a greater or less degree, the advantage of those writings, which we will now take for granted to be a divine Revelation, and which will hereafter be shown to be so? An assemblage of the grossest idolatries in varied forms, and of the wildest absurdities in opinion; the most vain and irrational superstitions in worship, and the most dangerous licentiousness, in morals; from that religion, (if it may be dignified by so venerable a name,) which forces itself upon our observation, wherever the light of revelation has not shone. Nor can so much as a single nation, or city, or family, be excepted from this general charge. If there have been a few individuals, who have manifested something not wholly dissimilar from true religion; and any be disposed to allow, that indeed it was such; it must be far more rational to ascribe it to the remains of original tradition, or even to a personal revelation afforded to them for their own benefit, though not authenticated for the good of others; than to make it an exception to the general rule, *That without revelation, there never was any true religion on earth, since the fall of Adam.*

Those, indeed, who live under the light of revelation, and make what use they choose of that light, may draw up systems of natural religion, sufficiently plausible, and apparently rational. But it should be remembered, that this light is originally, through one channel or another, derived from the Bible; though too often, with equal absurdity and ingratitude, set up in opposition to its sacred and sublime truths: and universal experience demonstrates, that no such natural religion ever was discovered and delineated, by men of any nation, who had never seen any part of the Bible, or any thing deduced from that source.

However reasonable and excellent many of those truths and precepts are, which are proposed to us as the *oracles of reason*; not one of them ever was proposed by reason without revelation, with such certainty, clearness, and authority, as to become a constant principle and rule of action, in secret and in public, towards God and towards man, to any company of men on earth, perhaps not to one individual.

Indeed, after all the supposed improvements and discoveries

of modern times, if we exclude the peculiar instructions of the Bible, what darkness and uncertainty rest upon points of the greatest imaginable importance!—Even in respect of the immortality of the soul, when Reason, at her best advantage, has done her utmost, her boasted power of demonstration fails; for even, were the arguments indisputably conclusive, by which the natural immortality of the soul is supported; who knows, or can know without revelation, how it may please a just and holy God to deal with the souls of his offending creatures? He can create, and he destroy?—But far greater obscurity and uncertainty rests on those subjects, which relate to the nature of the future world, and the rule of judgment, with which our whole conduct, and our hope and peace, are inseparably connected. It is difficult, if not impossible, to perceive by the light of nature, the consistency of perfect justice with boundless mercy: it still remains dubious, except to those who possess and believe revelation, whether God will punish at all, or pardon at all; or by what rule he intends to punish, or pardon: and indeed, wherever we turn, a thick cloud darkens our view, and discourages our inquiries, if we leave “the sure testimony of God,” and bewilder ourselves in speculations on matters evidently too high for us.—But how much worse has the case been of almost all the nations of the earth, and generations of men! Indeed so far have they been from advancing in religious knowledge, where revelation has not been afforded; that they have evidently sunk deeper and deeper into ignorance, and several of them almost into absolute atheism, as if the little glimmering which once shone among them, being the effect of original tradition, was gradually expiring and leaving them in utter darkness.

The most complete information, however, respecting doctrines and duties, would be wholly inadequate to the production of the desired effect; except such information were enforced by sufficient authority, gave necessary encouragement, and proposed effectual assistance. The knowledge of duty, and of its reasonableness is utterly unavailing, whilst men are under the dominion of their lusts and passions; as the laws and judicial proceedings of every civilized nation sufficiently manifest. In this case there is no disposition to perform the dictates even of conscience or prudence. A heathen could say, *Videò meliora proboque deteriora sequor*. The proposal of virtue as amiable and excellent, by the feeble recommendation of the moralist's pen, is infinitely inferior in energy to the authoritative command and sanction of the Almighty, denouncing his awful and eternal indignation against the transgressor: and yet facts undeniably show, that men venture upon sin, even with the threatenings of everlasting misery sounding in their ears; nay, with the trembling apprehensions of it dismaying their hearts: for divine as well as human laws “are weak through the flesh,”* and, with all their sanctions and barriers, are unable to fix boundaries to the swelling tide of human depravity. Indeed, were men fully acquainted with all the glorious perfections of God; with his holy law, with the nature and malignity of sin, with their own real character and situation as sinners, and with the rule and consequences of the future judgment; and were they, at the same time, left utterly destitute of the encouragements and assistances, which the Gospel proposes, and which form the grand peculiarity of the Bible; their knowledge, so far from rendering them religious, would probably, by leaving them without hope, annihilate all appearances of religion.† Wherever any semblance of religion is found, which has no respect at all to the mercy of God, as revealed in the gospel, through the righteousness, atonement, and mediation of Emmanuel, and to the effectual teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit, it seems to have its foundation, not in men's knowledge, but in their ignorance, of God, of themselves, of his law, and of the evil of sin; and this might easily be evinced to be the case even upon rational principles.

But the proposal of suitable encouragements and assistance is entirely out of the province of reason; these are “heavenly things,”‡ of which we can know nothing, except by immediate revelation; and of which we can have no assurance, but the express declaration and faithful promise of God. He alone can inform us, on what terms, or in what manner, his honour permits him, and his sovereign pleasure disposes him, to forgive his offending creatures; and to communicate those gracious influences, which may produce a holy disposition of heart, and enable sinners to overcome all the obstacles, which retard the progress of those who endeavour to lead “a sober, righteous, and godly life.”

From such considerations, the necessity of a revelation from God, in order to true religion among men, may be decidedly inferred; and it might reasonably have been expected, that he would afford such a revelation, if he intended to accept of any worship and service from them. Indeed this expectation has been very general in the world. And as counterfeit coin proves the existence of sterling money, and the value which men put on it; so counterfeit revelations, (instead of invalidating the argument,) if they do not prove the existence of a real revelation, yet evince that men have felt their need of one, have been sensible that it would be a most valuable acquisition, and have been generally disposed to expect it.

* Note, Rom. 8: 3, 4. † Note, Ps. 130: 3, 4. ‡ John 3: 12, 13.

All the counterfeiters, which hitherto have advanced a claim of being divine revelations, have also been successfully exposed, and have sunk into general contempt or neglect; and, in this age and nation, it may be asserted, without hazard of contradiction, that there is but ONE BOOK in the world, which so much as appears to be of divine original. This we call THE BIBLE, that is, by way of eminence, THE BOOK: and such is the internal and external evidence, which authenticates its claim, that I am persuaded, were men as open to conviction on this subject, as they are in mathematical investigations, they could no more, after due examination, reject it, than they could contradict an evident demonstration.

It may therefore not be improper to insert, in this place, a few of the most obvious reasons, which the more studious Christian is "ready to give of the hope which is in him;"* and which is grounded upon this first principle, 'THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD': in order to show that it is highly reasonable to believe the Bible to be a divine revelation; and if so, then equally reasonable to take all our measures of truth and duty from it, and to bow our understandings and inclinations to its teaching and governance.

Let it be here carefully observed, that the DIVINE INSPIRATION, and not merely the authenticity, or genuineness, of each part of the sacred writings, is intended.—Each part, and every part, may be authentic, or genuine; the work of the authors whose names they severally bear; or true and unsophisticated narratives of the times to which they refer: and yet they may be merely human, and of no authority in matters of doctrine and duty. The Odes of Horace, and Caesar's Commentaries, are authentic: probably the first book of Maccabees is genuine history; yet they are not, on that account, in any degree the authoritative guides or standards of our faith and practice.—Many able and admired writers, who apparently have stood forth, as the champions of the Bible, appear to the author of this Exposition, to have (he hopes undesignedly) betrayed the cause. An ancient warrior, having murdered his predecessor, and usurped his throne, was some time after requested to permit him to be numbered among the gods; and it is said that he answered, 'Sit deus, modo non sit vivus.'† Let him be a god, provided he be not living. These apologists for the Bible seem to reverse the words, and to say, 'Sit vivus, modo non sit deus;' 'Let it be genuine, provided it be not divine.' It would, however, be waste of time, to attempt to prove either the authenticity or the genuineness of the sacred writings; unless in entire subserviency to the demonstration that they are divinely inspired. All the works and words of mere men are fallible, and may be erroneous; and the desideratum, that which is especially wanted, is an INFALLIBLE STANDARD; to which all other books, and instructions of every kind, may be referred, with which they may be compared, and by which they may be judged. Now, if the sacred writings are indeed "THE WORD OF GOD," if "all scripture is given by inspiration of God,"‡ we have this desideratum; and have nothing further, in this respect, to expect or desire. But if the books, called by the apostles "The oracles of God,"§ are merely the authentic writings of Moses, David, Isaiah, and others in former times, and not the infallible word of God; we are as far off from the desideratum above mentioned as ever. We may indeed learn what these sages of Israel thought, as well as what the sages of China, Egypt, and Greece maintained, concerning God and religion; and we may examine the testimony of each, and bring in a verdict, some in favour of the one, and some of the other; but we are still far from an infallible standard; as far, as if the Bible had never been written; whatever value, in other respects, may be attached to such ancient, venerable, and interesting records.

With this view of the subject, gathering strength from year to year,‡ the author of this work is decided against any compromise; and he ventures to stand forth, as vindicating 'the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.' He wishes indeed to see far abler champions enter the lists against the Goliath of modern skepticism: but as most of those learned and eminent men, who take up the challenge, seem in some measure to compromise the main point, or to decline the discussion of it; he takes his sling and his stone, and says, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

By 'the divine inspiration of the Scriptures,' the author would be understood to mean, 'such a complete and immediate communication, by the Holy Spirit, to the minds of the sacred writers, of those things which could not have been otherwise known; and such an effectual superintendency, as to those particulars, concerning which they might otherwise obtain information; as sufficed absolutely to preserve them from every degree of error, in all things, which could in the least affect any of the doctrines or precepts contained in their writings, or mislead any person, who considered them as a divine and infallible standard of truth and duty.' Every sentence in this view, must be considered as "the sure testimony of God," in that sense in which it is proposed as truth. Facts occurred, and words were spoken, as to the import of them, and the instruction contained in them, exactly as they stand here recorded: but the morality of words and actions, recorded merely as spoken and done, must be judged of by the doctrinal and preceptive parts of the same book.—On this ground, all difference or disparity between one and another of the sacred writers is wholly excluded: Moses, Samuel, David, and Isaiah; Paul, James, Peter, and John, are all supposed to speak or write, "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" they are the voice, but the divine Spirit is every where the SPEAKER. They wrote indeed in such language, as their different talents, educations, habits, and associations suggested, or rendered natural to them; but the Holy Spirit so entirely superintended them, when writing, as to exclude every improper expression, and to guide them to all those which best

served their several subjects: "Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth:"* Many particulars, which philosophers, orators, or critics, think inaccurate, may consist with this complete inspiration: but every kind and degree of misrepresentation, as springing from personal, popular, or national prejudices or opinions, or as calculated to mislead the humble believer, or to sanction error, must be totally excluded.

It will also appear, in the course of the work, that the few passages, (and they are but few, compared with the whole,) in which errors or interpolations have taken place, through the mistakes of transcribers, form no formidable difficulty, in thus regarding the Holy Scriptures. Nearly all such interpolations and errors may be detected and pointed out, by sober and well-informed critics, in this, as well as in other books: and if a few escape detection, it is because they do not so immediately affect the sense, as to make it evident to the most acute, penetrating, and accurate student, that they deviate from the style and sentiment of the writer in whose works they are found.

The author has indeed, to this present time, always decidedly rejected all emendations of the sacred text, which are added either on conjecture, or without adequate authority; and even where the authority is respectable, he has chosen to abide by the present text, when there appeared no evident necessity, nor any very cogent reasons, for the contrary: being aware, how far such alterations may, and often do, lead men from the Scriptures; and how directly they tend gradually to substitute another book in the place of the Bible. Yet it is proper to observe, that if all the various readings, for which any respectable authority can be given were adopted; they would not alter either the standard of truth, or the rule of duty in one material point: but whether conjectural emendations might lead, he cannot undertake to prognosticate.

These things having been premised, he proceeds to state some of the leading reasons, which any intelligent man may assign, for believing the Scriptures, as we now have them, to be the infallible word of God.

I. Great numbers of wise and good men, through many generations and in distant countries, have agreed in receiving the Bible as a divine revelation. Many of them have been distinguished, and generally approved, for seriousness, erudition, penetration, and impartiality in judging of men and things. With much labour and patient investigation, they detected the impostures, by which their contemporaries were duped: yet the same assiduous examination confirmed them in believing the Bible to be "THE WORD OF GOD;" and induced them, living and dying, to recommend it to all others, as the source of all true wisdom, hope, and consolation. In this view, even "the tradition of the church" has great weight: for, whatever abuse has been made of the term, by such as generally were no part of the true church, yet it must be allowed to be a consideration of vast importance, that the whole company of those who have "worshipped the living God in spirit and truth," (including those who ventured and laid down their lives for conscience' sake, and who were the most pious, holy, and useful men in every age,) have unanimously concurred in handing down to us the Scriptures as a divine revelation, and have very little differed about the books which form that sacred deposit. And I cannot but suppose, that if a being of entire impartiality, of sound mind, and holy disposition, should be shown the two companies, of those who have received, and of those who have rejected the Scriptures; and should compare the seriousness, learning, patient investigation of truth, solid judgment, holy lives, and composure in a dying hour, without unmanly terror or indecent levity, of the one company, with the character and conduct of the other; he would be induced to take up the Bible with profound veneration, and the strongest prepossession in its favour.

II. The agreement of the sacred writers among themselves is another cogent argument of their divine inspiration. Should an equal number of contemporaries, of the same country, education, habits, profession, natural disposition, and rank in life, and associating together as a distinct company, concur in writing a book on religious subjects as large as the Bible, each furnishing his proportion, without comparing notes together; the attentive reader, whose mind had been long inured to such studies, would be able to discover some diversity of opinion among them. But the writers of the Scripture succeeded each other, during the term of fifteen hundred years: some of them were princes or priests, others shepherds or fishermen; their natural abilities, education, habits, and employments, were exceedingly dissimilar; they wrote laws, history, prophecy, odes, devotional exercises, proverbs, parables, doctrines, and controversies; and each man had his distinct department; yet they all exactly coincide in the exhibition which they give us of the perfections, works, truths, and will of God; of the nature, situation, and obligations, of man; of sin and salvation; of this world and the next; and in short of all things connected with our duty, safety, interest, and comfort, and in the whole of the religion inculcated by them. They all were evidently of the same judgment, aimed to establish the same principles, and applied them to the same practical purpose. Apparent inconsistencies may indeed perplex the superficial reader; but they vanish after a more accurate and persevering investigation: nor could any charge of disagreement, among the sacred writers, ever be substantiated; for it can only be said, that they related the same facts with different circumstances, which are perfectly reconcilable; and that they gave instructions suited to the persons whom they addressed, without systematically showing the harmony of them with other parts of divine truth. They did not write by concert, and they bestowed no pains to avoid the appearance of inconsistency: yet the exact coincidence, which is perceived among them by the diligent student, is most astonishing, and cannot be accounted for on any rational principles, without admitting that they wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."†

* 1 Pet. 2: 15.

† Rom. 3: 2. Heb. 5: 12. 1 Pet. 4: 11.

‡ This part of the preface was written above thirty years ago; and the expression, here used, may be considered as the author's present deliberate judgment.

* 1 Cor. 2: 13.

† 2 Pet. 1: 21.

‡ Mohammed, to serve present purposes, produced his Koran by a little at a time: this occasioned an evident inconsistency of one part with another; concerning which he only said, that God had a right to change his laws as he saw good.

To this we may add, that the scriptural history accords, in a wonderful manner, with the most authentic records which remain of the events, customs, and manners of the countries and ages to which it stands related. The rise and fall of empires; the revolutions which have taken place in the world; and the grand outlines of chronology, as mentioned or referred to in the scriptures, are coincident with those stated by the most approved ancient writers; whilst the palpable errors in these respects, detected in the apocryphal books, constitute one most decisive reason for rejecting them as spurious. But the history of the Bible is of far greater antiquity, than any other records extant in the world; and it is remarkable that, in numerous instances, it shows the real origin of those absurd fables, which disgrace and obscure all other histories of those remote times; and this is no feeble proof, that it was derived from some surer source of information, than human tradition.*

III. The miracles, by which the writers of the Scriptures confirmed their divine mission to their contemporaries, afford us also a most convincing proof in this matter. The narratives of these miracles may be clearly shown to have been published very soon after the time, and at the places, in which they were said to have been wrought in the most conspicuous manner, and before very great multitudes, enemies as well as friends. This constituted a public challenge to every man, to contradict or disprove them, if he could: yet this public challenge never called forth a single individual to deny that they were really performed; nor was an attempt of the kind ever made till long afterwards.—Can any man of common sense think, that Moses and Aaron could possibly have persuaded the whole nation of Israel, that they had witnessed all the plagues of Egypt, passed through the Red Sea with the waters piled on each side of them, gathered the manna every morning for forty years together, and seen all the wonders recorded in their history, had no such events taken place? If then that generation could not be thus imposed on, when could the belief of these extraordinary transactions be palmed upon the nation? Surely, it would have been impossible in the next age to persuade them, that their fathers had seen and experienced such wonderful things, when they had never before heard a single word about them; and when an appeal must have been made to them, that these were things well known among them! What credit could have been obtained to such a forgery at any subsequent period? It would have been absolutely necessary, in making the attempt, to persuade the people, that such traditions had always been current among them; that the memory of them had for ages been perpetuated, by days and ordinances observed in every succeeding age by all the nation; and that their whole civil and religious establishment had thence originated: nay, that the very tenure on which they held their estates was grounded on it! And could this have possibly been effected if they all had known, that no such memorials and traditions had ever before been heard of among them? The same might be shown concerning the other miracles recorded in Scripture, especially those of Christ and his apostles; and the sacrament of the Lord's supper in remembrance of his death, and the observance of the Lord's day on the first day of the week, in commemoration of his resurrection, in all ages to this present time. If not instituted at the time, immediately succeeding the events on which they are grounded, at what subsequent period could they have been introduced, so as to persuade multitudes in very many nations, that they and their fathers, and father's fathers had always observed them? So that it might be made evident, that the man who denies that the miracles were actually performed, must believe more wonderful things, without any evidence, than those are which he rejects, though established by unanswerable proof. To evince this as to one most important instance, namely, the resurrection of Christ, which, being once proved, undeniably establishes the divine original and authority of Christianity, let the reader consult the latter part of the note on *John* 20: 24—29.

On this subject it may again be denianded, When could the belief of the resurrection of Christ, and the miracles wrought by his apostles and disciples in proof of it, have been obtruded on mankind, if they had never happened? Surely not in the age, when they were said to have been witnessed by hundreds of thousands, who were publicly challenged to deny them if they could! certainly not in any subsequent age; for the origin of Christianity was expressly ascribed to them, and millions must have been persuaded, that they had always believed those things, of which they had never to that time so much as heard.† We may indeed venture to assert, that no past event was ever so fully proved as our Lord's resurrection; and that it would not be half so preposterous to doubt whether such a man as Julius Cæsar ever existed, as it would be to question whether Jesus actually rose from the dead. What then do they mean, who oppose some trivial apparent variations, in the account given of this event by the four Evangelists, (which have repeatedly been shown capable of an easy reconciliation,) to such an unparalleled complication of evidence that it did actually take place?

IV. The prophecies contained in the sacred Scriptures, and fulfilling to this day, fully demonstrate that they are divinely inspired. These form a species of perpetual miracles, which challenge the investigation of men in every age; and which, though overlooked by the careless and prejudiced, cannot fail of producing conviction proportioned to the humble and reverential attention paid to them. The prophecies of the Messiah which are found in almost all the books of the Old Testament, when compared with the exact accomplishment of them, as recorded in the authentic writings of the Evangelists, abundantly prove them to have been written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: while the existence of the Jews as a people differing from all others upon the face of the earth, and their regard to these writings, as the sacred oracles handed down from their progenitors, sufficiently vouch for their antiquity; though that admits of full and clear proof of another kind. According to the predictions of these books, Nineveh has been deso-

lated;* Babylon swept with the besom of destruction;† Tyre become a place to dry nets in;‡ Egypt the basest of the kingdoms, which has never since been able “to exalt itself above the nations.”§ These, and many other events, fulfilling ancient prophecies, very many ages after they were delivered, can never be accounted for; except by allowing, that He who sees the end from the beginning, thus revealed his secret purposes, that the accomplishment of them might prove the Scriptures to be his word of instruction to mankind.

In like manner, there are evident predictions interwoven with the writings of almost every writer of the New Testament, as a divine attestation to the doctrine contained in them. The destruction of Jerusalem, with all the circumstances predicted in the Evangelists, (the narrative of which may be seen in Josephus's History of the Jewish Wars;) the series of ages, during which that city has been “trodden down of the gentiles;”‡ the long-continued dispersion of the Jews, and the conversion of the nation to Christianity; the many antichristian corruptions of the gospel; the superstition, uncommanded austerities, idolatry, spiritual tyranny, and persecution of the Roman hierarchy; the division of the empire into ten kingdoms; the concurrence of those who ruled those kingdoms during many ages, to support the usurpations of the church of Rome; and the existence of Christianity to this day, amidst so many enemies, who have used every possible method to destroy it!—all these occurrences, when diligently compared with the predictions of the New Testament, do not come short of the fullest demonstration, of which the case will admit, that the books, which contain those predictions, are the unerring word of God.

There are two further observations, on this subject, which seem of great importance.

1. The predictions of Scripture, if carefully examined, will be found to contain a prophetic history of the world, as to all the grand outlines, from the beginning to this present time; not to speak of such as are yet unfulfilled. Who can deny, that the history of Abraham's posterity; of Israel especially; of Judah and Joseph, the most renowned sons of Jacob; and of the Jews, in their present dispersions; and their preservation, as a distinct people, “dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations,” might be clearly and particularly stated in the very words of prophecy?¶ Does not almost the whole of ancient profane history, as distinguished from that contained in the sacred Scriptures, and also a large proportion of modern history, consist principally of the records of the four great Empires, the Chaldean, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian or Macedonian, and the Roman? And are not these predicted in the book of Daniel so exactly and particularly, as to give some plausibility to the objection, which is demonstrated to be unfounded, that they were written after the event?‡‡ But especially, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”†† The changes which have taken place in the state of the world in consequence of the birth of Jesus at Beth-lehem, and of his claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God, which has by some been virulently opposed, by others zealously supported, have been great, extensive, and durable beyond comparison with all other revolutions; but is there one particular, in all the history of Jesus, and of the subsequent establishment of Christianity, with all the opposition made to it, and the corruptions afterwards introduced, which is not expressly predicted in Scripture? And might not a narrative, in many instances very circumstantial, of our Lord, from his birth to his death, be drawn up in the words of prophecy?

2. From the preceding consideration, another arises, as inseparably connected with it. The prophecies of Scripture are not detached or insulated predictions, but constitute a grand system of previous information, as to the secret designs of Providence, extending from the earliest ages even to the consummation of all things; and accompanied by such distinct notations of order, place, and time, as may well be called the *geography* and the *chronology* of prophecy. Inasmuch that any one, in any age, who well understood the prophecies extant in his day, might have known what to expect, at the specified times, and in the specified countries. As one prediction received its accomplishment, others were given, connecting prophecy with history;‡‡ till the Revelation of St. John concluded the whole. Events have hitherto, in every age and nation, corresponded with these predictions. This is well known to each individual, in exact proportion to the degree in which he becomes acquainted with Scripture and with historical records, and to the care and impartiality with which he compares the prophecies with those records. As it is the manifest and avowed plan of prophecy, to predict events occurring in their own place and season to the end of the world, the circumstance of several prophecies being yet unfulfilled, does not in the least deduct from the proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, derived from this source: for on such a plan, some must remain unfulfilled, till the end shall come.—It may also be added, that, in respect of the state of the Jews, and in many other particulars, there is an evident preparation made for the accomplishment of all the prophecies, which yet remain to be fulfilled. Now, I ask, is there any thing in the least coincident with such a system of prediction, from age to age, in any other book in the world, except the Bible? And could so many and so extraordinary and improbable events, through so many ages and nations, have occurred, in so undeniable a manner, as foretold in the Scriptures, had not the Omniscent God him self inspired the Scriptures? The grand outline of prophecy generally takes in all that space of time, which was included between the period when the prophet wrote and the end of the world; and as subordinate predictions, concerning Israel and the nations, and which form a kind of episode to the main design, were fulfilled, other prophecies were delivered from age to age: till St. John closed the whole, in The Revelation.§§ Can any reasonable man conceive that a design of this kind could ever have entered into the thoughts of an uninspired writer; that he could form the astonishing idea into a regular plan; and that during more than fifteen hundred years, he should have successors, who

* *Preface to the Book of Genesis.*

† The Jews, at this day, do not deny, that the miracles recorded in the New Testament history were actually performed, but they ascribe them all to enchantment.—See *Answer to Rabbi Crooll, by the Author.*

* *Nah. i. 2, 3. † Is. 13:14. ‡ Ex. 26:4, 5. § Ex. 20:14, 15. ¶ Luke 21:24. †† Gen. 12:1—3, 16:12, 49:12—26:12. Num. 23:9. Deut. 28:65—67.*

** *Notes, Dan. 2:35—45: 7, 8. †† Rev. 19:10. ‡† Notes, Is. 41:26—29, 42:8, 9. §§ Note, Is. 41: 21—24.*

entered fully into his views, and assisted in carrying them into effect? Or can it be conceived, that such a plan, however formed, could have been so executed, as to have even a plausible appearance of being successful? He who can believe this, has no right to call those credulous, who receive the Bible as the word of God.

V. The Bible alone, and such books as make it their basis, introduce the infinite God speaking in a manner worthy of himself, with simplicity, majesty, and authority. His character, as there delineated, comprises all possible excellence without any intermixture; his laws and ordinances accord to his perfections; his works and dispensations exhibit them; and all his dealings with his creatures bear the stamp of infinite wisdom, power, justice, purity, truth, goodness, and mercy, harmoniously displayed. The description given in the sacred oracles, of the state of the world and of human nature, widely differs from our previous ideas of them; yet facts on full investigation unanswerably prove it to be exactly true. The records of every nation, the events of every age, and the history of every individual, most entirely confute the self-flattery of man in this respect; and prove that the writers of the Bible knew the human character immensely better, than any philosopher, ancient or modern, ever did. Their account teaches us what men are actually doing, and what may be expected from them: while all, who form a different estimate of human nature, find their principles inapplicable to facts; their theories incapable of being reduced to practice; and their expectations strangely disappointed. The Bible, well understood, enables us to account for those events, which have appeared inexplicable to men in every age; and the more carefully any one watches and scrutinizes all the motives, imaginations, and desires of his own heart, during a length of time, the more manifest will it appear to him that the Scriptures give a far more just account of his disposition and character, than he himself could have done. In short, man is such a being, and the world is in such a state, as the Scriptures have described: yet multiplied facts, constant observation, and reiterated experience, are insufficient to convince us of it, till we first learn it from the Bible; and then comparing all which passes within us, and around us, with what we there read, we become more and more acquainted with our own hearts, and established in the belief of the divine original of this most wonderful book. To this we may add, as a most convincing internal proof that the Bible is the word of God, who "knoweth what is in man," that it is exactly suited to our *real* state, character, and wants; and proposes an adequate remedy, or supply, to all of them; which in proportion as self-knowledge increases, we see more and more. While others, through ignorance and self-flattery, cannot perceive that its proposals and promises suit their case, the experienced Christian is deeply convinced, that he wants all that is thus proposed and promised, to render him happy, and that he wants nothing more.

The mysteries contained in Scripture rather confirm than invalidate this conclusion: for a book, claiming to be a revelation from God and yet devoid of mystery, would, by this very circumstance, confute itself. Incomprehensibility is inseparable from God and from all his works, even the most inconsiderable; such as, for instance, the growth of a blade of grass. The mysteries of the *Scriptures* are sublime, interesting, and useful; they display the divine perfections; lay a foundation for our hope; and inculcate humility, reverence, love, and gratitude. What is incomprehensible must be mysterious: but it may be intelligible as far as it is revealed, and though it be connected with things above our reason, it may imply nothing contrary to it. So that, in all respects, the contents of the Bible are suited to convince the serious inquirer, that it is 'The word of God.'

VI. The tendency of the Scripture constitutes another unanswerable proof. Did all men believe and obey the Bible, as a divine revelation; let us seriously inquire, to what tenor of conduct it would lead them, and what would be the effect on society? Surely if repentance, and renunciation of all vice and immorality, when combined with the spiritual worship of God in his ordinances; faith in his mercy and truth, through the mediation of his Son; and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, as visible in the life of every true believer, were universal, or even general, they would form the bulk of mankind to such characters, and would produce such effects, as the world has never yet witnessed. Men would then habitually and uniformly do justice, speak truth, show mercy, exercise mutual forgiveness, follow after peace, bridle their appetites and passions, and lead sober, righteous and godly lives. Murders, wars, slavery, cruel oppressions, rapine and fraud, and unrestrained licentiousness, would no more desolate the world, or fill it with misery; and bitter contentions would no more destroy domestic comfort: but righteousness, goodness, and truth, would bless the earth with a felicity exceeding all our present conceptions. This is, no doubt, the direct tendency of the scriptural doctrines, precepts, motives, and promises: nothing is wanting to remedy the state of the world, and to fit men for the worship and felicity of heaven, but to believe and obey the Scriptures. And if many enormous crimes have been committed, under colour of zeal for Christianity, it only proves the depravity of man's heart: for the Scripture, soberly understood, most expressly forbids such practices; and men do not act in this shameful manner because they duly regard the Bible, but because they will not believe and obey it. The tendency of these principles is exhibited in the characters delineated in the sacred writings; while the consistency between the doctrines and precepts of Scripture, and the actions of men recorded in it, implies another argument of its divine original. The conduct of ungodly men, as there related, entirely accords to the abstract account given of human nature: and it appears, that believers conducted themselves exactly in that manner, which the principles of the Bible might have led us to expect. They had naturally like passions with other men; but these were habitually restrained and regulated by the fear and love of God, and by other holy affections. Their general behaviour was good, but not perfect; and sometimes their natural proneness to evil broke out, and made way for bitter repentance and deeper humiliation: so that they appear constantly to have perceived their need of forgiveness and divine assistance: to have expected felicity from the rich mercy of God; and, instead of making a bad use of that consideration, to have deduced from it motives for gratitude, zeal, patience, meekness, and love to mankind

But *one character* is exhibited, in the simplest and most unaffected manner, which is perfection itself. Philosophers, orators, and poets, in their several ways, have bestowed immense pains to delineate a faultless character: and they have given us complete models of their own estimate of excellence, and sufficient proof that they had laboured the point to the uttermost of their ability. But the four Evangelists, (whose divine inspiration is now frequently doubted on the most frivolous pretences,) without seeming to think of it, have done that, in which all other writers have failed. They have set before us a perfect human character, by recording facts, without making any comment on them, or showing the least ingenuity in the arrangement of them. 'They have given the history of one whose spirit, words, and action swere, in every particular, what they ought to have been; who always did the very thing which was proper, and in the best manner imaginable; who never once deviated from the most consummate wisdom, purity, benevolence, compassion, meekness, humility, fortitude, patience, piety, zeal, or any other excellency: and who in no instance let one virtue or holy disposition entrench on another, but exercised them all in entire harmony, and exact proportion.'—'This subject challenges investigation, and sets infidelity at defiance. Either these four men exceeded, in genius and capacity, all other writers that ever lived; or they wrote under the guidance of divine inspiration: for without labour or affectation, they have performed what hath baffled all others, who have set themselves purposely to accomplish it.'* This is a fact which cannot be denied: no perfect character is elsewhere delineated, and probably no mere man could have drawn one; and no one would have thought of such a character as that of Jesus. This alone, I apprehend, joined to their entire consistency in this respect with one another, demonstrates that the Evangelists wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It has often been observed, that Satan would never have influenced men to write the Bible, for then he would have been divided against himself; wicked men would not have written a book, which so awfully condemned their whole conduct; and good men would never have ascribed their own inventions to divine inspiration, especially as such forgeries are most severely reprobated in every part of it. But indeed, it is a work as much exceeding every effort of mere man, as the sun surpasses those scanty illuminations, by which his splendour is imitated, or his absence supplied.

VII. The *actual effects*, produced by the Scripture, evince their divine original. These are indeed far from being equal to its *tendency*; because, through human depravity, the gospel is not generally or fully believed and obeyed: yet they are very considerable; and we may assert, that even at present, there are many thousands, who have been reclaimed from a profane and immoral course of conduct, to sobriety, equity, truth, and piety, and to good behaviour in relative life, simply by attending to the sacred oracles. Having been "made free from sin, and become the servants of God, they have their fruit unto holiness;" and after "patiently continuing in well doing," and cheerfully bearing various afflictions, they joyfully meet death, being supported by the hope of eternal life, "as the gift of God through Jesus Christ;" while those who best know them, are most convinced, that they have been rendered more wise, holy, and happy, by believing the Bible; and that there is a reality in religion, though various interests and passions may keep them from duly embracing it. What a different nation would Britain become, if all its inhabitants were rendered as upright, sincere, peaceable, beneficent, and active in doing good to mankind, as a remnant of them are, on scriptural principles? How would the state of the whole earth be changed, if all men every where thus "denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lived soberly, righteously and godly in this present world?" This alone would do much towards introducing a state of things, resembling that of the millennium. There are indeed enthusiasts; but they become such, by forsaking the *old rule* of faith and duty, for some *new* imagination: and there are hypocrites; but they attest the *reality* and excellency of religion, by deeming it worth their while to counterfeit it.

VIII. *Brevity* is so connected with *fulness* in the Scriptures, that they are a treasure of divine knowledge, which can never be exhausted. The things that are absolutely necessary to salvation, are few, simple, and obvious to the meanest capacity, provided it be attended by a humble, teachable disposition: but the most learned, acute, and diligent student cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of this one volume. The more deeply he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore: new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct his conduct, and illustrate the works of God, and the ways of men; and he will at last leave the world confessing, that the more he studied the Scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance, and of their inestimable value.

IX. Lastly, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." The discoveries which he has made by the light of the Scripture; the experience which he has had, that the Lord fulfils its promises to those who trust in them; the abiding effects produced by attending to it, on his judgment, dispositions, and affections; and the earnest of heaven enjoyed by him in communion with God, put the matter beyond all doubt; and though many believers are not all qualified to dispute against infidels, they are enabled, through this inward testimony, to obey the gospel, and to suffer for it: and they can no more be convinced, by reasonings and objections, that ungodly men invented the Bible, than they can be persuaded, that man created the sun, whose light they behold, and by whose beams they are cheered.

And now, if an objector could fully invalidate more than one half of these arguments, (to which many more might easily be added,) the remainder would be abundantly sufficient.—*Nay*, perhaps, any one of them so far decides the question, that there were no other proof of the Bible's being the word of God, a man could not reject it, without acting in direct opposition to those dictates of common sense, which direct his conduct in his secular affairs.—But in reality, I have a confidence, that not one of these

* The author's Answer to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 66, 2 ed. V 14, 2 ed. 2:—46. 1 Note, 1 John 5:9, 10.

proofs can be fairly answered; at least it has never yet been done: and the combined force of the whole is so great, that the objections, by which men cavil against the truth, only resemble the flaming waves dashing against the deep-rooted rock, which has for ages defied their unavailing fury. But, though these can effect nothing more, they may beat off the poor shipwrecked mariner, who was about to ascend it, in hopes of deliverance from impending destruction.

A very small part of the evidences, which, with combined force, established the divine original and authority of our holy religion, has here been adduced. Many books have, of late years, been published on the important subject; the writers of which have treated it in different ways: yet, in general, the arguments advanced by each seem separately to be conclusive. It does not appear, that any view of the subject, materially new, remains to be exhibited: but the following particulars have not, as far as the Author has observed, been as yet brought forward in that prominent manner, and to that advantage, of which they are capable.

I. Many, in these days, allow the sacred writers to have been *wise and good men*; but they hesitate, and speak doubtfully, as to their *divine inspiration*. Yet, do not all the prophets, in the Old Testament, speak most decidedly of themselves and of their predecessors, as declaring, not their own words, but the word of God? Do not the apostles, and other writers of the New Testament, speak concerning the prophets who wrote the Old Testament, "as holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?" Do they not adopt language, which, in its most obvious meaning, claims the attention of their readers to their own instructions, as to the word of God? Do they not thus attest and sanction one another's writings? Do they thus attest and sanction any other books? The answer to these questions at least effectually confutes the sentiment above stated. If the sacred writers were indeed *wise men*, but *not inspired*; how were they *deluded* into the false imagination, that they and their predecessors and coadjutors were inspired? If they were *good men*, but *not inspired*, would they have thus confidently asserted their own inspiration, and sanctioned that of each other; knowing that this was contrary to the truth, and that they merely delivered their own private sentiments?

II. There are also very many, who so far reverence the name of our Lord Jesus, as to suppose his words to be divine and infallible; and yet they speak of the writers, both of the Old and New Testament, in more hesitating language. Now our Lord himself, in numerous instances, has quoted and referred to the Old Testament, and the several parts of it, as "of divine authority"; and this in a manner which directly tended to mislead the people, if the passages referred and appealed to, were merely the private opinion of some venerable men of former ages, but not the infallible word of God. And his appointment of the apostles, and his giving them the power of the keys, of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven, must imply, that in their writings, and in those which they sanctioned, his doctrine and religion might be found unimixed and genuine. Indeed, if it cannot be found here, where are we to look for it? These considerations show, that he himself has attested the divine inspiration of both the Old and the New Testament.

An argument comprising so many and important transactions, cannot here be fully discussed; but a few specimens may not improperly be annexed, of the manner in which the author supposes that the position might be maintained, with great effect, by any man who had talents and leisure for such an attempt.

When the divine Redeemer was tempted by the devil, he selected all the texts, with which, as 'by the sword of the Spirit,' he put the enemy to flight, from one of the Books of Moses. Does he then quote these books as the words of man? Surely not. He says repeatedly, "It is written." And had any one inquired, Where? Would he not have answered, "In the word of God?"—In his sermon on the mount he continually refers to the law given by Moses; declaring that "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;" for he came not to destroy "the law... but to fulfil." Now who can deny that our Lord came to fulfil the types of the ceremonial law, and the requirements of the moral law? And who can imagine, that the Son of God was manifested, thus to honour any institutions of mere human authority?—Yet many learned writers speak of the laws of Moses, as if they had originated with him.

The Pharisees and Scribes in general maintained, that JEHOUAH spake by Moses, and that his writings were the word of God: but does our Lord ever so much as intimate that this opinion was unwarranted, or held in too absolute and unrestricted a manner? Nay, when he saw good to expose the traditions of the elders, he charges them with rejecting and "making void the commandment of God by their traditions;"†, but where was that commandment of God to be found, except in the books of Moses? for he expressly referred to the fifth commandment.—Again, when the Pharisees proposed a question to him respecting divorces, he referred them to the Mosaic history of the creation, and to the original institution of marriage; saying, "Have ye never read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?" Does not this method of appealing to these records imply an express attestation to the indisputable truth of them? And does not that attestation amount to a declaration, that they were written by divine inspiration?

Who was intended by the Householder, that inclosed the vineyard of Israel, but JEHOUAH? By whom did he inclose it, but by Moses? What Moses enacted and performed, was done in the name and by the authority of JEHOUAH: and can his

writings be treated as the word of man, by any who consider the testimony of Christ as "the word of God?"

The Sadducees proposed a case to Jesus, which they imagined inconsistent with the resurrection of the dead: but he decisively answered, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God:" and he then referred them to the Books of Moses, as a confutation of their error. But did the Son of God in reality appeal to the writings of an uninspired man? or did he not appeal to "the oracles of God?" This however is not all that he says expressly, "Have ye not read, that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, &c.?"—What Moses recorded, was spoken by God.†

On another occasion he inculcated a regard to the Scribes and Pharisees, as sitting in Moses' seat, that is, teaching according to his law; though, at other times, he exposed their instructions when, following their own traditions, they disannulled that law what could this mean, but that the one was a divine revelation, the other a mere human invention?‡

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, (if indeed it be a parable,) our Lord introduces Abraham saying to the rich man concerning his brethren, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them;" and again, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."§—But would he have thus called the attention of his hearers, and of all through revolving ages who read his words, to the writings of Moses, if any part of them had been erroneous and the mere opinion of a fallible man?—It is worthy of notice, that our Lord also expressly attested the truth of the Mosaic History, in some particulars which have not been most implicitly credited, in their evident and literal import: I mean the account given by Moses of the universal deluge, and Noah's preservation in the ark while all else were drowned; and of the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven, with the sudden and awful doom of Lot's wife.||

When discoursing with Nicodemus, he referred to the Mosaic history of the brazen serpent, in such a manner as both attested the typical import of that transaction, and the reality of the miracle recorded by Moses.¶

On another occasion, probably before the Sanhedrim, our Lord says to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"—Hence we may infer, that an intelligent belief of the words of Moses necessarily leads to faith in Christ; and that it could not be expected, that the Jews, who did not believe the testimony of Moses in this particular, would believe in him of whom he spake.** Let this suffice in respect of the Books of Moses.

It may be proper also to adduce a few specimens, respecting the other parts of the Old Testament. When the Pharisees condemned the disciples for rubbing the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, our Lord said unto them, "Have ye not read what David did?" "Have ye not read so much as this, what David did?"† and directly referred also to the law in the same sentence.‡ Now this surely authorizes us to conclude, that he regarded both the law and the Books of Samuel, as equally "the word of God."—In like manner he called the attention of his hearers to the history of the queen of Sheba, as of undoubted authority; and this is recorded both in the Books of the Kings and in the Chronicles.§§

When he anticipated the objection of the Nazarenes, by referring them to the conduct of the Lord in sending Elijah to Zarephath, to a Zidonian woman, rather than to any of the widows in Israel; and in cleansing Naaman the Syrian, by Elisha, rather than any of the lepers in Israel; he not only authenticated the historical records of those facts as genuine, but attested the miracles recorded in them: which, admitted in their full extent, can never be separated from the divine inspiration of those who wrought them.|| It should also be observed, that our Lord never referred to any writings in this manner, except those received by the Jews as the word of God; he opposed oral traditions, and has not once quoted the Books of the Apocrypha, some of which were then extant. It may therefore be fairly inferred, that he expressly designed to confirm the opinion of the Jews on that subject, by his repeated attestations, and to establish exclusively the divine inspiration of their sacred books.

JEHOVAH had given commandment by Moses, that the people should offer sacrifices, exclusively at the place which he should appoint: and Joshua after his death, by divine direction, as the Jews supposed, placed the tabernacle at Shiloh, where it continued till the ark was taken by the Philistines. Afterwards David removed the ark to Jerusalem, and Solomon built the temple on mount Zion which was from that time regarded as exclusively the place appointed by God for sacrifice.—A large proportion of the Old Testament, from the Books of Moses to the end of it, relates to this tabernacle and temple; to the sins of the people in offering sacrifice elsewhere, or in hypocritically attending on the ordinances there administered; to the judgments of God upon them for these sins; to the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans; to the rebuilding of it by Zerubbabel; and to events of a similar nature.—These things are so interwoven with the historical records of the Old Testament; that to deny the divine authority, by which Joshua separated Shiloh, and David appointed mount Zion as the exclusive place for offering sacrifice, according to the command given by Moses, would tend to invalidate the whole narrative; as it would imply, that the Lord inflicted tremendous judgments on the nation, merely for violating the appointments of uninspired men.—The Samaritans indeed argued, that "men ought to worship" on mount Gerizim, and not at Jerusalem: but our Lord declared to the woman of Samaria, that the Samaritans "knew not what they worshipped; for salvation was of the Jews."¶¶ Now, who can doubt, that this

* 2 Sam. 23:1, 2. Neh. 9:30. Ps. 117:11. Is. 8:20. Jer. 20:7-9. 25:3, 4. 26:12-19. Ezr. 1:1-8. 3:16, 17. Dan. 9:12, 13. Mic. 3:8-12. Zech. 1:5, 6. † Notes, Rom. 3:12, 2 Tim. 3:14, 17. Heb. 1:1, 2. 2 Pet. 1:19-21. ‡ Notes, 1 Cor. 7:30, 40. 1 Thes. 4:6-8. 5:23-28. p. 27. 2 Pet. 3:1-4, 14, 16. 1 John 4:4-6. § Notes, Matt. 16:18-20. || Matt. 4:4-11. ¶ Note, Matt. 6:17, 18. ** Notes, John 5:15-17. 9:27-34. †† Notes, Matt. 13:1-14. Mark 7:1-9.

* Matt. 21:33-46. Mark 12:1-12. Luke 20:9-13. † Matt. 22:21-33. p. 51. ‡ Note, Matt. 28:1-4. § Luke 16:27-31. || Notes, 24:37-39. Luke 17:26-32. ¶ Note, John 3:1, 15. ** Notes, John 5:8-17. †† Matt. 12:1-5. Luke 6:3, 4. ‡ Lev. 24:5-9. 1 Sam. 21:1-6. § 1 Kings 10:1-13. 2 Chr. 9:12. Note, Matt. 12:41, 42. ¶ Luke 4:23-27. ¶¶ John 4:20-22.

declaration of Jesus Christ and his own constant attendance on the worship performed at Jerusalem, fully attest the divine inspiration of those books, in which the appointment of this place and the building of the temple are recorded, as having been done by the directions and command of God himself?

Let us also very briefly consider our Lord's testimony to the writings of the Prophets, and to the Book of Psalms. The Psalms are indeed ascribed to different writers; but it is evident that they constitute a book of the Scriptures among the Jews at that time, as the following do so that a quotation from that book, as the word of God, without adding any limitation, is in fact an attestation of the whole.

When the children in the temple cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David;" the chief priests said to Jesus, "Hearest thou not what these say?" To which he answered, "Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Did not this attest the words of David, as the language of inspiration, and of prophecy?

On another occasion he demanded of the Pharisees, "how David in Spirit," or, "by the Holy Ghost," "called the Messiah, Lord?" which is equivalent to David's declaration concerning himself; "The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." And accordingly our Lord, after his resurrection, declared that "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him."—But why *must* this have been, except as the writings referred to were inspired by God himself? Could there be any necessity, that the words of fallible men, however wise and good, should be fulfilled, in such extraordinary events, as the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ?

Referring to a passage in the Psalms,† he asks, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came; and the Scripture cannot be broken, &c."* Who called the magistrates gods, but JEHOVAH? And why could not the Scripture be broken, but because it is "the word of God?"

I shall only, in a general way, refer the reader to some of our Lord's attestations to several of the Prophets, whose writings form a part of our Scriptures. The texts referred to are surely a sufficient attestation to the prophecy of Isaiah.†† When our Lord says, "Well did Esaias prophesy of you," could he mean any thing less than St. Paul did, in saying, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet?"‡‡ Christ gives similar attestations to the prophecy of Daniel.§§ and to Hosea.¶¶ He also expressly attests the history contained in the book of Jonah, which is often treated very irreverently.¶¶ He evidently refers to the words of Micah, in predicting the persecutions to which his disciples would be subjected.*** And he explicitly attests the prophecy of Malachi.††† Several others of the prophets are quoted by the evangelists; but none are here adduced, except those who are mentioned by our Lord himself, in a manner attesting the divine inspiration of the writers, or their language, as "the word of God."

It only remains to mention his attestation to the Scriptures in general, and to the division of them which was received at that time, into "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms." Thus he says to the Scribes, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner?"‡‡‡ And when he adds, "Therefore, I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof;" he evidently shows, that he quoted the passage as the word of God, which "cannot be broken."—How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? and again, "All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."§§§

Would we know more particularly what Scriptures he meant? Let us hear his words to the apostles: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me."||||

The words of our Lord are very remarkable; "Search," says he, "the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."¶¶¶ Now what could the Jews suppose Jesus to mean by "the Scriptures," but the books which they had been accustomed to distinguish by that appellation? They had thought, that in these the way of eternal life was to be found; these testified of Jesus as the Messiah; and yet they rejected him, without whom they could not obtain eternal life!—This one testimony confirms indubitably the divine revelation of the whole Old Testament, as it stood at that time, to all who truly believe the words of Christ: but, reversing his conclusion in another case, we may fairly say to men who call themselves Christians, "If ye believe not his words, how can ye believe the writings of the Old Testament?"

When the Jews went about to stone him, because he had said, "I and my Father are One;" he quoted a passage from the Psalms, adding, "The Scripture cannot be broken."**** But what can we understand by "the Scripture" in this connexion, but the canonical books of the Old Testament as then received by the Jews? And who can deny this to be a complete authentication of them, as the unfulfilling word of the unchangeable God? Indeed all those passages in which Christ speaks of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, with the various circumstances connected with them, as what "must be," with reference to the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, prove, as far as men regard his testimony, that not one tithe of those sacred records could pass away, till the whole had received its full accomplishment: for which no other satisfactory reason can possibly be given, than this, that the whole is a divine revelation; "for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But, should it be granted that our Lord's own words demonstrate the whole Old Testament to be "given by inspiration from God," as far as men reverence and believe his testimony, yet it may still be asked, Does it follow, that the books of the New Testament admit of the same kind of proof from the words of Christ himself?—Let us briefly examine this subject also. It is not indeed practicable to adduce so large a body of evidence, as has been brought in the former case; nor is it necessary: yet I apprehend that the argument may in a short compass be made very conclusive.—When Peter confessed Jesus to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," he answered, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Peter had spoken in the name of the other apostles, as well as in his own; and it is generally allowed, that the answer included them also: indeed this appears by other passages of similar import, in which they were all addressed.*

If it be allowed that this absolute promise was given exclusively to the apostles, we must next inquire, how they could exercise this power of binding or loosing, especially after their decease, except by their doctrine? and where must the church or the world look for that doctrine, if not in their writings? Should we suppose, that the exercise of this exclusive authority was confined to the short time of their continuance on earth; then the church has ever since been left destitute of any rule, either for censures or absolutions, even of a declarative nature; and also of all *criteria* for the discrimination of true Christians from other men, either for the purpose of self-examination, or for the regulation of our conduct "towards the household of faith," and the world around us. But if this promise was not exclusively made to the apostles, nor the authority given by it intended to be exercised according to their doctrine; the consequence must be, either that there are, in every age, ministers of religion possessed of this absolute power of binding and loosing; or that the words of Christ have not received their accomplishment. And, as it does not seem to accord with the prevailing sentiments of this age, to invest ministers, of any kind or description, with such an infallible and decisive authority; we may, I apprehend, be allowed to conclude, that the promise was made exclusively to the apostles, and was fulfilled, when they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to deliver that doctrine to the church, according to which the state of all men, in respect of acceptance or condemnation, is and will be finally decided. If this be allowed, it will inevitably follow, that our Lord's express testimony proves that their writings are a *divine revelation*; for in them especially they delivered to the church what they received from the Lord; and these have been, and will be to all subsequent generations, exclusively "the doctrine of Christ."

On the night before his crucifixion, our blessed Saviour repeatedly promised to send to his apostles, "the Spirit of Truth, who should guide them into all Truth," and "show them things to come;" who should "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them," and who "should receive of his and show it to them."† There is a subordinate sense in which these promises are, in a measure, accomplished to all true Christians; but the persons who advance doubts respecting the divine authority of the books contained in the New Testament, will scarcely deny that they are addressed in a far superior sense, to the apostles and those immediately connected with them.‡ Now the Spirit was given to them, as well as to others, "to profit withal:" and it is undeniable, that genuine Christianity, without unremitted miracles, could be delivered down to future ages for the profit of mankind, only by writings, in which it should be stated without error or corrupt mixture, and preserved as a sacred deposit in the church from generation to generation. What then could the Holy Spirit, promised in this energetic language to the apostles, be so rationally supposed to do for them, as to guide their minds by an immediate superintending inspiration, when they dictated those writings, by which it was evidently the design of Providence that the doctrine of Christ should be perpetuated in the church? Indeed, either they did deliver to mankind the doctrine of their Lord and Master, pure and uncorrupted, or they did not; if they did not, the revelation, which God made of himself by his well-beloved Son, has answered very little purpose; as no man, without a new revelation properly so called, can or ever could distinguish the truths of Christ from the errors of the apostles: but if they did deliver their doctrine pure and uncorrupted to mankind; why should we maintain, that they were preserved from error when preaching the gospel, in which one generation of men alone was immediately concerned; and yet left to fall into errors in their writings, in which all future ages and nations were most deeply interested? If when they were brought before governors for a testimony to them, it was not they that spoke, but the Holy Spirit who spake by them; if we may surely conclude, that what they wrote for a testimony to all future ages and nations, was arranged under the same efficacious teaching and superintendency.

Our Lord, just before his ascension, renewed and ratified his commission to the apostles: "All power," says he, "is given unto me in heaven and earth: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."§ "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."¶ Yet none, those alone excepted to whom the apostles personally preached, can have any concern in this important declaration; unless the doctrine of Christ, delivered to the apostles, may be *certainly* found in their writings.—Our Lord, just before his crucifixion, intercedes for his whole future church in these words, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me *through their word*."|| and indeed all

* Luke 24: 44. Acts 1: 20, 13: 33. † Ps. 8: 2. Matt. 21: 15, 16. ‡ Notes, Ps. 110: 1. Matt. 22: 41—46. Mark 12: 35—37. § Note, 2 Sam. 23: 1, 2. Ps. 24: 44—45. ¶ Ps. 2: 16—17. ** Note, John 10: 32—39. †† Matt. 13: 13—15, 15: 7—9, 21: 13. Mark 7: 6, 7. Luke 4: 17—21. ‡‡ Acts 28: 25. §§ Matt. 24: 15. Mark 13: 14. || Hos. 6: 3. Matt. 9: 13, 12: 7. ¶¶ Matt. 13: 39—41, 16: 4. Luke 11: 29—32. ** Mic. 7: 8. Matt. 10: 35, 36. ††† Mal. 3: 1. Matt. 11: 10, &c. Luke 7: 27. Mal. 4: 5, 6. Matt. 17: 10—12. Mark 9: 11—13. ‡‡‡ Ps. 118: 22, 23. Matt. 21: 42, 43. §§§ Matt. 26: 54—56. |||| Luke 24: 27, 44—46. ¶¶¶ John 5: 39, 40. **** John 10: 34, 35.

* Notes, Matt. 16: 13—19, 1: 18. John 20: 19—23. † Note, John 14: 26, 26. ‡ Notes, Matt. 10: 19, 20. Luke 21: 12—19. § Notes, Matt. 28: 18—20. Mark 17: 15, 16. || Note, John 17: 20, 21.

real Christians in every age have believed in him, not so much through the word of the ministers who preached to them, as through that of the apostles, by which their doctrine must be tried; from which, if sound, it is deduced, and to which it is properly their custom to make an unreserved appeal. In this sense St. Paul says, that believers are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-Stone;" for the Old Testament written by the prophets, and the New Testament by the apostles, under "the inspiration of the Holy Spirit," contain that doctrine, which is the foundation of the faith and hope of the whole church, as resting on Christ, and united in him into an holy temple, "an habitation of God through the Spirit."

The several books of the New Testament were written by the apostles themselves, excepting the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles: and these were penned by the attendants on the apostles, and under their immediate inspection, and consequently were equally authenticated by them, as if they had themselves written them. If any should object, *viz.* Paul was not one of those apostles, to whom Christ gave his express testimony, and yet he wrote a great part of the Epistles: it may be answered, first, that there is no alternative between denying all the facts recorded concerning him, and allowing his apostolical authority in its fullest extent, or that at least "he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles;" and secondly, that Peter has attested his Epistles to be a part of the Scriptures, in these remarkable words, "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."† If therefore, our Lord's own words authenticate the writings of the other apostles as a divine revelation; Peter, who in some respects might be called the chief of the apostles, authenticates by divine inspiration the writings of his beloved brother Paul.

Finally, the only portion of Scripture, of which our Lord can in any sense be called the Writer, is that which contains the epistles to the seven churches in Asia, which he dictated to the apostle John as his amanuensis. All his discourses, (as well as his miracles, and the events of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension,) were written, not by himself, but by the evangelists, two of whom were not apostles. What greater assurance then have we, that they recorded faithfully his words, than that the apostles faithfully delivered his doctrine to mankind? If the evangelists were not inspired in recording his words, we are not infallibly sure that he spoke what they ascribe to him; and why should we allow the divine inspiration of his historians, in recording his words; and yet doubt the divine inspiration of his apostles, in communicating his doctrine to the church and to the world? This opinion therefore is, in fact, both hostile to the whole of the sacred oracles, and at variance with itself.

The consequences of our present conduct, according to the Scriptures, are so immense, that if there were only a bare possibility that these were divine truth, it would be madness to run the risk of rejecting them, for the sake of gaining the whole world. What then shall we think of those who having such unanswerable demonstrations of their being the word of God, that they cannot reasonably doubt of it for a moment, yet disobey the commands, and neglect the salvation revealed in them, for the veriest trifles which can be proposed? Especially, as it may be shown, that, (besides the eternal consequences,) the firm belief of the Scriptures, and the conscientious obedience which true faith always produces, will render a man far happier in this present life, even amidst trials and self-denying services, than any other man can be made, by all the pomp, pleasure, wealth, power, and honour, which the world can bestow on him.

If these arguments, which certainly contain a complete moral demonstration of the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, excite in any reader a greater attention to the sacred volume, and dispose him to read it with more strict impartiality, and larger expectations of improvement; if they induce any one, who has not hitherto turned his attention to the subject, to examine it carefully for himself; if they obviate the unhappy prejudices, or confirm the wavering faith, of one individual; if they stir up any one to seek and wait for "the witness in himself;" the Author's object, in prefixing them to this publication, will be thus far attained.

We must next proceed to consider the nature of a divine revelation, and the reception to which it is entitled.—Knowledge, in different degrees, may be acquired by us in various ways. We know some things by intuition, or the testimony of our senses; and other things by demonstration, or undeniably conclusive arguments. Many things which do not admit of this kind of proof, may be shown to be *probable*, in so great a degree that it would be absurd to doubt of them, and madness not to regulate our conduct according to them. A very small proportion of men's actions are directed by intuitive knowledge, by demonstration, or even by the higher degrees of probability. A moderate degree of probability is generally sufficient to excite them to activity, and to direct their conduct. **TESTIMONY**, especially, influences by far the greatest part of human actions; and forms the main spring of men's vigorous, self-denying exertions, their daring attempts, and their persevering labours. By crediting the assertions, and relying on the engagements, express or implied, of one another, all the grand concerns of nations are conducted; causes, in which life and death are involved, receive their final determination; and commerce, in all its branches, is directed and influenced: and the same regard to testimony, and confidence in our fellow-creatures, is inseparable from the most ordinary affairs of human life.

Now, "if the testimony of man be great, the testimony of God is greater,"‡ infinitely greater. Indeed his testimony, when fully ascertained, is the highest possible degree of demonstration: and when the Bible is proved, by adequate evidence, to be "the testimony of God," the information contained in it is *sure*, far be-

yond all other information, from whatever quarter or in what ever manner it is obtained.—I judge and the jury in court the merchant on the exchange, the commander of a fleet or army, the minister of state in council, (not to mention cases of subordinate importance,) are fully aware, that no testimony or information can be useful to direct their conduct, in their respective concerns, except it be *cred* led. To appreciate its credibility and its import, is the first consideration; and the next, when it is believed and understood, should be to form the plan of conduct according to it. Thus almost all human actions, and those especially of the greatest importance, are performed and regulated by *faith*, by that same principle which is the main spring of human activity, in the great concerns of religion: with this sole difference, that belief of human testimony, and reliance on human faithfulness to promises and engagements, by word or on paper, and in very many cases, as in that of physicians, lawyers, and even those who prepare our food, by what is regarded as a *professional* engagement, influence men in their secular concerns; the belief of God's testimony, and reliance on his faithfulness to his promises, as written in the Scriptures, influence Christians in their spiritual and eternal concerns.—These things are obvious: but they are seldom duly considered in this connexion.

The Bible is the "testimony of God" to truths and facts, many of which are not otherwise discoverable; or not with sufficient clearness and certainly, to become principles of our habitual conduct. Things past, future, and invisible; truths most important, sublime, and mysterious, are thus brought to our knowledge attested by him who cannot mistake, who cannot deceive. But *faith* is the only exercise of our rational faculties, the only operation of the human mind, by which we can avail ourselves of this information. Faith, receiving and appropriating the testimony of God, is to reason, not unlike what the telescope is to the eye of the astronomer; who by it discerns objects invisible to all others; and sees, clearly and distinctly, those things, which to others appear obscure and confused. Reason, thus appropriating, by faith, the information communicated by revelation from the "only wise God," adds immensely to her former scanty stock of knowledge; possessing at the same time *certainly* instead of *conjecture*; and thus, in the posture of a humble disciple, she receives that instruction, which must be for ever withheld from her, while she proudly affects to be the teacher. Thus, even the most illiterate of mankind, believing and becoming more and more acquainted with the sacred oracles, acquire a knowledge in the things of God and religion, far more certain and useful, than ever was possessed by the wisest and most learned unbeliever: in the same manner as the bosom friend or confidential counsellor of the prince, who is informed of his real purposes and designs, exceeds in practical knowledge of state-affairs the most sagacious speculating politician; who merely supposes that those things have been done, or will be done, which he thinks ought to be done, or in some way conjectures to be most probable.

When, relying on the veracity of God, we receive the Scriptures, as in every proposition infallibly true; the whole of the instruction contained in them becomes our own, and we may consider them as a mine of precious ore, which will more and more enrich us, in proportion to our diligence in exploring them, and, so to speak, in working the mine.

But this faith differs widely from the mere assent of the understanding to any proposition, without respect to its importance, and to our own concern in it. Noah, for instance, was informed, that the deluge would come; and we are informed that it actually came: but he was immediately interested in the event; we are not. We may therefore assent to the truth of it, as an historical fact, without being influenced by it in our habitual conduct; but if he truly believed the divine testimony and monition, this belief must necessarily influence his conduct. "By faith, Noah, moved with fear, prepared the ark." The truths of revelation, (wholly unlike the reports of the day, which, whether true or false, are of little consequence to us,) all relate to our eternal interests; and therefore have an inseparable connexion with our practice. The Bible, received in true faith, becomes the foundation of our hope, the standard of our judgment, the source of our comfort, "the lantern of our feet, and the light of our paths;" and implicit faith always produces unreserved obedience.

The province of reason therefore, in respect to revelation, is, first to examine and decide, (with modesty and caution,) on the evidences by which it is supported; to understand and explain the language in which it is conveyed; to discern, in many things, the excellency of the things revealed to us; and to use them as motives, encouragements, and rules of obedience: and, in things evidently mysterious, to bow in humble submission to the divine teaching; to receive in adoring faith and love what we cannot comprehend; to rest satisfied with what is revealed: and to leave sacred things with God, to whom alone they belong.—Should any one indeed presume to interpret a text of Scripture, in a sense which contradicts the testimony of our senses or clear demonstration; we may venture to reject this interpretation: for nothing can possibly prove that to be true, which we *certainly know* to be false. But when the doctrines of revelation, or the obvious interpretation of them, according to the common use of language, are only mysterious, but involve no real contradiction to the general notions, and preconceptions, or ordinary reasonings, of mankind; but are not opposite to the testimony of our senses, or to any *demonstrated* truth: to reject, on such grounds, the testimony of God, must be *irrational* in the highest degree; unless man be indeed wiser than his Creator.

Seeing, therefore, that the Bible may be unanswerably proved to be the word of God, we should reason from it, as from self-evident principles, or demonstrated truths: for "His Testimony is sure, making wise the simple."

Many parts of Scripture accord so well with the conclusions of our rational powers, when duly exercised, that either they might have been known without revelation, or else men have mistaken the capacity of *perceiving* truth, for that of *discovering* it. Hence various controversies have arisen about *natura-*

* Note, Eph. 2:19—22. † Note, 2 Pet. 3:14—16. ‡ Note, 1 John 5:9, 10.

religion, which many suppose to be rather taken for granted by revelation, than made known by it. But the term is ambiguous: for the word *natural* includes the *propensities of our hearts*, as well as the *powers of our understandings*; and the same truths which accord to the latter, are often totally opposite to the former. The Gentiles might have known many things concerning God and his Will, if they had "liked to retain him in their knowledge;" but their alienation of heart from him prevailed to keep them in ignorance, or entangle them in error. So that the term, "The religion of reason," would express the idea much more intelligibly, if any such distinction be deemed necessary.

This however is obvious, that many truths and precepts, which are found in the Bible, have been maintained by persons who were ignorant of that divine revelation, or who did not choose to own their obligations to it: and many others, professing to receive the Scriptures as the word of God, assent to some truths contained in them, not so much because they are revealed, as because they think that they may be proved by other arguments; while they reject, neglect, or explain away those doctrines, which are not thus evident to their reason, or level with their capacities. So that at last it comes to this, that they discard all which is deemed peculiar to revelation; and refuse to believe "the testimony of God," if their own reason will not vouch for the truth of what he says.*

It may indeed be questioned, whether those opinions, which men so confidently magnify, as 'The oracles of reason,' were not originally, without exception, borrowed from revelation, as far as there is any truth in them: and it is evident, that they cannot possess sufficient certainty, clearness, and authority, to render them efficacious principles of action, except as enforced by revelation and its awful sanctions. And the wildest enthusiast never dreamed of a grosser absurdity than those persons maintain, who suppose that the only wise God has given a revelation to man, confirmed by miracles and prophecies, and established in the world by the labours and sufferings of his servants, and by the crucifixion of his well-beloved Son; and that this revelation at last is found to contain nothing, but what we might have known as well without it! Nay, that it is expressed in such language as has given occasion to those, who have most implicitly believed and reverentially obeyed it, to maintain sentiments and adopt practices, erroneous and evil in themselves, and of fatal consequence to mankind!

We might therefore have previously expected, that the revelation from God should illustrate, confirm, and enforce such things as seem more level to our natural powers: and that it should make known to us many important matters, which we could not have otherwise discovered; and which would be found exceedingly different from all our notions and imaginations; seeing that our contracted views and limited capacities are infinitely distant from the omniscience of God. So that it is most reasonable to conclude, that the doctrinal truths, which more immediately relate to the divine nature, perfections, providence, and government, to the invisible and eternal world and the mysteries of redemption, constitute by far the most important part of revelation; as discovering to us such things, "as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man;" and yet they are essentially connected with our present hope, worship, and duty, and with our future happiness or misery.†

He therefore cannot, according to the common use of language, be called a believer, who only holds those doctrines which he deems the dictates of reason as well as of revelation, whilst he rejects the testimony of God, whenever he deems it *unreasonable*. And we may hence learn what judgment we ought to form of those who affirm, without hesitation, that the moral precepts, with the annexed penal sanctions, and the more evident truths of the Bible, are the only important part of it; that it is of little consequence what men believe, especially concerning those things which are in any degree mysterious; and that none but narrow-minded bigots, and weak and ignorant people, lay any stress upon speculative opinions.—"He that believeth not, maketh God a liar" especially "he that believeth not the testimony which God hath given of his Son," and of eternal life bestowed on sinners through him. This is the uniform doctrine of Scripture; and to contradict it is equivalent to a total rejection of divine revelation.‡ Can it be supposed, that the prophets and apostles were commissioned, and that the Son of God was "manifested in the flesh," died on the cross, and rose from the dead, merely to inform mankind that the Lord approved honesty, temperance, truth, and kindness, and disapproved the contrary vices? or that the unnumbered testimonies which the Scriptures contain to the mysteries of the Divine Nature, the Person of the Redeemer, the work of Redemption, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, may, without any criminality, be disbelieved, derided, or reviled, provided men are moral in their conduct towards one another? Or that God is equally pleased with those who thus affront his veracity, as with those who implicitly submit to his teaching and credit his testimony? If this be the case, in what does the difference between the infidel and the believer consist? All, except avowed atheists, will allow the propriety of many precepts, and the truth of some doctrines, coinciding with those contained in Scripture: but the infidel admits them as the dictates of reason, not as "the testimony of God;" and many professed believers reject all, without hesitation, that does not appear to accord to the same standard. So that both of them believe their own reasonings, "lean to their own understandings," and "make God a liar," when his testimony contradicts their self-conceived decisions! The prevailing notion, therefore, of the comparatively small importance of doctrinal truth, is subversive of revelation; and in fact is only a more plausible and more dangerous species of infidelity. The decided belief of the "sure testimony of God," on the most important doctrines of revelation, and those most intimately connected with our eternal salvation, our rejoicing hope, and

our adoring gratitude, is often, under the word *speculative* or *speculation*, confounded with the boldest investigation of things unrevealed, by the most presumptuous efforts and conclusions of reasoning unbelievers: and this sometimes by pious men, whose excessive antipathy to controversy will not allow them to admit the difference, or come near enough to perceive it.

If we believe the Scriptures to have been written by "inspiration from God," and have any suitable apprehensions of his omniscience, veracity, and perfections, we must be convinced, that it is the height of arrogance for us, short-sighted, erring creatures of yesterday, to speak of any doctrine contained in them as false or doubtful, because it is not coincident with our reasonings or conceptions. Surely, a small portion of modesty and humility might suffice to induce a confession, that *we* are more likely to be mistaken, than that the only wise God should attest what is not exactly true! In rejecting his authenticated testimony, we must either advance our knowledge above his omniscience, or impeach his veracity, or deny the Scriptures, altogether or in part, to be his word; reserving to ourselves the determination, what part is of divine authority, and what is not! If, on the other hand, we deem any part of the Scriptures, though true, to be of little or no importance, or of dangerous tendency, what do we, but affront the infinite wisdom or goodness of God, as if he did not know what truths were proper to be revealed to man; or as if he purposely discovered those matters, which it would have been better for mankind never to have known? And seeing it is evident that the Lord has, in the Scriptures, required the belief of certain doctrines, as absolutely necessary to salvation,* to insinuate that these doctrines are either false, doubtful, or of no value, must involve in it the grossest and most affronting blasphemy imaginable.

We do not indeed maintain, that all the truths of revelation are of equal importance, because they are not stated in Scripture to be so; but none can be wholly unimportant, and we are not always competent to decide upon their comparative value. Some things are more obvious than others; and such as are more hard to be understood, are not so well adapted to those persons, "who are unstable and unlearned" in the school of Christ: yet we are not authorized to reject, or even to doubt, any of them. We may indeed demur as to the true interpretation of them, whilst, in humble, reverent teachableness and prayer, we wait for clearer light upon the subject: and we must remain for some time in partial ignorance or error, because we cannot at once become acquainted with all the truths which are revealed, even when we possess a disposition implicitly to believe them. There are some things which relate to the very life and essence of true religion; and others are rather necessary to our stability, comfort, and holy conduct: these we must by no means reject, or treat with indifference; but it is possible, even that the teachable and diligent Christian may to the last be mistaken or ignorant about some of them, and yet be found among "the heirs of salvation:" nay, there is ground to conclude, that this is indeed the case with great numbers, in one way or other.

The importance of revealed truth may be shown in another way; for it is the seed or principle in the soul, whence all inward or real holiness proceeds. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."† "Beholding as in a glass," (namely in the person, redemption, and doctrine of Christ,) "the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image."‡ "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh."§ This doctrine was, in the judgment of the apostle, "the great mystery of godliness;" and indeed all the holy dispositions and affections towards God, all the genuine spiritual worship, all the willing obedience of filial love, and all the cheerful acquiescence in the divine will, and affiance on the divine truth and mercy, which have been found in the world since the fall of man, have arisen from a proper reception of this great truth, and the doctrines connected with it.¶ Spirituality, which consists in a supreme valuation of the holy excellencies of spiritual things, and a disposition to seek pleasure and satisfaction in religion, is intimately connected with a believing dependence on the promised influences of the Holy Spirit. And that view of the worth of the soul, the evil of sin, the justice and mercy of God, the vanity of the world, and the believer's obligations to a Saviour, "who loved him and redeemed him to God with his blood," which the doctrine of the cross communicates, is fundamental to deep repentance, genuine humility, gratitude, patience, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, love of enemies, and other parts of the Christian temper and character. Without this, a proud morality, and a pharisaical task and form of godliness, will comprise the sum total of man's religion; except as he is brought under those impressions and that guidance, which will in due time influence him to embrace "the truth as it is in Jesus" or as he is carried away into the mazes of anti-scriptural enthusiasm and delusion.

The Holy Scriptures should likewise be considered as a complete revelation: so that nothing needs be known, believed, or practised, as essential to religion, except what may be plainly proved from them. On the other hand, it should be carefully observed, that the *whole* word of God is our rule; and that all preference of one part to another, (except as some parts are more immediately connected with our faith and practice than others,) derogates from the credit of the whole, and implies a latent and indulged doubt, whether the Bible be altogether of divine authority; and whether only that part of it be so, which coincides with the favourite tenets of the person concerned.—True and intelligent faith receives the whole "testimony of God;" gives every part its proper place and measure of attention, and applies it to its proper use: for "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."‡

But all unwritten tradition, and apocryphal additions to the

* Note, 1 John 5:9, 10. † Notes, John 3:12, 13. 1 Cor. 2:9—9. ‡ Notes, John 3:17—21, 31—36. 1 John 5:9—12.

§ Notes, Mark 16:14—16. John 3:27—36, v. 36. 1 John 2:20—25, 5:11, 12. † Note, John 17:17—19. ‡ Notes, Matt. 13:18, 19, 33. Mark 4:22—29. 2 Cor. 3:17, 18, 4:3—6. Jam. 1:19—21. 1 Pet. 1:23—26. § 2 Pet. 1 Tim. 3:16. || Notes, 1 Pet. 29:29. 2 Tim. 9:14—17.

word of God, must be decidedly rejected. *Tradition* is so uncertain a way of conveying the knowledge either of truths or facts, that no dependence whatever can be placed on it; so that it is highly improbable, that, without written revelation, any one thing revealed to the prophets and apostles, would have been transmitted to us uncorrupted. Indeed there is some probability in the opinion, that the art of writing was first communicated by revelation to Moses, in order to perpetuate, with certainty, those facts, truths, and laws, which he was employed to deliver to Israel. Learned men find no traces of *literary* or *alphabetical* writing in the history of the nations, till long after the days of Moses, unless the book of Job be regarded as an exception.*

The art of expressing almost an infinite variety of sounds, by the interchanges of a few letters or marks, seems more like a discovery made to man from heaven, than a human invention; and its beneficial effects, and almost absolute necessity, for the preservation and communication of true religion, favour the conjecture.

But however that may be decided, all who love the Bible, will be thankful to God for this most important advantage; and also for the invention of printing, by which copies of the Scriptures are rendered cheap and plentiful, beyond all calculation, or comparison with the state of things before printing was discovered. This gives modern Christians advantages for disseminating the knowledge of divine truth among the nations, in some respects even beyond what the apostles themselves possessed: and how noble and Christian is that grand design, which has lately been grounded on this circumstance by 'The British and Foreign Bible Society,' which is no less, than that of causing prophets and apostles to speak to the inhabitants of every country on earth, to each in their own language! May God accomplish to its full extent this grand, pious, and beneficent purpose!

We do not need any apocryphal additions to the Scripture. Considered as *human writings*, the apocryphal books have their use; but if *custom* sanction any of them, being bound up in the same volume with the sacred oracles, *truth* requires that we explicitly declare, that they are not **THE WORD OF GOD**. Should it be inquired, how we may distinguish between the genuine books of Scripture and those which are apocryphal, we answer, that not only some, but all the books, contained in our authorized version of the Scriptures, have many or all of those evidences of a divine original, which have been insisted on: but there is not one of those called the *Apocrypha*, which may not be proved destitute of such evidence; and most of them contain internal proof that they are spurious.

The sacred writers often express themselves in language, taken from their own habits of life and the scenes with which they were conversant. Knowledge therefore, of various kinds, must be very advantageous, and in some instances necessary, in order fully to understand them: and the knowledge of eastern manners, and the local customs of the nations in that part of the world, is doubtless useful to an expositor, though not to that degree which many suppose. But I own I am *deliberately of opinion*, that what is called *Rabbinical learning*, is rather a *hinderance* than a *help* to the understanding of the sacred writings, in their spiritual meaning and practical import; and this conviction grows stronger, in proportion to the opportunity which I have had, in later years, of becoming more acquainted with it. The writers, as their predecessors of old did, "make void the commandment of God, that they may keep their own tradition."

We are, in the sacred Scriptures, addressed as rational creatures, endued with understanding; and as required to employ it, with diligence and earnestness, in deducing instruction, both doctrinal and practical, from what we read; "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." If we do not so value divine truth, as willingly to apply labour in "searching for it, as for hid treasure," revelation must be "a price put into the hands of a fool to get wisdom, who has no heart to it." A humble and teachable spirit is above all things requisite; for "except we receive" the testimony of God, concerning "the kingdom of heaven, as little children, we shall not enter into it." This will lead us to ask heavenly wisdom from God, by daily fervent prayer; and as "he giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not," we shall in this way "be made wise unto salvation;" and this will appear in our habitual conduct; for all our researches will be found vain, unless we endeavour to practise what we have already learned.

The Author of Revelation, "the Giver of every good and perfect gift," has endued men with talents, differing both in their nature and degree. He has also afforded some men far more advantages, by education, by leisure, and by opportunities for study, than others have. Some of these persons, in every age, are induced, by divine grace, to devote their endowments and advantages to the acquisition and communication of religious knowledge, for the benefit of those who are necessarily employed in another manner, whose talent is of another kind, whose time is otherwise occupied, and who need exciting to consider, and help in understanding, those things which belong to their eternal peace.

This is, especially, the object and service of the Christian ministry, when conscientiously and ably fulfilled. Men, previously endowed with suitable qualifications of mind and heart, by the great Source of all good, giving themselves up wholly to this one thing, become "mighty in the Scriptures," "scribes well instructed in the kingdom of God;" and are made useful, in divers ways, in calling the attention of mankind to the sacred Scriptures, and assisting them to understand the things contained in them, and in animating them to a correspondent tenor of conduct.

The bare reading of the Scriptures, no doubt, is frequently blessed to the souls of men, in making them "wise unto salvation," and few more egregious absurdities have by Antichrist been palmed upon mankind, than the persuasion, that unlearned men will learn heresy from the Scriptures, if put into their hand "without note or comment," or without some 'guard' to counteract the danger: yet commonly "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This is his appointed ordinance; and *general*, if not *universal*, experience and observation show,

that vital religion has uniformly prospered, in almost exact proportion to the measure in which the word of God, *unadulterated* and *unmutilated*, has been earnestly and publicly preached, by those persons whose disinterested labours and holy lives have "adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour," which they testified.

But though *oral* preaching is the grand means of promoting true religion, *written* preaching, (if I may be allowed the expression,) has been rendered exceedingly useful. A large proportion indeed of the Scriptures themselves, were occasional epistles or messages, sent to those whom the writers could not address by preaching; and many pious and eminent men, who died long since, still speak to us with great effect by the books which they left behind them.—Provided what is written is *truly scriptural*, the multiplication of religious books is not more justly a cause of complaint, than the increase of faithful ministers; and false or superficial religion is, at least, as likely to be disseminated from the pulpit, as from the press.

No method of conveying truth seems more advantageous than that of plain expository lectures on Scripture, with animated addresses to the heart and conscience. Now if this be allowed true in respect of preaching, it cannot be far otherwise in respect of writing. When the word of God is kept in sight, and the hearer or reader perceives that he is not amused with ingenious fancies or speculations, but instructed in the true meaning and import of the sacred oracles; an authority over his conscience may be exercised, beyond what can in any other way be obtained.

I would not be understood to depreciate *critical* comments of the Scripture these have an important use; yet *practical* expositions are more directly suited to edification. Indeed expositions of every kind may be perverted to bad purposes, by such persons as "wrest the Scriptures themselves to their own destruction;" but the pious, diligent, and impartial commentator is no more to be blamed for this, than the labour of the husbandman is to be considered as the cause of the intemperate use which men make of the productions of the earth. Indeed, if expositions, *really* and *fully* explaining the Scriptures, and not attempting to exalt human authority, learning, genius, tradition, reasoning, or conjecture, above the "sure testimony" and authoritative law of God; if such expositions were multiplied ten-fold, there would be no redundancy: unless some one had exhausted the subject, which in fact is inexhaustible; and unless this one comment was in every person's hands, and read by all. But as it is impossible that all men should hear the same preacher, so it is in the highest degree improbable that all men should read the same book.

The various, of men's minds, and their habits of thinking, are so various, that ministers of different endowments, who take diverse methods of delivering and enforcing the same truths, advantageously engage the attention of distinct descriptions of hearers. In like manner, some are suited with the style, method, and *peculiarity* of one writer; while others are more *varied* and profited by another, whose *peculiarity* is very different. Every man likewise has his connexions. Some will read, with candour and attention, what he writes, who have not so favourable a disposition towards others, who may be even of superior excellence. Thus some read one man's books, and some another's; and a few have leisure and inclination to read and profit by many of them: and so knowledge is dispersed, and it may reasonably be hoped that good is done.

There are indeed a considerable number of persons, who avowedly disparage all commentators and their labours, and profess to read the Scriptures alone. But if knowledge, in a variety of things, be useful, (not to say absolutely needful,) in order to understand the Scriptures, and to make the best application of them to practical purposes; and if these persons have not that knowledge, and despise the labours of those who have, it is not likely that they should make much proficiency, even in understanding the book to which they exclusively confine themselves. And surely a man, who has daily, and for a long course of years been traversing an intricate path through a forest, may, without arrogance, propose to give some useful directions and cautions, to those who are beginning to explore the same path. Nor would it savour either of wisdom or humility, if such persons should contemptuously refuse to avail themselves of the experience and observation of him, who had long traced and retraced the way; and determine to proceed on their journey, without a guide, or a chart of the road.

A man's main object indeed should be, to approve himself to God and to his own conscience, as to his motives and intentions in any undertaking; yet, when so many comments on the Scriptures are already extant, the bold undertaking of adding one more to them, may seem to require an apology. The preceding observations may properly introduce that of the Author. Experiencing the benefit and comfort arising from that measure of acquaintance with the sacred oracles with which he has been favoured, he longs that, were it possible, all others should enjoy the same felicity; and he would contribute, according to his ability, to promote so desirable an object.

It is in no degree the design of this publication, to detract from the merit of former commentators, or to intimate that any thing will here be added, which has never before been advanced: but the Author having for many years, made the Bible his daily and principal study; and having bestowed great pains to satisfy his own mind, as to the meaning of most parts of Scripture, and the practical use which should be made of them; and supposing also that his talent chiefly lies in speaking plainly and intelligibly to persons of ordinary capacity and information; he adopts this method of communicating his views of divine truth, in connexion with the Scriptures themselves, from which he has deduced them.

Some comments are far too learned for common people, and some too voluminous: while others are too compendious, to admit either any adequate explanation or application of the several subjects, which fall under consideration. Some are in very few hands, and not likely to be more generally read; and others, however excellent, are to numbers antiquated, though that fastidiousness which disrelishes the style and manner of

* Preface to the Book of Job.

† Notes, Lev. 1:5-9, 16:11-14.

former and perhaps better times. Were the present attempt therefore made almost entirely upon the plan of former expositions, it would not, if duly executed, be found supernumerary. But, in arranging old truths, the Author purposes to adopt something of a new method. Not indeed entirely *new*: for Browne's self-interpreting Bible suggested the idea, and the improvements in Doddridge's family-expositor of the New Testament, were proposed as, *in some respects*, models for imitation. He has often remarked, that some persons so confine their interpretation of Scripture to its meaning and use, with respect of those who were immediately addressed, as to leave the reader in doubt, whether he is at all concerned in it, or can derive any instruction from it: while others, so immediately and abruptly apply to the persons whom they address the passages which they undertake to explain and enforce, without inquiring whether they be, in character and situation, similar to those whom the prophets and apostles taught, warned, or encouraged; that their instructions seem rather more like an immediate revelation from God, than the explanation and practical improvement of a revelation given many ages ago. As this must be unsatisfactory to men of reflection, and as it is frequently connected with inattention to the primary meaning of the passage, (if it be not a fanciful misinterpretation of it,) many are ready to conclude, that the Scriptures have no precise meaning in themselves, but may be modelled almost to any thing, by men of lively imaginations and superior ingenuity. It therefore occurred to the Author, that one remedy of these evils, (if not the best remedy,) would be to keep the two parts distinct: and first to explain in the notes the primary meaning, as addressed to the writer's contemporaries; and then, in practical observations, to show what we may learn from each passage, allowing for all difference in circumstances, and in every other respect. It is indeed far more easy to form a plan of this kind, than duly to execute it; but this has been the purpose of the present attempt; and if some abler hand should, either in any portion of the sacred volume, or on the whole, more completely realize the idea, he cannot but think it would be found the best method of expounding Scripture. The applications of each chapter are entitled *Practical Observations*; not as excluding doctrine and experience, but as referring the whole to the practical effect on the heart and life. The reader must therefore expect, that the main object of the exposition is to lead him to the true meaning of the sacred Scriptures, his own concern in them, and the proper use which he ought to make of them in his edification, and that of others connected with him; without any attempt of the Author to give him information on a

variety of subjects, at most only collaterally connected with the right understanding and use of the Scripture.

When the Author published the first edition of this work, he proposed almost entirely to comment on the translation, without calling the reader's attention to the original languages: but during a course of thirty years, in which he has been almost constantly employed in this work, or in studies relative to it, he has turned a considerable share of his attention to those languages, and has ventured to deviate from his first design. He hopes, however, that he has done this with caution and diffidence; and in very few instances, in that measure which can perplex the unlearned reader, or interrupt his progress, or interfere with his edification. He has neither learning, nor leisure, nor inclination, to engage in merely critical discussions; and he has not gone into any investigations, concerning even chronology, history, or similar subjects, further than he thought subservient to the main design of the work.—The contents of each chapter are chiefly intended to assist the reader, in finding any subject which he wishes to consider.

Upon the whole, to store the understanding with the knowledge of divine truth, to awaken and direct the conscience, to effect and improve the heart, to promote the comfort and fruitfulness of true Christians, and to assist young students in divinity in acquiring those endowments which may qualify them for future usefulness, are the leading objects which the Author had in view, and which he hopes he has never lost sight of, from his first engaging in this work to the present day. He has therefore purposely avoided sharp and eager controversy, and studied exactness and consistency; choosing rather to follow the leadings of Scripture, than to press it into the service of a pre-established system; and preferring the satisfaction of promoting the edification of persons who differ in some things from each other, to the reputation of being exclusively the approved expositor of any party.

Whatever acceptance this work may find from man, the Author hopes to be satisfied with the testimony of his own conscience, and at length to meet the gracious approbation of his Saviour and Judge: and he would conclude with entreating the reader to join with him in praise and thanksgiving to God, who has spared and enabled him to bring this work to a conclusion, and to superintend so many editions of it; and in prayers, that he would pardon all that he has seen sinful in the writer, and prevent the bad effect of whatever may be erroneous in the publication; and also render what is true and right abundantly useful, by his special grace and blessing. To Him, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the God of our Salvation, be everlasting praise and glory. Amen.

POSTSCRIPT.

As the Marginal References formed no part of the original plan of this publication, but have, with very great labour, been added to the subsequent editions, it may be proper here to state some particulars respecting them.

They are arranged according to the following method :—Colons are used to separate figures referring to chapters, from those referring to verses, as *Gen.* 17:14 refers to the fourteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of *Genesis*. Sometimes chapters are referred to, without referring to particular verses, as *Lev.* 3: 24: 26: refers to the third, twenty-fourth, and twenty-sixth chapters of *Leviticus*. Commas are used to separate figures referring to verses from each other, as *Josh.* 3:2, 4, 26, 29. refers to the second, fourth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-eighth verses of the eighth chapter of *Joshua*. When a figure is found directly after the letter, which marks a new set of references, and not followed by a colon, it points to a verse in the same chapter; but when followed by a colon, it refers to a chapter in the same book; and afterwards, the references are made in the order of the books as they stand in the Bible. For example, the reference *r* to *Gen.* 31:28 stands thus :—*r* 55. 29:13. *Ex.* 4:27. *Ruth* 1:9, 14., &c. Here 55. refers to the 55th verse of the thirty-first chapter of *Genesis*; and 29:13. to *Gen.* 29:13. and so on in regular order. This method is invariably adhered to; and it has so many advantages, as abundantly to compensate any supposed disadvantages. Especially, it relieves the reader from perplexity, and prevents confusion by a regular arrangement; and it so greatly saves room, that more references may be adduced in a column very little crowded, than could on any other plan, by very much under-running. In pursuance to this plan, no more letters are used for marking any book, than are necessary clearly to distinguish it from all others: and as the prophecy of *Ezekiel* is referred to so much more frequently than the book of *Ezra*, the letters *Ez.* mark the former, and the latter is printed at full length. A little labour will render this easy and familiar to the reader.

The Author has availed himself of the pious labours of his predecessors, in selecting Marginal References; especially of the later Editions of the Oxford Bible in Quarto, of Mr. Browne's Bible, and Mr. Canne's; yet he has by no means taken their references as such: on the contrary he has omitted many (especially of the two latter,) which did not appear to bear on the subject, or to elucidate it; in numerous instances the references are entirely original, and in almost all many are so.—The degree of labour and attention which has been used to render the printing of the references correct, cannot easily be conceived: yet probably some errors still remain.

In some of the original references, the Author's idea may not at once be perceived by the reader: but, if the several places referred to be consulted, it will generally appear. He has sometimes proceeded by way of *contrast*, that the reader, by comparing the opposite characters or conduct of the persons mentioned, may more clearly perceive the excellency or evil of the case in question: or by comparing the different language of Scripture, used on the same subject, he may more readily see the true interpretation, especially on controverted subjects; or at least be better enabled to judge for himself.—The meaning of scriptural phrases may also be often fixed, by comparing the several places

where they are used. This is the intent of many sets of references; while others refer to the doctrine or promise inculcated in the passage, and tend to establish a scriptural interpretation. Where several sets of references are adduced on one verse, they are generally of the former kind.—Some pains have likewise been taken, even on those parts of Scripture which chiefly consist of names, to point out other passages, in which the same persons or places are mentioned; and to mark the difference in spelling the same name, or the different names for the same person or place which occur in different parts, and the different places and persons called by the same name. Sometimes the unlearned reader is perplexed or misled by these variations; and this part of the references often contains all which even the most learned know upon the subject, especially in the genealogies.

It is a great discouragement, in the laborious task of collecting marginal references, that it may be feared but few, in comparison, will take the pains to consult them: indeed many persons may not have leisure to do it, in every part, or fully. But though the Author had, for many years, previously studied the Scriptures as his one grand business; he can truly aver, that the insight which he has thus obtained into many parts, which before he had not so carefully noted, is so great, as abundantly to repay his labour, and to convince him, that, along with other means, (for none should be recommended exclusively,) consulting well selected marginal references forms one of the best helps for fixing the word of God in the memory, leading the mind to a just interpretation of it, and in many cases rendering it most affecting to the heart. It tends powerfully to counteract all skeptical doubts, when every part of Scripture is thus found, (like the stones in an arch,) to support and receive support from the rest, and to constitute one grand whole; the divine inspiration of which is proved by every prophecy or miracle, and all kinds of internal and external evidence. It serves also to satisfy the mind as to the meaning of disputed passages, when one sense is found manifestly to accord with the rest of the sacred word, and other interpretations evidently run contrary to them. And in many cases the Author has found a kind of delightful surprise at striking coincidences, which he had not before at all noticed.

To those who desire to study the Scriptures, accurately and deeply, (especially to young men, either intended for the sacred ministry, or newly engaged in it,) he would very earnestly recommend to set apart an hour, or half an hour, every day, when it can be done; and regularly to go through the Scriptures, carefully consulting all the references.—When it is considered, that the Author has for eight or nine years, spent at least three as much time each day in arranging them; this will not appear unreasonable to those who favour his attempts: and he has no doubt, that it will eventually be found amply to repay their labour.

He would also advise those who only occasionally consult the references, to examine all referred to under any one letter: for very frequently, those from the Old Testament are principally adduced, to make way for some still more pertinent in the New to show the coincidence of both Testaments; and to point out similar language concerning *JEHOVAH* in the one, and *JESUS* in the other; and in various ways to prove, that the same doctrine pervades the whole.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE LONDON STEREOTYPE EDITION.

THE following is a brief account of the principal points in which the present edition differs from the preceding.

1. In the present edition, it is in *stereotype*. To this laborious and expensive process it was submitted under the conviction, (which has proved too well founded,) that it was the last which the revered Author would be able to superintend. From the great pains also, with which it was determined that the revision in every part should be conducted, it was anticipated that this edition might deserve, by its *accuracy*, the distinction thus conferred upon it, of being rendered permanent and nearly unalterable. And though, in the course of so long a work, it is scarcely possible but that some errors should have escaped detection, it is confidently hoped, that, upon the whole, this expectation has been realized.—It may be added, that should any mistakes be discovered of sufficient consequence to require it, the plates are not so unalterable as to render the correction impracticable.

2. As Bishop Horsley some time since pointed out in the substitution of "*thy* doctrine" for "*the* doctrine," 1 *Tim.* 4:16. and as has been subsequently shown concerning the change of the stop, from a full-point to a colon or semicolon, at the close of the verse, *Heb.* 13:7. sundry small variations have, during the lapse of two centuries, crept into our common Bibles. Hence considerable pains have been taken, by the collation of different editions, to exhibit an accurate copy of the sacred text according to the authorized version.

3. Not only have the Marginal References throughout been revised with the utmost care, but it will be found that the Author has inserted, in the Notes and Practical Observations, frequent references to other parts of his Commentary. To this improvement he attached considerable importance: and its value will, no doubt, be felt by those readers, who may bestow sufficient pains upon the subject to enter into his design.—The student may be advantageously referred to the Book of Proverbs for a specimen of this addition to the work

4. But the most important improvement which has been received, consists in the copious critical remarks which have been introduced. Many of these occur in the Old Testament, in all which the original words, in Hebrew characters, have been substituted for the English letters, by which they had been before expressed, wherever any thing of the kind occurred. In the New Testament these remarks are numerous. Here also new authorities are adduced in support of the criticisms which had been previously made, particularly from Schleusner, to whose valuable *Lexicon* of the Greek Testament the Author was indebted for much assistance.—The critical remarks, it is also to be observed, are now uniformly carried to the end of the note, instead of being interspersed in the body of it.

5. It must be matter of great thankfulness to those who rightly appreciate the Author's indefatigable labours, that the full energy of his mind was continued almost to the last hour of his life; and that he was enabled to complete his revision as far as the end of 2 *Timothy* 3:2. Several alterations indeed will be found, and some of them of considerable importance, in parts posterior to the verse just named. These, however, have not been made without authority; but are taken, according to the Author's directions, from a copy of the last edition, which he read over soon after its publication, making such corrections as occurred.—The critical remarks also, contained in the former edition, have been, to the close, arranged, as nearly as possible, according to the plan adopted in the preceding parts of the work.

In consequence of the additions, which have been made in almost every part, and the necessity which existed of reducing the size of the overloaded pages to the proper dimensions, the bulk, as well as the intrinsic value of the work, will be found to have been considerably increased; which in connexion with other circumstances, has rendered some advance of the price unavoidable.

March 22, 1822.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

OLD TESTAMENT, AND TO THE BOOKS OF MOSES.

It does not appear that the distinction of the two parts of the sacred Scripture by the appellations of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is of divine authority ; though it is of very ancient use in the Christian Church. The original word, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, rendered *Testament*, in this connexion is more generally rendered *Covenant*, and perhaps ought always to be so.* It refers to the condescending manner in which it has pleased God to deal with men, by covenant transactions and engagements, and not merely by commands and sanctions. The *covenant of works*, as distinguished from the *covenant of grace*, does not seem to be intended by "the Old Testament;" for the covenant of grace and mercy was introduced immediately after the fall of Adam, by the promise that "the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head:" the hopes of believers in every age have arisen from that source alone : and all unbelievers, even under the Christian Dispensation, remain under the condemnation of that covenant which Adam transgressed ; the terms of which are simply, 'Do this and live ; transgress and die.'—But of the covenant of mercy and grace, there have been, so to speak, several editions ; yet that which Christianity has made known to mankind, is by far the most full, clear, and enlarged. Above four hundred years after God had established his covenant with Abraham, as 'the father of the faithful,' (which the apostle refers to, as the same in substance as that made with Christians under the gospel,†) it pleased him to make a covenant with Israel, as a nation, at mount Sinai. The Mosaical dispensation, and the writings of the prophets, chiefly related to that period during which this national covenant was in force ; and the prophets themselves speak of the change, which would take place in the days of the Messiah. as "a new covenant," distinguishing it from that which was made with Israel when brought out of Egypt. This, St. Paul says, "waxed old, and was ready to vanish away."‡—At the opening of the Christian dispensation, these predictions were fulfilled : and as the writings of the apostles and evangelists relate principally to the dealings of God with his church, in the days of the Messiah, the "Mediator of the new covenant ;" this part of the sacred volume has received the appellation of 'the New Testament,' or *New Covenant* ; and that part which was published before his coming, is called the Old Testament, or Covenant.—Thus they are distinguished from, but are by no means opposed to, each other. The same discoveries of the glorious God, and the same views of true religion, pervade both. They reciprocally establish the authority and illustrate the

meaning of each other : and even those parts of the Mosaic Law, which we are not now required to obey as commands, are replete with important instruction.—In short, the whole is the unerring Word of God.

The Preface to each of the books of Moses, with which the sacred Volume opens, renders it superfluous to add much in this place respecting them collectively. They are generally in the New Testament, as well as in uninspired writers, called "the Law ;" as distinguished from the other parts of the Old Testament. Yet a great proportion of them is historical ; they contain several most extraordinary prophecies ;* and some devotional compositions, exquisitely sublime and beautiful.† If the single book of Job be excepted, (and concerning it there are different opinions,‡) the books of Moses are, beyond comparison, the most ancient writings extant ; and certainly by far the most ancient authentic records. Immediate revelation alone could make known to the writer, or to those from whom he had his information, very many of those events which he records ; and on this account, the Author of this publication is at least doubtful whether the endeavours, which many persons have used, to show how, by tradition or other similar means, Moses might receive the knowledge of the facts which he narrates, are of salutary tendency. For instance, Adam could not know the particulars of the creation of the world, or of his own creation, except by immediate revelation. Adam might indeed make these things known to Methusaleh, Methusaleh to Shem, Shem to Isaac, Isaac to Levi, or Amram, and Amram to Moses : I am not sure that the chain might not be made shorter, by a link or two. But does it strengthen, or does it not rather greatly weaken, the proof, or rather the impression, of the divine original of the Mosaic History, to suppose that it was derived from traditional revelation, handed down from father to son, through a few generations, rather than from a revelation made directly from God to Moses ? Nothing is conveyed down by oral tradition, without alteration and deviation : Moses informs us, that "God spake with him face to face :‡" the prophecies extant in his books, compared with their accomplishment during three thousand years, as fully confirm his testimony to us, as his miracles did to his contemporaries : and the simplest as well as the most ancient method of stating the case, is the most rational. Whatever he might have known or collected otherwise, he wrote under the infallible superintendency of the Holy Spirit, or by immediate divine inspiration.

* Note, Heb. 9:15–17. † Notes, Gal. 3:15–23. ‡ Notes Ex. 19:5. Jer. 31:31–34. Hel. 8:7,13.

* Notes, Gen. 9:24–27. 12:1–3. 16:12. 27:27–29. 49:8–12. Num. 24:13–24. Deut. 4:25–28. 28:15–68. † Notes, Ex. 15:1–21. Deut. 32:1–43. ‡ Preface to Book of Job.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

GENESIS.

THE original Hebrew distinguishes this Book merely by the first word of it, viz. בְּרֵאשִׁית, or *In the beginning*: but the Greek translation, called the Septuagint, names it *GENESIS, The Beginning, or Original*; that is of *the world*.—The sacred historian first records the creation of the heaven and the earth, the formation of Adam and Eve after the image of God, and the institution of marriage. He then relates how “sin entered into the world, and death by sin;” and how the first promise of a Redeemer was given to our fallen progenitors.—He next illustrates the effects of the fall; which were manifested in the conduct of Cain, who murdered righteous Abel his brother, and in the general and almost universal prevalence of wickedness; and he likewise illustrates the power of divine grace in the examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah.—A few hints are dropped concerning some of Cain’s descendants, and their inventions and actions; but a genealogy of the descendants of Seth to Noah, with the age to which each person lived who is mentioned in the genealogy, is carefully given.—At length, at the end of 1656 years, the Lord, provoked by man’s wickedness, desolated the earth by a flood of waters, preserving his servant Noah and his wife, with his three sons and their wives, in the ark; of which extraordinary catastrophe all nations retain some traditions and vestiges. The re-peopling of the earth by the descendants of Noah’s sons is next recorded; and the genealogy is continued from Shem, in the line of Abraham, to Jacob and his sons.—Indeed, this narrative, though very compendious, throws more light on the original of nations and on many coincident subjects, than can be obtained from all other records of antiquity taken together: and its agreement with such as have the greatest claim to authenticity, conclusively proves that it gives a true account of those ancient times, which the pagan historians had only heard of by obscure tradition, and which they mutilated, or blended with most absurd fables; while the interspersed prophecies, fulfilling through all succeeding generations even to the present day, fully attest its divine inspiration. (Notes, 12: 1—3. 48: 49.) Many particulars indeed, in this part of the history, must be beyond the investigation of the unlearned: but the founding of Nineveh and Babylon, two of the greatest cities the world ever saw; the source of the vast variety of languages, which has in all ages interrupted the intercourse of mankind; and the original of the two most remarkable people which have ever appeared on earth, namely, the Jews and the Ishmaelites, are clearly and satisfactorily shown. Important information is also given concerning the Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites, Edomites or Idumeans, all descended from Abraham. The most ancient war known to genuine history is here recorded: and the awful destruction of Sodom and the neighbouring cities, as producing the Dead Sea, the peculiarities of which have always excited the attention of travellers.—The mass of interesting historical materials contained in this wonderful Book, concerning those remote ages of which we have no other even plausible records, must ever render it an invaluable treasure of ancient erudition to the sober scholar. But the copiousness with which the history of Abraham, “the father of the faithful,” the repository of the promises, and the ancestor of Christ, is given, with that of Isaac and Jacob the heirs of the same promises, shows what is deemed most important by him, whose “judgment is according to truth;” and the story of Joseph exceeds applause, being inimitably written, and unparalleled in the annals of the world.—The impartiality also of the sacred historian, in recording the imperfections of the most approved characters, though his own ancestors; and the strong expressions of abhorrence, with which he marks the crime of his immediate progenitor Levi, are worthy of an inspired writer, and hitherto almost entirely peculiar to the Scriptures. The narrative is thus continued to the death of Joseph, about 713 years after the deluge, or 2369 from the creation. And the important religious instruction contained in this book, concerning God our Creator, our fallen condition, the promise of a Saviour, and the redeemed sinner’s walk with God, must more endear it to the pious Christian, than all its immense and invaluable literary treasures can possibly recommend it to the learned antiquary or historian.—“Without this history the world would be in total darkness, not knowing whence it came or whither it goeth. In the first page of this sacred book, a child may learn more in one hour, than all the philosophers in the world learned without it in thousands of years.” Fuller.

B. C. 4004.

CHAPTER I.

God creates heaven and earth, 1; joins the light, and the firmament, 2—3; separates the dry land from the waters, and produces the vegetable tribes, 9—13; forms the sun, moon, and stars, 14—19; causes the waters to produce fishes and fowls; and the earth to bring forth cattle, wild beasts, and creeping things, 20—25; creates man in his own image; blesses him; gives him dominion; grants the fruits of the earth for food; and pronounces the whole “very good,” 26—31.

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

a Prov. 8:22, 23. John 1:1—3. Heb. 1:10. 1 John 1:1. b Job 38:4. Ps. 89:11, 12. 102:25. 146:4, 5. Is. 40:26. 42:5. 44:24. 51:13. Jer. 32:17. 51:15. Zech. 12:1. Acts 14:15. 17:24. Rom. 1:20. Col. 1:16. Heb. 3:4. 11:3. Rev. 4:11.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. It is natural and unavoidable for us, who are but of yesterday, to inquire about those things which have been before us, and to form conjectures even about the original of all things: but our reason is evidently incompetent to inquiries of this kind; and uncertainty, contrariety, and absurdity, always bewildered the wisest of the heathens on this subject. However rational it is to conclude, that all things were at first created by the eternal, self-existent, and almighty God, yet man has in every age lamentably failed of drawing this conclusion: and after all, it is “by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things, which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.” Heb. 11: 3. Reason is indeed capable of approving, appropriating, and applying, the information conveyed to us by the word of God, but not of anticipating it. The knowledge imparted by revelation is useful and necessary; but nothing is mentioned about “eternity *a parte ante*,” (a past eternity,) that abyss which swallows up all our thought, and involves all our reflections and discourse in inextricable perplexity; for this could only have gratified curiosity, and increased our stock of barren notions. The Scriptures, in perfect harmony with the conclusions of our reason when soberly exercised, declare that God is “from everlasting to everlasting.” (M. R. Note, Ex. 3: 14.) All else had a beginning. With this the inspired historian opens his narration, and, in most sublime abruptness, breaks forth, “In the beginning;” as if he had said, “This, O man, is enough for thee to know; here stop thy presumptuous inquiry; call back thy intruding thoughts from things too high for thee, and learn to adore thy Creator.”—The Scriptures are especially intended to teach us “the knowledge of God,” which is done, in the manner best suited to inform and affect us, by recording his works. From the creation of the world, we learn “his eternal power and

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2 And the earth was “without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep:” and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 ¶ And God said, “Let there be light: and there was light.”

4 And God saw the light, “that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”

10:6. c Jer. 4:3. Nah. 2:10. d Job 26:13. Ps. 33:6. 104:30. Is. 40:12, 13. e Ps. 33:9. Matt. 8:3. John 11:43, 41. f 2 Cor. 4:6. Eph. 5:14. g 10:12, 18, 25, 31. Ec. 2:13. 11:7. * Heb. *Between the light and between the darkness.*

Godhead;” and discern, in the things which he hath made, his infinite wisdom and goodness: while the simplicity and harmony, subsisting in the midst of the richest variety, lead the mind in the easiest manner, to conceive of the Creator, as “the ONE LIVING and TRUE God.”—It is well known that the original word, commonly translated God, is plural, in a language which has three numbers; and that *when thus used* it is joined to singular verbs. The Hebrew seems to have been at least a dialect of the original language; and it is evident that the Lord made choice of it, for the first written revelation of himself to man: so that this grammatical anomaly, at the very opening of the Scriptures, seems intended to give us some intimation concerning that mystery, which is afterwards more fully revealed; namely, the *Plurality in the Unity* of the Godhead. It would indeed be improper to rest a doctrine, which is of such importance in the Christian system, on these intimations; yet this should not be rejected as a mere verbal criticism.—God created the heaven and the earth, or the whole universe, visible and invisible. The word *heaven* is sometimes used in Scripture for that place, where the divine glory is especially displayed, and where angels and happy spirits have their residence; at other times for the boundless expanse, in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed; and at others for the circumambient air, even to the very surface of the earth; it must therefore be interpreted as the context requires.—This general account warrants no conclusions respecting the angels, or the inhabitants of other systems, except that they are all the creatures of God. But this visible world was formed in six days. The chaotic mass seems to have been first instantaneously created out of nothing, and then gradually reduced to order and beauty.

V. 2. The matter, from which this earth, and the solar system connected with it, were created, was at first a confused mass of component elements, *without form; and void,*

5 And God called the light ¹Day, and the darkness he called Night. ²And the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 ¹And God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and ¹divided the waters which *were* under the firmament, from the waters which *were* ²above the firmament: ³and it was so.

8 And ¹God called the firmament Heaven: And the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 ¹And God said, ²'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry-land appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry-land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: ³and God saw that *it was good*.

11 And God said, ¹'Let the earth bring forth ²grass, the herb yielding seed, ³and the fruit-tree yielding ⁴fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 And ¹the earth brought forth grass, ²and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 ¹And God said, ²'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide ³the day from the night: ⁴and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light ¹to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: ²he made the stars also.

17 And God ¹set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth;

18 And to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that *it was good*.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 And God blessed the fourth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

21 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

22 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

23 And God blessed the fifth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

24 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

25 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

26 And God blessed the sixth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

27 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

28 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

29 And God blessed the seventh day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

30 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

31 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

32 And God blessed the eighth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

33 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

34 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

35 And God blessed the ninth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

36 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

37 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

38 And God blessed the tenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

39 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

40 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

41 And God blessed the eleventh day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

42 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

43 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

44 And God blessed the twelfth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

45 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

46 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

47 And God blessed the thirteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

48 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

49 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

50 And God blessed the fourteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

51 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

52 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

53 And God blessed the fifteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

54 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

55 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

56 And God blessed the sixteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

57 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

58 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

59 And God blessed the seventeenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

60 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

61 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

62 And God blessed the eighteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

63 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

64 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

65 And God blessed the nineteenth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

66 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

67 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

68 And God blessed the twentieth day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

69 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

70 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

71 And God blessed the twenty-first day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

72 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

73 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

74 And God blessed the twenty-second day, and said, ¹Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth:

75 And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

76 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

1. Ps. 74:16, 104:20, 145:7. * Heb. And the evening was, and the morning was. 8:13, 19:23, 31:14, 20:11, 1:14, 20:11, 1:12, Job 37:11—18, 38:22—26, Jer. 10:13. † Heb. expansion. 1 Prov. 8:23, 29:1, Job 28:8, Ps. 104:10—13, 148:1, Ec. 1:13, m 9:11, 15:24, Matt. 8:27, n 5:10, 5:2, 32:28, o 5:13, p Job 26:10, 38:8—11, Ps. 24:2, 3:17, 95:5, 104:3, 5—9, 135:6, 1 Prov. 8:24, 29, Jer. 5:22, 2 Pet. 3:5, Rev. 10:6, q 4, Deut. 32:4, Ps. 104:31, r 2:5, Job 26:5, Ps. 104:11—17, 147:8, Matt. 6:30, Heb. 6:7, 1 Heb. tender grass. s 29:16, Matt. 7:17, Luke 6:43, 41, Jam. 3:12, 1 Ps. 61:

empty, or destitute of plants, trees, or animals; and it was covered with thick darkness resting on the abyss, or the unformed chaos, till dispersed by the agency of "the Spirit of God," to which the subsequent effects are ascribed, by a remarkable word, taken from the manner in which the fowls brood on and hatch their eggs. Thus, at the very first opening of the Sacred Volume, we have an intimation of that divine Spirit, whose influence and operations form so conspicuous and distinguishing a part of Revelation: for, as the efficient cause of the creation, "He moved upon the surface of the waters."—Let the impartial reader here turn his attention to those texts of the New Testament, which expressly ascribe all creation to Jesus Christ, the Son and Word of God, and, comparing them with this account of the agency of the Spirit in creation, and with those Scriptures which declare that God created all things; he must allow, that, from the beginning of the Bible, there is a real foundation for the doctrine of three divine Persons in the unity of the Godhead.

V. 3—5. The sublimity of the language, here used, has been universally admired by men of learning and taste; and indeed the simplicity of the whole narrative is unspeakably more majestic, than those studied ornaments which are generally employed and admired.—Before the formation of the sun, moon, and stars, there was, in some way which we cannot explain or understand, a regular succession of light and darkness on the chaotic *mass*, which thus measured out "the first day." "God saw the light that it was good;" good in itself, and admirably adapted to the benefit of his creatures. How wonderful and inexplicable is light! How indispensably necessary to all the purposes of human life.

V. 6—8. The word, translated *firmament*, and *expansion*, (*Marg.*) is used for the whole space which surrounds the earth, even to the fixed stars, which are "set in the firmament of heaven;" as "the fowls" are said "to fly in the open firmament of heaven;" and "he called the firmament, heaven." It must therefore be understood according to the context; but it is generally in this place interpreted to mean the atmosphere, or air, in which the clouds are suspended, and from which they water the earth.

V. 9. The waters, being separated from the dry ground, which they had hitherto overspread, or been mixed with, were divided into those "under the firmament," which are deposited in the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, brooks, fountains, and subterraneous receptacles; and those "above the firmament," which are suspended in the air, form the clouds, and descend in rains and dews.—Instead of attempting a further explanation of the terms here used, I would rather call the reader's attention to the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, displayed in this part of creation. In the vast reservoir of the oceans and seas, the waters are treasured up, being preserved from putridity by their saltness and incessant motion. These facilitate commerce and friendly intercourse betwixt distant nations, supply immense quantities of wholesome provisions, and are in many ways serviceable to mankind. From them originally, by various modes of conveyance, the whole earth is supplied with water, which is rendered fresh and fit for use, and communicated in the gentlest method. With this all living creatures "quench their thirst;" by this the surface of the earth is thus rendered fertile, and all the purposes of cleanliness are answered; and the same waters, continually returning to the sea, by brooks and rivers, enrich and beautify the adjacent countries, and confer manifold benefits upon mankind through the whole of their course.

V. 10. It is observable that God himself gave names to

12 And ¹the earth brought forth grass, ²and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 ¹And God said, ²'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide ³the day from the night: ⁴and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light ¹to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: ²he made the stars also.

17 And God ¹set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth;

18 And to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that *it was good*.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

11. Mark 4:28, o Is. 55:10, 11, Matt. 13:24, 25, 2 Cor. 9:10, Gal. 6:7, x Job 25:3, 5, 38:13—14, 1 s. 8:3, 1. 19:1—6, 7:16, 17, 10:19, 20, 119:9, 13:7—9, 148:4—6, Is. 40:26, Jer. 31:35, 33:20, 25, s Heb. between the day and between the night, y 8:22, † Heb. for the rule of the day, &c, z Deut. 4:19, Josh. 10:12—14, Job 31:26—28, Is. 13:10, 24:23, 45:7, Ez. 32:7, 8, Joel 2:10, 31, 3:15, Am. 5:8, 6:9, 11ab, 3:11, Matt. 24:29, 27:45, Acts 2:20, Rev. 16:9, 21:23, a 9:13, Ps. 8:1, Acts 13:47.

those creatures, over which Adam could not exercise dominion; but left him to give names to the rest.—Without doubt, the original names were expressive of the nature of the creatures.

V. 11, 12. Hitherto the whole was inert and lifeless; but the vegetable system was next produced, in all its varied and numerous tribes, for the use of man and beast: and each was created with the surprising power of propagating, and multiplying almost infinitely, its peculiar species, by seeds, often very minute, and scarcely discernible from each other; and yet never failing to produce plants of the same species as those from which they sprang, each after his kind! 'God has secured the seeds of all plants with singular care; some of them being defended by a double, nay, a triple inclosure.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Thus creation is still carried on from year to year; and, in an incomprehensible manner, the earth is filled with the riches and liberality of the Lord!

V. 14—19. By the word of the omnipotent Creator the light was, as it were, treasured up in the heavenly orbs, (as water is in the seas;) and with it warmth and fertility have ever since been conveyed to the different regions of the globe: while, by the regular circuits of the celestial bodies, time is measured out for our convenience in various respects. 'By times are meant the spring, summer, autumn, and winter; and by consequence, the seasons for ploughing, sowing, planting, pruning, reaping, vintage, sailing; and by a swift motion round in twenty-four hours, to make a day; and by a longer to make years, and the grateful variety of seasons.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The moon is undoubtedly an opaque body, much smaller than the primary planets; and it is with great probability supposed, that the fixed stars are lights themselves, immensely large: yet the moon is here called a *great light* in distinction from the stars; which proves that the sacred writers were not inspired to speak of natural things with philosophical exactness; but were left to use popular language, and to discourse of them according to their appearance. As a light to us, with reference to whom the sacred writer speaks, the moon is greater than the stars: and indeed a modern Astronomer, when not purposely expressing himself *scientifically*, would use similar language. Ignorance or error in these respects is not fatal, and the most exact knowledge is comparatively of small value: "Unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, is understanding." *Job* 28:28.

V. 20—25. The earth reduced to order and beauty, replenished with vegetable treasures, and lighted up with unspeakable splendour, had yet remained destitute of inhabitants: but in these verses we have a concise account of the formation of the various species of animals which inhabit the waters, the air, and the dry land. The similarity between fishes and birds, in the general manner of producing their young, and moving in their respective elements, is supposed to mark the common original of both from the waters. (21:9.) The word rendered *whales* may include all the large inhabitants of seas and rivers.—A very superficial acquaintance with the numerous tribes of animals, of different sizes, immensely large, or invisibly minute; their distinct modes of existence, in different elements and on different sustenance; the surprising exactness and kind contrivance, with which the organized body in every species is formed; and the various ways in which they subserve the use and pleasure of man; may suffice to show us that we have abundant reason to admire and adore the great Creator; while the nature of life itself, and its production, continuance, and propagation, in every distinct species, forms a very proper subject for our speculations, if we would be con-

20 ¶ And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

b 2:2, 2:19, 8:17, 1s. 10:1, 24:25, 148:10. Acts 17:25. * Or, creeping. 1 Kings 4:33. 1 Heb. a living soul. 30. Ec. 3:21. 1 Heb. let fowl fly. § Heb. face of the firmament of heaven. 7:14. c Job 7:12, 28:5. Ps. 104:26. Ec. 32:2. Jon. 1:17, 2:10. Matt. 12:40. d 8:17, 9:7. Ex. 1:7, 8:3. e 18:26, 31. f 28: 8:17.

vinced how incomprehensible the works of God are, and how ignorant man is.—The great Creator had no occasion minutely to enumerate his works, in order to display his glory; though we may properly descend to the minute investigation of them. There is therefore no particular mention here made of many things, which are to us of the greatest importance. The air, which modern experiments have evinced to be of absolute necessity to animal and vegetable life, and in which surprising traces of divine wisdom and goodness are discovered, is not particularly mentioned; though doubtless it is implied in the general term *expansion*. (6. *Marg.*) While the surface of the earth is constantly replenished with vegetable riches, and inhabited by useful animals; underneath it most valuable treasures are stored up, placed thus out of our way, but not out of our reach. "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

V. 26, 27. The language here used, is that of *consultation*, and not of *deliberation* only; and it intimates far more than the superior excellency and dignity of the creature about to be formed. It is not to be conceived, that the infinite God, by speaking in the plural number, should employ a language assumed by many princes: which is indeed, as thus used, more ostentatious than dignified. But it is still more intolerable to suppose, that the eternal God addressed any of his own creatures, as fellow-workers with him in the creation of man. Yet these seem the only expedients for interpreting this language, which can be adopted, by those who allow the divine inspiration of the whole Scripture, and still refuse their assent to the doctrine of the Trinity: whereas, admit this doctrine to be scriptural, and the expressions are suitable, natural, and need little explanation. The three Persons in the sacred Trinity at first concurred, in counsel and operation, in the creation of man, as afterwards in his recovery from the fall. And let it not be said, that, in avoiding one difficulty, we run ourselves into another and a greater; for it can never be shown impossible, that the same infinite Being should be *Three* in one respect, and *One* in another. We know, and it is absurd to deny it, that the soul and body are distinct substances; yet they form one man, who is *two* in one respect, and *one* in another: but who can comprehend the bond of union betwixt his own soul and body, or explain how they mutually operate on each other? And if we are incomprehensible to ourselves, how should it be possible for us to comprehend our great Creator? This indeed seems the limitation of human knowledge: by experiments the natural philosopher discovers, that things are so, and have such and such properties and powers; but *how* and *why* they are so and operate as they do, remains still an impenetrable secret. The process of nature in vegetation, from a grain of corn being cast in the earth until the gathering of harvest, is no more comprehensible by us than the doctrine of the Trinity; and he who will believe no more than he can comprehend, must, to be consistent, question his own existence. The authenticated testimony of God is surely as sufficient to establish the doctrine, as to its truth and certainty, in matters of revelation, as experiments are to establish the *fact* in philosophy; and the *manner how* is no more matter of faith in the one case, than of science in the other; nor are the difficulties greater, except as infinity exceeds the grasp of our finite capacities.

The great Creator said, "Let us make man, in our image, after our likeness." The expression is doubled and varied, that it may the more engage our attention, and ensure our belief. This image and likeness of God cannot be in the body; for God is a Spirit, which no bodily shape can in any respect resemble. We must therefore look for it in the rational soul. Even in the present state of human nature, the soul of man bears some faint resemblance to its Maker: the understanding, memory, and imagination, in their several operations, exhibit a faint shadow of the divine wisdom and knowledge; the will, as exciting and directing our activity in all respects, bears a similitude to the almighty effects of the divine volitions, and shows that *mind* can act on *matter* in some inexplicable manner: nay, conscience, in the exercise of her dictatorial and judicial functions, gives a feeble reflection of the justice and holiness of the Judge of all: whilst the derived and dependent immortality of the human soul reminds us of Him who is self-existent and eternal. But fallen angels, who possess these

24 ¶ And God said, ¶ Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind: and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

26 ¶ And God said, ¶ Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

9:1, 20:27, 30, 35:11. Lev. 26:9. Ps. 107:38. g 6:20, 7:14, 8:19. Job 38:39, 40, 39: 1, 5, 9, 19, 40:15. Ps. 50:9, 10, 104:18—23, 118:10. h 2:19, 20. Job 12:8—10, 26:13. i 3:22, 11:7. John 5:17, 14:23. k 5:1, 9:6. Ec. 7:29. Acts 17:29, 29, 1 Cor. 11:7, 2 Cor. 3:18. 4. l 1 ph. 4:24. Col. 1:15, 8:10. Jam. 3:9, 19:2, 3. Job 5:23. Ps. 8:

powers in a higher degree, are never said to bear the image of God; and few places in Scripture can be fairly interpreted of fallen man's being like his Maker till renewed by divine grace.

There must then be a nobler sense, in which Adam was formed in the image and likeness of God.—No adequate conception indeed can be formed of man's primeval state and powers, from the brief account given of him in Scripture. But we may also avail ourselves of the revelation given us, concerning the moral attributes of God; we may contemplate the character of Jesus Christ, who in human nature displayed the divine image in full perfection; we may examine the moral law which describes, and the Christian's character, which, being "renewed in knowledge," "righteousness, and true holiness," exemplifies the image of God. And the expression *renewed*, implies that it is the same image which sin had defaced. (*M.R.*) From these sources of information satisfactory conclusions may be deduced. God alone can have perfect, infallible, immutable knowledge; but Adam was created after the divine image, both in the capacity of receiving, and in the disposition of heart to entertain, true knowledge; and he actually possessed, from the gift of God, a right understanding and a competent knowledge of his Creator, of himself, of his own situation, his duty, his interests, his obligations to obedience, and the odious nature and evil consequences of disobedience.—In these and similar concerns, we may be assured, that he knew and judged according to the knowledge and judgment of his Maker; though not infallibly or immutably.—Resulting from this state of his understanding and judgment, he doubtless possessed a disposition to value or condemn, to approve or disapprove, to love or detest, every object which presented itself to his mind, according to its real excellency, worthlessness, or hatefulness.—In such a state of the heart, that is, of the judgment, will and affections, the divine image evidently must consist: and we may thence certainly infer, that in these things Adam resembled his Maker. Knowledge in a creature must be limited; error may follow, and thence a change of judgment and heart may be induced; that is, a holy creature may fall, and become unholy; but imperfection in the original disposition of the heart, supposes the creature to be formed unholy, and is inconsistent with its being created after the image of God.—We determine then, that the image of God, in which Adam was created, consisted in an understanding prepared to imbibе true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affections regulated according to reason and truth; nor can we conceive that it could consist in any thing else. From such a state of mind, godliness, in all its internal exercises and external expressions, righteousness, truth, benevolence, purity, and an exact regulation and government of every appetite and passion, must necessarily result, and every duty to God and man be constantly and delightfully performed. The same disposition would ensure belief of every truth which God should afterwards reveal, obedience to every precept which he should enjoin, a cordial acceptance of every proposal which he should make, and admiration of every discovery of the divine glory at any time vouchsafed: and could it have been possible for man to sin, without losing the divine image, it would have disposed him to repent: and with faith, love, and joy, to receive the Mediator in whom believers trust; and to exercise all those graces, and practise all those duties which spring from the character of a redeemed sinner.—Man, thus created in the divine image, was constituted ruler over the other creatures. This dominion has been frequently termed a part of the divine image: but it seems more natural, to consider the capacity for exercising dominion as the result of that image; and that the actual grant of dominion was made to man, in consequence of that capacity, and as shadowing forth the sovereignty of God over all his works. The subjection of the animals, had not sin entered, would doubtless have been far more entire and voluntary, and the exercise of man's authority far more benign and gentle, than they are at present. For man is now, too generally, a severe tyrant over the animals, which are within his reach and under his power; and many creatures seem to have shaken off, or fled from, his abused dominion.

V. 28. It appears from this verse, that both the man and the woman were created on the sixth day; and that the subsequent account is only a more circumstantial recapitulation

CHAPTER II.

27 So God created man in his *own* image; in the image of God created he him; "male and female created he them.

28 And "God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that "moveth upon the earth.

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb "bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: "to you it shall be for meat.

30 And "to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* "very good. "And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

4-8. 104:20-24. Jer. 27:6. Heb. 2:6-9. Jam. 3:7. m 2:21-25. 5:2. Mal. 3:15. Matt. 19:4. Mark 10:6. 1 Cor. 11:8,9. n 2:2. 9:17. 13:16,20. 22:17,8. 24:6. 30:3,4,34. 33:5. 49:25. 1 Jer. 26:9. 1 Chr. 26:5. Ps. 127:3-5. 128:3,4. 1 Tim. 4:3. " Heb. creepeth. Ps. 69:34. marg. o Ps. 21:1. 115:16. Hos. 2:8. Acts 17:24,25. 1 Tim. 6:17. " Heb. seed-bearing. p 16. 9:3. Job 36:31. Ps. 104:27,28. 136:25. 145:15,16. 117:9. Acts 1:17. q Job. 38:28-41. 39:4,8,30. 40:15,20. " Heb. a tree yielding seed. r Job 35:7. Ps. 19:1,2. 104:24,31. 1 Tim. 4:4. s 5:8,13,19.

of the interesting event.—The beneficent Creator, having formed them with capacities for enjoyment, and furnished them with all things externally conducive to it, assured them of his favour and blessing, to consummate their felicity and secure its continuance; and it is probable Adam was taught to expect, that, after a term of probation upon earth, he and his descendants, if they persevered in obedience, would be translated into heaven, or favoured with some confirmation in happiness equivalent to it. The increase of the human species formed a part of the Creator's benediction; and, had not sin entered, it would have been a progressive communication and multiplication of endless felicity.—In this method creation is still carried on, and the divine perfections are exercised and displayed in the continuance, as well as in the first production, of the creatures; though the former excites little surprise, because custom leads us to expect it.

V. 29, 30. Our wants and inclinations give us no right to use the creatures of God, however suitable they may be to supply and gratify them: the grant of the great Proprietor alone confers it. In this grant the animals are joined, as equally entitled to provision from the Creator's bounty.—Animal food seems not to have been generally allowed, till after the flood, or to have been desired or thought of before the fall. But it is not certain, either that no part of the sacrifices offered did not take the liberty of using animal food, before it was granted them.

V. 31. *Very good.*] Each production of creative power had before been pronounced *good*:—but after man's creation, the whole was declared to be *very good*. A superior excellency, from an harmonious connexion of perfect parts in one perfect whole, was produced by each part deriving beauty from, and reflecting beauty upon the rest: and the creation of man, the image and vicerger of his Maker, the only worshipper in this august temple, who in reasonable adoration might render him the glory of the whole, completed the design, and stamped it "very good."—The perfections of God are worthy of being exercised, displayed, contemplated, admired, and adored. Man was formed capable of perceiving that manifested glory, of rendering the tribute of vocal praise, and of finding felicity in his Maker's worship and love: this was well pleasing to the Lord, who was most perfectly satisfied with his work, "while the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Thus the creation of the heaven and the earth was completed in six days, which doubtless the Creator could have effected in an instant; but he deemed it more suited to his majesty and wisdom to do it gradually, and by progressive advances; that we, leisurely contemplating these wonders, might note more carefully the glories displayed in them; and, seeing each majestically rise superior to all that went before, might be more suitably affected with admiring gratitude, and excited to adoring praise.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The account given us in this chapter, of the Author and Original of all things, is so rational, satisfactory, and sublime; and the visible creation, as it subsists at this day, displays such wise contrivance, powerful operation, and beneficent attention to the wants and welfare of all creatures; that atheists, and all others who, with the Bible in their hands, and the creation before their eyes, "honour not the Creator as God, neither are thankful," must be for ever left without excuse: and infidelity and impiety must at length manifestly appear to be as absurd and foolish, as they are wicked.—The Creator of all things is, without controversy, the sole Proprietor and sovereign Lord of all. Our very bodies and souls are his, and not our own; for "he made us, and not we ourselves."

The sabbath is instituted, 1-3. Further particulars concerning the production of the vegetables, and the creation of man, 4-7. The garden of Eden, how planted, and where situated, 8-14; man is placed in it; and permitted to eat of the fruit, with a solemn interdiction of one tree, 15-17. The animals are named by Adam; and an account given of the creation of woman, and the institution of marriage, 18-25.

THUS "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the "host of them.

2 And "on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God "created and made.

4 ¶ These are "the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created: in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens;

5 And "every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew: for the LORD God "had not caused it to rain

23. 2:2. Ex. 20:11. s 4. 1:1. Ps. 104:2. Is. 45:18. 55:5. 65:17. Heb. 4:3. b Deut. 4:19. 17:3. 2 Kings 21:3-5. 1s. 33:5. Is. 40:25-28. 45:12. Jer. 8:2. Luke 21:3. Acts 1:10. e 1:31. John 5:17. d Ex. 1:22-3. 9:9-11. 31:13-17. 35:2. Lev. 23:23. Deut. 5:12-14. Noh. 9:14. 13:15-22. Is. 56:2-7. 55:13,14. Jer. 17:21. 24:27. Matt. 2:27. Heb. 4:4-10. " Heb. created to make. e 6:1. 10:1. 11:10. 22:12,19. 38:1-9. Ex. 6:16. f 1:12. g Job 5:10. 38:26-28. Ps. 65:9-11. Jer. 14:22. Matt. 5:4,5.

He has therefore an undoubted right to dispose of us, and of all creatures, as he pleases. To him an account must be rendered of the use which we make of all his gifts: nor should we ever allow ourselves to lose sight of this important truth; which is suited, not only to restrain us from abusing the work and gift of God in the practice of sin, but also to quicken us in employing all that we possess and enjoy in the service of our liberal Benefactor. We should also accustom ourselves to contemplate his glory in every object which we behold, and to taste his bounty in all our comforts and enjoyments. As our obligations are so vast, his largest demands of love, worship, and service, are perfectly reasonable: yet, tried by this plain rule, our own hearts must certainly condemn our past and present conduct.—In our own private history, as well as in that of the world through every age, we may read what havoc sin has made in the creation of God, once by infallible wisdom pronounced "very good;" especially in man, created in his own image and likeness! Let us then bless his name for the Gospel of Christ; and take warning from the consideration of the almighty power of that God against whom we have sinned, (the stupendous effects of which we have been contemplating,) to "flee from the wrath to come," and to seek reconciliation to him, that his powerful arm may be employed for our salvation, and not for our destruction. And what deliverances, supports, and consolations may we not expect, in our greatest distresses and perils, from the most powerful enemies; if the omnipotent Creator be our Father and our Friend? Being thus rendered victorious over all our enemies, and new created unto the image of God in holiness, we shall at length obtain admission into the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. *Host.*] All the parts of the visible creation occupy their proper places, like soldiers in a well disciplined host, or army: so that number and variety connect with regularity and beauty, and conduce to the perfection of the whole. (M. R.)—The sacred historian, having given a brief account of the orderly production of all things, explains in this chapter some particulars more fully, which would otherwise have interrupted the order of his narration.

V. 2. The Lord was pleased to complete his design, just when the sixth day ended and the seventh commenced; and then he rested from all his work: not that the exertion of creating power had caused weariness, or that his rest was inactivity: for he still upholds, preserves, renovates, and governs the whole; in which sense Christ says, "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." But he ceased from creating, and added no more; and he rejoiced with perfect satisfaction in the whole, as worthy of himself and manifesting his glory.

V. 3. The sacred writer here both records the appointment of the sabbath, and assigns the reason for it: "Because that in it the LORD rested from all his work." This is evidently historical, and not by anticipation: for the reason subsisted from the beginning; and was more cogent immediately, than it could be at a distance of more than two thousand years, when the command was solemnly renewed from Mount Sinai, long after sin had marred the beauty of the great Creator's works; and it concerns the whole human race, as much as the nation of Israel. This is confirmed by the custom of measuring time by weeks, which has generally prevailed in the world; and which is most reasonably accounted for, by supposing it to have arisen from an original tradition, handed down from Adam and Noah to all their posterity. And the silence of Moses concerning the observation of the sabbath by the patriarchs, so far from proving that they were not commanded to observe it, will not render it so much as probable that they did not actually keep it, to those who

upon the earth, and *there was* not a man ^hto till the ground.

6 But ⁱthere went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man ^jof the dust of the ground, and ^kbreathed into his ^lnostrils the breath of life: and man became ^ma living soul.

8 ¶ And the LORD God planted ⁿa garden eastward in Eden: and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: ^othe Tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and ^pthe Tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10 And ^qa river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which

compasseth the whole land of ^rHavilah, where *there is* gold;

12 And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and ^sthe onyx-stone.

13 And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of ^tEthiopia.

14 And the name of the third river *is* ^uHiddekel: that *is* it which goeth ^vtowards the east of ^wAssyria. And the fourth river *is* ^xEuphrates.

15 And the LORD God took ^ythe man, and ^zput him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

[Practical Observations.]

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden ^{aa}thou mayest ^{ab}freely eat:

17 But ^{ac}of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, ^{ad}thou shalt ^{ae}surely die.

h 3:23, 4:2-12. * Or, a mist which went up. † Heb. the dust of. &c. i 3:19, Job 4:19, 33:6. j Ps. 10:14. k Ec. 3:20, 12:7. l Is. 64:8, 1 Cor. 15:47. m 2 Cor. 4:7, 5:1. n Job 2:3, 33:4. o John 9:22. Acts 17:25. p 1:7-25. q Is. 2:22. m Num. 16:22, 27:16. Zech. 12:1. l Cor. 15:45. Heb. 12:9. n 13:10. o Is. 5:13. Joel 2:8. p 3:24. 4:16. 2 Kings 19:12. Ec. 27:23. 28:13. p 3:22. Prov. 9:18. 11:30. Ec. 47:12. Rev. 22:24. q 17:3-3:22. (s. 41-25. 47:10. l Cor. 8:1. r Ps. 45:4. Rev. 22:1. s 10:7-29. 25:18. 1 Sam. 15:7. t Num. 11:7. u Ec.

28:20, 30:13. Job 28:16. Ec. 28:13. † Heb. Cush. 10:6. Is. 11:1. x Dan. 10:4. y Or, eastward to Assyria. y 10:11. 25:18. z 15:18. † Or, Adam. 5:2. Job 31:33. a s. * Heb. eat; thou shalt eat. 3:1-2. b 9. 1 Tim. 4:4. 6:17. c 3:1-3, 11:17. * Heb. dying thou shalt die. d 3:3-4. Deut. 27:26. Ec. 13:20. 18:4. 13:20. Rom. 1:32. e 12:21-21. f 16:33. 7:10-13. g 2. 1 Cor. 15:22-56. Gal. 3:10. Eph. 2:1-6. 5:14. Col. 2:13. 1 Tim. 5:6. Jam. 1:15. 1 John 5:16. Rev. 2:11. 20:

attentively consider how much darkness rests upon many similar subjects, in the scriptural history of the Church. Yet some intimations are given in this book, which show that the patriarchs devoted time into weeks, and regarded the seventh day. (Notes, 8:6-14. 29:27.)—The "sabbath, being made for man," we no doubt coeval with his creation.—Even in the state of innocence, Adam and Eve were employed in dressing and keeping the garden; and though exempt from sin and suffering, yet their rational nature was capable of a far more exalted state; and they were taught to consider themselves as preparing for it by progressive improvement. The seventh day therefore, being blessed and sanctified by God, separated from common employments, and consecrated to religious worship; on it especially they were required to remember their Creator, to contemplate his works, and to render him their tribute of thankful praise; and this would, even in Paradise, be conducive to the glory of God, and beneficial to them; perhaps absolutely necessary to their safety and felicity. (Notes, Ex. 16:22-27. 20:8-11.)

V. 4. This is the real and true account of the origin of the heavens and the earth; and may therefore be opposed to the fables of poets, and the fancies of speculating philosophers.—The word **JEHOVAH**, the peculiar name of the living God, is here first used. It seems to mean *Self-existence*, undervived, independent, and immutable. (Note, Ex. 3:14.)

V. 5, 6. In general, God employs the germ warmth of the sun and the refreshing rains, and also the labour of man, in producing the fruits of the earth: but he needs them not; and therefore these first productions, (which doubtless were in full perfection,) were prepared before the sun was created, before the rain descended, or man was formed; but from the time that the vegetables were produced, a mist arose from the earth, and fell in gentle dews for their refreshment and preservation.—It is God's immediate work to communicate the first principles of things, but their growth is promoted by the instrumentality of man. Fuller. Thus regeneration is immediately the work of God; but in progressive sanctification man is willing and active.

V. 7. The Creator's skill was manifested, in forming so exquisite a structure as the human body, of so mean materials. Yet the Lord not only gave man life in common with the other animals, which had bodies formed of the same dust; but immediately communicated from himself the rational soul, here denoted by "*breathing into his nostrils the breath of life*." Thus "the first Adam became a living soul;" but man, by the fall having become dead in sin, in infinite mercy, "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven," became "a quickening spirit," and, by the communication of the Holy Spirit, he restores divine life and renews the divine image.—It is remarkable that Jesus, after his resurrection, (with apparent reference to this expression,) "*breathed upon his disciples*, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

V. 8, 9. This garden, planned doubtless with exquisite beauty, and stored with every thing which could regale the senses, seems to have been intended as a pledge of heavenly felicity.—The word *paradise*, (which the Septuagint use in this place for *garden*), in allusion to Eden, is in some instances used for heaven itself, and there are many references to it in scripture. (Luke 23:43. 2 Cor. 12:1.) "The Tree of Life" seems also to have been a sacramental pledge of immortality; and, by eating the fruit of it, life and felicity were sealed to Adam, as long as he continued obedient. "The Tree of Knowledge" might be thus called, because that, by the prohibition of its fruit, a revelation was made to Adam of his Creator's will; of his own duty, interest, situation, and danger; of the consequences of his future conduct; and of the prescribed condition of life or death, happiness or misery; in which things *his* most interesting knowledge consisted. By abstaining from this fruit the knowledge of good would be enjoyed; but by eat-

ing of it the knowledge of evil would be fatally introduced. It might also intimate that man should set boundaries to his thirst for knowledge; and covet rather to know and obey the commands of God, than to pry into un-revealed secrets. To these meanings Satan artfully superadded his pernicious misinterpretation, which will shortly require our attention.—This garden was situated eastward of Canaan, or of the wilderness where Moses wrote the history.—Adam and Eve seem to have been created without the garden, and to have been afterwards brought into it.

V. 10-14. From the well-known names of the Hiddekel or Tigris, and the Euphrates, we determine that the garden of Eden was situated in or near Mesopotamia; and some learned men have supposed that almost the precise spot may be ascertained; but this is doubtful. It is supposed, that the Tigris and Euphrates met and united their streams at the garden of Eden, and that below it, the river parted again into two streams, called Pison and Gihon; and that all these are called heads. It is manifest, that Moses intended to give an intelligible description of the situation of Eden to his countrymen; who might doubtless, by attending to the several particulars here mentioned, find the precise spot, though we cannot: and notwithstanding the subsequent convulsions during the deluge, which must have greatly changed the face of the country, it is evident that the Tigris and Euphrates continued nearly the same course after that catastrophe as before.

V. 15, 17. Man, created in the image of God, doubtless had the moral law written in his heart as the law of his holy nature; and was both bound and inclined to that love of God and his creatures, which constitutes its substance and fulfilment. But the prohibition, here imposed, was an *additional instituted test of obedience*; and, being accompanied with the liberal allowance which precedes it, formed a proper trial of his love, and of the submission of his inclinations to the will of his beneficent Benefactor. It likewise intimated to him, that the favour of God, and not animal gratification, was the proper felicity of his nature; and taught him not to consider himself at the summit of his happiness, in a state where self-denial was required. The annexed denunciation, "thou shalt surely die," or, *dying thou shalt die*, evidently implied, that by transgression he would totally forfeit his Maker's favour, and incur his displeasure with all its awful effects; that immediately he would become liable to pain and disease, which, as a tedious execution, would not cease but in the dissolution of the body; that he would lose the holy image of God and the comfort of his favour; and that he would experience the torment of sinful passions and the terror of his Creator's vengeance, which, according to this covenant, must endure coeval with the existence of his immortal soul. The event shows that all this was implied: for the just and holy God would not subsequently inflict more than he had previously denounced to Adam and Eve. The same evidence proves, that the whole human race, then in the loins of their common father, and represented by him as their federal head, were interested in the transaction. To argue against this, is to combat stubborn facts, as well as divine revelation unless some more satisfactory account of the present condition and character of man can be assigned, but which has never yet been done. For man is evidently a sinful creature, and shows his natural propensities by his first actions and continual conduct; he is under undeniable tokens of divine displeasure, and exposed to sufferings and death; a dark cloud, impenetrable except by the light of revelation, rests upon his state beyond the grave; the Scriptures always address him as in this miserable situation, and as bearing this sinful character; and these things have been universally verified in all ages and nations. If men find fault with that which God has evidently done, let them answer it to him. He deigns not to apologize for his own conduct; and, with our dark and imperfect views, we shall be deemed too officious, if we attempt it—"Shall not the Judge

18 ¶ And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.*

19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to

fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib which the LORD God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

6:14. 21:8. e 1:31. Prov. 18:22. Ec. 4:9-12. f 3:12. 1 Cor. 11:7-12. 1 Tim. 2:11-13. * Heb. as before him. g 1:20-25. h 22:23. 1 Or, the man. 15. * Heb. called. i 18. k 15:12. 1 Sam. 26:12. Dan. 9:18. § Heb. builded. 1 Tim. 2:13. 119. Prov. 18:22. 19:14. Heb. 13:4. m 29:14. Julg. 9:2. 2 Sam. 5:1. 19:

13. Eph. 5:30. n 24. ¶ Heb. Isha. 1 Cor. 11:9,9. ¶ Heb. Isha. o Ps. 45:10. p Deut. 4:4. 10:20. Josh. 23:8. Acts 1:23. q Mal. 2:14-15. Matt. 19:3-9. Mark 10:5-12. 1 Cor. 6:16,17. 7:2-4. Eph. 5:28-31. 1 Pet. 3:1-7. r 3:7, 10,11.

Adam; but certainly it was the word of God, speaking by one of them. Neither polygamy nor divorces can accord with this original institution. "In the beginning it was not so;" nor would such things have been practised, but for the sinful lusts of men. And equally unscriptural are constrained celibacy, and needless restraints upon marriage. The records of former times, and impartial observation on the present, evince that it is not generally "good for man to be alone." The mutual inclination of the sexes for each other, (which, however debased by sin, was originally implanted by the Creator,) when regulated by the law of God, and free from other restraints, becomes the foundation of all the relations of life, the source of the most rational of our earthly comforts, and equally beneficial to individuals, families, and nations: like a river, which, gliding within its banks, beautifies and enriches the neighbouring plains. But when unscriptural restraints are imposed, or when it bursts through the appointed bounds, it diffuses vice, discord, disease, and misery, with horrible rapidity; like the same river, obstructed in its natural channel, overflowing its banks, inundating and desolating the fields, and converting the neighbouring country into a noxious marsh or fen.—"Go among the enemies of the gospel, and you shall see the woman either reduced to abject slavery, or basely flattered for the vilest of purposes: but in Christian families, you see her treated with honour and respect; as a friend, as naturally an equal, a soother of man's cares, a softener of his grief, and a partner of his joys." Fuller.

V. 25. The human body, the most noble production in the material creation, would not have required concealment, had not sin disgraced the Creator's work: and probably shame would never have been excited, in the manner in which it has been ever since, had not the sinful nature been communicated with the propagation of the human species.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. As God himself contemplated his whole work with cordial approbation, and rested in it with entire complacency; it must be great presumption for us to find fault with any part of it. We are indeed capable of perceiving the wisdom and goodness of God, in many of the constituent parts of the vast creation, and of rendering to him the tribute of adoring praise; but it is most daring pride, to suppose ourselves competent to understand the whole.—The only wise God instituted the Sabbath in Paradise before the entrance of sin; and thus he has shown, not only the advantage, but the absolute necessity, of time set apart for his immediate service, as the world now is; if we would pay any suitable regard to religion, or to the salvation of our immortal souls. How diligently then should we sinners keep holy the Christian Sabbath; and take care that our children and domestics have leisure and opportunity, and make use of them, for the same salutary purposes! But the rest to be observed is not indolent repose. The rest of heaven consists in serving God without weariness and with entire satisfaction; and our sabbaths should be earnest of that blessedness, and a preparation for it. Indeed, God gives every thing to labour, which was needful in innocence and in paradise; because true excellence and happiness consist in action, not in inactivity.—The reflection likewise, that our bodies were formed from the dust of the earth, may tend to repress the pride of beauty, strength, or agility; to abate our solicitude about them; and to teach us to prepare for the execution of the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

V. 16-25. Additional favours lay us under additional obligations to grateful obedience: and as our liberal Benefactor indulges us in all things truly good for us, it is highly reasonable that we should give him credit for his wisdom and kindness, even in restraints and prohibitions, and cheerfully deny ourselves at his requirement.—The covenant of works was holy, and just, and good; being proposed by a God of perfect holiness, justice, and goodness; and acceded to by Adam, before sin had impaired his powers, perverted his judgment, or depraved his heart: yet it is contrary to us, who in Adam, and after his example, have violated the terms of it. We have, therefore, great reason to be thankful for another covenant, established upon better promises, and ratified by the engagements of a better Surety. To him let us flee for refuge, and from him alone seek deliverance from shame and pain, from sin and death. And while we receive all worldly and relative com-

of all the earth do right?" seems the proper answer to objectors; and to wait for a world of clearer light is our proper behaviour. To allow the wisdom, justice, and goodness of the divine conduct, only when we can perceive them, savours neither of humility nor of faith; for the same approbation is due to an equal or an enemy; but it becomes us, and is honourable to God, when we adore the depths which we cannot fathom, and believe that while "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the basis of his throne." Could we divest ourselves of partiality, we might discern in some degree the reasonableness of the prohibition; the peculiar meetness of Adam, as the common father of the human race, to be their representative; and the divine goodness in selecting, as the condition of this covenant, so easy a test of obedience, and in making the implied stipulation, that if he did not eat he should not die. Many things have been copiously and plausibly argued upon these topics: but it is readily granted, that great difficulties remain; and that they, who will give their Creator credit for justice and goodness, no farther than they can perceive them, must stumble at this stumbling-stone, after all that can be done to remove it. Man's mortality and depravity, as well as universal history, coincide with, and confirm, the scriptural account of this transaction; and, as collateral evidences, prove that it is the "testimony of God," and that we do not mistake its meaning: on this ground faith receives it; and humbled reason submits to her Teacher, God, and allows his righteousness, though she cannot fully comprehend it.

V. 18. It was not conducive to the happiness of man to remain without the solace of society, and the endearment of tender friendship; nor consistent with the end of his creation to be without marriage, by which the earth might be replenished, and worshippers and servants of God continually raised up to render him praise and glory.

V. 19, 20. Adam seems to have been vastly better acquainted, by intuition or immediate revelation, with the distinct properties of every creature, than the most sagacious observers, since the fall, have been by study. When, therefore, God brought the several species before him, he gave them names expressive of their distinct natures or exterior forms. This was also a token of his dominion over them.—Yet, upon this review, not one was found in outward form his counterpart, (as the animals were created male and female,) nor one suited to engage his affections, participate in his enjoyments, or associate with him in the worship of God.

V. 21-23. Adam, being supernaturally cast into a deep sleep, without consciousness or pain, the Lord took from that part of his body which was near the heart, the substance of which he formed the woman; who was to be as part of himself, and the object of his most cordial affections. She was taken from him, and not out of the ground; that there might be a natural foundation of moderate subordination on the woman's part, and sympathizing tenderness on the man's; as a man rules over, yet carefully defends and tenderly takes care of, his own body. The Lord then conducted her as his gift to Adam, that they might be united in marriage for their mutual good; and that he might thus authorize, and give an example for the regulation of, future marriages. Doubtless he made known to Adam, perhaps during his sleep, in what manner the woman had been created from a part of himself, to be his companion. The original word translated woman, is the same as is rendered man, excepting the feminine termination: it imports that she was exactly his counterpart, taken from him, united to him, and like him in every thing but sex; and it expressed his satisfaction in his Creator's gift, and his thankful acceptance of it.

V. 24. According to the original institution of marriage, the nearest of all relations and the proper source of all the rest, men in every subsequent age would leave the immediate society even of their parents, to lay the foundation of new families; and thenceforth all other relative affections and duties must be regulated, in subordination to the affections and duties of that new relation. Thus one man and one woman are so closely united as to become "one flesh;" so that, according to the original institution, nothing can separate them, but that which dissolves the union of soul and body, and even divides the component parts of the body from each other. This seems to be the remark of Moses rather than of

CHAPTER III.

The woman, tempted by the serpent, ate the forbidden fruit, and induces Adam to do the same, 1-6. They are alarmed and ashamed, in vain attempt concealment, and are convicted by God, 7-13. Sentence is denounced against them, containing the gracious promise of a Redeemer, 14-19. They are clothed, but expelled from Eden, 20-24.

NOW the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made: and he said unto the woman, 'Yea, ^bhath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

a 13-15. Is. 27:1. Matt. 10:16. 2 Cor. 11:3,14. Rev. 12:9, 20:2. * Heb. Yea, because, &c. b Matt. 4:3,6,9. c 2:16,17. d 20:8. Ex. 19:12,13. 1 Chr. 16:22. Job 1:11. 2:5. 12:9. 1 Cor. 7:1. 2 Cor. 6:17. Col. 2:21. e 13. 1 Pet. 29:19. Ps. 10:11. 2 Cor. 2:11. f Ex. 20:7. 1 Kings 22:6. Jer. 14:13,14. 28:2,3. Ez. 13:2-6,22.

forts from the hand of our reconciled God, and seek his blessing on them, use them according to his appointment, and attend to the duties which they require according to his command; let us not forget, that a union must be formed with the Lord Jesus, of which marriage itself is but a type and shadow. (2 Cor. 11:2.) We must be one spirit with him, and cleave to him in simple dependence, cordial attachment, and devoted obedience and submission; even though it should interfere with the comfort of that most endeared relation. Then death, which dissolves all other unions, will complete this to eternal ages.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. Adam and Eve, perhaps, had noticed with pleasure and partiality, that the serpent possessed an instinctive sagacity, which more resembled the effects of reason, than that of any other creature did; and this might suggest to Satan the device of using this animal as his instrument in temptation. For the serpent appeared to speak, but in reality Satan spake by the serpent; as, in the days of Christ, the unclean spirits employed the tongues of possessed persons. Common sense and the whole Scripture lead us to conclude, that the serpent was only the instrument; Satan the real agent, who is therefore called the serpent, the old dragon, a liar, and a murderer from the beginning. (Note, Rev. 12:7-12.)—The word of God reveals to us the world of spirits, holy and unholy, of which otherwise we should have had no certain knowledge. Faith avails itself of this information; but unbelief rejects it to the infidel's irreparable detriment: as nothing better answers the purpose of the powers of darkness, than to work in the dark; and none serve their interests more effectually, than they who deny and endeavour to disprove their existence; for we never can guard against the attacks of unseen and unsuspected enemies. From the Scriptures we learn, that "angels sinned, and kept not their first estate;" and that, being created holy and happy, they by transgression forfeited the favour, and incurred the displeasure, of their Creator, and became unholy and miserable; yea, desperate in the certain expectation of increasing and everlasting misery. Being, however, still endued with vast capacities, profound sagacity, extensive knowledge, and great power; and wholly actuated by enmity, malice, envy, pride, ambition, and subtlety; they maintain determined rebellion against their Maker: and as they are very numerous, they have established a kingdom in opposition to his kingdom, under the dominion of the arch-apostate, the Devil or Satan; so that, as far as they are permitted, they are unwearied and insatiable in mischief, aiming at nothing less than reducing the whole creation to a state of rebellion, anarchy, and misery, and rendering all creatures as vile and wretched as themselves.—Doubtless, the beauty of the recently created world, the glory of God, and the happiness of man, excited the envy and rage of these evil spirits, and suggested to Satan the malicious design of ruining the whole. For this purpose, he, with dark craftiness, concealed himself in the subtle serpent, and thus made his unsuspected attack on the woman when alone; perhaps insinuating that by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, the serpent had acquired the gift of reason and speech: nor can we satisfactorily account for the woman's entering into conversation with the serpent, and showing no marks of surprise or suspicion, unless we admit a supposition of this kind. Some learned men indeed have conjectured, that this serpent appeared so beautiful and resplendent, that Eve supposed it to be an angel, and listened to it as a heavenly messenger; and they confirm this opinion by observing, that the fiery serpents are called in the original *Seraphim*; (Num. 21:6, 8;) as the heavenly worshippers are by Isaiah, (Is. 6:2;) and that the apostle notes, that "Satan is transformed into an angel of light," in the same chapter in which he says, "The serpent beguiled Eve by his subtlety." (2 Cor. 11:3,14.) This supposition, however, makes more excuse for the conduct both of Eve and Adam, than the word of God authorizes; and certainly we cannot learn it from the narrative.—Nothing can be conceived more artful than Satan's first address, "Yea, hath God said?" How is it that God should speak thus? Can it be true, that he has given you appetites, and placed gratifications before you, only to mock you?—You must misunderstand his meaning; or some envious being has counterfeited his authority; or at least it must be allowed to be a very capricious restraint. Such insinuations were artfully couched in this insidious question, and such objections are continually raised by him and his instruments, against

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, 'Ye shall not surely die;

5 For [†]God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then [†]your eyes shall be opened: and ye shall be [†]as gods, [†]knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food; and that it was pleasant [†]to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [†]one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and [†]did eat, and

2 Cor. 11:3,13-15. g 7. Matt. 6:23. Acts 26:18. h Ex. 5:2. 2 Chr. 32:15. Is. 12:4. Ez. 28:2,9, 29:3. Dan. 4:30. 6:7. Acts 12:23,23. 2 Cor. 4:4. 2 Thes. 2:4. Rev. 13:14. 12:2. 2:17. † Heb. a desire. Ez. 24:16,21,25. k 6:2. 39:7. Josh. 7:21. 2 Sam. 11:2. Job 31:1. Matt. 5:28. 1 John 2:16. 1 Tim. 2:14.

every restriction in the word of God which calls for self-denial. It is observable, that no notice is taken of the largeness of the grant, but merely of its limitation.

V. 2, 3. The first mistake of the woman seems to have consisted in attempting to answer the ensnaring question proposed to her. She ought not to have listened for a moment to such suggestions; nor to have entered into a parley with one, whose words directly tended to excite hard thoughts of God, and of his express command. She mentioned the grant of the bountiful Creator, but not in the expressive language in which it had been made; "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat;" and she added to the restriction, "neither shall ye touch it." This is, indeed, an excellent precaution; we should not come within the attractive force of forbidden objects: yet it seems, as here used, to be an intimation of severity in the prohibition. The Lord had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" but the undoubted certainty of the event is here omitted. Indeed it is evident, that the poison began to work; Eve made too little of the liberal grant of the Creator, stated the prohibition in strong terms of severity, and rather faltered as to the certain and immediate execution of the threatening.

V. 4, 5. Perceiving his advantage, the tempter grew bolder, and gave a direct contradiction to the divine denunciation; and, to gain the more credit to his daring assertions, he proceeded to confirm them by an oath, blasphemously calling on God to attest his horrid falsehoods; or rather, he insinuated that the Lord knew his own threatening would not be executed, at least in the sense in which Adam and Eve had understood it; but that, on the contrary, most abundant advantage would accrue to them from the violation of the Creator's law: no less than a vast advance in knowledge, and an independent felicity, without subjection to the will, or dread of the displeasure, of any superior. Thus he insinuated, that God forbade this fruit in order to keep them in ignorance, and in a mean state of dependence and subjection. There is likewise an equivocation in the words; a latent truth, the reverse of their apparent meaning. "Your eyes," says Satan, "shall be opened;" that is, "When you have eaten the fruit, you will too late see your own folly. "Ye shall be as gods;" revolted from God, and losing his image and favour, you will ambitiously affect independency; demand the homage of flattery and praise; aspire at the pinnacle of pre-eminence, and grasp at dominion; act as if you were your own lords and avengers; and thus attempt to usurp the throne of God. By this conduct you will be left to make trial of your ability to contrive, effect, and secure a happiness to yourselves, as if ye were gods, till you find death and misery seize upon you; "knowing good and evil," by losing the good and experiencing the evil.—Of such a paraphrase the words will admit, and such have been the effects of eating the forbidden fruit; but nothing could be further from Eve's thoughts than this interpretation.—Thus the assertions of the tempter resembled the ancient heathen oracles, of which, in one way or other, this "father of lies" was doubtless the author: for these were generally couched in such ambiguous language, as might afterwards be accommodated to the event; though often in direct opposition to the disappointed expectations of the deluded votaries.—Nothing is more common, than for the most false and pernicious doctrines to be advanced with a boldness which stuns the minds of the simple, and induces a doubt: Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they would not be so confident! Fuller.

V. 6. "The lust of the eye" made way for the "lust of the flesh;" when the woman looked on the fruit, till she fancied there must be some very extraordinary pleasure in the taste of it. As her ear, formed to receive the truth of God, had just before been opened to admit Satan's lies; so now the eye, formed to behold his works, became an inlet to concupiscence. Now first the members became, as they have ever since continued in uncovered men, "instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." (Notes, Rom. 6:12,13,16-19.) Eve had no testimony except that of Satan concealed in the serpent, that "it was a tree to be desired to make one wise;" yet she neither hesitated, nor suspected any delusion; but, at his instance, "she took of the fruit, and did eat," without consulting Adam, or allowing herself leisure for consideration! Thus she listened to the tempter, till, entangled in unbelief, she suspected the divine veracity and goodness, conceived hopes of impunity in transgression, and expected a vast gratification both of an

gave also unto her husband with her,^a and he did eat.

[Practical Observations.]

7 And ^athe eyes of them both were opened, and they ^aknew that they *were* naked;^a and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And ^athey heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the ^acool of the day: and Adam and his wife ^ahid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, ^aWhere *art* thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden: ^aand I was afraid, ^abecause I *was* naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast*

naked? ^ahast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat?

12 And the man said, ^aThe woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, ^aWhat is this *that* thou hast done? and the woman said, ^aThe serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ^aAnd the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this ^bthou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and ^adust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

15 And I will put ^aenmity between thee and the woman, and between ^athy seed and ^aher Seed: ^ait shall bruise thy head, and ^athou shalt bruise his heel.

m Hos. 6:7. marg. Rom. 5:12—19. n 5. Dent. 28:34. Luke 16:23. o 10. 11. 2:25. p Job 9:20—31. Is. 28:20. 59:6. * Or, things to gird about. q 10. Dent. 4:33. 5:25. r Heb. wind. Job. 38:1. s Job 22:14. 34:22. Is. 139:1—12. Prov. 15:3. Jer. 23:24. Am. 9:2—3. Job. 1:3—10. Heb. 4:12. 9:19. 16:3. Josh. 7:17—19. [Rev. 20:12, 13. 1 John 3:15. Ps. 119:120. Is. 33:14. 57:11. u 7. 2:25. Ex. 32:25. Is. 47:3. Rev. 8:17, 18. 16:15. x 4:10. Ps. 50:21. Rom. 3:20. y 2:18, 22. Ex. 32:21—21. 1 Sam. 15:20—24. Job 41:33. Prov. 28:13. Luke 10:29. Rom. 10:3. Jam. 1:13—15. z 4:

10—12. 2 Sam. 12:9—12. a 4—6. 2 Cor. 11:3. 1 Tim. 2:14. b 1. 9. 6. Ex. 21:28—32. Lev. 20:25. c Ps. 72:1. Is. 29:4. 65:25. Mic. 7:17. d Num. 21:6, 7. Am. 9:3. Mark 16:18. Luke 10:19. Acts 28:3—6. Rom. 3:13. e Matt. 3:7. 12:34. 13:38. 23:33. John 8:44. Acts 13:10. 1 John 2:10. f Is. 7:14. Jer. 1:22. Mic. 5:3. Matt. 1:23. Luke 1:31—35. Gal. 4:4. Gen. 16:20. Col. 2:15. Heb. 2:14, 15. 1 John 3:8. Rev. 20:1—3, 10. h 9:17. Is. 53:3, 4, 12. Dan. 9:26. Matt. 4:1—10. Luke 22:39—44, 53. John 12:31—33. 14:30, 31. Heb. 2:18. 5:7. Rev. 2:10. 12—

tion and of the sensual appetite; and at length, with confident presumption, she took the forbidden fruit, and ate. In this manner was "just at first conceived, then sin brought forth; and sin being finished, brought forth death." But Satan's success was yet incomplete; for had Adam refused to eat, the woman's transgression would have remained with herself. It was, indeed, a great point gained to prevail with her whom Adam loved so tenderly, and one who would employ her fascinating influence, to prevail on him to follow her example. But whether Adam sinned in presumption, as not seeing death immediately inflicted on Eve; or in despair, as giving up all for lost; or as overcome by Eve's persuasions and reasonings, it does not clearly appear. Yet the apostle intimates, that he was not deceived in the same manner and degree as the woman. (1 Tim. 2:14.)—Considering this offence in all its circumstances, and with all its aggravations, we may term it the prolific parent and grand exemplar of all the transgressions committed ever since. Whatever there hath been in any sin of unbelief, ingratitude, apostasy, rebellion, robbery, contempt, defiance of God, hard thoughts of him, and enmity against him; whatever of idolatry, as comprehending faith in Satan, "the god" and "prince of this world," worship of him, and obedience to him; or of pride, exorbitant self-love, and self-will, in affecting that independency, exaltation, and homage which belong only to God; and of an inordinate love to the creatures, in seeking our happiness in the possession and enjoyment of them: whatever discontent, sensual lust, covetousness, murder, and mischief, were ever yet contained in any one sin, or in all which have been committed upon earth, the whole were concentrated in this one transaction. Nor have they been wide of the truth, who have laboured to prove, that all the ten commandments, extensively and spiritually expounded, were at once violated; while, in proportion as the prohibition was reasonable, and the inducements to rebel against it trifling, the offence was the more aggravated.—In this manner sin entered, and Satan triumphed in establishing his usurped authority; "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Thus man apostatized, God was provoked, the Holy Spirit forsook his polluted temple, the unclean spirit took possession, the divine image was defaced, and Satan's image impressed in its stead: hence the wickedness and the misery of man. A lamentation it is, and should be: yet, "righteous art thou in all thy judgments, O LORD." Let not the enemy further prevail against us, we beseech thee, by taking hence occasion to produce in our minds one hard thought of thee, or of thy mysterious judgments!

V. 7. Satan's promise soon began to be accomplished. The eyes of Adam and Eve were opened to see the snare, when they were already caught in it: they saw also misery before them with horror and dismay, and their new discoveries were their torment. Their bodily nakedness had not previously excited the sensation of shame: but being stripped of the robe of innocence, and despoiled of the image of God, the defence of his protection, and the honour of his presence, they perceived that they were indeed made naked to their shame; and their outward nakedness appeared an indication of the exposed and shameful condition to which they were reduced. Their vain attempt to cover themselves, by fig-leaves platted together, represents the fruitless pains and worthless expedients which men employ to conceal their real character, and hide their sins from each other, and even from themselves. For all men are naturally more ashamed of being detected in sin, than of committing it; and more desirous of keeping up a good opinion of themselves, than of obtaining pardon from God: though they can hide nothing from him, and can neither elude his justice, nor recover his favour, by any of their own contrivances.

V. 8. Some visible tokens of the Lord's presence, perhaps in human form, seem here intimated, of which we shall hereafter find undeniable instances; and which should be considered as tokens of his incarnation, who is called "The

Word of God;" though the word rendered *walking* may be referred to the voice, and not to the LORD. Some learned men, indeed, explain all these appearances of the SHEKINAH, or visible glory indicating the divine presence, which at some times shone with mild lustre, at others in terrific majesty. But I shall hereafter assign my reasons for thinking, that this hypothesis has its sole foundation in the imaginations of Jewish Rabbies, and is totally destitute of scriptural proof, except where express mention is made of visible glory. (Note, 32:30.) "The cool of the day" was, probably, one time of Adam and Eve's accustomed worship; when, doubtless, they had been used to welcome the tokens of the divine presence with that kind of exulting joy, with which a dutiful child meets the approbation of an indulgent parent. But now, conscious guilt inspired terror; and they desired to flee and hide themselves from God, as no longer their loving Father and bounteous Friend, but their dreaded Enemy, who was about to take vengeance on them.—Where was now the wisdom which they were to derive from the forbidden fruit? Alas! they could only devise a foolish project of hiding themselves from the all-seeing eye of God, under the shade of a few trees. (M. R.)

V. 9. *Where art thou?* Words of more terror, perhaps, never sounded in man's ears, or will be heard till the day of judgment.—The command had been peremptory, the threatening absolute, the transgression undeniable; no escape or resistance was practicable; no mention had been made of mercy, and probably the offenders had no expectation of forgiveness.

V. 10, 11. Adam did not say, "I saw thy glory," but "I heard thy voice;" which implies that he saw nothing to affright him; but merely that conscious guilt appalled him, on hearing the accustomed tokens of God's special presence.—Without any humiliation before his offended Lord, or confession of sin, or supplication for mercy, he evasively attempted to account for his flight and concealment. But the true cause was at once detected. It arose from conscious guilt, for he had dared to transgress the righteous command of the Most High. Thus "every mouth shall be stopped," and every excuse silenced, when God shall arise to judgment.—"Who told thee that thou wast naked?" Whence could arise this idea? It had before no existence.

V. 12, 13. Adam could neither deny nor excuse his transgression of his Creator's most express mandate; yet, instead of frankly confessing it, he cast the blame upon the woman; as if he had been allowed to hearken to her, rather than to obey God! Nay, he covertly charged the blame upon the Lord himself, saying, "The woman, whom thou gavest me." Here we discern the pride, and stoutness of heart, which characterize that evil spirit, who had just set up his kingdom in Adam's heart. The woman likewise discovered the same spirit, in her vain attempt to exculpate herself, by throwing the blame upon the Serpent.

V. 14, 15. It is probable, that the serpent was previously beautiful and innoxious; but it now assumed the reptile form, and became mischievous and hateful. From that season, serpents have been more shunned, and persecuted unto death, as enemies to the human race, than almost any other animal: by the venomous bite of many of them they have often severely avenged themselves; and, by reason of their proneness on the earth, they eat their food mingled with dust. Thus the words may imply a visible punishment to be executed on the serpent, as the instrument in this temptation: but the curse was in reality directed against the invisible tempter; whose abject, degraded condition, and base endeavours to find satisfaction in rendering others wicked and miserable, might be figuratively intimated, by the serpent's moving on his belly, and feeding on the dust. Yet this curse on Satan is expressed in language, which contains the sum of all the blessings, which a merciful God bestows on sinful man! It is a *prophecy* and a *promise*, which have ever since been fulfilling, but have not yet received their entire accomplishment. It comprises the

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; ¹in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and ²thy desire shall be ³to thy husband, and he shall ⁴rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, ¹Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, ²and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: ³cursed is the ground for thy sake; ⁴in sorrow shalt thou eat of it the days of thy life;

18 *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat ¹the herb of the field.

19 In ¹the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread ²till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for ³dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. [Practical Observations.]

20 ¶ And ¹Adam called his wife's name ²Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God ¹make coats of skins, and clothed them.

22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is

13. 13:7, 15:1-6, 20:7, 8, 13:5, 16-18, 1 Sam. 4:14-21, Ps. 48:6, Is. 13:8, 21:3, 36:17, 18, 33:11, Jer. 4:31, John 16:21, 1 Thes. 5:3, 1 Tim. 2:15, m. 4:7. *Or, subject to thy husband. n 1 Cor. 11:3, 14:34, Eph. 5:22-24, 1 Tim. 2:11 12. Tit. 2:5, 1 Pet. 3:1-6, o 1 Sam. 15:23, 24, Matt. 22:12, 25:26, 27, 45, Luke 19:22, Rom. 3:19, p 11:2, 16:17, Jer. 7:23, 24, q 5:29, Ps. 127:2, Ec. 1:2, 3, 13, 14, 2:11, 17, Is. 21:5, 6, Rom. 9:20-22, r Job 5:27, 7, 14:1, Ps. 90:7-9, Ec. 2:

22, 23, 5:17, John 16:33, s Job 31:40, Jer. 4:3, 12:13, Matt. 13:7, Heb. 6:8, † Heb. cause to bud, ‡ Is. 104:14, 15, Rom. 14:2, u Ec. 1:3, Luke 22:44, Eph. 4:28, 1 Thes. 2:9, 2 Thes. 3:10, x Job 1:21, Ps. 90:3, 104:20, Ec. 5:15, y 2:7, 18:27, z 23:4, Job 19:26, Ps. 104:29, Ec. 3:20, 12:7, Dan. 12:2, Rom. 5:12-21, 1 Cor. 15:21, 22, a 2:20, 23, 5:29, 16:11, 29:32-35, 35:13, Ex. 2:10, 1 Sam. 1:20, Matt. 1:21, 23, † Heb. Chava, r Acts 17:26, c 7, Is. 61:10, Rom. 3:22,

whole Gospel, and a prophetic history of the opposition with which it should meet, and the success with which it should be crowned, in all ages and countries to the end of time.—Christ himself is “the Seed of the woman,” as the most illustrious of the human race. Yet all true believers, as one with him, are also included. He is called the *Seed of the woman*, and not the *Seed of Adam*, though descended from both; not only because Satan had prevailed first against the woman, but likewise with an evident prophetic intimation of his miraculous conception and birth of a pure virgin. Mai-monides, an eminent Jewish writer, says, “This is one of the passages in Scripture which is most wonderful, and not to be understood according to the letter; but contains great wisdom in it.” “In which words he wrote more truth than he was aware, but was not able to unfold this hidden wisdom, as we Christians, blessed be God, are able to do.” *Bp. Patrick*.—The devil, his angels, and wicked men, are the Serpent and his seed: “Ye are of your father, the devil, and the works of your father ye will do.” God himself hath put enmity between these two contending parties. The effect of his grace in the heart of true Christians is *enmity*, not against the persons of sinners, but against their character, the image of Satan which they bear, and the cause of Satan which they favour; for “that mind is in believers which was in Christ,” “who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.” Their character and conduct also, the testimony which they bear against the wickedness of the world, and the opposition which they make to it, as well as the success which the Lord vouchsafes them, excite the rage, envy, and malice of Satan and his servants; whose pride they affront, whose consciences they disturb, whose real characters they detect, and whose iniquity they oppose. (*M. R.*) Hence Satan and his seed, by open violence and cruel persecutions, by secret machinations and base slanders, by artful temptations and pernicious heresies, fight against the “Seed of the woman.” In doing this, they “bruise his heel.” They once “crucified the Lord of Glory” himself; they have massacred perhaps millions of his disciples, and by one means or other are always bringing inward or outward tribulations on them; yet this is no mortal wound, for it does not hinder the final glorification of the whole multitude, who thus in succession have “Satan bruised under their feet.”—“The seed of the woman,” fighting under the Redeemer’s standard, by the doctrine of truth and the armour of righteousness, which are united with prayers and patience, hatred of sin, and compassion for sinners, carry on their benevolent war; and they gain most illustrious victories, when the power of Satan is broken, and his deluded servants are converted unto Christ. But their victories are the fruit of his severe conflict, and glorious triumph over the tempter, especially upon the cross; where, in human nature, giving himself a ransom for sinners, he broke the whole force of Satan’s usurped empire; and now, risen from the dead, and having “all power in heaven and earth” vested in him, he is continually employed in crushing the Serpent’s head; yet in measure and order, “according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” *Eph. 1:11*. Already, by his apostles and ministers, he hath shaken the very foundations of Satan’s kingdom, and rescued millions of his wretched captives: but ere long he will even on earth gain a more decisive victory; and at last, setting his foot, as it were, on the Serpent’s head, he will entirely crush his interests, deprive him of all power to do further mischief, and execute condign punishment on all his seed. (*Notes, Rev. 19:17-21*. 20:1-3, 11-15.)—From this short explication we perceive, that the person, sufferings, glory, and triumphs of the Redeemer; the character, tribulations, and felicity of the redeemed; the temporary success and final ruin of all the enemies of Christ and his people; and indeed almost the whole history of the church, and of the world, through time and to eternity, are compeniously delineated in this singular verse; which stands, and will stand to the end of time, an internal demonstration that the Scripture was given by inspiration from God.—Satan’s cause would be ruined by one in a nature inferior to his own; y one emphatically called the “Seed of the woman,” over whom the tempter had triumphed; and the victory over the enemy would be obtained, not only by the Messiah, but by all his servants. (*Note, Ez. 8:16, 17*.)—It is remarkable that his gracious promise of a Saviour was given unsolicited, and without any humiliation on the part of man. (*Note, Rom.*

5:7-10.) Without a revelation of mercy, inspiring hope of forgiveness, the convinced sinner would be hardened in despair: this intimation therefore formed that encouragement to hope, which was followed by true repentance and true religion, (as it is generally supposed,) in fallen Adam and Eve; and though the revelation was at first obscure, it became brighter and brighter, like the increasing light of the morning, till “the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings.”

V. 16. The woman was first in the transgression, and had tempted Adam, as the serpent had tempted her; she therefore next received her sentence, respecting the sufferings to which she and her daughters would be subjected. It cannot be supposed, that pain or sorrow would have been connected with pregnancy, or child-bearing, had not sin been committed: but now, the Lord threatened to multiply the woman’s sorrows, even those of her conception; so that, in a world of suffering, the pains and sufferings of the female sex are thus greatly multiplied indeed, almost beyond expression.—It might therefore have been expected, that on this account woman would generally prefer the single state, and thus prevent the increase of the human species: but God (according to the probable meaning of the expression as used in this connexion, (*Note, 4:6, 7*.) hath so ordered it, that marriage is notwithstanding generally chosen even by the suffering sex.—The authority of the husband, when exercised uniformly with wisdom and tenderness, would have increased mutual felicity: but, by the entrance of sin, it is often converted into unreasonable and unfeeling despotism, and becomes an additional source of misery to vast numbers of unhappy females: and they too are equally prone to neglect the duties of their station, which occasions a still further increase of misery and distraction.—To prevent or mitigate these evils, submission in things lawful is here commanded, notwithstanding this change in the conduct of the husband, which seems also to be predicted.—It is well, that enmity was not put between the man and woman, in the manner that it is betwixt her seed and that of the serpent. *Henry*.

V. 17-19. The plea, by which Adam tried to extenuate his crime, was adduced as the reason of his punishment: instead of hearkening to the voice of God, he had hearkened to the voice of Eve, whom he was appointed to counsel and command, not to obey. Yet the Lord did not denounce a curse on him and his seed, having before given intimations of rich blessings intended for them: but “he cursed the ground for his sake,” that as he had transgressed in eating the forbidden fruit, so he might be chastised in the labour and sorrow connected with his future sustenance. In consequence of this curse, useless and noxious weeds and plants spring up spontaneously, and both grow and multiply with immense rapidity. These must be eradicated, the soil prepared, and much labour bestowed, before the precious fruits of the earth can be obtained: hence incessant fatigue, pain, and penury are the lot of the bulk of mankind; which would not have been the case, had not sin occasioned it. And at last, the herb of the field, the ordinary productions of the earth, were substituted for the delicious fruits of Eden, as a sharp rebuke for man’s coveting and eating the forbidden fruit. The weight of this part of the sentence falls chiefly on the man, to whom it is addressed, as that of the former on the woman. Nor was any respite or termination of this labour and sorrow to be expected, till death should consign the body to the earth again, to mingle with its original dust.—As we feel that this sentence, in every part, is in full force against the whole human species; it is absurd to deny that we were all joined in the covenant with Adam, our common representative. (*Marg. Ref. q-z*.) But as the sentence upon the Serpent couched, under its outward meaning, the threatening of vengeance on the invisible tempter, so the death denounced against the body, which is but “the instrument of unrighteousness,” comprehends also the awful punishment prepared for the soul, the deviser of every sin, and the real agent in committing it. This is evinced by the sinful propensities of the human race, compared with the threatenings of “the wrath of God against every soul of man, that doeth evil.” Our very nature is fallen under the curse for Adam’s sake, and produces only sinful desires, words, and actions, unless renewed by divine grace: for in the very day in which Adam sinned, he died, he became spiritually dead, the Holy Spirit having left his soul; and all capacity of delighting in the holy service and spiritual worship

become ^das one of us, to know good and evil: and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the ^etree of life, and ^feat, and live for ever;

23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to ^gtill the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man: and he placed at the ^heast of the garden of Eden ⁱCherubims, and ^ja flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

2 Cor. 5:21. d 5. 1:26. 11:6,7. 1a. 10:12. 47:12,13. e 2:9. Prov. 3:18. Rev. 2:7. 22:2. f Ps. 22:26. John 6:48—53. g 2:5. 4:2,12. 9:20. Ec. 5:3. h 2:6. i Ex. 22:2. 1 Sam. 4:3. 1 Kings 6:25—35. j 1a. 30:1. 39:1. Ez. 10:2, &c. k Num. 22:23. Josh. 5:13. 1 Chr. 21:16. l 1 John 14:6. Heb. 10:18—22.

of God, is extinct in every descendant of Adam, till ^athe Spirit of life in Christ Jesus^b restores divine life, by regeneration. Indeed, the apostle directly opposes the death which came by Adam, to the life which comes by Christ: and therefore, if the one is eternal, so is the other. (Rom. 5:12—19.) Thus all are concluded under sin and wrath, and none but Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant, can deliver us. And thus He, ^c“the second Adam, the Lord from heaven,” as our Surety, was under ^dsubjection, and made a ^ecurse for us, laboured through his sorrowful life, ^fsweat blood in the garden, endured the ^g travail of his soul; and at length expired on the cross, and was laid in the grave, that he might bear every part of the sentence deserved by man’s sin, and so finally save the whole multitude of his believing people.

V. 20. Adam thankfully accepted the reprieve comprehended in the sentence, and looked forward to the increase of the human species with submissive satisfaction, notwithstanding its attendant miseries; because he by faith embraced the promise of that future ^a“Seed of the woman, which should bruise the Serpent’s head.” And he called his wife ^bEve, which signifies ^cLife, or ^dLiving; not only as she was to be the mother of the whole human race, but also of him especially who is the Author and Source of life eternal to all believers.

V. 21. *Coats of skins.* Some conclude from this circumstance, that a considerable time had elapsed between the creation and the fall, and that the animals had already begun to increase, or none could have been spared to be slain: but this is mere conjecture; as are all other opinions on the subject, in which it has not pleased God to gratify our curiosity. It is extremely probable that some beasts, sacrificed by divine appointment, furnished the skins with which Adam and Eve were clothed: for, as they certainly had never slain any animals before the fall, and as we have no reason to suppose that any had died of themselves, it is hard to conceive in what other way these skins could be procured.—Innocent animals, slain in sacrifice, furnishing garments to fallen Adam and Eve, would very aptly typify the promised Seed, who suffered for our sins, that we might stand accepted before God in his righteousness: and the circumstance of the Lord God making these coats of skins, and ^aclothing them, not only intimates the kind instruction and assistance which he afforded them, in accommodating themselves to their present situation: but represents to us, that the Saviour and salvation are of his providing; and that faith, which receives and puts on Christ, is his gift, and must be sought and received from him.

V. 22—24. The expression, ^a“become as one of us,” emphatically denotes the plurality of persons in the Deity. (Note, 1:26.)—The Lord was pleased to point out, in language, expressive both of pity and indignation, the sad change which had taken place, by thus alluding to the ambitious desire and vain expectation of being as gods, which had been excited in Adam and Eve, and to their woful disappointment. As they had forfeited the blessing of ^bimmortality, it was very proper that they should be deprived of the sacramental pledge of it. But this by no means proves, that the fruit of the tree of life had any ^cinherent efficacy of conferring immortality: it rather reflected upon their folly, who had been deluded to believe that the fruit of the tree of knowledge could of itself make them wise!—After this expulsion from Eden, some angelic guards, with a visible appearance, and the similitude of a flaming sword, forbad all entrance into it, or access to the tree of life. This indicated, that, ^daccording to the covenant sealed by the tree of life, the favour of God and eternal happiness were for ever unattainable by fallen man. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6. In deducing practical instruction from this important part of Scripture, the only difficulty lies in selection; for every part of revealed religion is virtually comprised in it.

—The subject calls upon us to lament and mourn; not so much for these primitive transgressors, as for ourselves, our children, and the whole human race, thus involved in one common ruin; but at the same time it reminds us to rejoice in God our Saviour, from whom come everlasting righteousness and felicity. It behoves us, however, ^a“to rejoice with trembling,” lest we be found among those who neglect this great salvation, through the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the snares of the world; and, above all, through the subtlety of our watchful, unwearied, and malicious enemies, the powers of darkness, and the agents in whom they lie concealed, who are still envious of our happiness, and covertly plotting our destruction. For, though the several steps be not always so discernible, there is

CHAPTER IV.

Cain and Abel are born, 1, 2. Abel’s offering is accepted, and Cain’s rejected, 3—7. Cain murders Abel; is convicted, condemned, and banished: his subsequent behaviour, 8—17. His descendants to Lamech, the fifth in descent from Adam, with some particulars of Lamech and his children, 18—24. ^aSet is born, 25, 26.

AND Adam knew Eve his wife: and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, ^a“I have gotten a man from the Lord.”

2 And she again bare his brother ^bAbel. ^cAnd Abel was ^da keeper of sheep, but Cain was ^ea tiller of the ground.

a 25. 5:29. 1 John 3:12. * Heb. *Hebel*. b 30:29—31. 46:32—34. 47:3. Ex. 3:1. Ps. 73:70—72. Am. 7:15. † Heb. *feeder*. c 3:23. 9:20.

the same concurrence and succession in all temptations, by which we are overcome, as there were in the case of Eve; and it contains a picture in miniature of all Satan’s devices and victories in every age. Still he insinuates hard thoughts of God and his commandments; flatters men with hopes of impunity, in direct contradiction to the sacred oracles; enhances to the imagination the pleasure or advantage of sinful indulgence; pays court to pride and the sensual appetite: he still entangles men in error, seduces them into unbelief, hurries them on with precipitation, and prevails with them to ^a“trust in their own hearts,” and ^b“lean to their own understandings,” till he has effected his destructive purposes. Whenever therefore our pride is flattered, or discontent, ambition, affectation of independence, covetousness, or sensual lust is excited; when we are ready to promise ourselves impunity in sin, or advantage from it; when hard thoughts of God and his commandments; doubts about his veracity and faithfulness, or low apprehensions of the value of his favour and of spiritual blessings are suggested; and when we are urged forward in self-confidence, not brooking opposition, and not taking time for prayer, and consulting pious and prudent friends; then we may be sure the old Serpent is tempting us; then especially we are called to ^c“watch and pray;” and our only safety consists in speedy flight, or vigorous resistance, being ^d“steadfast in the faith.”—We have also in Satan’s conduct the first example of ^eperjury, and a specimen of its horrible consequences: and perjurers would do well to contemplate, as in a glass, their own character, and learn whose children they are, and whose similitude they bear.—We should, however, not only be upon our guard against avowed enemies, or wicked people: we must also reject every temptation to unbelief or disobedience, though sent by the hands of the most lovely or beloved object on earth; recognizing the concealed tempter, and with indignation answering, ^f“Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written,” &c. (Note, Matt. 16:21—23.) for he still seduces us by those who possess our warmest affections; and he has in all ages employed men and women as tempters to each other, with immense success.—Transgressors can seldom be contented to sin alone; but they endeavour to draw others to imitate their own misconduct. Indeed, should our own senses or understandings seem to testify, that forbidden objects are good and desirable, we must reject that testimony, if we would be safe and happy. Nor let it be forgotten, that the desire of knowledge is as liable to exorbitancy, as the sensual appetites; and when not restricted by the word of God, it degenerates into bold curiosity, skepticism, and infidelity.

V. 7—13. “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” “The knowledge which puffeth up,” induces men to ^a“profess themselves wise, till they become fools;” and either to say, ^b“There is no God,” or to speak and act as if there were none, or as if he were! ^c“altogether such an one as themselves.”—The triumphs of successful wickedness are short, and often terminate in shame and anguish; and agreement in sin commonly produces bitter recriminations, and often implacable enmities.—When God shall ^d“judge the world in righteousness,” a summons even more dreadful than that which called forth our affrighted progenitors, will constrain every impenitent sinner’s attendance at his awful tribunal. Then ^e“every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world will become guilty before God;” and whatever excuse shall be attempted, it will not only be silenced, but turned into an argument against the criminal, and an aggravation of his guilt and condemnation.—In the meanwhile, it is very useful for us frequently to propose to ourselves this question, ^f“Where art thou?” In a state of safety and peace? or in the broad road to destruction? In the path of duty, or in some devious course?—But alas! Adam’s posterity have ever shown a prevalent disposition to copy his example, not only in transgression, but also in making such excuses as ultimately throw the blame upon God himself. Self-justification forms a prominent feature in the human character, discernible from tender infancy to hoary hairs, not only among the moral and virtuous, but even down to the murderer, the thief, and the prostitute! To this there is ^ano exception.—It is indeed artfully concealed in some; suppressed in others by that proficiency in vice, which, glorying in what is shameful, like Satan attempts no excuse; and subdued in others by the grace of the gospel, and the humbling influences of the Holy Spirit.

V. 14—19. We should accustom ourselves to consider all the sorrows and troubles of life, however varied, and by whatever second causes brought upon us, as part of the sentence of

3 And "in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of "the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of "the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the LORD "had respect unto Abel, and to his offering:

5 But "unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very "wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

*Heb. at the end of day. 1 Kings 17:7. Neh. 13:6. marg. d. Lev. 2:1—11. Num. 15:12. e. Ex. 13:12. Num. 15:17. Prov. 3:9. Heb. 9:22. 1 Pet. 1:19, 20. Rev. 13:8. f. Heb. sheep or goat. 15:17. Lev. 1:24. Num. 16:35. Jude. 6:21. 1 Kings 18:24, 28. 1 Chr. 21:26. 2 Chr. 7:1. Ps. 20:3. marg. g. Num. 16:15. Heb. 11:4. h. 31:2, 5. Job 5:2. Luke 15:23—30. Acts 1:45. i. 1 Chr. 13:11—13. 1s. 1:18. Jer. 2:5, 31. Jon. 4:1—4, 8—11. Mic. 6:3—5. Matt. 20:45. Luke 15:31, 32.

a righteous Judge pronounced against our sinful race. (Notes, P. 90, 93—11.) Even death itself should not be spoken of as the debt of nature, but as the execution of the law of God upon a criminal. "So teach us, O LORD, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—On the other hand, all our comforts are undeserved mercies; and this should teach us, not only patience and contentment, but lively gratitude; especially as they are connected with the promise of a Saviour, and the hope of eternal life. Even the troubles to which we are here exposed, death itself not excepted, as things are now circumstanced, are of a salutary tendency, if duly prepared for: and the wearisome labour to which man, as a criminal, is sentenced, and against which all the slothful of every rank continually rebel, prevents far greater evils than it occasions.—This transaction, at first sight, makes it manifest that we are capable of ruining, but not of saving ourselves; and that the contrivance and proposal of salvation go before, not only our deservings and endeavours, but even our desires and expectations. Had not therefore the Judge of men been previously revealed as the Saviour of sinners, we must all have stood self-convicted and trembling before him, to hear the awful sentence of everlasting condemnation, without the possibility of escape.

V. 20—21. Notwithstanding the light of revelation, and the hope of eternal life, the world, ever since the fall, has been full of darkness, sin, and misery: what then would it have been, had the Lord finally withdrawn from his apostate creatures? And if temporal suffering causes such doleful lamentations, what will be "the second death," "the wrath to come?" The believer, however, is taught to consider the former as fatherly chastisements, tokens of love, "light afflictions, and but for a moment;" and is enabled to submit to them, and to death itself, with cheerfulness, in the hope of everlasting glory: but the latter is reserved as the portion of the enemies of God. Hoping in the merits of Christ, and the blood of the everlasting covenant of which he is the faithful Surety, let us prostrate ourselves before God, in humiliation for sin, and gratitude for salvation; let us labour and suffer patiently, manfully resist temptation, and obey his commands with cheerfulness: not only expecting that "he will bruise Satan under our feet shortly;" but that he will in due time crush the Serpent's head completely, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The word translated *gotten*, means *acquired or possessed*, and generally implies a high valuation of the acquisition; it is thus used in two remarkable texts: *Deut. 32:6. Prov. 8:22.* Heb. Probably therefore Eve concluded that this was the promised Seed; and indeed some think the words may be rendered, "I have acquired a MAN, even *JEHOVAH*." If so, the subsequent events must have been a most distressing disappointment. On the other hand the name given to Abel (which signifies *Vanity*) seems to imply, that far inferior expectations were formed respecting him. And if Cain was early taught to consider himself as entitled by his birthright to the special favour and blessing of God, it might greatly tend to nourish in him that proud, malignant, and envious spirit, which produced the fatal consequences recorded in this chapter.

V. 3—5. This early use of sacrifices confirms the supposition, that the appointment of them formed a part of the gracious revelation, made to Adam after his transgression.—It is indeed exceedingly difficult, in any other way, to account for the use of altars and sacrifices, in appeasing the anger of the offended Deity; which has prevailed almost in all ages and nations, and which does not appear to have its origin from any deductions of human reason. But if God commanded Adam, after the fall, to shed the blood of *innocent* animals, and to consume part or the whole of their bodies by fire; representing the punishment merited by sin, in death and after death, and prefiguring the sufferings of Christ; then the whole is natural: the original tradition was remembered, and the method of expiation practised, long after the meaning of it was obscured or forgotten.—The apostle informs us that, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Note, Heb. 11:4.) Now Cain evidently had some kind of faith in God, his Creator and providential Benefactor; and he brought an offering as an outward acknowledgment of his obligations and expression of his gratitude:

7 If "thou doest well, shalt thou not 'be accepted? and if thou doest not well, 'sin lieth at the door. And "unto thee *shall* be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. [Practical Observations.]

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass when they were in the field, that "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto Cain, "Where "Abel thy brother? And he said, "I know not: "Am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, "What hast thou done? the

k Ec. 8:12, 13. 1s. 3:10, 11. Acts 10:35. Rom. 2:7—10. l Or, have the excellency. 1:18. Rom. 7:8, 9. Jam. 1:15. § Or, subject unto thee. 3:16. marg. m 2 Sam. 3:27. 13:28—29. 20:9, 10. Neh. 6:7. Ps. 55:21. Prov. 23:24—28. Luke 22:40. n 2 Sam. 14:6. Matt. 23:36. Luke 11:51. 1 John 3:12—15. Jude 11. o 3:3—11. p 37:32. Job 22:13, 14. Ps. 10:13, 14. John 8:14. Acts 5:4—8. q 3:13. Josh. 7:19. Ps. 50:21.

but he did not believe in the promised Saviour, nor come as a sinner to supplicate mercy through him; and therefore he did not bring the sacrifices which prefigured the atonement. Thus he manifested an impenitent and unbelieving heart, and virtually cleaved to the violated covenant of works; and therefore he and his offering were rejected. But Abel came in faith, as a sinner, according to the appointment of God; his offering was presented in sincerity, and was expressive of humility and believing obedience: and, as he sought the mercy of the new covenant, through the promised Seed, he was graciously accepted; and his sacrifice was distinguished by some manifest token of divine approbation. Probably it was consumed by fire from heaven; which intimated, that deserved vengeance, consuming the sacrifice, made way for the exercise of every mercy to the offender. (Marg. Ref. f.)—In all ages there have been two such descriptions of worshippers; namely, proud despisers of salvation by faith in the blood of Christ, who have attempted to please God by their own devices; and humble believers, who have found acceptance in his appointed way, and patiently endured the envy, hatred, and persecution to which this exposed them. Cain, however, instead of humbly inquiring the cause of his dejection, indulged desponding grief, and malignant resentment against Abel, and even rebellion and enmity against God himself; which tormenting passions were, (as they were wont to be), strongly marked on his sullen, downcast countenance.

V. 6, 7. Though Cain manifested a most rebellious spirit, yet the Lord condescended to expostulate with him, and showed that he had no cause of dissatisfaction; that the hypocrisy of his heart, and the unwarranted method of his approach, had indeed *deservedly* excluded him from his gracious approbation; but that, if he came in another temper, and in the prescribed way, he too would be accepted. He further warned him, that "sin lay at the door," ready to burst in upon him; for impenitence and the indulgence of malignant passions would open the way to the commission of greater crimes, which would expose him to still deeper condemnation: or the guilt of his unpardoned, because unexpiated, crimes lay at the door ready to seize on him, as a lion on his prey. Neither had Cain any cause for discontent or resentment; seeing Abel still loved him, and was ready to obey him, as his elder brother, even as he had before done.—It is not said in what way the Lord spake to Cain; but it is probable, that it was by some mild and familiar appearance in human form, as in many subsequent instances it was undeniably the case: for had it been with a display of terrific glory, as some suppose, it can hardly be conceived, that he would have dared to answer as he afterwards did.

V. 8. Cain concealed his murderous hatred under the mask of cordial affability, and entered into familiar converse with his brother; till he had drawn him into a place of privacy, where he took the opportunity of slaying him.

V. 9. The Lord soon called the murderer to account for his conduct, (as he had formerly done Adam and Eve;) inquiring of him, "Where his brother Abel was?" and his answer accorded to the idea before suggested of his pride and unbelief. He denied that he knew where Abel was, as if he could conceal his crime from God himself; and he instantly demanded, whether he was his brother's keeper?—I know not whether we are to consider this as a denial of the omniscience of God, as a rejection of his authority, or as a defence of his omnipotence; but it plainly shows that sin had hardened Cain's heart and blinded his understanding.

V. 10—12. Thus God called upon Cain to reflect on the horrid nature and aggravated circumstances of his crime, and the vengeance due to him, in order to awaken his remorse and alarm his fears.—Undeserved hatred and proud revenge producing premeditated murder, while men were comparatively few in number, and probably none had yet died; the murder of a brother, in cruel disregard to their common parents, for no other cause than the excellency of his character, and the envy excited by the favour which God had shown him; a malignant hatred of holiness, daring contempt of the Lord himself, and determined enmity to him; were united in this one crime. (Note, 1 John 3:11, 12.)—The justice and holiness of the great Governor of the universe, render it so proper for him to punish offenders, that they who suffer flagrant wrong, are often spoken of in Scripture, as loudly calling upon him

voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. *A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the Lord, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15 And the Lord said unto him, 'Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

16 ¶ And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.

18 And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad

begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

19 And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

20 And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

21 And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

23 ¶ And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, 'Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

24 If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold.

25 ¶ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed in stead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.

* Heb. bloods. r 18:20. Ex. 3:7. Job 31:38,39. Ps. 9:12. Is. 5:7. Heb. 12:24. Jam. 5:4. Rev. 6:10. s 3:14. Dent. 27:24. 28:15-20. 29:19-21. Gal. 3:10. t 10:16,17. 31:35-40. Is. 36:21. Rev. 12:18. u 3:17,18. Lev. 26:20. 1. ent. 26: 23,24. x 14. Lev. 26:36. Deut. 25:65,66. Ps. 109:10. Jer. 20:3,4. Hos. 9:17. 1. Or, Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven. y Rev. 16:9,11,21. z Prov. 14:32. Is. 8:22. Hos. 13:3. a 16. Job 21:14,15. Ps. 51:11-14. 143:7. Matt. 23:41,46. 2. Heb. 1:9. b 13. 9:56. Num. 17:12,13. 35:9,21. 2 Sam. 14: 2. c 1 s. 39:11. d 26. Lev. 26:18,21,24,28. Ps. 79:12. e Ex. 9:4,6. Rev. 14:9, 11. f 14. 3:8. Ex. 20:24. 2 Kings 13:23. Job 1:12. 2:7. 20:17. Jon. 1:3,10. Matt.

18:20. Luke 13:26. † Heb. Chanoch. g 11:4. Ec. 2:4-11. Dan. 4:30. Luke 17: 26,29. h 2 Sam. 15:18. Ps. 49:11. ‡ Heb. Lamech. i 12:24. Matt. 19:4-6,8. k 21. l 1. h 2. 7:3-9. 4:1,5. Rom. 4:11,12. 12: 25:27. Jer. 35:9,10. Heb. 11:9. m 31:27,30. 21:12. Is. 5:12. Am. 6:5. n Heb. c 1. 7. 1:1. 2:3. Num. 31:22. Deut. 8:9,33,25. 2 Chr. 2:7. o Num. 25:18. Judg. 9:7. p Or, I would slay my man in my wound, &c. ** Or, in my hurt. p 15. Matt. 18:22. q 5:3,4. 1 Chr. 1:1. Luke 3:38. † Heb. Sheth. r 1-8,10,11. s 9:6-8. ‡ Heb. Enos. § Or, call themselves by the name of the Lord. Dent. 32:17,18. Is. 44:5. 48:1. 63:16. Jer. 33: 16. Zeph. 3:9. Acts 17:26. Eph. 3:14,15.

to execute vengeance on their injurers. And, as he witnesses the secret crimes which elude human justice; so those crimes themselves are represented, as demanding the punishment of the offenders from the Judge of all, "to whom vengeance belongs." Thus Abel's blood called, as with a loud voice, to the Lord to punish the murderer: and Cain's enormous crime exposed him to so awful and deserved a curse, that the very elements were ready to rise up in arms against him, as the Creator's instruments of vengeance; and the earth would withhold her wonted increase, because he had forced her to drink the blood of righteous Abel.—There is peculiar majesty and energy in thus personifying the inanimate creatures, and representing them as uniting against Cain.—In consequence of his crime, he would also be dreaded and detested, and the sight of him would become hateful even to his parents, Adam and Eve; so that he would be compelled to leave their society, and to wander as a vagabond in distant parts, filled with anguish and made a terror to himself. (Στενω καὶ τρεμων. Groaning and trembling. Sept.)

Cursed from the earth, &c. (11.) Or, "more cursed than the ground," &c.

V. 13-15. Either Cain proudly complained of the severity with which he was to be punished; or, as the words more naturally signify, he stated that his crime was too great to be pardoned. Thus he still manifested an unhumiliated, impenitent, unbelieving heart. He considered himself as an outlaw, about to be left destitute of God's providential protection, and driven to a distance from his worshippers and ordinances, to spend his days in groans and terrors, till some person should meet with him and kill him. 'Behold here a finished picture of impenitent misery; what a contrast to the fifty-first Psalm!' Fuller.—But the Lord determined that Cain should live, a monument and evidence of his abhorrence of murder; so that he would severely punish any one who should slay him.—It is vain to inquire about the mark set upon Cain: it was doubtless an indelible brand of infamy, which would make him known to all who saw him.—Adam and Eve had very many more children than are mentioned in this brief narrative; which was principally intended to record a few important particulars, and to trace the history, from the beginning to the time of Moses. And if, as it is generally thought, Abel was murdered but a short time before the birth of Seth; the human race might be exceedingly increased in the space of a hundred and thirty years.

V. 16, 17. Cain seems entirely to have left the ordinances of God, the society of his worshippers, and the places especially favoured with the tokens of his presence. This might be at first by compulsion, in consequence of the curse denounced on him; but, continuing impenitent, he probably soon became openly irreligious, or perhaps an idolater. Nod signifies a vagabond, or wanderer: the land of the vagabonds. The wife of Cain is the first woman mentioned in this history, Eve only excepted. The sons and daughters of Adam and Eve must have intermarried. It is probable that Cain had been married, and had children, long before these events; and that his descendants principally helped him to build a city, and formed the majority of its inhabitants.—Thus he attempted to divert his mind from serious reflections and remorse of

conscience; or to attach to himself adherents, and to get a name in one way, as he had forfeited his reputation in another.

V. 18-22. The sacred historian cursorily mentions a few of Cain's descendants; but not in that particular manner, in which he afterwards gives a genealogy of the line of Seth to Noah.—Lamech is the first on record, who deviated from the original institution of marriage, by taking more than one wife; and this did not occur till the earth was considerably replenished with inhabitants. Some of his sons became remarkable, as the inventors of useful and ingenious arts: but no intimation is given that any of them were pious persons. (Marg. Ref.)

Brass and iron.] This early use of metals, seems to imply, that some instructions in this respect had been given to Adam from God.

V. 23, 24. Lamech appears to have been either suspicious of his wives, or desirous of obviating their apprehensions for his safety. It seems plain that he was conscious of having many enemies, whose resentment he had provoked by injuries of one kind or other: whether therefore he spake affirmatively, and acknowledged that he had killed a man, though not his own brother; or interrogatively, "Have I killed a man to my hurt?" he evidently drew a comparison betwixt himself and his ancestor Cain, and flattered himself that he was much less criminal: while he seems to have abused the patience of God in sparing Cain, into an encouragement to himself to expect impunity in sin, and to defy the vengeance of his adversaries.

V. 25. Perhaps Eve had some intimation, that this son was to be the progenitor of the promised Seed. The mention of Abel, in this connexion, was an indication of her piety, as valuing pious Abel above all her children.

V. 26. To call upon, &c.] Or, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord." (Marg.) That is, some persons, by an open profession of true religion, began to protest against the prevailing impiety and wickedness of the world around them; to separate from the society of idolaters and irreligious persons; and to call on the Lord as his worshippers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. The promises of God will surely be accomplished; but the appointed season must be waited for, and hasty expectations often end in bitter disappointments. An instance of worship accepted by our holy God, from any of our fallen race, should be a joyful and welcome sight to sinners; but his acceptance can only be obtained, in the way of his appointment; and unbelief, pride, and hypocrisy, are as ruinous as open ungodliness.—When we fail of success in our undertakings, or comfort in religious exercises, instead of yielding to discontent and envy, we should diligently search out and remove the sinful cause; for thus we may afterwards succeed: but if we "give place to the devil," by harbouring envy and resentment, we know not whither we may be hurried.—What fatal effects do we here behold of Adam's transgression! What can we discern in Cain of the divine image? Was he "very good?" On the contrary, do not pride, anger, envy, lies, malice, murder, enmity against God, and final apostasy, the very image of Satan, mark his whole character? for as divine truth, embraced in faith, is the appointed

CHAPTER V.

A revised account of Adam's creation, 1, 2. The birth of Seth, 3. The age and death of Adam, 4, 5; Seth, 6—8; Enos, 9—11; Cainan, 14—14; Mahalaleel, 15—17; and Jared, 18—20. Enoch walks with God, and is translated, 21—24. The age and death of Methuselah, 25—27; and of Lamech, 28—31. An account of Noah, and his sons, 32.

THIS is the "book of the generations of Adam: in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him:

2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth.

4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years: and the begat sons and daughters:

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

B. C. 2864. 6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters:

B. C. 2862. 8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

B. C. 2879. 9 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

10 And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

B. C. 2854. 11 And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

*a 2:4. Matt. 1:1. Luke 3:38—39. b 1:26, 27. Eph. 4:24. Col. 3:10. c 2:15. marg. Acts 17:26. d Job 14:1. 15:14—16. 35:4. e 5:5. Luke 1:35. John 3:5. Rom. 5:12. Eph. 2:3. e 4:25. f 1 Chr. 1:1—3. Luke 3:37, 38. g 7:10, 13, 19, 22, 26, 30. 1:23. 9:7. h 3:19. Heb. 9:27. * Heb. Aenan. † Heb. Jared. 14:17. 1 Chr. 1:3.*

means of our recovering "from glory to glory," the image of God; so Satan's lies, when believed, produce his diabolical nature in the soul.

V. 8—26. What varied anguish must have tortured the hearts of our first parents at the events here recorded! But, "Abel being dead, yet speaketh," not only proclaiming the heinousness of murder, and warning us resolutely to suppress the first emotions of wrath; but also teaching us, that the believer's happiness is not in this world; that persecution must be expected by the righteous, and that there is a future state, and an eternal recompense to be enjoyed by them, through faith in Christ and his atoning sacrifice.—When "Cain, who was of that wicked one, slew his brother, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," then, in consequence of the enmity put betwixt the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, the war broke out, which, in one way or another, hath been waged ever since: and Cain may be considered as the father, the patron, and the archetype of proud infidels, Pharisees, formal worshippers, and bloody persecutors, of every age and nation, from the beginning to the end of the world. In this war we are all concerned: for our Captain hath declared, "He that is not with me, is against me." Under his banners therefore let us enlist, and not be fearful and unbelieving, but take up our cross and follow him; and let us earnestly and decidedly, yet meekly, support the cause of truth and righteousness against Satan and his servants: and should we meet with persecution even unto death, he will certainly give us the crown of everlasting life. (Rev. 3:21.) These are "the better things," which the blood of Jesus speaketh, than did that of Abel, who was a type of him, both in the righteousness of his life, and in the manner of his death: but Abel's blood called for vengeance on him who shed it; while the blood of Christ pleads, before the throne, for pardon and peace, grace and glory, to those whose sins procured his death.—But what will it avail the sinner, to deny or excuse his crimes? to impeach or blaspheme the justice of his Maker? or impiously to spend the space of his long-suffering in worldly projects, or in making himself eminent among his fellow-creatures, or terrible to them? For "the wrath of God abideth on him:" this will poison all his enjoyments; and heaven, earth, and hell, will speedily combine, as it were, in effecting his everlasting destruction. Indeed, worldly employments often help men to forget their danger and misery: and, as the first city, that is mentioned in history, was built by Cain, and his posterity were the inventors of many useful arts; so ungodly men still frequently excel in natural ingenuity and skill, those who attend to "the one thing needful:" who, however, "choose the good part, which shall never be taken from them."

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. This chapter is a brief history of the posterity of Adam, in that line from which all the human race since the flood is descended: and of them alone; for the immense numbers, which sprang from the other branches of the families, in each generation, are barely mentioned. The former chapters seem also referred to as the authentic records of the original of the world, and of the hu-

12 And Cainan lived seventy years, and **B. C.** 2589 begat Mahalaleel.

13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

14 And all the days of Cainan were nine **B. C.** 2769 hundred and ten years: and he died.

15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five **B. C.** 3544 years, and begat Jared:

16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

17 And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he **B. C.** 2714 died.

18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and **B. C.** 3382 two years, and he begat Enoch.

19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

20 And all the days of Jared were nine **B. C.** 2582 hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

[Practical Observations.]

21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, **B. C.** 3317 and begat Methuselah.

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years.

24 And Enoch walked with God, and he *was* not: for God took him.

Heb. x. Luke 3:37. 1:6, 9. 17:1. 24:40. 48:15. Lev. 26:12. Deut. 13:4. Ps. 116:9. Cant. 1:4. Am. 3:3. Mic. 4:5. 6:8. Mal. 2:6. Luke 1:6. Acts 9:31. 2 Cor. 6:16. Col. 1:10. 1 Thes. 2:12. 1 John 1:7. 12 Kings 2:11. Heb. 11:5, 6. Jude 14, 15.

man race.—ADAM was the name not only of the first man, but also of the species: it is supposed to have been derived from the red colour of the earth, out of which his body was formed.

V. 3. The distinction between Adam "created in the likeness of God," and Seth begotten in the likeness of Adam after the fall, is very remarkable.—It is generally allowed that Adam and Eve were personally pardoned, and recovered to holiness: but Adam was no longer the representative of his posterity, as he was when he transgressed the covenant; thus he communicated to them that nature which he had as a sinner, not the new nature which he had as a believer.—Seth also seems to have been a godly person; not as begotten by Adam, but as "born of the Spirit;" and this seems to have been noted in respect of him, lest Cain's wickedness should be ascribed to other causes, and Abel's righteousness to the goodness of his natural disposition, and not to the grace of God. But indeed the character and conduct of all Seth's posterity, (Christ alone excepted,) plainly testify what that image was in which he was begotten.

V. 4—20. The Greek translation of the Bible, called the Septuagint, varies from our version, (which was made from the Hebrew,) both in this genealogy, and in that which follows. (11:10—26.) In particular, by the addition of a hundred years to the age of Adam, and of six of these Patriarchs, before their sons here mentioned were born, and deducting them from the subsequent part of their lives, making the sum total the same. Thus the space between the creation and the deluge is made seven hundred years more than in our account: and by a similar addition, with other variations, the space between the deluge and the birth of Abraham, is made almost nine hundred years more. But the original Hebrew is best entitled to our confidence: and the difference may be ascribed to some mistakes in the numeral letters; or rather, perhaps, to a vanity in the translators, which has been common in many nations, of ascribing a very remote antiquity to the commencement of their history.—The individuals here mentioned might not be the first-born, as Seth was not the eldest son of Adam; but the genealogy was continued through them, not only from Adam to Noah, but afterwards even to Christ, "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven."

V. 21—24. "Walking with God," is a figurative description of the intimate communion, which subsists between a merciful God and true believers. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3. Without coincidence in sentiment, judgment, and disposition, there can be no cordial union nor harmony. But man is naturally prone to those things which God abhors and forbids, and averse from those which he loves and commands. Man's understanding is darkened, his judgment perverted, his affections depraved, and his taste vitiated by sin; so that, in almost every thing, his views, his choice, his desires, and pursuits, are the reverse of those which the Scripture requires. Thus he is induced to walk contrary to God, to contract guilt, and merit condemnation. A sinner's walk with God, therefore, commences with the change of his judgment and disposition by divine grace. **Ther**

25 And Methuseah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat *Lamech.

26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters.

27 And all the days of Methuselah were ^{B. C. 2338.} nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

28 And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son.

29 And ^{he} called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands, *because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.

30 And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters.

* Heb. Lamech, 4:18. marg. m. 5:8. 7:23. 9:24. Is. 54:9. Ex. 14:20. Matt. 24:37. Luke 3:36. 17:26. 27. Noe. Heb. 11:7. 1 Pet. 3:20. 2 Pet. 2:5. a. 3:17, 19. 4:12. o. 6:10. 7:13. 9:18. 19:22—27. 10:1. 32. 1 Chr. 1:4—28. Luke 3:36. a. 1:28. b. 4:26. Ex. 4:22, 23. Deut. 14:1. Ps. 82:6, 7. Is. 63:16. Mal. 2:11. John

he begins to record of his sins, to despise the world in comparison of the favour of God, to "hunger and thirst after righteousness," to seek forgiveness and acceptance in the way of God's appointment, and to devote himself to his love and service, and the pursuit of holiness. Having been thus reconciled to God, he walks with him by habitual repentance, and "faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," in a realizing regard to the presence of God in his whole conduct; a daily dependence on the promise, providence, and grace of God, for all things needful for soul and body; and a continual attention to his word, that from thence he may learn his truth and will, and derive the peace and comfort of his salvation; by pouring out his heart before the Lord in fervent prayer and grateful praise; by a believing, reverential, and delightful attendance on all the ordinances of his worship, and an open profession of his faith and love; by a conscientious obedience to all his commandments, without regarding the praise or censure of men; by submission to his providential appointments; and finally, by attention to every relative obligation, a careful improvement of every talent, a circumspect conversation, and endeavouring to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things," and to recommend religion to all around him.—The Lord, on his part, answers the expectations of those who walk with him. He supplies their wants, interposes in their emergencies, and evidences his care of them: he meets them in his ordinances, teaches them from his word, answers their prayers, accepts their services: he communicates by his Spirit, wisdom, strength, and consolation to their souls, and is indeed their Guide, Companion, and Counsellor through life: and at length he meets them at death, and takes them into "his presence, where is fulness of joy." Thus ends the walk of faith; for thenceforth they walk by sight, and see him as he is; being for ever with him, and like him in holiness and felicity.—But "Enoch was translated, that he should not see death." Heb. 11:5.6. In the prime of life, according to those times, he was taken from earth to heaven, in the body, without feeling the pangs of death, "having received this testimony, that he pleased God." Therefore "he was not" on earth: neither his friends nor his persecutors could find him. He was a preacher of righteousness; and, if we may judge by the specimen left on record, (Jude 14, 15,) his plain and alarming address could not fail greatly to enrage the daring sinners, among whom he lived. But God effectually rescued him from their malice, testified his approbation of his conduct, and gave a convincing proof of the existence of the invisible world, and of the future state of recompense. 'It is possible also that the translation of this holy man might be conferred, in order to show what should have been common to all, had man persisted in his obedience: a translation from the earthly to the heavenly paradise.' Fuller.

V. 29. Noah signifies rest, or refreshing.—Perhaps Lamech had respect to the promise, (3:15,) and might hope he had obtained the promised Seed: but it is more likely that he spake by the Spirit of prophecy, which revealed to him that Noah would be an extraordinary person; and not only a great comfort to his parents and relatives amidst their toils and sorrows, but likewise a great blessing to mankind; with special reference to the preservation of the human species with him in the ark, which typified the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. He was also thus marked out as the progenitor of the promised Seed.—It is generally thought that Noah greatly improved the art of husbandry, and so lessened the labour before required in cultivating the earth. (9:20.)

V. 32. Note, 10:1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20. This chapter contains nearly all the history that God hath pleased to transmit to us, of the antediluvian world which subsisted for the space of 1656 years. Considering how long men lived and had children before the flood, we may well suppose that the earth was filled with inhabitants; and conjecture, with apparent probability, that there were many flourishing kingdoms, many revolutions in states, many mighty achievements and renowned characters, which are all

(28.)

31 And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he ^{B. C. 2333.} died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old: ^{B. C. 2318.} and Noah begat *Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

CHAPTER VI.

The worshippers of God intermarry with the ungodly; wickedness rapidly increases; and the Lord in anger determines to destroy the earth, 1—7. Noah is accepted by God; warned of an approaching deluge; and instructed to prepare an ark, 8—21. He implicitly obeys, 22.

AND it came to pass, when men began *to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; *and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the Lord said, *My spirit shall not

8:41, 42. Rom. 9:7, 8. 2 Cor. 6:18. c. 8:6. 39:6, 7. 2 Sam. 11:2. Job 31:1. 1 John 4:16. d. 24:3. 27:46. Ex. 34:16. Deut. 7:3, 4. Josh. 23:12, 13. Ezra 9:1, 2, 12. Neh. 13:24—27. Mal. 2:15. 1 Cor. 7:39. 2 Cor. 6:14—16. e Num. 11:17. Neh. 9:30. Is. 63:10. Acts 7:51. 1 Thes. 5:19, 20. 11 et. 3:18—20. Jude 14, 15.

now buried in oblivion: while nothing is recorded but what relates to the holy seed, among whom true religion was maintained, and who doubtless were despised and hated in their generation. In the judgment of God, the saints are the only excellent and eminent persons, and true religion the grand concern on earth; compared with which, all things else are scarcely worth mentioning.—The power of God alone, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being," could preserve the curious fabric of the human body for the few years now allotted to us; and the same power would suffice to preserve it to the age of Methuselah, or for ever. Man lives as long as his Creator pleases, and no longer; which should warn us not to provoke him, but to be prepared for and expecting our summons. Nor have we any cause to regret the shortness of our present lives: Abel and Enoch, the two most favoured characters before the flood, were removed at an earlier period than any others whose history is recorded. Were the world less miserable, it could be no loss to die and go to heaven: nor can it ever be gain to live and treasure up wrath by sin; and as the long lives of the antediluvians might encourage procrastination and increase presumption; so the shortness of our days may warn us without delay, to hearken to the voice of God in the gospel.

V. 21—32. Man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity.—He is born, raises up a family, and dies. These are his memoirs: all else is a cipher, or a blot, except he WALKS WITH GOD.—The page of history records the splendid actions of the great and illustrious: the report of the day proclaims the wealth which some have accumulated and left behind, and of which they are gone to render an account: the monuments of the dead are often inscribed with pompous titles and flattering commendations:—but may it, with truth, be engraven on my tomb-stone, or whispered in the obscurest corner, "He walked with God, and was not, for God took him!" and so far from envying their distinctions, not even Enoch's privilege shall be anxiously desired; but, as one expresses it,

'I'll hail the sharpest pangs of death,

Which break my way to God!' Doddridge.

We may also observe that they, who begin young to walk with God, may expect to walk with him long, comfortably, and usefully: and the true Christian's perseverance in holiness, through many a year, till God takes him, will best evince and illustrate that doctrine, which many oppose, and others pervert.—But walking with God requires no monkish celibacy and solitude: it well consists with the cares and comforts, and much consists in the conscientious performance of the duties of social and relative life.—As, however, we need better comforters under our toil and sorrow than the dearest relations and most promising offspring, may we seek and find the comforts of faith in Christ, and of joy in the Holy Ghost!

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The spiritual worshippers of God are his children; and this honourable title is sometimes conferred on all who profess the true religion. These seem to have kept themselves for a long time distinct from such as were openly irreligious, or idolatrous; the former uniting with Seth's descendants, the latter with Cam's. But at length, when the human race had greatly increased, and numbers of very beautiful women were observed among the irreligious or idolatrous party; the worshippers of God were induced by unworthy motives, unreservedly to contract marriages with them, which made way for a rapid increase of wickedness, and an almost universal apostasy. (Marg. Ref.) These women are called "the daughters of men," or rather of Adam; as inheriting his fallen nature, and imitating his sin, but not his repentance.

V. 3. The Spirit of God strove with men, by inspiring Enoch, Noah, and perhaps others, to preach to them; as bearing with them, and waiting to be gracious, notwithstanding their rebellions; and as exciting convictions in their consciences. But the Lord on this occasion declared, probably by Noah, that his Spirit should not thus strive with them perpetually; but that, provoked by their obstinate resistance, not only to the warning of his prophets, but even to the voice

always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them; the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown.

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them.

[Practical Observations.]

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

f John 3:6. Rom. 8:1-13. Gal. 5:16-24. g Num. 13:33. Deut. 2:20-21. 3:11. 1 Sam. 17:1. 2 Sam. 21:15-22. h Heb. 11:4. Num. 16:2. 113:13. 18:20-21. Ps. 14:1. Rom. 1:8-31. 3:10-19. i Heb. the whole imagination, with the purposes and desires of the heart. k 9:21. Job 15:16. Ec. 7:24. 9:3. Jer. 17:9. Mark 7:21-23. Eph. 2:1-3. Tit. 3:3. 1 Jer. 4:14. j Heb. every day. m Num. 23:19. 1 Sam. 15:11, 29. 2 Sam. 24:16. Ps. 106:45. 110:4. Jer. 18:8-10. Hos. 11:7. Jon. 3:10. Mat. 3:6. Rom. 11:29. Heb. 6:17, 18. Jam. 1:17. n 1 Pet. 5:20. 2:29. 2 Pet. 2:4. 8:13. 9:5, 10. 1e. 48:18. Luke 19:41, 42. Eph. 4:30. j Heb. from men unto beast. o 19:19. Ec. 33:12-17. Prov. 3:4. 9:35. 12:2. Jer. 31:2. Luke 1:30. Acts 7:46. 2 Tim. 1:18. p 2:4. 5:1. q Job 12:4.

own consciences, he would finally leave them to be hardened in sin, and ripened for destruction. This he determined on, because "man was flesh;" not only frail and feeble, but carnal and depraved; having prostituted the noble powers of his rational soul, and every higher consideration, to make provision for the gratification of his corrupt inclinations. And now, by the defection of those who had been distinguished as "the sons of God," this was become almost the universal character of the human race; so that man was become altogether incapable of answering the great end of his creation. Yet the Lord was pleased to declare, that he would wait a hundred and twenty years, before he executed his purposed vengeance; that men might have space to repent, and to use proper methods of averting his terrible indignation.

V. 4. *Giants.* These giants perhaps were men of great stature and strength, but more certainly men of enormous wickedness. And the children, which sprang from the intermarriages above mentioned, were of the same character. Thus they became, in those ancient times, "mighty men," men of renown," as heroes, conquerors, and chieftains; but they were apostates from God, and cruel destroyers and oppressors of mankind.

The Hebrew word (גִּימְטִים), rendered *giants*, appears to be derived from a root which signifies to fall (נָפַל): either, Men who had fallen from God; or Men, who by force and power caused others to fall, that is, cast them down.

V. 5. The words of this verse are peculiarly expressive:—"God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth." He who could not mistake, or form a false estimate, saw that man's wickedness was great, open, daring, and atrocious; and that among all men, throughout the earth. Yet he saw the heart still worse. "Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart were only evil continually," that is, the workings of the fancy, the contrivances of the understanding, the purposes, desires, and affections of the whole soul, were every one of them evil, only evil, without any intermixture of good; only evil, every day, continually, without interruption or cessation!

V. 6, 7. *It repented—it grieved.* Such expressions as these are made use of by the Holy Spirit, in a gracious condescension to our apprehensions; and to accommodate heavenly things, as far as their nature will admit of it, to the similitude of earthly things: just as we speak to children in their language, and in accommodation to their capacities, that we may the better convey our meaning to their minds.—Metaphysical truth is too refined and subtle for mankind in general; and only fitted for the amusement of speculative men: but the Scriptures were written to make even the poor and illiterate wise unto salvation. To speak to them of the *passions*, from its sensible and visible effects, more readily informs and more deeply interests them: while other passages sufficiently guard the sober inquirer from misapprehension.—Should an artist, after bestowing much pains, and manifesting great skill about some curious piece of mechanism, dash it to pieces; we should conclude from this effect, that he repented having made it. Or should a parent, after conferring great favours on his child, be provoked by his misconduct finally to disinherit him; we should thence infer, that he was "grieved at his heart" that he had bestowed so much upon him. Thus

11 The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13* And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof: with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

17 And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

Prov. 4:18. Ec. 7:20. Hab. 2:4. Luke 2:25. 23:50. Acts 10:22. Gal. 3:11. Heb. 11:7. 5 Or, upright. 2 Chr. 15:17. 25:2. Job 1:18. 1s. 37:37. Luke 1:6. Phil. 3:9-15. f See on 5:2. g 5:22. 1 Is. 60:16. Ec. 8:17. Hos. 4:12. Hab. 2:8, 17. d 8. Job 33:27. Ps. 33:14. 55:2. Prov. 15:3. x 5. 7:4, 21. 9:12, 16, 17. Luke 3:4. y Jer. 51:13. Ez. 7:3-6. Amos 8:2. 1 Pet. 4:7. 1 Or, from the earth. 7:23. z Jer. 4:23-28. 2 Pet. 3:6, 7, 10-12. a Matt. 24:38. Luke 17:27. 1 Pet. 3:20. b Heb. note. b Ec. 2:3. c 7:20. Deut. 3:11. d 8:6. 2 Sam. 6:16. 2 Kings 9:30. e 7:16. Luke 13:25. f Ez. 41:16. 42:3. g 9:9. Ex. 14:17. Lev. 26:26. Deut. 32:30. h 5:12. Ez. 9:8. 6:3. 34:11, 20. Hos. 5:14. h 7:4, 17, 23. Ps. 29:10. 93:3, 4. Amos 9:6. 1:2, 7. 7:15. k Rom. 5:12-14, 21. 6:23. 8:20-22.

the Creator, having formed the earth, and men upon it; having displayed his wisdom, power, and goodness in his works, and in the riches which he had conferred on man, in whom especially his glory had shone; after the earth was filled with inhabitants, was provoked by their wickedness to destroy them all with a flood. This was an effect which seemed to flow from his repenting that he had made man, and to indicate that he was "grieved at his heart."—It is, indeed impossible that God should really be sorry, or repent of any thing that he has said or done; or really wish he had never said or done it: but his change of conduct was such as in men springs from these causes; and the expression most emphatically denotes extreme abhorrence of the crimes of men, and of their desperate depravity.

V. 8, 9. Noah is the first person who is called *righteous*, or just; that is, he was so by the "righteousness of faith." (Marg. Ref.—Note, Heb. 11:7.) He was a true believer, "he found grace," and was the object of the Lord's special favour; being sincerely and unreservedly religious; and one who dared to be singular in that corrupt generation.

V. 11, 12. The earth was not only full of daring impiety, and probably idolatry, before God, and, as it were, in defiance of him; but also of oppression, cruelty, and murder; so that men in general had corrupted their way all over the world.

V. 13. The Lord revealed to Noah, that he would destroy guilty man from the earth, with all the animal tribes and all the vegetable riches, with which it was replenished; and also all the works of men; and so change the state of it, as to render the whole one universal desolation. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 14-16. The word here rendered an *ark*, is only used for Noah's ark, and that ark of bulrushes in which the child Moses was preserved. It seems to have been built, in some respects, like the hulk of a ship, except that it was flat-bottomed, square at each end, and roofed as a house; so that it terminated at the top in the breadth of a cubit. It is not agreed what kind of timber is meant by Gopher-wood; perhaps that of the Cypress-tree. The ark was made with three decks, and divided into many little cabins; it was pitched within and without to keep it tight and sweet; and lighted from the upper part, probably by one window reaching from end to end. A cubit was something more than half a yard; so that this enormous vessel was about a hundred and sixty yards in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and sixteen in height; and thus vastly larger than our greatest ships. Learned men have shown, that these dimensions were far more than were necessary to contain all the animals to be preserved, and sufficient provision for them. But it must at first sight be evident that so great a vessel, thus constructed, and with so few persons on board, was utterly unsuitable to weather out the deluge; except as it was under the immediate guidance and protection of the Almighty.

V. 17. These were "things not seen as yet," concerning which Noah was warned; and many have since ventured to deny, and it is not improbable that some would then argue against, the possibility of such a deluge: but the Almighty God, with a most emphatical repetition, declared that he would effect it; and Noah simply credited this word. He neither hesitated to expect the unprecedented catastrophe; nor argued against the justice or goodness of God in the awful sen-

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant: and thou shalt come into the ark; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark to keep them alive with thee: they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind: two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee, and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

19:9,11. 17:4,7,21. m 7:1,7,19. Is. 26:20. 1 Pet. 3:20. 2 Pet. 2:5. n 7:2,3. 8:17. o 1:20-22. p 7:9-16. q 1:29-30. Job 38:41. 40:20. Ps. 36:6. 104:27,28. 136:25. 145:16. 147:9. Matt. 6:26. c 7:5. 17:23. Ex. 40:16,21,23,27,32. Matt. 7:24-27. John 2:5. 15:14. Heb. 11:7,8. 1 John 5:3.

tence; nor declined the immense labour and expense imposed on him, or the reproach and ridicule to which it might expose him; nor made any objection to this mode of preservation. But, being "moved with fear," and reverencing the divine revelation, he prepared the ark; became a preacher of righteousness; and, taking the warning given him for his subject, and showing his faith by his works, he called on mankind to repent of their sins. Had they duly regarded the warning, all the inhabitants of the earth might have heard it, before the expiration of the hundred and twenty years of God's long-suffering; and if a general repentance had taken place, perhaps a respite would have been granted; as there was afterwards, in like circumstances, to Nineveh. (Notes, Jon. 3.) If individuals had repented, and by faith sought admission into the ark, doubtless it would have been opened to as many as it could contain; and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, if others had, in humble, penitent faith, prepared arks, they also might have been preserved.

V. 18. This is the first place in which the word *covenant* occurs; and it seems to relate to the gracious assurance which God gave Noah, that the earth should not be destroyed by a second deluge. (*Marg. Ref.*)—[Sons.] None of Noah's sons were born a hundred years before the flood; but the command might be given prophetically in this respect, as well as in others. It is however probable, that the first intimations of the approaching deluge were given some years before the command for building the ark; yet this was a work of so great labour, that much time must have been employed about it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. There is scarcely a more lamentable proof of a decay in vital godliness, or a more effectual means of hastening it, than intermarriages between professors of true religion and its avowed enemies. In all ages there seems to have been a peculiar curse of God on them; the evil example of the ungodly party generally corrupts the other; family religion is put an end to; and the children, almost universally, are trained up according to the maxims of the ungodly parent. If we profess ourselves to be "the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty," we must not marry in opposition to his will; and he will not allow us to prefer beauty, wit, wealth, or honourable alliances, to piety. Though "the Lord is slow to anger, and of great kindness," yet his "Spirit will not always strive with men;" and when they persist in sin, in defiance of his word, and the convictions of their own consciences, he will at length totally withdraw from them, and permit them to be hardened to their ruin. If he is so grieved by our sin as to destroy the work of his own hands, how reasonable is it that we should mourn for it, and that we should show our repentance by seeking its destruction!—They whom the world admires as "men of renown," are often, in the judgment of God, and even of common sense, no better than cruel tyrants and oppressors; let us then desire that "honour which cometh from God" on those who do good; not that which comes from man upon those who do mischief. But what is now become of "the image and likeness of God?" Doth man now merit to be pronounced *VERY GOOD* by the Lord himself? Alas! the old serpent, that proud, ambitious apostate, rebel, liar, and murderer, hath filled the earth with his detestable progeny! Yet, how few are aware that the description here given of human depravity suits them, while unregenerate! Inattention, ignorance of the divine law, and self-flattery, hide this humiliating truth from men's minds; yea, strongly prejudice them against it: but a deep conviction of it, with application to our own state and character, is essential to a due valuation of the salvation proposed in the gospel.

V. 8-22. In the worst of times, God hath "a remnant according to the election of grace;" and they who would please him, must dare to be singular. These believe his truth, and obey his commandments; they hear his warnings, and fear, but do not despair; they embrace his promises, and hope, but do not presume; they stand in awe, and do not find fault; they expect safely upon the warrant of his word; and they refuse no obedience, however burdensome, expensive, or self-denying.—But in the warning to Noah, there is one

CHAPTER VII.

At God's command Noah enters the ark, with his family, and the living creatures; and the flood begins, 1-16. Its increase for forty days, 17-20. All flesh is destroyed by it, 21-23. Its duration, 24.

AND the Lord said unto Noah, "Come, thou and all thy house, into the ark: for 'thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean, by two, the male and his female.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights:

a Job 5:19-24. Ps. 91:1-10. Prov. 14:26. 18:10. Is. 26:20,21. Ez. 9:4-6. Zeph. 2:3. Matt. 24:37-39. b See on 6:9. Ps. 33:18,19. Prov. 11:4-8. Is. 3:10,11. 2 Pet. 2:5-9. c 2:9. Lev. 11. Deut. 14:1-21. Acts 10:11-15. d Heb. account, seven. e Lev. 10:10. Ex. 44:23. f 10. 6:3. 8:10-12. 29:27,28. f 12,17.

more solemn given to us, "to flee from the wrath to come," which, with tremendous efficacy, will sweep all unbelievers into the pit of destruction. Christ, (the true "Noah, which same shall comfort us,") hath, at infinite expense, already prepared the ark, and kindly invites us to enter in. Whilst the day of his patience continues, let us obediently hear his voice, and thankfully sue for admission, which will then be readily vouchsafed us. But let it be observed, that they who "go about to establish their own righteousness," act as Noah would have done, had he substituted a high tower on a mountain, according to his own wisdom, for his place of security, instead of the ark which God had appointed.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1. At the appointed time, when all needful preparations had been made, Noah was directed to enter with his family into the ark; because the Lord had "seen him righteous before him in that generation." The apostle says, that he "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." (Notes, 6:8,9. Heb. 11:7.) The same principle which induced him to believe, on the testimony of God, and contrary to all human probability, that the deluge would come at the appointed season, would move him "to flee from the wrath to come;" and as he believed that in the ark alone he could be safe from the approaching deluge; so he doubtless believed the revelation of a Saviour, and sought and expected salvation through him alone. Thus he was "justified by faith," and being likewise a partaker of that Spirit, whose "fruit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;" he was *righteous* in his character and conduct; that is, devoted to God, and "walking before him in all his ordinances and commandments, blameless."

V. 2,3. It is probable, that the *clean beasts* signify such as were not rapacious, and which were exclusively offered in sacrifice by the express appointment of God. They were also such as were most serviceable to man. The grant of animal food seems not to have been explicitly made before the flood; the distinction of *meats* could not therefore have been appointed. Seven couple of the clean beasts seem to have been preserved. Some indeed suppose that only three couple, and the seventh animal for sacrifice were meant. (8:20.)—There must have been a very extraordinary miracle wrought, perhaps by the ministrations of angels, in bringing two of every species to Noah, and rendering them submissive to him, and peaceable with each other: yet it seems not to have made any impression on the hardened spectators!—The suspension of the ferocity of the savage beasts, during their continuance in the ark, is generally considered as an apt figure of the change which takes place in the disposition of sinners when they enter the true church of Christ; (Note, Is. 11:3-9.) but it may also remind us of the hypocrite's external good behaviour, though his nature is not changed.

V. 7. [Sons' wives.] Though each of Noah's three sons was at this time nearly a hundred years old, and none of them had any children living; and the whole earth was about to be desolated: yet no exception, even on this extraordinary occasion, was made to the original constitution of marriage, "they twain shall be one flesh;" a decisive proof that polygamy is contrary to the original institution of marriage, and not at all useful for the increase of the human species, or even conducive to it.

V. 10-12. "The longsuffering of God had waited" six hundred and twenty years; and, as many think, seven days more; but at length the days of vengeance arrived.—"Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters on the earth," saith the Lord. Thus speaks the Almighty, and it is absurd to question whether Omnipotence could effect the deluge. Every attempt to explain the manner in which the earth was overflowed, too much resembles the presumption of those who inquire, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" It is no more incredible that God should drown the world, than that he should raise the dead; and, by his almighty power, he caused "the waters from above the firmament, and the waters under the firmament," which he had before separated, to meet together: for that pur-

and every living substance that I have made, will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

5 And Noah did according unto ^{all} that the Lord commanded him.

6 And Noah was ^{six} hundred years old, when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And ^{Noah} went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 ¶ And it came to pass ^{after} seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

11 In the six hundredth-year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were ^{all} the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth ^{forty} days and forty nights.

13 In the self-same day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark:

Gen. 23, 6:17. ¶ Heb. *blew out*. Ex. 32:32, 33. 1s. 60:24. Rev. 3:5. h. 6:22. Ex. 30:42, 43. Ps. 118:2. Matt. 3:15. Luke 8:21. John 2:5, 13:17. 15:32. 8:13. 16:1. 6:13. Prov. 22:3. Heb. 6:18, 12:12. 1s. 11:6—9. 65:25. Gal. 3:28. Col. 3:11. 1 Th. ^{upon the seventh day}, 4. m. 1:7. 6:17. 8:2. Job 38:8—11. Ps. 33:7. Prov. 8:29. Jer. 3:22. 51:16. Ex. 26:19. Am. 9:5, 6. ¶ Or, *flowed out*. 2 Kings 7:2, 19.

rose. (Note, 1:9.) "The fountains of the great deep were broken up," and, by some vast convulsions, the waters from the bowels of the earth and from the depths of the ocean, were forced upwards; while the windows or floodgates of heaven were opened, and rain poured out impetuously in *cataracts*, or water-spouts, without intermission, for forty days and nights, in every part of the globe, till a universal deluge was effected.—Probably this commenced about the beginning of November; for the patriarchal year began in September.

V. 16. *Shut him in.* No doubt this was done by the ministration of angels, and as an evident miracle in the view of all the spectators, of whom numbers, from different motives, might be collected.—Probably, the door of this vast structure was too massy to be securely closed by the few persons within the ark. Thus the Lord gave Noah a pledge of his acceptance and his care of him; and by the same token he shut out all the rest of mankind, and sealed their condemnation.—But had Noah's preaching no effect? Were there no other believers upon the whole earth? We may probably suppose, that many had been previously taken away from the evil to come; for Methuselah is computed to have died the year before the flood, or in that very year. But it seems evident, that there were no godly persons among the survivors, however some might have been alarmed, affected, or convinced: for there was room enough in the ark; and it does not appear that any were refused admittance.—Indeed, our Lord has informed us of the real state of the case: "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." Luke 17:27. Thus they encouraged one another in contemptuous disobedience; and if any were at all disposed to pay regard to the divine warning, they either procrastinated, or were afraid of being singular. But what must have been their feelings, when, at the appointed time, it began to rain in so extraordinary a manner, and continued to do so from week to week incessantly: the waters still rising, and following them to the eminences on which they ascended! How much sorer they had before despised Noah's mildness, or pitied his weakness, they would now remember his warnings, admire his wisdom, and envy his happiness; while they cursed their own folly and impnitence.

V. 17—19. At the end of forty days the waters were so raised, that the ark was afloat; but they increased exceedingly afterwards, by the continuance of the same causes, though perhaps with some intermission. Thus the deluge prevailed till "all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered." This decidedly proves the deluge to have been strictly universal; though some learned men have argued against this: but indeed traces of the deluge are found in all parts of the earth, and some confused tradition of it every where prevails.

V. 20—23. The waters at length arose to be above eight yards deep on the top of the highest mountains: so that every project for security was frustrated; every advantage of situation was unavailing. Some might escape longer than others; but first or last, all men, except those in the ark, perished. And with the human species most of the animals perished also. (Is. 34:1—6.) Indeed the faithful and powerful protection of God was Noah's only security, in this wild tumult of

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in. [Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And the flood was forty days upon the earth: and the waters increased, and bare up the ark; and it was lifted up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth: and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

Ps. 78:23, 24. Mal. 3:10. n. Ex. 24:18. 1 Pet. 3:18, 19. 1 Kings 19:5. Matt. 4:2. o. 5:32. 6:10. 9:18, 19. 10:13, 21. 1 Th. 1:4—8. § Heb. *was*. p. Ps. 9:1—10. Matt. 25:10. Luke 13:25. John 10:27—30. 1 Pet. 1:5. q. Job 12:15. Ps. 46:2, 3. 104:6—9. r. 4. 6:6, 7. 2 Pet. 3:6. ¶ Heb. *the breath of the spirit of life*; 2. 7: 6:17.

the elements; and the presence of God was his only comfort in this dreary confinement, and in witnessing the dire devastation of the earth and its inhabitants, and especially of the human species; of his companions, his neighbours, his relatives; of those, to whom he had preached, for whom he had prayed, and over whom he had wept, many of whom had even helped to build the ark. (2 Pet. 2:5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16. Numbers in every age "despise the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God, not knowing that his goodness leads to repentance: but after their hardness and impenitent heart they treasure up wrath against the day of wrath;" till judgment come upon them to the uttermost. But in all this the Lord's purposes are effected, his predictions accomplished, and his justice displayed.—Our short span of life will speedily come to a close, even though we should linger out our threescore years and ten. Yes, the last week, the last day, the last hour, will soon surprise us, if we be not always watching and ready; and with no less tremendous consternation and terrible destruction, than the deluge did those in the days of Noah. If when "the Master of the house has risen up, and shut to the door," we be found without, it will then be too late to knock for admittance. For the threatenings of the Lord, however now neglected or despised, will as certainly be fulfilled as his promises: and there is a time coming, when they, who have most affected to pity or deride the godly, will admire or envy them.

V. 17—24. What a triumph was here of death, even "over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression!" and how did the whole creation groan under man's sin! But, though we may indulge the hope that the multitude of infants, who died without their own actual sin, through the first Adam's transgression, obtained life without their own actual faith, through the second Adam's obedience; yet we are constrained to admit, that the same deluge, which swept the rest of that generation from the earth, swept their souls into the prison of hell. How tremendous then will be "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men!" and what will be the feelings of those, who, in contempt of the divine testimony, treat the "things not seen as yet" as unreal, though revealed by the infallible testimony of God; when they shall at length be seen, but seen too late! Happy they, who are part of Christ's family, and safe with him in the ark! they may look forward without dismay, and rejoice in the assurance, that they shall triumph, when a deluge of fire shall encircle the visible creation. But, unless we dare to be singular, and renounce the favour, and venture the scorn and hatred of the world; unless we are willing to exercise self-denial and diligence; we can find no admission into this ark. And, even in the ark, while in this world, we shall need faith and patience, and have much to try them.—Though we should lament, we need not wonder at, the prevalence of impiety; nor should faithful ministers despond, if their success be not so large as their expectations; for the most eminent and favoured servants of God have experienced the same disappointments.—Ungodly children often receive temporal mercies for their parents' sake; but unless they themselves are made partakers of faith and holiness, they will not escape eternal destruction.—Finally, though there is great difference of character among

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

CHAPTER VIII.

God remembers Noah, and assuages the waters, 1-3. The ark rests on the mountains of Ararat, 4, 5. Noah sends forth a raven, and then a dove, to gain intelligence, 6-13. He leaves the ark, offers sacrifices, and is accepted and encouraged, 13-22.

AND God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.

2 The fountains also of the deep, and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark: for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

a Job 22:15-17. Is. 24:1-8. Matt. 24:37-39. Luke 17:26, 27. 1 Pet. 3:20. 2 Pet. 2:5. e Ex. 14:28-30. Ez. 14:14, 20. Mal. 3:1. Matt. 25:46. u 8:3, 4. 12:1. 13:2. 14:2. 15:1. 16:1. 17:1. 18:1. 19:1. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 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879:1. 880:1. 881:1. 882:1. 883:1. 884:1. 885:1. 886:1. 887:1. 888:1. 889:1. 890:1. 891:1. 892:1. 893:1. 894:1. 895:1. 896:1. 897:1. 898:1. 899:1. 900:1. 901:1. 902:1. 903:1. 904:1. 905:1. 906:1. 907:1. 908:1. 909:1. 910:1. 911:1. 912:1. 913:1. 914:1. 915:1. 916:1. 917:1. 918:1. 919:1. 920:1. 921:1. 922:1. 923:1. 924:1. 925:1. 926:1. 927:1. 928:1. 929:1. 930:1. 931:1. 932:1. 933:1. 934:1. 935:1. 936:1. 937:1. 938:1. 939:1. 940:1. 941:1. 942:1. 943:1. 944:1. 945:1. 946:1. 947:1. 948:1. 949:1. 950:1. 951:1. 952:1. 953:1. 954:1. 955:1. 956:1. 957:1. 958:1. 959:1. 960:1. 961:1. 962:1. 963:1. 964:1. 965:1. 966:1. 967:1. 968:1. 969:1. 970:1. 971:1. 972:1. 973:1. 974:1. 975:1. 976:1. 977:1. 978:1. 979:1. 980:1. 981:1. 982:1. 983:1. 984:1. 985:1. 986:1. 987:1. 988:1. 989:1. 990:1. 991:1. 992:1. 993:1. 994:1. 995:1. 996:1. 997:1. 998:1. 999:1. 1000:1.

men, and we are apt to imagine some favourable distinctions in our own case: yet, if we neglect, refuse, or abuse the salvation of Christ, we shall, notwithstanding such imaginary advantages be overwhelmed in the common destruction of an unbelieving world.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-3. The flood continued a considerable time after the inhabitants of the earth were destroyed; and Noah might be tempted to be weary of his confinement, and almost to question whether "the Lord had not forgotten to be gracious;" but at length "God remembered" him, by hearing his prayers, and preparing for the release of him and his family; and also of the animals which were with him in the ark, which is specially noted.—By a strong, dry wind the clouds were dispersed, and so the rain ceased; and the miraculous interposition being withdrawn, things reverted to their former course. Thus the waters, in going and returning, were in part evaporated, and in part ran off into the lower countries and the bed of the ocean, or sunk into caverns in the bowels of the earth.

V. 4, 5. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the year, (as it is most probable,) just five months, or a hundred and fifty days from the beginning of the flood, the waters were so far abated, that the ark rested on one of the summits of mount Ararat. This is supposed to mean a ridge of mountains, extending from Armenia eastward to a great distance. The word *Ararat* is elsewhere translated *Armenia*, but it is not agreed whether the ark rested in Armenia, or more towards the east. It was, however, no doubt on some lofty summit; as it was almost three months longer before the tops of the mountains were seen. (*Marg. Ref.*) "If we had been a long and dangerous voyage at sea, we would be better able to conceive of the joy which this sight must have occasioned." Fuller.

V. 6-14. Forty days after the tops of the mountains became visible, Noah sent out a raven, in order that he might learn the state of the earth; but as this bird was used to feed on flesh, it either returned no more, or, as some think, it continued to come back to the ark, and again to leave it, without

10 And he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth was an olive-leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark; and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.

18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.

21 And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.

7:4, 10. r Heb. 8:15. Zech. 4:12-14. a Ps. 27:14. 130:5, 6. Is. 25:9. 26:8. Hab. 2:3. Jam. 5:7, 8. 10. 2:2, 3. u 7:11. x 7:17, 13. Josh. 3:17. 4:10, 16-18. Ps. 121:8. Dan. 3:25, 26. Zech. 9:11. Acta 16:27, 28, 37-39. y 7:14, 15. z 1:22. 9:7. Ps. 107:38. 144:13, 14. Jer. 31:17, 28. j Heb. families, a 4:4. 12:7, 8. 13:4. 22:9. 28:35. 33:20. 35:17. Ez. 20:24, 25. 24:5-8. Heb. 13:10. 15:16. h 7:12. Lev. 11: c Lev. 11. d Lev. 19:17. 23:31. Ez. 20:41. Amos 5:31, 22. 2 Cor. 2:15. Eph. 2:15. Phil. 4:18. e Heb. savour of rest, e 3:17. 4:12. 5:29. 6:17. **Or, though, f 6:5. Job 14:15-16. Ps. 31:5. Is. 47:12, 15. 48:8. John 3:6. Rom. 1:21. 8:7, 8. Eph. 2:1-3. g 9:11-15. Is. 54:9, 10. h 2 Pet. 3:6, 7. i Heb. As yet all the days of the ear, h. i 4:56. Ez. 34:21. Jam. 5:7. k Jer. 33:20-28.

being received into it till the waters were dried up. After seven days therefore, as the subsequent language implies, (10,) he sent forth a dove which soon returned, and was taken into the ark; and on a second trial she brought an olive-branch in her mouth. This was a token that some of the fruitful plains were dried, and the vegetables preserved. On the third trial the dove returned no more.—The repeated mention of seven days seems an intimation of the observance of the sabbath in the ark; after the ordinances of which, the dove was sent out.—The olive-branch, probably from some obscure tradition of this event, has generally been the emblem of peace. Thus also the Holy Spirit, whose emblem is a dove, by his consolations, brings to the broken-hearted believer the olive-branch of peace and reconciliation with God.—According to the computation of time used in Scripture, Noah and his company continued in the ark a year and ten days. (7:11.)

V. 15-19. Noah had made observations on the state of the earth, and preparations for leaving the ark; but he waited God's command before he actually quitted it.—It seems that, by a peculiar providential interposition, no animal of any sort had died, though they had been shut up in the ark above a year! and it does not appear that there had been any increase of them during that time.

V. 20-22. This is the first time that an altar is mentioned; and the word rendered *burnt-offerings* here first occurs: yet Abel's offering seems to have been of the same nature, and was probably laid on some kind of altar. By these burnt-offerings, Noah, in faith, ascribed his preservation to the mercy of God through the promised Saviour; he rendered to him a tribute of fervent gratitude and adoration he devoted himself and family to his service; and he sought further protection and blessing amidst the desolations which surrounded him.—The smell of burning flesh could in itself be no more pleasing to God, than "the blood of bulls or of goats;" but as it typified the sacrifice of Christ, and expressed Noah's obedient faith and grateful love, the Lord graciously accepted it, and promised that he would no more curse

CHAPTER IX.

The Lord bless a Noah and his family; grant a them additionally flesh for food; p. whitens them from eating blood; and is a sign that murderers should be punished with death, 1-7. His covenant with Noah and his posterity, of which the rainbow was constituted a pledge, 8-17. Noah's family and employment, 18-20. His drunkenness, and the different behaviour of his sons; with his prophecy, age, and death, 21-29.

AND God ¹blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, ²Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.

³And ⁴the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

⁵Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even ⁶as the green herb have I given you all things.

¹28. 24-60. Is. 51:2. b 7:19. 8:17. 10:32. c 1:28. Lev. 26:6, 22. Job 5:22, 23. Ps. 8:1-8. 104:20-23. Hos. 2:18. Jam. 3:7. d Lev. 11:22-5. 12:15. 13:43. 14:3. 15:1. 16:1. 17:1. 18:1. 19:1. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1.

the earth, that is, after the manner of the flood: for the original curse was not removed, nor is it clear that it was mitigated. He added, "for, or though, (*Marg.*)" "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." The flood washed away that generation of wicked men, but it did not remove depravity from man's nature; who, being conceived and born in sin, thinks, devises, and loves wickedness, even from his youth; and that as much since the flood as before. Other methods indeed would be used to repress wickedness, but a universal deluge should no more be employed for that purpose; nor should any other year, like the past, occur to the end of the world, in which there was neither sowing nor reaping.—*Partial* failures of seed-time and harvest, or other irregularities, are not inconsistent with this gracious assurance; according to which the heavenly bodies have ever since preserved their courses, the seasons their successions, and the earth hath produced its increase for the use of man, notwithstanding his ingratitude. And on this word we depend, that thus it shall be "till the mystery of God is finished."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord "knoweth how to reserve the wicked unto the day of judgment to be punished," however numerous, powerful, and haughty they may be; and also "to deliver the godly out of temptation" in the best time and manner, though few, despised, and helpless. (*2 Pet.* 2:9.) For a season he *seems* to forget his afflicted children, and they are prone to judge according to appearances; but in due season he will manifest his kind and careful remembrance of them.—The devoted servant of God will make haste to keep his commandments; and patiently wait his time for deliverance and promised blessings.—The faithfulness of God is the best security; and it is given to all them that trust in him: for his glory is engaged for their salvation, as much as for Noah's preservation.—Alas! how many are there in the visible church, who resemble the *raven* more than the *dove*! who retain a relish for worldly things under a religious appearance; and who, "in time of temptation fall away!" But the true Christian, partaking of the Spirit of Christ, may indeed, through temptation, for a season, quit the ark and go to the world; but, like the dove, he can find no rest till he returns to the Lord.—They who are saved from destruction, must on earth witness the desolations which sin makes, with aching hearts and weeping eyes; and in many things share in them. But the consolations of God will counterbalance these sorrows; and in heaven all tears shall be wiped away; so that even the destruction of the wicked will in no wise abate the perfect felicity of the righteous.—The mercy of God, the sacrifice of Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, cause the difference between those who are saved, and those who perish; and the first use which we should make of deliverances from trouble, is to return thanks to God for his mercy, solemnly to devote ourselves to him and his service, and to seek anew his providential protection and gracious blessing. Nor can that be *wasted*, whether of our valued property or more valuable time, which is expended in the service of God, according to his appointment. Finally, the divine authority of the Scripture, as well as the faithfulness of God, is demonstrated in the regular course of the seasons of the year. May we therefore admire the goodness of the Lord, trust his providence, receive all from his love, and use all to his glory.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. It is not said, in what manner the Lord revealed himself to Noah and his sons: but he renewed to them the blessing pronounced originally on our first parents, because they were the appointed progenitors of a new race of men, (*Note*, 1:28;) and he added several things, both for warning and encouragement, adapted to their situation. The dominion over the animal creation, which had been forfeited by sin, was again conceded; yet with some variation from the original grant. It is probable that the subjection of the animals before the fall was voluntary, and that by instinct they regarded man as a friend: but since that event, it hath been more the result of fear; most of them dreading him as a powerful enemy, whom they must

4 But flesh with ⁵the life thereof, *which is the blood thereof*, shall ye not eat.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of every beast will I require it, and ⁶at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's ⁷brother will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, ⁷by man shall his blood be shed: for ⁸in the image of God made he man.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

8 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold I, ¹⁰establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And ¹¹with every living creature that is with

¹Acts 15:20, 29. 1 Tim. 4:4. g Ex. 21:28, 29. h 4:9, 10. Num. 35:31-33. Deut. 21:1-9. Ps. 9:12. 1 Acts 17:26. j Ex. 21:12-14. Lev. 24:17. 1 Kings 2:5, 6, 28-34. Matt. 26:52. Rom. 13:4. Rev. 13:10. k 1:26, 27. 5:1. Ps. 51:4. Jam. 3:9. 111. 17:6, 18. 17:7, 8. Is. 54:9, 10. m 8:1. Ps. 145:9. Jon. 4:11.

either submit to or flee from. We continually witness the fulfilment of this promise, among creatures of all sorts. The ease with which horses are managed, notwithstanding their strength and spirit, and the severity with which they are treated; and the safety with which large droves of oxen are goaded forward, frequently by a single whip, who, conscious of his superiority, fears not them whilst they stand in awe of him; are circumstances which would be deemed very wonderful were they not so common; but they are seldom considered as effected by the power, and as proving the faithfulness and goodness of God. Even the most savage of the wild beasts have been, and are, tamed or subdued by man, and have an instinctive dread of him; shunning populous places, and retreating into forests and deserts; lying still all the day while man is abroad, roaming forth when he retires to rest; and seldom injuring him unless pinched by hunger, or provoked by opposition. (*Note*, Ps. 104:20-23.) Were this instinctive fear removed, and should the animals, conscious of their force, rise in general rebellion, what confusion and devastation must ensue!

V. 3, 4. Perhaps, before the flood, men had *taken the liberty* of eating flesh; but it seems not to have been explicitly allowed: the grant, however, here given, fully warrants our use of the animals for food, but not the abuse of them by intemperance or cruelty. This is not here limited to any kind of animals; so that the distinction of clean and unclean must relate to the use of them in sacrifice: and the eating of blood seems principally to have been prohibited, because blood typified the great atonement. (*Notes*, Acts 15:19-29. *Marg. Ref. f.*) Yet this restriction might be intended as a check to cruelty; lest men, inured to shed and feed upon the blood of animals, should grow unfeeling, and be the less shocked at the idea of shedding human blood.

V. 5, 6. From this energetic declaration it certainly follows, that wilful murder ought invariably in all communities to be punished with death; whatever form it assumes, or however it may, by specious pretences, be extenuated; and that God will himself require it of those who suffer the murderer to escape; so that the punishment due to murder will, in some way, be inflicted on them, as accessories to the crime. This implies, that magistrates should be appointed, who might punish murderers with death; though in the case of Cain the Lord had been pleased to prohibit all men from slaying him. (*Notes*, 4:13-15. *2 Sam.* 12:13.) Perhaps the impious inhabitants of the old world had been emboldened by the example of Cain; and no intimation is given, that any murderer was punished with death during all that period of violence. To impress the greater horror of destroying man's life, it was enjoined that even the beast which killed a man should be put to death. (*Note*, Ex. 21:28-32.)—It is a subject for serious inquiry, to all who are cordially affected to the welfare of these nations, how far national guilt is contracted, when so many are suffered to elude justice, who commit *wilful, deliberate murder in duels*: whilst many thieves are put to death, a punishment which God never commanded to be inflicted on them, and perhaps does not *approve*. The *connivance* also of British rulers in India at the murders committed by the inhabitants, in their idolatry and idolatrous customs, should not be forgotten. (*Num.* 35:33. *2 Kings* 21:16. 24:4.) Though the moral image of God, in which man was at first created, is defaced, yet the natural image remains: and it is the most daring act of rebellion against God to assault his visible image on earth, and destroy the life which he communicated.—It is observable that the reason given for the punishment of the murderer with death, is taken from the affront which he offers to God, not from the injury which he does to man.

V. 9-17. The words rendered *covenant*, sometimes mean a reciprocal agreement between two or more parties; and at other times a positive engagement made by one party, without any stipulation being required of the other; that established with Noah was of the latter sort. To obviate the fears of him and his posterity, the Lord engaged that he would drown the earth no more, notwithstanding man's wickedness. Prob-

you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you, from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood: neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15 And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, between God and every living creature of all flesh, that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

18 ¶ And the sons of Noah, that went forth of

the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.

19 These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

20 ¶ And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.

21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent.

22 And Ham the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. [Practical Observations.]

24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

28 ¶ And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

n 7:21—23. 8:21, 22. 2 Pet. 3:11. o 17:11. Ex. 12:13. 13:16. Josh. 2:12. Matt. 26:29—31. 1 Cor. 11:23—25. p Ez. 1:28. Rev. 4:8. 10:1. q Ex. 23:12. Lev. 26:42—45. Ps. 104:45. Jer. 14:21. Ez. 16:60. Luke 1:72. r Is. 54:8—10. s 17:13. 19. 2 Sam. 23:5. Is. 55:3. Jer. 32:40. Heb. 13:20. t 5:32. 10:1. u 10:6. v Heb. Chenan. x 8:17. 10:2—32. 1 Chr. 1:4—28. y 3:18. 19:23. z 2:5. 5:20. 1 rev. 12:11. Ec. 5:9. z 6:9. 13:34—36. Prov. 20:1. 23:31. Ec. 7:20. Luke 21:34.

bly, the rainbow had appeared before the flood, being the effect of natural causes; but it was now appointed to a new use, and made a seal and pledge of a particular engagement. This was confirmed by an everlasting covenant, or one which shall never be abolished. (Note, 17:7, 8.) Without revelation this gracious assurance could not be known; and without faith it can be of no use to us: and thus it is in respect of a still greater and more imminent danger, to which all are exposed; and to the new covenant, with its blessings and securities, which in these events was prefigured. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 19. Of them, &c.] This precludes the conjecture that Noah himself had other children, though he lived above three hundred years after the flood.

V. 20—23. When Noah, after the deluge, began again to cultivate the earth, he planted a vineyard, made wine, and was betrayed into excess. Some have thought that wine was now first made of grapes, and that Noah, not aware of its effects, was surprised into drunkenness.—But this is highly improbable; for even in the most savage tribes, the art of making intoxicating liquors is known; and though a man might plant two or three vines, for the sake of the grapes; who ever “planted a vineyard,” except for the sake of wine? Indeed, the fact seems recorded by the inspired historian, with that perfect impartiality which is peculiar to the Scripture, as an instance and evidence of human frailty and imperfection. Ham appears to have been a man of bad character; and probably he rejoiced to find his father in so unbecoming a situation, that, by exposing him, he might retaliate for the reproaches which he had received from his parental authority: and perhaps Canaan first discovered Noah's situation, and told it to Ham. In that case, the event must have occurred several years after the flood, for there were but eight persons in the ark, and consequently Ham had no children at that time.—The conduct of Ham in exposing his father to his brethren, and their behaviour in turning away from the sight of his disgrace, form a striking contrast. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 24, 25. This portion of Scripture, though attended with some difficulties, evidently contains a remarkable prophecy, which was recorded for the encouragement of the Israelites, in warring against the devoted Canaanites.—There is no authority for altering the text, and reading, as some do, “Cursed be Ham the father of Canaan.” yet the frequent mention of Ham as the father of Canaan, suggests the thought, that the latter was also criminal. Ham is thought to have been the second, and not the youngest, son of Noah, (Note, 10:1;) and if so, the words, “knew what his younger son had done,” refer to Canaan his grandson.—Ham must have felt it a very mortifying rebuke, when his own father was inspired on this occasion to predict the durable oppression and slavery of his posterity, Canaan also was rebuked, by learning that the curse would especially rest on that branch of the family, which should descend from him: for his posterity were no doubt principally, though not exclusively intended. The devoted nations, which God destroyed before Israel, were descended from Canaan: and so were the Phenicians and the Carthaginians, who were at length subjugated with dreadful destruction by the Greeks and Romans. ‘The whole continent of

Africa was peopled principally by the descendants of Ham: and for how many ages have the better parts of that country lain under the dominion of the Romans, and then of the Saracens, and now of the Turks! In what wickedness, ignorance, barbarity, slavery, misery live most of the inhabitants! and of the poor negroes, how many hundreds every year are sold and bought, like beasts in the market; and conveyed from one quarter of the world, to do the work of beasts in another!

Bp. Newton. This, however, in no measure vindicates the covetous and barbarous oppression of those, who thus enrich themselves with the products of their sweat and blood. God has not commanded us to enslave negroes, as he did Israel to extirpate the Canaanites; and therefore, without doubt, he will severely punish this cruel injustice.—True religion has hitherto flourished very little among Ham's descendants; they remain to this day almost entire strangers to Christianity; and their condition in every age has remarkably coincided with this prediction. (Notes, Ec. 20:—32:.) ‘There never has been a son of Ham, who has shaken a sceptre over the head of Japheth. Shem hath subdued Japheth, and Japheth subdued Shem; but Ham never subdued either.’ Mede. This must be understood, with some exceptions in the first ages of the world: for the Egyptians enslaved Israel, and it is recorded that they made extensive conquests in Asia. (2 Chr. 12:2—4.) Nimrod, it also seems probable, subjugated and tyrannized over the descendants of Shem, when he “went to Asher and built Nineveh.” (Note, 10:8—12.)

V. 26. The descendants of Shem, in the line of Arphaxad, Eber, and Peleg, included all the posterity of Abraham; and the Lord Jesus, “in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed,” sprang from him.—Thus JEHOVAH was especially “the God of Shem.” His descendants comprised a vast majority of the worshippers of the true God, till the coming of Christ; and afterwards they were the first and principal instruments of bringing other nations to share the blessings of his salvation; so that the descendants of the other sons of Noah, when converted to Christianity, are taught to worship and “bless JEHOVAH the God of Shem.” (Note, Zech. 9:20—23.)—The posterity of Abraham also subjugated or destroyed the posterity of Canaan; and the nations, which sprang from Shem by his other sons, have prospered greatly, enjoyed fruitful countries, and been far more civilized than the race of Ham.

V. 27. Japheth seems to have been the progenitor of above half the human race; and the principal success of the gospel, in the calling of the Gentiles, has hitherto been among his descendants. (Notes, 10:1—5.) Thus God has enlarged Japheth, and persuaded him, (as some render the word, marg.) “to dwell in the tents of Shem,” by receiving the Gospel from preachers of Abraham's race, who descended from Shem; and so obtaining admission into the church.—The descendants of Japheth have also obtained that dominion, under the Grecian and Roman Empires, and in subsequent ages, which was for a long time chiefly possessed by the posterity of Shem. Indeed, even a general knowledge of the outlines of history will suffice to satisfy the serious inquirer, that the descendants of Canaan have been subjected to those of Shem and Japheth,

CHAPTER X

The posterity of Noah, by Japheth, 1-5; by Ham, with some particulars concerning Nimrod, and the descendants of Canaan, 6-20; by Shem, 21-32.

NOW these ^{are} the generations of the sons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

1 ¶ The ^{sons} of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

5 By these were the ^{isles} of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one ^{after} his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

6 ¶ And the sons of Ham; ^{Cush}, and Mizraim, and ^{Phut}, and Canaan.

a 2:4. 5:1. 6:9. b 21. 1 Chr. 1:5-7. Is. 65:19. Ez. 27:7, 12-14, 19. 38:2, 8. 39:1. Jer. 20:8. c Num. 24:24. Is. 23:1-2. 1 Sam. 11:30. d Kittim. Or, R. dianim. e 2 Ps. 72:10. Is. 24:15. 40:15. 41:5. 42:4, 10. 49:1. 51:5. Jer. 2:10. 25:22. Zeph. 2:11. e 20. 11:1-9. f 9:22. 1 Chr. 1:8-16. Ps. 78:51. 105:23. 106:22. g Is. 14:11. h Jer. 46:9. marg. Ez. 27:10. i 2:11. k 1 Kings 10:1. Ez. 27:22. l Is. 21:

through many generations: and the extraordinary accomplishment of this prediction, which contains almost a prophetic history of the world, vindicates Noah from the suspicion of having uttered it from personal resentment; and fully proves that the Spirit of God took occasion, from Ham's misconduct, to reveal his secret purposes, for a very important benefit to posterity even to this day. (Notes, 48: 49.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-23. The blessing of God is the real cause of prosperity, personal, relative, and national.—With what thankfulness should we receive that immense advantage, ease, and pleasure, which result from the labour of the domestic animals, and which the flesh of so many creatures affords us; and the security that we enjoy from the assaults of the noxious and ferocious, through the fear and dread of man which God hath impressed upon them!—But, though God has constituted us masters, he will call us to an awful account if we act as tyrants; and avenge the cause of his oppressed creatures upon their oppressors.—How greatly then should we dread murder, and all those passions which produce that enormous crime! Though the murderer may escape, or bribe, or outbrave, human justice; yet, except he repent, he shall never escape the vengeance of God.—The Lord takes care to obviate the fears and anxieties of his people; and we should copy the example of his kindness in this and in every other instance.—But what is man in his best estate! “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall:” and let not him, who has triumphed over great temptations, be secure even in respect of such as are less; for they who have behaved well in the worst of company, and amidst the worst examples, are not safe even in solitude. Let us then watch and pray, and not be high-minded, but fear; and remember that drunkenness is a sin especially to be shunned, as it both exposes men to shame, and is an occasion of further wickedness of various kinds, in themselves and others.—But, though the righteous fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: nor is a single act of sin, inadvertently committed, to be looked upon in the same light, as allowed and habitual transgression: the former may be the blemish of the saint, the latter is the brand of the hypocrite.—In honouring parents, magistrates, seniors, and other honourable characters, we ought to imitate the example of Shem and Japheth; not only respecting their wisdom and godliness, but covering their incidental blemishes and failures: for a peculiar blessing belongs to those who act in this manner;—but an awful curse awaits such as copy the pattern of Canaan or Ham, in their conduct towards those whom God has commanded them to honour.

V. 24-29. We should carefully observe, and continually keep in mind, how fully these prophecies, so evidently fulfilling in all nations and ages, demonstrate the divine original of the Bible; that we may receive the instructions and commands of God, with more implicit faith and obedience. Thus we shall learn our guilt and danger; and, fleeing from the wrath and curse which is coming on the impenitent and unbelieving, we shall embrace the invitations of the gospel, accept of his precious salvation, rely on the security of the new Covenant, and patiently wait for the blessings, which will assuredly be conferred on all believers. Then we shall be safe in those wasting calamities, which sweep others into destruction: and, though what we witness or experience may give us great pain, and may even afford lamentable proof of our weakness and depravity, yet we shall be carried through all trials and temptations, and overcome all our enemies; we shall be made instruments of good to others; and at length find, that all the promises of the Scripture have been fulfilled to us, and all our prayers that were grounded on them have been completely answered. “O LORD God of hosts, blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee!”

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1. Shem, the progenitor of Abraham, and of the Messiah, is constantly placed first, when the sons of Noah are enumerated, and Japheth last; yet it

7 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be mighty one in the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord.

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.

13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananiam, and Lebahim, and Naphtuhim.

13. Ez. 27:13. m Mic. 5:6. n 25:27. 27:41. Jer. 16:16. Mic. 7:2. o 6:11. p 2 Chr. 28:22. 1 Gr. Babylon. 11:9. q Am. 6:2. r 11:2. 14:1. Is. 11:11. 1 Sam. 1:2. Zech. 5:11. 1 Or, he went out into Assyria. Mic. 5:6. s Num. 21:22, 24. Era. 4:2. Ps. 83:8. Ez. 27:23. 32:22. Hos. 14:3. t 2 Kings 19:36. Jon. 1:2. 3: Nah. 1:1. 2:8. 3:7. Zeph. 2:13. § Or, the street of the city. u Jer. 46:9. Ez. 30:5

is generally supposed that Japheth was the eldest son of Noah, and Shem the youngest. (21.) Accordingly, in this chapter, the posterity of Japheth are first mentioned.—After the flood.] This confirms the supposition, that Noah's sons had no children till after the flood.

V. 2-5. The sacred writer was about to enter upon the history of Abraham and his family, to which his narrative would afterwards be principally confined; but before he did this, he was led to give a general account of the several branches of Noah's family, from which the original of many nations may be distinctly traced. And, in like manner, before he enters on the history of Isaac, he gives a brief account of the descendants of Ishmael, and of Abraham's sons by Keturah; and before he confines his narrative to Jacob's family, he states some particulars concerning Esau's posterity. (25:1-18. 36:)—This chapter, as a kind of introduction to universal history, implies many things afterwards related. It is supposed by many learned men, and shown at least by probable arguments, that the descendants of Gomer, Japheth's eldest son, settled in the northern parts of Asia Minor, and then spread into the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the adjacent regions; and that from them the numerous tribes of the Gauls, Germans, Celts, and Cimbrians descended. The Scythians, Tartars, and other northern nations, are supposed to be descendants of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal; the Medes, of Madai; the Ionians, and indeed all the Greeks, of Javan; and the Thracians of Tiras. Nearly all the inhabitants of Europe, and probably of America, descended from Japheth, besides those of the northern regions of Asia.—“The isles of the Gentiles,” generally mean the parts of Europe most known to the ancient inhabitants of Asia. The inhabitants of Britain are in general descended from Japheth, and especially concerned in “the isles of the Gentiles.”—The reader, by examining carefully the marginal references, may perceive, in several particulars, some of the grounds on which these conclusions rest: but it would be improper, in this place, to enter on so complicated a subject.

V. 6, 7. From Cush, the son of Ham, the Ethiopians in Africa, and many tribes in Asia, (inhabiting part of Arabia, and often improperly called Ethiopians,) were evidently descended. Mizraim was the ancestor of the Egyptians, Cyrenians, and Lybians; or (the word being plural) it may be the general name of the family or tribe whence they sprang; and Phut of the Mauritians.—In short, all Africa is supposed to have been peopled by Ham's posterity: besides the Philistines, Canaanites, and Phenicians.

V. 8-12. Nimrod seems at first to have exceedingly distinguished himself by hunting, which was then not so much a diversion, as a useful method of preventing the hurtful increase of wild beasts. This employment required great courage and address, and exposed a man to much danger and hardship; and thus afforded a field for ambition to aspire after pre-eminence, and gradually attached a number of valiant men to one leader. From such a beginning, it is likely that Nimrod began to claim authority, and enforce subjection. In fact, he is the first king of whom we read in authentic history; and afterward he took occasion to wage war to extend his conquests, and to enlarge his acquisitions by violence and blood. Thus in a daring manner casting off the fear of God, and acting in defiance of his late prohibition of shedding human blood, Nimrod rendered himself notorious, and his name became a proverb. When he had erected a kingdom at Babel, “He went forth out of that land to Asshur, and builded Nineveh.” Thus the words may be rendered, (marg.) and this appears to be the true meaning of them: for the descendants of Ham are spoken of; not those of Shem, who had a son called Asshur. (22.) Nimrod seems to have been the principal person concerned in building both Babylon and Nineveh.—The words translated, the city Rehoboth, are more properly rendered in the margin the streets of the city. Little is resting to us is known concerning the other cities here mentioned.

14 And ²Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came ¹ Hittitim,) and ²Caphtorim.

15 And Canaan begat ¹Sidon his first born, and ¹Heth,

16 And the ¹Jebusite, and the Emorite, and the Girgasite,

17 And the ¹Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

18 And the ¹Arvadite, and the ¹Zemarite, and the ¹Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to ¹Gerar, unto ¹Gaza: as thou goest unto ¹Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

20 These are the sons of ¹Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations.

21 ¹Unto Shem also, ¹the father of all the children of Eber, ¹the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born.

22 The children of Shem; ¹Elam and Asshur, and ¹Arphaxad, and ¹Lud, and ¹Aram.

23 And the children of Aram; ¹Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

24 And Arphaxad begat ¹Salah; and ¹Salah begat Eber.

25 And unto Eber were born two sons; ¹the name of one was Peleg, for ¹in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

x Is. 11:11. Jer. 44:1. y 1 Chr. 1:2. Jer. 47:4. z Deut. 2:23. Jer. 47:4. Am. 9:7. ¹ Heb. *Tsidon*. 49:13. Job. 11:3. Is. 23:4. *Zidon*. a 15:18—21. 23:3—20. Ex. 3:34:1. Josh. 12:8—24. 2 Sam. 11:3. b Judg. 1:21. 2 Sam. 24:18. Zech. 9:7. c ¹ Heb. d Ex. 27:8. e Josh. 18:22. 2 Chr. 13:4. f Num. 34:8. 2 Sam. 8:9. 2 Kings 17:24. 30. Is. 10:9. Zech. 9:2. g Num. 34:2—15. ¹ Pent. 32:8. Josh. 12:7, 8. h 13:10. 12:1. 26:1. ¹ Heb. *Azzah*. Judg. 16:1. Jer. 25:20. k 13:10—13. 14:2. 18:20. 19:24, 25. Hos. 11:8. 16: 11:1—9. m 11:10—26. n 2. o 9:25. 1 Chr. 1:17—27. p 14:1, 9. Is. 11:11. 21:2. 22:6. Jer. 23:25. 49:34—39. ¹ Heb. *Ar, ach, ahad*. q Is. 66:19. r Num. 23:7. s Job 1:1. Jer. 25:20. ¹ Heb. *Shelek*. t 11:

The Septuagint render the words translated "a mighty hunter," *γυναικωνος, a hunting giant*.

V. 13, 14. The names, being plural, seem to be those of families, not individuals.

V. 15—19. Several of these tribes are not mentioned among the people whom the Lord destroyed before Israel. Some of them inhabited a country further northward than the promised land; and various changes would take place, during a course of ages, in respect of names, especially by uniting two or more families into one. The boundaries of the Canaanites are nearly the same as those assigned to the Israelites west of Jordan, including also the country of Sodom and Gomorrah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. Of Eber.] Of all the Hebrews, and of many other nations, who were descended from Shem by his branch.

V. 22—30. Besides the descendants of Shem by Arphaxad, the Persians are supposed to be the posterity of Elam; the Assyrians and Chaldeans, of Asshur; and the Syrians, Armenians, and many tribes inhabiting Mesopotamia, of Aram; and the immensely numerous inhabitants of the East Indies, China and Japan, may perhaps be considered as the descendants of Joktan, the son of Eber. Indeed, many learned men suppose that they find all Joktan's descendants in the large peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf; and appear to derive the Arabians in general from him. But the mention of a mountain in the East, warrants us to look for his posterity more to the East; at least if they settled in Arabia at first; some of them seem afterwards to have migrated to a greater distance. Indeed, this appears to be the most accurate account of the peopling of the regions in the eastern parts of Asia, south of Tartary. It is likewise certain, that many of the Arabians trace back their original to Ishmael and Keturah.—Peleg signifies *division*: and had not the division spoken of been appointed about the time of his birth, it does not appear why that name might not as properly have been given to any of his contemporaries, as to him.

V. 31. Tongues.] (*Note*, 11:1, 2.) The division mentioned before, (25,) seems to have been made by divine appointment, (*Marg. Ref.*) but it was not complied with till after the confusion of tongues; and the historian here refers to the consequences in later ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As all mankind are of one family, and nearly related in Adam and Noah, how reasonable is it that we should love and do good to each other! Whenever we behold a human being, whatever be his language and garb, or wherever he was born, we should recognize a relation, and behave to him accordingly. In this view, how unnatural and absurd is that prejudice against foreigners, and that contempt of them, which generally prevail! And how can it consist with love to our neighbours, our brethren, "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," to treat them with rigour, or hold them in slavery?—But "whence then come wars and fightings

26 And ¹Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

27 And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

28 And Obal, and Abimael, and ¹Sheba,

29 And ¹Ophir, and ¹Havilah, and Jobab: all these were the sons of Joktan.

30 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the east.

31 These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32 These are the families of the sons of Noah after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

CHAPTER XI.

Only one language in the world, 1. The building of Babel interrupted by the confusion of tongues, and the builders dispersed, 2—9. A genealogy from Shem to Abram, 10—27. Some account of Abram and his family, and of his removal from his native country, 28—32.

AND the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of ¹Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had ¹brick for stone, and ¹slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven

13—15. u 11:16—19. Luke 3:35, 36. x 32. Deut. 32:8. Acts 17:26. y 1 (Chr. 1:20—23. z 25:3. 1 Kings 10:1. a 1 Kings 9:28. 22:49. 2 (Chr. 8:18. 9:10. Job 22:24. 26. Ps. 47:9. Is. 13:12. b 2:11. 25:18. 1 Sam. 15:7. c 5:20. d 5:28—31. e 29. f Is. 19:18. Zeph. 3:9. Acts 2:6. ¹ Heb. *tip*. ¹ Heb. *vords*. ¹ Or, *eastward*. 13:11. *feld*. ¹ Seeon 10:10. ¹ Heb. *a man said to his neighbour*. c 4:7. Eccl. 2:1. Is. 5:5. Jam. 4:13. 5:1. ¹ Heb. *burn them to a burning*. d Ex. 1:14. 5:7—18. 2 Sam. 12:31. Is. 9:10. 65:3. Neh. 3:14. e 14:10. Ex. 2:3. (Deut. 1:28. 9:1. Dan. 4:11, 22.

amongst us?" From that first murderer, who so early stirred up in fallen man the vile lusts of ambition, covetousness, revenge, and cruelty, and armed brethren against each other in horrid war; and who hath in all ages filled the earth with slaughter and devastation, which, it might previously have been supposed, could gratify none but himself. But the very existence of war, and the necessity of always being ready for it, and of sometimes waging it, too plainly prove *man's depravity*, as well as *Satan's influence*. Blessed be God the days are coming, when all the "nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and they shall learn war no more;" and then ambitious or rapacious conquerors will no longer be adjudged illustrious characters, as in man's partial histories; but they will be branded with infamy, as in the impartial records of the Bible.

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Many learned men are of opinion, that the events here recorded occurred about the time of Peleg's birth, or a hundred and one years after the deluge: but their arguments are by no means conclusive: and the idea impressed on the mind in reading the chapter, of the numbers to which the family of Noah was already increased, favours the opinion that a longer term of years had elapsed. Probably the *division* of the earth before mentioned, was a distinct transaction from the *dispersion* which took place on this occasion. It was the purpose of God, declared in the blessing pronounced on the sons of Noah, that they should "replenish the earth." (9:1.) This implied that they should be *divided* into distinct nations, under separate governments, inhabiting different countries, till the whole earth was re-peopled. But as they all spake one language, and with but few exceptions had cast off the fear of God, they formed a project which tended to counteract his purpose.—Some regular *division* of the earth seems to have taken place at the time that Peleg was born, probably by divine appointment, under the direction of Noah and his sons. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 10:22—30.)—But the several families, to which the different regions were assigned, had not yet separated, and were unwilling to separate.—The expression, "as they journeyed from the East," may refer to some of the expeditions headed by Nimrod, who, having united the whole company under his government, perhaps led them to combine in this undertaking, (*Note*, 10:8—12;) though some think that Noah had settled to the East of Shinar when he left the ark, and that his descendants were now removing towards the West.

V. 3, 4. The company, or their leaders, consulted together, and excited and animated each other in encountering difficulties. The plain which they had chosen contained no quarries of stone; but it yielded quantities of bitumen, which formed a natural cement: and having thus obtained mortar, their ingenuity and resolution suggested a method of surmounting the other impediment to their design, (which was, to erect both a *city*, and an exceedingly high *tower*), by burning clay into bricks. If they had planned this enormous

and let us make us a name, ¹lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 And the LORD said, ²Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.

7 Go to, ³let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called ⁴Babel, because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

10 ¶ These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood.

11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad ^{B. C. 1946.} five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

^{B. C. 1931.} 12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah.

^{B. C. 1908.} 13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

^{B. C. 1885.} 14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber.

^{B. C. 1872.} 15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

^{g 2 Sam. 8:13. Prov. 1:7. Dan. 4:30. John 5:44. h 8. Ps. 92:9. Luke 1:51. i 18: 21. Ex. 19:11. John 3:13. k 3:22. Judg. 10:14. i Kings 18:27. Ec. 11:9. 11. i 19:19. Acts 17:25. m 6:5. 8:21. Ps. 2:1-11. Luke 1:51. n 5. 1:36. 3:22. Is. 6:8. o Job 5:12, 13. 12:20. Ps. 33:10. Acts 2:4-11. p 10:5, 20, 32. 12:23. Deut. 28:49. Ps. 55:9. Jer. 5:15. 1 Chr. 14:2-11. q 4. 49:7. Luke 1:51. ¶ That is, Confusion.}

building to secure themselves against a future deluge, as forgetting or distrusting the promise of God, or defying his vengeance, they would probably have chosen for the purpose some high mountain, and not a plain: but they proposed to themselves the acquisition of renown; they wanted to do something in order to be admired and celebrated; and they sought their own glory among posterity. Yet it is remarkable that no history records so much as the name of one of these Babel-builders, except that obscure intimation respecting Nimrod before referred to.—It appears likewise, that they meant this tower to be a centre of union, that they might not be divided, and “scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” And probably their chieftains, Nimrod especially, intended it to be the metropolis of that universal dominion of which they seem to have been ambitious.—It does not appear that they built the tower for an idolatrous temple expressly; but idolatry was early introduced, and this became one of its chief residences.

V. 5. The Lord took particular notice of this daring enterprise; and men, who take such notice, *come to the spot* to examine for themselves. (Note, 6:6, 7.)—The distinction between “the children of men,” or the openly profane, and “the children of God,” or professors of true religion, still subsisted. We may be sure that Noah, Shem, Eber, and other pious persons, had no concern in this ambitious, rebellious project.

V. 6—9. Ever since Adam broke through the fence of the divine prohibition, by eating the forbidden fruit, men have not been restrained from any thing on which they set their hearts, unless by a strong hand. The remarkable language here used, not only implies *counsel* and *determination*, and an indignant contempt of the presumptuous project formed by the builders, but is likewise a clear intimation of the plurality of persons in the Deity, and can admit of no other consistent interpretation. (Note, 1:26, 27.)—The power of that God, who first gave man the gift of speech, was exerted in *confounding* the language of this rebellious company; and nothing could be more suited to break their wicked combination. Some indeed have thought, that no more is meant than *dividing* their *counsels*, by leaving them to their violent passions, till they quarrelled and separated; and several other interpretations have been given: but the variety of languages, which has ever since prevailed on earth, proves that their language was confounded, and that they could not understand each other. By an extraordinary miracle, their minds were strangely *confused* as to the meaning of the terms in which they had before conversed, and led to form other words and expressions. Thus new languages were produced; and, probably, these were as numerous as the principal families in the company, who could understand one another, but could not converse with their former associates. Thus the very plans which they had formed to prevent their dis-

16 And Eber lived four and thirty years, ^{B. C. 1924.} and begat Peleg.

17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu.

19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and ^{B. C. 1921.} daughters.

20 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug.

21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and ^{B. C. 1955.} daughters.

22 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor. ^{B. C. 1955.}

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. ^{B. C. 1955.}

24 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah. ^{B. C. 2126.}

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. ^{B. C. 2007.}

26 ¶ And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

27 Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the

^{fusion, 10:10. Is. 13:14. Jer. 50:51. ¶ 10:25, 32. Acts 17:26. s 27. 10:21, 22. 1 Chr. 1:17-27. Luke 3:34-36. t 5:4, &c. u 10:21, 25. 1 Chr. 1:19. ¶ Luke 3:35. Ptolemy, i Luke 3:35. Ragau. § Luke 3:35. Saruch. ¶ Luke 3:34. Thara. x 12:4, 5. 22:30-34. Josh. 24:2. 1 Chr. 1:36, 27. y 31. 12:4. 13:1-11. 14:12. 19:1-23. 2 Pet. 2:7. z 15:7. Neh. 9:7. Acts 7:4. a 17:15. 20:12.}

person made way for it; and in consequence, the several tribes removed to the regions allotted to them. In some respects this was a severe rebuke, and led to the more entire separation of most of them from the worshippers of God; but it tended to accomplish his purpose in replenishing the earth with the human species.—There is scarcely a great nation in the world, but what has its own language. The dividing of languages was therefore the dividing of nations; and so a bar to the whole world being under one government.¹ Fuller.—Noah, and other pious persons, chiefly the descendants of Shem in the line of Eber, not being concerned in this project, retained the original language. Now, if this was, as it is highly probable, the Hebrew, we may conclude it was thus called from Eber, to whose descendants it was peculiar: and perhaps this is the most satisfactory reason that can be assigned, why Abraham is called the Hebrew, and his posterity the Hebrews. This name, however, seems to have been at first general to all the race of Eber.—Babel signifies confusion; (Bp. Patrick, Leigh;) and the city was afterwards called Babylon, and continued, for many ages, the headquarters of idolatry, and the type of the mystical Babylon, “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;” which likewise is, and will be, confusion.

V. 10—25. The sacred writer, having given a general account of the tribes and nations descended from the three sons of Noah, before he proceeded to trace the line of Shem to Abram, introduced the building of Babel, and the confusion of tongues, as in a parenthesis. The Septuagint read, “Arphaxad lived one hundred and thirty-five years, and begat Cainan. . . . And Cainan lived one hundred and thirty years, and begat Salah.” And St. Luke refers to the genealogy, with this additional link in it. (Luke 3:36.)—According to the Hebrew text, followed by our version, we may by computation find, that the original revelation made to Adam, might be transmitted to Abram, at above two thousand years’ distance, through only two intermediate persons. Adam lived till Methusaleh was two hundred and forty-three years old; and Methusaleh died when Shem was about one hundred, who lived almost as long as Abraham.

The Septuagint, indeed, add one hundred years to all, beginning at Arphaxad; and take them away from the subsequent life of some of them. (Note, 5:4-20.)—It is remarkable in how gradual a manner the life of man was shortened after the deluge, till it was confined within its present limits.

V. 26, 27. Terah seems to have lived seventy years before he had any children, and in process of time to have had Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and perhaps others. But, though Abram was mentioned first, as the most honourable character, it is probable that he was Terah's youngest son, and not born till his father was a hundred and thirty years of age. For Terah lived two hundred and five years, and Abram

name of Nahor's wife, ^bMilcah (the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah).

30 But Sarai was barren: she had no child.

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

CHAPTER XII.

God calls Abram and blesses him, 1-3. He, with Lot, leaves Haran and comes to Canaan, 4, 5. The Lord appears to him, and Abram worships, 6-9. Abram in a famine goes down to Egypt, and feigns his wife to be his sister, 10-13. She is taken into Pharaoh's house, who by plagues is compelled to restore her, 14-17. He reproves Abram, and sends him away, 18-20.

NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, ^bGet thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I

will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land into the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

who did not leave Haran till after his death, was only seventy-five when he departed thence. (125.)

V. 28-32. Sarai is supposed by some to have been the daughter of Haran, and the same as Iscah.—She is called the daughter-in-law of Terah, (31,) as being Abram's wife; yet Abram afterwards said, "she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother." (20:12.) Probably Haran was the eldest son of Terah, and Abram his youngest by another wife; and thus Sarai was the daughter, or granddaughter, of Terah, Abram's father, but not of his mother.—It seems that Terah left his country on a divine monition made to Abram. (12:1. Acts 7:2,3.)—Idolatry must have become very general at this early period; for both Terah and his family had served other gods before this call; which was doubtless one reason of the command to Abram finally to leave his native country. Terah appears to have been very ready to obey the call, and even active in removing from Ur: and he reached a place called Haran or Charan, (well known in history, and perhaps thus named from Terah's deceased son;) but here he stopped, probably through sickness and infirmity; and Abram, having attended him till he died, afterwards proceeded on his journey towards Canaan. The other branches of the family seem afterwards to have left Ur, and to have settled at Haran.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How soon do men forget the most tremendous judgments, and return to their former crimes! The increase of wickedness kept pace with that of the human species; though the desolations of the deluge were before their eyes, though they sprang from the stock of righteous Noah, and though that patriarch was still living! So ineffectual is every thing, except the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, to rectify the obliquity of the human will, and subdue the depravity of the human heart!—Arduous undertakings can be accomplished only by counsel, harmony, and mutual encouragement; which we often find in the enterprises of daring sinners against the cause of God, and which are too often wanting in the endeavours of his servants to promote his glory. There is, however, no counsel or wisdom against the Lord. While men on earth are plotting to defeat his purposes, "he sitteth in heaven and laugheth them to scorn;" and all the efforts of sinners to honour themselves will at last terminate in shame and confusion.—In the difficulty with which our intercourse with foreign nations is carried on, and the labour with which learning is acquired, we experience the effects of the transaction at Babel. Indeed, one great hindrance to the promulgation of true religion, both in former and latter ages, has arisen from this source. Yet, "righteous art thou in all thy judgments, O Lord!" When it was thy sovereign purpose to spread the Gospel among the nations which thou hadst dispersed, how easily didst thou by the gift of tongues remove this impediment!—Oh! remove all other impediments, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1-3. To prevent the universal prevalence of idolatry, and to reserve a remnant to whom his oracles might be delivered, and among whom his ordinances might be established, till the coming of Christ, the Lord, as a Sovereign, chose Abram from among his associates in idolatry. "Thus the God of glory appeared to him," probably by a visible manifestation; and, having made himself known unto him, and satisfied him that this was a divine revelation, he commanded him to leave his native country.—It is not certain that idolatry was more prevalent there than in Canaan; but Abram might more easily avoid it among strangers, than among his former associates; he was therefore likewise required to leave all his kindred, that is, all who

Matt. 25:10,45. f18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, 30:27,30, 39:5. Ps. 72:17. Acts 3:25,26. Gal. 3:8. g 11:27. h 14:14,21. marg. 48:5-26. i 11:31. k Acts 7:4. 29:11. Acts 7:9, 133:18. 34:2, 35:4. Josh. 20:7, 24:32. Judg. 9:1. 1 Kings 12:1. Shechem, John 4:5. Sychar. Acts 7:16. Sichem. m Deut. 11:30. Judg. 7:1. n 10:15, 16. 13:7. 15:10-11. o 17:1. 18:1. 32:30. p 15:7, 26:3. 28:13. Ps. 105:9-12. q 8:30. 13:4, 18. 26:25. 35:9,10.

would not accompany him.—"The LORD had said," &c. That is, when he was in Ur of the Chaldees; and perhaps he repeated the call after Terah's death. To engage Abram's prompt obedience, God promised to bless him personally in things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and relatively in his posterity, by "making of him a great nation."—God would also "make his name great."—Abram was not renowned, either as a conqueror, a lawgiver, or an inventor of useful and ingenious arts: he was not a monarch, a genius, a philosopher, or so much as an author; but a plain man, dwelling in tents, and feeding cattle all his days: yet perhaps no mere man has been so widely and permanently honoured. The Jews, and many tribes of the Saracens and Arabians, justly own and revere him as their progenitor: many nations in the East exceedingly honour his memory at this day, and glory in their real or pretended relation to him. Throughout the visible church he has always been highly venerated; and at this day, Jews, Mohammedans, and many Gentiles, vie with each other and with Christians, who should most honour this ancient patriarch! Nothing could be more improbable at the time, than this event; yet the prediction has been fulfilling, most exactly, and minutely, during the course of almost four thousand years! Need we any other proof that the historian wrote as "he was moved by the Holy Ghost?"—The Lord also promised Abram that "he should be a blessing." To the latest ages important blessings would, for his sake, be vouchsafed to his posterity; he should be an instrument of great good, while he lived, to his relations, domestics, and neighbours; and his example would be eminently useful till the end of time. "All the true blessedness the world is now, or ever shall be possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity. Through them we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the stock on which the Christian Church is grafted. Their very dispersions have proved the riches of the world." Fuller.—The Lord would also have the same friends and enemies with his chosen servant, rewarding the kindness, and punishing the injuries, done to him, as if done to himself. In him, and in One descended from him, all blessings centre; and through and from him they have been communicated to unnumbered millions, and shall continue to be so, till all nations shall be made happy in him, and by faith in Jesus become "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Notes, Acts, 3:24-26. Rom. 4: Gal. 3.)

V. 4, 5. By faith Abram obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went." He was fully satisfied that the call, promise, and command, were from the living God. He believed that his testimony was true, and his promise faithful, and that he was able to fulfil it. He was assured, that the blessing of the Almighty was sufficient to compensate for all that he could lose or leave behind, to countervail all trials, to supply all wants, and to answer and exceed all his desires and expectations. His natural reluctance might be strong; and many would deride him as a visionary, for leaving all, without so much as being able to inform his inquiring neighbours, or expostulating relatives, whither he was going. For it seems that Canaan was almost entirely unknown to him: being at least three hundred miles distant from Haran, and separated by great rivers, and an extensive and perilous desert.—Lot also, with his family, went with him, having become, probably by his means, a believer; and they took such of their possessions as could be removed, with the servants who were their property, and perhaps many of them proselytes to their religion. Thus with steady perseverance they went forward, and by the Lord's guidance and protection safely arrived in Canaan.

V. 6, 7. The Lord appeared to Abram on his arrival in

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of ¹Beth-el, and pitched his tent, ²having Beth-el on the west, and ³Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and ⁴called upon the name of the LORD.

9 And Abram journeyed, ¹going on still toward the south.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¹And there was ²a famine in the land: and Abram ³went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now I know that thou ¹art ²a fair woman to look upon.

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they ¹will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

13 Say, I pray thee, ¹thou ²art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; ³and my soul shall live because of thee.

r 24:19, 35:3, 15:16, a Josh. 7:2, 8:3, Ai, Neh. 11:31. *Aija*. t 4:26, 13:4, 21:33. Ps. 116:4. Joel 2:32. Acts 2:21. Rom. 10:12-14. 1 Cor. 1:2. ¹ Heb. *In going and journeying*. 13:3. ² a 26:1. 42:5. 43:1. 47:13. Ruth 1:1. 2 Sam. 21:1. 1 Kings 17:18. 2 Kings 4:38, 6:25. 7: Ps. 107:34. Jer. 14:1. Act. 7:11. x 26:2, 3. 46: 24. 2 Kings 8:1. ³ a 26:7. 29:17. 39:6. 2 Sam. 11:2. Prov. 31:30. ² a 20:11. 28: 7. 1 Sam. 27:1. Prov. 29:25. 1 John 18-10. ¹ a 11:29. 20:12. 26:7. Is. 51:11.

Canaan, to testify his acceptance of his faith and obedience, and to encourage him; at the same time that he welcomed him to the promised land, which he assured him should be the possession of his posterity: yet he then had no child, the Canaanites dwelt in it, and he could only sojourn there as a stranger upon sufferance. Accordingly Abram ¹built an altar, unto JEHOVAH, who appeared to him." He made an open profession of his religion; maintained the public worship of JEHOVAH; avowed his faith in the promised Seed, in prefiguration of whose atonement sacrifices were instituted; and probably, both with his family and such of his neighbours as were induced to join him, he observed the sabbaths with sacred solemnity. Thus, in faith, he seemed to take possession of the promised land, in the name of JEHOVAH, as the land which in future ages would be the principal seat of true religion.—*Suchen* is afterwards spelt *Shechem*, which best accords with the original.—The word rendered *plain*, is generally supposed to mean *an oak*, or grove of oaks.—The clause, "The Canaanite was then in the land," might be added afterwards as an explanatory note, perhaps by Ezra: yet some think that the branch of the devoted nations, which were called Canaanites, then inhabited this district, but, before the times when Moses wrote, had been dispossessed by some other tribe.

V. 8. *Beth-el.* Many of these names were given afterwards; but Moses spake of the several places as they were known in his time.—"Calling on the name of the LORD," seems to signify the public worship which accompanied Abram's sacrifices. Some render it, ¹he preached concerning the name of the LORD; as intimating that he joined instructions to his devotions. (18:19.)

V. 10. Abram, when pressed by famine, did not return to Mesopotamia, as weary of his pilgrimage, or as despising the promised land; but he retired for a season into Egypt.

V. 11-16. It is supposed that Sarai's complexion being fair, (as the Egyptians were *sallow*,) might render her more beautiful in the eyes of Pharaoh; though she was at this time sixty-five years of age.—The impartiality of the historian is here worthy of admiration: but the conduct of Abram was exceedingly culpable, and inconsistent with the character of "the father of the faithful," and "the friend of God." His counsel to Sarai could arise from nothing but distrust and unbelief: for a numerous posterity had been just before promised him; and would the Lord suffer him to be slain when childless? The words which he suggested to Sarai were at best an equivocation, intended for the purpose of deceiving. He tempted her to join in his sin, and thus to expose her own chastity to imminent danger! And his language implied a strong dependence on the success of his carnal policy; and a disposition, if it succeeded, to give Sarai the credit of preserving his life, instead of ascribing his safety to the Lord. The temptation also, thrown in the way of Pharaoh and his princes, was suited to ensnare them in guilt, and even to prejudice them against Abram's religion.—Pharaoh, (whose name was for many ages common to the kings of Egypt,) was disposed to add to the number of his wives, (for probably he had some before,) and his courtiers were willing to assist him: but they did not show any tokens of so atrocious wickedness, as to take Abram's wife from him, or to murder him on her account.

V. 17. God inflicted on Pharaoh and his family some grievous disorders, which made them sensible for what cause they were plagued; and thus he preserved Sarah. And probably she, being further questioned, declared the real state of the case.

14 And it came to pass that when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman, that she ¹was very fair.

15 The ¹princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before ²Pharaoh: and the woman was ³taken into Pharaoh's house.

16 And he ¹entreated Abram well for her sake, and ²he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels.

17 And the LORD ¹plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, ¹What is this ²that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she ³was thy wife?

19 Why saidst thou she is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore, behold thy wife, take ¹her and go thy way.

20 And Pharaoh commanded ¹his men concerning him; ²and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Matt. 26:69-75. Gal. 2:12, 13. b Ps. 46:3-5. Jer. 17:5-8. c 3:6, 6:2, 39:7. Matt. 5:28. d Ps. 2:2-16. Prov. 25:12. e 40:2, 41:1. Ex. 2:5. 1 Kings 3:1. Jer. 25:19. Eyr. 32:2. f 20:2. g 13:2. Ps. 114. h 24:35. 26:14. 35:13-15. Job 1:3. 12:12. 120:18. Job 34:19. Ps. 105:14, 15. Heb. 13:4. k 20:9, 10. 26:9-11. Ex. 32:21. Prov. 21:1. 1 Sam. 29:6-11.

V. 18-20. Pharaoh's conduct on this occasion was equitable and honourable; and his rebuke and expostulation could admit of no answer.—To tempt others to sin is the greatest of injuries.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. In the call of Abram, the chosen repository of the promises, and the exemplar of believers through all future ages, we have a representation of the life of faith, and the walk with God. This commences when the Lord graciously makes himself known to a sinner, by his word and Spirit: thus calling him to forsake his sinful and worldly pursuits and connexions, to deny himself, and to become his spiritual worshipper and devoted servant: while allured by "exceedingly great and precious promises," drawn by strong desires and expectations, and convinced of the ruin which attends disobedience, the sinner, "through grace obeys the calling."—He who indeed believes the word of God, and values duly the promised blessings, will yield a prompt and unreserved obedience to the command, however nature may revolt at, or shrink from it; and nothing but true faith will produce this self-denying obedience. Believers, "being justified by faith, have peace with God:" they are blessed themselves, and blessings to others, to relatives, to friends, to neighbours, to their country, to the church of God, and to posterity; by their example, influence, and prayers, living and dying: and their words and actions are often long after remembered with great profit, by many. As their friends will be rewarded, so their enemies will be punished; though their name may not be *great* on earth, it shall be great in heaven; and some, who have lived long in sin, have become afterwards very eminent in faith and holiness.—We must not neglect the call of God, to oblige our nearest relations; but we should endeavour to prevail on them to associate with us in his service: and we shall not in general be altogether unsuccessful. Wherever we go, "the Lord is there;" and, professing his truth, attending on his worship, and enjoying communion with him, we cannot but be safe, respectable, and happy. Whatever difficulties and dangers we meet with, we must never think of turning back; but must press forward, aiming at still more intimate communion with God, and more entire conformity to him.

V. 10-20. No state on earth is free from trials; no character from blemishes: famine was known in Canaan, the glory of all lands; and unbelief, with its consequent evils, was clearly discernible in Abram, "the father of the faithful!" In heaven alone can perfect felicity and purity be found.—Those external accomplishments which are most coveted and admired, frequently prove sources of danger and temptation to the possessor, and to others.—"The fear of man bringeth a snare;" and nothing but lively and vigorous faith can keep us steadfast in obedience, amidst perils and temptations.—Our attachments to endeared relatives, and our expectations from them, are frequently idolatrous, and inconsistent with simplicity of dependence on the Lord.—Strict sincerity, remote from the least appearance of evasion or duplicity, is not only most honourable, but in the event safest and most advantageous: for "a lying lip is but for a moment," and disgrace is sure to follow.—Magistrates are exalted in Providence to be "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well;" but too often they are slaves to their own lusts, and sacrifice every nobler consideration to "make provision for the flesh;" but they must give an account of their conduct to God. And when courtiers degrade themselves, by becoming caterers to the lusts of their superiors, they forfeit the honourable appellation of princes, and merit the most opprobrious epithets. Yet, even in the worst of times and places, we meet with more honour and cou-

CHAPTER XIII.

Abram and Lot return with great riches from Egypt, 1, 5. Strife arises between Abram's herdsmen and those of Lot, 6, 7. Abram meekly refers it to Lot, to choose his part in the country, 8, 9; and he goes to Soiom, 10—13. God renews his promises to Abram, 14—17; who goes to Hebron and builds an altar, 18.

AND Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into ^{the} south.

2 And Abram ^{was} very ^{rich} in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

3 And he went on his journeys from the south, even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

4 Unto ^{the} place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram ^{called} on the name of the LORD.

5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and ^{tents}.

6 And the land was not able to ^{bear} them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was ^a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and ^{the} Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled there in the land.

8 And Abram said unto Lot, ^{Let} there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we be ^{brethren}.

9 ^{Is} ^{not} the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: ^{if thou wilt take}

a 12:9. Josh. 10:40. 18:5. 1 Sam. 27:10. 2 Sam. 24:7. b 24:35. 26:12, 13. Deut. 34:1. 1 Sam. 2:7. Job 1:10. Ps. 112:1—3. Prov. 3:9, 10. 10:22. Matt. 6:33. c 18. 12:7, 8. 35:1—3. Is. 23:8. 42:2. 34:1, 2, 10. d Ps. 116:2, 17. Jer. 29:12. Zeph. 5:9. 1 Cor. 12. e 4:20. 25:27. Jer. 49:29. f 36:6, 7. Ec. 5:10, 11. Luke 12:17, 18. g 26:20. Ec. 2:17. 1 Cor. 3:3. Gal. 5:20. h 12:6. 34:30. Neh. 5:9. Phil. 2:14, 15. i Col. 4:5. 1 Thes. 4:12. 1 Pet. 2:12. j Prov. 15:1. Matt. 5:9. 1 Cor. 6:8, 7. Heb. 12:14. k Heb. man, brethren. 11:27—31. 45:24. Ps. 133: Acts 7:36. Rom. 12:10. Eph. 4:2, 3. 1 Thes. 4:9. Heb. 13:1. 1 Pet. 1:22. 2:17. 3:5. 4:8. 2 Pet. 1:7. 1 John 2:3—11. 3:14—19. 4:7, 20, 21. k 20:15. 34:10. 1 Rom. 12:18. Jam. 3:13—18. 1 Pet. 3:10, 11. m 3:6. 6:2. Num. 32:1. Ec. 1 John 2:15, 16. n 19:17, 25. 1 Kings 7:46.

science, than we perhaps expected, and find our unbelieving fears were groundless.—God protects his people notwithstanding their infirmities; takes better care of them than they do of themselves; and overrules all things for their good: yet they shall not escape rebuke, even from those who are in other respects their inferiors, when they act inconsistently with their character and profession.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1. *South.*] The southern part of Canaan lay north-east of Egypt.

V. 2. Abram's riches had been increased by his journey to Egypt, nay, by means of his misconduct! God so overruling it, entirely beside Abram's intention.

V. 4. *Place of the altar.*] In preference to any other place, as remembering with pleasure the worship which he had there performed.

V. 6. The former inhabitants doubtless occupied much of the best land; and the unoccupied part could not, in one district, support so large flocks and herds.

V. 7. The Canaanite and Perizzite, being estranged from true religion, would strictly scrutinize, and severely animadvert upon, the conduct of those, who openly professed themselves the servants and worshippers of JEHOVAH.—*The Canaanite, &c.*] (Note 12:6, 7.)

V. 8, 9. Abram was the elder man, the superior relation, and the more eminent servant of God: yet, for the sake of peace, and for the credit of religion, he gave up every personal consideration, and with great temper and prudence supplicated his nephew, and allowed him his choice.—*The best, the wisest, and men of the greatest experience in the world, are most inclined to peace, and most yielding in order to it.*

By Patrick.

V. 10—12. Lot seems to have expressed no great reluctance at leaving Abram's family, and losing the benefit of his conversation, counsel, example, worship, and instructions; nor so much as to have remitted to him the privilege of the first choice! But if this was faulty, it was still worse to choose, merely from "the lust of the eye," a well-watered, fruitful land, without any higher motive than the hope that his substance, already too large, would there become much greater.—Before the destruction of Sodom, this region appeared to those who approached it by the way of Zoar, which lay on its borders, like a most beautiful garden. The garden of Eden seems referred to. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) The flat country, watered abundantly by the streams of Jordan, resembled Egypt in appearance and fertility. Thither Lot resorted: and Abram continued to dwell in a part of that country, which was afterwards inherited by his posterity.—It is not said that Lot built an altar to the LORD.

V. 13. *Sinners, &c.*] The men of Sodom were notorious and daring transgressors; despising God, and openly defying him; and they were especially marked by him for vengeance.

the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, ^{and} beheld all ^{the} plain of Jordan, that it ^{was} well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, ^{even as} ^{the} garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto ^{Zoar}.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and ^{they} separated themselves the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot ^{dwelled} in the cities of the plain, and ^{pitched} his tent toward Sodom.

13 But ^{the} men of Sodom ^{were} wicked, and sinners ^{before} the LORD exceedingly.

14 [¶] And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, ^{Lift up} now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, ^{northward}, and southward, and eastward, and westward.

15 For all the land which thou seest, ^{to} thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And ^I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, ^{then} shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee.

18 Then Abram removed ^{his} tent, and came and dwelt in the ^{plain} of ^{Mamre} which is in Hebron, and built there ^{an} altar unto the LORD.

a 12:9. Is. 51:3. Ez. 28:13. 31:8. Joel 2:3. b 14:2, 8. 16:20—22, 20. Deut. 34:3. c 12:5. Jer. 43:34. s 14. Ps. 163:4, 153. Prov. 27:10. Heb. 10:23. f 19:29. s 14:2. 19:1. Ps. 26:5. 1 Cor. 15:33. 2 Pet. 2:7, 8. t 15:16. 18:20. 19:4. k Ec. 1:9. 3:9. Ezek. 16:46—50. Matt. 11:23, 24. u 6:11. 10:9. 36:7. 2 Kings 18:18. Is. 3:8. x 10. Is. 49:18. 60:4. y 28:14. Deut. 3:27. z 12:7. 15:18. 17:8. 18:18. 21:7. 26:13. 28:13. Num. 34:2. Deut. 26:2—4. 2 Chr. 20:7. Neh. 9:7, 8. Ps. 105: 9—12. 119: 1, 2. Acts 7:5. a 15:5. 21:17. 26:4. 28:3, 14. 32:12. Ec. 32:13. Num. 23:10. Deut. 1:10. 1 Kings 3:8. 4:20. 1 Chr. 27:23. Is. 48:18, 19. Jer. 33:22. Rom. 4:16—18. Heb. 11:12. t Heb. plains. b 14:13. 18:1. c 23:2. Num. 13:22. Josh. 14:13. d 8:30. 12:7, 8.

V. 14. "Lot lifted up his eyes, &c." (10:)—and God said to Abram, "Lift up thine eyes, &c."—Thus he who sought this world lost it; and he who was willing to give up anything for the honour of God and religion, found it. *Faith.*

V. 15. *For ever.*] This expression, in some instances, means, for ages to come. (Note, 17:7, 8.)

V. 16. *As the dust.*] This promise must have put Abram's faith to a sharp trial: for as yet he had no child; though he was far advanced in life, and had been long married.—Had an innumerable posterity been promised to one of Noah's sons, or grandsons, it would not have been extraordinary; but about four hundred and thirty years had now elapsed since the deluge; the earth was greatly replenished, and considerable nations were already founded; yet Abram's descendants had been so numerous, as almost to rank with those of some of Noah's grandsons; and none of his contemporaries can, in this respect, be at all put in competition with him. When Moses wrote the history, these predictions had, in some measure, been fulfilled: but what proportion did the increase of Abram's seed at that time bear to the incalculable multitudes which have since sprung from him? Besides the nations of Judah and Israel, his descendants by Esau, and Ishmael, and the sons of Keturah, have been astonishingly numerous. What human foresight could have perceived, that the nations descended from Abram would be preserved so distinct, during such a lapse of ages, as to afford mankind any satisfaction in inquiring into the number of his descendants? What other nations have been kept separate from the people, in the midst of whom they lived, as the Israelites, Ishmaelites, and Arabians have been? What other people can trace back their origin to one illustrious progenitor, without involving the whole in fable and uncertainty?—Even should any one doubt, against the express testimony of Christ and his apostles, whether Moses wrote these books; it is unquestionable that they are very ancient; and that these prophecies have received their most illustrious accomplishment, since the time when we may certainly know that they were extant.

V. 17. *Arise, &c.*] ^{Go} and survey the inheritance allotted to thy posterity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may sometimes be driven into places of temptation, but we must not continue in them when the necessity ceases.—The possession of riches, though dangerous, is not absolutely incompatible with the life of faith and walk with God. When they are neither anxiously coveted, nor eagerly pursued, nor improperly confided in, nor inordinately loved;—when they come by the blessing of God, are thankfully received, moderately enjoyed, and carefully improved;—they may then be ornaments of godliness, and means of usefulness. Yet they are generally incumbrances to the possessor, and sources of contention or separation between brethren. ^{and frequently}

CHAPTER XIV.

War is waged by four kings against the king of Sodom and his allies, who are converted and plundered, 1-11. Lot is taken prisoner, but is rescued by Abram, 12-16. Abram returns, and is met by Melchizedek king of Salem; and by the king of Sodom, to whom he restores the spoil, except the portion of his own confederates, 17-24.

AND it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of ^aShinar, Arioch king of ^bEllasar, Chedorlaomer king of ^cElam, and Tidal king of nations;

2 That these made war with Bera king of ^dSodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of ^eAdmah, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is ^fZoar.

3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt-sea.

4 Twelve years ^gthey served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the ^hRephaims in ⁱAshteroth-Karnaim, and the ^jZuzims in Ham, and the ^kEnims in ^lShaveh Kiriathaim,

6 And the ^mHorites in their mount Seir, unto ⁿEl-paran, which is by the wilderness.

7 And they returned and came to Enmishpat, which is ^oKadesh, and smote all the country of the ^pAmalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwell in ^qHazezon-tamar.

8 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim;

9 With Chedorlaomer, the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar: four kings with five.

10:10, 11:2, 1s. 11:11. Dan. 1:2. Zech. 5:11. b. 1s. 37:12. c. 10:22. 1s. 21:2. Jer. 25:25. 49:34-39. d. 10:19. 13:10. 1s. 1:9,10. e. Deut. 29:23. Hos. 11:8. f. 13:20-22. g. Num. 34:12. Deut. 3:17. Josh. 3:16. Ps. 107:34. mare. h. 9:25. 15:3. 11:20. 2 Sam. 5:18. 23:13. 1 Chr. 11:15. 14:9. 1s. 17:5. i. Josh. 12:4. 13:12. 1 Deut. 2:20-23. m. 1eut. 2:10,11. * Or, the plain of Kiriathaim. Jer. 43:20. 1s. 36:20-30. Deut. 2:12,22. 1 Chr. 1:38-42. 1 Or, the plain of Paran. 21:21. Num. 12:16. 13:3. e. Num. 20:1. Deut. 1:19,46. p. 36:16. Ex. 17:16. Num. 14:43,45. 24:20. 1 Sam. 15:30. q. 2 Chr. 20:2. r. 11:3. s. 13:17,30. 11:22. 12:5. u. 13:12,13. Num. 16:26. Job 9:23. Jer. 3:17-19. 1 Tim. 6:9-11.

they exclude men from comfortable society, and many spiritual advantages. When they "are increased, those are increased that eat them," which commonly creates uneasiness, and renders the possession of the blessing of peace more precarious. Let the poor then learn contentment, and the wealthy caution and moderation, from the example of Abram and Lot. As we, who profess to be brethren in Christ, are surrounded with enemies and spies, we should be careful to preserve union, and to "avoid all appearance of evil," lest we should prejudice their minds, or open their mouths against us: and we ought to renounce every personal interest, and to make every concession, for the sake of peace.—If the real servants of God so lose themselves, as to leave, for temporal advantages, the society of the faithful, and to estrange themselves from sacred ordinances, by removing to dark and wicked places, they will be severely corrected: while the Lord will compensate, perhaps in outward blessings, certainly in spiritual consolations, pledges of his love, and earnestness of glory, those who give up secular advantages for his sake, and for the cause and honour of the Gospel.—In outward difficulties it is very profitable for the believer to meditate, frequently and intensely, on the glorious inheritance which the Lord hath in reserve for him at the last. And as it is impossible to conceive, that the promises and predictions of this ancient book could have been so minutely and circumstantially fulfilled, during a course of so many centuries, unless they had been written "by inspiration of God," let every reader remember our Lord's words: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1-3. This is the most ancient war recorded in authentic history; and doubtless it would have been passed over in silence and buried in oblivion, had not Abram and Lot been concerned in it: edification, not he gratifying of curiosity, being the object of the inspired historians.—The fruitful valley of Siddim, by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, became a large lake, called the *Salt Sea*, or the *Dead Sea*.—Some of these assailants came from Mesopotamia, and others from beyond the Tigris. Amraphel was king of the country in which Babel stood. (*Marg. Ref. a.*)

V. 4. After having submitted for twelve years, these kings formed an alliance to shake off the yoke of this foreign prince.

V. 5-7. This ancient conqueror, having subdued all the neighbouring petty princes, and ravaged their territories, came with his victorious army to subjugate the king of Sodom and his allies.—The word *Rephaim* is often translated giants.

10 And the vale o' Siddim was full of slime-pits: and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there: and they that remained fled to the mountain.

11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way

12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, (who dwelt in Sodom,) and his goods, and departed.

13 And there came ^aone that had escaped, and told Abram ^bthe Hebrew; for he ^cdwelt in the plain of ^dAmamre the ^eAmorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these ^fwere confederate with Abram.

14 And when Abram heard that ^gthis brother was taken captive, he ^harmed his ⁱtrained servants, ^jborn in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued ^kthem unto ^lDan.

15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants by night, and smote them, and pursued ^mthem unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of ⁿDamascus.

16 And ^ohe brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, (after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him,) at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

18 And Melchizedek, ^mking of Salem, brought forth ⁿbread and wine: and he was ^othe priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, ^pBlessed be Abram of the ^qmost high God, ^rpossessor of heaven and earth:

Rev. 3:19. x. 1 Sam. 4:12. y. 37:14. 40:15. 41:12. 43:32. Ex. 2:6,11. 2 Cor. 11:22. Phil. 3:5. z. 13:18. a. 24. b. 10:16. Num. 21:21. c. 13:8. Prov. 17:17. 24:11. 12. Gen. 17:27. 1 John 3:18. 2 Or, led forth. 3 Or, instructed. d. 12:5,16. 15:3. 17:12,17. 18:19. e. Deut. 34:1. Jude. 18:25. 20:1. f. 1s. 41:2,3. g. 15:2. 1 Kings 15:18. Acts 9:2. h. 11:12. 12:2. 1 Sam. 30:8,18,19. 1 Sam. 18:6. Prov. 14:20. 19:4. k. Heb. 7:1. 12 Sam. 18:18. m. Ps. 76:2. Heb. 7:1,2. n. Matt. 26:28-29. o. 1s. 11:4. Heb. 5:6,10. 6:20. 7:10-22. p. 27:4,25-29. 47:7,10. 48:5-16. 49:28. Num. 6:23-27. Mark 10:15. Heb. 7:6,7. q. Ruth 3:10. 2 Sam. 2:5. r. Mic. 6:6. Acts 16:17. s. Ps. 115:16. Matt. 11:25. Luke 16:21.

(*Marg. Ref. a.*) For "all the country of the Amalekites," the Septuagint read, "All the rulers of Amalek." (*Note, 36:12.*)

V. 12. From avaricious motives Lot had chosen the fruitful plain of Sodom, and at length had gone to dwell in that wicked city, the inhabitants of which were ripe for vengeance, but their wealth soon tempted plunderers, and he was stripped of all his property and carried captive. Had not Lot been taken, the conquerors might have gone off with their booty; but he was the servant of God, though he had offended; he needed a rebuke, but he must not be reduced to slavery; especially as he was brother's son to Abram the blessed, who was "a blessing" to all related to him.

V. 13. Abram is called the *Hebrew*, probably from the name of Eber his ancestor, and not, as some think, from his having passed the Euphrates, the word signifying a *passage*. (*Note, 11:6-9.*)—He had prudently formed an alliance with these chiefs for mutual defence, amidst all this violence and depredation. Perhaps they were proselyted by his religion.—Mamre is the name of a man, from whom the plain was called.

V. 14-16. Abram might have found many plausible reasons to excuse himself from this dangerous enterprise, and especially he might have pleaded the impropriety of Lot's conduct. But he forgot all; he disregarded difficulty and danger; he feared not the numerous and victorious forces of the combined kings: and having so good a cause as the relief of a brother in distress, depending on God, he boldly pursued them with his small company.—Though adverse from war, in which we do not find he ever engaged before or after, he had yet trained his domestics for it, and put himself in a posture of defence. Some indeed understand it, that he trained up his servants in the faith and fear of God, which would render them the best soldiers for such an expedition. In company, however, with his confederates, Abram followed the victors to the northern borders of Canaan. He, employ: g both courage and policy, attacked the enemy in the night by surprise; and, God so ordering it, he totally intimidated and subdued them, slaying some, and dispersing the rest. Thus he recovered all, and took a great booty.—Some think that the place called *Dan*, was so named from its situation near the springs of the river *Jordan*: others that this name, being given to a city built long after by the Danites, was inserted by Ezra, instead of Laish, the ancient name, to render the passage more intelligible. (*Marg. Ref. e.*)

V. 18-20. Various have been the opinions of expositors respecting Melchizedek. Some have conjectured that it was Shem, who, as Abram's venerable progenitor, was entitled to

20 And 'blessed be the most high God, 'which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him 'tithes of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the 'persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have 'lifted up mine hand 'unto the LORD, 'the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth:

23 That 'I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, 'lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with

me, 'Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; 'let them take their portion.

CHAPTER XV.

The Lord encourages Abram; who complains that he continues childless, but is assured of a numerous posterity, 1-5. He is justified by faith, 6. He requests a pledge to confirm his faith; and being directed to prepare a sacrifice obeys, 7-11. He is favoured with a vision, prophetic of the condition of his posterity till brought out of Egypt: and Canaan is ensured by covenant to them, 12-21.

AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram 'in a vision, saying, 'Fear not, Abram; I am 'thy Shield, and thy 'exceeding great Reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord God, 'what wilt thou give me, seeing I go 'childless, and 'the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, 'Behold, to me thou hast

124-27. Ps. 72:17-19. Eph. 1:3. 1 Pet. 1:3. 1. Josh. 10:42. x Lev. 27:30-32. Heb. 7:5-10. Heb. 10:1. y Deut. 1:40. Dan. 12:7. Rev. 10:5, 6. z 21:21-31. 1 John 1:3. 2. 171 P. 211 Hec. 2:8. b 1 Kings 13:8. 2 Kings 5:16. Eccl. 9:15, 16. 2. or. 11:9-11. 12:14. 2 Cor. 11:12. d 13. e 1 Cor. 19:14, 15. 46:2. Num. 12:6. Jer. 1:1. 8:4. 11:24. Dan. 10:1-16. Acts 10:10-17. b 13-16. 26:94. 46:3. Ps. 27:1. Is. 41:10-14. 43:1. 51:12. Dan. 10:12. Matt. 9:26. 10:23-31.

peculiar respect. But Shem's genealogy was well known; and Levi was descended from him as well as from Abram, which is irreconcilable with the apostle's reasoning on the subject. (*Notes, Heb. 7:1-10.*)—Others therefore have thought that it was the Son of God himself; being unwilling to allow that any mere man was superior to Abram. But surely the apostle in this case would never have said, that Melchizedek was "made like to the Son of God;" or that Christ was constituted "a Priest after the order of Melchizedek;" or that he was a type of himself! Melchizedek is stated to have been the king of Salem; (probably the city afterwards called Jerusalem, and distinguished in Pagan writers by the name *Solyma*;) but we may be sure that Christ did not then reign over any particular city as a temporal prince. It is indeed very evident that Melchizedek was a mere man: but the Lord has not seen good to inform us from which of Noah's sons he sprang; or who were his immediate parents, predecessors, or successors; indeed, he seems intentionally to have concealed them. We may, however, reasonably determine, that he was an aged person, venerable for sanctity, who ruled over his subjects in righteousness, while they lived under him in peace; which, when oppression and violence prevailed among their neighbours, perhaps gave the name both to him and to his city.—He also kept up the worship of the true God; and, though a king, he officiated as his priest.—In these things, and many others, he was a remarkable type of Christ; (*Notes, Ps. 110:4. Heb. 7:*) and, in reverence to his age, rank, piety, and priestly character, Abram showed him great honour, received his benediction, and gave him tithes of all his spoils: being influenced to this by some secret divine monition; perhaps being led to see in this typical character his future Lord and Saviour. At least the Spirit of God intended to instruct Abram's descendants by this action, "that a better priest should arise," than those of the family of Aaron.—We cannot determine from the silence of the sacred historian, that this was the only interview between Melchizedek and Abram: for, as Shem lived almost as long as Abram, it is probable they met together, though we are not informed that they did.—Bread and wine constituted a suitable refreshment of Abram's weary followers: and it is remarkable that Christ hath appointed the same, as the memorials of his body and blood, which are "meat indeed and drink indeed." Melchizedek is the only person expressly spoken of, as the priest of the true God, before the institution of the Aaronic priesthood. In this he had no predecessor, or successor, but was appointed for special purposes by God himself. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. Give me, &c.] 'Release the prisoners and take the spoil, not only of the kings, but of Sodom too, as the reward of thy victory.'

V. 22-24. Probably Abram solemnly vowed, before he set out on this expedition, that he would not take any thing which had belonged to the vanquished kings. The credit of his religious profession required, that if he engaged in war, it should evidently be on the most liberal and disinterested principles. This would best answer the question, "What do ye more than others?"—*Lifting up the hand to the Lord*, was a customary token of taking an oath, or making a vow to the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-16. Sinners may for a season prosper, though "the wrath of God abides upon them;" but respites are not pardons, and prosperity often hardens and ripens men for destruction. After four hundred years, the curse denounced on Canaan began to take effect; let us hear and fear, and flee from the wrath to come.—Avarice, ambition, and the thirst of dominion are insatiable, render men savage and brutal, and in all ages have filled the earth with misery and destruction: yet God executes his righteous purposes even by means of the unrighteousness of men.—Some calamity might have been expected to befall Lot for his misconduct; and we may expect similar consequences if we imitate his example, and prefer the prospect of gain to 'the means of grace,' and 'the communion of the saints.' But the Lord, though he rebuke and chasten, will not forsake his offending

28:5. Luke 1:13, 30. 12:32. Rev. 1:17. c Deut. 33:29. Ps. 3:3. 5:12. 13:2. 84:9, 11. 91:4. 119:114. Prov. 30:5. d Deut. 33:26-29. Ruth 2:12. Ps. 16:5, 6. 142:5. 1 Cor. 3:22. Heb. 13:5, 6. Rev. 21:3, 4. e 12:1, 3. f 26:21. 50:1, 2. Is. 127:3. Prov. 13:12. Acts 7:5. g 24:2, 10. 39:4-6, 9. 43:19. 44:1. Prov. 17:2. h 12:2. 13:16. Jer. 13:1.

children; and we also must be ready to forgive our offending brethren, and hasten to their relief.—War 'can never be desirable: but in the present state of things it may be lawful, and even advisable; and never more so, than in order to relieve the oppressed.—They who serve God, whatever means they employ, will not depend on an "arm of flesh;" and when they trust in him, and have a righteous cause and a good conscience, it becomes them to be "bold as a lion," and not to shrink from difficulties in the path of duty. Nor is any courage worthy of admiration or imitation, or in the least degree rational, but that which springs from a believing dependence upon God, and a firm persuasion that we are prepared for life and death, and are in the place, and doing the work which he hath assigned us.—It is a great advantage to stand related to those who are the friends and followers of God: for by their means, and in answer to their prayers, such persons will often be preserved.

V. 17-24. The Lord is "the most high God, the Possessor of heaven and earth;" and all our possessions belong to him: we ought then to acknowledge his right, and seek his blessing, by consecrating a portion to his immediate service; and the tenth was early deemed, and long continued to be considered, a very moderate proportion.—Oaths on important occasions are lawful, but they should be taken with great solemnity, as an act of sacred worship, and observed with great punctuality.—Nothing better becomes a profession of godliness, than a noble spirit of disinterestedness; and in our whole conduct we should study to avoid, not only evil, but the very appearance of it; especially in those things which at first glance seem unsuitable to our profession. As "the earth is the LORD's and the fulness thereof," they who belong to him have no occasion to grasp at temporal advantages; for if riches are good for them, he will surely confer them. We should, however, without censure, allow many things to others, which our profession and character may render it expedient for us to deny ourselves.—But what is become of Lot? Alas! he is gone back to Sodom; for indulged corruptions are not mortified except through severe discipline.—Finally, let us remember "our King of righteousness and King of peace," our "Priest upon his throne;" let us rejoice in his equitable and peaceful administration; and declare war against his and our enemies, sin, the world, and Satan. Invisibly he will assist us in every conflict, and manifest himself to us after every victory, refresh us with his gracious provisions, and bless us with the earnestness of his love. And shortly, when the final victory is won, and he hath made us more than conquerors, he will applaud our achievements, accept and reward our poor services, and place us with himself upon his throne; while we rejoice in his love, and give him all the glory.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1. This is the first time the expression, "The word of the LORD," is used in Scripture; and some persons suppose that Christ, "The Word of God," is meant.—The prophets, when they received revelations of the divine will in a vision, seem generally to have had the exercise of their senses on outward objects suspended, though they were not asleep. Yet the circumstances of the vision here recorded, do not indicate that this was the case with Abram; for the whole is related as a real transaction. It is however probable, that this was in some way distinguished from other appearances of the Lord, and more resembled the prophetic visions, than the condescending intercourse to which Abram was on other occasions admitted.—He might be tempted to fear, lest the potent enemies whom he had exasperated, should return with larger forces and take vengeance on him. The Lord therefore assured him that he was his "Shield," to defend him from all assailants; as well as his "exceeding great Reward," to compensate his generous behaviour to Lot, and disinterested contempt of wealth, in his conduct towards the king of Sodom.—(*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. In this answer of Abram, the striving of unbelief and impatience against his better judgment, is very discernible. Outward prosperity and security seemed of little importance, as he still continued childless; and a stran-

given no seed: and lo, one ^bborn in my house is mine heir.

4 And behold the word of the **LORD** came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, "So shall thy seed be.

6 And ^ahe believed in the **LORD**; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

7 And he said unto him, I am the **LORD** that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

8 And he said, Lord God, ^awhereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

9 And he said unto him, Take me ^aan heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but ^athe birds divided he not.

11:14. Ec. 2:7. k 17:16. 2 Sam. 7:12. 16:11. 2 Chr. 32:21. Philom. 12. 1 Ps. 147:4. Jer. 33:22. m 22:17. Ec. 32:13. Deut. 1:10. 10:22. 1 Chr. 27:23. Rom. 4:18. Heb. 11:12. n Rom. 4:3-6. 20-25. Gal. 3:6-14. Jam. 2:23. o s. 106:31. Rom. 4:11. Gal. 3:6. p 11:28-31. 12:1. Neh. 9:7. Acts 7:2-3. q 2:4-24. July 6:7-24. 35-40. 2 Kings 50:15. h. 7:31. Luke 1:38. 9:4. r 2:13. Lev. 1:3. 10. 14. 3:1-6. 9:2-4. 12:8. 13:29. 30. Luke 2:24. s 15:15. 1 Jer. 34:18. u 1:17. x Ps. 119:113. y 2:31. 1 Sam. 25:12. Job 4:13. 14. Dan. 10:8-9. z Ps. 4:3-5. Acts 9:8. 9. Ex. 1:2. 5. Ps. 105:23-25. Acts 7:5. b Ex. 12:40. 41. (cal. 3:17. c Ex. 6:5-6. 7:14. Deut. 6:22. Ps. 78:43-31. 105:27-37. 135:9, 14.

ger born in his house, and entrusted by him, was likely to be his heir. The numerous posterity before mentioned, and the blessings comprised in the promised Seed, lay near his heart: nothing else could satisfy him; and perhaps the long delay almost induced him to conclude, that he had misunderstood the divine revelation.

V. 5, 6. Some expositors think, that the several particulars which follow were only presented in a vision to Abram; and they urge in support of this opinion, that "the sun was not gone down," (12.) and yet he was called on to "look toward heaven and tell the stars." But it is most unreasonable to interpret one part as a visionary representation to the mind, and the other as a real transaction: or to suppose that the whole narrative of this solemn sacrifice, and of Abram's deep sleep and prophetic dream, and of the covenant ratified with him, is merely the relation of a vision. And, if it be well considered, what time would be employed in preparing for the commanded sacrifice and other events, we shall be induced to conclude, that Abram was led forth early in the morning, before the stars disappeared, and that he spent the whole day till after sunset in religious duties, and in receiving divine revelations and assurances.—An innumerable posterity having been again promised him, his faith was strengthened; and, depending on the divine power and faithfulness, he rose superior to discouragement on account of the delays and difficulties. Thus he gave glory to God by firmly believing, that "what he had promised he was able also to perform; and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."—It is evident from the apostle's reasoning, that Abram's faith had a special respect to the promised Seed and to salvation by him; and therefore, though in himself a sinner, and his very faith itself not free from defect, he was accounted righteous, and dealt with as if he had personally performed a perfect righteousness; being "made the righteousness of God in Christ." This had no doubt been the case from the time when he first believed, that in "his Seed all nations should be blessed;" but it was now more expressly attested for his encouragement: and the sacred historian records this circumstance, as a remarkable instance and example of that faith, which was counted to Abram for righteousness. (Notes, Rom. 4: Gal. 3: Marg. Ref. n. o.)—"Christians may believe in God, with respect of the common concerns of this life; and such faith may ascertain, that they are in a justified state: yet this is not, strictly speaking, the faith by which they are justified, which invariably has respect to the person and work of Christ. Abram believed in God as promising Christ; they believe in him as having raised him from the dead." Fuller.

V. 7, 8. The favours already shown to Abram, were earnest of the fulfilment of all the promises of God, whose unchangeable perfections were engaged to perform them: yet Abram, that his faith might be confirmed, desired an *external token* as an assurance that his posterity should inherit the land which the Lord graciously vouchsafed him.

V. 9, 10. In order to give Abram the desired token, the Lord was pleased to prescribe a solemn sacrifice. The heifer, she-goat, and ram, were supposed to be arrived at maturity when three years old. As the ratification of a covenant between the Lord and his servant was intended, the animals were divided asunder, the birds alone excepted: because the form of covenanting required, that the persons concerned should pass between the parts of the sacrifice; perhaps inti-

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, ^aAbram drove them away.

[Practical Observations.]

12 And when the sun was going down, ^aa deep sleep fell upon Abram: and lo, ^aan horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety, that ^athy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them ^bfour hundred years.

14 And also ^athat nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out ^awith great substance.

15 And ^athou shalt go to thy fathers ^ain peace, ^athou shalt be ^aburied in ^aa good old age.

16 But in ^athe fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of ^athe Amorites is not yet full.

17 ^aAnd it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a ^a"smoking furnace, and ^aa burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In that same day the **LORD** made a covenant with Abram, saying, ^aUnto thy seed have I given

d Ex. 2:21, 22. 12:35, 36. e 25:8. Num. 20:24. 27:13. Judg. 2:10. 1. 12:7. Acts 13:36. f 2 Chr. 34:23. Ps. 37: 37. 57:1, 2. Dan. 12:13. Matt. 22:32. Heb. 6:13-19. 11:13-16. g 23:4, 19. 25:9. 35:29. 1:29. 4. 30:13. Ec. 6:3. Jer. 8:1. 2. h 2:17. 8. 1 Chr. 24:1. 28:28. Job 5:25. 42:17. i Ex. 12:1. k 1 Kings 21:26. 13:10. 8:23. Zech. 5:5-11. Matt. 23:32-35. 1 Ths. 2:16. 2 Pet. 3:8. 9. m Ex. 8:23. 1 Pet. 4:20. Judg. 6:21. 13:20. 1 Chr. 21:25. Is. 62:1. Jer. 11:4. n Heb. a lamp of fire. 2 Sam. 22:29. o 9:8-17. 17. 12: 2 sam. 23:5. Is. 55:3. Jer. 31:31-34. 38:40. 33:20-25. val. 3:15-17. Heb. 13:20. o 12:7. 13:15. 25:4. 28:13. Deu. 17:8. 11:24. 34:4. Josh. 1:3. 4. 1 Kings 4:21. 2 Chr. 9:25. Neh. 9:8. Ps. 105:11.

ating, that he who broke the covenant, might expect in like manner to be cut asunder by the avenging sword of justice. The Gentiles, as well as the Jews, used a form of this kind in confirming covenants and treaties; which custom might perhaps be derived by tradition from this transaction; or the Lord saw good, in this instance, to condescend as far as practicable, to a custom already established.

V. 11. When Abram had prepared the sacrifices, he spent the rest of the day in watching them, no doubt also pouring out his heart in fervent prayer: and when the birds of prey attempted to devour them, he drove them away.

V. 12-15. Perhaps Abram did not understand how the transaction would end, but he patiently waited on the Lord; and about sunset, he was cast into a supernatural sleep, in which he received important prophetic information concerning the future condition of his posterity.—The "horror of great darkness" was doubtless emblematical of their affliction and bondage in Egypt, and many of their subsequent calamities. From the birth of Isaac to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, Abram's descendants were strangers in a land, in which they possessed no inheritance; for part of the time they were sojourners in Canaan, and the rest of it they spent in Egypt, where for many years they were enslaved and cruelly oppressed. Their departure out of Egypt is supposed to have been exactly four hundred and thirty years from the call of Abram; but the birth of Isaac was twenty-five years later, and the prediction especially relates to him and his posterity. This is therefore computed to have occurred four hundred and five years before that event; but in so long a term, the five odd years are not mentioned. Some however think that the term began from the weaning of Isaac, when Ishmael, the son of an Egyptian, mocked him. (Note, 21:8-12.)—The continuance of Israel in Egypt is calculated to have been two hundred and fifteen years.—Their bondage in Egypt being introductory to subsequent honour and prosperity, and attended with signal judgments on their enemies, differed widely from the permanent slavery of the Canaanites. Abram, however, would not witness these scenes; but would live to a good old age, and then die in peace: and while his body would be decently interred, his soul would enter on a state of blessedness among those of his believing progenitors.—*Afflict them, &c.* Four hundred years would elapse before the end of their afflicted state.

V. 16. "The fourth generation" may mean the completion of the four hundred years before mentioned: but indeed the Israelites of the fourth generation, from those who went down into Egypt, seem actually to have inherited Canaan.—Among other reasons for these delays, this was one; that the inhabitants of the land, (of whom the Amorites seem to have been the chief,) though wicked, were not yet ripe for vengeance.

V. 17. "The smoking furnace and burning lamp" represented the severe trials of Israel in Egypt, and their joyful deliverance; with the hopes and supports in the mean while afforded them. (Notes, Ex. 3.) Thus the Lord attested his acceptance of Abram's sacrifices, by the symbols of his presence passing between the parts of them, and probably at length consuming them; but not, as it may be supposed, till Abram also had passed between them.

V. 18-21. In this manner God confirmed the promise of Canaan to the seed of Abram, by a solemn covenant, and

this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sarai being barren gives Hagar to Abram, 1-3. Hagar devises Sarai, who complains to Abram; he gives up Hagar to her, and Hagar, being harshly treated, flees from her, 4-6. An Angel commands her to return and submit, promises her a son and a numerous posterity, and shows her character and condition, 7-12. Hagar gives a name to the place, and returns to Sarai, 13, 14. The birth of Ishmael, and the age of Abram, 15, 16.

NOW Sarai Abram's wife ¹bare him no children; and she had an handmaid ²an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, ³the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee go in unto my maid: it may be that I may obtain children by her: and Abram ⁴thearkened to the voice of Sarai.

3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram ⁵had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and ⁶gave her to her husband Abram to be ⁷his wife.

4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she con-

ceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, ⁸her mistress was despised in her eyes.

5 And Sarai said unto Abram, ⁹My wrong be upon thee; I have given my maid into thy bosom: and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: ¹⁰the LORD judge between me and thee.

6 But ¹¹Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is ¹²in thy hand; do to her ¹³as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai ¹⁴dealt hardly with her, she ¹⁵fled from her face.

7 ¹⁶And the Angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by ¹⁷the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, ⁹Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the Angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and ¹⁰submit thyself under her hands.

10 And ¹¹the Angel of the LORD said unto her, ¹²I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the Angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou ¹²art with child, and shalt bear a son, and ¹³shalt call his name Ishmael; ¹⁴because the LORD ¹⁵shalt heard thy affliction.

is good in thine eyes. 1 Heb. afflicted her. o Ex. 2:15. Prov. 27:8. Ec. 10:4. p 25:18. Ex. 15:22. 1 Sam. 13:7. q 1:4. Eph. 6:5-8. 1 Tim. 6:12. r 3:9. 4:10. Ec. 10:4. Jer. 2:17, 18. s Eph. 5:21. Tit. 2:9. 1 Pet. 2:18-25. 5:5, 6. 1:22. 15-18. 31:11-13. 32:24-30. 48:15, 16. Ex. 3:2-6. Judg. 2:1-3. 6:11, 16, 21. 24. 13:16-22. 16. 63:9. Hos. 12:3-5. Zech. 2:8, 9. Mal. 3:1. John 1:18. Acts 7: 30-32. 1 Tim. 6:16. o 1:20. 21:13. 25:12-18. Ps. 63:6. s 17:19. 29:32-35. 1s. 7:14. Matt. 1:21-23. Luke 1:31, 63. 5 That is, God shall hear. y 41:51, 52. 1 Sam. 1:20. z Ec. 23:24. 3:7.

more explicitly stated that what was included in it. "The river of Egypt" is supposed to have been a small current, just at the entrance of that country; and not the river Nile.—In the days of David and Solomon, the Israelites ruled over the whole extent of country here described; and it was the effect of their sins, that they neither got possession of it sooner, nor kept it longer. During the course of four hundred years, several of the tribes here mentioned were either extinct, or blended with other tribes, or had changed their names. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. They who trust in God, and serve him, should fear no enemies, for they have an omnipresent and omnipotent Protector. Nor need they hesitate to renounce the most valuable temporal advantages for his sake, for he will abundantly recompense them; yea, he himself will be their Shield and Portion, their exceedingly great and everlasting Reward.—Yet "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" the strongest faith has its misgivings, the most courageous spirit has its fears, and the most resigned believer his complaints: these the Lord graciously notes, pities, pardons, and relieves.—He who in one instance, upon the single testimony of God, steadfastly expects things exceedingly difficult and improbable, will be enabled to believe all that God has revealed when he becomes acquainted with it, and will embrace and expect whatever he promises; and this man's "faith is accounted to him for righteousness." Yet he will seek, and God will grant, further tokens of his love, to confirm and strengthen his faith; and he will be encouraged to consider former mercies as earnest of future blessings.—The covenant of God with sinners has always been ratified by sacrifice and the shedding of blood: and, in attendance on his ordinances, we must wait for the confirmation of our faith, and guard against all intrusion on our devotions: especially those vain thoughts, which are apt, on the most solemn occasions, to arise, and interrupt the exercise of faith, hope, and love.

V. 12-21. The knowledge of future events, if attainable, would seldom add to our comfort: in the most favoured families and most happy lives, there are such chequered scenes and so many afflictions, that it is merciful in God to conceal from us what will befall us and ours; for if we knew the whole, we should painfully anticipate the troubles of life; and even distress ourselves about things, which will not take place till we are in the silent grave, or rather in the eternal world. Yet multitudes far more desire to partake with Abraham in this kind of information, than in his "most holy faith!"—God waits till iniquity be ripe ere he punishes, and in the mean time gives space for repentance: let the sinner then count his long-suffering to be salvation, and improve it; and let believers also wait for their mercies till they are prepared for them.—Finally, the diligent Christian will daily obtain fuller assurances and more explicit knowledge of the blessings of the covenant, which God hath ratified with him.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-3. Ten years had elapsed since Abram arrived in Canaan; and a numerous posterity had repeatedly been promised him, from among whom that Seed was to arise, "in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed;" yet Sarai, though amiable and faithful,

still continued childless, and was now seventy-five years of age. The promise had not hitherto been expressly restricted to her; and though we never before read of a pious person having two wives at once; yet such marriages appear to have been common, and perhaps in no bad repute in the world: and not only the natural desire of children, but the fulfilment of the promises seemed to be concerned. Sarai, therefore, no longer expecting to be herself the ancestor of the promised Seed, proposed to Abram to take a secondary wife, and expressed an intention of adopting his children by her. She indeed acknowledged the hand of God in her trial, and acquiesced in his will: yet her plan resulted from carnal policy and weakness of faith, and it was too hastily approved by Abram; it was also a bad example, a fatal precedent, and a source of manifold uneasiness. "The father of mankind sinned, by hearkening to his wife; and now the father of the faithful imitates his example." Fuller.—Probably, Hagar was one of the maid-servants, whom Pharaoh had given Abram.

V. 4-6. Hagar, forgetful of God who had especially favoured her, was lifted up with pride and self-preference; flattering herself that she should now secure Abram's affections, and probably expecting to be the mother of the promised Seed. Sarai also, instead of condemning herself, seemed to claim merit from her conduct; unreasonably blamed Abram, as if he had encouraged Hagar's insolence; improperly appealed to the Lord; and betrayed much passion and peevishness, and a very uneasy frame of mind. "Passionate appeals to God, instead of indicating a good cause, are commonly the marks of a bad one." Fuller.—In these perplexing circumstances Abram indeed acted wisely in relinquishing Hagar, and showed that he had not been influenced by carnal affection: but he conceded too far in leaving one whom he was bound to protect entirely in the power of Sarai, whose mind was too much imbittered to act with equity and impartiality, so that she exacted rigorously from Hagar her former service, which in her situation was unjustifiable; and she otherwise used her with harshness. And Hagar, not brooking to be treated as a slave, when she had expected the privilege of a wife, passionately and inconsiderately left Abram's house and family.

V. 7-9. Probably, Hagar set out with the design of returning to Egypt, her native country; but being unable to proceed, she sat down, fatigued and overwhelmed with distress, by a fountain of water.—The Angel addressed her, as *Sarai's servant*, not as *Abram's wife*: thus her marriage was tacitly censured and disallowed, which would tend to humble her for despising and fleeing from her mistress. By inquiring of her whence she came, and whither she would go, the Angel implicitly charged her with leaving her proper station, acting inconsistently with her duty and interest, forsaking her own mercies, and rushing on destruction: and by commanding her to return and submit to her mistress, he reminded her, that her trouble was the consequence of sin, and that she must patiently endure it.—This is the first time the appearance of an Angel is mentioned: but the following verses show us who this Angel was.

V. 10, 11. The Angel said to Hagar "I will multiply thy seed;" not "The LORD will multiply th seed." an' there is

12 And he will be "a wild man;" his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, "Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?"

14 Wherefore the well was called 'Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

a 21:20. Job 11:12, 39:5-8. b 27:40. c 25:18. d 7:9,10, 22:14, 28:17,19, 32:20. Judg. 6:24. e Ex. 33:18-23, 34:5-7. Ps. 139:1-12. Prov. 15:3. * That is, The well of him that liveth and seeth me. 21:31, 24:62, 25:11. f Num. 13:26. g 11. Gal. 1:22,23. h 17:19,20,25,26, 21:9-21, 25:9,12, 28:8, 37:27. a 16:16. b 12:1. c 15:14, 28:3, 35:11. Ex. 6:3. Num. 11:23. Job 11:7. Dan. 4:35.

not the least intimation that he spake in the name of another. This confirms the opinion of those who think the words should be rendered the ANGEL-JEHOVAH: JEHOVAH himself, yet the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant, the eternal Word and Son of God: and the interpretation is established by the subsequent narrative. (*Marg. Ref.*)—"Ishmael" signifies God will hear; "he hath heard," and therefore he will hear, "thy affliction;" intimating that the relief was not only unmerited, but unsolicited.

V. 12. The word rendered "a wild man," properly signifies a *wild-ass* man: and perhaps this emblem was descriptive of Ishmael's character; but his posterity were principally intended. The Hagarites, Saracens, and various other tribes of Arabs, are allowed to have descended in great measure from Ishmael: and they have, in all ages to this present day, been a hardy untamed race of freebooters, unlike every other nation in the world. They have chiefly subsisted by plundering their neighbours and passengers; as it appears by the united testimony of all the historians and travellers who have written of those countries. They have provoked the enmity of the neighbouring nations, and lived in a state of hostility with all men; so that there is no travelling in safety through those countries, except in large armed companies, called Caravans; and these are often plundered. Yet have they set at defiance the mightiest conquerors in every age, and stood their ground against them all. The Persians, Macedonians, and Romans, successively attempted to subjugate them; and made many powerful, but ineffectual, efforts to that purpose. At length Mohammed arose, and under him and his successors, they subdued a large part of the world. After a time indeed, the power of the Mohammedans was transferred to the Turks, who have repeatedly attempted to subdue the Saracens, or Arabs; but, instead of succeeding, they have for above three hundred years been obliged to pay a large tribute to them, for the safe passage of their pilgrims to Mecca, the city which is the centre of their religion! The descendants of Ishmael also lived as ravagers in the neighbourhood of the Israelites and Edomites, and other descendants of Abram, and yet were never subjugated by any of them. See *Bp. Newton on the Prophecies*. Diss. 1.

V. 13, 14. JEHOVAH spake to Hagar, and she called his name, "Thou God seest me;" yet we read of no other speaker than the Angel.—Admiring the Lord's condescension and mercy, she added, "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?" "Have I, who am so unworthy, here, in this desert, at a distance from his ordinances, and out of the path of duty, been favoured with such an encouraging appearance of the LORD?"—Accordingly, she called the name of the place, *The well of him that liveth and seeth me*. She was now brought to a better temper, returned home, and, probably, by proper behaviour, pacified Sarah, and experienced better usage.

V. 15. Abram named his son Ishmael, (having been informed by Hagar of what had taken place. (11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. In every relation and situation of life there is some trouble to bear; and the exercise of faith greatly consists in patiently submitting to it, waiting the Lord's time, and using those means, and those only, which he appoints and authorizes, for its removal. But unbelief is frequently shown by impatience, and hastily using unhalloved means of obtaining those things which we inordinately desire.—Very bad actions may be sanctioned by the example of very good men; they may appear plausible, be supported with some show of reason, and be suggested by those who are justly dear to us. But we never have more cause to be upon our guard, than when "Satan thus transforms himself into an angel of light." Then especially we should appeal "to the law and to the testimony." "What hath God said?" Then indeed we should act with deliberation, be afraid of leaning to our own understanding, and seek counsel of the Lord by earnest prayer.—In Hagar's insolence, in Sarah's impatience, and in Abram's uneasiness; and also in Sarah's severity, and in Hagar's flight and distress, we see the effects of carnal projects, and of deviating from the original institution of marriage: and they who consent together in sin will generally be chastened together and will often correct each other.—Anger and discord

CHAPTER XVII.

The Lord again ratifies the covenant with Abram; changes his name to Abram, and Sarah's to Sarah, and institutes circumcision. 1-15. He promises him a son by Sarah; accepts his prayer for Ishmael; and fixes the time for the birth of Isaac, 16-22. Abraham circumcises himself and the males of his family, 23-27.

AND when Abram "was ninety years old and nine," the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am the Almighty God*: "walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Eph. 3:20. Phil. 4:13. d 5:24, 6:9. * Or, upright, or, sincere. Deut. 18:13. Job 1:1. Matt. 5:48. e 9:9, 15:18. Ps. 105:9-11. Gal. 3:17,18. f 12:2, 13:16. g Ex. 3:6. Lev. 9:24. Num. 16:22,45. Josh. 5:14. Jude. 13:20. Ex. 1:28, 3:23. 9:8. Dan. 8:17, 10:9. Matt. 17:8. Rev. 1:17. h 16:10, 25:1-18, 36: Rom. 4:11-18. Gal. 3:29. i Heb. multitude of nations.

should indeed be shunned: yet even peace may be bought too dear; and we ought not to allow any person injuriously to treat those who are entitled to our protection. But it is never safe or prudent to quit our situation under the influence of pride, impatience, and resentment. A haughty spirit indeed will disdain contradiction: but it is best to endure it, and to consider that "yielding pacifieth great offences."

V. 7-16. Important lessons of wisdom are couched under the answer which ought to be made to such questions as the Angel put to Hagar. Recollecting "who we are," would teach us our duty, and suggest motives for quietly attending to it. Seriously inquiring in many cases, "whence we came," may show us our sin and folly: and considering, "whither we will go," may often discover our danger and misery, before it be too late; and prepare us to listen to the counsel of him who calls on us to repent of what we have done in pride and passion.—How free from fear and care, how conscientious in duty, how watchful against sin, and how resolute in resisting temptation should we be, if we always were suitably impressed with this thought, "Thou God seest me!" The good Lord, who always sees us, and despises not the meanest, but hears the affliction of the distressed, even before it vents itself in prayer, help us to realize his presence, to trust in his goodness, to submit to his will, and to all those whom he commands us to honour and obey for his sake; and with admiring, humble gratitude, to acknowledge his mercies to us, which are innumerable and unmerited, and often surprise us when we least expect them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1-3. This appearance of the Lord to Abram, was nearly fourteen years after his marriage with Hagar: and, perhaps, this long trial of his faith implied a rebuke for his misconduct in that transaction. The Lord, by revealing himself as "the Almighty," or *the all-sufficient* God, most powerfully enforced the subsequent exhortation to Abram, "to walk before him," without being discouraged; and to "be perfect," or not to waver and decline, but to be constantly and entirely dependant on him, and devoted to him. "Have recourse now more to unbelieving expedients: keep thou the path of uprightness; and leave me to fulfil my promise in the time and manner that seem good to me." Fuller.—Abram, perceiving the special presence of God, fell on his face in humble adoration, and the Lord continued to speak to him in an audible voice.

V. 4. The Lord thus engaged, that his covenant, before confirmed, and now to be further ratified and sealed, should certainly be accomplished, notwithstanding delays and difficulties.—This covenant was essentially different from that made with Israel, as a nation, at Mount Sinai: (*Notes*, Ex. 19:5. Gal. 3:) yet it was far more than a personal engagement to Abram, concerning a numerous posterity and the inheritance of Canaan, or even concerning his own salvation; though these were included, with all the peculiar advantages enjoyed by Israel till the coming of Christ, and even to the end of time. But, as the covenant, confirmed to Abram with an oath, is fulfilled to all believers as his children; (*Notes*, Heb. 6:13-20.) it must have been in substance the same as the Covenant of Grace, of which Christ is the Mediator and Surety, and which was ratified with Abram, as "the father of the faithful." In this view of the subject, the promised Seed was Christ, and Christians in him, of whom Israel as a nation was a type; Canaan typified heaven; every blessing was conferred on Abraham through "the righteousness of faith;" and all who are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.

V. 5, 6. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Ishmaelites, Midianites, and other nations, were descended from Abraham by Hagar and Keturah; and the Edomites, as well as the Israelites, by Sarah. All these nations were, for many ages, powerful and prosperous, and governed by princes of their own; and some of them are so to this day. Besides the kings of Israel, (or the ten tribes,) David and Solomon were renowned monarchs, and, by their descendants, formed an illustrious race of kings for almost five hundred years.—This is intimated by the change of his name, from ABRAHAM, a high father, to ABRAHAM, a father of a great multitude.

V. 7, 8. Abraham chose the Lord for his portion, and devoted himself to his service; and the Lord answered his ex-

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; and to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession: and I will be their God. *[Practical Observations.]*

9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

10 This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised.

11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

13 He that is born in thy house, and he that

is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14 And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

15 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

18 And Abraham said unto God, Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!

19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac,

115. 32-28. 12:25. Neh. 9:7. Is. 62-2-4. 65:15. Jer. 20:3. 22:6. Matt. 12:1-23. 13:12. 14:3. 35:11. 116. 35:31. &c. Ezra 4:20. Matt. 1:15. 15:24. 16:1. 18:1. 19:10-11. 19:12. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 164:1. 165:1. 166:1. 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3:14. † Heb. a son of eight days. 21:4. Lev. 12:3. Luke 1:59. 2:21. John 7:22. 23. Acts 7:8. Phil. 3:5. u 23. Ex. 12:48. 49. x 14:14. Ex. 12:44. y 37:27, 30. 39:1. Ex. 21:2, 16. Neh. 5:5, 8. Matt. 18:25. x Ex. 4:24-26. 12:15, 19. 30: 33, 38. Lev. 7:20, 21, 27. 18:29. 19:8. Num. 15:30, 31. a Pa. 55:29. Is. 24:5. 33:8. Jer. 11:10. 31:2. O 1:28. 24:60. x 18:10-14. † Heb. become male na. 35: 11. Gal. 4:27-31. d See on 6. Is. 49:23. e 18:12. 21:6. Rom. 4:19, 20. (Jer. 32:39. Acts 2:39. g 18:10-14. 21:2, 3. 2 Kings 4:16, 17. Luke 1:13-20. Rom. 9:6-9. (Gal. 4:28-31. h 16:10-12. 25:12-18. 121:10-12. 26:2-5. 46:1. 48:15. Ex. 2:24. 3:6. Heb. 11:9.

pectations by engaging to make him partaker of everlasting felicity; and his posterity according to the flesh had his oracles committed to them, his prophets sent to them, and his ordinances administered among them. Thus he was their God by external relation, and they enjoyed vast advantages, in spiritual things, above all the rest of the human race, till the coming of Christ. (Note, Rom. 3:1, 2.)—The word rendered everlasting, must be understood according to the nature of the subject: when used about the things of this present world, or outward privileges, it means perpetual, and unalterable while the same state of things continues; but when it relates to inward spiritual blessings, or the concerns of a future state, it seems generally, if not always, strictly to denote eternal duration. Thus JEHOVAH was a God to the Israelites, till the coming of the Messiah, when, according to the whole tenor of prophecy, that state of things was to terminate: yet the nation is still kept separate for gracious purposes, in remembrance of this covenant. But of Abraham and all his spiritual seed, God is the eternal Portion and Blessedness. (Notes, Matt. 22:23-33. Heb. 11:13-16.) This covenant shall involve great blessings to the world; yet it was made with Abram...It made Abram the father of the church in all future ages...All that the Christian world enjoys, or ever will enjoy, it is indebted for to Abram and his Seed...A high honour this, to be the stock whence the Messiah should spring, and on which the church of God should grow. Fuller.

V. 9-12. Abraham was required to accede to the covenant, to profess his faith, and to give a proof of his ready acquiescence in the Lord's will, by submitting to circumcision; and he and all his posterity must observe this ordinance, as a pledge and mark of their being the worshippers and servants of JEHOVAH. Many nations have practised circumcision, and do so to this day; and even some not descended from Abraham, or related to him: yet it is highly probable, that this was the first introduction of this singular observance.—Cutting off the foreskin seems to have been intended as an intimation, that a sinful nature is propagated with the human species; and this depravity, called "the old man," must be put off, or mortified and destroyed, by believers. (Note, Eph. 4:20-24.) In them the heart is circumcised to love the Lord; and rebellion and enmity are gradually destroyed out of it by sanctifying grace. This observance was the sacrament of regeneration, "the seal of the righteousness of faith;" (Note, Rom. 4:9-12.) for the circumcision of the heart is an inward seal, that the sinner is justified by the righteousness of faith, as Abraham was.—Circumcision was a bloody and painful ordinance: for the sanctification of the Spirit is vouchsafed to sinners through the blood of Christ; the mortification of sin is painful to the flesh; and, till the blood of Christ had been shed once for all, the ordinances of God were generally attended with the shedding of blood; but none since that time have been so.—Not only Abraham and Isaac, and Abraham's posterity by Isaac, were circumcised; but his son Ishmael and his very bond-servants; for circumcision sealed the covenant of God's giving, not only Canaan to Isaac's posterity, but heaven, through Christ, to the whole

Church of God. The outward sign belonged to the professed people of God; but the inward seal of the Spirit is peculiar to those whom God knows (and he alone can know them) to be believers.—Infants were circumcised, because a part of the visible church, and because this was a proper profession of their parents' faith, and a pledge for the religious education of their children, thus early dedicated to God. Yet they must not be circumcised till the eighth day; and, under the law, even animals must not be presented to God before that age. (Ex. 22:30.) But, as many infants would die before the eighth day, this might intimate that the outward ordinance, though always the parents' duty, was not essential to salvation. Males only were capable of circumcision: but in Christ there is no more distinction between male or female, than between Jew and Gentile. The Gentile, who embraced the Jewish religion, was circumcised adult; but his future offspring at eight days old. The uncircumcised were ordered to be cut off, (14:) for the neglect of circumcision was in fact a rejection of the covenant; and the uncircumcised in heart will be separated for ever from the Lord and his people. Doubtless the parent would be chargeable with the guilt of his neglect, and not the child till grown up. (Note, Matt. 23:19, 20.)

V. 13. In your flesh. The outward seal of the covenant would remain in the flesh of Abraham, and Isaac, and their posterity, and of all who were thus incorporated among them; for the use of circumcision, as a religious rite, would distinguish them from other people.

V. 15, 16. SARAI signifies my princess; SARAH, a princess, to others as well as to Abraham: implying how honourable her name would be in the whole church of God, as well as in Abraham's family. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. When Abraham heard the words of God, he again prostrated himself in reverential worship, and laughed, in admiring faith and joyful gratitude.—He himself was born when Terah was a hundred and thirty years old, as it is generally calculated; (Note, 11:26, 27.) but, in the course of the last hundred years, it seems to have become very uncommon for men to have children at so advanced an age. He had been so long married to Sarah, and she was now so far advanced in years, continuing barren, that it seems he had given up all expectation of having seed by her: and, previously to this explicit declaration, thought that the promises would be fulfilled in Ishmael.

V. 18. Though Abraham "staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;" yet he seems to have had some struggle with unbelief, in which he came off victorious, through the repeated assurances which the Lord gave him.—This verse, however, may be interpreted as a natural and earnest desire that Ishmael might have a blessing also; and not be excluded from the favour of God, or separated from his worshippers, though the promised Seed was not to descend from him.

V. 19-21. It was the purpose of God, that Christ should descend from Isaac and his son Jacob: in that family true religion was chiefly supported; to them Canaan, the type of heaven, was granted; and they represented the spiritual

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, and well stricken in age: and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

13 And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14 Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not: for she was afraid. And he said, Nay, but thou didst laugh.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And the men rose up from thence, and looked towards Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment: that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

20 And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.

[Practical Observations.]

r 17:24. Luke 17:36. Rom. 4:13-21. e 31:35. t 17:17. 21:6. 7. Luke 1:18-20. 34:35. Heb. 11:11, 12. e Eph. 5:83. 1 Pet. 3:6. v Num. 11:23. 2 Kings 7:12. Jer. 32:17. Zech. 8:6. Mat. 3:9. 19:26. Luke 1:37. Phil. 3:20. Phil. 3:21. 4:13. Heb. 11:19. x 10. Deut. 30:3. Ps. 90:13. y 4:9. 12:13. Job 2:10. John 18:17. 25-27. 1 John 1:8. z 14:21. Prov. 12:19. Mark 2:2. John 2:25. Rom. 3:19. a 21:5. Rom. 15:24. 3 John 6. b 2 Kings 4:27. Ps. 25:14. Am. 8:7. John 15:15. Jam. 2:2. c See on 12:23. 22-17:18. Ps. 72:17. Acts 3:25, 28. Gal. 3:8, 14. Eph. 1:13. d 2 Sam. 7:20. Ps. 1:6. John 21:17. 2 Tim 2:19. e 17:23-27. Deut. 4:9, 10. 6:6, 7. 11:19-21. 32:46. Josh. 24:13. Job 1:5. Ps. 78:5-8. Prov. 6:20, 21. 22:16. Eph. 6:4. 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12. 2 Tim. 1:5. 3:15. 1 Sam. 2:30-31. Acts 27:23. 24, 31. e 4:10. 19:13. Jam. 5:4. 18:13. 11:15, 17. Ex. 3:8. 33:5. Mic. 1:3. John 6:38. 1 Thes. 4:16. k Jer. 17:1. Zeph. 1:12. Heb. 4:13. 1 Deut. 8:2. 13:

from this very speech of Sarah, the apostle Peter quotes her words concerning Abraham, in which she calls him, "My lord," as a commendable instance of her dutiful subjection to him! (1 Pet. 3:6.)

V. 13-15. Here the speaker is expressly called **JEHOVAH**.—By manifesting that he was acquainted with what Sarah did secretly, he showed that he could accomplish his word, however contrary to the ordinary course of things. The conduct of Sarah showed great weakness, and was exceedingly faulty; yet the rebuke was very gentle, and connected with a renewal of the promise!

V. 17. The Lord would not conceal from "Abraham his friend," his intention of destroying the cities of the plain; for he was concerned in the event, both on account of Lot, and as the inheritance of the adjacent countries was covenanted to his posterity. God would also give his servant an opportunity to intercede for the criminals; and show him the reasons of his conduct, that he might approve of it, and glorify him on that account. (Note, John 15:12-16.)

V. 18, 19. The promises to Abraham and his posterity, and, through Christ, to the nations of the earth, were absolute; yet Abraham's conduct was an essential part of the gracious plan. The Lord also approved his servant's integrity, piety, and zeal; and knew that he would perseveringly instruct his family, set them a good example, and pray for them; and use his authority in restraining evil, and promoting justice and godliness among them. Of this he had just before given a remarkable proof, by obeying the Lord's command in circumcising himself and family. He would also train up Isaac in the same pious manner; and thus the way would be prepared for the promised blessings to be conferred on his posterity.

V. 20, 21. The just judge does not pronounce sentence on mere rumour; but ascertains the criminal's guilt before he executes vengeance. Thus the Lord declared, that he would impartially judge and punish the guilty cities, on full proof of their atrocious wickedness.

V. 22. The two, whom we suppose to have been created angels, departed at this time; and accordingly two entered Sodom at evening: while the One, called **JEHOVAH** throughout the chapter, continued with Abraham, who "stood yet before the Lord;" before the same Person with whom he had hitherto been communing.

23 ¶ And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

26 And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And He said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And He said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

30 And he said unto him, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And He said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

32 And he said, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

33 And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

3. m 2. 19:1. n Ps. 106:23. Jer. 15:1. 18:20. Ez. 22:30. Acts 7:55. o Ps. 73:28. Jer. 30:21. Heb. 10:32. p 20:4. Num. 16:22. 2 Sam. 24:17. Ps. 114-7. Rom. 3:5, 6. q 38. 1:9. Jer. 5:1. Matt. 7:13, 14. r Acts 27:24. s Jer. 12:1. (Job 8:20. 9:23, 23. Ec. 7:15. 8:12, 13. s 3:10. 11. 57:12. Mal. 3:18. u Job 8:3. 34:17-19. Ps. 58:11. 94:2. 98:9. Rom. 8:6. s John 5:22-27. 2 Cor. 5:10. y Is. 65:8. Ez. 42:30. Matt. 24:22. z 30-32. Ezra 9:6. Job 42:6-8. Is. 6:5. a 2:7. 3:19. Job 21:9. Ps. 84:14, 14, 13. Ec. 12:7. Is. 64:8. 1 Cor. 15:47, 48. 2 Cor. 5:1. b Num. 14:17-19. 1 Kings 20:32, 33. Job 23:34. c 29:29. d 44:18. Jude. 6:38. Esch. 41:11-16. Is. 55:8, 9. e 7. Luke 11:8. 18:1. Eph. 6:18. Heb. 4:16. f Prov. 15:8. 62:6, 7. Jam. 5:15-17. 1 John 5:15, 16. g Ex. 34:6, 7. Ps. 86:5. Mic. 4:18. Eph. 3:20. h 16, 22. 32:26. 131:55.

V. 23-26. When Abraham "engaged his heart" to intercede for the devoted cities; (*Note, Jer. 30:19-22, v. 22.*) he assumed it as an unquestionable truth, that "the Judge of all the earth would do right." But, knowing how "the righteous Lord delighteth in mercy," he not only pleaded that the pious remnant might be preserved, but likewise that the rest might be spared for their sakes.—"He does not plead that the wicked may be spared for their own sakes, or because it would be too severe to destroy them.—This would have been siding with sinners against God!—Thus Christ makes intercession for sinners; not by arraigning the divine law, not by alleging aught in extenuation of human guilt; but by pleading his own obedience unto death." Fuller.

V. 27, 28. While Abraham, with magnanimous philanthropy, pleaded for the guilty cities; he did not forget that he himself was but "dust and ashes," a poor, sinful, dying man. His argument also was very ingenious: he had obtained from the divine condescension an assurance, that Sodom should be saved, if fifty righteous persons could be found in it; and would the merciful God destroy the whole city for the want of only five of that number?

V. 32. Ten.] It is probable, that Abraham thought that he had now got within the limits of Lot's family; if, however, there were not that small number in Sodom and its dependencies, he must allow the justice of the sentence.—"Not a soul seems to have been won over, by Lot's residence in the place, to the worship of the true God." Fuller.

V. 33. Surely this is calculated to convey to us the idea of a visible appearance and a personal conference! But "no man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;" and thence we infer, that this was an anticipation of the future incarnation of the Son of God.

PRactical OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. We should not "be forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares:" nay, the Lord of angels himself, as indeed we always do, when for his sake we entertain one of the least of his brethren. Cheerful liberality, and an obliging manner in showing kindness, are great ornaments to true piety: and wealth, used to pious and beneficent purposes, becomes indeed a blessing to the possessor and to many others.—Though our condescending Lord does not vouchsafe to us his personal

CHAPTER XIX.

Lot entertains two angels, 1-3. The abandoned Sodomites are smitten with blindness, 4-11. Lot is warned, and in vain warns his sons-in-law, 12-14. He is directed to flee with his family to the mountain, but obtains leave to retire to Zoar, 15-23. Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed; and Lot's wife, looking back, becomes a pillar of salt, 24-26. Abraham beholds the destruction of Sodom, Ec. 37-39. Lot returns from Zoar; and is betrayed into drunkenness and incest, 30-35. The birth of Moab and Ammon, 35-38.

AND there came ^atwo angels to Sodom at ^beven; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing ^cthem, ^drose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; ^e2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall arise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, ^fNay, but we will abide in the street all night.

^g3 And he ^hpressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house: and he made them ⁱa feast, and did bake ^junleavened bread, and they did eat.

^k4 ¶ But before they lay down, the men of the city, ^leven the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, ^mall the people from every quarter.

a 18:1, 2, 22. *b* 18:2-5. *c* Job 31:32. *d* Heb. 13:2. *e* Judg. 19:17-21. *f* Luke 24:28, 29. *g* Acts 16:15. *h* 2 Kings 4:8. *i* Luke 14:23. *j* 2 Cor. 5:14. *k* 18:6-9. *l* 21:8. *m* Luke 5:29. *n* John 12:2. *o* Ex. 12:15, 19. *p* Judg. 6:19. *q* 1 Sam. 28:24. *r* 1 Cor. 5:8. *s* g Prov. 4:16. *t* 6:18. *u* 13:13. *v* 18:20. *w* Ec. 16:5. *x* Jer. 5:1-6, 31. *y* Matt. 27:30-25. *z* 1 Lev. 18:22. *aa* 20:13. *ab* 22:12. *ac* 1:9. *ad* 1:9. *ae* 16:49, 51. *af* Matt. 11:23, 24. *ag* Rom. 1:23, 27. 1

visits, yet still, by his word and Spirit, he "stands at the door and knocks;" and when we are inclined to open, he deigns to enter; and by his gracious consolations provides a rich entertainment, on which "he sups with us, and we with him." (*Note, Rev. 3:20-22*).—Even the strongest believers need repeated confirmations of their faith, and in trying circumstances sometimes "stagger through unbelief."—One sin is commonly the introduction to another: and it is hardly to be expected that we should strictly adhere to truth, when we allow ourselves to question the divine veracity: but those "whom the Lord loves, he rebukes," silences, and brings to repentance, when they sin against him.—The same action may in some cases be either good or bad, as it springs from opposite internal principles.—Our discouragements also would be greatly removed, and our temptations prevented, did we more fully realize the almighty power of God, as engaged to fulfil his largest promises.

V. 16-22. The righteous Lord exactly determines the degree of criminality, both of individuals and nations, and proportions his punishments to their sins; but, alas! the more particular the scrutiny is, the more numerous and atrocious abominations are generally detected and exposed.—"The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him:" and whether he does, or does not, discover to his people what he is about to do, he will eventually satisfy them of his wisdom and justice in his most awful judgments on the wicked; so that the whole will animate their admiring adorations and praises.—He graciously notices our attention to family religion: and when we use our authority and ability, in governing and instructing our households, it is not only an acceptable service, and conducive to the diffusion and continuance of piety in the world; but is also the means of entailing spiritual advantages on our posterity: while the neglect of it is often visited by sore judgments on them, as in the case of Lot, of Eli, and of Jehoshaphat.

V. 23-33. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:" and the ungodly are little aware how deeply they are indebted, as to temporal comforts, and that long-suffering, which frequently makes way for their conversion and salvation, to the prayers of the very persons whom they despise and injure; nay, a number in any nation or city, who stand in the gap by their intercessions and exertions, are a stronger defence than armies, navies, or fortifications.—It is our duty and privilege thus to stand before the Lord, not only in behalf of our relatives, friends, brethren, and country, but likewise of all on whom we apprehend the wrath of God is about to be poured; and to fill our mouth with arguments, and order our cause before him in the best manner we can. And though our unworthiness and vileness, compared with his majesty and holiness, must frequently excite a consciousness how unworth we are thus "to engage our hearts to approach unto God;" yet, coming through our great and merciful High-Priest to a throne of Grace, we, sinful dust and ashes, need not fear, that the Lord will be angry at our humble, compassionate, and fervent petitions: for they are "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." We shall always find him more ready to hear than we to ask; and shall commonly discontinue our requests before he ceases to grant them. Yet in many cases we must be satisfied with the assurance, that our "prayers will return into our own bosom."—In praying for sinners, we should be careful not to impeach the justice of God in their condemnation: for we could not desire that the destruction of the finally impenitent should be prevented.—The Lord will by no means deal alike with the righteous and the wicked.

^a5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, ^bWhere are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

^c6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

^d7 And said, ^eI pray you, brethren, ^fdo not so wickedly.

^g8 Behold now, ^hI have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for ⁱtherefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

^j9 And they said, ^kStand back. And they said ^lagain, ^mThis one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. ⁿAnd they pressed sore upon the man, ^oeven Lot, and came near to break the door.

^p10 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

Cor. 6:9. 1 Tim. 1:10. Jude 7. k Judg. 19:23. l 1 Sam 30:23, 24. Acts 17:26. 1 Ex. 32:22. m 31:38. 42:37. Judg. 19:24. Mark 9:6. Rom. 3:8. n 18:5. o 1 Sam. 55:17. Prov. 9:7, 9. Jer. 33:6, 15. 8:12. Matt. 7:6. p 13:12. Ex. 3:14. Acts 23:28. q 2 Pet. 2:7, 8. q 11:6. 1 Sam. 2:16. Prov. 14:16. 17:12. 27:3. Ec. 9:3. 10:13. Dan. 3:19-22.

"That be far from him: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Yet the best of men are sinners, and may justly be involved in public calamities; especially when they have not decidedly protested against prevailing impiety, and separated from the wicked: but God will make a more exact discrimination in a future world. He delighteth, however, in mercy; and for the sake of a few who really serve him, he often prolongs the tranquillity and preserves the lives of multitudes; so that believers are not only *blessed*, but a *blessing* wherever they live. The good Lord be pleased to increase the number of them in our land, and in every part of the world!

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1. The sacred historian, more agreeably occupied, as it were, by the history of faithful Abraham, had for some time been silent as to Lot; but in this chapter he is again introduced, though not greatly to his credit. The apostle Peter says, that "Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; for that righteous man, dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." We must therefore conclude, that his character was upright, and on the whole his example good. But he wanted firmness, and was not fit for the situation into which he had intruded himself; nor was he able to "set his face like a flint" against the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. He went thither from unworthy motives, and continued there with unwarrantable pertinacity: and accordingly, he seems to have done no good, and to have got much harm himself, and his family still more. He however waited for an opportunity of entertaining strangers; setting an example of hospitality in the midst of triumphant abominations: and in this he imitated Abraham.—Two angels appeared to Lot, and He who spake as JEHOVAH was not sensibly present. Lot must be delivered as "a righteous man," and in regard to Abraham's intercession; but sharp rebukes, rather than peculiar honour and consolation, were most suited to his case.—The angels appeared to him as men; but there seems to have been something extraordinary and attractive in their form and manner.

V. 2, 3. In order to evince the cordiality of Lot's invitations, the angels at first declined them: but "he pressed on them greatly;" aware that insults awaited them in the street. (*Kathbaragaro. Sept. Marg. Ref. c. d.*)

V. 4, 5. This simple narration conveys more forcibly an idea of the extreme and unparalleled wickedness of Sodom, and of all ranks and descriptions of its inhabitants, than the most laboured descriptions and rhetorical declamations could have done; and is a most beautiful example of giving intimations concerning practices, too shameful to be mentioned, in language which excites no other sensation than horror and indignation.

V. 6-9. The regard to the rites of hospitality, which Lot expressed on this occasion, was very commendable; but having used all proper means of preserving his guests, he ought to have left the cause with God; and on no account to have made a proposal to the outrageous Sodomites concerning his daughters, which was entirely inconsistent with every moral obligation. It may indeed be ascribed in part to the excessive perturbation of his mind: but probably his judgment was rather perverted, and his feelings blunted, by the conversation and example of his profligate neighbours. (*1 Cor. 15:33*.) He thus, however, gave them occasion, by violently resenting so gentle and feeble an admonition, to manifest their excessive depravity, in the most striking manner imaginable.

11 And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

12 ¶ And the men said unto Lot, 'Hast thou here any besides? "son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place.

13 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.

14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, 'Up, get ye out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city: but he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.

15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, 'Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

[Practical Observations.]

16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, 'Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

18 And Lot said unto them, 'Oh, not so, my Lord.

19 Behold, now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life: and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die.

r 2 Kings 6:18, Acts 13:11, s Ec. 10:15, 17:1, Num. 16:26, Josh. 6:22, 23, Jer. 32:29, o 14, x 18:20, Jam. 5:4, y 1 Chr. 21:15-16, Is. 37:36, Ez. 9:5-6, Matt. 13:41, 42, 49-50, Acts 12:23, Rev. 16:1-12, z Num. 16:21-45, Rev. 18:4-8, a Ex. 9:2, 2 Chr. 30:10, 35:16, Prov. 29:1, Jer. 5:12-14, Luke 17:25-30, Acts 17:32, 1 Thes. 5:3, b Num. 16:24-27, Prov. 6:4-5, Luke 13:24-25, 2 Cor. 6:2, Heb. 3:7-8, c Heb. are fund, d Or, punishment, e Ps. 119:60, d Ex. 34:6, Is. 63:9, Lam. 3:22, Rom. 9:15-18, Eph. 2:4-5, Tit. 3:5, e Josh. 6:22, Ps. 34:22, 2 Pet. 2:9, f 1 Sam. 19:11, 1 Kings 19:3, Matt. 3:7, 24:16-18, Heb. 2:3, g 28, Luke 17:31, 32, h 2 Kings 5:11, 12, John 13:6-8, Acts 9:13, 10:14, 11 Tim. 1:14-16, i 2:12, 13, 1 Sam. 27:1, Ps. 77:7-11, 116:11, Matt. 9:25, 26, Mark

20 Behold, now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

21 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

22 Haste thee, escape thither: for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

24 Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

27 ¶ And Abraham gat up early in the morning, to the place where he stood before the Lord.

28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

30 ¶ And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 And the first-born said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man on the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth.

9:19, Rom. 9:31, 130, Prov. 3:5-7, m 12:13, Ps. 119:175, n Ps. 102:17, 145:19, Matt. 19:20, Heb. 2:17, 4:15-16, 1 Heb. thy face, e 12:22, 18:24, p 32:29, 28, Ex. 32:16, Deut. 9:14, Mark 6:5, 2 Tim. 2:13, Tit. 1:2, q 13:10, 14:2, Is. 15:5, Jer. 48:34, s Heb. gone forth, r Deut. 29:23, Job 18:15, Is. 11:6, Is. 13:19, Jer. 49:18, 50:40, Lam. 4:6, Ez. 16:49-50, Hos. 11:8, Am. 4:11, Zeph. 2:9, Matt. 11:23-24, Luke 17:28-29, 2 Pet. 2:6, Jude 7, s 13:10, 14:3, 117, Prov. 14:14, Luke 17:31, 32, Heb. 10:38, u Num. 16:38, v 16:22, y Rev. 14:10, 11, 18:1, 21:8, z 8:1, 12:2, 18:23-33, Deut. 9:5, Ps. 36:31, 32, a 17-22, b 4:4, Jer. 2:26, 37, Lam. 1:8, c 6:4, 16:24, 38:8, 9, 14-30, Deut. 26:5, Is. 4:1,

V. 11. The persons, thus smitten with blindness, seem not to have been aware of their real condition: but supposing they saw objects which indeed they did not see, they were entirely bewildered, and wearied themselves with seeking the door, while incapable of perceiving where it really was. (Notes, 2 Kings 6:18-20.)

V. 13. *We will destroy . . . the Lord hath sent us.* This is the language of servants obeying orders; and very different from that employed in the preceding chapter. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 14, 15. Probably the sons-in-law here mentioned, had married other daughters of Lot; who either were dead, or they perished in the ruin of the city. (Note, Rev. 18:4-8.)

V. 16-22. Lot was forbidden to look behind him; as this would indicate great reluctance to leave his property in Sodom, and to quit the fertile plain which had so long ensnared him. Indeed, his attachment was so strong to Sodom, and his lingering so criminal, that it was an instance of special indulgence, that he was not left to loiter till it was too late to escape. And at last, through unbelief and untrue valuation of worldly things, he was unwilling entirely to quit the plain and flee to the mountain; yet mercy prevailed; and Zoar, a small city, was spared in condescension to his infirmity, and in answer to his request! Zoar signifies Little: it was before called Bela; but being spared because it was a little city, it afterwards retained the name of Zoar.—Lot addressed himself especially to the angel, who left him out of Sodom, and was answered by him; yet the other seems to have continued with his family. Many indeed suppose that he, who appeared and spake to Abraham as JEHOVAH, had now joined them; but there is no decided proof of it. The angels might have a commission to spare Zoar at Lot's request; and he might express his gratitude to the instrument of his preservation, when visibly present, in the language here used, without ascribing to him the honour due to God alone. Lot must arrive at a place of safety, before vengeance could be inflicted on Sodom: this implied a rebuke of his unbelieving fears, as well as a most condescending assurance of the Lord's merciful care of him.

V. 23. The rising sun promised a cheerful day; but how speedily and awfully was the prospect changed!

V. 24, 25. The language here is remarkable; "JEHOVAH rained . . . from JEHOVAH out of heaven;" and it is supposed by many expositors to confirm the opinion, that He, who appeared and spake to Abraham as JEHOVAH, was visibly present at Sodom immediately commanding the fire and

brimstone from heaven to destroy the city. The judgment came, however, "as a destruction from the Almighty;" and we need not inquire how he effected it. But the cities and all the inhabitants were totally destroyed; and the whole plain was converted into a great lake, called the Salt Sea, or Dead Sea; which exhibits an appearance in many respects extraordinary, and dissimilar to that of all other seas or lakes.

V. 26. This unhappy woman, contrary to God's express command, in unbelief and love to Sodom and its riches, regretting what was left behind, and probably purposing to return, "looked back;" and as some think, actually attempted to return; and our Lord's words, "Let him not return back; remember Lot's wife," favour this supposition. She was therefore instantaneously struck dead and petrified, and thus remained to after-ages a visible monument of the divine displeasure; being punished as a warning to others through successive generations.—Perhaps she was a native of Sodom, as nothing is said of Lot having a wife, when with Abraham.—Above twenty years had passed, from the time that Lot went to Sodom.

V. 27-29. Abraham rose early to inquire after the success of his prayers, and probably to renew them: but the awful scene which he witnessed effectually precluded further intercession for those cities. Yet God remembered Abraham, and rescued Lot, more in answer to Abraham's prayers, than as approving Lot's behaviour.

V. 30. Lot retired from the place which he had chosen, perhaps finding it as wicked as Sodom; and that consideration, joined to the inundating of the neighbouring plain by the obstructed waters of Jordan, might excite apprehensions for his safety. He went, therefore, to reside in a cave, probably on the very mountain to which he was at first commanded to flee.—But what hindered his return to Abraham? Doubtless Abraham would have received him, though strip of all, and a wretched outcast. We cannot but attribute his conduct to stoutness of spirit, and fear of contempt, if he should appear so degraded among those, who had known him in more prosperous days. Whatever were his reasons, he forsook his own mercies.—No doubt his herdmen, as well as his herds, perished in the overthrow of Sodom. How different was his family from that of Abraham!

V. 31-33. Many conjectures have been formed concerning the motives which induced Lot's daughters to this most atrocious conduct; and many excuses have been advanced. It is not indeed improbable that the desire of having children,

(51)

against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

7 Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

9 ¶ Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me, and on my kingdom, a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place: and they will slay me for my wife's sake.

12 And yet indeed *she is* my sister; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother: and she became my wife.

13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother.

14 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and

men-servants, and women-servants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

15 And Abimelech said, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand *pieces* of silver: behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* with thee, and with all *other*: thus she was reproved.

17 So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare children.

18 For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

CHAPTER XXI.

Isaac is born and circumcised, and Abraham and Sarah rejoice, 1-7. Isaac is named, 8. Ishmael mocks, and a Sarah's instance and by God's direction, is sent away into Hagar, 9-14. They are distressed, but delivered; and Ishmael prospers and marries an Egyptian, 15-21. Abraham covenants with Abimelech, and worships God at Beersheba, 22-34.

AND the LORD visited Sarah as he had said: and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

2 For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

o 3.9, 26:11, 1 Cor. 7:1, 2 Cor. 6:17, p 12:1-3, 15:17 Ex. 7:1, Ps. 115:9-13, g 1 Sam. 7:5-8, 12:19, 33, 2 Sam. 21:17, 1 Kings 13:9, 2 Kings 5:11, 19:2-4, Job 42:8, Jer. 14:11, 15:1, 27:18, Jer. 5:11-16, 1 John 5:16, r 2:17, Ex. 3:18, 33:8, 14-16, e Num. 16:32-33, 12:18, 25:10, Ex. 32:21, 35, Josh. 7:23, 1 Sam. 26:18, 19, Prov. 28:10, u Lev. 20:10, 2 Sam. 12:10, 11, Heb. 13:4, x 34:7, 2 Sam. 13:12, 14:1, 11, y 22:12, 43:18, Neh. 5:15, Job 1:1, 28:28, Ps. 35:1, Prov. 1:7, 2:5, 8:13, 16:6, Rom. 3:18, z 12:12, 26:7, a 11:29, 1 Thes. 5:22.

ranks of the superior orders in the community!—Against me, (6.) Note, Ps. 51:4.

V. 7. Prophet.] Abraham is the first person called a prophet in the scripture. The title seems to denote one who is favoured with a peculiar intercourse with God, who receives communications from him in his own personal concerns, or is employed to deliver his mind and will to others; whether he utter predictions of future events or not. Various external circumstances attended these communications; and some prophets had more intimate access to God, and explicit discoveries of his will, than others; but this general definition will apply almost to every place in the sacred oracles, where the word is used; except when false prophets are meant, who pretended to that special intercourse with God which the true prophets actually enjoyed.—The intercession of prophets was deemed peculiarly effectual. (Marg. Ref. p. q.)

V. 8. His council were all of the same mind, that this was a divine admonition, which it was not safe to disobey. Bp. Patrick.

V. 9-13. Abimelech's expostulation and remonstrance were weighty, convincing, and mild: but Abraham's answer implied criminal distrust of God, groundless suspicion of the Gerarites, and a settled plan of misconduct; and his excuse was tinged with equivocation.—(Note, 11: 28-32.)

V. 16. Abraham actually gave Abraham a thousand pieces of silver, (probably shekels), in money, besides the presents before-mentioned; or this was the value of the whole. In stating this to Sarah, he calls him her brother, which implied a rebuke of her misconduct.—Some expound the following words of the money given to Abraham:—“This is a covering of the eyes, &c.” “I have given him this money to buy thee a veil, that all who converse with thee here, or in any other country where thou shalt come, may know thee to be a married woman.”—A veil was worn as a token of subjection to her husband.—Others refer them to Abraham: “He is to thee a covering of the eyes, &c.” “Thou shouldst have avowed thy relation to him, which would have sufficiently protected thee, either here or elsewhere.”—Instead of, “And with all other, &c.” the Septuagint read, “And in all things speak truth.”—Thus she was reproved or instructed.

V. 17, 18. The disorders inflicted on Abimelech and his family, not only withheld him from sin, but tended to show the efficacy of fervent prayer, and to put honour upon Abraham, and so to promote the knowledge of God among the Philistines. (1 Sam. 5: 6.)—Man's wisdom leads him into a pit; but God's wisdom must draw him out. Fuller.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very affecting here again to notice even the father of the faithful manifesting distrust of God, and undue solicitude about life; equivocating with intent to deceive; relapsing into his former sin; drawing in Sarah to share his guilt, exposing her honour and chastity, and even endangering a question about the legitimacy of his promised Isaac; throwing temptation into Abimelech's way; occasioning affliction

to him and his family; exposing himself and Sarah to just rebukes, and yet vainly attempting an excuse. Shall we commend or imitate Abraham in these things? by no means. They are written for our warning, that “while we think we stand, we may take heed lest we fall.” Even “Abraham hath not whereof to glory,” but must be justified in “that righteousness of God, which is upon all and unto all them that believe.”—We must not condemn all as hypocrites who relapse into sin, even with aggravation, if they do not continue in it; nor need we ourselves despair, if humbly conscious of having thus relapsed. But let the unhumiliated and impatient take heed to themselves; for their case is unspeakably perilous: and let all men abhor the thoughts of “sinning on, that grace may abound.”—It should also be noted, that artifice, of whatever kind, is more certainly unsuccessful, and more speedily detected, when used by religious characters, than in the case of others. The irreligious may for a season practise it and prosper; but the servants of God must for their good be soon put to shame.—On the other hand, though some things in Abimelech must be blamed; and it should be observed that indulgence gives force to all our passions; yet we must commend, and should imitate, the calmness and mildness of his reproof, his ready return of good for evil, and the salutary counsel which he gave to Sarah: and it is pleasing to find that he mentions adultery as a horrible sin against God, and temptation to it as a great injury; and that he so seriously expostulates with Abraham about his misconduct in that respect.—To appeal to God in particular instances, concerning our integrity, is not at all inconsistent with a humble consciousness, that we cannot stand before him in judgment, but continually need his pardoning mercy. He will indeed graciously admit such appeals, when well grounded, but it is difficult to vindicate ourselves, without seeming to reflect upon his righteousness.—We often disquiet ourselves, and even are led into temptation and sin, by groundless suspicions: and we sometimes find the fear of God where we least expected it.—Combinations to deceive generally issue in shame and sorrow: and restraints from sin, though by suffering, should thankfully be acknowledged. But though the Lord rebukes, yet he will pardon and deliver his people, and for his own glory put honour upon them and their prayers. He will give them favour in the sight of those with whom they sojourn; and will so overrule even their infirmities, when they are humbled for them, that they shall prove an occasion of good to themselves and others.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. The word visit, when thus used, denotes the visible effects of the Lord's presence and power, either in mercy or in judgment. Here it signifies his gracious attention to Sarah, and his faithful accomplishment of his promise; when in the natural course of things, it could not be expected that she should bear a son.

V. 3, 4. Isaac signifies laughter; and this child of promise was so named, in remembrance of Abraham's believing, and Sarah's unbelieving, laughter; and as an expression of joy and gratitude. In this, as well as in circumcising Isaac and

4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, ^{being} eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was ^{an} hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

6 And Sarah said, ^{God} hath made me to laugh, ^{so that} all that hear ^{will} laugh with me.

^{B. C. 1893.} 7 And she said, ^{Who} would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given child-age? for I have born him a son in his old age.

8 [¶] And the child grew, ^{and} was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

9 And [¶] Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the ^{Egyptian}, which she had born unto Abraham, ^{mocking}.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, ^{Cast} out this bond-woman, and her son: for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, ^{because} of his son.

12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight, ^{because} of the lad, and ^{because} of thy bond-woman: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, ^{hearken} unto her voice: for ⁱⁿ Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13 And also ^{of} the son of the bond-woman will I make a nation, ^{because} he is thy seed.

14 And Abraham ^{rose} up early in the morning, and ^{took} bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, (putting it on her shoulder,) and the child, and sent her away: and she departed and ^{wandered} in the wilderness of ^{Beer}-sheba.

15 And [¶] the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against *him*, a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, ^{Let} me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against *him* and ^{lifted} up her voice and wept.

17 And God ^{heard} the voice of the lad: and

[¶] the Angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, ^{What} aileth thee, Hagar? [¶] Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand: for [¶] I will make him a great nation.

19 And [¶] God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water: and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And [¶] God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became ^{an} archer.

21 And he dwelt ⁱⁿ the wilderness of [¶] Paran: and his mother took him ^a wife out of the land of [¶] Egypt.

[*Practical Observations.*]

22 [¶] And it came to pass at that time, that [¶] Abimelech, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, spake unto Abraham, saying, [¶] God is with thee in all that thou doest.

23 Now therefore ^{swear} unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son; *but* according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

25 And Abraham ^{reproved} Abimelech ^{because} of a well of water, which Abimelech's ^{servants} had violently taken away.

26 And Abimelech said, [¶] I wot not who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I ^{of} it but to-day.

27 And Abraham ^{took} sheep, and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech: and both of them ^{made} a covenant.

28 And Abraham set seven ewe-lambs of the flock by themselves.

29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, [¶] What mean these seven ewe-lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

30 And he said, [¶] For these seven ewe-lambs shalt thou take of my hand, ^{that} they may be a witness unto me; that I have digged this well.

f 17:10—12. Lev. 12:3. Luke 1:59. 2:21. John 7:22,23. g 17:1,17. Rom. 4:19. h 17:18. 12—15. 1 Sam. 1:26—28. Ps. 113:9. 126:2. i. 54:1. Gal. 4:27. i Luke 1:14. 55. Rom. 12:15. k Num. 23:23. Deut. 4:32—34. p. 36:8. Is. 66:8. 2 Thes. 1:10. 1 Sam. 1:22. q. 13:12. Hos. 1:8. m 16:9—6:15. 17:21. n 16:1. o 2 Kings 2:23,24. 2 Chr. 30:10. 36:16. Neh. 4:1—5. Ps. 42:10. 44:13,14. Prov. 20:11. Gal. 4:29. Heb. 11:36. p Prov. 22:10. John 8:35. Gal. 4:30,31. q 17:18. 22:12. 2 Sam. 18:33. Matt. 10:37. r 1 Sam. 8:7,9. Is. 46:10. s 17:19. 21. Rom. 9:7,8. Heb. 11:18. t 16:10. 17:20. 25:12—18. u 19:27. 22:3. 24:54. v Prov. 27:14. x 25:6. 36:6,7. y 16:7. 37:15. Ps. 107:4. Is. 16:3. z 33. 72:19. 25:33. 46:11. 1 Kings 19:3. a 14. Ex. 15:22—25. 17:1—3. 2 Kings 3:9. Ps. 62:1. Is. 44:12. Jer. 14:3. b 44:34. Esth. 8:6. c 27:38. 29:11. Judg. 2:4. Ruth

1:9. 1 Sam. 24:16. 30:4. 2 Sam. 13:36. d 16:11. Ex. 3:7. 22:27. 2 Kings 13:4. 23. e See on 16:9,11. f Judg. 18:23. 1 Sam. 11:5. Is. 22:1. g 15:1. 46:3. Ex. 14:13. Is. 41:10,14. h 13. 16:10. 17:20. i Num. 22:31. 2 Kings 6:17—20. Luke 24:16,31. k 25:15. 39:23,24. Judg. 13:24,25. Luke 1:80. 2:40. 1:102. 16:12. 23:27—37. q 19:23,24. m Num. 10:12. 12:16. 13:3,36. 1 Sam. 25:1. n 24:3,4. 28:31,35. 37:46. 28:1,2. o 20:2. 26:26. p 26:28. 30:27. 39:3. Is. 8:10. Zech. 8:23. Matt. 12:3. Rev. 3:9. q 24:3. 31:53. Josh. 2:12. 1 Sam. 20:42. 24:21,22. 30:15. Heb. 6:16. r Heb. if thou shalt lie unto me. s 26:15—22. Prov. 17:10. 25:27. 26:17. 15:15. t 13:7. Ex. 2:16,17. u 2 Kings 5:20—24. v 14:22,23. Prov. 18:24. Is. 32:8. x 26:28—31. 1 Sam. 1:3. Ex. 17:13. Rom. 1:31. Gal. 3:15. y 3:38. Ex. 12:25. 1 Sam. 15:14. z 31:44,52. Josh. 22:27,28. 24:27.

the eighth day, Abraham was implicitly obedient to the commandment of God.

V. 5—7. The joy of Abraham and Sarah, on this extraordinary occasion, and the congratulations which they would receive from friends and neighbours, were but feeble earnestness of the rejoicing of many millions in Him, who descended from Isaac, to bless the nations of the earth.

V. 8—12. It is probable, that Isaac was not weaned very early; some think not till he was five years old: and Abraham made a feast on that occasion, as thankfully rejoicing that his son was thus far advanced towards maturity. It appears that Ishmael derided Isaac as the child of promise; and that his mocking was a kind of persecution, implying profane contempt of the covenant and promise of God, and opposition to his purpose, and some indications of malice against Isaac.—Sarah, however, seems to have been actuated, in some measure, by disdain and resentment, in requiring Abraham to send away Hagar and Ishmael: yet she was led to utter words, which were afterwards to be made use of in illustrating a most important part of divine truth. (*Note, Gal. 4:21—31.*)—Abraham was grieved, on account both of Ishmael's misconduct, and Sarah's severity; and he might also be perplexed, how to reconcile the duty which he owed to his son and to Hagar, with his affection to his wife. But the Lord made his duty plain to him, and showed him that Ishmael must be sent away, in order that the promises might be fulfilled to Isaac and his Seed.

V. 13. *Thy seed.* Ishmael should have many blessings, as Abraham's son; though not the special blessing of being the ancestor of the promised Seed.

V. 14—19. "Bread and water" denote necessities for the journey of Hagar and Ishmael, probably into Egypt to her relations, she being now liberated from bondage. Ishmael was more than sixteen, some think he was nineteen, years of age at this time: yet the provisions were put upon Hagar's shoulder, as more innured to labour; and the lad was committed to her care. No doubt these circumstances were ordered according to instructions given to Abraham; perhaps

for Hagar's humiliation, and with some view to the future state of Ishmael's posterity. She, however, "wandered," or *lost her way*, in the desert, which may account for the distress which ensued; for it does not appear that the provisions were consumed, or that she was sent away without money. But the water was spent, and the climate was hot; so that Ishmael was overcome with fatigue and thirst, and ready to die; and Hagar assisted him in reaching the shade of some shrubs, and lying down as his circumstances would admit: and fully expecting that he would die, she sat down at a distance and wept. In this season of deep distress the Lord heard the voice of Ishmael's groaning, perhaps of his prayer, and addressed Hagar by an angel, saying, "What aileth thee, Hagar?" "Fear not," intimating that the promise, before made to her, (16:10—13.) was a full security that Ishmael should not die at this time, and that therefore her anguish was needless, and her fear groundless. At the same time the Lord directed her attention to the relief, which was near at hand, but which she had not before observed.

V. 20, 21. The Lord prospered Ishmael in his outward circumstances: nor can we positively conclude, either from his past misconduct, his general character, or the typical meaning of his expulsion from Abraham's family, that he lived and died destitute of the special grace and favour of God. He became, however, an archer and a hunter; and thus the prophecy concerning him began to be accomplished, in his person, as it has been ever since in his posterity. (*Notes, 16:12*)—We have no reason to conclude, that he was never visited by his father, or that he came no more to see him. (*Notes, 25:9,10.*)

V. 22—24. Abimelech was convinced that the promises of God would be fulfilled to Abraham; and he was therefore desirous of securing his friendship, and the benefit of it, to himself, to his posterity, and to his people.—Perhaps he too was a true believer; at least his character seems not at all inconsistent with that supposition. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 20:12—17.*)—*Phicol.* *Note, 26:26.*

V. 25, 26. Wells of water, being scarce, were very valuable in those countries. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)

31 Wherefore he called that place 'Beer-sheba: because there they swore both of them.

32 Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up and Pichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

33 And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

34 And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

a 36:33. * That is, *The well of the oath*. 14. Josh. 15:28. b 27. 1 Sam. 18:3. c 10: 11. 28:14. Ex. 13:17. Judg. 13:1. 1 Chr. 2:2. d 28:12. e Deut. 32:27. f 29:2. g 12:40. 29:25. Rom. 16:26. 1 Tim. 1:17. f 28:1. 1 Chr. 29:15. Ps. 3:12. Heb. 11:9, 13. a Ex. 15:25, 26. 16:4. Deut. 8:2. 13:3. Judg. 2:22. 2 Chr. 32:31.

V. 31. *Beer-sheba.*] *The well of the oath: or, The well of the seven*, alluding to the seven ewe lambs. Perhaps these were given to Abimelech, as the proprietor of the land, in which the well was digged, and as the rent of it, that the well might be the more clearly Abraham's property.—The verb rendered "to swear," is derived from the word translated *seven*; probably with reference to the number of the sacrifices frequently offered on these solemn occasions.

V. 32. *Into the land of the Philistines.*] That is, to Gerar. Beer-sheba seems at that time to have been under the dominion of the king of the Philistines: (33.) but it was not generally considered as a part of Philistia.

V. 33. Perhaps Abraham planted this grove to shelter his tent; and to form a shade for the performance of sacred worship, which was at that time usually performed in the open air.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21. Blessed are they whose hope is in the Lord, and who patiently wait for him; for their expectations shall certainly be answered, and even exceeded. The delay may seem tedious, and the exercise of faith and patience sharp; but they shall at length acknowledge, that their blessings were only deferred, that they might have them with additional comfort, by perceiving more plainly the power, love, and faithfulness of God in them; and that his name might be the more glorified. He does not indeed relieve and comfort, when we should choose it; but he always observes his own set time, which is the best that infinite wisdom can select; and they who uprightly serve him, will never be ashamed of any thing, except their unbelief; and this shame will be swallowed up in their thankful joy for the largeness of his performances.—As he keeps his time in giving blessings, so we must observe the appointed season for performing his commandments, and not be induced by any consideration to omit or defer our obedience.—Grievous things speedily follow joyous events in this world, and the effect of former marriages often interrupts the satisfaction of present advantages. Even children are more certain cares than comforts; and their ill behaviour and contentions, with the fear or pain of parting with them, greatly alloy the pleasure which we might otherwise derive from them.—In all our anxieties, we should observe the directions, obey the commandments, and depend on the promises and providence of God: and thus, "casting our care on him," our minds will be kept in peace; and he will take care of those whom we love, when we are no longer able to do it.—Let us not, however, neglect to notice the secret influence of the Lord in this domestic transaction; nor overlook the instruction given us, not to rest in external privileges, or in our own performances, lest we be outcasts with Ishmael; but let us learn to seek the blessings of the new covenant, by faith in its divine Surety; and that grace and Spirit of adoption, which mark the children and heirs of God, and enable them to walk at liberty in his commandments, and cheerfully to expect the fulfilment of his promises. And let us habitually recollect, that our despondency and complaints arise from forgetfulness of his word; that relief is often nearer than we perceive; that the Lord always hears the prayer of faith, and frequently the very cry of distress; and that numerous advantages are conferred on the posterity of those who have honoured God, for the sake of their pious ancestors.

V. 22—34. The behaviour of believers may be so undeniably excellent, and the Lord's favour to them so manifest, as to convince observers that "God is with them in all they do;" and this conviction is often the means of their conversion. How important then is it, that we "walk in wisdom towards those that are without!"—Common prudence might suffice to teach men, that it is advantageous to be connected with those whom the Lord blesses; did not the enmity of the carnal mind counteract its influence.—They who would "live peaceably with all men," must watch over their servants, and be careful whom they trust, as well as be circumspect in their own conduct; especially if affluence or high station require many to be employed: for injuries are often committed, and charged on the principal, of which he knows and hears nothing. On this, as well as on other accounts, it is far better mildly to reprove those by whom we suppose ourselves ill-used, than to complain to others, without giving them the opportunity of clearing themselves.—They who profess to serve God, should act in all cases with strict fidelity; require

CHAPTER XXII.

Abraham, tried by the command to sacrifice Isaac, shows his faith by obeying, 1—10. He is prevented from slaying his son, and offers a ram in his stead, 11—13. A name is given to the place, and the covenant is renewed with Abraham, 14—18. Some account of Nahor's family, 20—24.

AND it came to pass after these things, that a God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, 'Behold, *here I am*.

2 And he said, 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of 'Moriah; and offer him there for a

Prov. 17:3. 1 Cor. 10:13. Heb. 11:17. Jam. 1:12—14. * Heb. *Behold me*. 7:11. Ex. 3:4. 16:8. b 17:19. 21:12. John 3:16. Rom. 8:32. 1 John 4:9, 10. c 2 Chr. 3:1. d Judg. 11:31, 39. 2 Kings 3:27. Mic. 6:7.

every kindness liberally to the benefactor, or his relatives and descendants; and exhibit, in all things, an example of integrity and disinterestedness. In general it is advisable to avoid oaths or vows; yet on important occasions, and when due solemnity is observed, the honour of God and religion, and the cause of justice and peace, may require us to confirm our covenants by these awful obligations. In this case, however, it is incumbent on us to be very explicit in our requirements and engagements; that we may neither entangle our own consciences, nor give others the least ground to suspect that we have failed in fulfilling our promises. Indeed, honest and friendly purposes naturally lead to an unreserved frankness, which is the best security of peace and harmony.—But while we attend to outward matters with prudence and equity, we must never forget that we are strangers and pilgrims on earth; and, wherever we sojourn, we must neither neglect, nor be ashamed of, the worship of JEHOVAH, the everlasting God, our Refuge, Rest, and Portion, through all generations, and to all eternity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. "After these things;" "after five and twenty years" waiting; after the promise had been frequently repeated; after hope had been raised to the highest pitch, yea, after it had been actually turned into enjoyment: and when the child had lived long enough to discover an amiable and godly disposition." *Fuller.—Tempt.*] This word, as here used, conveys an idea, which may seem inconsistent with other testimonies of the sacred oracles; but the case is different as to the original languages, in which, to *tempt*, and to *try* or *prove*, are expressed in the same manner. Accordingly, the old translation very properly renders the clause, "God did *prove* Abraham."—Every *trial* indeed is eventually a *temptation*, and tends to manifest the prevailing dispositions of the heart, whether holy or unholy. As to the state of the heart, or the influence of external agents upon it, *exciting* to sin, "let no man say he is tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man:" but he appoints all external circumstances, he gives us general or particular commandments, and he allots us our several services. In all these respects he acts in perfect wisdom and holiness; yet his appointments are intended "to prove us, and show what is in our hearts;" and they frequently give occasion to our evil propensities to manifest themselves, and to Satan and wicked men to tempt us. Thus the Lord may be said not only to *try* us, but also to "lead us into temptation;" (*Note, Matt. 6:13.*) which, conscious of our weakness, we are taught to deprecate.—If the young man, whom our Lord required "to sell all and follow him," had possessed Abraham's strength of faith, he would have given an illustrious example of self-denying obedience. Had Abraham, when commanded to sacrifice Isaac, been under the power of unbelief and carnal attachments, he would have been recorded as a lamentable instance of defection in the day of trial.—Joseph overcame a far more dangerous temptation to adultery, than that by which David fell; because his heart was vastly more under the influence of holy dispositions than David's was on that awful occasion. This is universally applicable. The holy law gives occasion to all manner of concupiscence; and even the blessed gospel to still deeper malignity, when sin reigns in the heart; while the most horrid temptations tend to illustrate the power of divine love and zeal, when holy affections completely possess it; as the conduct of our tempted, suffering, and holy Redeemer most evidently shows.—We may apply these remarks to the case of Abraham. The Lord saw good to put his faith and obedience to a most severe trial. The evil propensities of our fallen nature are, in no sense, to be ascribed to God; for that would make him the author of sin. He did not tempt Abraham, by suggesting evil thoughts to his mind, or exciting sinful passions; for thus a man is tempted by his own lust, by the devil, and by his fellow-sinners; but he placed him in such circumstances, as effectually showed the ruling dispositions of his heart, and proved them to be very excellent.

V. 2. Every word in this surprising command is marked with emphasis of terror, when we consider it as directed to a tender parent: "Thy son"—"thine only son" by Sarah thy wife—"whom thou lovest—even Isaac."—Go into the land of Moriah;—then, after that long journey, offer him there for a burnt-offering, shed his blood, and burn his body to ashes!—How many objections might Abraham have started to this command! He might have urged the divine prohibition of

burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there,

and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

[Practical Observations.]

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son.

14 And Abraham called the name of that place JEHOVAH-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

15 And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in

e 17:23. Ps. 119:60. Ec. 9:10. Is. 26:34. Matt. 10:37. Mark 10:28—31. Luke 14:23. Gal. 1:16. Heb. 11:17—19. f Ex. 19:11,15. 1 Cor. 15:4. g Heb. 12:1. h Heb. 11:19. i Is. 53:6. Matt. 8:17. John 19:17. 1 Pet. 2:24. k Matt. 25:39,42. John 18:11. Rom. 8:15. * Heb. 11:19. m 1. 14:2—4. 8:20. f Or, kid. Ex. 12:3. marg. m John 1:29,36. 1 Pet. 1:19,20. Rev. 5:6,12. 7:14. 13:8. n Ps. 118:27. Matt. 27:62. John 10:17,18. Acts 3:2. Eph. 5:2. Phil. 2:8. o Is. 53:6—12. Heb. 11:17—19. Jam. 2:21—23. p See on 16:9,10. q 1. Ex. 3:4. 1 Sam. 3:10. Acts 9:4. 25:14. r 1 Sam. 15:22. Jer. 19:5. Mic. 6:6—8. 2 Cor. 8:

12. s 20:11. 42:18. Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24,25. Neh. 5:15. Job 28:28. Ps. 25:12,14. 111:10. 112:1. Prov. 1:7. Ec. 8:12,13. 12:13. Jer. 32:40. Mal. 4:2. Acts 9:31. Heb. 12:28. Jam. 2:22. Rev. 19:5. 1 Rom. 8:32. 1 John 4:9,10. u Is. 30:21. x 1 Cor. 5:7,8. 1 Pet. 1:19,20. y 16:13,14. 28:15. 32:30. Ez. 17:15. 1 Sam. 7:12. * That is, The Lord will see, or provide. z Deut. 32:36. Mic. 4:10. 2 Cor. 1:8—10. a 11. b Ps. 105:9. Is. 45:23. Jer. 49:13. 51:14. Am. 6:8. Luke 1:73. Heb. 6:13,14. c 27:23,29. 49:25,26. Deut. 28:2—13. Eph. 1:3.

murder; and the evil report which such an action would bring on his character, on the religion which he professed, and the God whom he worshipped. He might have pleaded the fatal consequences of such an example; and even the very promises and covenant of God, ratified again and again with him.—*Moriah*,] *MORIAH*—*JAH* is shown: nearly the same as *JEHOVAH-jireh*. (Note, 14.)—The temple was built on mount *Moriah*, which was doubtless in the land of *Moriah*. (2 Chron. 3:1.) This therefore must have been some adjacent mountain, of which there were many in that neighbourhood; and there is no improbability in the general opinion, that it was mount Calvary, where Christ, the great Anti-type, was afterwards crucified; and that it was selected with reference to that event.

V. 3, 4. Being assured that this was a divine command, Abraham implicitly confided in the infinite wisdom, justice, holiness, faithfulness, goodness, and power of God; and neither hesitated nor objected. Nay, the very energy of the command, compared with past mercies received, and the promises made to him, excited a firm expectation, that God would, from the ashes, immediately restore his son to life, though there had never been an instance of the kind from the beginning of the world. (Note, Heb. 11:17—19.) It does not appear that he manifested that anguish or anxiety, which might have been expected from the command; or that either Sarah, or his attendants, or even Isaac, perceived any thing unusual in his conduct. It is probable that he did not inform Sarah, lest her feeble faith and more tender frame might not support so severe a shock; or lest she should start some objection, or make some opposition to the heavenly mandate.—Till the third day Abraham's faith was thus tried, that his obedience might appear to be the result, not of rash precipitation, but of calm deliberation; and then he saw the place; perhaps, marked out by an appearance of glory, such as had probably on some occasions been the token of the Lord's presence with him.

V. 5, 6. Abraham left the servants behind, lest their affectionate, but ill-timed interference should create him disturbance.—The expression, "We will come again to you," (the original is plural,) clearly implies an expectation that God would raise Isaac again, to return along with him.—Isaac was evidently grown up at this time; some say he was twenty-five years of age, some thirty, and some thirty-three or thirty-five.—In carrying the wood for the intended sacrifice, he typified Christ bearing his cross.

V. 7, 8. Isaac's question, so full of consideration and filial respect, must have tended to put Abraham's resolution to the sharper trial; but he deemed it not proper as yet to disclose this solemn business; and the Holy Spirit by his mouth seems to have predicted "the Lamb of God" which God hath provided, and "which taketh away the sin of the world." (Note, John 1:29.)

V. 9. It is probable, that Abraham previously explained to Isaac the nature and obligations of the divine command, the principle of his obedience, and the expectation of his faith in respect of the event; and Isaac yielded submission and concurrence; for certainly he did not attempt to escape or resist, but yielded up himself voluntarily to be a sacrifice.—When he lay bound upon the altar, he typified Christ, as

bound by the officers of the high-priest, and as nailed to the cross: and as "bruised and put to grief" by his heavenly Father, "when he made his soul a sacrifice for sin," even for our sins.

V. 10. Abraham acted with firm and calm determination, as if about to offer an ordinary sacrifice, and was allowed to proceed thus far, that his obedience might be complete; but at this crisis he was stopped; for it was not the intention of God that Isaac should actually be sacrificed. Thus it was intimated, that nobler blood than that of animals, even the blood of the only begotten Son of God, was in due time to be shed for sin; but that in the mean while, the Lord would in no case have human sacrifices used, as typical of that atoning blood.

V. 11, 12. The Angel called to Abraham out of heaven by name; and he says, "Thou hast not withheld thy son... from me;" and by this he knew, that Abraham feared the Lord.—Doubtless God knew the reality and vigour of Abraham's piety previous to this trial; but he saw good to require experimental evidence of it, for the glory of his own grace, for Abraham's comfort, and for the benefit of his whole church.—"The fear of God" is frequently put for the whole of true religion, being an essential part of it, and necessarily connected with all the rest. (Marg. Ref.s.) It seems to comprise a reverential regard to the majesty, authority, presence, and purity of God; an influential dread of his displeasure, accompanied with a desire and hope of his favour; (otherwise it would drive us from him, inspire hard thoughts, excite enmity, and discourage all endeavours to please him; Matt. 25:21,25.) a submissive acquiescence in his appointments, a conscientious obedience to his commandments, and a serious devoted attendance on his worship, in his holy ordinances: nor can it be ever separated from a real belief of his truth, and a cordial acceptance of his salvation, as far as we are acquainted with them; or from love, gratitude, and other holy affections. In proportion as faith and hope deliver the soul from terror; humble, admiring reverence of God will be increased; and when "perfect love shall have cast out," entirely and finally, that "fear which hath torment;" the filial reverential regard to God, as our adorable Friend and Father, will be enlarged and perfected for ever, even as it is in the holy angels. (Notes, Ps. 89:6—12, v. 7.)

V. 13. The ram now became the type of the sacrifice of Christ's death, and indicated what sort of prefigurations of that event God would approve and accept.—Isaac thus rescued, after having been three days under the sentence of death, and living to be the progenitor of the promised innumerable posterity, represented the Saviour rising on the third day, "to see his seed, and prolong his days, the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in his hand."

V. 14. *JEHOVAH-jireh* perhaps alludes to Abraham's words, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." The latter clause should be translated, "In the mount the Lord will appear;" that is, just in the crisis, as he did upon the mount to Abraham. This it seems became a proverb, similar to that in our language; 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.'

V. 16—18. "Because he could swear by no greater, the Lord swore by himself;" and thus he solemnly pledged the

multiplyng "I w^{il} multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea-shore;" and "thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies";

18 And "in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

19 So "Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up, and went together to Beer-sheba, and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

20 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold "Mileah,

she hath also born children unto thy brother "Nahor;

21 "Huz his first-born, and "Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and "Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

23 And "Bethuel begat "Rebekah: these eight Mileah did bear to Nahor Abraham's brother.

24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

d See on 13:16, 15:5. Jer. 33:22. * Heb. lip. 1 Kings 9:26, marg. e 24:60. Num. 24:17-19. Job. 1:10. 2 Sam. 3:10. Ps. 2:8,9. 72:3,9. Dan. 2:44,45. Luke 1:68-75. Rev. 11:15. f See on 12:3 18:18. Acts 3:25. Gal. 3:16,28,29.

g 26:5. Heb. 11:1,5. i 21:31. k 11:29. 24:15. 111:26. 24:10,24. 31:53. m Job 1:1. n Job 32:2. o 24:15,24,47. 25:20. 28:2,5. p 24:51,60,67. Rom. 9:10. Rebecca. q 16:3. 25:6.

honour of his holy name, and of all his perfections, as the security for the fulfilment of his engagements to Abraham. The promises before given had been formed into a covenant; that covenant was signed, sealed, and ratified; and now it was solemnly confirmed with an oath. (Notes, 12:1-5, 15:17.) This was done, not only that Abraham, but also "that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us" in Christ. (Notes, Heb. 6:13-20.)—To the former promises it is here added, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;" or, by occupying their cities, shall acquire the dominion over them. "Thy seed shall inherit the cities of the adversaries." Sept. This was accomplished when the Israelites conquered Canaan, and in the victories of David, and the extensive authority of Solomon; but in a far higher sense, when Christ, the promised Seed, ascended the mediatorial throne; when the Gentiles were converted to Christianity; and when opposing nations were crushed before him, or submitted to him.—The language of the last clause also is changed. It had before been said, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" but here the expression literally is, "They shall bless themselves;" perhaps implying how highly they would value the promised Saviour, and how desirous they would be to declare to others their blessedness in him, that they might come and share it.—Abraham's obedience evinced the strength of his faith, and the sincerity of his love: thus "faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect." As a sinner, he was justified before God by faith alone; as a professed believer, he was justified before the whole world, by the works which his faith produced. (Note, Jam. 2:21-24.)—"Hast not withheld." (16.) *Ouk epeceus.* Sept. 12. See Rom. 6:32. 2 Pet. 2:4,5. Gr.

V. 20-24. This is introduced as a preface to the account given of Isaac's marriage with Rebekah, and afterwards to that of Jacob with Leah and Rachel. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

[N. B. The practical observations on this chapter cannot well be divided; but the first section, being on Abraham's example, may be read with the former part: and the second, on the typical import of the transaction, with the latter.]

V. 1-12. While we remain in this world we must never expect to be exempt from trials, and frequently the sharpest come last: we should therefore "put on," and keep on "the whole armour of God," that when summoned to the conflict, we may answer "Here I am."—Where God bestows much grace, he will be sure greatly to try it; and though the conflict is painful, the event will be glorious and joyful. Conscious of our weakness, we ought not to rush uncalled into difficult services, and should pray "not to be led into temptation;" yet, if we be upright and watchful, we may be confident "that the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able:" nay, we may "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations;" firmly believing that "the trial of our faith shall be to praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—If there be any earthly object which seems to rival God in our affections, we may expect that he will in that particular try the sincerity and supremacy of our love; and by cheerfully parting with even our beloved Isaacs for his sake, we most undeniably prove that we have given him our hearts.—They who would perform unreserved obedience, when satisfied what the will of God is, must neither be influenced by carnal affections, listen to plausible objections, consult partial counsellors, make needless delays, nor leave an opening to interruption and disturbance; but, committing all into the Lord's hand, they must simply follow his direction, and leave all consequences with him: and they need not doubt, but in the trying moment he will appear for their comfort or relief.—But what a wonderful sight is in this chapter set before us! The long-expected seed, the son of joy, the child of promise, the well-beloved Isaac, now grown up to maturity, and entwining every day more closely round the tender affections of his parents, of which he was justly deserving; nay, the church's hope, and the declared progenitor of him "in whom all the families of the earth are blessed;" bound, laid upon the altar, and mildly expecting the fatal blow from the hand of his loving father; who, with collected firmness and intrepid resolution, takes the knife to shed his blood, and prepares immediately to kindle that fire which is to consume him to ashes!—For this singular conduct Abraham could render no other reason, than the express command of God nor was there any other principle of obe-

dience to that extraordinary command, (an obedience never equalled by mere man,) but *faith*, an unshaken belief of the Lord's testimony, a firm expectation of the accomplishment of his promises, and a full confidence in his wisdom, power, and love. Though the command seemed to run counter to those promises, Abraham knew it only *seemed* to do so: obedience was his part, and the Lord would take care to glorify his own faithfulness. He had received Isaac from God, who had a right to dispose of him: honour and comfort were in his path; and, though untried before, with undaunted constancy he walked in it.—Hear this, ye inattentive objectors, who traduce the doctrine of salvation by faith, as inimical to practical godliness: go, and upon your principles equal and exceed this obedience: till then be dumb, or allow that, though you understand it not, this apparently weak principle produces effects beyond comparison prodigious. Hear this likewise, ye abusers of this most holy faith, whose conduct merits still deeper indignation; who "say you have faith," yet cleave to your sins, renounce not the world, deny not yourselves, refuse the cross, are lovers of yourselves, of pleasure, of money, or of worldly honour, more than lovers of God; and, instead of parting with a deservedly beloved Isaac at God's command, like Judas, kiss Christ, and sell him to his enemies for a few pieces of silver, or some vile sensual gratification! Here then compare your faith with Abraham's, and acknowledge that ye are no genuine sons, of this "father of the faithful;" but that your faith is dead, your hope presumptuous, and that Abraham disowns and is ashamed of you.—In plain language, nothing but faith will carry a man through with unreserved obedience, in every possible trial; and that is no true faith, which perseveres in refusing to obey a plain command, in any case whatever. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."—In proportion as faith stands this test, when sharply and repeatedly tried, we may be assured that we are Abraham's children, interested in his covenant, and in the oath by which it was confirmed; and have a right to that strong consolation which by it God wills and intends for his people.

V. 13-24. In the wonderful transaction recorded in this chapter, faith discerns one infinitely more stupendous. What was the love which Abraham or Isaac bore to the Lord, compared with the love of God the Father, in giving his only begotten Son? and with that of the only begotten Son in giving himself a sacrifice upon the cross for the sins of men? God commanded Abraham previously to his yielding up his son; but the sacrifice of Christ prevented even solicitation! The Lord had an undoubted right to demand that life which he had given: but where shall we sinners, deserving of eternal misery, ground our claim to such a gift, as that of Christ to be "the propitiation for our sins?" The Lord had been a most liberal Friend to Abraham, before he was required to offer Isaac as a burnt-offering; but "God commended his love to us, in that when we were yet sinners Christ died for us;" and in that, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Isaac was a sinner born to die: but the Son of God assumed human nature for the very purpose of dying for us; and in human nature being free from sin, he was under no obligation to suffer death, except the bond of his love to us. If Isaac was justly beloved by Abraham, Jesus was the "beloved Son of the Father, in whom he was well pleased." Had Isaac died, it had been with inward peace, without extraordinary pain, and with singular reputation: but Christ tasted death in all its bitterness, died by violence, surrounded with contempt and insult, treated with indignity and cruelty, and loaded with the weight of our iniquities; while "it pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief, and make his very soul a sacrifice for sin." By this we know the loving kindness of God our Saviour towards sinful man, in that "he hath not withheld his Son, his only Son from us:" by this we perceive the love of Christ, in that he gave himself a sacrifice for our sins.—Behold, he dies; yet rises! lives, ascends, and intercedes for us! and calls on sinners to come to him, and partake of his blood-bought salvation. Let them therefore be warned to hear his voice, and encouraged to trust in him. He calls to his redeemed people to rejoice in him and glorify him: "What then shall we render for all his benefits?" May this "love constrain us to live no longer to ourselves, but to him who died for us and rose again," and, admiring and adoring his grace, let us devote our all to his service, who laid down his life for our salvation. Thus every Christian may be sure,

CHAPTER XXIII.

The age and death of Sarah, 1, 2. Abraham commences with the sons of Heth, and purchases the field and cave Machpelah of Ephron, 3—18; where Sarah is buried, 19, 20.

AND Sarah was "an hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were the years of the life of Sarah.*"

2 And Sarah died in "Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her."

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of "Heth, saying,

4 *I am a "stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a "burying-place with you, that I may "bury my dead out of my sight.*

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, "my lord: thou art "a mighty "prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead: none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead."

7 And Abraham stood up, and "bowed himself to the people of the land, *even to the children of Heth.*

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and "intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar:

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which *is in the end of his field;* for 'as much money as it is worth he shall give it; me, for a possession of a burying-place among you."

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the "audience of the children of Heth, *even of all that were in at the gates of his city,* saying,

11 Nay, "my lord, hear me: the field give I

thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee, in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead."

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou *wilt give it*, I pray thee hear me: "I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there."

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land *is* worth four hundred shekels of silver; what *is* that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead."

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron, and Abraham "weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, "four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant."

17 And "the field of Ephron, which *was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were "made sure*

18 Unto Abraham, for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city."

19 ¶ And after this, Abraham "buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre: the same *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan."

20 And the field, and the cave that *is* therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place, by the sons of Heth."

a 17:17. b 13:18. Num. 13:22. Josh. 14:15. 20:7. Judg. 1:10. c 27:41. 50:10. Num. 20:29. Deut. 34:8. 1 Sam. 28:3. 2 Chr. 35:25. Jer. 22:10, 18. Ez. 24:16—18. Acts 8:2. 4:5. 7:10. 15:10. 25:10. 27:45. 49:30. 1 Sam. 26:6. 2 Sam. 23:39. e 17:8. 47:9. Lev. 25:22. 1 Chr. 29:15. Ps. 39:12. 105:12. Heb. 11:9, 13. 1 Pet. 2:11. 1:319. 49:30. 50:13. Job 30:23. Ec. 12:7. Acts 7:5. g 19. h 18:12. 24:18. 31:35. 32:4, 5, 18. 42:10. 44:5, 8. Ex. 32:22. Ruth 2:13. * Heb. *A prince of God*, 21:22.

that in all emergencies, the Lord will appear for his relief, be his shield in all dangers, provide effectually for all his wants, order all events for his good, and make him conquer over all enemies, till he shall sit down with him upon his throne of glory.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. Sarah is the only woman whose entire age is recorded in Scripture.—"She was ten years younger than Abraham, and died thirty-eight before him.—God often takes the youngest before the eldest." *Ful-ler*. It seems that Abraham had some time before her death left his residence at Beer-sheba, and came to sojourn at Hebron. When she died, he came to her tent, to express his unfeigned sorrow, and pay her the last tribute of affection.

V. 3, 4. The sons of Heth are called elsewhere Hittites, that is *Hethites*. Abraham was "a stranger and a sojourner" among them; one who had no fixed settlement, and did not attempt to acquire any. (*Marg. Ref. e.*)—It has generally been the custom, in the church of God, to *inter* the dead; though *burning* has elsewhere been much in use: and indeed interring more aptly expresses an acquiescence in that sentence, "until thou return unto the ground whence thou wast taken: . . . for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

V. 6. According to those times, Abraham's retinue, wealth and prosperity, would rank him among the surrounding princes. Yet the sons of Heth, in calling him "a prince of God," (*marg.*) might perhaps also advert to his religion, as respecting his honourable character.

V. 7. *Bowed.* Abraham rendered honour and respect to the sons of Heth, according to the custom of that age and country.—It is evidently no part of the religion of the Bible, to refuse such expressions of regard; but an ornament to godliness to render them, as far as it can be done, without flattering the persons, or countenancing the crimes, of those to whom they are addressed.

V. 9. Abraham would have a *separate* burying-place; perhaps intimating, that though the righteous live intermingled with the ungodly in this world, there will be a separation after death.

V. 15, 16. *Shekel* comes from a Hebrew verb, signifying *weigh*; for money was not then coined and stamped; but the precious metals passed by weight. A shekel is about half an ounce. (*Tables.*)

V. 20. Thus Abraham, in a burying-place, had an earnest of Canaan, and a pledge of his reversionary inheritance!

"This chapter not only illustrates the excellent spirit of the father of the faithful," but exhibits a specimen of *manners* which might do honour to any age and country. The *scene* of the transaction appears to be a public assembly of the chief persons among "the sons of Heth,"—"in the audi-

ence of the people of the land." Abraham "stands up and bows himself" before them, with respect and deference, at the commencement of his suit, and repeats this courtesy on hearing their kindness and readiness to comply with his wishes. He assumes no civil superiority on the ground of his high religious distinctions; nor cherishes any sense of *right* to what he asked, in virtue of the whole land being promised to his family: on the contrary, while they pronounce him "a mighty prince among them," he styles himself a mere "stranger and sojourner" in the country; and when, in compliance with their invitations, he selects a particular portion of land as what he should desire, he requests the good offices of the assembly with one of their principal members, (such we may suppose Ephron to have been,) to obtain it for him. They, on the other hand, evidently sympathize with him, and study to show him all the respect due to his character and his circumstances. They desire him to choose his own place of sepulture, assured that no one of them all would withhold from him the object of his choice. When he pitches upon the field of Ephron, Ephron immediately steps forward, without waiting for any such intervention as Abraham had requested, and begs he will accept the land as a free gift. "The field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee: in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead." (11.) Of this liberal offer Abraham, however, is too disinterested to avail himself, and Ephron consents to accept the price of the land, at the same time observing, that it was a matter of no consideration between him and Abraham. Nothing could, throughout, be more agreeable to every principle of good manners, and it is impossible not to admire the behaviour of both parties.—How strong must have been the impression made by Abraham's general character and conduct, to procure him such treatment among persons to whom his religion would naturally be obnoxious; and his prosperity an object of jealousy or envy!

"The closing verses of the chapter exhibit the earliest instance on record of the regular conveyance of landed property: "the field, and the cave that was therein, and a the trees that were in the field, and that were in all the borders round about."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The longest life must shortly close; and the survivors among relations only live to experience painful separations.—The more valued any earthly enjoyment is, the greater must be our anxiety about it, and our reluctance to part with it; and the sharper the anguish when this trial takes place; and when those who have lived together in conjugal affection for many years, are parted by death, the separation bears some resemblance to the dissolution of soul and body. Thus the entrance of sin, and the sentence of death, have filled all

CHAPTER XXIV.

Abraham commits, "his servant to go to Mesopotamia in order to take a wife for Isaac, 1-9. The servant arrives at the city of Nahor; his prayer is answered, and he is entertained by Laban, 10-33. He proposes a marriage between Isaac and Rebekah, which is accepted to, 34-58. Rebekah goes with him, and is married to Isaac, 59-67.

AND Abraham was "old and well stricken in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, "Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, "that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son, of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell:

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

5 And the servant said unto him, "Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

a 18:11. 21:5. 25:20. 1 Kings 1:1. Luke 1:7. * Heb. *gone into days*. b 35: 12. 2. 49:25. Ps. 112:1-3. Prov. 10:22. Is. 54: 2. Gal. 3:9. Eph. 1:3. c 15:2. d 10. 39:1-5, 8, 9. 44:1. e 9. 47:22. f 21:23. 39:28-31. 31:7. Ex. 30:7. 22:11. 1 Deut. 6:13. 10:20. Josh. 2:12. 1 Sam. 20:17. Jer. 4:2. 12:16. g 11:22. 2 Kings 19:15. 2 Chr. 2:12. Neh. 9:6. Ps. 115:15. Jer. 10:11. h 6:24. 26:34, 35. 27:46. 28:8. Ex. 31:16. Deut. 7:34. 1 Cor. 7:39. 2 Cor. 6:14-17. i 12:1. 22:20-23.

below with vanity and vexation.—Blessed be God that there is a world, where sin, death, anxiety, and sorrow gain no admission; that there are relations formed, which even death cannot part; and that sinners are invited to enter into this indissoluble union and intimate relation with "the everlasting God," by faith in his only begotten-Son. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," and no separation can injure, or should terrify him, who can never feel that separation from God, "which is the second death."—Soon they whom we most love, yea, our very bodies which we often inordinately care for, will become so deformed that they must be "buried out of sight." How vain, then, to boast of vigour and comeliness! how mean to pamper and decorate these bodies of humiliation! and how loose should we be to all earthly attachments! Let us rather seek to have our souls adorned with heavenly graces; then shall they flourish in immortal beauty; and the very body shall rise incorruptible and glorious, meet for the eternal enjoyment of God, in the blessed society of the angelic hosts.—As we, if true believers, are "strangers and sojourners" here below, are seeking a heavenly city, and shall shortly want nothing but a burying-place, let us mourn departed friends with submission and in hope, and not indulge sorrow so as to interfere with present duty, any more than other passions, which are of worse repute: for indulged grief, however plausible, is rebellion against Providence, ingratitude for remaining undeserved mercies, and a proof of the want or weakness of faith, and of confidence in the promises and all-sufficiency of the living God.—Let us also avoid every appearance of selfishness, and not be outdone by the people of this world in courteousness or generosity, when consistent with sincerity and a good conscience; let us manage our concerns with punctuality and precision, in order to avoid contention; and thus let us stand prepared, and waiting for the coming of our Lord.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. These events took place three years after Sarah's death, when Isaac was forty years of age, and Abraham a hundred and forty.—It is remarkable, that though a numerous posterity was so eminent a part of the promised blessing, no great haste was made about Isaac's marriage, and much less afterwards about that of Jacob.—"The Lord had blessed Abraham in all things," notwithstanding his trials, and even by means of them.

V. 2-9. There can be no reasonable doubt, that Eliezer of Damascus was the servant employed on this occasion. (15:2.) About sixty years had elapsed, since Abraham spoke of him as "the steward of his house," and the words rendered "the eldest servant of his house," or *his servant the elder of his house*, are of similar import. He was, therefore, not only far advanced in years, but a person of singular piety and wisdom.—"Lifting up the hand to the Lord" was before mentioned, as the form of taking an oath: (Note, 14:22-24.) but "putting the hand under the thigh" might be used to express submissive duty and fidelity.—Eliezer was required to swear, that he would diligently use his influence to prevent Isaac from marrying a wife of the Canaanites, who were then generally idolaters, and not proper persons with whom to form so intimate a connexion; (especially as the Lord had shown Abraham, that they were filling up their measure of iniquity, and were doomed to destruction;) but that he would endeavour to procure him one of Abraham's kindred, among whom the worship of God was still, in some measure, maintained.—"There does not appear in all this concern the least taint of worldly policy, or any of those motives which usually govern men in the settlement of their children. No mention is made of riches, or honours, or natural accomplishments; but merely of what related to God." Fuller.—Before, however, Eliezer thus engaged, he inquired whether, if the proper person, when found, should not consent to leave home,

6 And Abraham said unto him, "Beware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again.

7 The "Lord God of heaven, which "took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and "which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter. [Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed, (for "all the goods of his master were in his hand:)" and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

23:2. k 58. Pc. 5:2. l Heb. 10:39. 11:13-16. 2 Pet. 2:20-22. m Ezra 1:2. n Dan. 2:41. Jon. 1:9. Rev. 11:31. o 12:1. p 13:15. 15:16. 17:8. 22:16-18. 26: 3:4, 24. Ex. 13:5. Num. 14:16, 30. 32:11. Deut. 1:8. Josh. 1:6. Judg. 9:1. p Ex. 23:20-23. 33:2. Ps. 34:7. 103:20. Is. 63:9. Heb. 1:14. q Num. 30:5, 8. Josh. 3:17-20. 9:20. r 2. † Or, *and*. s 2. 39:4-6, 8, 9, 22, 23. t Deut. 23:4. Judg. 3:8-10. 1 Chr. 19:6. Acts 2:9. u 11:31. 28:1, 5.

and become a stranger in Canaan, Isaac ought to go and live in Mesopotamia. But the sojourning of the patriarchs in Canaan represented the state of believers in this world; and Isaac's returning and settling in that country, from which Abraham at God's command had come, would have been an emblem of apostasy in a professed worshipper of God. Abraham, therefore, declared his assurance, grounded on the former mercies of the Lord, and on his promises, and his covenant confirmed by an oath, that "he would send his angel before him" to prosper his way. And this assurance, with the express stipulation, that the oath should not otherwise be binding, fully satisfied this faithful and conscientious servant.—We may here make some remarks about good angels, as we formerly did about fallen angels. (Note, Gen. 3:1.) It appears then from Scripture, that the holy angels were created by God, complete in derived and dependent excellence; that they are very numerous, and of different orders, "angels, principalities, and powers;" that they are now confirmed in holiness and felicity; that they excel in wisdom, knowledge, and strength; and that they are as a flame of fire, with fervent love, gratitude, and active zeal; and yet proportionably influenced by deep humility, and reverential awe of God. They are represented as standing in his presence, waiting his commands: covering their faces with their wings, or prostrate in profound adoration; hearkening to his voice, doing his will, and fulfilling his pleasure. (Notes, Ps. 68:17. 103:20-22. Is. 6:1-4. Rev. 5:11-14.) They are, on this account, called angels, or messengers: for though he "puts no trust in them," and even in comparison with his own infinite wisdom, "charges them with folly," yet he is pleased to honour, and, (if we may so speak,) to indulge them with his commands, which they execute with unwearied alacrity: and when he appoints and approves, the meanest or the most important services are alike delightful to them. These blessed beings are the ministers of his providence, and are often introduced as executing his awful vengeance; but more generally they are considered as "sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." (Notes, 2 Kings 19:35. Heb. 1:13, 14.) There is not a bright seraph through all the heavenly train, who would not delight and glory in attending a poor despised Lazarus, in a hospital or a dungeon, to ward off the machinations of evil spirits, to procure a calm to his dying moments, and to hail his departing soul to the mansions of the blessed: for they are all free from pride and envy, all full of love to the Redeemer and redeemed, and all rejoice, even over one sinner brought to true repentance. Our obligations to them are great: but all the adoration and praise belong to Him who works by them; for they are our fellow-servants, and have no claim to our worship, but abhor it as sacrilege and idolatry. (Note, Rev. 19:9, 10.) We may, however, feel a love for them, and rejoice in the thought of being with them, and like them for ever: and we may well endeavour to copy the example of their humble zeal, their fervent love, their solemn worship and cheerful services; and in our conduct to each other, take pattern from them, by condescending to the meanest and the vilest, without envying, disdain, or overlooking one another. For the lowest and worst of human creatures is not so mean and vile, compared with the greatest and the best of men, as the greatest and best of men is mean and vile, compared even with a created angel.

V. 10. It is evident that these ten camels carried every thing requisite for the journey, and suited to the occasion; and that Eliezer was accompanied by other servants. (30-32, 59.)—The word rendered *Mesopotamia*, is literally *Aram of the two rivers*; that is, Aram, or Syria, which lies between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Nahor did not dwell at Ur of the Chaldees, but at Haran. (11:31. 29:4.)

11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, *even* the time that women go out to draw water.

12 And he said, *O LORD* God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham.

13 Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; *let the same be she* that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.

15 ¶ And it came to pass before he had done speaking, that behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher and came up.

17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

20 And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

21 And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous, or not.

22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ear-ring, of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands, of ten shekels weight of gold;

23 And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

24 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

27 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in

the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

28 And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house of these things.

29 And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

30 And it came to pass when he saw the ear-ring, and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD: wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

32 And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

[Practical Observations.]

33 And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told my errand. And he said, Speak on.

34 And he said, I am Abraham's servant.

35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses.

36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;

38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

40 And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way: and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.

41 Then thou shalt be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

42 And I came to this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou dost prosper my way which I go;

43 Behold I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, than when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

44 And she say unto me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.

* Heb. *women which draw water on forth*, 13-20. Ex. 2:16. 1 Sam. 9:11. John 4:7. e 27. 31:42. 32:9. 1 Kings 18:36. 2 Kings 2:14. y 13:14. Neh. 1:11. 2:4. Ps. 37:5. 50:16. 77. 113:25. Prov. 3:6. Phil. 4:6. 1 Thes. 3:10, 11. z 11. 2 Sam. 10:4. 14. 10. 2 Sam. 5:24. 2 Kings 20:9-11. fa. 7:11. c Ps. 34:15. 145:13, 14. h 65:24. Dan. 9:20-23. d 21. 12:20-23. e 11:57, 59. f 21:14. Ruth 2:17. Prov. 31:27. g Heb. *go out of countenance*, 25:7. 39:6. h Luke 2:19, 51. John 4:7. i 1 Pet. 3:1. 2 Pet. 3:8. 4:8. 11:4-16. k Luke 2:19, 51. l 190. Ex. 32:2, 3. Ruth. 6:1. Jer. 2:32. 1 Tim. 2:9-10. 1 Pet. 3:9. i Or, *jewel for the forehead*, 1. 3:20-23. Ex. 16:11, 12. m 23:15-16. n 15. o 18:4-8. Judg. 19:19-21. is. 32:8. 1 Pet. 4:9. p 4:32. Ex. 4:31. 31:8. Neh. 8:6. i. 95:6. q 12. Ex. 18:10. Ruth 4:14.

V. 11-14. * That which is done for life, and which may involve things of another life, requires to be done well; and nothing can be done well, in which the will of God is not consulted, and his blessing implored. Fuller. Great humility and caution are requisite, in imitating such examples as this of Abraham's servant: yet we must not limit God by our rules; and he may still at some times so impress the minds of his servants in perplexity, as to lead them to expect extraordinary interpositions, and then evidently to answer these expectations. We should not, therefore, hastily condemn every thing of this kind; provided it neither countenances unscriptural opinions or practices; nor takes men off from attending to the ordinary means of instruction; nor is substituted as the foundation of hope, instead of the promises of God, and the work of his Spirit upon the heart.—It is observable that Abraham's servant had in mind, in this address, the idea of a wife for Isaac, as one who united in her character simplicity, industry, humility, affability, and cheerfulness in being serviceable and hospitable.

V. 21. Abraham's servant had attendants, who might

1 Sam. 25:32, 39. 2 Sam. 19:28. Luke 1:68. r 2:10. Ps. 58:3. 106:5. Mic. 7:20. John 1:17. s Prov. 3:6. 4:11-13. 8:20. t 4. 13:8. Ex. 2:11. u 55. x 55:60. 29:5. y 28:29. Judg. 17:21. Ruth 3:10. Ps. 115:15. 1 Prov. 17:8. 18:16. 19:6. z 25. a 18: 4. 43:24. Judg. 15:21. 1 Sam. 23:41. Luke 7:44. John 13:4-14. b Job 33:12. Ps. 132:3-5. John 4:31-34. c 1 Tim. 6:2. cl. 12:2. 25:19. 26:12. 49:25. Prov. 10:22. d 12:16. 13:2. 26:13, 14. Job 1:3. 42:12. Ps. 107:38. Matt. 6:33. e 11:29, 30. f 17: 15-19. 18:11-13. g 21:10. 25:5. g 2-9. h 5:22, 24. 6:9. 17:1. 48:15. i 1 Kings 2:3. 8:23. 2 Kings 20:3. j 17. Ex. 23:20. 30:2. Dan. 3:28. 8:16. k 12-14. Acts 10:7, 8. 22. l 81. 39:3. 2 Tim. 4:21. Neh. 1:11. 1 s. 50:17. Rom. 1:10 m Heb. 13:2. n 14. 2:22. Prov. 16:33. 18:22. 19:14.

have spared Rebekah; and the labour of drawing water for ten camels must have been great: but he would not interpose, that he might observe her conduct, and wait the answer to his prayer.

V. 22. About six ounces of gold, in all.

V. 28. * It was her mother's house, not her father's.—The whole narrative implies, that Bethuel, Rebekah's father, was dead; and that Bethuel, afterwards mentioned, was Laban's younger brother. (50:53.)

V. 33-36. Abraham had received intelligence concerning the family of Nahor, and we may suppose they had also heard of him; but now the report was authenticated, and the particulars ascertained. The narration is beautifully simple; well suited to recommend Isaac, and to promote the object of the journey.—The servant's heart was so deeply engaged in the business, that he could not eat till he had declared it. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 44. Appointed.] Those events, which appear to us the effect of choice, contrivance, or chance, are matters of ap-

45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee.

46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the ear-ring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

49 And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me: that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee had or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

52 And it came to pass, that when Abraham's servant heard these words, he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.

53 ¶ And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: He gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night: and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

o 15—20. Is. 65:24. Dan. 9:19,23. Acts 4:24—33. 10:30. 12:12—17. p 1 Sam. 1: 13—15. Neh. 2:4. Rom. 8:25. q 29:53. Is. 45:9,13,14. Is. 62:3—5. Ez. 16:10—13. Epi. 5:26,27. r 29:37,52. s 27. Ex. 16:30. Ps. 32:8. 48:14. 107:7. Prov. 3:6. 4:11. Is. 45:17. t 47:22. Josh. 2:14. u Num. 20:17. Deut. 2:27. s 15:26,55,60. v Pa. 118: 123. 31:24,29. 2 Sam. 13:22. a 26:48. 1 Chr. 29:24. 2 Chr. 20:16. Ps. 65:6. 107: 21,22. 116:1,2. Matt. 2:11. Acts 10:25,26. * Heb. *versale*. Ex. 3:22. 11:2. 12:35. b Deut. 33:19—26. 2 Chr. 21:3. Ezra 1:6. Is. 39:2. c 56. 28:5,6. 45:24. 2 Sam.

pointment with God: and the persuasion of this does not prevent, but rather encourage, the use of all proper means; at the same time that it confines us to proper means, and delivers the mind from useless anxiety about consequences.

V. 45. Some things form more proper subjects for secret than for social prayer: Abraham's servant therefore used mental prayer, and was silent, till the singularity of the answer required that it should be communicated.

V. 50. The whole concern was so evidently according to the appointment, and under the direction of the Lord, that there was no room for hesitation or objection.

V. 53. *Her brother and mother.*] No mention is made of her father.

V. 55,56. This good and faithful servant's desire of communicating the agreeable intelligence at home, no doubt induced him to hasten his departure as much as he could with propriety: yet the transaction may admit of a useful accommodation. (P. O. 33—67.)

V. 58. *I will go.*] The excellence of Rebekah's character forbids us to think, that there could be any thing in her answer inconsistent with true delicacy; though it does not accord to the modern standard, which is frequently subversive of sincerity. No doubt she saw with peculiar clearness, that the whole was the appointment of God; and she would not so much as seem to slight the honour and happiness of being a progenitor of the promised Seed: but, like his immediate parent, she answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Luke 1:38.

V. 59,60. *Their sister . . . our sister.*] Bethuel, as well as Laban, must have been her brother.—*Nurse.*] Note, 35:8.

V. 63. *To meditate.*] To reflect on the works and truths of God, and pour out his heart in prayer and praise.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9. The effect of good example and instructions, and the reverential worship of God, in public ordinances and in private families, will generally appear in the piety, faithfulness, prudence, and affection of the domestics: and to live in pious families, or to be favoured with pious servants, is a blessing highly to be valued, and thankfully to be acknowledged. —No concern in life is of more importance to ourselves, to others, and to the church, and even to posterity, than contracting marriage: which therefore ought always to be undertaken with much circumspection and prudence, with an eye to the will and appointment of God, and with prayer for his direction and blessing.—It is an important part of a parent's

55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least; after that she shall go.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way: send me away, that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

59 And they sent away Rebekah (their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

61 And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

62 ¶ And Isaac came from the way of the well Elai-roi; for he dwelt in the south-country.

63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the even-tide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels were coming.

64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

65 For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67 And Isaac brought her in to his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife: and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

16:19,27,28. Luke 8:38,39. † Or, a full year, or ten months. Lev. 25:29. d 45:9—13. Prov. 25:25. e Ps. 45:10,11. Luke 1:38. f 50:53,60. g 35:8. h 1: 28. 9:14:19. 17:16. 23:3. 48:15,16,20. Ruth 4:11,12. i See on 22:17. k 31:34. l Sam. 30:17. Ps. 8:10,14. 116:14. 25:11. ‡ Or, to pray. m Josh. 1:8. Pa. 1:2. 72:11,12. 104:34. 119:15. 139:17,18. 149:5,6. n Josh. 15:18. Judg. 1:14. o 20:16. 1 Cor. 11:5,6,10. p Mark 6:30. q 16:6,9,10. r 22:2—24. 2 Cor. 11:1,2. Epi. 5:22—33. s 37:35. 38:12. 1 The 4:13.

duty, to direct, counsel, and assist his children in this particular, with great tenderness and affection: and those young persons are highly favoured, who have parents that will, in a proper manner, and with suitable consideration, perform this duty; and they are wise who avail themselves of these advantages. But where such parents are not consulted and regarded, the blessing of God cannot be expected; nor when godliness is not regarded as the primary requisite in a companion for life.—They who stay their minds on God, will be kept in peace, and enabled to disregard the peradventures which trouble others: they wait to know his appointment, are prepared to be satisfied with it, and assured that in due time it will take place and correspond with his promises; and they only aim to know and to do their duty, and use the proper means. But, in binding ourselves by an oath, we should take great care that, through inattention, we do not ensnare our souls.

V. 10—32. They who acknowledge God in all their ways, will find him present to direct their paths, and make their way prosperous: and when the prayer of faith meets with an immediate answer, the glory ought as speedily to be rendered to God in solemn praise and thanksgivings.—How are the times changed, since the chief persons, and their sons and daughters, cheerfully performed the most laborious services with their own hands! It is to be feared we have got but a poor exchange, in our excessive refinements, for the simplicity, diligence, and usefulness, which characterized the patriarchs. And surely common sense must allow, that these are the most valuable endowments in one, who is to fill up the important duties of a wife and a mother; to be the companion of a wise and pious man's retired hours; and to be entrusted with the management of his domestic concerns, and with forming the tender minds of his children!

V. 33—67. Whatever business we are entrusted with, we should, like this pious servant, attend to it in preference to our own indulgence or refreshment: and when our purpose is honourable, and we are waiting to know the Lord's appointment, a plain recital of facts, in which the hand of God appears evident, is more becoming, and frequently more effectual, than all the trappings of oratory, which too often disguise the real truth.—The remarkable private experience, which we have of God's mercy and faithfulness, ought to be declared among those who fear God, for his glory and their encouragement.—Though the counsel and consent of parents should be obtained: yet, before marriage is solemnized, the mutual and cheerful compliance of the contracting parties is also requisite.

CHAPTER XXV.

Abraham marries Keturah, 1: his sons by her, 2-4. He gives his substance to Isaac; and sends them away with gifts, 5, 6. His age, death, and burial, 7-10. God blesses Isaac, 11. The posterity, age, and death of Ishmael, 12-18. Isaac prays for Rebekah, who was barren; and is heard, 19-21. Circumstances preceding and attending the birth of Esau and Jacob, 22-26. The different characters and pursuits, 27, 28. Esau sells his birth-right to Jacob, 28-34.

THEN again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

3 And Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephher, and Hanoth, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, (while he yet lived,) eastward, unto the east-country.

7 ¶ And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred and threescore and fifteen years.

8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

9 And his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

a 23:12, 1 Chr. 1:32,33. b 36:35, 37:28,36. Ex. 2:15,16, 18:1-4. Num. 22:4, 25:17,18, 31:2,9. Judg. 6: 7,8. c Job 2:11. d 1 Kings 10:1. Job 6:19. Ps. 72: 10. e Jer. 25:23, 49:8. Ez. 25:13, 27:20. f Ec. 27:6. g Is. 60:6. h 21:10-12, 24:36. Matt. 11:27. 28:18. John 3:35. Rom. 8:17,32. 9:7-9. 1 Cor. 3:21-22. Ga. 3:29, 4:28. Heb. 1:2. 1. 16:3. 20:4,8. 32:22, 35:22. Judg. 19:1,2,11. 1 Ps. 17:14,15. 19:8,11. 11-13. 11:15,13. 35:24,29. 47:6,9. Judg. 8:32. 1 Chr. 25:18. Job 33. Acts 5:5,10. 12-23. n 15:13. 35:24,29. 47:6,9. Judg. 8:32. 1 Chr. 25:18. Job

being essential to the comfort and happiness of that honourable state; and when matters are thus begun and completed in faith, and with the prayer of all parties, the blessing of God on them and their posterity may reasonably be expected; while the comfort of one relation will compensate for the loss of another.—But will not the most sober judgment allow, that in this transaction we have a type of Christ and his church? We know who is the Bridegroom, that in perfect harmony with his heavenly Father, having offered himself as a sacrifice for sin, espouses his church unto himself, by the ministration of his servants the preachers of the gospel; who, with his commission, go to find out those who are afar off, "that they may present them as a chaste virgin unto Christ." They represent to sinners his glory, his excellency, his suitableness and loving kindness; their own experience of his grace, and his unsearchable riches, to induce their willingness; and by these representations, the drawings of his Spirit, and some foretastes of his goodness, they are prevailed on to consent to their own happiness, and made willing to forsake their own country, and to renounce all for him. (Note, John 16:14,15.) Then he adorns them with the robe of his righteousness, and the graces of his Spirit; endows them with all his riches; ennobles them by their relation to him, and makes them happy in his love, and their fellowship with him. They are now supremely attached to his person and interest, and faithful to their engagements to him; they give him their heart, and devote body and soul to his service, in sincerity and simplicity. He greatly delights in the beauty which he hath put upon them; being thus united to him, they bring forth fruit unto God; and at length he will wash away every spot and blemish, and present them, (adorned as a bride for her husband,) faultless before his presence with exceeding joy.—In this view, how punctual, laborious, faithful, self-denying, disinterested, fervent in prayer, watchful of providence, jealous for Christ, and affectionately desirous of souls ought all to be, who sustain the sacred ministerial character! The good Lord send forth many such labourers and stewards, and make them wise to win souls!

NOTES.—**CHAP. XXV. V. 1-4.** Abraham was a hundred and thirty-seven years of age when Sarah died; and nearly forty years before that event, his age had rendered it very improbable he should have children; yet he had six sons by Keturah, whom he sent away in his lifetime: and on these grounds it has been conjectured that he had married this wife long before.—But the language of the original text, "And Abraham added, and took a wife," as well as the unnatural disturbance which this supposition occasions in the simple narration, militates against the opinion. The Lord had promised him an innumerable posterity, and the long delay both served to try his faith, and to illustrate the divine power and faithfulness; when at length, beyond all probability, the promise was so remarkably fulfilled. And, as Abraham lived thirty-eight years after Sarah's death, all these children might be grown up, and much older than Ishmael

10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac: and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

12 ¶ Now these are the generations of Ishmael Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham.

13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The first-born of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam.

14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massah, and Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. [B.C. 1773.]

17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.

18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest towards Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

[Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac.

20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took

49:17. c 7. 49:33. Num. 20:24, 27:13. Judg. 2:10. Acts 13:36. p 21:9,10, 35:29, q 2:19-20, 49:29,30, 50:13. r 12:2. 17:19, 23:17, 50:24. s 16:14, 24:62, t 16: 10-15, 17:21, 21:13. Ps. 83:6. u 1 Chr. 1:29-31, 5:19,20. x 36:3, Is. 60:7, y Is. 120:5, Cant. 1:1. Is. 21:16,17, 42:11. z Is. 21:11. Or, Hadad, 1 Chr. 1:30. a Job 2:11. 6:19. b 17:20. c 7:8. d 2:11. 10:29, 20:1. 1 Sam. 15:7. e 18: 10. f 2 Kings 23:29. Is. 19:23,24. f Heb. fell. g 16:12. h 1 Chr. 1:34. Matt. 1:2. Luke 3:31. Acts 7:8. 12:23,24, 24:67.

was when he was sent away, and might be taken in the world before his death.—They were afterwards intimately connected with the Ishmaelites; and many great nations at this very day claim Abraham for their progenitor, by some of these branches.—Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was descended from Midian; and Job and some of his friends, either from others of Keturah's son, or from Ishmael, or from Esau. (Marg. Ref. Note, Job 2:11.)

V. 5, 6. Abraham gave the bulk of his substance to Isaac, as his legitimate heir, his only son by Sarah the free woman, according to the promise. Isaac typified the Son of God, "whom he hath appointed Heir of all things;" and also represented believers, to whom with Christ the Father giveth all things.—The word concubine is used, not only for one who cohabited with a man that had another wife, as Hagar; but also for one who was a lawful wife, though not admitted to the full privilege of that relation, in respect of rank and possessions, as Keturah. Ishmael was one of the sons here mentioned; and we may hence infer that he was not sent away destitute, or finally deserted by Abraham.

V. 7, 8. The sacred historian here concludes the history of Abraham, to prevent the subsequent interruption of his narrative; for Esau and Jacob were born fifteen years before the death of Abraham.—The word rendered "Gave up the ghost," means no more than expired, or ceased to breathe. A Greek word of similar import is used concerning Ananias and Sapphira; but the words of one Evangelist concerning our Lord signify, that "he yielded up his spirit." (Matt. 27:50.)—The words, of years, are not in the original; and the term employed seems to denote, that Abraham was satisfied with living in this world, and ripe for a better.—The expression, "gathered to his people," decides nothing concerning the eternal state of the persons spoken of, being used without any exact discrimination of characters. (Marg. Ref. o.)

V. 9, 10. It is probable that Isaac and Ishmael maintained a degree of friendly intercourse with each other; and that Ishmael was satisfied the inheritance belonged to Isaac, as the son of Sarah, and that his father had acted properly in leaving it to him.

V. 11. God blessed Isaac with that special blessing, which had been engaged to his believing father.

V. 16. The Ishmaelites were settled in towns and castles, when Moses wrote this history; and probably had been so a long time before the descendants of Isaac were delivered out of Egypt.

V. 18. The Ishmaelites inhabited the country to the east and south of Judea, from the entrance into Egypt almost to the river Euphrates: perhaps the direct road from Egypt to Assyria, lay through their country. Thus Ishmael's lot fell among his brethren, Abraham's sons by Keturah, who probably survived him; and he died surrounded by them and their descendants.

V. 20, 21. The faith of Isaac was tried by the barrenness

R. bekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel ^{the} Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

21 And Isaac ^{intreated} the LORD for his wife, ^{because} she ^{was} barren: and the LORD ^{was} intreated of him, ^{and} Rebekah his wife conceived.

22 And the children struggled together within her: and she said, *If it be so, why am I thus?* And she went to ^{inquire} of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said unto her, ^{Two} nations ^{are} in thy womb, and ^{two} manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and ^{the one} people shall be stronger than ^{the other} people: and the elder shall serve the younger.

24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, ^{there were} twins in her womb.

25 And the first came out red, ^{all over} like an hairy garment: and they called his name Esau.

26 And ^{after} that came his brother out, and his hand ^{took hold} on Esau's heel; and his name ^{was} called Jacob: and Isaac ^{was} three-score years old when she bare them.

27 And the boys grew: and Esau was ^a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob ^{was} ^a plain man, ^{dwelling} in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because ^{he} did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

28:5,6. 9:18,20,24. 35:9. Deut. 2:5. 1 Sam. 1:11,27. Luke 1:13. m 1:30. 15:23. 16:2. 17:16-19. 1 Sam. 1:2. Luke 1:3. Rom. 9:10-12. o 1 Sam. 9:9. 10:22. 26:5,30. 8. p 17:16. 24:60. q 27. 32:6. 33:3. 36:31. Num. 20:14. r 27: 23,40. 2 Sam. 8:14. 1 Kings 22:47. 2 Chr. 25:11,12. Ps. 60:8,9. 8:16-15. Is. 31: 33. 1-6. Jer. 49:7-22. Ps. 25:12-14. Ps. 5:11,12. Ob. 1-16. Mal. 1:2-4. Rom. 9:10-13. s 27:11,23. t 33:28-30. u Hos. 12:3. x 27:36. y 20. z 10:9. 21:20. 27:3-5,40. a 22:10,11. 31:39-41. 46:34. b 11:6. 11:9. c Heb. venison

of Rebekah during twenty years, as that of Abraham and Sarah had been for a much longer time; but Isaac, depending on the promise of an innumerable posterity, ceased not to intreat the Lord to remove this hindrance to its fulfilment; and at length his prayer was answered.

V. 22, 23. The extraordinary sensations experienced by Rebekah, convinced her that there was something supernatural in her case.—She therefore said, “If so, why is it thus with me?” “This must be inquired into.” Abraham was yet living, and was a prophet; and probably he directed her in inquiring of the Lord; but the particular method used on this occasion is not recorded. She however received for answer, that two nations, and two manner of people, were in her womb; namely, the Israelites and the Edomites or Idumeans, being then in their common parents, Jacob and Esau. They were men of very opposite dispositions, and their descendants were as dissimilar; they personally struggled hard for the pre-eminence, and so did their posterity during many ages. In the days of David, the descendants of Esau, the elder brother, were generally subject to those of Jacob the younger; and much more entirely in the latter times of the Jewish state.—These struggles may be considered as an emblem of the conflict between the world and the true church of God, the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman; in which the church, which is the younger, after many struggles, will gain a final mastery. (Notes, 3:14,15.)—The conflict between “that which is born of the flesh,” and “that which is born of the Spirit,” in the true believer, is of the same nature, and will have a similar event. (Notes, John 3:7,8. Gal. 5:16-18.)

V. 25, 26. Esau signifies *made, or formed*.—“He was as full of hairs when he was born, as others are at man’s estate.” *Bp. Patrick*. Jacob, even at his birth, seemed to struggle for the primogeniture, which was an indication of his subsequent conduct. His name was given him with evident allusion to this circumstance; and signifies *a supplanter*, or one who throws down another, by taking hold of his heel.

V. 27. Esau hunted the beasts of the forest with dexterity and address; till probably, like Nimrod, he became a warrior and conqueror; accordingly, when he met his brother he had with him four hundred men. But Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents; an industrious, honest, pious character: “a stranger and pilgrim” in his spirit, and a shepherd all his days.

V. 28. (Notes, 27:—*Venison*.) That which is taken in hunting. (Onp, Sept.)

V. 30. Edom signifies *red*, and is nearly the same as Adam. (Note, 5:1,2.) This name was given Esau, because he so eagerly desired the red pottage of Jacob.

V. 31-34. As it does not appear that Jacob inherited a double portion of Isaac’s substance, it is probable this was not meant by the birthright. But it included the special blessings covenanted to Abraham and his posterity; not only in respect of the land of Canaan, but also in respect of the Messiah, who would arise from among them, and all the religious advantages connected with this distinction. These blessings Jacob as a believer supremely valued, but unbelieving Esau despised them.—It cannot be conceived that Esau was literally dying of hunger, nor would the transac-

29 ¶ And Jacob sold pottage: and Esau came from the field, ^{and} he ^{was} faint.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, ^{with} that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called ^{Edom}.

31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

32 And Esau said, Behold, I am ^{at} the point to die: ^{and} what profit shall this birthright do to me?

33 And Jacob said, ^{Swear} to me this day: and he sware unto him: ^{and} he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles: and he did ^{eat} and drink, and rose up, and went his way: ^{thus} Esau despised his birthright.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Isaac, because of a famine, sojourns in Gerar; and the Lord instructs and blesses him, 1-5. He denies his wife, and is detected and reproved, 6-11. The Philistines envy his prosperity; he removes from them, and they fill up, or take from him, the wells which his father and he had dug, 12-17. He digs several other wells, 18-22. The Lord blesses him at Beersheba, 23-25. Abimelech covenants with him, 26-33. Esau marries two Canaanish wives, to the grief of his parents, 34, 35.

AND there was a famine in the land, besides ^{the} first famine that was in the days of Abraham. ^{And} Isaac went unto ^{Abimelech} king of the Philistines, unto Gerar.

was in his mouth. 27:4,19. c Judg. 8:4,5. 1 Sam. 14:28,31. Is. 40:30,31. d Heb. with that red, with that red pottage. d 38:1,9,43. Ex. 15:15. Num. 20:14-21. Deut. 23:7. 2 Kings 9:20. e Heb. going to die. e Job 31:15. 2e:17. 34:9. Mai. 3:14. f 34:3. Mark 6:23. Heb. 6:16. g 27:36. 36:6,7. h Is. 22:16. 1 Cor. 15:32. i Zech. 11:13. Matt. 22:5. 23:15. Luke 14:13-20. Phil. 3:13,19. Heb. 12:16,17. a 12:10. b 25:11. c 20:2.

tion have been so severely condemned had this been so. He had indeed come in from hunting in the field, where he had continued till he was faint for want of refreshment: but doubtless, other food might have been procured in Isaac’s family, had he not inordinately craved Jacob’s pottage, which he probably saw as soon as he entered the house, and determined at any rate to obtain. The words signify, “I am going towards death,” and he seems to have meant, “I shall never live to inherit Canaan, or any of these future supposed blessings; and what signifies it who has them when I am dead?” This was the language of profaneness, for which the apostle condemns him; and it implied a great contempt of the birthright, which the historian notes with decided censure. (Note, Heb. 12:15-17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-18. By repeated examples the Lord teaches us that he tries the faith of his people by long delays; but at length vastly exceeds their expectations, by fulfilling to them his largest promises.—“The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” *Hab. 2:3*.—A great part of this history relates to those who go off, and those who appear on, the stage of life; and it is of little consequence, whether our continuance on this grand theatre be short or long, provided we act in such a manner as to quit the world with comfort to ourselves, with benefit to others, and with the approbation of our gracious God. Only let us be anxious to leave behind us a testimony from our lips to the faithfulness and goodness of the Lord, and in the consciences of others, to the uprightness and consistency of our walk before him; and the blessing of God to our families. Having then lived to every good purpose, and being ripe for the world above, we may cheerfully resign our souls into the hands of our Redeemer, expecting to join “the spirits of just men made perfect,” and leave our bodies to the silent tomb, in joyful hope of a happy resurrection. But God forbid, that the writer or any of the readers of these observations should rest contented with earthly blessings, which the Lord bestows on the men of this world; or should come short of those special and eternal blessings, which belong to the children of the promise! Though the former seem to have the pre-eminence here, yet the latter will have their portion, when that of the former is spent and gone for ever.

V. 19-34. They who are stirred up, by the delays of promised and expected blessings, to “pray always and not faint,” will surely succeed; for “every one that asketh receiveth,” though perhaps not immediately.—In all our doubts and perplexities, we should inquire of the Lord by prayer, attendance on his ordinances, and attention to his word: and in many of our conflicts and struggles with sin and temptations, we may adopt Rebekah’s words: “If it be so, why am I thus?” “If a child of God, why so careless or carnal?” If not a child of God, why so afraid of sin or burdened with it?—In the best of characters we perceive infirmities, and in the best of parents sinful partialities; but surely those children are entitled to our superior regard, who are evidently beloved of the Lord!—Men, who are slaves to their appetites, and who inordinately crave earthly things, and despise spiritual blessings, will, however sagacious in other respects, find themselves *unprofitable*

2 And th^e LORD ¹appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; ²dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of.

3 ¹Sojourn in this land, and ²I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for ³unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all these countries, and will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father.

4 And I will make thy seed to ¹multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries: and in thy ²Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:

5 Because that Abraham ¹obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

6 ¹And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

7 And the men of the place asked ¹him of his wife; and he said, ²She is my sister: for he feared to say, ³She is my wife; lest, ⁴said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she was ⁵fair to look upon.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out from a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was ¹sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety, she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, ¹What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought guiltiness upon us.

11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that ¹toucheth this man or his wife, shall surely be put to death. [Practical Observations.]

12 ¹Then Isaac sowed in that land, and ²received in the same year ³an hundred-fold, and the LORD ⁴blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and ¹went forward, and grew until he became very great.

14 For he had ¹possession of flocks, and pos-

session of herds, and great store of ¹servants. And the Philistines ²envied him.

15 For all the wells which ¹his father's servants had digged, in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us: for thou art much ¹mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 ¹And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them, after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of ¹springing water.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well ¹Esek, because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: And he called the name of it ¹Sitnah.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it ¹Rehoboth; and he said, For now ²the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, ¹I am the God of Abraham thy father: ²fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake.

25 And he ¹built an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

26 ¹Then ²Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Abuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army.

d 12:7, 17:1. e 12:1. Ps. 37:3. f 20:1. Ps. 39:12. Heb. 11:9, 13-16. g 28:15. 39:22. Phil. 4:1. h 12:7. 13:15, 17. 15:18. 17:8. i 22:16, 18. Ps. 105:9. Heb. 6:17. k 13:16. 15:5. 22:17. Heb. 11:12. 17:8. 22:18. Ps. 72:17. Acts 3:25. Gal. 3:8, 16. m 24: 17:23. 18:19. 22:18. Ps. 112:12. Matt. 5:19. 7:24. Gal. 5: 6. Heb. 11: 9. Jam. 2:22. n 12:13. 20:25, 13. Prov. 29:25. o 24:16. p Judg. 5:23. Prov. 7:6. Cant. 2:9. q Prov. 5:18, 19. Ec. 9:9. r 12:19. 20:9, 10. s 20:5. Ps. 105:15. Prov. 6:29. Zech. 2:8. t Heb. found. i Ps. 72:16. Ec. 11:6. Zech. 8:12.

excelled in wisdom by those, who "choose that good part which shall never be taken from them." But, while we should be of Jacob's judgment in preferring the birthright, we ought carefully to avoid all approaches to imposition, in seeking to obtain the most important advantages; and even the appearance of being a *supplanter*, should be shunned with scrupulous vigilance.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. Abraham sojourned in Gerar just before the birth of Isaac, and soon after entered into a treaty with Abimelech; and Isaac was sixty years of age when his sons were born, and a hundred when Esau married. (34.) Esau and Jacob are spoken of in the close of the former chapter, as grown up. The transaction, therefore, recorded in this chapter, must have been at least ninety years after the former covenant.—It is probable that Abimelech, (which signifies *'my father the king,'*) was the common name of the kings of the Philistines; and that this Abimelech was a successor to him with whom Abraham covenanted. (Note, Ps. 34: title.)

V. 2—5. Abraham had gone down into Egypt during a famine, and we may suppose that Isaac was purposing to do the same; but God commanded him to dwell in some part of the land of Canaan, according to such intimations as should from time to time be given him. For the present he was directed to sojourn in the country of the Philistines: and the Lord promised to be with him, to supply his wants, and to protect and comfort him; and he renewed the promises, which had been repeatedly ratified to Abraham. God thus testified his approbation of Abraham's remarkable obedience, for the honour, of his own name, and the encouragement of Isaac, and of others in every age and nation. This obedience likewise conduced to the fulfilment of the promises. It was the evidence of that faith, by which Abraham was justified; and, in consequence of his prompt obedience, the covenant respecting his seed was confirmed to him by an oath.—The several expressions made use of seem to refer to Abraham's unreserved obedience, in leaving his native country, sojourning in Canaan, offering sacrifices, being circumcised, and circumcising his sons and servants, and at length *intentionally* sacrificing Isaac, at God's command; as well as to his general course of piety, righteousness, and holiness.—As "Abraham was justified by *faith*," which referred to the righteousness of Christ; so the

Lord's blessing Isaac for Abraham's sake, was virtually blessing him through the Redeemer.—The principle of blessing some for the sake of others, seems to have been intended to prepare men's minds for receiving the blessings of salvation, not as due to them, but as given for the sake of the divine Saviour.

V. 7. (Notes, 12:10—20:20.) The questions of the men of Gerar excited Isaac's apprehensions: his answer contained a more direct falsehood than that used by Abraham; and his unbelief was the more excusable, because he lived in Gerar by God's express command, and under his immediate protection.

V. 8. *A long time.* Without interruption, which showed that Isaac's suspicions were injurious to the Philistines.

V. 11. Probably Abimelech recollected the reproof and correction, which had been incurred on Abraham's account, in similar circumstances.

V. 12. *An hundred-fold.* If this be the meaning of the passage, (for it is not without difficulty,) it was an extraordinary increase, and an evident effect of the divine blessing. In many parts of this land, with all our improvements in agriculture, an ordinary crop of grain is very seldom known to exceed twenty-fold; and much more frequently, without any remarkable mismanagement or disaster, to come short of ten-fold clear increase upon the seed sown.—And he found the barley increased unto him an hundred-fold in that year.' Sept.

V. 13—16. The conduct of the Philistines was a direct infringement of the covenant, which Abimelech had made with Abraham; but Isaac's prosperity excited their envy and jealousy, which induced forgetfulness of all moral obligations.

V. 17. *Valley of Gerar.* Upon the borders of Abimelech's kingdom.

V. 21. *Sitnah.* Hatred, (margin,) or opposition. Extra 4:6. Heb. The name Satan, an adversary, is derived from the same root.

V. 22. The piety of the language here used in the ordinary concerns of life, is worth noticing and imitating.

V. 24. *Fear not.* 'Be not afraid of the envy or enmity of the Philistines.' (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26. *Phicol.* This seems to have been the name of some dignity among the Philistines; for probably Phicol, who

27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, ^hseeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

28 And they said, ⁱWe saw certainly that the LORD was with thee; and we said, ^jLet there be now an oath betwixt us, ^keven betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

29 ^lThat thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou ^mart now ⁿthe blessed of the LORD.

30 And he ^omade them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

31 And they rose up ^pbetimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.

33 And he called it ^qShebah: therefore the name of the city is ^rBeer-sheba unto this day.

34 ^s¶ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith, ^tthe daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:

35 ^uWhich were a ^vgrief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah.

h Judg. 11:7. Acts 7:9, 11, 35. Rev. 3:9. ⁱ Heb. *seeing we saw*, 131:49—53. ^j Heb. *if thou shalt*, &c. k 24:31. Ps. 115:13, 131:54. Rom. 12:18. Heb. 12: 14. 1 Pet. 4:9. m 22:3. ⁿ That is, an oath. ^o That is, the well of the oath. n 24:3. Ex. 34:16. o 6:2. 27:46. 28:3, 8. ^p Heb. *bitterness of spirit*, a 48:

came to Abimelech to Abraham on a similar occasion, was dead before this time. (21:22, 32.)

V. 29—31. The Philistines attempted to justify their conduct, though indeed they had acted deceitfully and unjustly, and in a manner wholly inexcusable; but Isaac, loving peace, admitted their plea without altercation.

V. 35. ^u And they were quarrelling with Isaac and Rebekah. ^v Sept.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11. Repeated famines in "the land of promise," taught the patriarchs, and uneasiness in the most eligible situations should teach us, to look to the heavenly inheritance for unalloyed felicity. Yet they are happy, even on earth, who are guided by JEHOVAH's counsel, upheld and protected by his power, encouraged by his presence, and assured of an interest in his everlasting love. If he engage to be with us, and if we abide in our proper place, nothing but unbelief and distrust can prevent our comfort. The blessing which descends upon posterity in answer to prayer, as the effect of wholesome instructions and a good example, and as a gracious recompense of the obedience of faith, is unspeakably preferable to any other riches which can beleft them. "The righteous LORD loveth righteousness," and will show his love of it by abundantly rewarding the good works of his believing people.—But alas! it is far more natural and easy to imitate the faults of eminent characters, than their faith and holiness; and too many conclude, that they may venture on improper conduct, because pious persons have been betrayed into it. How careful therefore should we be, not to sanction transgression, or give force to temptation, by our example! ¹ The falls of them who have gone before us are as so many rocks, on which others have split; and the recording of them is like placing buoys over them, for the security of future mariners. ^{Fuller} Such examples also show, that righteousness cometh not by the law, but by the faith of Christ.—Let us, however, imitate the conduct of Abimelech, in seriously reproving Isaac, and in returning good for evil. It may also be proper to inquire whether his abhorrence of adultery will not rise up in judgment "against such a nation as this," or at least against very many of its inhabitants, its robes, and princes.

V. 12—35. The Lord detects and reproves his offending servants; but he also pardons and blesses them. His blessing maketh rich, and the increase of the earth is his gift: but riches generally excite envy, suspicion, and jealousy; and we may very often call our worldly acquisitions, (as Isaac did his wells,) *contention and enmity*.—"The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy;" and, while we watch and pray against it in ourselves, we shall avoid whatever may needlessly excite it in others; for when once it is kindled, none can tell what malice and mischief it may occasion.—As Isaac constantly chose to reside near a well, so we should give up many other advantages, in order to be near the ordinances of God. Many will try to deprive us of these "wells of salvation;" but we must contend for them earnestly, yet meekly; and endeavour to preserve for our children, the religious privileges which we have received from our fathers.—In other things, "the wisdom which is from above," will teach us to recede from our right, and retire from the contentious;

CHAPTER XXVII.

Isaac when old sends Esau to take venison, intending to bless him, 1—4. Rebekah instructs Jacob how to secure the blessing, and overrules his objections, 5—13. The stratagem succeeds, and Isaac blesses Jacob, supposing him to be Esau, 14—29. Esau afterwards avires, complains bitterly, and by importunity obtains a blessing, 30—40. Esau purposes to murder Jacob, who is sent away to New-potania, 41—46.

AND it came to pass that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were ^adim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold ^bhere am I.

2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, ^cI know not the day of my death.

3 Now therefore ^dtake, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver, and thy bow, and go out to the field, and ^etake me ^fsome venison;

4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; ^gthat my soul may bless thee before I die.

5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son: and Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

6 ^h¶ And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee ⁱbefore the LORD before my death.

8 Now therefore, my son, ^jobey my voice, according to that which I command thee.

10. 1 Sam. 3:2. Ec. 12:3. b 48:21. Prov. 27:1. Ec. 9:10. Is. 38:1. Jam. 4: 14. c 10:9. 25:27, 28. ^d Heb. *hun*. d 7. 48:9, 15—20. 49:28. ^e Lev. 33:1, &c. Luke 24:51. Heb. 11:20. ^f Josh. 6:26. 1 Sam. 26:19. ^g 13. Acts 4:19. 5:29. Eph. 6:1.

and if we are injuriously driven from one place, the Lord will make room for us in another, and recompense us with the assurance and consolations of his love. Yea, he will "make our enemies to be at peace with us," and to court our friendship, acknowledging that he loveth us: and we should always show ourselves disposed to reconciliation and hospitality.—We must, however, have some trial to counterbalance each comfort: yet children are highly culpable, who by their sins grieve the hearts of their pious and affectionate parents: nor has any thing been more generally the bane of domestic happiness, as well as of piety, than unhallowed marriages, and the practice of polygamy.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. The subsequent narrative shows, that Joseph was born about fourteen years after the events recorded in this chapter. (29:30. 30:24—26.) Joseph was thirty years of age when he stood before Pharaoh; (41:46.) and after the seven years of plenty, and two or three years of famine, Jacob told Pharaoh that he was a hundred and thirty. (47:9.) Jacob must have been about ninety when Joseph was born, and about seventy-five at this time; and as Isaac was sixty when Esau and Jacob were born, he must have been about a hundred and thirty-five or six years of age. Since Esau married his two wives, thirty-five or six years had elapsed, concerning which nothing is recorded.

V. 2. Isaac deemed it best to settle his domestic concerns, that he might not have incumbrances of that kind to discompose him at the solemn season of death, which his infirmities led him continually to expect. Yet he lived almost forty-four years longer.

V. 3, 4. As this preparation was not intended for a public feast, but merely for a private self-indulgent meal, it must be considered as, in some degree, a carnal introduction to the spiritual blessing, which Isaac purposed to pronounce: a solemn sacrifice would have been much more consistent with his character, and more suitable to the occasion. (7.)—Isaac's partiality for Esau, and the custom of regarding the elder brother as the heir, led him to forget, misunderstand, or disregard, the answer which the Lord had formerly given Rebekah on this subject. (25:23.)

V. 6—10. Rebekah was sensible that Isaac was about to act improperly; for she knew that the blessing was intended for Jacob, and expected that he would have it. But she ought either calmly to have argued the case and expostulated with Isaac; or, if that appeared inexpedient, to have committed the matter to the Lord by prayer, and by no means to have used any artifice on such an occasion. She indeed did no wrong to Esau in regard to the birthright; as both the purpose of God, and his own agreement, ratified with an oath, deprived him of all claim to it: (Notes, 25:22, 33. 31—34.) but she injured Isaac, by practising an imposition upon him; and Jacob, by using her authority and persuasions to tempt him to sin. She also dishonoured the power and faithfulness of God, by supposing that he needed such means of effecting his purpose and fulfilling his promise. Nay, by exciting Jacob to act so treacherous a part, she even threw a stumbling-block in Esau's way; and furnished him with a plausible pretext for his enmity, not only against his brother but also against religion.

9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth.

10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother, is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.

12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck.

17 And she gave the savoury meat, and the bread which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 ¶ And he came unto his father, and said, My father: And he said, Here am I: who art thou, my son?

19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born: I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20 And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.

21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau, or not.

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him.

24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

25 And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field, which the Lord hath blessed.

28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.

29 ¶ Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

[Practical Observations.]

30 ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father; and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy first-born Esau.

33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who, where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter

e Judg. 13:15, 1 Sam. 16:20, h 25:25, 189, 25:27, 1 Thea. 5:22, k 9:25, Deut. 27:18, Mal. 1:14, l 25:23, 33, 1 Sam. 11:21—28, 36—45, 2 Sam. 14:9, Matt. 27:25, m 4, 7, 9, 17, 31, 35—38, Ps. 141:4, Prov. 23:23, n Heb. desirab. 27, o 21, 24, 29—32—35, 1 Kings 13:18, 14:2, Zech. 13:3, 4, Matt. 20:70—74, o Ex. 20:7, ¶ Heb. before me, p 1 Sam. 21:2, 13, 27:10, 2 Sam. 14:5, Job 13:7, 8, 15:5, Prov. 12:19, 22, 30:8, Rom. 3:7, 8, Eph. 4:25, q Cant. 2:13, 4:11—14, 7:12, 13, Hos. 14:6, r 26:12, Heb. 6:7, s Deut. 11:1, 12, 32:2, 33:13, 23, 2 Sam. 1:21, 1 Kings 17:1, Ps. 65:9—13, 133:3, Hos. 14:5, 7, Mic. 5:7, 139, 45:18.

V. 11—14. Jacob objected to the proposed measure as *impolitic*; and feared that he should be detected, and put to shame, for trying to impose on his father by means of his infirmities; and that he should thus provoke him to pronounce a curse on him instead of a blessing: but he does not seem to have been in any degree properly impressed with the sense of the exceedingly great *criminality* of the attempt. And Rebekah, (who, from her confidence that Jacob would obtain the blessing, was encouraged to urge him to commit evident sin,) in enraging to take the consequences on herself, acted too much like those persons who are bold in transgression, because "God is rich in mercy." Thus they both contracted deep guilt, for which they were afterwards sharply chastised; yet the purposes of God were accomplished, even by means of their misconduct.

V. 18. The animals, in those hot climates, are not covered with so thick a coat of hair, as they are in more northerly regions.

V. 19, 20. Jacob not only told the most palpable falsehoods on this occasion, but directly profaned the name of the Lord in his answer to Isaac's inquiry; and thus made religion the cloak of his dissimulation!

V. 21—23. Isaac no doubt would have rejoiced to hear Esau use the language of piety, as Jacob had affected to do: yet this circumstance seems to have concurred in exciting his suspicions. But as his eyes failed him, he distrusted his ears also; and thus the plan of Rebekah succeeded.—How wonderful is that difference, which there is betwixt the faces and the voices of the several individuals of the human species! Scarcely any two of the innumerable millions are exactly alike in either, and yet the difference cannot be defined or described! The power, wisdom, and kindness of our Creator, should be admired and adored in this remarkable circumstance; for they are very visible.—This description of Jacob is not unaptly accommodated to the character of a hypocrite: his voice, his language, is that of a Christian; his hands, or conduct, that of an ungodly man: but the judgment will proceed from God the Judge of all, at the last day, as in the present case, not by the voice, but by the hands.

Ps. 36:8, Rom. 11:17, u Deut. 7:13, 9:8, 33:28, x 9:25, 49:8—10, 2 Sam. 8:10, 1 Kings 4:21, 1a 2:6—9, 72:8, 1a 9:7, Dan. 2:44, 45, Rev. 19:16, y 37, 25:22, 23, 2 Sam. 8:14, 1 Kings 11:15, 16, 22:47, 2 Chr. 25:11—14, Ps. 60: title 1a, 63:1—6, Mal. 1:2—5, Rom. 9:12, z 12:3, Num. 24:9, Zech. 2:8, 9, Matt. 25:40, 45, 1 Heb. trembled with a great trembling greatly, Job 21:6, 37:1, Ps. 55:5, 6 Heb. heard, a 26:3, 4, Rom. 11:29, Heb. 11:20, b 1 Sam. 30:4, Prov. 1:24—28, 19:3, Luke 13:24—28, 11eb. 12:17.

V. 27—29. The hand of God is manifest in this transaction; and the blessing pronounced on Jacob was an evident prophecy, which was fulfilled in the history of the two nations descended from Jacob and Esau; and indeed the language of the original implies this; being literally, "God shall give thee... the people shall serve thee, &c." It is likewise observable, that no explicit mention is made here, as elsewhere, of the promised Seed and of the promised land. Perhaps Isaac was conscious, that these were intended for Jacob, and confined his interpretation of the answer given Rebekah to these particulars; or he deemed that matter determined by the sale of the birthright; or he knew that Esau did not set much value on the spiritual meaning of the blessing, and therefore couched it in general terms. Indeed, he seems to have spoken with hesitation; yet he was led to use such expressions, as assigned the dominion to Jacob, and conferred on him the substance of the blessings first promised to Abraham. (Note, 12:1—3.)—Dew, &c. (28.) Marg. Ref. s.—Thy mother's sons. (29.) The sons not only of the same father, as Ishmael was brother to Isaac; but of the same mother also, as Jacob was brother to Esau. Jacob, with his posterity, was especially intended, whom Isaac desired and hoped would be subject to Esau and his posterity; though their mother Rebekah, as he well knew, favoured Jacob.

V. 33. By the unexpected entrance of Esau, and his address and answer, Isaac was exceedingly agitated and alarmed. Various reflections now rushed at once into his mind; and he was convinced that he had been rashly attempting to counteract the appointment of God. The language of this verse most emphatically expresses the confusion into which he was thrown, on perceiving in what manner his intention had been counteracted: but he acquiesced in what had been done, as manifestly the will of God: and indeed he seems to have been directed by the Spirit of prophecy, in thus confirming the blessing to Jacob.

V. 34. Esau was exceedingly grieved and vexed at being thus circumvented and disappointed; and at finding that the providence of God had ratified his former foolish bargain. Perhaps he dreaded some immediate temporal calamity in

cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

35 And he said, 'Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36 And he said, Is not he rightly named 'Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and behold now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, 'I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I 'sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38 And Esau said unto his father, 'Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even me also*, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39 And Isaac his father answered, and said unto him, 'Behold thy dwelling shall be 'the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.

40 And by 'thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt 'serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that 'thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

c 19-23. 2 Kings 10:19. Mal. 2:10. 1 Thes. 4:6. * That is, a *Supplanter*. 25: 91-24. 32-29. John 1. d 23. 25:23. Rom. 9:10-12. 1 Or, *supplanted*. e 34. 35. 48:28. 1e. 65:14. Heb. 12:17. (35:8-8. Josh. 24:4. 1 Or, of the *fatness*. 25: 32-6. h 2 Sam. 8:14. 1 Kings 11:15-17. 2 Kings 14:7,10. 1 Chr. 18:11-13. 2 Chr. 25:11,12. Ps. 60:8. Ovad. 17-21. 2 Kings 8:20-22. 2 Chr. 21:8. * 4:5-3. Ezech. 25:12-14. 35:5. Amos 1:11,12. Ob. 10-14. 1 John 3:12. 1 35:29. 50:4,

consequence: yet it is plain that he expressed no proper value for the spiritual blessings of the covenant, made with Abraham and Isaac, which were thus transferred to Jacob.

V. 36. *Is not he? &c.* וְהִנֵּה הִנֵּה Or, "Is it because one called his name Jacob?"—Does he act in this manner, because the name Jacob was given him?—See 2 Sam. 23:19. Heb. Esau spoke, as if Jacob had taken away the birthright by force or fraud: being more disposed to blame his brother than himself.—*Jacob*.] Note, 25:25,26.

V. 38. If Esau might not have that very blessing, which was promised to Abraham, and then limited to Isaac, and now given to Jacob, and which implied and typified the everlasting blessings which believers have in and by Christ, as descended from Jacob; he earnestly entreated, that he might have an assurance of some blessing, though not exactly of the same kind.

And Esau lifted up, &c.] 'And Isaac being pierced in his heart, (κατακτύςεντος, Acts 2:37. Gr.) Esau cried out with his voice and wept.' Sept.

V. 39, 40. This blessing was very well suited to Esau's character, and probably would not have been disagreeable to him, had it not been for the clause, "Thou shalt serve thy brother." Yet it was intimated that Esau's posterity would break the yoke, and not serve submissively, but indignantly; and that at some times they would be so powerful as to revolt successfully, though never so as to acquire dominion over the descendants of Jacob. (*Marg. Ref.*) Probably, the country in which Esau dwelt, was fertile in his days; but it afterwards became barren. (Note, Mal. 1:2-5.)

V. 41, 42. Jacob had given Esau a plausible pretext for his enmity: yet it *originated* from the same source, and was of the same nature, as the hatred of Cain to Abel; namely, the piety of Jacob's character, and the evident preference which the Lord had manifested for him.—Esau seems to have retained no regard for Rebekah, whom probably he disliked for her love to Jacob, and for assisting him in procuring the blessing; and therefore, when Isaac should be removed, (which he erroneously supposed would soon take place, Note, 2.) he purposed to slay his brother, whatever anguish his mother might endure. And, it seems, he could not keep his purpose to himself; but told it to others, and thus it came to the ears of Rebekah.

V. 45. *Both in one day.*] Either by the death of the murderer, by some judgment from God, if human justice reached him not; or by her son Esau's thus becoming so vile, as to be only a trouble and a grief of heart to her.

V. 46. Rebekah, being reluctant to render Isaac's mind more uneasy, did not mention the principal reason of her proposal; but added one, which was perfectly consistent with truth, and which gives us a melancholy idea of Esau's two wives, and the effect of this part of his conduct on his father's domestic felicity: for her words imply, that they were still living; though she likewise referred to the general character of the daughters of the land.—"What good? &c.]" Or, "For what do I live?"

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-29. What is long life, of which we are naturally so desirous, but surviving our dearest friends and choicest comforts, our capacities of enjoyment, and our very faculties and senses? and what can life then be, but "labour and sorrow"?—We should indeed be willing to live as long as, either by active service or patient suffering, we can glorify God and 'serve our generation:' but we should never postpone the

41 ¶ And Esau 'hated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, 'The days of mourning for my father are at hand, 'then will I slay my brother Jacob.

42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: And she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth 'comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.

43 Now therefore, my son, 'obey my voice: and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to 'Haran.

44 And tarry with him 'a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou hast done to him: 'then I will send and fetch thee from thence. 'Why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, 'I am weary of my life, 'because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these *which are* of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

10.11. Pent. 24:9. 2 Chr. 35:24. Ps. 35:14. m 2 Sam. 13:26-29. Ec. 7:9. Eph. 4. 26:47. 1 John 3:12-13. n 37:18-20. 42:21-22. Job 21:13-14. Ps. 64:5. Prov. 3. 14. 4:16-17. o 8:13. 28:7. Prov. 30:17. Jer. 35:14. Acts 5:29. p 11:31. 12:45. 25:10. q 31:38. r Prov. 19:21. Lam. 3:7. Jam. 4:13-15. s 4:8-16. 9:5,6. 2 Sam. 14:6,7. Acts 28:4. (Num. 11:15. 1 Kings 19:4. Job 3:20-22. 7:16. 14:13. Jon. 4:3,9. u 26:34,35. 28:8. 34:1,2.

necessary preparation for death; and, if ready, we need not be unwilling to quit this vale of tears, whenever the Lord shall call. Nor will the constant expectation of that uncertain hour, or habitual preparation for it, in the least hasten its approach.—The same impartiality, which influenced the inspired writer, requires us to note, that we must not follow the best of men further than they act in conformity to the *law of God*, and that we meet with many things in this chapter decidedly to condemn and shun: such as Isaac's partiality for profane Esau, and the unworthy grounds of that preference; his disregard of the divine revelation, and his heedless attempt to disannul the purposes of God; Rebekah's rash project to deceive Isaac, her putting into Jacob's mouth many falsehoods, and urging him to venture on them with her absurd engagement, "Upon me be thy curse, my son;" and Jacob's undertaking and going through with this most fraudulent and disgraceful design. Nor could their faith, or desire of the blessing, justify or excuse, (much less sanctify,) such unlawful means; for "we must not do evil that good may come." We may likewise observe, that the arts of falsehood are soon learned; that one sin makes way for many; and that "a lying lip is but for a moment." Nor can they expect to be treated with candour and truth by others, who do not strictly adhere to veracity themselves. (Notes, 29:22, 23. 37:32.)

V. 30-46. They, who profanely despise spiritual blessings, may one day bewail their folly with unavailing lamentations; nay, even in this world, there are seasons when the most ungodly perceive and envy, though they will not seek for the superior felicity of believers.—Impenitent sinners blame any rather than themselves: and, in the abundance of worldly enjoyments, they soon forget the folly and misery of forfeiting spiritual blessings.—A pious man, when reminded and convinced of the will of God, will submit his inclination to it, though before he were otherwise minded.—The wicked, indeed, being the seed of the old serpent, implacably and without cause hate the righteous: but sometimes the misconduct of the latter furnishes them with a pretext, and draws forth their enmity into more immediate malice and murder; and it behooves us to be very circumspect, that we may not thus become their tempters.—There is much wickedness in the world; but far more in the heart of man. It is however restrained by fear, natural affection, shame, conscience, or human laws; without which the earth would be a mere field of blood: for that heart must be truly diabolical, which can seek comfort in a brother's murder.—Though the Lord overruled the conduct of the parties concerned in the transactions here recorded, to the accomplishment of his own purposes; yet we may learn his judgment respecting it, from Isaac's trembling and consternation, and the subsequent discord in his family; from the anguish of Rebekah, when she heard of Esau's murderous intentions, and when she parted with her beloved Jacob, probably no more to meet with him on earth; from Jacob's tedious exile, and great and many hardships; and from his fear, long after, that enraged Esau would smite the mother with the children. (32:11).—We would commend Rebekah for her prudent care to prevent the fatal effects of her son's anger, for her tenderness to Isaac, and for her dislike to the ill behaviour of Esau's wives; yet it is hard to express abhorrence of evil, without some mixture of impatience; for life may be valuable and useful, though the world, and even our near relatives be wicked and ungrateful.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Esau bleſſes Jacob, and ſends him to Padan aram to take a wife from thence, 1-5. Esau marries Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, 6-9. Jacob journeyeth, has a vision of a ladder, sets up a stone as a pillar, calls the place Beth-el, and makes a solemn vow, 10-22.

AND Isaac called Jacob, and ^ablessed him, and ^bcharged him, and said unto him, ^cThou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

2 Arise, go to ^dPadan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of ^eLaban thy mother's brother.

3 And ^fGod Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be ^ga multitude of people:

4 And give thee ^hthe blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land ⁱwherein thou art a stranger, ^jwhich God gave unto Abraham.

5 And Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

6 ¶ When ^kEsau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him, he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan:

7 And ^lthat Jacob obeyed his father, and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram:

8 And Esau seeing that ^mthe daughters of Canaan ⁿpleased not Isaac his father:

9 Then went Esau ^ounto Ishmael, and took unto the wives ^pwhich he had, ^qMahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

^a 34, 27:27-33. ^b 21:3, 37. 25:34, 35. 27:46. 34:9, 16. Ex. 34:15, 16. 2 Cor. 6:14-16. ^c 22:2-10. 24:10, 15-24. 25:20. 31:18. 35:9. 46:15. ^d 24:29, 50. ^e 17:4-6. 22:17, 18. 35:11. 43:14, 48:3. Ex. 6:3. 2 Cor. 6:18. Rev. 21:22. ^f 1:23. 9:1. 24:60. 41:52. Ps. 127:3-5. ^g Heb. an assembly of people. ^h 12:1-3, 15:5-7. 17:6-8. 22:17, 18. Gal. 3:8-14. Eph. 1:3. ⁱ Heb. of thy enjoyments. ^j 13:14-17. 15:15-21. ^k 16:10, 15:6-12. Heb. 11:9-13. ^l 12:33. ^m 27:43. Prov. 30:17. Eph. 6:1-3. ⁿ 11. 24:3. 26:34, 35. ^o Heb. were evil in the eyes. ^p 1 Sam. 8:6. ^q 1 Sam. 27:13-17. 36:3. ^r Called also, *Bashaneth*. 86:3. ^s 11:31. ^t Heb. 12:12. ^u Acts 7:2. ^v Charran. ^w Matt. 8:20. ^x 15:12, 16:7. 37:5-11. 40:41. Num. 12:6. Job 4:12-21. 33:15, 16. ^y Dan. 2:4. 7:1. Matt. 1:20. 12:13, 13. ^z 24:1, 2. 2 Chr. 16:9. Is. 41:10. John 1:51. 2 Tim. 4:16, 17. Heb. 1:14.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 2. *Bethuel.* Bethuel had been long dead, but Jacob was directed to go to his family and descendants.

V. 3, 4. Isaac at this time deliberately confirmed the blessing pronounced on Jacob; lest it should not be deemed valid, seeing it had been obtained by fraud.—And it is remarkable, that he more explicitly than before mentions the blessings which God gave to Abraham and his seed, as thus pledged to Jacob.—The original is, “God Almighty shall bless thee;” being the language of prophecy, rather than of prayer. (*Note*, 27:27—29.)

V. 9. Ishmael had been dead some time, but Esau went to his family. It is doubtful whether he would have done right, had he married Ishmael's daughter, first and singly. Probably, some regard to Abraham's God remained in Ishmael's family; yet it did not look well in Esau to unite himself with those who were cast out from the inheritance by God himself; and to marry a descendant of Ishmael, when he had two other wives, was certainly wrong, and wholly contrary to the original institution of marriage.

V. 10, 11. We should not resolve the solitary journey of Jacob, on this occasion, merely into the simplicity of the times: for the servant of Abraham, when he took the same journey on a similar occasion, had a suitable retinue; and probably Isaac was much more wealthy than his father. We may therefore suppose, that the plan was concerted by Rebekah, in order that Jacob might set out, unobserved by Esau, lest he should embrace that opportunity of murdering him; and that Esau's envy and jealousy might not be inflamed, as they would have been, had Jacob been sent away with a suitable attendance; but rather be abated by the consideration of the hardships to which he was exposed: and to show that he did not, in consequence of the birthright and blessing, advance any claim to the temporal riches of his father.—Jacob, as a plain man, would have no objection to go unattended and obscure. Yet we must not conclude from the meanness of this night's lodging, that he had not wherewithal to purchase a better: but as night came on, and there was no public inn nor hospitable person at hand; and as the climate was mild, and the spot pleasant, (*Note*, 19:) having taken such refreshment as he had with him, and being weary and of a hardy disposition, he soon composed him to sleep; though in circumstances which we should think neither comfortable nor secure.

V. 12. This ladder seems to have been an emblem of the gracious care, which the God of heaven takes of the inhabitants of the earth, especially of such as fear and trust in him. This is, in many things, carried on by the ministry of

10 ¶ And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and ^awent toward ^bHaran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and ^ctarried there all night, because the sun was set: ^dand he took of the stones of that place, and put ^ethem for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And ^fhe dreamed, and behold, a ^gladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And behold, ^hthe Lord stood above it, and said, ⁱI am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: ^jthe land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

14 And ^kthy seed shall be as the dust of the earth: and thou shalt ^lspread abroad ^mto the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: ⁿand in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And behold, ^oI am with thee, and will keep thee in all ^pplaces whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee ^quntil I have done ^rthat which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; ^sand I knew ^tit not.

17 And ^uhe was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! ^vthis is none other but ^wthe house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 ¶ And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and ^xset it up for a pillar, and ^ypoured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called ^zthe name of that place ^aBeth-el: but the name of that city was called ^bLuz at the first.

^r 35:1, 6, 7. 48:3. ^s 15:1. 31:42. 32:9. 46:3. Ex. 3:6, 15, 16. Matt. 22:32. ^t See on 4. ^u 13:16. 35:11, 12. Num. 23:10. ^v Heb. break forth. ^x Deut. 12:20. Matt. 8:11. ^y 12:3. 18:15. 22:18. 26:4. Gal. 3:16. ^z 20:21. 26:24. 31:3. 39:2. 41:4. ^a 14. ^b 32. Josh. 1:5. Judg. 6:16. Ps. 46:7, 11. Is. 7:14. 63:10. 43:2. Jer. 1:19. Matt. 18:20. 28:20. Rom. 8:31. Heb. 13:5, 6. ^c Num. 23:19. Josh. 23:14—16. Matt. 24:35. ^d Ex. 3:5. Josh. 5:15. Job 9:11. ^e Ex. 3:6. Judg. 13:22. Matt. 17:8. Rev. 1:17. ^f 22. 2 Chr. 5:14. Ec. 5:1. Heb. 10:21. 11 et. 4:17. ^g 31:13, 45. 35:14, 20. Josh. 24:26, 27. 1 Sam. 7:12. 2 Sam. 15:18. Is. 19:19. ^h Lev. 8:10—12. Num. 7:1. ⁱ 12:3. 35:1. 45:3. Judg. 1:22—26. Heb. 12:4, 5. ^j That is, *The house of God*.

holy angels, executing his mandates and reporting their services. (*Note*, 24:2—9.) But it is vouchsafed to us, only through Jesus Christ, as “God manifest in the flesh,” the Mediator and Advocate for sinners. He is the true Ladder; and Jacob, as well as Abraham, “saw his day and was glad.” (*Note*, John 1:47—51.)—“It was giving the patriarch a glimpse of that glory, which should be accomplished in his Seed. Fuller.

V. 13—15. The Lord seems to have appeared to Jacob above the ladder, in some visible form; and, as the God of Abraham and Isaac, he ratified to him in the fullest manner the blessings originally covenanted to them; accompanying this transaction with most encouraging promises, suited to his present circumstances.—He was at this time about seventy-five years of age, and unmarried.

V. 16, 17. Jacob was not ignorant of God's omnipresence, or of his gracious nearness to those who fear him. But, having left his father's house under the rebukes of Providence, probably uneasy in his conscience, and fleeing from the face of enraged Esau; being removed not only from the company of endeared friends, (of whom he had taken a sorrowful farewell,) but from the ordinances of divine worship; and having nothing before him but a long journey into a strange country; his heart was disquieted within him, and he was ready to say, “I am banished from the sight of thine eyes.” Little expecting the ordinary comforts of religion, he was surprised with this extraordinary visit, and these gracious assurances, which in fact formed a prophetic revelation of the Lord's will to him; and, in a deep sense of his own unworthiness, ashamed of his unbelieving despondency, and in a thankful, reverential acknowledgment of the divine condescension, he thus expressed his mingled affections.—The vision of angels and the display of the divine glory, with the gracious promises which he had received, induced the conviction, that JEHOVAH was present in a special manner in that place, which thus might be considered as “the house of God, and the gate of heaven;” for there He appeared, attended by his angelic retinue.

V. 18. Jacob thus expressed, as well as he was able in his present situation, his willing mind to offer “the sacrifice of praise,” and his desire to keep in remembrance the goodness of the Lord; and to leave a sort of monument, by which the place of this gracious vision might be readily known, when he should return to perform his vows. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. It seems that there was even then a city near the place, though Jacob did not go to it.—*Luz.* ⁿ *ly*. This word is rendered *hazel*, (30:37.) where alone it occurs in the

20 And **Jaw** ¹, bowed a vow, saying, ² If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and ³ will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on:

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace: ⁴ then shall the Lord be my God;

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be ⁵ God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, ⁶ I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Jacob arrives at Haran, and confers with some shepherds, 1-8. He meets with Rachel, is entertained by Laban, and so ve seven years for Rachel, 9-20. He is cheated by Laban with Leah; he remonstrates, and Laban excuses himself; Jacob marries both sisters, and serves other seven years, 21-30. Rachel is barren; but Leah bears Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 31-35.

THEN ¹ Jacob ² went on his journey, and ³ came into the land of the ⁴ people of the east.

2 And he looked, and behold, ⁵ a well in the field, and lo, ⁶ there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? and they said, ⁷ Of Haran are we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

6 And he said unto them, ⁸ Is the well? and they said, He is well: and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

7 And he said, ⁹ Lo, ¹⁰ it is yet high day, neither

is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

8 And they said, We cannot, ¹¹ until all the flocks be gathered together, and ¹² till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

9 And while he yet spake with them, ¹³ Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the ¹⁴ sheep of Laban his mother's brother; that Jacob went near, ¹⁵ and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

11 And Jacob ¹⁶ kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he ¹⁷ was her father's ¹⁸ brother, and that he ¹⁹ was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father.

13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ²⁰ ran to meet him, and embraced him, and ²¹ kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou ²² art my bone and my flesh; and he abode with him ²³ the space of a month.

15 ²⁴ And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou ²⁵ art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? ²⁶ tell me what ²⁷ shall thy wages be?

[Practical Observations.]

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder ²⁸ was Leah, and the name of the younger ²⁹ was Rachel.

b Lev. 27: Num. 6:1-20, 21-23, Judg. 11:30-31, 1 Sam. 1:11, 14:24, 2 Sam. 15:8, Neh. 9:10, Ps. 75:11, 119:105, Ec. 5:1-7, Is. 19:21, Jon. 1:16, Acts 18:19, 23:12-15, 1 See on 15, k 1 Tim. 6:8, 1 Ex. 15:2, Deut. 25:17, 2 Kings 5:17, m 17, 35:1-15, n 14:20, Lev. 27:30-33, Deut. 14:22-23, a Ps. 119:32, Ec. 9:7, * Heb. lifted up his feet, b 28:5-7, Num. 23:7, Judg. 6:3-33, 7:12, 8:10, 1 Kings 4:30, † Heb. children, c 24:11, Ex. 2:15, d i s 23:

2, Cant. 1:7, Is. 49:10, Rev. 7:17, e 27:43, 23:10, f 43:27, † Heb. peace to him 2 37:14, Is. 18:7, 1 Sam. 17:32, marg., g Gal. 6:10, † Heb. yet the day is great, h 8, i 21:15, Ex. 2:16, k i x 3:17, l 13, 33:4, 43:30, 45:24, 15, Ex. 4:27, 18:7, m 13:8, 14:16, n 24:28, † Heb. hearing, o 21:29, p Luke 7:45, Rom. 16:16, q 2:23, Judg. 9:2, 2 Sam. 5:1, 19:12, 15, † Heb. a month of days, r 30:28, 31:7, s 17:25-32, 30:19, 31:4, 33:2, 35:23, 46:15, 49:31, Ruth 4:11.

Hebrew.—Probably the spot was remarkable for the number of *hazel* trees which it produced. The meaning generally given it, as denoting an *almond* tree, is taken from the Arabic. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20-22. Jacob solemnly bound himself unto God by a voluntary engagement in the particulars here stated. His language does not imply any unbelieving distrust of the divine promise, or disposition to dictate to the Lord: but he merely took his words, put the most moderate sense upon them, and intimated, that having food and raiment, he desired no more; and that, when he returned in peace, as it had been promised, he would publicly set up the worship of the Lord his God, as his father and grandfather had done; build an altar in that very spot; and offer the tenth of all the substance which he brought back with him, to the immediate service of God, and the support of his worship, or to pious and charitable uses in general. All that he engaged for was lawful and practicable; and the circumstances, the place of this solemn worship, and the proportion of his goods to be thus dedicated, were in themselves things discretionary, and thus the proper matter for a religious vow. This is the first instance of the kind which we meet with in Scripture. Yet Abraham had given the same proportion of the spoils to Melchizedek, and it was afterwards appropriated by the law to the priests: so that we may reasonably suppose, the patriarchs had some traditional or immediate intimations of the will of God in this particular.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. It is incumbent on parents to unite their influence and authority with wisdom and experience, in warning and advising their children, and in charging things of consequence upon their consciences: and when such instructions are joined with fervent, affectionate prayers, they are likely to make a deep impression. It is also well, when former miscarriages render us more watchful and attentive; and when we have humility enough, openly and explicitly to retract what we have erroneously attempted.—Good examples of obedience to God and pious parents, cannot but make some impressions, even upon the profane and malicious; but a few external acts of partial or imaginary amendment, which only spring from a desire of pleasing men, too often serve as a fatal quietus to the conscience.—We know not to what hardships we may in Providence be called: it is therefore prudent to inure ourselves to labour and self-denial; as the mean accommodations, which are intolerable to the delicate and luxurious, are scarcely inconvenient to those, who have been accustomed to labour and fare hardly.

V. 12-22. When the Lord hath made his offending children humbly sensible of their misconduct, he will again encourage them, lest they should ¹ be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow: and generally the sweetest comforts are afforded in the sharpest trials, and surprise us when ready to faint under deserved rebukes.—When the soul by faith can

see Christ, the true Ladder, opening the way of communication betwixt heaven and earth, and securing to us acceptance with God, the protection of his providence, the ministrations of his angels, and the consolations of his Spirit; every place becomes pleasant, and every prospect joyful. With the Lord for our Guide, Companion, and Comforter, we may defy all enemies, outbrave all dangers, and despise all difficulties: every thing must succeed, and end well; and he will never leave us, till his last promise is accomplished in our everlasting felicity.—The places and ordinances in which God is more especially present, ought to be regarded with solemn reverence; and peculiar consolations should leave us filled with holy awe, prepared for self-denying services, and disposed to adopt every means of keeping the Lord's goodness in remembrance.—Many "an Israelite indeed," who had been for a time burdened with guilt, oppressed with desponding fears, and conflicting with difficulties and temptations, has at length unexpectedly been surprised with sweet peace, and a sense of pardoning mercy, through "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit;" and, in adoring gratitude, has surmised the scene of such a deliverance, *Beth-el*; has deemed it the "very house of God, and the gate of heaven;" and perhaps has been afraid to quit it, lest he should lose the sweet consolations which he there had tasted, or forget the loving-kindness of the Lord. At such times, how ready are we to inquire, "What shall we render unto the Lord for his goodness?" How willing are we to forego all worldly considerations, and to be contented with food and raiment, however mean and hardly earned! How do we stand prepared for any service or suffering; and, by solemn vows, to yield ourselves unto the Lord, to take him for our God, and to devote all we have and are to his glory! All this is well, and as it should be; but oh, that there were at all times such a heart in us! Let us remember our Beth-els, be ashamed of our forgetfulness, and "pay the vows which we vowed, when the Lord answered us in the day of our distress." (*Notes*, 35:1-5.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 3. This verse describes what was usually done, by some mutual compact among the shepherds; and shows the purpose for which the flocks lay by the well: for the stone was not removed till all the flocks had been collected. (6.)

V. 5. Laban seems to have been grandson to Nahor, who, as the head of the family, is mentioned rather than Bethuel. (*Notes*, 24:28, 53.)

V. 8. It is probable that there was some regulation agreed on, to prevent the waste or the unequal use of the water, where it was so scarce and valuable.

V. 12-14. Jacob informed Rachel, that he was "her father's brother." (12.) Accordingly Laban calls Jacob "my bone and my flesh." He owns him as a very near relation; being his sister's son.—The word brother is often used in scripture with this or greater latitude. (133.)

17 Leah *was* tender-eyed, but 'Rachel *was* beautiful and well-favoured.

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, 'I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, 'It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; *n. c.* and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, *1753.* for the love he had to her.

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, (or my days are fulfilled,) that I may go in unto her.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him: and he went in unto her.

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah, Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

25 And it came to pass that in the morning, behold it *was* Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.

16-12, 13. 30:1, 2, 22. 35:19, 20, 24. 46:19-22. 48:7. 1 Sam. 10:2. Jer. 31:15. Matt. 2:18. u. 12:1. 24:16. 39:6. Prov. 31:30. x. 20:30. y. 31:41. 34:12. Ex. 25:17. Hos. 3:2. 12:12. z. Pa. 12:2. a Cant. 8:6, 7. 1 Cor. 13:7. 2 Cor. 5:14. b Jude. 14:10-18. Ruth 4:10-13. Matt. 22:2-10. 25:1-10. John 2:1-10. Rev. 1:9. c 34:55. 38:14, 15. d 16:1. e 21:29. 30:9-12. 46:18. e 27:35, 36. Prov. 11:31. Matt. 7:2. John 21:17. Rev. 3:19. f Heb. *place*. f 2:2, 3. 8:10-12. Lev. 18:15. Jude. 14:12. Mal. 2:15. Matt. 19:5. g 20. h See on 24-30:3-8. 35:22, 25. 37:1. 1:20, 31. 44:20, 27. k 18. 30:25, 23. 31:15. 1 Sam. 18:17-27. Hos. 12:1. 130: 27:

V. 19. 18. When Abraham's servant came, with great appearance of wealth, to take a wife for Isaac, Laban readily consented that Rebekah should accompany him. But Jacob came in a great measure destitute; and it might be supposed that, notwithstanding the transactions of the birthright and the blessing, Esau, being on the spot, would inherit Isaac's wealth. Therefore, though Jacob had told him the circumstances and motives of his journey; and had doubtless informed him, that he came to seek a wife from among his mother's kindred, as well as to escape from Esau; Laban did not see that "the matter proceeded from the LORD;" (24:50.) or offer to give Jacob one of his daughters, till he had witnessed his ability and industry; and then Jacob's proposal addressed his selfishness with success. Yet he would not, it seems, let him have his daughter, till he had performed his seven years' service! (Notes, 24:29-60.)

V. 21. The language of the narration evidently determines, that Jacob waited till the seven years were expired before his marriage. This interpretation has indeed been objected to, both on account of Jacob's age, and also as not allowing time enough before he went to Egypt, for the several events which intervened; but the objection does not seem well grounded, nor the difficulty insurmountable.—The promise of an innumerable posterity was first given to Abraham; yet he was very old before he had any child, and a hundred years of age before Isaac was born. It was again made to Isaac, who was childless till the age of sixty; and then it was ratified to Jacob, who did not marry till he was about eighty-three or four years old. These circumstances were nitable evidences or exercises of their faith: but it might be expected that the descendants of these patriarchs, as the progenitors of so numerous a posterity, would marry and have children as soon as possible; which was accordingly the case.

V. 22, 23. The public feast, made on this occasion, formed the regular method of recognizing the marriage; and in the evening it was customary to convey the bride, *veiled*, to her husband's house. Thus Jacob, who had deceived Isaac by personating Esau, was imposed on by Laban and Leah, in a most important concern, by a similar deception! In this the Lord was righteous, but the parties concerned were highly criminal.—If Rachel had been led to expect that she was to be given to Jacob at that time, probably she was not undeceived till it was too late to deceive Jacob: though if it had been otherwise, it might not have been practicable or expedient to do so.

V. 26. This seems to have been a mere pretence; but, if it was the custom of the country, Laban ought previously to have informed Jacob of it.

V. 27, 28. The week, here mentioned, was that of the marriage-feast; and did not relate to the years Jacob afterwards served. There existed no express and positive law against polygamy; Jacob considered Rachel as his wife, and yet he could not desert Leah; and so he seems to have thought himself obliged to retain both.—The division of time *u* weeks, intimates that some regard was paid to the sabbath.

V. 30, 32. Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, not only

27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid, to be her maid.

30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

31 And when the Lord saw that Leah *was* hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren.

32 And Leah conceived and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction: now therefore my husband will love me.

33 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and said, Because the Lord hath heard that I *was* hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon.

34 And she conceived again, and bare a son, and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have borne him three sons: therefore his name called Levi.

35 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise the Lord: therefore she called his name Judah, and left bearing.

41. Deut. 31:15. Mal. 1:3. Matt. 6:94. 10:37. Luke 14:29. John 12:25. m 21:1, 2. 25: 21. 30:2, 23. Jude. 13:2, 3. 1 Sam. 1:3, 20, 27. 5:21. Pa. 127:3. n 35:22. 49:3, 4. 1 Chr. 5:1. t That is, See a n. a Kx. 3:7. 4:31. 1 Sam. 1:14, 20. 2 Sam. 16:12. Pa. 25:18. Luke 1:25. p 50:6, 3, 18, 20. q 34:30. 42:24. t That is, Hearing. r 49: 5-7. Ex. 21:1. 32:2-29. Deut. 33:8-10. s That is, Joined. Num. 18:24. s 44:18-34. 49:8-12. Deut. 33:7. 1 Chr. 5:2. Matt. 1:12. u That is, Praise ¶ Heb. stood from bearing.

as most beautiful and amiable, and the object of his first and most endeared affection; but likewise, because he considered Leah as having concurred in the imposition put on him by Laban. Thus his preference of Rachel led him, in some respects, to treat Leah with an indifference and neglect, which resembled hatred.

V. 32-35. From the names which Leah gave her sons, and the reasons which she assigned for them, it seems probable that she was piously disposed; though criminal in imposing on Jacob, and faulty in some other respects. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. Gracious consolations are intended as cordials, to animate and strengthen us, that we may proceed without weariness or fainting, in the arduous and self-denying paths of obedience: and in so doing, we shall speedily experience the faithfulness of God to his promises; even as he accompanied and kept Jacob, in all the places to which he went.—We cannot but approve the simplicity, courteousness, and benevolence, which mark this first interview between Jacob and the shepherds; the frank manner in which he makes his observations, offers his advice, and affords his assistance; and the mild and candid reception that he meets with from them; for the proud are offended when intimations are given that they are mistaken or to blame.—He, who has all hearts in his hands, disposes all things for the good of those who trust in him, and works upon the natural affection even of selfish hearts, to procure them kind entertainment. And they who are skilful and active in business, being capable of rendering themselves useful, will generally, when known, be made welcome. Relations, however, should not be less rewarded for their services than others, but meet with greater encouragement.

V. 16-35. Love, whatever be its object, is a most active and powerful principle; and not only engages a man in hard and difficult services, but even renders them delightful. If then the Lord possess our supreme love, we shall greatly delight in his commandments, and all other affections will be regulated and subordinated by it, and rendered lawful and useful; yet times may come, when we must, in the superiority of our love to him, be called to disregard our dearest friends, as if we hated them. But, on the other hand, if they have our supreme regard, we shall for their sakes despise and neglect the Lord.—How often in Providence are men reminded of their sin in their punishment, and corrected by others much worse than themselves! One cannot but lament to see Jacob cheated into polygamy in so extraordinary a manner, and indeed the malice and artifice of Satan are clearly discernible in the transaction.—The Lord, however, so sets one thing against another, that there is less difference in the comparative happiness of mankind, than superficial observers imagine: and in the most ordinary circumstances of private life, his hand should be acknowledged; especially when he relieves our distresses, and answers our prayers.—And let us always remember, that "children and the fruit of the womb are a heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord," and should be received as from his hand, and trained up for his service.

CHAPTER XXX.

Rachel envies Leah, and complains impatiently to Jacob, who sharply rebukes her; yet at her instance takes Bilhah to wife, who bears Dan and Naphtali, 1-8. Leah gives Zilpah to Jacob, and she bears Gad and Asher, 9-13. Leah purchases Jacob's company, of Rachel, by her son's mandrakes; and bears Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah, 14-24. Rachel bears Joseph, 25-26. Jacob desires to leave Laban, who agrees with him for his future services, 25-36. The means by which Jacob grew rich, 37-43.

AND when ¹Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, ²Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, for else I die.

2 And Jacob's ³anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, ⁴Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her: and ⁵she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.

4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid ⁶to wife: and Jacob went in unto her.

5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

6 And Rachel said, ⁷God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name ⁸Dan.

7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

8 And Rachel said, With ⁹great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name ¹⁰Naphtali.

9 ¶ When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

10 And Jacob Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

11 And Leah said, A troop cometh: and ¹²she called his name ¹³Gad.

E. C.] 12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob ¹⁴a second son.

13 And Leah said, ¹⁵Happy am I, for the daughters ¹⁶will call me blessed: and she called his name ¹⁷Asher.

14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found ¹⁸mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

15 And she said unto her, ¹⁹Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest

thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes.

16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said Thou must come in unto me, for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

17 And ²⁰God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived and bare Jacob the fifth son.

18 And Leah said, God hath given me mine hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name ²¹Issachar.

19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

20 And Leah said, God hath endued me ²²with a good dowry: now wil my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons: and she called his name ²³Zebulun.

21 And afterward she bare a daughter, and called her name ²⁴Dinah.

22 ¶ And God remembered Rachel, and ²⁵God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

23 And she conceived and bare a son: and said God hath ²⁶taken away my reproach.

24 And ²⁷she called his name ²⁸Joseph, and said The Lord shall add to me another son.

[Practical Observations.]

25 ¶ And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

26 Give me ²⁹my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for ³⁰thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found ³¹favour in thine eyes, ³²tarry: for I have learned by experience, that ³³the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.

28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

29 And he said unto him, ³⁴Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.

30 For it was little which thou hadst before I

a 29:31. b 37:11. 1 Sam. 1:4-8. Ps. 106:16. Prov. 14:80. 27:4. 1 Cor. 3:3. Gal. 5:21. Jam. 4:5. c 35:16-19. Num. 11:15. 1 Kings 19:4. Job 3:1-3. 11:20-22. 5:2. 13:19. Jer. 20:14-18. Jon. 4:3,8. 2 Cor. 7:10. d 31:36. Ex. 32:1,9. Matt. 5:22. Mark. 9:5. Eph. 4:26. e 25:21. 20:19. 1 Sam. 1:5. 2:5,6. 2 Kings 5:7. f Deut. 7:13,14. P. 113:9. 127:3. Luke 1:42. g 9. 16:2,3. h 1:23. Job 3:12. * Heb. be built up by her. 16:2. marg. Ruth 4:11. 1:6,3. 21:10. 25:1,6. 33:2. 35:22. 2 Sam. 12:11. k 29:32-35. Ps. 35:24. Lam. 3:59. l That is, Judging. 49:16,17. Deut. 33:22. Judg. 13:23,24. 15:14-20. m Heb. wrestlings of God. Ex. 9:28. 1 Sam. 14:15. marg. 149:21. Deut. 33:2. n That is, My wages line. 82:24,25. Matt. 4:13. *Nephtalim*. m 49:19. Deut. 33:20,21. ¶ That is, A troop or company. Is. 65:11. * Heb. In my happiness. n Prov. 31:28. † ant. 6:9. Luke 1:48. o Gen. 49:20. Deut. 33:24,25. ** That is, Happy. p Cant. 7:13.

q Num. 16:9,10,13. Is. 7:13. Ex. 16:47. 1 Cor. 4:8. r 22. Ex. 2:7. 1 Sam. 1:20. 26:27. Luke 1:1. s 49:14,15. Deut. 33:18. † That is, *Dielling*. Matt. 4:13. *Za'ulun*. u 49:13. Judg. 4:10. 5:14. Ps. 68:27. † That is, *Dielling*. Matt. 4:13. *Za'ulun*. x 34:1-3. 26. 46:15. 58: That is, *Judgment*. y 8:1. 1 Sam. 1:19,20. Ps. 105:42. z 2. 21:12. 25:21. 29:31. P. 113:9. 127:3. 29:31. 1 Sam. 1:6. Is. 4:1. Luke 1:23. h 37:24. 42:6. 48:1. Ac. 48:22-26. Deut. 33:13-17. Ex. 37:16. Act. 7: 9-15. Heb. 11:21,22. Rev. 7:8. ¶ That is, *Adding*. 35:17,18. c 24:6,7. 26:3. 27:44,45. 28:13,15. 31:13. Act. 7:4,5. Heb. 11:15,16. d 29:19,20. 31:25,31,41. Hos. 12:12. e 29:30. 31:6,38-40. f Ex. 3:21. Neh. 1:1. 2:5. Dan. 1:9. Act. 7:10. g 30. 12:3. 39:2-5. 21:3. Ps. 1:3. Is. 61:9. h 29:15. i Prov. 6:9. Eph. 6:5-8. Col. 3:22-25. Tit. 2:10. 1 Pet. 2:16.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1, 2. Under the influence of selfish and malignant passions, Rachel impatiently murmured against God, and expressed her fretfulness in very absurd language, which Jacob justly, though sharply, reproveth.—Instead of humbly entreating the Lord, as Isaac and no doubt Rebekah had done, and waiting his time of granting her requests, she declared that her heart would break with grief and vexation, if she continued any longer childless!—She who said, "Give me children, or else I die," afterwards died in child-birth. (*Marg. Ref.*) Hannah, whose trial resembled Rachel's, but was much heavier, acted far more properly, and had several children with comfort and a blessing. (1 Sam. 1:2-28. 2:1-11,20,21.)

V. 3. Rachel intended to adopt and nurse Bilhah's children as her own, and thus solace herself under the trial and reproach of barrenness. But had not her sister been her rival, and had she not been influenced by envy and resentment, she would have thought Leah's children nearer to her, and more entitled to her care, than Bilhah's could be.

V. 4. Rachel might, in some measure, be induced to this conduct by the same motives which influenced Sarah in a similar case; and Jacob doubtless supposed that he was merely imitating his illustrious progenitor: but the circumstances were, in all respects, so different, as to render his conduct far less excusable. (*Notes*, 16:1-3.)

V. 8. The literal marginal translation, *wrestlings of God*, in this connexion, seems to imply, that Rachel thought there was some *excellency*, as well as *earnestness*, in her contest; and that her success was a token of God's favour, if not an answer to her prayers. Yet she seems to have been mistaken; her motive might in part be good, but her measures cannot be justified.

V. 11. *A troop cometh.* The word in the Hebrew text (צב) more obviously means, "In a troop;" and so answers to the marginal reading, verse 13, "In my happiness," (שׂוּכָה).

V. 14. *Mandrakes.*] These were either fruit or flowers, pleasing to the eye, the smell, or the taste; probably the latter. It is generally thought that the word is not properly translated; but it is uncertain what they were, though very much has been written on the subject.

V. 15, 16. The desire, good in itself, but often inordinate and irregular, of being the mother or ancestor of the promised Seed; together with the honour of being prolific, and the reproach of being barren, may be supposed to have had considerable influence in these contests; though combined with jealousy and other selfish passions.

V. 15. Leah was so far from considering herself culpable, in giving her handmaid to her husband, that she deemed it meritorious, and erroneously interpreted the Lord's kindness as the reward of it!

V. 21, 22. *Dinah* means the same as *Dan*, the name of Jacob's first son by Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; and this name seems to have been given by Leah to her daughter, in a kind of triumph over her sister. It therefore follows that "God remembered Rachel."

V. 23. All these children were born to Jacob, within the second seventh year of his serving Laban, (25.) Reuben, therefore, was not much above six years older than Joseph; and Judah not more than four.

V. 25, 26. The fourteen years being expired, Jacob, depending on the promise of God, was willing to depart, without any other recompense from Laban for his hard service, than his large family; though he could appeal to Laban himself, that he had served him with diligence, fidelity, and success! He was also very desirous of returning to Isaac and Rebekah, and the land of his pilgrimage. But he had, in many ways, an equitable claim on Laban's large substance; and it was the will of God that he should be amply provided for out of it.

V. 30. Laban had acknowledged that "the Lord blessed

came, and it is now increased unto a multitude, and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock:

32 I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire.

33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be accounted stolen with me.

34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

35 And he removed that day the he-goats, that were ring-streaked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons.

36 And he set three days' journey between himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 ¶ And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut-tree; and piled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

38 And he set the rods which he had piled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs, when the flocks came to drink; that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 And the flocks conceived before the rods,

and brought forth cattle ring-streaked, speckled and spotted.

40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ring-streaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban: and he put his own flocks by themselves; and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

41 And it came to pass whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feeble were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants, and men servants, and camels, and asses.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Jacob is envied by Laban and his sons, 1, 2. Being commanded by God to return to his kindred, he proposes it to his wives; explains the Lord's dealings with him; and, with their consent, privately departs, taking his family and substance, 3-21. Laban pursues him, but is warned in a dream not to injure Jacob: he overtakes Jacob and expostulates with him, 22-32. Laban searches in vain for his images, which Rachel had stolen and concealed, 33-35. Jacob vindicates himself, and complains of Laban, 36-42; they enter into a covenant, and Laban returns home, 43-55.

AND he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.

2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and behold, it was not toward him as before.

3 And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

4 ¶ And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock;

5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before: but the God of my father hath been with me.

6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

* Heb. broken forth. k 27. † Heb. at my foot. 12 Cor. 12:14. 1 Tim. 5:8. m 2 Sam. 21:4-6. n 31:8. o 31:37. 1 Sam. 26:23. 2 Sam. 22:21. p s. 37:6. ‡ Heb. to-morrow. Ex. 13:14. p Num. 22:29. 1 Cor. 7:7. 14:5. Gal. 5:12. Rev. 3:15. q 31:9. r 31:9-13. s 31:9-12. Ex. 12:35, 36. Jer. 27:5, 6. 1 So. 13:2. 13:2. 26:13, 14. 28:15. 31:7, 8. 32:10. 33:11. 35:7. a 8:9. Job 31:31. Ps. 120:3-5. b Eath.

5:11. Job 31:24, 25. Ps. 17:14. 49:16, 17. Is. 5:14. Jer. 9:23. Matt. 4:8. 1 Pet. 1:24. c 4:5. 1 Sam. 18:9-11. Dan. 3:19. d 30:27. * Heb. as yesterday and the day before. Ex. 4:10. Deut. 19:4. 1 Sam. 19:7. margins. e 23:15, 20, 21. 32:9. 35:1. 46:2, 3. 50:24. f 26:13-5. 28:4, 13. 30:25. g 2:8. h 42:53. 32:9. 48:15. 50:17. i 35:42. 30:29. Tit. 2:9, 10.

him for Jacob's sake," (27:) but Jacob, with observable modesty, alters the term for one of a more general application. (*Marg.*)

V. 31-34. Jacob chose to refer his cause to God in the way here proposed, rather than to enter into an agreement for stated wages with Laban, whose selfishness was excessive. He would have no such cattle left under his care, as were coloured in any unusual way; and then he required that the spotted and speckled, &c. which they bred, should be given to him. Thus it would appear, whenever the question concerning his hire should be started, that he had acted honestly; provided none, but those of the stipulated colours, were found in his possession. And Laban, judging from common observation, that his cattle would breed but few colours different from their own, eagerly acceded to his proposal.

V. 37-42. Jacob's conduct in this transaction has commonly been considered as an instance of his policy and management; and it has by many been objected to, by others vindicated and commended. But, as the means which he used would not in general produce similar effects; nay, probably the experiment was never in any other instance tried with success; it is more reasonable to suppose, that he was directed by some divine intimation; and rendered successful, if not by a direct miracle, yet at least by the Lord's giving a new and uncommon bias to the tendency of natural causes. (*Note*, 31:10-13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-24. When eminent persons sanction any thing evil by their example, the consequences are often durably pernicious; because it is far more easy to imitate the misconduct of those whom we esteem, than to copy their faith and obedience. And when we tread their devious footsteps, it is natural for us to go further than they did: nay, we are apt to think ourselves authorized, or at least excused, in so doing. What an unhappy precedent was Sarah to Rachel and Leah, and Abraham to Jacob! We are grieved to see this plain man, in his old age, yielding to one suggestion after another to multiply wives; though by that means he multiplied bitter envying and contention in his family. This "his way was his folly," though many of his posterity approved and imitated his example.—To carry matters even between two wives, who have an equal claim to affection, is almost, if not utterly, impossible; and to fail of it ensures emulation and strife, and may even perpetuate discord to posterity. How much more comfortably did Isaac live with Rebekah, according to God's primary institution, than Jacob with his two wives and their

handmaids!—Envy and jealousy are most tormenting passions to the breast which harbours them, vexatious to all around, and introductory to much impatience and ungodliness; observing, therefore, how absurd and odious they appear in Rachel, we should watch and pray against them in ourselves; and turn aside from all such objects and pursuits as tend to excite them.—Too frequently they who possess the most beautiful countenances are lamentably deficient in "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; which is in the sight of God" and of all wise men, of much greater value; and partial affections are often corrected by the persons on whom they are misplaced.—They who are angry only at sin, and express that anger by reasonable, though sharp, rebukes, and with zeal for the honour of God, are not sinfully angry; nor must those whom we love best be connived at in wickedness.—Our natural conscience is a partial and erroneous judge, and, if left to itself, will often excuse, nay commend, our very faults: we ought, therefore, to seek to the word, and pray for the Spirit, of God, to illuminate our understandings, and deliver our consciences from mistake and self-flattery.

V. 25-43. The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayer of faith, and to forgive the transgression of his people; and he graciously recompenses and honours their integrity and faithful industry. He convinces all, with whom they are connected, that he hath loved them, and that he blesses others on their account; so that it is not uncommon for those, who love neither them nor their religion, to value them from interested motives; and to desire to employ them in preference to others: and "all who name the name of Christ" should, for the honour of his gospel, be ambitious of this distinction.—The Lord will also, in one way or other, plead the cause of the injured and oppressed; and honour those who simply trust his providence, avoid evil and the appearance of it, and walk so wisely, as to give no occasion of reproach to those who manifestly are seeking it. And, as "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," he hath an indisputable right to dispose of every one's property as he pleases; and who shall dare to find fault with his appointments?

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXI. V. 1-3. Laban's sons were probably younger than his daughters; but were now grown up, and resembled him in selfishness. Instigated by them, Laban appeared so dissatisfied, and expressed in his looks so much envy and resentment, that Jacob deemed it dangerous to continue longer with him. But, though he had overheard the words of Laban's sons, and evidently perceived the effect which they had produced; yet he did not attempt to remove,

" And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times: but God suffered him not to hurt me.

8 If he said thus, ^mThe speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ring-streaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ring-streaked.

9 Thus "God hath taken away the cattle of
your father, and given *them* to me.

10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ring-streaked, speckled, and grizzled.

11 And the ¹Angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, ²Here *am* I.

12 And he said, [†]Lift up now thine eyes and see all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ring-streaked, speckled, and grizzled: for [†]I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

13 *I am* 'the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me : now arise, get thee out from this land, and "return unto the land of thy kindred.

14 And Rachel and Leah answered, and said unto him, *Is there* *yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath ⁷sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

16 For all the riches which ²God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

17 ¶ Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives ^aupon camels.

18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, ^bfor to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that *were* her father's.

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had, and he rose up, and ^cpassed over the river, and ^dset his face *toward* the mount ^eGilead. [Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ And it was told Laban on the third day, that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban ^hthe Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, ^kTake heed that thou speak not to Jacob ^seither good or bad

25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, "What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and "carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword?"

27 Wherefore ^odidst thou flee away secretly
and ^osteal away from me? and didst not tell me,
^othat I might have sent thee away ^owith mirth
and with songs, with tabret and with harp?

28 And hast not suffered me to ^rkiss my sons
and my daughters? thou hast now done ^ffoolishly
in so doing.

29 It is in 'the power of my hand to do you hurt: but "the God of your father spake unto me

[illegible]

Num. 32:1, Jnig. 10:18, 1 Kings 17:1, f 30:36, g 18:8, 24:27, Ex. 2:11, h 28:25, 5, Deut. 2:15, 5, Hos. 11:2, 11:20, 20:3, 40:5, 41:1, Num. 22:20, Job 33:15-17, Matt. 27:19, k 42, 24:50, Num. 24:13, Sam. 13:22, ¹ Heb. from good to evil, 1:12, 8:3, 9:8, 28:2, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1, 101:1, 102:1, 103:1, 104:1, 105:1, 106:1, 107:1, 108:1, 109:1, 110:1, 111:1, 112:1, 113:1, 114:1, 115:1, 116:1, 117:1, 118:1, 119:1, 120:1, 121:1, 122:1, 123:1, 124:1, 125:1, 126:1, 127:1, 128:1, 129:1, 130:1, 131:1, 132:1, 133:1, 134:1, 135:1, 136:1, 137:1, 138:1, 139:1, 140:1, 141:1, 142:1, 143:1, 144:1, 145:1, 146:1, 147:1, 148:1, 149:1, 150:1, 151:1, 152:1, 153:1, 154:1, 155:1, 156:1, 157:1, 158:1, 159:1, 160:1, 161:1, 162:1, 163:1, 164:1, 165:1, 166:1, 167:1, 168:1, 169:1, 170:1, 171:1, 172:1, 173:1, 174:1, 175:1, 176:1, 177:1, 178:1, 179:1, 180:1, 181:1, 182:1, 183:1, 184:1, 185:1, 186:1, 187:1, 188:1, 189:1, 190:1, 191:1, 192:1, 193:1, 194:1, 195:1, 196:1, 197:1, 198:1, 199:1, 200:1, 201:1, 202:1, 203:1, 204:1, 205:1, 206:1, 207:1, 208:1, 209:1, 210:1, 211:1, 212:1, 213:1, 214:1, 215:1, 216:1, 217:1, 218:1, 219:1, 220:1, 221:1, 222:1, 223:1, 224:1, 225:1, 226:1, 227:1, 228:1, 229:1, 230:1, 231:1, 232:1, 233:1, 234:1, 235:1, 236:1, 237:1, 238:1, 239:1, 240:1, 241:1, 242:1, 243:1, 244:1, 245:1, 246:1, 247:1, 248:1, 249:1, 250:1, 251:1, 252:1, 253:1, 254:1, 255:1, 256:1, 257:1, 258:1, 259:1, 260:1, 261:1, 262:1, 263:1, 264:1, 265:1, 266:1, 267:1, 268:1, 269:1, 270:1, 271:1, 272:1, 273:1, 274:1, 275:1, 276:1, 277:1, 278:1, 279:1, 280:1, 281:1, 282:1, 283:1, 284:1, 285:1, 286:1, 287:1, 288:1, 289:1, 290:1, 291:1, 292:1, 293:1, 294:1, 295:1, 296:1, 297:1, 298:1, 299:1, 300:1, 301:1, 302:1, 303:1, 304:1, 305:1, 306:1, 307:1, 308:1, 309:1, 310:1, 311:1, 312:1, 313:1, 314:1, 315:1, 316:1, 317:1, 318:1, 319:1, 320:1, 321:1, 322:1, 323:1, 324:1, 325:1, 326:1, 327:1, 328:1, 329:1, 330:1, 331:1, 332:1, 333:1, 334:1, 335:1, 336:1, 337:1, 338:1, 339:1, 340:1, 341:1, 342:1, 343:1, 344:1, 345:1, 346:1, 347:1, 348:1, 349:1, 350:1, 351:1, 352:1, 353:1, 354:1, 355:1, 356:1, 357:1, 358:1, 359:1, 360:1, 361:1, 362:1, 363:1, 364:1, 365:1, 366:1, 367:1, 368:1, 369:1, 370:1, 371:1, 372:1, 373:1, 374:1, 375:1, 376:1, 377:1, 378:1, 379:1, 380:1, 381:1, 382:1, 383:1, 384:1, 385:1, 386:1, 387:1, 388:1, 389:1, 390:1, 391:1, 392:1, 393:1, 394:1, 395:1, 396:1, 397:1, 398:1, 399:1, 400:1, 401:1, 402:1, 403:1, 404:1, 405:1, 406:1, 407:1, 408:1, 409:1, 410:1, 411:1, 412:1, 413:1, 414:1, 415:1, 416:1, 417:1, 418:1, 419:1, 420:1, 421:1, 422:1, 423:1, 424:1, 425:1, 426:1, 427:1, 428:1, 429:1, 430:1, 431:1, 432:1, 433:1, 434:1, 435:1, 436:1, 437:1, 438:1, 439:1, 440:1, 441:1, 442:1, 443:1, 444:1, 445:1, 446:1, 447:1, 448:1, 449:1, 450:1, 451:1, 452:1, 453:1, 454:1, 455:1, 456:1, 457:1, 458:1, 459:1, 460:1, 461:1, 462:1, 463:1, 464:1, 465:1, 466:1, 467:1, 468:1, 469:1, 470:1, 471:1, 472:1, 473:1, 474:1, 475:1, 476:1, 477:1, 478:1, 479:1, 480:1, 481:1, 482:1, 483:1, 484:1, 485:1, 486:1, 487:1, 488:1, 489:1, 490:1, 491:1, 492:1, 493:1, 494:1, 495:1, 496:1, 497:1, 498:1, 499:1, 500:1, 501:1, 502:1, 503:1, 504:1, 505:1, 506:1, 507:1, 508:1, 509:1, 510:1, 511:1, 512:1, 513:1, 514:1, 515:1, 516:1, 517:1, 518:1, 519:1, 520:1, 521:1, 522:1, 523:1, 524:1, 525:1, 526:1, 527:1, 528:1, 529:1, 530:1, 531:1, 532:1, 533:1, 534:1, 535:1, 536:1, 537:1, 538:1, 539:1, 540:1, 541:1, 542:1, 543:1, 544:1, 545:1, 546:1, 547:1, 548:1, 549:1, 550:1, 551:1, 552:1, 553:1, 554:1, 555:1, 556:1, 557:1, 558:1, 559:1, 560:1, 561:1, 562:1, 563:1, 564:1, 565:1, 566:1, 567:1, 568:1, 569:1, 570:1, 571:1, 572:1, 573:1, 574:1, 575:1, 576:1, 577:1, 578:1, 579:1, 580:1, 581:1, 582:1, 583:1, 584:1, 585:1, 586:1, 587:1, 588:1, 589:1, 590:1, 591:1, 592:1, 593:1,

till the Lord expressly commanded him : perhaps thinking it still more dangerous to come within the reach of his brother Esau.

V. 7. *Ten times.*] As the history of these six years is very compendious, we cannot determine, whether Laban changed Jacob's wages exactly ten times, or whether the expression only meant in general, many times. It is plain, however, that Laban tried all methods of circumventing and defrauding him, but in vain. (*Marg. Ref. k.*)

V. 10-13. It has before been supposed, that Jacob had some previous divine intimation, suggesting the plan which he adopted respecting the cattle; (*Note*, 30:37-42.) but the dream, which he here relates to Rachel and Leah, seems to have taken place towards the close of his service. Thus he accounted to them for the rapid increase of his flocks, and introduced the subsequent proposal, in which he made known to them the will of God, and the justice of his cause; that by thus appealing to them, and consulting with them, he might obtain their willing acquiescence. The Lord himself pointed out the circumstance concerning the colour of the rams, that Jacob might ascribe his success to the divine blessing, and possess his substance with a thankful heart and a quiet conscience, regardless of the unmerited anger of Laban and his sons.—The language of the passage is worthy of peculiar attention. At Th. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 8

vention." "The Angel of God spake: . . . I am the God of Beth-el." The supposition of some learned men, that the angel spake as an ambassador, in the name of God, is extremely unreasonable: for what ambassador, when representing his principal, ever said, 'I am the king'? Would not such language be a claim to the honour due only to his sovereign?—The Jewish expositors, and some others, *imagine*, that on such occasions there was a glorious appearance of JEHOVAH, distinct from the angel: but were there two speakers in this instance? Nothing can be plainer, than that he, who is called, "The Angel," said, "I am the God of Beth-el."—Repeated instances of this kind continually augment the evidence, that the Speaker was no other than the Word and Son of God, who "was God, and with God," but now condescended to be the Angel or Messenger of the Father to men; as he afterwards did in human nature to "take upon him the form of a servant." Yet in both manifestations of himself he could say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; for I and the Father are One."—The title, "the God of Beth-el," would be peculiarly encouraging to Jacob.

V. 15, 16. Laban, instead of providing for his daughters, had sold them as strangers and slaves to increase his wealth, which he spent entirely on himself and his sons. But God had provided for them, by giving Laban's substance to Jacob, and they acknowledged his hand in it, and were well satisfied.

fied. The conduct of Leah and Rachel, in this particular, does not appear reprehensible: they could not have concurred with Laban, without neglecting their duty to a still nearer relation; and preferring the cause of an idolater, and an unjust man, to that of Jacob, the approved servant of God. What they said was private, and in conjugal confidence: and so did not dishonour Laban.

V. 17. Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, could not be much above twelve years of age at this time.

V. 19. Rachel and Leah no doubt returned to their tents, and to the house of Laban, to take what belonged to them, which gave Rachel the opportunity of stealing these *images* or *teraphim*. (*Morg. Ref.*) It is evident, that they have been made for idolatrous or superstitious purposes; but it is not clear what Rachel's motive was in taking them away: whether she intended to use them, or to prevent her father from so doing. She however acted very improperly; she exposed herself and the rest of the company to great danger, and the images afterwards seem to have been a snare to Jacob's family. (*Note*, 35:2,4.)

V. 20, 21. Had Laban known of Jacob's intentions, he would doubtless have attempted forcibly to defeat them; but Jacob *eluded his vigilance*, and was actually got to a great distance before Laban heard of it.—The Hebrew phrase translated, *unawares to Laban*, seems to mean, that Jacob rendered his sagacity and vigilance as useless as if he had deprived him of his understanding. (*Marg.*)

V. 23, 24. Without doubt, Laban intended at least to plunder Jacob's property; if he could not induce him by promises or threats to return, or compel him to do so. But the Lord, in a dream, at this critical time, effectually deterred Laban from all such attempts. Jacob had passed the Euphrates, and crossed the spacious desert, which intervened between that river and mount Gilead, before Laban overtook him. This was a very long journey, considering the largeness of his company, and all his encumbrances.

V. 26. *Captives.*] This was very false and injurious. Jacob had a nearer interest in Leah and Rachel than Laban had; they had voluntarily agreed to go with their husband, rather than abide with their father; and indeed it was their duty so to do. (*Marg. Ref. u.*)

V. 27-29. Laban pretended to a very amicable disposition towards Jacob, now that he was overawed and durst not hurt him and his company: perhaps he thought that he acted from religious motives, in regarding the divine admonition.

V. 30. Laban thus insinuated that Jacob had no cause of dissatisfaction with him; and that he went away, merely because he exceedingly longed to see his parents and friends.

yesternight, saying, "Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

30 And now *though* thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house; *yet* wherefore hast thou stolen *my* gods?

31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

32 With *whomsoever* thou findest thy gods, let him not live: *before* our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee: for Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into *Leah's* tent, and into the two maid-servant's tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

34 Now Rachel *had* taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them; and Laban *searched* all the tent, but found *them* not.

35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease *my* lord that I cannot arise up before thee: for the *custom* of women *is* upon me: and he searched, but found not the images.

36 ¶ And Jacob *was* wroth, and chode with Laban; and Jacob answered, and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass? what *is* my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

37 Whereas thou hast searched all *my* stuff, *what* hast thou found of all thy household-stuff? *set* it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

38 This *twenty* years *have* I been with thee; thy *mewes* and thy *she-goats* have not cast their young, and *the* rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was *torn of beasts* I brought not unto thee; *I* bare the loss of it: of my hand didst thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, *or* stolen by night.

40 *Thus* I was; *in* the day the drougt consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 *Thus* have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee *fourteen* years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages *ten* times.

x 24. Acts 5:38, 39. y 19. Judg. 6:31. 18:24. 1 Sam. 5:2-6. 2 Sam. 5:21. 1s. 37:19. 46:1-2. 26:27. 19:30. 44:9-12. 2:2. 30:33. 1 Sam. 12:3-5. 2 Cor. 8:20:21. 12:17-19. c 1 Sam. 14:24-29. d 24:57. e 17:19. f Heb. *fell*. g 18:12. Ex. 20:12. 1 Pet. 3:6. h Lev. 19:32. 1 Kings 2:19. h 18:11. Lev. 15:19. 130:2. 34:7. 49:7. Num. 16:15. 2 Kings 5:11. 13:19. Mark 3:5. Eph. 4:23. Jam. 1:19-21. k 8 Sam. 22. l 2 Sam. 7:24. Matt. 18:16. 1 Cor. 6:14, 5. 1. 41. m 20:27, 30. Ex. 23:28. Dent. 28:34. n Ex. 24:2-4. o Ex. 23:31. Lev. 22:1. 1 Sam. 17:34. Ex. 23:10-13. p Ex. 22:19-13. q Luke 2:8. r Ex. 2:19-22. 31. Ps. 78:70, 71. Hos. 12:12. John 21:15-17. 1 Pet. 5:2-4. s 29:18-30. 30:33-40. t See on 7. u 24:29. 1s. 124:1-3. s 53. Ps. 76:11, 12. 1s. 8:13. y See on 12.

V. 31. Jacob answered Laban's former question in the first place without mentioning it; "Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me?" (27.) "Because," says Jacob, "I was afraid." This implied a strong charge of injustice and oppression against Laban.

V. 32. [Not true.] This was rash, and might have produced fatal effects; but Jacob was partial to Rachel, and did not suspect her; and he was indignant at being accused of a crime which he deeply abhorred.

V. 34. Probably the furniture of the camels formed a kind of a couch, for the convenience of women in long journeys.

V. 39. *Note, Ex. 22:7-15.*

V. 40. The transition from great heat in the day, to chilling cold in the night, is often known in those regions.

V. 42. *The Fear of Isaac.* The God, whom Isaac (who was still living) worshipped with "reverence and godly fear."—Jacob's language, though keen, was too obviously true to admit of any answer; and it is too plain to need any comment. (*Marg. Ref.*) Laban's silence proves Jacob's innocence.

V. 45, 46. Thus a large heap of stones was formed to be an abiding memorial of this compact, and a reproach to him who should pass over this heap to injure the other.

V. 47. *Jegar-sahadutha—Galeed.* The former word in the Chaldee or Syriac, the latter in Hebrew, signifies *the heap of witness*. These were indeed distinct dialects of the same general language, which marked the inhabitants of the different regions; though they had no difficulty in understanding each other.

V. 53. There seems to be some ambiguity in Laban's language, respecting the God by whom he swore: for Abraham and Nahor, and their father Terah, had worshipped

42 "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the **Fear* of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: God **hath* seen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yesternight.

43 And Laban answered, and said unto Jacob *These* daughters *are* my daughters, and *these* children *are* my children, and *these* cattle *are* my cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have borne?

44 Now therefore come thou, *let* us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for *a* witness between me and thee.

45 And Jacob took a **stone*, and set it up *for* a pillar.

46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, **Gather* stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it **Jegar-sahadutha*: but Jacob called it **Galeed*.

48 And Laban said, *This* heap *is* a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called *Galeed*:

49 And **Mizpah*; for he said, *The Lord* watch between me and thee, when we are *absent* one from another.

50 If thou shalt *afflict* my daughters, or if thou shalt take *other* wives besides my daughters, no man *is* with us; see, **God* *is* witness betwixt me and thee.

51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

52 *This* *heap* *be* witness, and *this* pillar *be* witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

53 The **God* of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, *judge* betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the **Fear* of his father Isaac.

Then Jacob *offered* sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they *did* eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and *blest* them: and Laban departed, *and* returned unto his place.

16:11. 28:32. 1 Chr. 12:17. z 21:22-32. 23:28-31. 1 Sam. 20:14-17. a 48:52. 21:30. Dent. 31:19, 21, 26. Josh. 22:27. 24:27-27. b 28:18-22. c Josh. 4:5-9. 20-24. 7:26. 2 Sam. 18:17. Ec. 3:5. † That is, the heap of witness. Chal. ‡ That is, the heap of witness. Heb. § That is, a beacon, or watchtower. Judg. 10:17. 11:29. Mizpah. d 1. ex. 18:18. Matt. 3:5:5. e Judg. 11:30. 1 Sam. 12:5. Jer. 29:32. 42:5. Mic. 1:2. Mal. 2:14. 3:5. 1 Thes. 5:5. f See on 44. g 11:24-29, 31. 22:20-24. 24:34. Josh. 24:2. h 16:5. i Se on 42. 1. eut. 6:18. j Il. Or, killed beasts. k 26:30. Ex. 18:12. 2 Sam. 3:20, 21. 128. Ruth 1:14. m 24:50. 28:1. Num. 23:8, 11. Prov. 16:7. n 18:53. Num. 24:35.

other gods in Mesopotamia; (*Josh. 24:2.*) and Laban's expressions in this discourse imply that he was an idolater, and did not worship the true God alone. (29, 30.) Jacob therefore appealed to the God of his father Isaac, who had never been an idolater, that he might not leave it in doubt, to whom he rendered this act of solemn worship.

V. 54, 55. Laban had spoken of a common feast, (27;) but Jacob offered a solemn sacrifice, and feasted the company in a religious manner. In this we read the different characters of the two men; and hence we may form some estimate of the low state of religion in Laban's family.—This parting proved final; and we near no more of Laban, or any other of that branch of Abraham's family; who seem after this to have sunk into idolatry, and to have been lost among the other Gentiles.—Some indeed think that Balaam descended from Laban; but this is quite uncertain.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-21. How particularly are the affairs of these families related, while the great events of states and kingdoms are passed over in silence, and buried in obscurity! Indeed the Bible is intended to teach people the duties of common life; and how to serve God, enjoy comfort, and do good, in their several stations and relations: and but very few are concerned in the government of empires, compared with the numbers who support the characters of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants.—The selfish think themselves robbed of all which others obtain from them, however justly; and covetousness destroys even natural affection. Yet those objects which the men of the world count "all their glory," are so scanty, that in the pursuit or possession of them, they stand in each other's way, and every one seems to be taking from the rest: hence discontent, and envy, and

CHAPTER XXXII.

Jacob has a vision of angels, 1, 2. He sends a message to Esau; and, alarmed by the report of his coming with four hundred men, prays for deliverance, 3-12. He prepares a present for Esau; instructs his servants, and passes the brook Jabbok, 13-25. He wrestles at Peniel; prevails, is blessed, and called Israel; ye goes away halting, 26-32.

AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called ^{the} name of that place Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau: Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now.

5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid, and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

8 And said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, and the other company which is left shall escape.

9 ¶ And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord

1. Hil. 4:6, 7. Heb. 1:14. b Josh. 5:14. 2 Kings 6:17. Ps. 34:7. 103:21. 148:2. Luke 2:13. c Josh. 21:38. 2 Sam. 2:8. 17:24. 27. 1 Kings 2:8. 4:14. That is, two hosts, or camps. Cant. 6:13. d 14:6. 35:6-8. Deut. 2:5. 22. Josh. 24:4. 1. Hil. field. e See on 25:30. f 5:18. 4:7. 23:6. 27:29. 37. 33:8. Ex. 32:22. 1 Sam. 26:17. Prov. 15:1. g 1 Kings 20:32. Ec. 10:4. h 30:43. 33:11. Job 6:22. 133:8, 15. 47:25. Ruth 2:2. 1 Sam. 1:18. 2 Sam. 16:4. k 11. 27:40. 41. 33:1. Amos 5:19. l Ex. 14:10. Ps. 55:4, 5. 61:2. Matt. 8:26. 2 Cor. 1:8-10. m 3:1-3. Matt. 10:16. n 1 Sam. 30:6. 2 Chr. 20:16, 12. 32:20. Ju. 34:4-6. 50:15. 91:15.

discord. But there are possessions of such extent, as amply to suffice for all: happy they who seek them in the first place!—We may however thankfully receive, and cheerfully use, the portion which Providence allots us, as far as we obtain it with a clear conscience, and a testimony in the consciences of others to our fidelity and integrity: and even if men should hate and criminate us without reason, yet, when “our ways please the Lord,” he will plead our cause, and “make our very enemies to be at peace with us;” he will vindicate our characters, do us justice, and overrule every event for our good.—In all our removals we should have respect to the command, promise, and providence of God; and if he be with us, we need not fear in the most dangerous circumstances. Indeed, so many are the perils with which we are surrounded, that nothing else can reasonably ensure our safety, or encourage our hearts.—The remembrance of favoured seasons of communion with God is very refreshing to us, when embarrassed in difficulties; and the recollection of our vows should be frequent, that we may not fail to fulfil them.

V. 22—55. God can put a bridle into the mouth of wicked men, to restrain their malice, even without changing their hearts: and then, though they have no love for his people, they will pretend to it, and try to make a merit of necessity. But great watchfulness is necessary to keep out evil, and the appearance of evil, even from those undertakings which are in themselves according to the will of God; yet nothing less than this can stop the mouths of our enemies, and make those ashamed who would speak evil of us.—There are seasons when a sharp reproof may consist with meekness, and reminding others of our services, with humility: but great wisdom and grace are necessary on such occasions, that the reproofs may be well timed, well conducted, and unanswerably convincing; and they should always be accompanied with a disposition to forgiveness, to accept of even a partial apology, and to overlook injurious insinuations.—Those who mean honestly and kindly, need not scruple assurances; but these should be solemnly entered into, in the fear of God, who is both the Witness and the Avenger of fraud and injustice.—And finally, an amicable conclusion of differences, though upon disadvantageous terms, is generally preferable, in respect of our innocence, peace, and interest, to the most successful litigation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXII. V. 1, 2. A company of angels met Jacob, in some visible and glorious appearance, to encourage him with the assurance of the divine protection, especially from the power and anger of Esau. This he called “God’s host,” or army; by which we learn that the angels were numerous, and appeared very formidable and powerful, to protect or to destroy. Mahanaim signifies two armies: the one, as some suppose, having conveyed him safe from Mesopotamia, the other was ready to welcome him to Canaan, and receive him through their protection. Or perhaps

which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand, a present for Esau his brother;

14 Two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams.

15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals.

16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say: They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and behold also he is behind us.

1. Hil. 4:6, 7. p 17:7. 28:13. 31:29, 42. Ex. 3:6. p 31:3, 13. 1. Hil. less than all. q 18:27. 2 Sam. 7:18. Job 42:5, 6. Is. 6:5. 63:7. Dan. 9:8, 9. Luke 5:8. 2 Cor. 12:1. 1 Tim. 1:12-15. 1 Pet. 5:5. 1 John 1:8-10. r 24:27. 28:15. Mic. 7:20. s 28:10, 11. Job 8:7. 17. u 1 Sam. 12:10. 24:15. Ps. 25:20. 31:2. 119:134. 142. 6. Dan. 3:17. Matt. 6:13. z Hos. 10:14. h Heb. upon. y Ex. 32:13. Num. 23:19. Matt. 24:35. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:17. z 28:13-15. 46:3, 4. a 1 Sam. 25:8. b 20:21. 33:10. 1 Sam. 25:27. Prov. 17:8. 15:16. 19:6. 21:14. c 30:43. 31:9, 16. Deut. 8:18. 1 Sam. 25:2. Job 1:3. 42:12. d 33:3. e See on 4:6.

one encamped before, and the other behind him and his company, as his guard on every side, both against Laban and Esau.

V. 3. The word rendered “angel” signifies a messenger. so that the same term is used for the messengers whom Jacob sent to Esau, and for those whom the Lord sent to protect him.—While Jacob, to whom the promise and blessing belonged, had been a hired servant to a hard master, Esau was become a prince, and had established his authority in mount Seir, which was afterwards called Edom from him. (25:30.)

V. 4, 5. My lord.] Esau’s success in obtaining authority, probably by conquest, in mount Seir, had no doubt procured him from others the title of honour which Jacob gave him. By this humble message, Jacob intimated that he was well satisfied with his present possessions, the fruit of his labour; and was ready to give up all pretensions to Isaac’s substance, and to render his brother all suitable respect.

V. 6—8. Jacob doubtless understood from the messengers, that Esau came towards him in a hostile manner. This appears from the narrative itself, and from Jacob’s precautions, and from the language of his prayer: and to suppose the contrary, is to assume, without the least proof, that both Jacob and the messengers were mistaken. Indeed, the consciousness of having deeply offended his brother, might render him suspicious; yet Esau’s resentment seems actually to have revived on this occasion. And though the Lord did not restrain him by force, or in a dream prohibit him from injuring Jacob, as he had prohibited Laban; yet he influenced his heart to kindness, and blessed the means of conciliation which Jacob employed. (Prov. 16:7.)

V. 9—12. There can scarcely be a finer model of genuine prayer than this. Jacob’s thankful acknowledgment of former unmerited favours; the humble confession of his entire unworthiness; his simple description of his fears and distress; his unreserved reference of the whole matter to God, renouncing all other dependence, and resting all his hopes on him; his explicit mention of the very words both of the Lord’s promises and commands, as engaging his own glory to protect him; and his anxiety for the preservation of his family, but especially of his children, in whose lives the promises seemed chiefly concerned;—these are points peculiarly worthy of notice and of imitation.—Thus he made “the name of the Lord his strong tower,” and could not but be safe.

V. 13. Came to his hand.] Or, that which Providence had put into his possession.

V. 14, 15. The present was noble; and not intended as a restitution for injuries done to Esau.—The blessing belonged to Jacob, by God’s own appointment; and Esau was only affronted, and disappointed in his object, not injured in his property, by Jacob’s misconduct.

V. 16—20. Jacob had purchased the birthright, and the dominion had been expressly promised him in the blessing; yet, understanding that the temporal advantages were princ-

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye, moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us: for he said, 'I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face: peradventure he will accept of me.'

21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

24 ¶ And Jacob was left alone: and there wrestled a man with him, until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh: and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

[43:11. 1 Sam. 23:17-35. Prov. 15:18. 16:14. 21:14. g 1 Sam. 6:5. 1 Kings 20:31. Job. 9:9. 2 Tim. 2:25. * Heb. my face, Job 42:39. Prov. 6:35. margin. 59:23-33. 30:1-20. 1 Dent. 2:37. 3:16. Josh. 12:2. 1 Heb. caused to pass. k 30:8. Luke 13:24. 22:4. Rom. 8:26. 15:30. Eph. 6:12. Col. 2:1. 4:12. Heb. 5:7. 12:30. 13:2. Hos. 12:3-5. 1 Cor. 15:47. 2 Heb. ascen. (ing of the morning. Cant. 2:17. n Num. 14:13.14. Matt. 15:28. Luke 11:3-8. n 32. 2 Cor. 12:7-9. o Ex. 32:10. Dent. 9:14. 15. 64:7. Luke 24:28.29. p Cant. 3:4. Luke 18:1-7.

pally intended for his posterity, and satisfied with the spiritual benefits for himself, he paid homage to Esau, as an acknowledged superior.—His liberal present being thus divided, and the persons attending each drove thus repeating the same expressions of respect to Esau, would have a powerful tendency to soften his resentment and conciliate his favour.

V. 21-23. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 24. Having taken every needful precaution, Jacob retired into some solitary place, to renew his earnest supplications; and while he was thus employed, one "in fashion as a man" appeared to him, and engaged in wrestling with him. Nothing requires more vigour, activity, attention, and unintermitting exertion, than wrestling; which seems on this account to have been selected as an emblem of the fervent prayer of faith, persisted in amidst delays, alarms, discouragements, and opposition from every side; and which at length will surely be crowned with success. (*Marg. Ref. k.*)

V. 25. *Prevailed not.*] This circumstance significantly marked out that frame of mind, which refuses, as it were, to yield, or take a denial. (*Notes, Matt. 15:21-28.*) He with whom Jacob wrestled, by touching the hollow of his thigh, and dislocating the bone, evidently showed, that when he suffered himself to be prevailed over, it was the effect of mercy, and the gracious acceptance of Jacob's impurity in prayer. The dislocation seems to have been momentary, though the effect in some measure continued afterwards.

V. 26. The morning now called Jacob to the care of his family which was here intimated to him. But Jacob, in the person who contended with him, recognised a friend; yea, that Friend from whom all blessings flow; and therefore he refused to let him go, till he had blessed him.

V. 27, 28. This change of name, from Jacob to Israel, signified that he was no longer to be regarded as one who got the blessing, yet with some discredit, by twice supplanting his elder brother; but, as a *prince of God*, (*marg.*) who had wrestled with him for it, and prevailed to his everlasting honour. Having power with God, he would surely also prevail with man. Thus he was, so to speak, knighted in the field. His posterity inherited his *new name*, but were never called after his *original name*; and the nation of Israel was a type of "the Israel of God," in every age and country, who wrestle and prevail with him by faith and prayer. (*Note, John 1:47-51.*)

V. 29. *Wherefore? &c.*] After what had passed, there could be no ground of doubt or uncertainty, in respect of him with whom Jacob had wrestled; and it was therefore wholly needless to inquire his name. But Jacob's other request was granted, "and he blessed him there;" probably ratifying to him the blessings covenanted to Abraham, and Isaac, and afterwards to him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30. He who appeared to Jacob was before called a *Man*; yet here he is called *GOD*. The prophet Hosea calls him "the Angel, even JEHOVAH the God of hosts, JEHOVAH is his memorial;" and says, that "Jacob wept and made supplication to him." (*Note, Hos. 12:3-6.*) We cannot, therefore, reasonably doubt the sentiments of Jacob, of Moses, and of Hosea, concerning him who now wrestled with Jacob, and surnamed him *Israel*. And the Scriptures referred to in the margin, if carefully examined and compared, will have a powerful tendency to convince the impartial inquirer, that he could be no other than the eternal Son of God, by these appearances anticipating his incarnation.—It is indeed asserted by the Rabbinical expositors, and from them adopted by some learned men, that the *SHECHINAH*, or visible glory of God, of which the attendant angels constituted a part, was dis-

26 And he said, 'Let me go, for the day breaketh: And he said, 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'

27 And he said unto him, 'What is thy name? And he said Jacob.'

28 And he said, 'Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.'

29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name: And he said, 'Wherefore is it, that thou dost ask after my name? and he blessed him there.'

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.'

31 And as he passed over Peniel, the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, in the sinew that shrank.

Rom. 8:37. q 1 Chr. 4:10. Ps. 67:1,6,7. 115:12,13. r 29. a 17:5,15. 33:20. 35:10. 36:2. 37:34. 1 Chr. 17:34. 15. 62:2-4. 65:15. s That is, A prince of God. t 24. Hos. 12:3-5. u 25:31. 27:33-36. 31:24. 33:14. 1 Sam. 25:25. Prov. 16:7. x 27. Judg. 13:16-18. 15. 9:6. y 27:28.29. 28:3,4,13,14. z 31. Peniel. 28:19. Judg. 8:8,17. 1 Kings 12:25. ¶ That is, The face of God. a 16:13. Ex. 24:10,11. 33:14,19-23. Num. 12:8. Judg. 6:22,23. 13:21,22. 15. 6:5. John 1:18. 2 Tim. 1:10. b 25. c 1 Sam. 5:5.

played on this occasion, as well as on all others of a similar kind; and that these expressions, and the language often used by the angel who appeared, are to be thus accounted for.—But there seems no scriptural ground for this sentiment; and it was probably first devised, to answer the arguments taken from such passages by the ancient Christian writers, for the Deity of the predicted Messiah, and the doctrine of the Trinity; though it has been since espoused by many who profess those doctrines. The word *SHECHINAH* is not found in Scripture, but only in the Rabbinical Hebrew. It signifies merely a *habitation*: but it is used to denote all those appearances, by which the special presence of JEHOVAH was announced. It is readily allowed, that a visible glory of this kind afterwards appeared to Moses, and to Israel; and perhaps in the holy of holies, both of the tabernacle and temple, above the Mercy-Seat. (*Ex. 13:21,22. 14:19-24. 16:10. 33:7-11,18-23. 40:34,38. Num. 12:4,5. 14:10. 16:19,42. 1 Kings 8:10,11.*) But it must strike every attentive reader, that these displays of the glory of the Lord differed exceedingly from such appearances, as we have repeatedly considered; in which an Angel spake in the name of God, and as JEHOVAH; or one in human form was addressed by the patriarchs as JEHOVAH, and spoken of by them and by the historian in that character. No doubt, the tabernacle and temple were intended as types of Him, in "whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He in fact is the true *SHECHINAH*: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him;" and I cannot doubt, after the most deliberate examination, that the exposition, which has been given in "he notes, on this and many preceding passages, is the only true, scriptural, and consistent interpretation.—Jacob, beholding the Lord in human form, was not overwhelmed by the appearance; as it was generally supposed they must be who beheld the divine glory. He had also received an assurance of deliverance from the dreaded resentment of Esau; and in both respects his life was preserved. (*Note, Ex. 33:20-23.*)

V. 31. *Halted.*] Israel carried this token away with him, that it was a *reality*, and not a *dream*, or *vision*, or *delusive imagination*.

V. 32. Probably this was done by some divine appointment, before the giving of the law; and the meaning was clear to them, though obscure to us.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. Though we cannot behold the angels meeting us, and as "the host of God," encamping round us; yet, possessing that "faith which is the evidence of things not seen," we may have a full and comfortable assurance that they actually do so. And we need to be encouraged, not only by expecting the guardianship of angels, but by a firm reliance on the protection of the God of angels, to render us secure and happy in such a world as this; where victory in one conflict only reminds us to arm for another; and deliverance from one trouble or danger, to prepare for further suffering. Yet our severest trials frequently result from former transgressions, and call them to our remembrance for our deeper humiliation.—Prudent precautions may and ought to be employed by those who simply trust in God; and to neglect them is to tempt him: nor are any means more proper to disarm resentment, especially that of proud and worldly men, than humble, respectful language, and cheerfully relinquishing the objects of contention. Yet these are but *means*; and unless God arrest and influence the heart, they cannot subdue the power of jealousy and revenge.—In times of

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Esau and Jacob meet, and after an amicable conference, Esau departs, 1—16. Jacob abides at Succoth; and buys a field, and builds an altar at Shechem, 17—20.

AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and ¹behold, "Esau came, and with him four hundred men." And he divided the children unto Leah and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he "passed over before them, and "bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and "embraced him, and "fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who ^{are} those "with thee? And he said, The "children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near, and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

8 And he said, "What meanest thou by 'all this drove, which I met? And he said, *These are* to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough; "my brother, "keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, "if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my

present at my hand: for therefore "I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, "my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, "and because I have "enough; and he "barged him, and he took it.

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that "the children ^{are} tender, and the flocks and herds with young ^{are} with me; and if men should over-drive them one day, all the flock will die.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, "according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children "be able to endure; until I come unto my lord "unto Seir.

15 And Esau said, Let me now "leave with thee *some* of the folk that ^{are} with me: And he said, "What needeth it? Let me "find grace in the sight of my lord.

16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

17 ¶ And Jacob journeyed to "Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called "Succoth.

18 And Jacob came to "Shalem, a city of "Shechem, which ^{is} in the land of Canaan, when he came from "Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city.

19 And he "bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children

a 37:41, 42, 39:6. b 37:7. c 29:20, 30:22—24, 37:3. Mal. 3:17. d John 10:4, 11, 12. e 18:2, 42:6, 43:26. f 28:28, 43:30, 45:15. Ezra 7:27, 28. Neh. 1:11. Ps. 34:4. Prov. 18:7, 21:1. g 45:14, 46:29. Luke 15:20. Acts 20:37. * Heb. to thee. h 30:2, 48:9. Ruth 4:13. i 1 Chr. 24:5, 1 s. 127:3. Ja. 5:18. † Heb. What is this band to thee? ‡ 13:2, 13—20. § 4:9, 27:41. Jude, 20:23. Acts 9:17, 21:20. || Philo, 7:16. ¶ Heb. be that to thee that is thine. †† 19:19, 47:29, 50:4. ‡‡ Ec. 33:13, Ruth 2:11. 1 Sam. 20:3. Jer. 31:2. m 32:30. Job 33:26. Matt. 18:10. Rev. 22:4. n Josh. 15:19. 1 Sam. 23:27, 30:28. 2 Kings 5:15. 2 Cor. 9:5, 6. o 9. Phil. 4:11, 12, 18. § Heb. all things. Rom. 8:32. 1 Cor. 3:21. 2 Cor. 6:10. 1 hil.

4:18. p 2 Kings 2:17, 5:16, 23. Luke 14:23. q Is. 40:11. Ez. 34:23. John 21:15—17. r Heb. according to the *foot of the work*, &c., and according to the *foot of the children*. s Mark 4:33. Rom. 15:1. 1 Cor. 5:2, 9:18—22. s See on 32:8. Deut. 2:1. Judg. 5:4. 2 Chr. 20:10. Ez. 25:8, 35:2, 3. ¶ Heb. set, or place. ** Heb. Wherefore is this? † 13:41, 47:25. Ruth 2:13. 1 Sam. 25:8. 2 Sam. 10:4. u Josh. 13:27. Judg. 8:5, 16. 1 Kings 7:46. Ps. 60:6. †† That is, *foot* has x John 3:23. y Josh. 24:1. Jude. 2:1. Acts 7:16. Sychem. z 25:20, 28:6, 7. §§ 9, 46:15. u 23:17—20, 49:30—32. Josh. 24:32. John 4:5.

urgent danger, even strong faith and repeated assurances will not entirely exclude terror and distress: but they will put life and vigour into humble, fervent prayer; and enable us to plead the promises, to remember former mercies and deliverances; and, in the path of unreserved obedience, so to leave ourselves in the Lord's hands, as shall ensure protection, and restore peace to our souls.

V. 13—32. Every duty has its season: and the care of our families, according to present emergencies, may properly succeed, though it must not exclude our devotions: and again, when we have used every prudent means for our own and others' good, we must retire and pray for the blessing. If we are in a proper frame of mind, we shall rather abridge ourselves of wonted refreshments than neglect communion with God: nay, there may be urgent cases, when even the night itself does not seem too long to pour out our hearts before him; and if our faith do not fail, our spirits flag, and we grow formal, our devotions should not be counted too long. When "the Spirit of God helpeth our infirmities," and our intense, earnest, and vast desires can scarcely find words large and emphatic enough to utter them, but we still mean more than we can express; then prayer is indeed *wrestling* with God: and however we be tried or discouraged, we shall certainly prevail. He will approve our importunity, and largely communicate his blessings; and, prevailing with him in prayer, we shall succeed against all our enemies who persist in striving with us, and prevail on many to be at peace with us. Indeed, in every case in which we desire to prevail with man, fervent prayer to God is our most efficacious means. (*Notes, Neh. 1:5—1. 2:4.*)—But it is only in human nature that sinners can see God, and live. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," God as reconciled in and through him, is the Object of a sinner's acceptable worship; with him we may be as importunate as we please; and if, in humble faith, we determine "not to let him go except he bless us," he will take it well: nor should we ever leave off wrestling, in the nights of trouble or temptation, till the day break, nay, till "the Sun of righteousness arise" upon our souls. Thus shall we be acknowledged as true Israelites, and crowned as princes with God; and while we "ray away the memorials of our victories, we must record his goodness, for his glory and the benefit of others. But we must not wonder, if even our sweetest consolations carry with them evidences of our infirmity; and if we have afterwards a thorn in the flesh and buffetings of Satan, to preserve us from being exalted above measure.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIII. V. 2. *Rachel.*] Rachel and Joseph being dearest to Jacob, he provided most carefully for their security.

V. 3. Jacob still prosecuted his plan of satisfying Esau,

that he made no claim to secular pre-eminence, but readily yielded him all due respect, as his superior.

V. 4. In answer to Jacob's prayer, and in accomplishment of the promise made to him, the Lord thus influenced Esau's heart, to the exercise of natural affection towards his brother. The reconciliation from this time seems to have been cordial: though there is no proof or token that Esau was become truly religious.

V. 5. *The children, &c.*] The piety and simplicity of this answer is well worthy of admiration and imitation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. It is remarkable that, on this affecting occasion, we find no intimation of Esau's expressing any good will to his brother Jacob's numerous family, thus respectfully bowing before him, one after another. No good wish towards them is recorded, such as even irreligious men often make in similar circumstances. Much less was any prayer offered in their behalf for the blessing of God upon them. This should be carefully noticed in estimating Esau's character.

V. 10. Jacob expressed the great satisfaction which he took in this friendly interview, as if it resembled even the pleasure of intimate communion with God. We may suppose him to have used a *proverbial* expression: yet we cannot so cordially approve of this answer, as of the preceding unless in Esau's conduct, he recognized the special presence and favour of God, who was thus granting the prayers which he had presented, when he saw his face and wrestled with him. (32:30).—To accept a present from an inferior, was a customary pledge of friendship; but refusing it implied disaffection: and the case in the eastern world is the same at this day.

V. 12. Esau thus offered to escort Jacob into the land of Seir.

V. 14. It is not likely that Jacob intended to settle in Seir with his family; nor do we know that he ever *pr* in Esau a visit there, though he probably at this time intended it: there is no proof, however, that he did not. But, perhaps, on more mature consideration, or by divine monition, or because of some change in his circumstances, he might afterwards alter his intention, or fail of performing it.

V. 15. *What needeth it?*] Guarded thus far by the angels of God, Jacob neither required nor wished for a guard of soldiers. The friendship of Esau was all that he asked. (*Note, Ecra 8:21—23.*)

V. 17. Succoth was on the east side of Jordan, being the last station at which Jacob rested before he passed that river. After a very long journey, he stayed here awhile, in some temporary habitation which he had hastily built, to rest and refresh his family and his flocks.

V. 18. *Shalem.*] This place was situated on the west side of Jordan, on which Jacob was after he had crossed that

of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

20 And he erected there an altar, and called it 'El-Elohe-Israel.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Dinah visits the daughters of the land, and is defiled by Shechem, who loves her and proposes to marry her, 1-12. Jacob's sons indignantly consent, on condition that the Shechemites be circumcised; to which a Shechemite instance they submit, 13-24. Simeon and Levi murder all the men of Shechem, plunder the city, make captives of the women and children, and recover Dinah, 25-29. Jacob bitterly complains, and his sons excuse their conduct, 30, 31.

AND Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.

3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field; and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

b34:2, &c. Acts 7:16. Eunior. * Or, tams. c 12:7, 8. 13:18. † That is, God, the God of Israel. 32:28. 35:7. a 30:21. 46:15. b 26:34. 27:46. 28:5. c 33:19. d 6:2. 39:6, 7. 2 Sam. 11:2. Job 31:1, 9. Matt. 5:28. * Heb. humbled her. Deut. 21:14. 22:24, 28. Judg. 19:24, 35. Ex. 22:10, 11. † Heb. to the heart of the damsel. 9 Sam. 13:7. 2 Chr. 30:22. Is. 40:2. Hos. 2:14. marg. e 21:21. Judg. 14:2. 2 Sam. 13:13. 1 Chr. 25: 37, 13, 14. 1 Sam. 16:11. 17:15. Luke 15:32, 29. g Deut. 22:21. Josh. 7:15. Judg. 19:22-25. 20:6. 2 Sam. 13:12, 13. h 20:9. Lev. 4:2, 13, 27.

river. Some translate it, *He came in peace to the city of Shechem*; and it is probable that this is the true meaning of the clause.

V. 20. *El-Elohe-Israel.* The altar was erected and inscribed to Him with whom Jacob had before wrestled and prevailed, and by whom he had been surnamed *Israel*, as the very name indisputably proves: and this is an additional discovery, who that *Man* was; and an indication, what value Jacob put on the new name which he had thus received. (*Notes*, 32:24-30.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we have poured out our souls before the Lord in fervent prayer, we are prepared to meet dangers and difficulties with confidence and comfort, and shall soon experience the mercy and faithfulness of God. He hath various methods of "making our enemies to be at peace with us;" he can either bind their hands, awe their spirits, excite natural affection, or plant supernatural grace in their hearts. Yet in all this the Lord works by suitable means; and "yielding" often forms the wisest method of "pacifying great offences." This is done by waving points in contest, paying all due respect, and receding from our temporal interest; and by manifesting to the consciences of our opponents, that we are satisfied with a portion earned by our labour, and neither envy nor covet their abundance; that we count it "more blessed to give than to receive;" that we consider ourselves happy in the Lord's favour, and under his protection; and that we want nothing more than to live in peace and amity, which we much desire and greatly value. Yet, in such circumstances, we must be careful that we do not carry too far our desire of pleasing, or our fear of offending, or profess more than consists with piety or sincerity; nor may we conceal or be ashamed of our religion, when in the company of those who fear not God. It is not therefore desirable to be too intimate with superior ungodly relations, who will expect us to join in their vanities, or at least to connive at them, though they disapprove and perhaps deride our religion; and thus they will either be a snare to us, or offended with our conduct. It is more prudent to keep at a distance, and live among such as have less ascendancy over us, and where we can be more at liberty.—Let us also observe, that we shall be least willing to expose to hazard that which we value most and love best: we shall therefore venture the loss of all things rather than endanger the loss of our souls, if we know their value; or than renounce Christ, if we truly love him. And while we admire Jacob's tender care of his family and flocks, the good Shepherd of our souls, who "gathers the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young," should not be forgotten; whose example we should all imitate, whether as parents, teachers, or pastors. Blessed be his name, he is still "The mighty God, the God of Israel;" may he who writes these reflections, and may all who read them, be numbered among the true Israel of God; that we may record his name, and rejoice in his love, through our pilgrimage here on earth, and for ever in the Canaan above! Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1. Jacob must have continued several years near Shechem, before the events recorded in this chapter took place; and this made way for too free an intercourse between his family and the Shechemites.

7 ¶ And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it, and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth: because he had wrought folly in Israel, in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

10 And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade you therein, and get you possessions therein.

11 And Shechem said unto her father, and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife. [*Practical Observations.*]

13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:

14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised: for that were a reproach unto us.

Deut. 23:17. Eph. 5:3. 1 Tim. 5:13. Jam. 2:10. 12. 1 Kings 11:2. Ps. 63:1. 84. 2. 18:20. 16:24. 26:34, 35. 27:46. Deut. 7:5. 2 Chr. 28:1. 1 Sam. 26:15. 49:4. 47:27. 12:53. 29:18. Ex. 22:16, 17. Deut. 22:28, 29. 4 Sam. 18:24-27. 2 Sam. 3:14. Hos. 3:2. m Judg. 15:3. 2 Sam. 13:23-29. Ps. 120. Prov. 19:18-20. 23: 23, 29. 25:24-26. Rom. 12:19. 1 Thes. 5:15. n 17:11. Job. 5:2-9. 1 Sam. 14: 6. 17:26, 36. 2 Sam. 1:20. 15:7. 1 Kings 21:9. Matt. 2:8, 9.

Dinah seems to have been about the age of Joseph, or rather younger. As, some time after Jacob's departure from Shechem, Joseph was seventeen years of age, and went to his brethren and was sold by them; so Dinah could not at this time be more than fifteen years old. She was an only daughter, doubtless much beloved, and probably too much indulged; and having got acquainted with the daughters of their heathen neighbours, she went to visit them, and to look about with them, as the original implies, probably on some public occasion of mirth and festivity: but it does not appear, whether it was with or without the consent of her parents.

V. 2. There is nothing, in the narrative, which implies that Shechem committed a rape on Dinah; nay, the contrary is denoted in the words, "Should he deal with our sister, as with a harlot?" (31) for force is not used with harlots. The Jewish expositors, however, assert that he ravished her. Perhaps they devised this, in order to palliate the cruelty and injustice of Jacob's sons, by the greatness of the provocation. But Shechem rather seems to have used the common arts of seduction; and to have detained Dinah with the promise of marrying her, till she was afterwards taken away by her brethren.

V. 5. Jacob kept silence till his sons returned home; as scarcely knowing what to say, or as afraid, either of exasperating the men of Shechem, or of taking some improper step. Probably he would have acted more wisely, if he had taken the management of the business wholly upon himself; instead of intrusting it with his sons, who were young, rash, and violent, and had too much influence with him.

V. 7. Jacob's sons were extremely grieved and enraged; more, probably, on account of the disgrace of their family, than for the sin committed against God.—What follows seems to be the sentiment of the historian, who spake according to the language of the times in which he wrote, to intimate to the children of Israel, the inconsistency of such practices with their name and profession: for it is not probable, that at this early period the name of Israel was so well known, and so much regarded in its genuine import, by the sons of Jacob.

V. 8-12. Hamor seems to have made his proposal to Jacob alone, in the first instance, who deferred him till his sons came home, when it was more fully stated to them. Shechem appears to have been sincerely desirous of conciliating their favour, and obtaining their consent to his marriage with Dinah, on any terms. Nothing, as matters then stood, could have been spoken more fairly: and it may be questioned whether, in such a case, it would have been wrong in Jacob to consent to Dinah's marriage; though the proposal, of forming further connexions of that kind, ought perhaps to have been declined. But Shechem's conduct in detaining Dinah did not well accord to his language.

V. 13. *Because, &c.* Jacob's sons made Shechem's sin the excuse for their own deceitful project. Perhaps at first most of them only intended to procure an opportunity of rescuing their sister, in case Shechem should refuse to restore her peaceably: but Simeon and Levi formed and executed a far deeper scheme of revenge and plunder. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14-17. Neither Abraham nor Isaac had daughters: both Isaac and Jacob had married the daughters of uncircumcised persons; and we have reason to conclude, that

15 But in this will we consent unto you: [¶]If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

17 But if ye will not hearken unto us to be circumcised, then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

18 And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem, Hamor's son.

19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father.

20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

21 These men are peaceable with us, therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

22 Only herein will the men consent unto us, for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

23 Shall not their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs be ours? Only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

e Gal. 4:12. p 29:20. Cant. 8:6. Is. 62:4. q Num. 22:15. 2 Kings 5:1. Is. 3:3-5. 6:13. 23:8-9. Acts 13:30. 17:12. r 22:17. 23:10. Ruth 4:1. Job 29:7. Prov. 31:23. Am. 5:10. 12:15. Zech. 8:16. s 16:17. t John 2:16. 6:26, 27. Acts 19:24-26. 1 Tim. 6:6-10. u 17:23. Is. 1:10-16. Matt. 7:6. Rom. 2:28, 29. 1 Cor. 7:19. x Josh. 5:8. y 20:33, 34. 49:5-7. Num. 31:7, 17. * Heb. mouth. Deut. 32:42.

most of Jacob's sons, if not all, did the same. (*Ex.* 6:15.) As far as we know, there was no law nor custom against intermarriages with uncircumcised persons at that time existing; though the intermarriages of Abraham's family with idolaters in general, and with the inhabitants of the land in particular, were in many ways discountenanced. Indeed, this seems to have been merely a *pretence*, as used by Jacob's sons; though it might have become a general opinion in his family, grounded on the covenant ratified with Abraham by circumcision, and perhaps on tradition; but religion was by no means their object in this transaction.—Some doubt may exist concerning the propriety of admitting into the church by circumcision the Shechemites, who belonged to the devoted race of Canaan, even if they had made an intelligent and suitable profession of religion; but the very proposing the performance of this religious ordinance, as a condition of secular advantages, was as inconsistent with true piety as the deceitful intention and subsequent conduct of Jacob's sons were with truth, justice, and humanity. Yet alas! practices of the same nature are still shamefully common in the visible church!

V. 18—24. The Shechemites acted upon the most selfish principles, and submitted to circumcision without the least regard to its nature, meaning, or divine institution, avowedly to obtain their own secular ends: yet they were much more excusable in this profanation than the sons of Jacob, who proposed it to them, and who might have been expected to know better.

V. 25—28. Simeon and Levi, sons of Leah, were Dinah's brethren by the whole blood.—It has not improbably been conjectured, that they were at that time hospitably entertained in Shechem's house; which gave them a fairer opportunity of coming upon the Shechemites, when sore and unprepared, and of effecting this dreadful execution. Though no more of Jacob's sons were concerned in the massacre, perhaps some servants might assist; and it seems that all the rest, without hesitation, concurred in the plunder.

V. 29. We are not informed what became of these captives afterwards, any more than of the servants of Jacob's household; whether they were otherwise previously disposed of, or whether they went down with Jacob's family into Egypt. Some think that Jacob restored both the persons and the property to their surviving relatives and countrymen; and indeed this is highly probable.

V. 30. *To make me to stink.* Abraham and Isaac had been respected, though strangers; and their religion honoured, through their good behaviour and that of their families; but by this infamous conduct, Jacob apprehended that his sons would cause him and his religion to be even execrated among the heathen, whose crimes they had surpassed.

V. 31. Thus the criminals attempted to vindicate themselves, and wickedly insinuated that Jacob was willing to permit his daughter to be treated as a harlot.—Though he said nothing more for the present, their conduct made a deep and durable impression on his mind.—After this, we read nothing more of Dinah than her name; and it may be concluded that she lived and died unmarried, but we hope not impenitent.

24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city: and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

25 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city; because they had defiled their sister.

28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field.

29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

30 ¶ And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites, and the Perizzites; and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

31 And they said, (Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?

2 Sam. 2:26. Is. 31:8. z Esth. 9:10-16. a 2:31. See on 13. b Josh. 7:25. 1 Kings 15:16. 1 Chr. 2:7. c Ex. 5:21. 1 Sam. 13:4. 27:12. 1 Chr. 19:6. d Deut. 4:27. 7:7. Ez. 10:12. e 12:2, 12. 28:13, 14. 1 Sam. 16:2. 27:1. Rom. 4:18-20. f See on 13. 49:7.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12. Young persons, especially females, are never so safe as under the inspection of prudent and pious parents: for their own inexperience and credulity, and the intoxicating nature of flattery, together with the artifice of those who are continually laying snares for them, expose them to imminent danger. They are therefore their own enemies if they desire to go from home alone, especially among those who are strangers to God and true religion; but those parents are much more excusable who allow or encourage their children in acting so imprudently; nay, who do not interpose their authority to prevent them from heedlessly exposing themselves to unseen and unsuspected danger.—Children who are indulged because beloved, too often, like Dinah, become the shame and grief of their relations. And indeed large families, even when trained up in the fear of God, will frequently occasion many trials, anxieties, and sorrows to their parents; and the grief of losing them in infancy is transient and tolerable, compared with that of seeing them grow up and live in wickedness. Let parents then rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and submit with resignation if the Lord bereave them of their beloved offspring; and if their children be spared, let them bring them up for the Lord, and commend them to his gracious protection.—When young women listen to the vile proposals or flattering promises of seducers, they not unfrequently seclude themselves from every prospect of forming honourable connexions; and voluntarily consign themselves to a single life, if still worse consequences do not ensue: and this consideration, combined with nobler motives, should induce them to reject, with determined indignation and disdain, every dishonourable proposal.—No sin is made lighter of by multitudes than lewdness: yet no crime is more injurious to the bodies and souls of individuals, to the peace and comfort of families, and to the welfare of society; and no sin makes way for more horrible consequences, as introductory to all other wickedness. But how will these heathens rise up in judgment against thousands, falsely called Christians, and condemn them; who, having seduced and defiled the objects of their pretended affection, afterwards treat them with contempt and hatred; leave them to the infamy and misery of prostitution, disease, and death; and, without the least compassion for them or their broken-hearted parents, proceed to add new trophies of their infamous success, and to multiply the victims of their unbridled lusts! Surely Shechem was in this more honourable, not only than all the house of his father, but than all the rest of his brethren, the whole tribe of seducers; who are in honour and conscience bound to make this *only*, but *inadequate* reparation, though very few of them are willing to do it!

V. 13—31. How lamentable is it that children who have profited little by the example and instructions of their godly parents, should so often gain an undue ascendancy over them! and that they who express great indignation at the crimes of others, and the "folly wrought in Israel," should prove themselves so unacquainted with the character of a true Israelite, as far to exceed in their own conduct those crimes which they punish in others! They, who under the pretext of religion, and by profaning its sacred institutions,

parting, (for she died,) that she called his name ¹Benoni: but his father called him ¹Benjamin.

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is ¹the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

21 ¹And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

22 And it came to pass when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard *it*. ¹Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.

23 The ¹sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's first-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun.

24 The ¹sons of Rachel; Joseph and Benjamin.

25 And ¹the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan and Naphtali.

26 And ¹the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad and Asher. These ¹are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

27 ¹And ¹Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, (which is Hebron,) where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

^{B. C. 1716.} 28 And the days of Isaac were ¹an hundred and fourscore years.

29 And Isaac ¹gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people, ¹being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

* That is, *The son of my sorrow*. 1 Chr. 4:9. † That is, *The son of the right hand*. 12:1, 13:1, 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1.

not proper so to indulge his sorrow, as to overlook the mercies still vouchsafed him, or neglect the duties of his station.—*The son of the right hand*, seems to mean one valued as a right hand; or, a son, who shall be my defender in old age, as if he were my right hand.

V. 21. *Tower of Edar*.] The same words (מגדל עדר) are rendered, "Tower of the flock," in Micah. (Mic. 4:8. Heb.)

V. 22. Reuben and Bilhah doubtless flattered themselves that their abominable crime would be concealed; yet Jacob was made acquainted with their conduct, and most decidedly showed his abhorrence of it. Their actual crime is indisputable, notwithstanding the palliating glosses of some Jewish writers. (Note, 49:3, 4.)

V. 27. It should not be concluded, from the silence of Scripture, that Jacob had not before this visited his father. Probably he came often to see him; but at length, as he evidently drew near death, he came to dwell with him, or in the neighbourhood.

V. 28. The age, death, and burial of Isaac, are here inserted by anticipation; for by computation we find that he did not die till about the time that Joseph stood before Pharaoh. Isaac was about a hundred and fifty years old when Joseph was born; Joseph therefore must have been thirty when Isaac was a hundred and eighty. (Note, 27:1.)

V. 29. Esau, instead of taking this opportunity to murder Jacob, as he had purposed, found his heart so influenced, that he amicably assisted at Isaac's funeral.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15. Such is the imperfection of the best of men, that they are prone to defer those things which they know ought to be done, and which they really intend to do; and to forget the mercies which they have received, and the obligations under which they lie: nay, without great circumspection, gross abuses will find their way even into religious families, especially if numerous. We need therefore to be frequently reminded of our duty, and even rebuked for neglecting it; and we should deem it a very great mercy to be stirred up to personal or family reformation, and cheerfully part with every thing, however valuable, which proves an occasion of sin.—Not only rebukes, however, but sharp chastisements, may be expected, if we neglect or postpone our solemn tribute of praise to God, when he hath "answered us in the day of our distress."—A good example and serious admonitions will go a great way in promoting the good behaviour of those around us; and there is often less opposition made to our pious endeavours than we expected.—The Lord does not deal with his people and their families according to their deservings; nay, he is better to them than their fears: and when he overrules the spirit of their enemies, his servants cannot but be safe whithersoever they go, or wherever they are. When we have obediently hearkened to the Lord's reproving voice, have rectified abuses, and paid our vows, we may expect to hear from him with comfort, and to enjoy the assurance and earnest of his covenantal blessings. But all our consolations in this world only prepare us for trials, and are intermingled with sorrows; and the continual rav-

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Esau's wives and children; his removal to mount Seir, &c. his descendants in Seir, 1—19. The descendants of Seir the Horite, 20—33. Kings and daughters of Edom, 34—43.

NOW these ¹are ¹the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

2 Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Ziboeon the Hivite:

3 And ¹Bashemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister ¹to Nebajoth.

4 And ¹Adah bare to Esau, Eliphaz: and ¹Bashemath bare Reuel. ^[B. C. 1760.]

5 And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these ¹are the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the ¹persons of his ^[B. C. 1716.] house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan; and ¹went into the country, from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For ¹their riches were more than that they might dwell together: and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in ¹mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

9 ¹And these ¹are the generations of Esau the father of the ¹Edomites, in mount Seir.

37:2, 46:20—25, 130:9—13, 46:16—18, m 27:43—45, 28:5, n 13:18, 23:219, Job, 14:15, 15:13, o 25:7, 47:28, 50:26, p 15:15, 25:7, 17:1, 27:1, 2, 49:33, Job 32:9, q 29:19, 29:9, 27:41, 49:11, a 23:24—31, 27:33—41, 32:3—7, Num. 20:14—21, Deut. 29:7, Is. 63:1, Ez. 25:12, b 29:24, 25, 27:46, c 25:13, 28:9, d 1 Chr. 1:35, * Heb. sons, e 13:6, 11:17, 17:8, 28:4, f 13:6, g 32:3, Deut. 2:5, Josh. 24:4, Mal. 1:3, i 1 Chr. Edom.

vages of death, bereaving us of our nearest and best beloved friends and relatives, will frequently excite our fears and lamentations, and remind us to be ready also, and to set our affections on things above.—It is very becoming when servants, by good behaviour, deservedly enjoy the endeared affection of the families in which they reside, so that they live beloved and die lamented; and when they, who have had the benefit of their faithful services, while in health and strength, provide comfortably for them in sickness and old age.—Such scenes of domestic life are far more beautiful and instructive, than the events which crowd the pages of history, with splendid evidences of the folly and madness of mankind.

V. 16—29. We should be very cautious not to desire too earnestly any temporal object, nor impatiently to complain of the want of it; as the Lord may remember our unadvised expressions long after, and rebuke them even in granting our desires, without giving his blessing with them.—Even the most favoured servants of the Lord are frequently tried with afflictions, which quickly succeed each other. Yet "all shall work together for their good."—While we live in this world, we must witness so much sin around us, and mourn over so much in ourselves and our families, as well as experience so many bodily infirmities and outward disappointments, that we may well congratulate, and almost envy, those who have finished their measure of sufferings and services, and leave the world full of days, and hope for glory: for if we are fit for heaven, "better is the day of our death, than the day of our birth."—They, who live the most peaceably and comfortably, are least noticed in history: and it may be some consolation to reflect, that while we read of scarcely any thing else than the vices and miseries of mankind, very many, unnoticed by man, have "walked with God, and are not, for God hath taken them."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVI. V. 2, 3. Esau married "Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite." (26:34.) And as these wives are mentioned many years after, in a manner which implies they were then living, (27:46, 28:9.) we can hardly suppose that they both died childless, and that after their death Esau married the wives, by whom he had most of his children, and especially Eliphaz his eldest son.—Possibly his wives had different names. Bashemath might also be called Adah. And if Aholibamah were the same person as Judith, Beeri the Hittite might be her father, and Anah, the daughter of Ziboeon the Hivite, her mother.—It is evident that Bashemath, the daughter of Ishmael, is also called Mahalath. (28:9.) And indeed such variations in names are very common in Scripture.

V. 6, 7. Probably Esau came frequently to Isaac during his lifetime, and had part of his family and property in Canaan, where his children were born: but after his father's death he took away all his possessions, and finally removed from Canaan, the land of promise, the type of heaven; and left Jacob unmolested in the prospect of his reversionary inheritance.—He seems, however, to have inherited a large portion of Isaac's riches.

10 These are the names of Esau's sons, Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz, Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.

13 And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

14 And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau, Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

15 These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the first-born son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,

16 Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: These are the dukes that came of Eliphaz, in the land of Edom: these were the sons of Adah.

17 And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah. These are the dukes that came of Reuel, in the land of Edom: these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

18 And these are the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife: duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah Esau's wife.

19 These are the sons of Esau, (who is Edom,) and these are their dukes.

20 ¶ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land: Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah,

21 And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these are the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.

22 And the children of Lotan were, Hori, and Heman: and Lotan's sister was Timna.

23 And the children of Shobal were these; Alvah, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

24 And these are the children of Zibeon: both Ajah, and Anah: this was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.

25 And the children of Anah were these: Dishon, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

26 And these are the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

27 The children of Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Achan.

28 The children of Dishan are these; Uzi, and Aran.

29 These are the dukes that came of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah,

30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

31 ¶ And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel

32 And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

33 And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

34 And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead.

35 And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.

36 And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

37 And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

38 And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

39 And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

40 ¶ And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth,

41 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

42 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

43 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these be the dukes of Edom according to their habitations, in the land of their possession: he is Esau the father of the Edomites.

h1 Chr. 1:38. Zephi. 1:14-7. Ez. 7:8-16. Num. 24:19-20. Dent. 32:7. 25:17-19. 1:2. 1 Chr. 1:38-45. 51-54. Job 2:11. 4:1. Jer. 49:7-20. Ez. 25:13. Am. 1:12. Ob. 9. Hab. 3:3. m. Ez. 15:15. n. 4:13. 1 Chr. 1:37. o. 5:14. 1 Chr. 1:35. p. See on 1. q. 14:6. Dent. 2:12-22. 1 Chr. 1:38-42. r. 1 Chr. 1:39. Haman. 1 Chr. 1:40. Aftan. Sie. hi. s. Lev. 19:19. 2 Sam. 13:20. 18:9. 1 Kings 1:38-44. 4:28. Zech. 14:15. t. 2,5,14,18. 1 Chr. 1:41. u. 1 Chr. 1:41.

V. 12. Amalek.] It has generally been taken for granted, that the Amalekites descended from this grandson of Esau: but, as they were a powerful people when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and able to contend with them in battle; as they are always spoken of as a distinct people from the Edomites; and as mention had before been made of their country; this opinion is not very probable. The marginal references may enable the reader to form a judgment on the subject. Timna was sister to Lotan a descendant of Seir. (20-22.)

V. 15, 16. Dukes.] רָאשֵׁי אֲחֵיהֶם Heads of families, princes, or military leaders, some of whom were contemporaries.—Korah is not mentioned before among the sons of Eliphaz: probably he was one of his grandsons.

V. 20. The sons of Seir the Horite.] These were the former inhabitants of that country, with whom probably the descendants of Esau intermarried, and were in a great measure incorporated.

V. 24. Found, &c.] This passage is particularly difficult, as the word translated mules occurs in no other place: and many conjectures have been formed concerning what it was that Anah found; among which the more general has been, that in keeping asses he discovered the method of breeding mules, either by accident or contrivance.—Anah is the name both of a woman and a man, as Aholibamah likewise is. (2,14,18,20,35,41.)

V. 31-39. It is not agreed whether these kings were descendants of Esau or of Seir.—They seem to have been elective, and to have reigned in succession over the whole country.

V. 40. Dukes.] These were either eminent leaders under the kings before mentioned; or, as some suppose, they succeeded them in authority, by a revolution in the form of government. It has been thought that some part of this chapter was written after the death of Moses, or added from the first chapter of Chronicles; and perhaps it was: but all

Amam. v21. 1 Chr. 1:38. x. 1 Chr. 1:42. Jakan. y Job 1:1. Jer. 25:20. Lam. 1:2. z 20. 1 Chr. 1:38. a. 17:6,16. 25:23. Num. 20:14. 24:12,18. Dent. 17:14-20. 33:5. 1 Chr. 1:43-50. b. 15:34,6. 43:1. Jer. 49:13,22. Mic. 2:12. c. See on 15. Job 2:11. Jer. 49:7. d. 10:11. 1 Chr. 1:48. e. 1 Chr. 1:50. Hadad. Pat. f. See on 15:16. 1 Chr. 1:51-54. t. 1 Chr. 1:51. Aftan. g. Ez. 15:15. Num. 20:14. h. Heb. Edom.

these events might very well take place while Israel was in Egypt and in the wilderness. (Ez. 15:15.) Eight successions are mentioned; but it is uncertain when the period began, or how long it continued.—Moses had before recorded the prediction, that kings should descend from Jacob; but these kings reigned before that prophecy began to be fulfilled. (Marg. Ref. on 31.)

V. 43. Their possession.] The descendants of Esau were settled in possession of the land of Seir; while Israel had his inheritance only in reversion.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

This chapter seems intended to evince the faithfulness of God in performing his promise to Abraham, "Nations shall come of thee;" and to show the accomplishment of his prophetic information to Rebekah, "Two nations are in thy womb;" and of the blessing pronounced on Esau, "By thy sword shalt thou live." It might also be in many ways useful to the children of Israel. Yet it contains mere registers, and is very different from the particular history of the heirs of promise; who have the best place and the highest character in the book of God, though not in many other books.—However men may struggle against the purpose of God, his counsel will stand; they will finally be compelled to give place to it, and he hath many ways of inducing them to do so. He often gives ungodly people a large portion of this world; and satisfied with it, they leave others to possess and enjoy spiritual blessings unenvied and unmolested. This is Esau: still the profane despiser of heavenly things, as when he sold his birthright; though not the same malicious persecutor, as when he vowed Jacob's destruction.—Yet persons of his character look great, become dukes and princes, and are envied and courted; while the "Israel of God" are poor, obscure, and despised! But soon the state of things will be reversed: the wicked shall be cut down, and wither as the grass; while "the righteous shall flourish as the cedar in Lebanon;" and having their good things, when those of the sin-

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Joseph is loved by Jacob, but hated by his brethren, 1-4. His dreams and the interpretation, 5-11. Jacob sends him to his brethren, who counsel to slay him, 12-20. Reuben's desire they cast him into a pit, 21-24; and afterwards sell him to the Ishmaelites; while Reuben grieves at not finding him, 25-30. His coat, covered with blood, is sent to Jacob, who mourns inordinately, 31-35. Joseph is brought to Egypt, and sold to Potiphar, 36.

AND Jacob dwelt in the land ^awherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

2 These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren, and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the ^bson of his old age; and he made him ^ca coat of many colours.

4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

5 And Joseph dreamed a dream: and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 And he said unto them, ^dHear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed.

7 For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 And his brethren said unto him, ^eShalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? and they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

9 And he dreamed yet ^fanother dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed

a dream more; and behold, the sun and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream thou hast dreamed? ^gShall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth?

11 And his brethren ^henvied him: but his father observed the saying.

12 ¶ And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? ⁱCome, and I will send thee unto them. And he said unto him, ^jHere am I.

14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of ^kHebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and he asked, ^lhe was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, ^mWhat seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren: ⁿtell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks.

17 And the man said, They are departed hence: for I heard them say, Let us go to ^oDothan. And Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan.

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

* Heb. of his father's sojournings. 17:8. 23:4. 28:4. 36:7. Heb. 11:9-16. a. 2: 4. 5:1. 6:9. 10:1. b. 30:4. 9. 35:22. c. 1 Sam. 2:22-24. 1 Cor. 1:11. 5:1. 11:18. d. 44:20. e. 23:32. f. 30:25. 2 Sam. 13:18. g. 45:13, 14. h. 26:16. i. Or, piece. 11:18-20. 4:5. 27:41. 49:23. 1 Sam. 16:12, 13. 17:38. John 7:3-5. g. 9. 28:12. 40:5. 41:1. 42:9. Num. 12:6. 1 Kings 3:5. h. 44:18. Judg. 9:7. i. 42:6, 9. 43:26. 44:14. j. Ex. 2:14. 1 Sam. 10:27. Ps. 2:3-6. 118:22. Luke 19:14. 20: 17. Acts 4:27, 28. 7:35. k. 41:26, 32. 110. 43:26. 46:29. 47:12. 50:15-21. Acts 7:9-14. m. 27:29. 1s. 60:14. Phil. 2:10, 11. n. 1s. 26:11. Matt. 27:18. Mark 15:

10. Acts 7:9. o. Dan. 7:28. Luke 2:19, 51. p. 1. 53:18. 94:25-31. q. 1 Sam. 17: 17-20. Matt. 10:16. Luke 20:13. r. 22:1. 27:1, 18. 1 Sam. 3:4, 5, 8, 16. s. Heb. see the peace of thy brethren, &c. 1 Sam. 17:17, 18. Jer. 29:7. Luke 19:42. e. 23: 2. 35:27. Num. 13:32. Josh. 14:13, 15. t. 21:14. u. Judg. 4:22. John 1:38. 4:37. 18:47. 20:15. x. Cant. 1:7. y. 2 Kings 6:13. z. 1 Sam. 19:1. Ps. 21:13. 32: 32. 44:21. Matt. 21:39. 27:1. Mark 12:7. 14:1. Luke 20:14, 15. John 11:53. Acts 23:12. s. Heb. master of dreams.

ner are spent and gone, they shall have them durably, yea eternally. Let us then seek an interest in these blessings; and not covet, envy, or glory in those fading distinctions which are so often lavished upon the enemies of God, and "the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVII. V. 1. Jacob continued to dwell in Canaan, "the land of his father's sojournings," (*marg.*) after Esau had got possessions and exercised lordship in Seir. (*Notes*, 24:2-9. Heb. 11:13-16.)

V. 2. By "the generations of Jacob," we may understand the history of him and of his family. (35:23-26.) The inspired writer had done with Esau, except as he came in his way when treating of the affairs of Israel: he had joined himself to the heathen; let him be numbered among them: but of Jacob and the chosen seed, Moses had much to record.—Joseph, though greatly beloved, was not trained up delicately and in sloth, but inured to labour. Though but a lad, he accompanied the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, particularly assisting them in their pastoral employments. Perhaps his father thought, that the sons of Bilhah, his mother's handmaid, would favour him; and that those of Zilpah would be less disposed to emulation against him, than the sons of Leah. But he witnessed their ill behaviour, and brought to his father their evil report, in order that the crimes which he could not prevent, might be reproved and repressed by Jacob's authority.

V. 3. Jacob had no son by his beloved Rachel, till about seven years after his marriage, when he was far advanced in years. Benjamin was, in the more strict sense, "the son of his old age;" but he was at the same time very young.—His other sons had in many things grieved and disgraced him; but Joseph seems to have given early indications of that wisdom and piety, which adorned his maturer age. He was therefore the chief earthly comfort Jacob enjoyed after Rachel's death; and, in token of special affection, he clothed him in "a coat of colours," or "of pieces;" for there is nothing for *many* in the original.—However this may be understood, it is evident that the garment was deemed superior to the clothing worn by the others; but this distinction between him and his brothers seems to have been invidious and injudicious.

V. 4. The preference manifested to Joseph excited the envy of his brethren; and the ground of that preference, even his wisdom and piety, called forth their enmity. Conscious of his superior excellency, and hating him for it, they considered Jacob's approbation of his conduct as a reproach of *themselves*: all which was augmented by his reporting their evil deeds.—In this Joseph was a type of Christ, the Beloved of the Father, who was on that account envied and hated by the Jews and by the world; not only notwithstanding his excellency, but *for it*, as it reproached and exposed their hy-

procrisy and wickedness; and because he also "testified of them, that their works were evil." (*John* 7:7.) This was the effect of the old enmity put between "the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent."

V. 5. God, by supernatural dreams, gave Joseph a pre-intimation of his future greatness, to prepare him for his previous trials, and to support him under them.—Mr. Henry observes, "that he dreamed of his preferment, but not of his imprisonment; as young people are apt to dream of prosperity, but think nothing of affliction!"

V. 6-9. Some expositors consider Joseph as faulty in disclosing his dreams, but probably he was led by a divine impulse on his mind to do so! It was on many accounts proper they should be known, though otherwise it would have been impolitic for him to declare them. His brethren rightly interpreted the dream, though they abhorred the interpretation; and while in endeavouring to defeat it they spared no pains, and ventured upon the most atrocious crimes, they were themselves the instruments of its accomplishment.—Thus the Jews understood Christ's parables, and the intimations he gave of his kingdom; but, determining that he should not reign over *them*, they consulted to put him to death, and by his crucifixion they actually made way for that exaltation, which they intended to prevent.—"They hated" (that of Joseph's brethren towards him) "had originated in religion; and the thought of God having determined to honour him, provoked them the more. Such were the operations of malice in Cain towards Abel, in Esau towards Jacob, in Saul towards David, and in the Scribes and Pharisees towards the Lord of glory." *Fuller*.

V. 10, 11. Perhaps Jacob meant to abate the indignation of his other sons by rebuking Joseph; yet it is evident that he thought, there was something supernatural in the dream.—Rachel, the mother of Joseph, was dead; but it is probable that Leah was still alive: the expression may, however, only mean the whole family, with peculiar reference to the number of his brethren.

V. 12-14. Shechem was at least forty miles northward from Hebron, where Jacob then resided. Dothan was about eight miles further, (17.)—Jacob had bought a piece of land there: but it is probable that his sons went thither, for the sake of better pasture for their numerous flocks, than could be found in the region about Hebron. After the wickedness which they had perpetrated on the Shechemites, it is more wonderful that they should venture thither, than that Jacob should be anxious for their safety. Had he suspected their malignant enmity against Joseph, he would not have thus exposed his favourite son; but the hand of the Lord was in it.

V. 15. *Wandering.* Either having lost his way or traversing the country in search of his brethren

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit: and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him.

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, and our flesh: and his brethren were content.

28 Then there passed by Midianites, merchant-

men; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and behold Joseph was not in the pit; and the rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

[Practical Observations.]

31 And they took Joseph's coat and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood.

32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

a. Ps. 64:5. Prov. 1:11, 18. 6:17. 27:4. b. 1 Sam. 24:20. 26:2. Matt. 2:2-16. 27:40-42. Mark 15:29-32. John 12:10, 11. Acts 4:1-13. 5:22. 22:32. d. 5:32. 23. Matt. 27:28. * Or, pieces. 3. marg. e. Ps. 40:2. 89:6, 8. 130:1, 2. Jer. 38:6. Lam. 3:52-55. Zech. 9:11. f. Eccl. 3:15. Amos 6:6. g. 28:38. 16:11, 12. 25:1-4. 16-18. Ps. 83:6. h. 43:11. Jer. 8:22. 125:32. Ps. 30:9. Jer. 41:8. Rom. 6:21. k. Job 10:18. Ex. 24:7. 1 Ex. 21:16. Neh. 5:8. Matt. 26:15. 1 Tim. 1:10. Heb. 13:13. m. 1 Sam. 15:17. 2 Sam. 11:14-17. 12:9. n. 29:14. 42:21. 1 Heb. 13:13. o. 25. Num. 25:15, 17. 31:2. Judg. 6:1-3. Ps. 83:9. p. 45:4, 5. Ps. 105:17. Zech. 11:12, 13. Matt. 27:9. Acts 7:9. q. 84. 44:13. Num. 14:6. Judg.

11:35. Job 1:20. Joel 2:13. Acts 14:14. r. 42:13, 32, 36. Jer. 31:15. s. 3:23. t. 3. 44:20-23. Luke 15:30. u. 44:28. v. 29. Josh. 7:6. 2 Sam. 1:11. 3:31. 1 Kings 20:31. 21:27. 1 Chr. 21:16. Ezra 9:3-5. Neh. 9:1. Esth. 4:1-3. Job 1:20. 2:12. Ps. 69:11. Is. 22:12, 13. 56:1. 37:1. 2 Jer. 36:24. Joel 2:13. Jonah 3:5-8. Matt. 11:25. 25:65. Acts 14:14. Rev. 11:3. x. 2 Sam. 12:17. Job 2:11. Ps. 77:2. Jer. 31:15. y. 42:35. 44:29-31. 45:28. z. 28. 39:1. 1 Heb. eumach, chomb-plain, or courtier. Esth. 1:10. 5 Or, chief marshal. Heb. chief of the slaughtermen, or, executioners. 40:4. 2 Kings 25:8. marg.

V. 19, 21, 23. These unnatural children had no more compassion for their father than for Joseph; nay, perhaps they secretly enjoyed the pleasure of disappointing and grieving him. Their proposal showed how desperate their enmity was, and the sarcasm concerning Joseph's dreams, intimated at least some misgivings, that they were divine presages of his future pre-eminence.—Let us kill him, say they, and then he cannot rule over us! (Marg. Ref.)—Their diabolical malignity rendered them prompt to invent a subtle plan of concealment. None, I think, after consulting the marginal references, can doubt, that Joseph was, in the strictest sense, a type of Christ. And the conduct of his brethren, on this occasion, calls to our recollection those of whom Christ said, "Now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." John 15:24.

V. 21. Reuben had been guilty of "such fornication, as is not so much as named among the Gentiles;" yet here he opposed the wickedness of his brethren, of another kind! Human depravity runs in different channels; some are more prone to one sin, some to another.

V. 22. Reuben spake as if he meant, that Joseph should be left to starve in the pit; but he purposed to restore him to his father, hoping probably by that service to recover his favour: and though his purpose was disappointed, yet God by his means preserved the life of Joseph, on which consequences infinitely important depended.—Thus Joseph, murdered in the intention of his brethren, and, as it were, buried in the pit, yet preserved in order to his exaltation, was a type of Christ crucified, buried, risen, and glorified.

V. 25. The descendants of Ishmael, Midian, Medan, and the other sons of Abraham by Keturah, (who were grown into a multitude, while the descendants of the promised Isaac were few in number,) uniting together, engaged in this traffic.

V. 26. What profit? &c.] Judah seems to have been naturally prone to covetousness, as Judas afterwards was; one great objection with him to killing Joseph was, that they should get nothing by it. The word rendered profit is almost always used in a bad sense.

V. 28. Sold Joseph.] Thus Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and by a Judas or Judah; one of the same name as his who proposed the sale of Joseph.

V. 29, 30. Reuben seems to have been sincerely grieved when he missed his brother, no doubt suspecting that some violence had been done to him; and he might also dread his father's displeasure against himself, as his eldest son, who ought especially to have protected his beloved Joseph. But though he was absent when the plan of selling him had been proposed, agreed upon, and executed; yet he never disclosed this circumstance to his father; for fear, perhaps, of drawing down the resentment of the rest upon himself. Whether he was informed of the transaction or not, he concurred in the plan of imposing on Jacob.

V. 32. Thy son's coat.] Not our brother's coat, nor Joseph's, but "thy son's;" as if, even in this cruel imposition, they would reproach their father for his partiality to Joseph,

and almost insinuate that he alone was considered as a son!

V. 34. Rent his clothes, &c.] These were, in the earliest ages, the customary indications of great sorrow; and they seem also to have implied abhorrence of sin, and humiliation before God on account of it, as the cause of affliction.—This is the first instance recorded in Scripture of wearing sackcloth: as that of Reuben (29) is of rending the clothes. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 35. Daughters.] Not only Dinah, but his son's wives, (for many of them were at that time married,) joined in endeavouring to comfort Jacob.—His sons too seem to have rather relented, when they witnessed his excessive sorrow: yet not so far as to confess their evil deeds; though Jacob's grief might have been thus abated, and probable measures taken for recovering Joseph.—The word translated the grave, is rendered elsewhere hell; and means the unseen state, either of the body in the grave, or of the soul in the world of departed spirits. (Notes, Ps. 16:10. Acts 2:25-32.)—Joseph was not supposed to be buried in the grave; but Jacob expected to meet him in another world. Yet he wept for him immoderately, and without proper resignation to the will of God.

V. 36. The word in this place signifies Medanties, rather than Midianites. (25:2.)—Pharaoh was the common name of the kings of Egypt. (12:15-20.)—Potiphar seems to have been, according to our translation, captain of the guard to Pharaoh; and, in that capacity, to have had the charge of the state-prisoners, and to have superintended the execution of criminals. (Marg.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-30. They who hate to be reformed, hate also to be reprov'd, and are offended with those who expose them to reproof; and though it is often of important advantage to disclose the secret crimes which men commit to such as are authorized to restrain them; yet nothing requires more prudence and candour. It should never be done out of resentment, or without urgent occasion, but always from hatred of the sin and love to the sinner, and with reluctance, as expecting nothing but unpleasant consequences to ourselves.—In the present state of things, there will frequently be contentions among brethren, especially those of opposite characters; and while parents ought to manifest a preference of such as behave with the greatest piety and prudence, even this will excite the enmity and envy of those who are proud and ungodly. Great care should therefore be taken not to inflame these malignant passions by useless and invidious distinctions; and that wisdom which is from above is greatly wanted to avoid sowing those seeds of discord, that will not speedily be eradicated. For when once malice and envy have got possession of the heart, every circumstance inflames them: love shown to the person envied is considered as hatred to the envious man; and commendation and kindness bestowed on the one, seem to be reproaching and injuring the other: yea, the very excellency of a person's character and conduct makes him appear the more odious, in the distempered judg-

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Judah's marriage and children, 1-5. His son Er's marriage and death, 6, 7. Onan marries his brother's widow; is cut off for his sin; and Tamar his widow is reserved for Shelah, 8-11. Judah's wife dies; he is deceived by Tamar and commits incest with her; his crime is detected, and Tamar bears to him Pharez and Zarah, 12-30.

AND it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain ^bAdullamite, whose name was Hirah.

2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was ^cShuah: and he took her and went in unto her.

3 And she conceived and bare a son; and he called his name ^dEr.

4 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan.

5 And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name ^eShelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.

6 And Judah took a wife for Er his first-born, whose name was Tamar.

7 And Er, Judah's first-born, was ^fwicked in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord slew him.

8 And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy

brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.

9 And Onan knew that the seed should not be his: and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.

10 And the thing which he did ^gdispleased the Lord: wherefore he slew him also.

11 Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown; (for he said, Lest per adventure he die also as his brethren ^hdid:) and Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

[Practical Observations.]

12 ¶ And in process of time, the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his ⁱsheep-shearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father-in-law goeth up to Timnath, to shear his sheep.

14 And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped her-

a 19:3. Judg. 4:18. 2 Kings 4:8. Prov. 13:20. b Josh. 15:35. 1 Sam. 22:1. 2 Sam. 24:34. Mic. 1:15. c 3:6. d 2:3. 34:2. Judg. 14:2. 16:1. 2 Sam. 11:2. d 1 Chr. 2:3. Shua. e 46:12. Num. 26:19. f 11:26. 1 Chr. 4:21. g 21:31. 24:3. h 13:13. 19:13. i 2 Chr. 33:6. i Lev. 18:16. Deut. 25:5-10. Ruth 1:11. 4:5-11. Matt. 23:33-37. j Jam. 4:5. k Heb. was evil in the eyes of the Lord. Num. 11:1. 22:34. 2 Sam. 11:27. 1 Chr. 21:7. Prov. 24:18. 1 Ind. 1:15. k Ruth 1:13. l Heb. the days were multiplied. 124:67. 2 Sam. 13:39. m 31:16. 1 Sam. 25:4-3, 36. Matt. 13:23-25. n Josh. 15:10, 57. Timna. Judg. 14:1.

ment of his competitor. These passions, when matured, break through every tie of nature, every obligation of duty, and every restraint of conscience and compassion: and, if grafted upon that enmity, which is in the "seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman,"—upon religious enmity and the spirit of persecution,—they produce the most atrocious crimes, committed without remorse or reluctance.—But though the Lord knows that his favours, and the honour which comes from him, will excite these diabolical dispositions, and inflame them more and more yet, he will not on that account, withhold the marks of his approbation; nay, he will rather confer them, purposely to evidence the force and tendency of these base passions, either for the sinner's future conviction and humiliation, or to manifest the justice of his condemnation. For he can make "the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of it he will restrain;" he can check and moderate the force of men's passions, work upon their humanity or natural affection, excite horror or terror in their minds, or even let loose selfishness, covetousness, or fear of man to counteract the effects of malice and revenge: so that, in direct opposition to their own intentions, his enemies shall just go far enough to accomplish his purposes, and to defeat their own; and to promote the benefit and advancement of believers, which they meant to hinder.—In whatever way he may give his servants any previous intimations of future honour and usefulness, they may be considered as equivalent to assurances of many preparatory trials: for "before honour is humility," and the human heart is seldom sufficiently humbled, for suitably filling up important stations, without a previous course of painful discipline.

V. 31—36. Scarcely any thing can be baser, than for children to insult and torture the heart of a parent, whose chief fault consists in having too much indulged them; yet in this common case, though the conduct of the child is vile, the appointment of God is wise and righteous.—The more we love earthly objects, the greater affliction are we exposed to on their account; and impatient mourning, when they are taken away, too plainly proves the excess of our affection, and the need there was of the salutary stroke. Yet our sorrow would often cease, and be turned into joy, if we knew all the truth. We should therefore endeavour, in the exercise of faith, to rest satisfied, that though we know not now what the Lord is doing, we shall know and approve it hereafter; and thus to find comfort, instead of rashly, and in general ^lfalsely, determining, under severe trials, to go down mourning to the grave. (45:28. 48:11.)—As we know not what we may come to before we die, it is good to habituate ourselves to labour, self-denial, and submission.—When men are bent upon wickedness, they will never want some stratagem to effect it, and some pretext to conceal it; yet, however unanimous they may be in hiding their sins, they will at last be discovered to their confusion.—But let us in all this behold Jesus, hated, envied, persecuted, sold, and suffering for us: yea, in some sense by us; for we are like-minded by nature with those who crucified him; and our sins were the real causes of those sufferings which made way for his mediatorial exaltation. Thus while we were enemies, provision was made for our extreme necessity, against the time when we should become sensible of our real character and condition: and then we find, that he was thus waiting his opportunity of overcoming evil with good.—While we receive from his fulness daily, let us not forget the anguish of his soul, when suffering for our sins; that we may mourn for our crimes, and crucify his crucifiers; that we may love and serve him; and through envy, reproach, and tribulation, follow him to glory.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 1, 2. The inspired historian here breaks off his narration, to relate some other occurrences which had taken place in Jacob's family, and were doubtless an additional cause of great grief to the aged Patriarch.—Though Judah and his brethren so strenuously opposed the marriage of Dinah with an uncircumcised person; yet he, and probably all the rest, married the daughters of those who were not circumcised. (Note, 34:14-17.)—The marriages of Israelitish women with uncircumcised persons, were, by the law, virtually forbidden; for they were not allowed to marry Gentiles who had not fully embraced the religion of Israel; and who were consequently uncircumcised. But if the daughters of uncircumcised persons were converted to the worship of the true God, not being capable of circumcision, they might become the wives of Israelites, without violating any statute; and indeed this seems to have been allowed in some other cases. (Deut. 21:10-14. Judg. 14:1-4. Ruth 3:9-13. 4: Matt. 1:5.) It does not however appear, that Judah was more careful in this respect, than Esau had been. He must have been very young when he married, which probably took place before Joseph was sold into Egypt; yet he seems to have acted without Jacob's consent, by the advice of his Canaanitish friend. Adullam was not far from Ephrath, and it is generally supposed, to the north of Hebron. Probably, Judah at this time left his father's house for some other residence.—Shuah was the name of Judah's wife's father, and not that of his wife, (12.)

V. 4, 5. Probably Judah was from home when these two sons were born, and so ^mhis wife named them.—Chezib is supposed to have been the same as ⁿAchziv. (Josh. 15:44.)

V. 7. Er was "wicked in the sight of the Lord;" but perhaps not in the sight of man, from whom he concealed his crimes. The Lord, however, was so provoked at his secret sins, that he slew him.—Many premature deaths might probably be accounted for in the same manner, had we as impartial and well informed historians to record them.

V. 8. The custom of marrying a brother's widow, when he died childless, seems to have been traditional before it became a written law; and the first-born from such marriages was accounted the child of the deceased, adopted into his family, and so became his heir. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 9, 10. Onan's ^ohabitual conduct, (for this is meant,) was not only unnatural and detestable in itself, but full of envy and malice, and not without something of the nature of murder in it: for the same principle would have induced him to murder a child born to him, but accounted his brother's, if he could have done it with impunity. It implied also a contempt of the promise of a numerous posterity, made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of that Seed especially in whom all nations "should be blessed."

V. 11. Perhaps Judah, being ignorant of the real cause of his sons' death, attributed it to some ill behaviour of Tamar, and therefore secretly determined not to marry Shelah to her. For the present, however, he put the matter off, by intimating that his son was too young, and that he should wait some time longer before he allowed them to marry.

V. 14-16. Tamar could not think this a probable way of forwarding her marriage with Shelah; but perhaps she concluded that Judah never intended it. It is supposed, that, according to the custom of the times, she was considered as Shelah's wife, and could not be married to another in such circumstances. Some think, that she was ambitious of being brought into the line of Christ's ancestors, and of having children by some of Jacob's family; and perhaps some indignation had been given, that our Lord should spring from Judah: not expecting therefore to be married to Shelah, she set up no other

self, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a harlot: because she had covered her face.

16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee, (for he knew not that she was his daughter-in-law:) and she said, What wilt thou give me that thou mayest come in unto me?

17 And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock: And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it?

18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand: and he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

19 And she arose, and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 ¶ And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not.

21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the wayside? And they said, There was no harlot in this place.

22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said that there was no harlot in this place.

23 And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

24 And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and also behold, she is with child by whoredom: and Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burned.

25 When she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, By the man whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff.

26 And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son; and he knew her again no more.

27 ¶ And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that behold twins were in her womb.

28 And it came to pass when she travailed, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

29 And it came to pass as he drew back his hand, that behold his brother came out; and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore this name was called Pharez.

30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand; and his name was called Zarah.

c Prov. 7:12. Jer. 3:2. Ez. 16:25. * Heb. the door of eyes, or, of En-jim. p 136. q Matt. 26:15. 1 Tim. 6:10. r Ez. 16:33. † Heb. a kid of the goats. s 24:25. 1 rev. 20:16. Luke 16:8. ‡ Jer. 22:34. Luke 15:22. o 25:36. Hos. 4:11. v 14. 2 Sam. 14:25. x Jude 14:20. 2 Sam. 13:3. Luke 23:12. † 1 Cor. in En-jim. 14. y Ps. 6:3. Rom. 6:21. 2 Cor. 4:2. Eph. 5:12. Rev. 16:15. s Heb. become a contempt. z 34:31. Judg. 19:2. Jer. 2:20. 3:1,6,8. Ez. 16:15,28,41. 23:5,19,44. Hos. 2:5. 3:3. 4:15. a Lev. 20:10. 21:9. Deut. 22:21-27. 2 Sam. 12:5,7. Jer.

29:22,23. Matt. 7:1-5. Rom. 2:1,2. h 37:32. Ps. 50:21. Jer. 2:26. Rom. 2:16. 1 Cor. 4:5. Rev. 20:12. c 1 Sam. 24:17. 2 Sam. 24:17. Ez. 16:52. Hab. 1:13. John 8:9. Rom. 3:19. d 14. e Job 34:31,32. 40:5. Matt. 3:8. 1 Pet. 4:2,3. † 1 Cor. Wherefore hast thou made this breach against thee? ‡ 46:12. Num. 26:20. 1 Chr. 2:4. 9:4. Neh. 11:4,6. Perez. Matt. 1:3. Luke 3:33. Pharez. † That is, a breach. g 1 Chr. 5:6. Zarah. Matt. 1:3. Zarah.

way but the very criminal one which she adopted. If this was her motive, though it by no means excuses or palliates her conduct, she certainly obtained her end; for Christ was descended from her by this very incestuous intercourse!—Judah did not discover that she was his daughter-in-law, as she was veiled, and he took her for a harlot, because she sat by the way-side.

V. 17. *Pledge.*] *Apabbaw*, Sept. which is rendered earnest in 2 Cor. 12:22. 5:5. Eph. 1:14.

V. 18. *Signet, bracelets, and staff.*] These were probably of considerable value, and would afford Tamar an opportunity of exposing Judah; yet he was so infatuated as to intrust them with a supposed harlot!

V. 21. *Where is the harlot?*] By the answer returned to this question, we learn that these practices were neither so common, nor so shameless, among the Canaanites, as they are now in general among nominal Christians.

V. 23. *Lest we be shamed.*] For the whoredom, and for the folly connected with it.

V. 24. Some suppose that Judah only meant to brand Tamar with a mark of infamy. If he meant to burn her to death, though pregnant, it shows, not only that he considered her as betrothed to Shelah, and an adulteress, but also that he was actuated by excessive severity, and dislike to Tamar.—In those days, when a general civil government was not established through the country, but different tribes and families were ruled by their several heads, the injured party, if a principal person, seems to have been both accuser, judge, and frequently the executioner; as in the case of murder, the nearest relation was the avenger of blood.

V. 25. He who had been the adviser of the sale of Joseph, and of sending his coat to Jacob, with this taunting message, "Know now whether this be thy son's coat or no," was at length taunted in a similar manner, "Discern, I pray thee, whose are these?" (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. Judah had intentionally committed only fornication, while Tamar had been guilty of incest: yet, conscious of being the occasion of her crime by withholding Shelah, and of excessive severity in the harsh sentence which he had uttered against her, and perhaps being truly penitent, he condemned himself more than her: "and he knew her again no more." Though he was yet young, it does not appear that he married again.—It cannot be supposed, that Tamar was after this married to Shelah; but probably she lived the rest of her days in widowhood.

V. 27-30. By a hard labour, Tamar was corrected for her crime. From these twins, the offspring of so much sin, descended the principal part of the tribe of Judah, from whom the whole nation are to this day called Jews, or *Judeans*; and who had little cause to boast that "they were not born of fornication."—Some make the singular circumstances of this birth emblematical of the Jews and Gentiles: the Jews, like Zarah, seemed marked for priority in the church of Christ, yet they drew back; and the Gentiles, like Pharez, have got the birthright: yet, in due time, the Jews shall again find admission, and share the same privileges.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. What a melancholy view do these records give us of Jacob's family, of the trouble which he had with his children, and of the state of religion in the visible church of God!—Is this "Judah, whom his brethren shall praise?" Rather let us praise God for his patience with him; and that "where sin had abounded, grace" as we have reason to conclude, "much more abounded" in his salvation.—The friendship of those who flatter young persons, and assist them in gratifying their licentious inclinations, is often much valued, and their company courted and preferred before that of pious friends and relations; but it corrupts good manners and principles, and makes bad ones worse. Though, all things considered, it is best for most men to marry early in life; yet surely not when they are incapable of judging for themselves, and will not be counselled or directed by their parents and friends; but are influenced by those who fear not God, to form connexions with others of the same character. Indeed, parents themselves frequently lead their children into the mistakes and sins, of which they themselves have been guilty; and are instrumental in their ruin, tempora, and eternal.—The Scriptures sparingly hint at those vile practices, which, being done in secret, are a shame to be spoken of; this suffices to show, that the Lord notices and abhors them, and will bring to light all the lasciviousness, of which it is to be feared multitudes are guilty in heart and life, who stand fair in the world's esteem. Then the secret history of every individual, who hath not truly repented, and washed away his sins in the blood of Christ, will be written with an impartial pen, and published to the world of men and angels: every mouth will be stopped; and God's righteousness, in the condemnation of sinners, manifested to the whole universe.

V. 12-30. Mirth, festivity, and vain company, furnish fuel to licentious inclinations, and opportunity inflames the heart; then interest, credit, and conscience are sacrificed, and the wisest of men act as if bereft of common sense: for "wine and whoredom take away the heart," and stupefy the conscience.—What need have we then to "watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation?" Unthought-of consequences will soon prove the folly of those who give license to their lusts; and they who fear shame before men, more than condemnation before God, often find the very thing come upon them which they feared, notwithstanding all their care to prevent it.—Injurious suspicions and unjust treatment frequently drive those to evil practices, who were not previously disposed to them; but miserable and infatuated beyond expression are they, who barter chastity, reputation, and even their souls, for the paltry reward of sin. Nor are any more hardened against compassion, or more disposed to treat others with unrelenting severity, than they who are most indulgent to themselves, and heedlessly continue in unrepented wickedness: yet it is hopeless, when being put to shame before men produces conviction of guilt, humiliating confessions, and renunciation of the sin thus exposed, never more to return to it.—But while we by compassionate pious Jacob, thus wounded on every side by the misconduct of his family, let

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Joseph is taught by Potiphar, and preferred in the family, 1-6; tempted by his mistress, but overcomes the temptation, 7-12; accused by her, and imprisoned by Potiphar, 13-20; favoured by the Lord's presence, and advanced by the keeper of the prison, 21-23.

AND Joseph ^{was} brought down to Egypt: and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.

2 And ^{the} LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man: and he was in the ^{house} of his master the Egyptian.

3 And his master ^{saw} that the LORD ^{was} with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

4 And Joseph ^{found} grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him ^{overseer} over his house, and all ^{that} he had he put into his hand.

5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house ^{for} Joseph's sake: and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had, in the house, and in the field.

6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat: and Joseph was ^a goodly person, and well favoured.

7 [¶] And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife ^{cast} her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, ^{"Lie with me."}

8 But he ^{refused}, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand.

9 *There is none greater in this house than I: neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, because thou art his wife: shew then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

10 And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, ^{or} to be with her. [*Practical Observations.*]

11 [¶] And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there ^{was} none of the men of the house there within.

12 And she ^{caught} him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: ^{and} he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in ^a Hebrew unto us to mock us: ^{he} came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice.

15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

16 And she ^{laid} up his garment by her until his lord came home.

17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, ^{"The Hebrew servant which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me."}

18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

19 And it came to pass, when his master ^{heard} the words of his wife, which she spake unto him,

3,6. Lev. 20:10. 2 Sam. 11:27. Job 31:9-12. Jer. 5:8,9. 1 Cor. 6:9,10. Gal. 5:19-21. Heb. 13:4. Rev. 21:8. 22:15. q Num. 32:23. 2 Sam. 12:13. Neh. 5:15. Ps. 61:4. Jer. 28:16. 50:7. r Prov. 1:15. 5:8. 1 Cor. 6:18. 15:33. 1 The. 5:22. 2 Tim. 2:22. 1 Pet. 2:11. s Job 34:15. Jer. 23:34. Mal. 3:5. t Prov. 7:13. Ec. 7:26. Ez. 16:30-34. u 1 Sam. 15:27. Prov. 6:5. Mark 14:51,52. x 17:10. 21:14,13. 40:15. y Is. 51:7. 54:17. Matt. 5:11. 26:59. 1 Luke 22:2. 2 Cor. 6:8. 1 Pet. 2:20. 3:14-18. 4:14-19. * Heb. gent. s Jer. 422:9,3-5. a 14. Ex. 20:16. 23:1. 1 Kings 21:9-13. Ps. 55:3. 120:3,4. Prov. 19:5,9. s Job 29:16. Prov. 17:29. 12. Acts 25:16.

of youth, the importunity with which he was assaulted, and the opportunity and privacy afforded him, we cannot too much admire this glorious victory of chastity, the power of divine grace displayed in it, and the excellence of him who was hated of his brethren. Comparing his conduct with that of Judah, Reuben, and the other sons of Jacob, it must be allowed, that he had justly the preference in his father's esteem.—Nor was this refusal more worthy of admiration than the *manner* of it. The calmness of his spirit, the force of his arguments, the generosity and delicacy, as well as piety, of his sentiments, are most beautiful.—His master's kindness to him, the honourable station which he held in his family, the peculiar relation in which his tempter stood to his generous benefactor, the greatness of the injustice and ingratitude to him;—but above all, the greatness of the wickedness in the sight of God, whose authority and displeasure he was not ashamed to mention to this adulterous woman;—these were the topics on which he insisted; and had not her vile passions stupified and hardened her heart, surely she must have been reclaimed, or even converted to his God, and induced to embrace that religion, which he so adorned and recommended by his conduct!—While she assailed him day by day continually, no doubt Satan, as far as permitted, would paint to his imagination in lively colours the advantages of compliance, and the consequences of refusal: but all was in vain; for the grace of our Lord was sufficient for him. And when he found her deaf to the remonstrances of duty, conscience, gratitude, honour, and the fear of God, and that he could not reclaim her, he avoided her company as much as possible; being distrustful of himself and fearful of being overcome, if he parleyed with the temptation.

V. 13-16. The base affection of this wicked woman, being finally disappointed, was changed for the most rancorous enmity; and she seems to have exulted in the opportunity of being revenged upon Joseph. When therefore the men came in, she addressed them in the affected language of rage and disdain; alluding to Potiphar, in language which seemed to charge him as accessory to the indignity which she pretended to have received. She called Joseph a *Hebrew* in contempt of his original and religion; and added that he left his garment with her; intimating, that when she called aloud for help, he hastened to escape; upon which, seizing hold of his garment, she had in vain endeavoured to retain him till they came to apprehend him.

V. 17. *To mock me.*] To insult and treat me in a base unworthy manner.

V. 19, 20. Joseph did not attempt to speak in his own de-

a 37:36. 45:4. Ps. 105:17. Acts 7:9. b 37:25,28. c 21:22. 23:15. 1 Sam. 3:19. Rom. 8:31. 4 Cor. 7:11. Is. 8:9,10. 41:10. 43:2. Jer. 15:20. Matt. 1:23. Acts 7:9,10. Rom. 8:31. 4 Cor. 7:11. 21:22. 23:15. 30:27,37. 1 Sam. 18:14,26. Zech. 8:3. Rev. 3:9. 123. Josh. 1:7. 2 Chr. 26:5. Neh. 2:20. Ps. 1:3. 1 Cor. 16:2. g 21:13. 19:19. 32:5. 33:10. Neh. 2:4,5. Prov. 16:7. h 22:15,2. 24:2. 41:40,41. Prov. 14:35. 17:2. 27:18. Acts 20:28. 112:2. 19:29. 30:27. Deut. 28:3-6. Acts 27:24. 14,9,23. k 12:14. 15:29. 1 Sam. 16:12. 19:2. 1 Sam. 16:2. Job 31:1. Ps. 119:37. Ez. 33:5,12-16. Matt. 5:28. 2 Pet. 2:14. 1 John 2:16. n 2 Sam. 13:11. Prov. 7:13. Jer. 3:3. o Prov. 1:10. 2:10. 16-18. 50-55. 52:33. 7:25-27. 9:13-18. 22:14. 32:26-28. p Neh. 6:11. Luke 12:48. 1 Cor. 4:2. Tit. 2:10. p 20:

us admire the sovereign purpose and grace of God, who by all these events, was preparing for the manifestation of his Son in human nature. Our Redeemer sprang from Judah by Tamar, and from Pharez: for his excellency was personal; and, though himself sinless, it suited the end of his appearance, for him to be ^{"made in the likeness of sinful flesh."}

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIX. V. 2-6. Joseph was not only favoured with the comforting presence of the Lord, and with seasons of peculiarly sweet communion with him, but he was so remarkably furnished with wisdom from above, and prospered in all his undertakings, that it was evident, even to Potiphar himself, that the Lord was with him, assisting and succeeding them. Thus, though a slave, he was had in reputation; and, being diligent in his business, he became a favourite with his master, who greatly countenanced and confided in him. Potiphar, no doubt, would hear from Joseph, (who, it is evident, avowed his religion, and refused to join in idolatry, many things concerning JEHOVAH, the God whom he worshipped: and finding all his affairs prospered, and that Joseph ascribed this to the Lord's special blessing, he might be convinced, (as Laban had been concerning Jacob,) that the Lord blessed him for Joseph's sake; indeed, it seems to have been evident to all concerned. Thus at length Potiphar, having full confidence in his integrity, prudence, and good success, left all his concerns to his management; and, without anxiety, enjoyed his abundance. Considering Potiphar's rank, it is not probable that Joseph was preferred to so important a station, till his ability and fidelity had been fully proved. About thirteen years elapsed, from the time when he was sold into Egypt, to that of his standing before Pharaoh. Some years he was confined in prison: but probably more elapsed during his continuance in Potiphar's family, before his imprisonment; where he would have large opportunity of acquiring that kind of knowledge and address, which his future elevated station required.—Joseph's comeliness is spoken of in the very terms before used in the original concerning his mother Rachel. (29:17.)

V. 7. *Lie with me.*] The disparity in rank between Potiphar's wife and Joseph, and the observation of his modesty, as equal to his other virtues, probably made her despair of inveigling him by distant hints: and considering how much it was his interest to oblige her, and how dangerous to give her offence, and hurried on by her criminal passions, she was not ashamed to address him in this impudent manner, not greatly fearing a repulse.

V. 8-10. Attending to the circumstances before mentioned, and considering Joseph as a single man in the vigour

saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.

20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

21 ¶ But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison: and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand: because the LORD was with him: and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

c Prov. 6:31,35. d 40:15. 41:14. Ps. 105:19. 1 Pet. 2:19. e 40:1—3. 41:9—14. 1s. 78:10. f See on 2. * Heb. extend d kindness unto him. g Ex. 3:21. 11:3. 12:36. 1s. 105:19,22. Prov. 16:7. Dan. 1:9. Acts 7:10. h 4:9. i 40:3,4. k See on 2,3. 49:23,24. 1 Sam. 2:30. Ps. 37:3—11. Is. 43:2. Dan. 6:22. a 39:

fence: perhaps he was not permitted; or he might not be inclined, sensible it would be in vain. Doubtless, however, he would say, as David did, "Thou shalt answer for me, O LORD, my God." Potiphar was no doubt plausible, for so hastily crediting this accusation against a person of approved excellence; yet, considering the absolute authority which masters possessed over the lives of their slaves, the vehement rancour of his accuser, that accuser his master's wife, and the baseness of the crime very plausibly laid to his charge, it must be ascribed to a special interposition of God, that he was not immediately put to death. Instead of this, he was cast into the prison where the king's prisoners were confined, in which circumstance also the hand of the LORD should be noticed; for in any other prison probably Pharaoh would never have heard of him.

V. 22. *He was the doer of it.*] Through the wisdom and fidelity which Joseph manifested, he soon acquired the confidence of the keeper of the prison; and though at first severely treated, (*Note*, Ps. 105:18.) yet he afterwards became both comfortable and useful. No doubt, the prisoners were used by him with singular humanity, and probably benefited by his pious counsels, excellent example, and winning benevolence.

V. 23. *Because the LORD, &c.*] This was so evident that the keeper of the prison noticed it; and was influenced, perhaps even converted, by what he observed. Thus, in all respects, Joseph was a blessing. (12:2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10. Our enemies may strip us of external distinctions and ornaments, but wisdom and grace cannot be taken from us: they may banish us from our friends, relatives, and country; but they cannot deprive us of the presence of the LORD: they may even exclude us from the benefits of common providence, rob us of our liberty, and confine us in dungeons; but they cannot shut us out from the throne of grace, or bereave us of the blessings of salvation.—The ordinances of God and the society of his people are very useful, and, in some sense, almost necessary, to the life of faith and growth of grace, especially in young converts; so that parents and ministers are justly fearful lest their beloved children or people should be secluded from them: but if, contrary to our inclination, we should be deprived of these advantages, His gracious presence can supply the deficiency, and even make our souls like a watered garden, rendering us comfortable, respectable, prosperous, and useful.—Had Potiphar purchased Joseph with half the substance of his house, he would have made an advantageous bargain; and, till imposed upon, he learned his value by experience, and treated him accordingly. Yet how little do many Christians understand the worth of such servants as fear God, who will always be most faithful, industrious, and successful! But we must allow, on the other hand, that mere pretenders to religion, of character and conduct exactly the reverse of Joseph, occasion this prejudice among those who cannot or will not discriminate, between the humble Christian, and the noisy hypocrite.—When the LORD pleases he can easily give his servants favour, even among strangers; and no one was ever a loser by being kind to them. In general, they who accommodate themselves to a low and laborious situation, will get forward, and acquire confidence. But alas! prosperity draws on temptation: and personal accomplishments are often snares to others, as well as to the possessor, who has therefore no cause to glory in them; nor ought any one to envy or covet them. Through the force of human depravity, those amiable qualities, which should command esteem, attract the attention of the licentious eye, and excite the licentious passions; which, having required the ascendancy, scorn restraint and regard to modesty and decency. Thus "when lust is conceived, it bringeth forth sin;" and the infatuated wretch, rushing headlong to destruction, turns seducer, and becomes the factor for Satan, in tempting others to wickedness. Nor is any thing more to be dreaded than such a tempter, or more to be shunned than such temptations: so that if we do not mean to commit iniquity, we ought to "flee as a bird from the snare of

CHAPTER XL.

Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker being imprisoned, Joseph is charged with them, 1—4. He interprets their dreams, and offers a petition to the chief butler, 5—19. The dreams are accomplished, and the chief butler gets Joseph, 20—23.

AND it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.

2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they continued a season in ward.

5 ¶ And they dreamed a dream both of them,

20—23. Esh. 6:1. b 13. Neh. 1:11. 2:1,2. c Ps. 76:10. Prov. 16:14. Acta 12:20. d 1 C. 17:37,27. e 39:20. f 39:1,21—28. g 8. 20:3. 37:5,10. 41:1—7. Judg. 7:13. Dan. 2:1—3. 4:5,9,19.

the fowler, and as a roe from the hand of the hunter." Let us not, however, rest satisfied with admiring Joseph, in the honourable victory which he acquired; but let us consider him as a bright example proposed to our imitation, and an illustrious proof of the energy of divine grace. Trusting to that grace, we may hope to be more than conquerors, not only if exposed to the fiery trial of persecution, but even if assaulted in the far more dangerous manner that Joseph was. But, would we stand steadfast in the day of trial, we must have our minds armed with gratitude, justice, fear of God, faith, love, abhorrence of evil, contempt of worldly pleasure or gain, and readiness for the cross; we must learn also to judge of every sin, and of licentious indulgences especially, not in that slight manner which the world does, but as enormous crimes, "for the sake of which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." And, that importunity may not prevail on us, nor secrecy encourage us, we should endeavour to have our minds habitually possessed with a sense of our obligations unto God, his all-seeing eye upon us, and the approaching discoveries of the day of judgment.

V. 11—23. If Satan cannot induce us to sin, he will do his utmost to distress us; and we must expect the embittered resentment of those, whose wicked inclinations we disappoint; and to be accused of the very crimes which we abhor, yea, because we abhor them. It is, however, far "better, if the will of God be so, that we suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing;" a clear conscience and the presence of a merciful God will support us, not only under our trials, but under the most injurious calumnies; and we need not use much labour to vindicate ourselves; for in due time the LORD will vindicate us, and clear off every aspersion.—The more meekly and patiently we suffer, the less bitterness shall we experience in our trials, and the more consistent will our conduct be with the Christian character. By all these things, the LORD is training up his people for glory: perhaps for better scenes, and important services, in this present world; and, if we are not in a wrong spirit, or out of the path of duty, we can never be out of the way either of comfort or usefulness.—But let us not forget, through Joseph, to look unto Jesus, who "suffered being tempted," yet without sin; who was calumniated and persecuted, but without cause; "who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;" to recriminate, or to vindicate himself; and who by the cross ascended to the throne. May we be enabled, and contented, to follow in the same path of submissive suffering, to the same place of glory.

NOTES.—CHAP. XL. V. 3. Potiphar was "captain of the guard;" and it seems this state-prison was adjoining to his house, and intrusted to his care; so that the keeper of the prison probably was his deputy. (37:36.)

V. 4. Joseph at first was not only closely confined, but severely treated in the prison. (*Note*, Ps. 105:18.) Yet, after some time, Potiphar's resentment seems to have cooled; and, considering the whole of Joseph's prudent and excellent conduct, he perhaps began to suspect that he had been maliciously accused. He however connived at the kindness shown to Joseph, and, being sensible of his abilities, was not unwilling he should be trusted, and prove serviceable in that situation. Being thus employed, he gave the king's butler and baker, as prisoners of rank, all the attendance required.—"On how many little incidents of which the parties at the time think nothing, do some of the greatest events depend! If they had gone to another prison, Joseph might have died where he was, and no provision been made for the seven years of famine; and Jacob and his family, with millions of others, have perished for want; and so all the promises of their becoming a great nation, and of the Messiah springing from among them, and all nations being blessed in him, would have been frustrated. But he that appoints the end, appoints all the means which lead to it." Fuller.

V. 6. The prisoners, considering their dreams as supernatural, were very melancholy; for their situation, and perhaps conscious guilt, caused them to forebode the worst. —hu

each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream; the outler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and behold they were sad.

7 And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, "Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?"

8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you."

9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said unto him, In my dream, behold, "a vine was before me.

10 And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes.

11 And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

12 And Joseph said unto him, "This is the interpretation of it: "The three branches are three days.

13 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

14 But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me;

18. Dan. 4:5, 5:8. 2 Sam. 13:4. Neh. 2:2. Luke 24:17. * Heb. are your faces evil? 14:15, 16. Is. 6:19. Dan. 2:11, 23, 47. 5:11-15. 1 Cor. 12:10, 11. m 37-40. Judg. 7:13-15. Dan. 2:31, 4:10, &c. n 41:25. Dan. 2:36, &c. 4:19, &c. o 41:28. Judg. 7:14. Matt. 26:26. 1 Cor. 10:4. Gal. 4:25. p 2 Kings 25:27. Ps. 8:3. Jer. 52:31. 1 Cor. reckoned, 19:20. marg. 1 Heb. remember me with thee. q 1 Sam. 25:31. Luke 23:42. 1 Cor. 7:21. r Josh. 2:12. 1 Sam. 20:14, 15. 2 Sam. 9:1. 1 Kings 2:7. s 37:28. Ex. 21:16. Deut. 24:7. 1 Tim. 1:10. 14:13. 41:12. u 39:20. 1 Sam. 24:11. Ps. 59:3, 4. Dan. 6:22. John 10:32, 15:25. Acts 24:12-21.

deed, it must have appeared very extraordinary, that each of them should have so significant a dream at the same time.

V. 7. This is a beautiful specimen of that attentive tenderness and sympathy, by means of which God gave Joseph favour with every one whom he approached.

V. 8. The prisoners could not consult the diviners, in whom they placed confidence; and this added to their anxiety. Joseph's apposite question intimates, that he had before discoursed with them concerning the true God, and endeavoured to draw them off from those lying vanities to his worship and service. It also precluded them from giving him the honour of the interpretation.

V. 9-13. The rapid budding and blossoming of the vine, and ripening of the grapes, seems to have fixed the interpretation to three days, rather than weeks, months, or years: and the actual delivery of the cup into Pharaoh's hand obviously denoted a prosperous event.—"The three branches are three days," (12.) "This is my body."

V. 14, 15. Joseph desired, by an appeal to Pharaoh, to obtain his liberty; but he had no further request to present. He did not say by whom, or in what manner, he was stolen, and sold for a slave; for he was not disposed to criminate or reproach: neither did he so much as accuse his wicked mistress, or at all reflect on Potiphar, or express any resentment for his false imprisonment.—It seems that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with large families and in flourishing circumstances had so long sojourned in the southern part of Canaan, that it had become known in the adjacent countries as "the land of the Hebrews."

V. 16-19. The baked-meats, eaten by the birds and not brought to Pharaoh, was the unfavourable presage. The bad dream would not admit of a good interpretation; nor could Joseph, without unfaithfulness, conceal the truth, however it might pain him to speak it. The baker might be benefited by the warning, if he prepared to meet the predicted event.

V. 20-22. The anniversary of Pharaoh's birthday being observed as a season of festivity, these officers were inquired after; and either through the merits of their cause, or the caprice of their sovereign, they were thus differently disposed of.

V. 23. Neither the kindness shown by Joseph, nor the interpretation of his dream thus remarkably verified, nor the discourses which doubtless he had heard concerning religion, nor the excellent conduct of Joseph which adorned it, made any lasting impression on the chief butler, when he was again possessed of the emoluments of his office, and enjoying the pleasures of the court!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

High stations are slippery places: and from the presence-chamber to the dungeon is, in many earthly courts, only a short step: but a place in the favour of God, who will not forsake his true servants, is of unsearchable value.—In the vo-

and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

15 For indeed I was "stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I "done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

16 ¶ When "the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good; he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and behold, I had three "white baskets on my head.

17 And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of "bake-meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

18 And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: "The three baskets are three days.

19 Yet "within three days shall Pharaoh "lift up thy head from off thee, and shall "hang thee on a tree: "and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

20 ¶ And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's "birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he "lifted up the head of the chief butler, and of the chief baker, among his servants.

21 And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he "gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand:

22 But "he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, "but forgot him.

25:10, 11. 1 Pet. 3:17, 18. x 1:2. § Or, baskets full of holes. ¶ Heb. meat of Pharaoh, the work of a baker, or cook. y See on 12. 41:26. 1 Cor. 10:4, 11:34. z 13. 1 Or, reckon these and take thy office from thee. a 22. 41:13. Deut. 21:22, 23. Josh. 5:29. 10:26. 2 Sam. 21:6. Gal. 3:13. b 17. 1 Sam. 17:44, 46. 2 Sam. 21:10. Ez. 39:4. c Matt. 14:6. Mark 6:21. ** Or, reckoned, 18:19. marg. Matt. 18:23-25. Luke 16:1, 2. d 13. Neh. 2:1. e 8:19. 41:11-13, 16. Dan. 2:19-23, 30. 5:12. f Job 19:14. Ps. 31:12. Ec. 9:15, 16. Am. 6:6.

luntary actions of men, who know not God and pay no regard to him, we may discern his hand; and perceive how his purposes unfold, and his counsels slowly, but surely, work towards an accomplishment. While we are encouraged by the gracious dealings of the Lord towards his afflicted servant, let us mark how he resembled Christ; and may we, through the grace of God, resemble and imitate him in fidelity, humanity, compassion, unaffected piety, and humility; in repressing the pride and resentment, which agitate our hearts, imbibitor our spirits, and sometimes disgrace our conversation, when we meet with injurious treatment, or speak of that which we have met with; and in modestly pleading our own cause, without needlessly mentioning or exposing the faults, even of our most malignant enemies.—The foresight of sinners, however attained, reaches but a few days forward; but, by faith, the believer looks through the sufferings of time, and anticipates the glories of eternity.—Though we ought not in general to expect information from dreams, and need not regret the want of an interpreter: yet, to be favoured with a wise and faithful interpreter of God's providences and oracles, especially in seasons of affliction, is an inexpressible mercy. (Note, Job 33:19-26.) Here also "interpretations belong to God:" from him we must seek them, and to him give the praise, whatever instruments he employs. But the same faithful interpretation which encourages one man, will contain an awful warning to another of a contrary character: yet even this is of salutary tendency; for blessed be God, if we discover our danger, we need not long seek in vain for a refuge. Temporal deliverances must generally be longer waited for by the Lord's servants, than by others, that they may have them with the fullest advantage, and be previously prepared for them: and he will teach them to cease from man, before they obtain their best blessings.—The festive observation of birthdays by men, who are exceedingly desirous of living in this world, seems rather incongruous; for, in fact, they thus celebrate, with every indication of joy and gladness, the decrease, as it were, of one year after another of their uncertain span; nor are the two instances of this vanity, recorded in Scripture, suited to recommend the practice. (Mark 6:16-29.) A Christian, however, may properly observe his birthday, with praise and thanksgiving to God for giving him life, and with gladness of heart that he approaches the conclusion of sin and sorrow, and the completion of his felicity. He may also take occasion, at these returning seasons, to bless the Lord for the mercies of the past year, to humble himself for the sins which he has committed, and to seek the divine assistance and blessing in all he shall undertake during the year on which he then enters.—We must not complain or be discouraged, if we are forgotten, or ungratefully required, by those whom we have served. Ingratitude is, alas! the fault of our nature; and we as well as others are guilty of it, especially in our base forgetfulness of God. But let us remem-

CHAPTER XLI.

Pharaoh has two dreams, which the magicians cannot interpret, 1-8. The chief butler recommends Joseph, who is sent for, and interprets the dreams to foretell seven years of great plenty and seven of as great scarcity, 9-32. He gives counsel to Pharaoh; and is highly preferred, 33-44; and married, 45. The seven years of plenty, and Joseph's wise management, 46-49. The names of his two sons, 50-52. The seven years of scarcity begin, and the Egyptians are relieved by Joseph, 53-57.

AND it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed, and behold he stood by the river.

2 And behold, there came up out of the river seven well-favoured kine, and fat-fleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 And behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favoured, and lean-fleshed; and stood by the other kine, upon the brink of the river.

4 And the ill-favoured and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

6 And behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprang up after them.

7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears: and Pharaoh awoke, and behold it was a dream.

8 And it came to pass in the morning, that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dreams; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

9 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day.

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me, and the chief baker.

11 And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he: we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 And there was there with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams: to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was: me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream, to interpret it.

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river.

18 And behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed, and well-favoured; and they fed in a meadow.

19 And behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favoured, and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness.

20 And the lean and the ill-favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine.

21 And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill-favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

22 And I saw in my dream, and behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good.

23 And behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east-wind, sprang up after them.

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it unto me.

25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

26 The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one.

27 And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east-wind, shall be seven years of famine.

28 This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty, throughout all the land of Egypt.

30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine, and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt: and the famine shall consume the land.

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land, by reason of that famine following: for it shall be very grievous.

32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established.

a 37-50. 40-5. Esth. 6:1. Dan. 2:1-3. 4, 5, &c. Matt. 27:19. b Deut. 11:10. c 28:39. d 17-27. e Heb. fat. f Gen. 32:14. g Ex. 17:10. 19:12. Hos. 13:15. h 40:6. Dan. 2:1-3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. i 40:10. j 40:20. k Jer. 1:10. l Ex. 43:3. m 1 Sam. 2:3. n Ps. 105:15-22. o Ex. 10:16. Dan. 2:25. p 2 Sam. 12:19. 2 Kings 23:29. Esth. 4:1-4. 5:1. Is. 61:3, 10. Jer. 52:32, 33. q 9

ber the sufferings, promises, and love of our Redeemer, and mark in this narration of Joseph, a type of Jesus, in the depth of his humiliation, mercifully assuring one of the malefactors, who hung beside him, of immediate and eternal felicity; and with awful justice leaving the other to hardness of heart and eternal perdition.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLI. V. 1. Joseph must have been a considerable time in prison, before he would be so far trusted, as to have the two state-prisoners under his charge; they were confined for some time, and yet two years more elapsed without any tokens of approaching deliverance! Surely he would often be ready to say, "Lord, how long?"—But it was the will of God, that his servant should receive liberty, and preferment also, not as an obligation conferred on an indigent person, but for the benefit of others, and in the character of a benefactor to the king and people of Egypt.—The scene of Pharaoh's dreams is laid at the river Nile, the annual overflowing of which caused the fertility of Egypt; but the failure of it was followed by famine, or at least by scarcity.

V. 2-7. The fat cattle and full ears of corn were apt emblems of plenty; the lean cattle and blighted ears, of famine. "The kine" seem to bear an allusion to the grass for the use of cattle; and "the ears" to the corn for the food of man.

V. 8. The circumstances of Pharaoh's dreams were strange and unnatural, yet they seemed very significant; and

—13. Dan. 5:16. f Or, when thou hastest a dream thou canst interpret it. g 40:8. Dan. 2:18-23, 28-30, 47. a 3:12. 14:14, 15. 2 Cor. 3:5. s 1-7. i Jer. 24:1-3. 3:5, 8. h Heb. come to the inward parts of them. Ex. 3:3. Rev. 10:9, 10. j Or, small. u 6. 2 Kings 19:26. Is. 129:6, 7. Hos. 8:7. 9:16. x See on 16. Is. 41:22, 23. 43:9. Mark 13:23. Rev. 4:1. y See on 40:12. z 24. Ex. 26:6. 1 Sam. 5:7. a See on 16:25. b 7. 2 Sam. 24:13. 1 Kings 17:1. 2 Kings 8:1. 1 Sam. 4:25. Jam. 5:17. c Jer. 31:7. Is. 65:16. d 47:19. e Heb. I saw. f 1 Sam. 2:6. Is. 24:20. g 37:7, 9. 2 Cor. 13:1. h Num. 23:19. Is. 14:21-27. i 14:11. j 21. k 25. ** Or, prepared. Is. 30:33. Matt. 25:34, 41. Mark 16:7. 1 Cor. 2:9. Gal. 1:15.

they impressed his mind, as a presage of some great events to himself or his kingdom: and God so ordered it, to forward Joseph's advancement, that the magicians and wise men could not make so much as a plausible conjecture at the meaning of them. (Marg. Ref.) It does not appear by what rules they interpreted dreams, or why they declined giving any interpretation on this occasion.

V. 9. My faults.] Either formerly against Pharaoh, or in forgetting Joseph.

V. 16. Thus Joseph spake of the Lord and his "statutes before kings, and was not ashamed." By this modest and pious answer he tacitly condemned all the pretended skill of the magicians, and endeavoured to draw the king himself "from these lying vanities unto the living God;" at the same time he renounced all pretensions to superior sagacity, expressed his good will to Pharaoh, and intimated a confidence that the dream and interpretation would prove beneficial to his kingdom.

V. 25-27. Both dreams had one meaning; the same events being represented under two emblems.—The seven good kine and the seven good ears, "were seven years," or denoted seven years: a very common mode of expression; though in a single instance multitudes have inferred things absurd and impossible from one similar to it; viz. "This is my body."—(See 40:12.)

V. 28-32. Thus Joseph emphatically intimated to Pha-

blished by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 Now ^{therefore} let Pharaoh ^{look out a} man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 And let them ^{gather all the food of those} good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 And that food shall be for store to the land, against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt: ^{that the land} ^{perish not} through the famine.

37 ¶ And ^{the thing was} good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man ^{in whom the} Spirit of God *is*?

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as ^{God hath} showed thee all this, *there is none* so discreet and wise as thou art.

40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people ^{be ruled}: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, ¶ See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42 And Pharaoh took off ^{his ring from his} hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of ^{fine linen}, and put ^{a gold} chain about his neck.

43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, ^{Bow the knee}: and he made him ^{ruler} over all the land of Egypt.

44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, *I am Pharaoh,*

and without thee shall no man ^{lift up his hand or} foot in all the land of Egypt.

45 ¶ And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah ^{priest of On}: and Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

46 And Joseph was ^{thirty years old} when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by ^{handfuls}.

48 And ^{he gathered up all the food of the seven} years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field which *was* round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn ^{as the sand of} the sea, very much, until he left numbering: for *it was* without number.

50 ¶ And ^{unto Joseph} were born two sons before the years of famine came: which ^{Asenath}, the daughter of Poti-pherah ^{priest of On}, bare unto him.

51 And Joseph ^{called the name of the first-born} Manasseh; for God, *said he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second ^{called he} Ephraim: for God hath caused me to be fruitful in ^{the land of my} affliction.

53 ¶ And ^{the seven years of plenteousness,} that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

54 And ^{the seven years of dearth} began to come, ^{according as Joseph had said}: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was ^{famished}, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread:

g Dan. 4:27. h Ex. 18:19-22. Dent. 1:13. Acts 6:3. * Or, overseers. i Prov. 6:6-8. j 37:42. k 43:49. l 45:7. 147:13-25. † Heb. he no cut off. 30. m Prov. 10:20. 25:11. n Josh. 22:30. 2 Sam. 3:30. 1 Kings 21:2. margins. o Num. 27:18. Job 32:8. Dan. 4:18. 5:11, 14. p See on 16:25, 28, 33. q 39:4-5. Ps. 103:21, 22. Prov. 22:29. Dan. 2:48. 6:3. † Heb. be armed, or kiss. i Sam. 10:1. Ps. 2:12. r 44. Esth. 10:3. Dan. 4:2, 3. Matt. 23:18. 1 Pil. 2:9-11. s Esth. 10:12. 6:7-12. 8:2, 8, 10, 15. 10:3. Dan. 2:49, 47. 5:7, 29. Luke 15:22. ‡ Or, will. † Prov. 1:9. Cant. 1:10. Ez. 16:11. 1 Jan. 5:7, 16. † Or, Tender father. 4:58. Heb. Ad eek. u 42:6, 30, 33. 45:26. Acts 7:10. x Ex. 11:7.

raoh, that the fertility of Egypt, or the contrary, was entirely the work of JEHOVAH; and that the overflowing of the Nile, and its failure, were second causes, entirely directed and ordered by the God of heaven.

V. 33-36. Joseph presumed to offer Pharaoh this counsel, as the practical inference from the revelation which God had afforded him; for that was intended to forewarn the king, that he might make preparation. There could be no risk in following this advice; as corn was not to be reserved, except as it could be well spared from the regular consumption.—Besides all the corn which Pharaoh should lay up, it might be supposed that many of the wealthy Egyptians would provide private granaries; and that an immense quantity would, in different ways, be collected during the years of plenty.

V. 37. Under the present impression of Joseph's interpretation of the dream, not only Pharaoh, but his counsellors likewise, approved Joseph's advice as undeniably good; perhaps not without each expecting, for himself or his friend, this lucrative and honourable employment.—Thus God gave Joseph favour as well as wisdom.

V. 38. *Spirit of God.*] This conclusion probably sprang from the remainder of a traditional opinion, that the highest and noblest wisdom was derived from the inspiration of the Spirit of God; and the judgment of Pharaoh concerning Joseph was doubtless formed, not only from the interpretation, as excelling all the skill of the magicians, but also from his purposed plan, as equally superior to all the sagacity of his counsellors. All parties were silent on the occasion, and it may well be ascribed to God's overawing their minds, that no opposition was made, when we consider how prone human nature is to envy, and that Joseph was a stranger and a slave!

V. 40. Thus was Joseph made chief minister and ruler in every department of government; as well as placed over the business of collecting corn: a station which no man on earth could have held with equal advantage to all concerned, and with less danger to any; for in this Joseph was an especial type of our perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, and compassionate Mediator and King.

Be ruled.] שָׁרָה, be armed, kiss. (marg.)—Notes, 1 Sam. 10:1. Ps. 2:10-12.

V. 41-43. Perhaps Joseph was modestly disposed to decline so weighty and exalted a station, and intimidated at the difficulty and danger of it; and therefore he needed repeated

assurances to encourage him.—By these several tokens, the king publicly avowed his appointment, and showed that it would be at the peril of any one who dared to oppose it.—*Chariot*, (43.) This is the first time that a chariot or any carriage is mentioned in Scripture.—*Bow the knee.*] See the margin.

V. 44. *I am Pharaoh.*] *As sure as I am king of Egypt, I will stand by thee; so that no man shall do any thing contrary to thy command and allowance.*

V. 45, 46. Some interpret *Zaphnath-paaneah* to signify *The preserver of the land*: but others suppose it to mean, in the Egyptian tongue, a *revealer of secrets*: or *“the man to whom secrets are revealed.”*—*Poti-pherah* is a different name from Potiphar, and another person than Joseph's master is meant. As priest, or prince of On or Heliopolis, he was some great lord of the court, or at least had been; for perhaps he was dead, and his daughter a ward of Pharaoh.—Joseph immediately went over all the land to take surveys, build granaries, and make preparations for the execution of his grand design.—*Thirty years old.*] Notes, 27:1. 39:2-6.

V. 47. *By handfuls.*] An uncommon and vast increase.

V. 49. Perhaps the fifth before mentioned was imposed as a public tax; and Joseph might also buy large quantities, when corn was cheap, which he stored up near the spot; thus consulting both ease and convenience, and giving the people a pledge that it was laid up for them, not taken from them.—Some think, that the grain, or a considerable part of it, was preserved in the straw, in stacks; that so the straw might be food for the starving cattle, the produce of the first years of plenty being used in the beginning of the scarcity.

V. 51. *Manasseh.*] *Causing to forget.* God had made Joseph forget all his toil and his father's house, by the prosperous event of his captivity, slavery, and imprisonment. Perhaps, when he sought enlargement through the chief butler, he had thoughts of returning home, out of regard to his father and family: but, being now settled and engaged otherwise in Providence, he had relinquished this design.—It must be ascribed to the peculiar disposal of God, that he was kept from sending to inquire about his father, or to inform him of his advancement.

V. 54. *In all lands.*] In all the countries adjoining to Egypt.

V. 55. *Famished.*] The private stores of the Egyptians were after a time exhausted; and then they had in general no other resource but the public granaries, without which a

and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians: and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

CHAPTER XLII.

Jacob sends ten of his sons to Egypt to buy corn. 1-5. Joseph, who knows them but is unknown to them, implores them as spies, 6-17. They betray before Joseph remorse for their cruelty to him: he conceals his sympathy; retains Simeon, and sends the rest home, with provisions, requiring them to bring their younger brother, 18-25. They add their money in their sacks' mouths, and are alarmed: they report the matter to Jacob, who complains, laments, is afflicted, and refuses to send Benjamin, 26-38.

NOW when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?

2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get ye down thither, and buy

o 40,41. Matt. 3:17. 17:5. p 18. 23:17. Zech. 5:3. Luke 21:35. Acts 17:26. * Heb. all who rein was. q 42:6. 47:14-24. r 42:5. s 54:56. a 41:54,57. Acts 7:12. b 2. 1 Kings 19:3. Hos. 5:13. Gal. 2:7. c Josh. 7:10. 2 Kings 7:3,4. Ezra 10:4. Jer. 8:14. d 43:2,4. e 43:8. Ps. 118:17. Is. 38:1. Matt.

desolating famine must have ensued.—The coincidence of events with Joseph's predictions, would greatly increase his influence both with prince and people.

V. 56, 57. Joseph does not seem to have opened the public granaries, till the private stock was nearly exhausted. This measure would tend to frugality, and subserve his design both of enriching the public treasure, and preventing the horrors of famine in that and the adjacent countries.—"Face of the earth," (56.) Or, "Of the land," or, "the country, (פָּנֵי הָאֶרֶץ.)"

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-38. The Lord in his appointed time will bring his people out of trouble, purified as gold from the furnace; but seldom according to their expectations, either as to the way or the season of their deliverance; and not until he hath brought them off from other dependences, to a simple trust in him and submission to him.—"In the multitude of dreams there are divers vanities," and in general they are neither worth repeating, nor capable of any useful interpretation: yet, so absolutely is our imagination, sleeping as well as waking, in the Lord's hand, that without supposing any thing prophetic, (as in Pharaoh's dreams,) he may by a dream leave an impression upon the mind, of the most important consequences to ourselves and others.—We should not deem those expectations frustrated which are not immediately answered; nor that seed of the word thrown away, which does not immediately spring up: as the most negligent and forgetful may hereafter remember, and be humbled for their present inattention.—Deliverances, both from temporal and spiritual distress, often surprise the praying soul when least expected, so that a man at once becomes "like them that dream;" and as God frequently pours contempt upon princes, and takes pleasure in abasing the haughty; so he delights as much in advancing the humble "from the dunghill, to make them inherit the throne of glory."—Humility and a regard to the glory of God are requisite, in order to behave suitably in prosperous circumstances; and an answer of peace may be expected, when those are consulted "in whom is the Spirit of God," by those who sincerely desire to know his truth and will.—To honour those who honour him, the Lord frequently "confounds the wisdom of the wise, and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent;" and when he pleases to give wisdom and favour, he can conciliate the affections of all, or overawe their spirits; and prevent opposition from the jarring counsels and selfish passions of the ambitious and envious.

V. 39-57. Important trusts, however unexceptionably obtained and managed, are an encumbrance rather than an advantage to the possessor; who might be more comfortable, though not so useful, in a more obscure situation. Indeed, all worldly prosperity, like the ears of plenty, is fleeting away, and will soon be forgotten and swallowed up in the afflictions which are coming upon the wicked. In Joseph, however, we still see a bright example of fidelity, activity, and equity; and an instance of the extensive good, which in some circumstances may be done by one man, who is called forth, qualified, and prospered by the Lord.—The knowledge of future temporal events might in some instances be useful, yet would seldom be pleasant; but the knowledge of the future state and eternal world will be both useful and pleasant, if we do but "labour for that meat, which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give us; for him hath God the Father sealed." He is the great Antitype of Joseph.—Risen, ascended, and exalted on the throne of glory, all power is vested in him as Mediator: he is the *Revealer of secrets*, and the *Saviour of the world*. Through the whole earth the souls of men are perishing without resource, save in him, "the Bread of Life," whose fulness is inexhaustible. To him the Father bears testimony, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him;" "Go to Jesus, and what he bids you, do." To those who attend to this voice and apply to him, he will open his treasures, and will satisfy the hungry soul in every age

for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

3 And Joseph's brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

4 But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren: for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

5 And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

6 And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him, with their faces to the earth.

7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

4:4. f 5:13. g 38:16-19. h 38. 33:1,2. 43:14,25. 44:20-22,27-34. i 12:10. 26:1. 41:57. Acts 7:11. 11:28. k 41:40,41. 43:8,26. Ps. 105:16-21. Acts 7:10. 141:55,56. m 37:7. 44:14. Rev. 3:9. * Heb. hard things with them. 14-17,19,20. Matt. 15:23-28.

and nation, and that "without money and without price." But they who slight this provision must starve; and they who bow not the knee before him, and "will not that he should reign over them," will be inevitably destroyed, as enemies to him and his cause.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XLII. V. 1, 2. Jacob learned, not only from report, but from those who had actually procured supplies, that in this time of general scarcity there was abundance of corn in Egypt, which was sold to other nations.—When he said, "Why do ye look one upon another?" it implied that already they were reduced to great distress, and scarcely knew what to do: and if this was the case in Jacob's family, after the first or second year of the famine, how terrible must have been the case of multitudes, before the seven years were expired!

V. 3. All Jacob's sons seem to have been married, and to have had families, at this time: perhaps the wealth of the family being thus divided, and by the badness of the times exceedingly diminished, they had parted with most of those servants of whom we before read; and probably they disposed of the rest, previously to their going to reside in Egypt; for no further mention is made of servants, or of any that went down, besides Jacob and his descendants, with their wives.—Camels, of which Jacob had formerly possessed very many, (31:17. 32:15.) would have been more suited to fetch corn upon, than asses; but all of these seem to have been previously disposed of, probably to raise money, with which to purchase food in this emergency. (45:11.) For none are afterwards mentioned among his possessions, or those of his sons.

V. 4. *Lest ... mischief, &c.]* As Jacob supposed had befallen his beloved Joseph.

V. 6. *Bowed, &c.]* Joseph's dreams at length began to be accomplished: his brethren's shaves bowed to his sheaf; for his was full, and theirs were empty.—Probably a peculiar vigilance was on this occasion exercised respecting foreigners, lest any should come for bad purposes; and all, who were any way remarkable, were brought before Joseph in person. Thus his brethren would be introduced to him; for it must be supposed, that he employed deputies in selling the corn in different parts of the land.

V. 7, 8. It is evident that Joseph did not behave thus from resentment; for in the whole transaction he exceedingly denied himself, and put a powerful restraint on his own inclinations. No doubt he was unwilling to augment his father's grief, and would rather have rejoiced to set his heart at ease by an immediate message; yet his behaviour had for a time a contrary tendency. It is most probable that the whole transaction, from Joseph's first advancement to Jacob's descent into Egypt, was conducted by some intimations from God to Joseph, in order to accomplish his purposes respecting Jacob and his posterity.—It would not indeed have been proper for Joseph immediately to receive his brethren into favour, till it appeared that they were sensible of their guilt, and showed some symptoms of remorse. Now, by bringing concealed, he had a fair opportunity of discovering the real state of their mind, from time to time: and by virtue of his authority, he was able not only to make strict trial of them, but to employ means exactly suited to produce that state of mind which he wished to see; by exciting a beneficial remorse of conscience, and repressing their pride and stoutness of heart. By his own experience he knew the good effects of severe and long continued troubles, and was willing to try the same remedy upon them. At the same time he seems to have been very solicitous to obtain information concerning the state of the family; especially as he did not see Benjamin among his other brethren.—Joseph was seven years when sold into Egypt; he was now about thirty-eight; and he might be more altered in the space of above twenty years than his elder brethren. This would concur with his rank and state, to prevent their knowing him.

8 And Joseph knew his brethren, ^{but} they knew not him.

9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, *Ye are spies*; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

10 And they said unto him, Nay, ^{my lord}, but to buy food are thy servants come.

11 *We are all one man's sons: we are true men*; thy servants are no spies.

12 And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

13 And they said, *Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan*; and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and ^{one} is not.

14 And Joseph said unto them, *That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies*.

15 Hereby ye shall be proved: ^{by} the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, ^{except} your youngest brother come hither.

16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, ^{that} your words may be proved, whether *there be any truth in you*; or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies.

17 And he put them ^{all} together into ward, three days.

18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live: ^{for} I fear God.

19 If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses.

20 But bring your youngest brother unto me: so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. ^{And they did so.} [Practical Observations.]

21 And they said one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us; and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us.*

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, I spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the

child; and ye would not hear? therefore behold also, ^{this} blood is required.

23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for the spake unto them by an interpreter.

24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

26 And they laden their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money: for behold it was in his sack's mouth.

28 And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and ^{to it} is even in my sack; and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, *What is this that God hath done unto us?*

29 And they came unto Jacob their father, unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them, saying,

30 The man *who is* the lord of the land spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

31 And we said unto him, *We are true men*; we are no spies.

32 *We be twelve brethren, sons of our father: one is not, and the youngest is* this day with our father in the land of Canaan.

33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men, leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone.

34 And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, ^{but that} ye are true men: ^{so will} I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land.

35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that behold, every man's bundle of money

n Luke 24:16. John 20:14. 21:4. o 37:5-9. p 9:16,30,31,34. Num. 13:2,16-20. Josh. 2:1. 6:23. Judg. 1:34. 1 Sam. 25:4. Luke 20:20. Heb. 11:31. q Ex. 32:25. r 27:29,37. 37:8. 43:9. 1 Sam. 25:17. 1 Kings 18:7. s 19:33,34. John 7:18. 2 Cor. 6:8. t 11:32. 43:7. u 36:38. 37:30. 44:20,28. 45:26. Lam. 5:7. Matt. 2:18. x 9-11. Job 13:24. 19:11. Matt. 15:21-28. y Deut. 6:13. 1 Sam. 1:26. 17:55. Matt. 5:33-37. 23:16-22. Jam. 5:12. z 20:34. 43:3. 44:21-34. a Heb. *was not*. b 7:12,30. c Heb. *gathered*. d 34:22. Acts 5:18. e 40:7. 41:10. Lev. 24:12. Acts 4:3. Heb. 12:10. f 20:11. Lev. 25:43. 59:15. Luke 18:24. d 40:3. 1s. 42:7,22. Jer. 37:15. e 1:2,26. 43:1,2. 45:23. f 15. 43:5. 44:23. g 26. 6:22. John 2:5. h 41:9. 2 Sam. 12:13. 1 Kings 17:

18. Job 33:27,28. 34:31. 36:8,9. Hos. 5:15. Mark 9:44,46,48. Luke 16:29. 1 Cor. 23:28. Judg. 1:7. Prov. 21:15. 24:11,12. 28:17. Jer. 34:17. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:12. k Prov. 1:27,28. 137:21,22,29,30. Luke 23:51. Rom. 2:15. m 4:10. 9:5,6. 1 Kings 2:32. 2 Chr. 24:22. 1s. 9:12. Ez. 3:18. Luke 11:50,51. Acts 28:4. n Heb. *an interpreter was between them*. o 43:30. Luke 19:41. Rom. 12:15. 1 Cor. 12:25. o 43:25. 49:5-7. p 44:1,2. 1s. 65:1. q 45:21. Matt. 6:33. y Matt. 5:44. Rom. 12:17-21. z 43:21. Ez. 4:24. Luke 2:7. 10:34. (Lev. 25:38. Deut. 28:65. 1 Kings 10:5. Cant. 5:6. Luke 21:26. s Heb. *went forth*. t u 1s. 45:7. 1s. 2:17. 3:37. Am. 3:6. v Heb. *with us hard things*. w 20:15. x 34:10,21. 1 Kings 10:15. Ez. 17:4. y 27:28.

V. 20. *They did so.* They consented to the proposal.

V. 9. Joseph now experienced in part the accomplishment of his dreams, of which perhaps he had sometimes been ready to despair.—To effect his purposes, he charged his brethren with being spies, sent by some foreign prince who intended to invade Egypt, that they might spy out the most defenceless quarter for an attack; and he urged that they only covered their real business under the pretence of buying corn.

V. 11-13. It was not likely that one man would venture ten sons in the hazardous employment of spies.—Thus Joseph drew from them the information which he wanted: but what must have been his feelings when they said "One is not!"

V. 15. It is painful to censure so high a character as Joseph. But the expression, "by the life of Pharaoh," could be no other than a sort of court-oath, and a profane flattery of the prince, which Joseph should not have sanctioned by his example. It may be supposed, that he did not customarily use it, but only now assumed it as a more effectual blind; but still it was, at best, "doing evil, that good might come." "Let your communication;" (that is, in ordinary conversation,) "be ye yea, nay yea; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." An oath by any creature is virtually an act of idolatry; and even the outward concurrence, in such a case, should be strictly avoided.

V. 17. Considering Joseph's authority, the nature of the crime of which he professed to suspect the strangers, and the roughness of his behaviour, they perhaps expected little else during these three days, than to be put to death.—They seem to have been unwilling to comply with his requirement; or they could not agree who should be the messenger of ill tidings to Jacob; and they were therefore confined till they submitted, and came to a determination.—*Three days.* "The third day," (18.)—Compare Matt. 20:19. 27:63,64.

V. 18. *I fear God.* This expression might surprise, and perhaps encourage Joseph's brethren: but his chief design seems to have been this; by declaring that he, a supposed Egyptian, feared God, and would not do injustice, he meant to awaken their remorse; who, though educated in the true religion had not been restrained by the fear of God from cruelly treating their brother.

V. 21, 22. Joseph's brethren at length felt a keen remorse, though perhaps insensible before, or at least not deeply convinced of their heinous crime: and considering how the fear of God influenced an Egyptian, as they supposed, their unrelenting malice to their brother recurred to their remembrance; and they were unable any longer to conceal their convictions, but began to speak their thoughts one to another on the subject.—The anguish of Joseph, and his earnest and pathetic intreaties for mercy, when his brethren were about to sell him for a slave, or to kill him, are not mentioned in the narrative, but are here introduced with great effect: and they were ready to conclude, that God was about to take vengeance upon them for that cruelty. Reuben had remonstrated at the time with his brethren, but they would not hear, and now he reproached them, and seemed to denounce their doom. Thus will conscience at length reproach and torture those, who at present neglect its warnings. In this respect Reuben could plead *not guilty*; but his conscience would condemn him in another matter, respecting which his brethren could plead *not guilty*. (35:22. Notes, 49:3,4. Rom. 2:12-16.)

V. 23. *They knew not.* Thus Joseph was favoured with an encouraging token of the success of his plan, to support his mind till he should witness the final effect.

V. 24. Simeon was one of the murderers of the Shechemites, and probably of a daring, hardy spirit. It is not unlikely that he was peculiarly vehement against Joseph when he was sold, or that he seemed at this time the least affected, and therefore Joseph allotted him this additional discipline.

V. 27. *Inn.* Probably this was nothing more than a shelter provided for travellers, to which every one brought his own provisions.

V. 28. The sons of Jacob, expecting no favour from the Egyptians, regarded him as a snare laid for them; and were afraid of being pursued and prosecuted as thieves. (Notes, 44:2-16.) This was doubtless the effect which Joseph intended to produce, in order to augment their convictions and humiliation. As they had before escaped when guilty, they were ready to conclude, that they should now sin with impunity.

was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, ^aMe have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: ^aall these things are against me.

37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, ^bSlay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye ^abring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Jacob at length is persuaded to send Benjamin, who goes with his brethren into Egypt, 1-15. They are brought into Joseph's house, and are greatly alarmed, but are encouraged by Joseph's steward, 16-25. Joseph is kind to them, inquires about their father, is affected at seeing Benjamin; and they do obedience to him, 26-29. Joseph retires to weep, and then hospitably entertains them, 30-34.

AND ^athe famine was sore in the land.

2 And it came to pass when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, ^bGo again, buy us a little food.

3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The ^cman

^ddid solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food.

5 But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down; for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

7 And they said, The man tasked us straitly our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? And we told him according to the tenor of these words: ^eCould we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.

9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever.

10 For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned ^fthis second time.

^g37:20-35. ^ha 45:28. 47:12. 1 Sam. 27:1. Job 7:7. Ps. 34:19. Ec. 7:8. Is. 38:10. Rom. 8:23. 1 Cor. 10:13. 2 Cor. 4:17. Jam. 5:7-11. b 43:29-34. Mic. 6:7. c 35:12-21. 35:16-18. 37:33. 44:20, 27-34. d 44:29, 31. 1 Kings 9:8. Ps. 71:18. Is. 46:4. a 41:54-57. 42:23. 1 Sam. 5:10. Acts 7:11-13. b 42:1, 2. 1 Tim. 5:8. 6:6-8. c 42:15-20. 44:23. ⁱHeb. protesting, protested. Acts 7:34. d 5. 2 Acknowledged

crime, of which they were innocent; and they acknowledged the hand of God in it.

V. 36. Probably Jacob suspected a fallacy in the relation, and feared lest his sons had really committed some base crime, which was the cause of Simeon's being left behind; and perhaps that they had some design upon Benjamin: at least he charged the blame upon them, in language implying such distrust.—All these things lay as a heavy burden upon him, which he thought his sons but little felt. Jacob made this lamentation, when, had he known all, his heart would have exulted with joy.—*Me have ye bereaved, &c.*] It is probable that concurring circumstances, and their conduct in other respects, made him suspect the truth of their report concerning Joseph.

V. 37. Reuben (as the first-born) was the only one who brake silence on this occasion; and probably he intended principally to divert the discourse from Joseph; but his proposal was very rash and absurd! What right had he over the lives of his children? and what satisfaction could the murder of two grandchildren give Jacob for the loss of Benjamin?—Moreover, Reuben engaged to bring back Benjamin without so much as adding, 'By the blessing of God,' or 'If the Lord will': as if his puny arm could both defend and uphold him. Jacob, in other respects, seems to have placed but little confidence in him. (Notes, 43:8, 9. 49:8, 9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-20. When the Lord rendereth a "fruitful land barren" for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," he seldom proceeds to extremities. Though much misery is endured, there is some redress and respite; one country supplies the deficiencies of another, and one year furnishes a redundancy to help out the scarcity that follows or precedes it: for in the other world alone will happiness or misery be unmixed; no scarcity in the Canaan above, no redress in hell beneath.—In distress or danger, we should not stand looking one at another, desponding and inactive; but, having discovered where help may be had, we ought to apply for it without delay, and without shrinking from labour, or grudging expense; especially in the dangers to which our immortal souls are exposed. There is provision in Christ, and to him we must come, and from him we must diligently seek it; even though in obtaining it we be called to "deny ourselves, take up our cross, and forsake all that we have."—When we or our friends go from home, we should commend ourselves and them to the divine protection; for we know not what unexpected dangers may be in the way: and, when returned in safety, we should not forget our tribute of grateful praise; for many meet with terrible disasters.—Though God's purposes slowly unfold, yet they are certainly accomplished, often by the most improbable means; nay, those enemies, who have set themselves to defeat his designs, are made the instruments of their fulfilment!—Neither the guilt nor the consciousness of sin will wear out by time; and though men may commit crimes with unconcern, and remain insensible for many years, conscience being struck dumb and stupified; yet there may be a time even in this life, when it shall awake, and inspire such terrors as cannot be described. Happy is it when this is the case: otherwise the never-dying worm will certainly torment the soul for ever, in another world. In order therefore to awaken serious reflection in the guilty breast, the most afflictive dispensations of Providence are precious blessings; and, in some instances, it is

the result of wise love, to treat the proud and careless with roughness and distance; and, as far as equity and the fear of God will allow, to show them, in our dealings with them, the picture of their conduct to others, in order to bring their sins to remembrance, and excite a salutary remorse. They therefore who are of a very kind and tender disposition, if they would do good, must sometimes disguise their feelings under an assumed sternness; as the humane surgeon probes the wound, or cuts the limb, with firmness and apparent unconcern, while his heart bleeds for the anguish which he occasions.

V. 21-38. When conscience is once awakened, there needs no accuser; for every circumstance increases the dismay: and under calamities, in which many are involved, the consciousness of having avoided and protested against those crimes, which are thus called to remembrance, affords a singular support.—Many are the troubles of the righteous: yet imagination and a mistaken judgment often magnify them; and many things appear to be against them, which are most effectually conducive to their good. The Lord will make such persons ashamed of their distrustful complaints; and their gray hairs shall not descend to the grave with that sorrow which they have presaged; for the latter end of the upright man shall be peace.—But in this narration let us look unto Jesus. Thus does he conceal himself and his favour: thus does he rebuke and chasten those for whom he hath purposes of love; and by sharp corrections, and humiliating conviction from the spirit of bondage, he breaks the stoutness and subdues the pride of their hearts, and brings them to true repentance: nor will he disclose his reconciled countenance, till he has fully humbled their hearts, perhaps by long continued discouragements; till he has proved their sincerity, and led them to the simplicity of faith and dependence on him: and then by "the Spirit of adoption," he will manifest himself unto them as their Brother and their Friend. Yet before they fully know him, or taste that he is gracious, he both consults their good, and sustains their souls; preserves them from despair, and strengthens them to wait upon him, and wait for him.—Thus may we do continually; never yielding to discouragement, determining to seek no other refuge, and humbling ourselves more and more under his mighty hand; and then in due time he will answer our petitions, and far exceed our expectations.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLIII. V. 1-7. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 8, 9. Probably Judah, (whom we observed before to have shown some tokens of repentance,) had acquired more of the confidence of Jacob than either Reuben or Levi; and he seems to have been sincerely desirous of the welfare of Benjamin, as well as of the family; remembering perhaps with inward anguish his former treatment of Joseph. His arguments were very forcible. Unless Benjamin went with them, they must all perish together by famine; and ^jas even he would be more endangered by staying at home, than by going into Egypt.—Judah's engagement meant, that he would venture or endure any thing to preserve Benjamin: which he fulfilled by the most heroic and generous proposals imaginable. (Note, 44:33, 34.)

V. 10. Jacob's refusal to let Benjamin accompany his brethren had already caused them to lose much time; and Judah thus intimated that the whole family was likely to perish, by means of their father's unreasonable care of an individual.

11 And their father Israel said unto them, *If it must be* so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and *carry down* the man a present, *a little balm*, and a little honey, *spices*, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds.

12 And take double money in your hand: and the money that was brought again in the *mouth* of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it *was an oversight*:

13 Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man.

14 And *God Almighty* give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin: *"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."* [Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

16 And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to *the ruler of his house*, Bring *these* men home, and *slay* and make ready: for *these* men shall *dine* with me at noon.

17 And the man did as Joseph bade: and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 And *the men* were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house, and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time, are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house;

20 And said, O sir, *we came* indeed down the first time to buy food:

21 And it came to pass, when *we came* to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and behold, *every man's money was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and *we have brought* it again in our hand.

22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

14, 14th. 4:16. Acts 21:14. m 22:13—21. 1 Sam. 25:27. Prov. 18:16. 21:14. n 37: 25, Jer. 8:22. Ex. 27:17. o 1 Kings 10:15. 2 Chr. 32:27. Cant. 4:10. 14—16. 5:1. 8: 11. p 10:1. 12:17. 2 Cor. 8:21. Phil. 4:8. 1 Thes. 5:21. q 42:25, 35. r 17:1. 32:11. 28. s. v. 7:27. Neh. 1:11. Ps. 37:5. Prov. 16:7. 21:1. Acts 7:10. * *Or, And I, as if I were a stranger. See on 11. s 15:2. 24:2, 10. 39:4, 5. 41:1. † Heb. kill a dove. 1 Sam. 25:11. marg. ‡ Heb. eat. x 42:21, 28, 35. Job 15:21. 1sa. 53:5. 73:14. Is. 7:2. Mic. 11:25, 27. Mark 6:16. § Heb. roll himself upon us. Job 37:11. || Heb. we came down we came down. 3:7. y 42:27, 36. z See on 12— Heb. 13:18. a Judg. 6:22. 15:20. 1 Sam. 25:6. 1 Chr. 12:18. Ezra 4:17. Luke 24:36. John 14:27. 20:19, 21, 25. ¶ Heb. Your money came to me. b 14. 42:24.*

V. 11, 12. The productions of the high and mountainous parts of Canaan would differ greatly from those of Egypt, which is flat, and annually inundated. The dry seasons, which caused a famine, might not prevent the increase of those things which are here mentioned; and no doubt Jacob selected what he knew was likely to be most acceptable to an Egyptian prince. He likewise directed his sons to carry back the money that had been returned, and to take other money with which to purchase corn; perhaps double the sum which they took before, in case the prices should be advanced. Thus they would show, that they meant to act fairly.—[Spices.] (37:25.) Some think, that these were brought from India. (Marg. Ref. o.)

V. 14. Jacob knew, by experience, the influence which the Lord has over every heart, to incline it favourably to his people; and it is observable that in this speech, in which he has recourse to his former method of prevailing with man, by faith and prayer to God, he is dignified with the name of Israel.—The concluding words expressed a humble resignation to the will of God. 'If I be bereaved of my children, be it so; the Lord hath wise reasons for thus dealing with me.'

V. 16—23. Joseph seems especially to have sought time to compose his mind, that his tender feelings respecting Benjamin might not defeat his designs.

V. 27. Joseph's inquiry was aptly introduced by the present brought him; and while he, with wonderful propriety, acted in his assumed character, his question expressed the most benevolent and attentive disposition.

V. 28. In thus bowing down at the mention of their father, they, as it were, did obeisance in his name; according to Joseph's second dream. (37:9, 10.)

V. 29—31. This union in Joseph of exquisite sensibility, with firmness and entire command of his passions, in every circumstance which required it, is a decided indication of a very superior character.

23 And he said, *"Peace be* to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: *"I had your money."*

And he brought Simeon out unto them.

24 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet, and he gave their asses provender.

25 And *they made ready* the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

26 ¶ And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

27 And he asked them of *their* "welfare, and said, *"Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?"*

28 And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive: and they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, *Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?* And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

30 And Joseph made haste; for *his bowels* did yearn upon his brother: and he sought *where* to weep, and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there.

31 And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

32 And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves; because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is *an abomination* unto the Egyptians.

33 And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

34 And he took and sent *messes* unto them, from before him. But Benjamin's mess *was* five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and *were* merry with him.

96. c 18:4. 19:2. 24:32. Luke 7:44. John 13:4—17. d 11:6. e 27:29. 37:2—10. 19:20. 42:6. f 1s. 72:9. Rom. 14:11. Phil. 2:10, 11. ** Heb. peace. 37:14. Ex. 18: 7. Judg. 18:15. 1 Sam. 17:32. 25:5. † Heb. Is there peace in your father? ‡ 42: 11, 18. g 28. 37:9, 10. h Ex. 18:7. 2 Sam. 1:2. 14:4. 1 Kings 1:16. 2 Chr. 24:17. 130:22—24. 35:17, 18. k 42:13. 145:8. Josh. 7:19. 2 Chr. 29:11. Matt. 9:3, 22. Mark 10:24. 1 Kings 3:28. Jer. 31:20. Phil. 1:3. 2:1. Col. 3:12. 1 John 3:17. a 42:24. John 11:33—38. Acts 20:19, 31, 37. 2 Tim. 1:4. o 45:1. Is. 42:14. Jer. 31:16. 1 Pet. 3:10. p 46:34. Ex. 8:26. q 44:12. r 2 Sam. 11:8. s 45:22. 1 Sam. 1:5. 9:22—24. † Heb. drank largely. Cant. 5:1. Hag. 1:6. John 2:10.

V. 32. Probably Joseph, as known to be a Hebrew, connived at the superstitious prejudices of the Egyptians; but he would not sit with his brethren, lest it should excite suspicion. The abomination in which the Egyptians held eating with the Hebrews, has generally been ascribed to the latter eating the flesh of those animals which the former held sacred: therefore *shepherds* also were an abomination to the Egyptians, though they likewise had flocks and herds. This however is very doubtful; as we have no intimation of the kind in the history, nor any other records of so ancient a date. Indeed national, and even religious antipathies are so common, and so unreasonable, that it is not greatly worth while to inquire particularly into the occasion of them.

V. 33. No doubt, Joseph's brethren were seated in this order by his appointment, which excited their surprise. But probably they ascribed it to some extraordinary sagacity, or to divination, which he afterwards mentioned.

V. 34. Five times, &c.] A token of respect customary in those days, which should not be judged of by modern manners. Joseph tried whether his brethren would envy Benjamin this distinction, as they had envied him his coat of many colours. The word (שׂוּפֵר) rendered, *were merry*, sometimes means, *were intoxicated*: but it seems to be properly translated; for we cannot suppose, either that in such circumstances they would drink to excess, or that Joseph would have countenanced them in so doing.—*Εὐχάρισται, Sept. Μεσσοῦσται, John 2:10.* "Have well drunk."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14. We should use great caution in forming resolutions concerning our future measures in things indifferent; for our perseverance so much depends on the events of Providence, that the conduct which we most fully purpose may become impracticable: in most things, therefore, where duty is not concerned, we are best ruled by circumstances as they arise. But if we have formed a rash resolution, to which we cannot with propriety adhere, we must, virtually or explicitly

CHAPTER XLIV.

Joseph directs his steward to put the money into the mouths of his brethren's sacks, and his silver cup into that of Benjamin, 1, 2; and afterwards to pursue them and accuse them of theft, 3-6. Their sacks are searched; the cup is found; and in deep distress they return to Joseph, 7-13. They humble themselves before him, 14-17; and Judah makes a most pathetic speech, concluding with a most generous request, 18-34.

AND he commanded the steward of his house, ^asaying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.

2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn-money; and he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

3 ¶ As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

4 AND when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

5 Is not this it, in which my lord drinketh? and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

6 And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

7 And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing.

8 Behold, the money which we found in our sacks' mouths we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?

acknowledge our mistake, and forego our determination: for though firmness is essential to usefulness and comfort, yet obstinacy is both foolish and ruinous.—There may be cases, in which we must refuse obedience to an earthly superior; because it is superseded by a higher obligation: but this should never be done without necessity; and should always be grounded on cogent arguments, and expressed in gentle and respectful language; and even when a refusal is unexceptionable, an impartial judge can seldom approve the manner in which it is given.—When the Lord seems to frown on us, we are prone to blame others; and thus we often rebelliously murmur against the Author of our troubles, by quarrelling with the instruments.—But when all our contrivances are overruled, and necessity compels us to say, "It must be so now," then submission to the will of the all-wise Disposer, and a believing dependence on the almighty Lord, who hath all hearts in his hands, will yield us a seasonable support. While we use every prudent conciliatory means, we shall best prevail with man, by first prevailing with the Lord in fervent prayer; and "Thy will be done" should close every petition for temporal benefits, or against temporal afflictions.—Though men value very highly their gold and silver, and the luxuries which are accounted the best fruits of every land; yet, in a time of famine, they willingly barter them away for bread: how little then will they stand us in stead in the day of wrath! and how ready shall we be, if truly wise, to renounce them all "as loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ!"—They who mean sincerely, are apt to engage for more than they can perform; and, if we feel our passions greatly moved, our tongue should be held in as with a bridle; or it may afterwards occasion us much trouble.

V. 15-34. Terror once excited is increased by every event: yet innocence gives confidence, and supplies the want of eloquence; or rather furnishes that which is the most simple and expressive.—"He that walketh with wise men will be wise" and the good and pious words of the Egyptian, Joseph's steward, show us that a godly man's conversation is never useless; and teach us to abound in that speech, which is good for the use of edifying.—Even they who inadvertently, and by oversight, have got possession of the property belonging to another, are bound to restore it, when they discover the mistake; and, however we acquire honest gain, we ought to look to the Lord as the Giver of it.—His purposes are continually advancing to their full accomplishment; but they who would have his special blessings, must wait for them; and they who desire to do special good, must learn to bridle and conceal their tenderest passions.—In Joseph's conduct, we see that of Jesus, who shows those whom he loves more and more of their extreme necessity; makes them perceive that he is their only Refuge from destruction; and, consulting their future good more than their present comfort, by salutary terrors and troubles overcomes their reluctance, and brings them to himself. Then, in his wise and holy sovereignty, according to that proportion which he sees good, he gives them some taste of his exhilarating love, and welcomes them to the provisions

9 With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.

10 And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

11 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

12 And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

13 Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

14 ¶ And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, (for he was yet there,) and they fell before him on the ground.

15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not, that such a man as I can certainly divine.

16 And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

17 And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

18 ¶ Then Judah came near unto him, and said, O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a

14. m 37:29,34. Num. 14.6 2 Sam. 1:2,11. 13:19. n 43:16,23. o 37:7-9. 50: 18. 1. hii. 2:10,11. p 4:5,3:18. 4:10. q 21:26, 39:8. Ex. 32:1. 1 Or, make trial, 5. r 32. 43:9,9. s Ezra 9:10,15. Job 40:4. Acts 2:37. t 37:18-23. 42:21,22. Num. 32:33. Job. 7:1. 18. Prov. 28:17. Luke 12:2. u 19:25. 42:18. v am 2:7. Prov. 17:15. x 10. y 37:32,33. z 18:30,32. 2 Sam. 14:12. Job 40:1. Acts 2:29.

of his house, as earnest of what he further intends for them. yet so as still to prove and try them, with a view to their more complete humiliation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLIV. V. 2. It may be supposed, that this silver cup had been used at the entertainment, (43:32-34).—Joseph seems to have been desirous of ascertaining beyond doubt, how his brethren stood affected to Benjamin, Jacob's present favourite, and to their father on his account. Had they envied and hated Benjamin, (the other son of Rachel, Leah's rival,) as they had him; and had they been influenced by the same unfeeling indignation against Jacob as they were formerly, they would on this occasion have discovered it: for when the cup was found upon Benjamin, they would have had a plausible pretence for leaving him to be a slave, and returning home without him. In this case Joseph no doubt would have acted far otherwise than he did, when the event proved them to be so affectionately disposed both towards Benjamin and their father. At the same time this trial was exceedingly calculated to increase their humiliation.

V. 4-6. The abruptness of this unexpected address was well suited to surprise and confuse, and to favour the design.—Joseph probably meant that by divination he had discovered who had stolen his cup, (15:) which he could not have done, had he divined by means of the cup: and the words might be rendered, "that about which he hath used divination."—It is not however certain, that divination is meant; as the original word is used sometimes for accurate investigation or diligent observation. (30:27. 1 Kings 20:33. Heb.)

V. 9. Probably Joseph expected that his brethren, conscious of their innocence, would make use of such language as this; which favoured his design of proving how they stood affected towards Benjamin. Their money had before been put into their sacks, they knew not how, and they might have suspected somewhat similar on this occasion: their confidence therefore was very imprudent.

V. 12, 13. "In very agony they rend their clothes.—As they walk along their thoughts turn on another event.—"It is the Lord." We are murderers: divine vengeance suffers us not to live." Fuller.

V. 14. Now Joseph had, in every sense, the domination over his brethren, according to their interpretation of his dreams.

V. 15. Wot ye not? &c.] 'What! Could you suppose that I, who foretold the famine seven years before it came, was unable to discover who had stolen my cup?

V. 16. God hath found out, &c.] Probably Judah inwardly meant, the former guilt of himself and his brethren, which was now visited upon them. Conscious of his own innocence, as to the present concern, he very prudently waived all mention of it; for otherwise he must either have allowed Benjamin's guilt, or reflected on Joseph's equity.

V. 17. Get you up, &c.] At this time the experiment was at the crisis, and no doubt Joseph anxiously expected the event.

V. 18. As Pharaoh.] That is, equally to be respected.

ward in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father or a brother?

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one: and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass, when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food.

26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go

down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons.

28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since.

29 And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; (seeing that this life is bound up in the lad's life:)

31 It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide, instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

a Ezech. 1:12. Ps. 79:5. b 41:40, 44. Prov. 19:12. Dan. 8:15, 19—23. 5:19. c 42:7—10, 43:7, 29. d 37:3. 43:8. e 37:33—35. 42:36, 38. f 27—29. Luke 7:12. g 43:7. h 30. 42:33. i 42:15—20. 43:3. j 42:32—34. 143:2. m 43:4, 5. Luke 11:7. n 29:18—21, 28. 30:22—25. 33:16—13. 46:19. o 37:13, 14. p 37:33. q 42:33.

38. 44:14. Ps. 84:3, 4. r 17:31, 34. s 18:8. m 18:1, 28. Sam. 1:24. t 1 Sam. 4:17. u 24:26. v 24:1. 1 Tim. 4:13. w 29:29. x 29:29. y Ex. 32:32. Rom. 5:7—10. 9:3. z 1 Sam. 2:33, 34. 2 Chr. 34:28. Ezech. 8:6. Jer. 52:10, 11. * Heb. And. Ps. 116:3. 119:143. marg.

and feared. The reader should keep the dreams still in mind: Joseph's brethren soon learned what was become of them. (37:20.)—Judah being intrusted with Benjamin, and perhaps more affectionate than the rest both to him and his father, and having conceived the generous design mentioned in the close of the chapter, assumed the office of speaker in the name of the rest; probably with their concurrence. But it was an arduous task to plead with the judge after sentence had been passed.

V. 20. Joseph had been long dead to his father, and his brethren had been long accustomed to speak of him as dead. Every word in this verse is simplicity and pathos itself. No man of the least taste or sensibility can read it without great emotion. Indeed the whole speech is exquisitely beautiful, and perhaps the most complete pattern of genuine natural eloquence, extant in any language. Had Joseph been merely a humane judge, and no relation, and had Benjamin been guilty, such an address must have been irresistibly forcible: with what feelings then must Joseph have heard it!—When we read this generous speech we forgive Judah all the past, and cannot refuse to say, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." (49:8.)

V. 26. *We cannot, &c.* Judah had said, "We will not;" (43:5.) but he here softened the harshness of that expression.

V. 28. Judah touched on this subject with a kind of trembling hesitation. As a part of his plea it must not be omitted; yet his conscience seems to have made him falter in reporting Jacob's language, which he knew resulted from a deception.—It is surprising that Joseph could refrain on hearing this.

V. 30, 31. Nothing can exceed the tender affection expressed for Jacob in this speech; which confirms the sentiment, that from the discovery of Judah's incest with Tamar, he had been a true penitent, and consequently a more dutiful son than before. It might be feared that the sad tidings of Benjamin's hopeless bondage would quite overwhelm Jacob, and cause his immediate death. Perhaps Judah considered the former guilt of himself and brethren respecting Joseph, as the cause of this severe visitation; and as the means of rendering it insupportable to Jacob. In deep anguish of conscience, he seems to have apprehended, that he and his brethren would actually be chargeable in the sight of God, with the guilt of murdering their father; as well as of the death or slavery of Joseph and Benjamin.

V. 33, 34. Judah would be as useful a servant as Benjamin: Joseph would be no loser; his father could perhaps survive the loss of him; and he was willing to submit to any hardship, rather than occasion and witness his aged father's death.—What must Benjamin have felt, when he heard his brother conclude his speech with a proposal, which could never have been thought of, if it had not been actually made! Perhaps the annals of the whole world do not produce an instance of so heroic and disinterested affection in any mere man. Some would even dare to die for a beloved or honoured friend, who nevertheless would not willingly submit to be a slave for life to ransom him. Without exception, this may be considered as by far the most affecting speech that was ever recorded. Either the speakers and writers, in this sacred volume, excelled all other men in native genius and simple eloquence, or they were divinely inspired: for surely, no men ever spake and wrote as they did.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17. They who have been guilty of deceit and injustice, must blame themselves when afterwards suspected without cause, and put upon repeated trials, before they recover the confidence of those whom they have injured: but if they are sincere, the event will make amends for the severest scrutiny.—Though open and direct measures are generally preferable; yet, in some cases, stratagems are lawful: and never more so, than when they tend to the benefit of the persons for whom they are laid, in order that they may remember and repent of their own treacherous dealings.—To reward evil for good is so evidently base, that nothing can be urged in excuse of it: how then shall we stand in judgment before that God whom we have so ungratefully required for his multiplied benefits?—Men think it hard to be suspected of crimes, which are contrary to a few of their outward actions; though they are inwardly conscious of much worse, which they conceal from their fellow-creatures! Yet conscious innocence has no occasion to fear a fair trial: but, as all hearts are totally concealed from us, except our own, we should be cautious in answering for others also: and they who are most confident in self-justification, may soon have their mouths stopped, and not know what to say.—If, before the powerful of the earth, it is sometimes prudent to waive the question of right, and to appeal to their compassion and generosity; much more should we submit to the righteousness of God, and renouncing all other pleas, cast ourselves upon his infinite compassion: for he is perfectly righteous, and will be acknowledged to be so, by all who would approach him with acceptance.

V. 18—34. In many cases, undissembled narrations form the most conclusive and affecting arguments. (Acts 11:1—18.) Such addresses to the tender passions, as are grounded upon evident reason, truth, and fact, and carry with them internal testimony of disinterestedness, generosity, and relative affection, are almost irresistible: and the glow of filial affection, through manly sense and fortitude, has a peculiar beauty and energy.—How careful should children be not to grieve their parents, lest by bittering their infirm age, they should shorten their days, and be indicted now at the bar of their own consciences, or hereafter at the judgment-seat of God, for the horrible crime of parricide; which many are guilty of who never suspect themselves, or are suspected by others!—True penitents will show, that a total revolution has taken place in their principles and practice: were it possible, they would undo their former misconduct; and therefore they will endeavour to make amends for it, and prevent any further ill effects, though in the most self-denying manner: and this will evidence that their sins are pardoned, and prepare the way for their receiving the comfort of forgiveness.—Thus Jesus, the Anointed, proceeds to humble and prove his people, even after they have had some tastes of his loving-kindness: he brings their sins renewedly to remembrance, that they may renew and evidence their repentance: he tries, that they may manifest, their graces: his bowels yearn over them, while his face wears a frown, and his hand holds the rod of correction; and thus by rebukes and chastenings, he prepares them for comfort here and for glory hereafter.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLV. V. 1, 2. It is a remarkable proof of the strength of mind, which united with exquisite sensibility in Joseph's character, that he could so long repress his emotions, and conceal them from all parties; but Judah's

CHAPTER XLV.

Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, 1-3; encourages them by showing them the Lord's merciful purposes in these transactions, 4-8; orders them to fetch his father and family into Egypt; and cordially embraces them, 9-15. Pharaoh concurs the invitation, 16-20. Joseph furnishes his brethren for their journey, and exhorts them to concord, 21-24. They report the whole to Jacob, who hardly believes the tidings, but is at length revived by them 25-28.

THEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me: and there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you: and they came near: and he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be hearing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste you, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath

made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not.

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast.

11 And there will I nourish thee; (for yet there are five years of famine:) lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste, and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

16 ¶ And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; make your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan.

18 And take your father, and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take your wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

20 Also regard not your stuff: for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

a 43:30, 31. Jer. 20:9. b 2 Sam. 1:20. Matt. 18:15. Acts 10:41. c Heb. gave forth his voice in weeping. Num. 14:1. 2 Kings 20:3. e Matt. 14:27. Acts 7:13. d Job 4:5. 23:15. Zech. 12:10. Mark 6:50. Luke 8:8. 24:37, 38. Rev. 17:1. f Or, terrified. e 37:25. 50:18. Acts 9:5. f 16. 40:1, 2. 2 Cor. 2:7. g Heb. neither let there be anger in your eyes. g 8. 47:25. 30:20. 2 Sam. 16:10-12. 17:14. Job 1:21. Ps. 105:16, 17. Acts 2:23. 1:4-23. 7:9-15. h 41:29-31, 54-56. 47:18. 1 Ex. 34:21. Deut. 21:4. 1 Sam. 8:12. Is. 30:24. i Heb. to put for you a remnant. d Judg. 15:18. 1 Chr. 11:14. Ps. 44:4. Acts 7:35. 1 John 15:16. Rom. 9:16. m 41:

39-43. Judg. 17:10. Job 29:16. n 26-28. o 13:19, 20. p 46:34. 47:1-6. Ex. 8:22. 9:26. q 1 John 14:2, 3. 17:24. r 47:12. Matt. 15:5, 6. Mark 7:9-13. s 42. 23. Luke 24:39. John 20:27. t John 17:24. 1 Pet. 1:10-12. Rev. 21:23. u Acts 7:14. s 29:11. 33:4. Rom. 1:31. v 2 Sam. 14:33. Luke 15:20. g Heb. was good in the eyes of Pharaoh. 16:6. 20:15. 41:37. margins. s 42:25, 26. 44:1, 2. s 27:38. 47:6. Deut. 32:14. Ps. 147:14. Is. 28:1, 4. v 31:17, 18. i Heb. let not your eyes spare, &c. Is. 13:18. Ez. 9:5. 20:17. s Matt. 24:17. Luke 17:31. d 18 20:15. Ezra 9:12. Is. 1:19.

most affecting speech and generous proposal entirely overcame him. He would not, however, let the Egyptians learn any particulars of his brethren's guilt; and he still refrained himself, till the former were gone out of the room: but then his restrained passions burst forth with the greater violence.

V. 3. Joseph had doubtless all along been addressed and spoken of by his Egyptian name, or by his titles of office: so that, though the historian calls him Joseph, probably his brethren had never heard that name before, from any person in Egypt.—It is impossible that the tongue, the pen, or the pencil, can ever do justice to the mixed emotions of surprise, fear, grief, remorse, hope, natural affection, and joy, which must alternately, yet almost at the same instant, have seized upon their minds at this unexpected discovery.—But Joseph evidently perceived, that confusion and terror were likely to predominate, and to fill them with apprehensions, that he would now avenge the injustice and cruelty, of which they had been guilty.

V. 4. The name of Joseph might have led his brethren to a recollection of his features and voice: yet the mention of their having sold him was necessary, though painful; both to remove all doubts of his being their brother, and also to introduce the kind attempt, which he intended to make, to obviate their fears, and to inspire confidence and comfort.—Perhaps he called them near to him, lest the Egyptians should overhear this part of the conversation.

V. 5. Every passion has its proper boundaries, which it ought not to exceed. The skillful physician aims to produce an effect: yet, having produced it, he often sees occasion to check, and even sometimes to counteract, his first intention; lest it prove excessive, and expose the patient to the opposite danger. Joseph had designed to humble and to reprove his brethren, to bring their sin to remembrance, to fill them with remorse for it, and to convince that they really repented, and were not disposed to repeat the crime. But he now perceived, from their confusion and dismay, that they were in danger of being overwhelmed by over-much sorrow, and of sinking under despondency: and therefore he endeavoured to comfort and encourage them. (Marg. Ref.)—Not only would the authority of one, whom they had so grossly injured, fright them; but the excellence of his character, the reputation which he had acquired, and the accomplishment of those dreams, as divine predictions, which they had contemptuously opposed, would make their crime appear more horrid than before; and all together might induce them to conclude, that they had sinned beyond the reach of forgiveness.—Though the merciful purpose of God, in sending him into Egypt, in no degree excused their sin, and therefore

ought not to prevent their humiliation and repentance; yet it might very properly abate their anguish of spirit, and encourage their hope of pardon from so gracious a God: and it might assure them of Joseph's forgiveness, who clearly saw the wisdom of God, and richly experienced his goodness, in that event.

V. 6. *Earing.*] That is, *ploughing*, or preparing the ground and sowing it. It appears by this, that the Egyptians, finding Joseph's predictions exactly accomplished thus far, followed his counsel, and wasted no corn in sowing the land. The entire failure of the accustomed overflowing of the Nile, which probably took place, would in general render agriculture impracticable, yet where it might have been attempted, it was not. (47:23.)

V. 8. 'No longer confine your thoughts to your own misconduct in that affair: but see and admire the wonderful contrivance of God in it, who sent me hither for such important benefits, especially to you and your families.'—Thus Joseph, by repeatedly pointing out the wisdom and mercy of God in these dispensations, both obviated the desponding conclusions, which his brethren might have been tempted to deduce, and assured them of his cordial forgiveness.—He was made a father to Pharaoh, as the instrument of God in preserving him and his kingdom.

V. 12. Benjamin was so very young when Joseph was sold, that it is not probable he remembered him; but doubtless he had heard much concerning him.

V. 13. *Tell my father.*] This direction was given, not in ostentation, but to rejoice Jacob's heart, and likewise to induce him the more readily to come into Egypt.

V. 14. Benjamin, having no share in the crimes of his brethren towards Joseph, would have his joy unmingled with those painful feelings, which the rest experienced.

V. 15. *Kissed.*] As a token of entire reconciliation and endeared affection. This seems to have been the first thing which encouraged them to speak to him.

V. 16. *It pleased.*] This is a conclusive testimony how highly Joseph was esteemed, and how little he was envied.

V. 17. Pharaoh left all other concerns to Joseph; but here he generously interposed, and gave most liberal orders, about Jacob and his family; which would be very agreeable to the feelings of all parties.

V. 19. *Wagons.*] No mention has hitherto been made of horses, among the possessions of the patriarchs, or of wheel-carriages, both of which abounded in Egypt at that time. It is probable these wagons were drawn by horses. (Notes, 47:17. Deut. 17:16.)

V. 20. *Your stuff.*] Such furniture, or other property, as

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment: but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

25 ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father;

26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw

the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.

28 And Israel said, It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Jacob offers sacrifices, and has an encouraging vision, 1-4. He goes with his family into Egypt, 5-7. The names and the number of his descendants, 8-27. He sees and confers with Joseph, who instructs his brethren how to answer Pharaoh, 28-34.

AND Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob: and he said, Here am I.

3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation.

4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

5 And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

e 19:27. 46:5. Num. 7:3-9. Ex. 23:24. * Heb. mouth. Num. 3:16. marg. 2 Chron. 35:22. 1 Sam. 1:16. marg. f Jude. 14:12, 19. 2 Kings 5:5, 22, 23. g 43:34. h Heb. carrying. h 37:22. 42:22. Ps. 133. John 13:34, 35. Eph. 4:31, 32. 1 Thil. 2: 2-5. Col. 3:12, 13. 1 Thes. 5:13. i Luke 24:24. 18:9. k 37:35. 42:38. 38: 44: 28. l Heb. his. 1 Job 9:16. 29:24. Is. 126:1. Luke 24:11, 41. m Jude. 15: 19. Ps. 85:6. Is. 57:15. Hos. 6:2. n 46:30. Luke 2:23-30. John 16:21, 22.

could not be conveniently removed so far, should be left behind without concern.

V. 22. To Benjamin.] Thus Joseph still continued the trial of his brethren, to see whether any of them were disposed to envy Benjamin.

V. 24. It would be natural for this company, during so interesting a journey, to converse freely concerning their conduct in selling Joseph, and the manner in which they should relate the particulars to Jacob: and as some of them had been much more criminal than others, and as Reuben, in Joseph's hearing, had sharply reproached his brethren; these passions might easily produce altercations, and even quarrels of fatal consequence. But as, after all, Joseph forgave and loved them, so he required them to forgive and love one another.

V. 26. For above twenty years Jacob had been used to consider his beloved Joseph as dead; with what emotions then must he have heard the words, "Joseph is yet alive, and is governor over all the land of Egypt!"

V. 27. This must have been attended by a confession of their own base conduct respecting Joseph; but Jacob had no heart now for reproaches or complaints.

V. 28. It is enough, &c.] "I shall then account myself to have lived long enough."—Joseph's glory in Egypt seemed little to Jacob. As he was alive, that thought swallowed up all other considerations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. In endeavouring to render men sensible of their faults, we should be careful lest we needlessly expose them.—True excellence does not consist in being devoid of passions, but in having them all under the government of reason and conscience; so as to know how to restrain them, and how to yield to them with prudence and expediency: and true wisdom discovers itself, in being able to suit our conduct and conversation to the persons with whom we have to do, and to the circumstances in which they are placed.—In speaking to men about the concerns of their souls, two grand objects should always be kept in view; namely, to awaken the careless conscience to an adequate sense of guilt and danger, and to inspire the burdened and desponding heart with the hope of pardon and peace.—It is very profitable for us to observe the footsteps of Providence, and to note how infinite wisdom and goodness deduce the most beneficial effects from the crimes and follies of men: especially we should study the history of our own lives with this design: we shall not then want proof, that the only wise God hath overruled many of our mistakes and sins to our important good; and thus we may also perceive some of the outlines of his plan, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This review, if duly made, cannot reasonably lead us to entertain a slighter sense of the evil of sin, or better thoughts of ourselves; it cannot encourage us to go on in disobedience, or lessen our humiliation and self-abasement; but, on the contrary, it will convince us the more deeply of our own ignorance and folly, and render us more ashamed of offending against so kind a Benefactor. Yet it will prevent our despairing of forgiveness; check that sorrow, which unfits the mind for duty and damps our gratitude; and excite that admiration, love, and confidence, which produce cheerful obedience.

V. 9-28. We should ever manifest brotherly love, even to those who have treated us injuriously; and show a readiness to forgive, and an earnest desire to disperse those fears and jealousies, which the recollection of past offences may

a 21:14, 31. 26:23. 1 Sam. 3:20. b 4:4. 8:20. 12:8. 22:13. 33:20. 35:7. Job 1:5, 42:3. c 21:33. 26:23-25. 28:13. 31:42, 53. d 16:1. Num. 12:6. Job 4:13. 33: 14, 15. e 2:23. f Ex. 3:3, 4. 1 Sam. 3:4, 10. Acts 9:4. 10:3. f 15:13. 26:3, 9. Is. 41:10. Jer. 40:9. Acts 27:24. g 12:2. 33:11. Ex. 1:7-10. Deut. 1:10. 10:22. 26: 5. Acts 7:17. h 28:15. Is. 43:1, 2. 15:14-16. 50:13, 24, 25. Ex. 3:8. k 50:1. 13:17. 45:19, 27.

excite; by uniting the most compassionate affection with our faithful attempts to make men sensible that they have offended.—But what haste ought children to make, and what gratification should they account it, to contribute to the comfort of their tender parents! They should check every mean desire, and spur themselves on to every laudable pursuit, with the idea, that the one will grieve, and the other gladden, a kind parent's heart. They ought to value prosperity, especially as enabling them to share it with them; and spare a considerable portion, even of a moderate provision, to requite the cares, toils, and anxieties of an aged father and mother. How shamefully unlike Joseph are they, who, in comparative affluence, through pride, covetousness, or self-indulgence, neglect, and leave to languish in indigence, such near relations!—Oh! how it adorns the doctrine of God our Saviour, when believers, by a blameless, useful, and prudent conduct, conciliate the good will of many, and silence the reproaches of all.—If men may without injustice confer unmerited favours on whom, and in what proportion, they please, who shall dare to find fault, if our righteous God, punishing none above their deservings, "has mercy on whom he will have mercy?"

When the reasons of the divine appointments are made known to us, we shall clearly perceive the Lord's wisdom, love, and faithfulness; we shall know that all those things are for us which once we thought against us, and that our murmurs sprang from ignorance and unbelief; we shall say, "It is enough," "I am now satisfied;" and therefore in the exercise of faith we should endeavour to anticipate that discovery.—Here also we behold Jesus, manifesting himself as a Brother and Friend to those, who once were his despisers, his enemies, and, in some sense, his murderers, having previously humbled them in true repentance; preventing most kindly their dismay and confusion; assuring them of his love, and of the provisions of his grace; explaining to them the mysteries of his cross, and the designs of the Father in his sufferings and glory; admitting them into sweet fellowship with himself; bidding them go, and inform others of his love and grace, that they may come and share it also; commanding them to lay aside envy, anger, malice, and contention, and live in peace with each other; teaching them willingly to renounce the world for him and his fulness; giving them earnestness of his love, and supplying all that is needful to bring them home to himself, that "where he is, there they may be also." And though, when he sends for his people by death as his messenger, they may at first feel some discouraging apprehensions; yet the thoughts of seeing his glory, and being with him, will enable them at length to say, "It is enough;"—"I am willing to die, and go to see, and be with, the Beloved of my soul."

NOTES.—CHAP. XLVI. V. 1. Perhaps Jacob chose Beer-sheba for his solemn sacrifices, either as having been frequently the scene of his father's communion with God, or because it was the last place in Canaan which he was now leaving never to see again. He spoke at first with rapture of going to see Joseph; but it had been revealed to Abraham, that his posterity would be durably oppressed in Egypt; and Isaac had been forbidden to go thither. Perhaps, recollecting these things, Jacob hesitated about leaving Canaan, till he had sought direction and protection from God.—Nothing is recorded concerning sacrifices, from this time till Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

V. 4. God would surely bring Jacob back again to Canaan, in his posterity, of which his burial in Canaan was an

6 And they took their cattle, and their goods which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him:

7 His sons and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

8 ¶ And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's first-born.

9 And the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

10 And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

11 And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: But Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron, and Hamul.

13 And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.

14 And the sons of Zebulun; Seread, and Elon, and Jahleel.

15 These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.

16 And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.

17 And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter: and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.

19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph, and Benjamin.

20 And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherahi priest of On bare unto him.

21 And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and

Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard.

22 These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen.

23 And the sons of Dan; Hushim.

24 And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

25 These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.

26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six.

27 And the sons of Joseph which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

28 ¶ And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father to Goshen; and presented himself unto him: and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and to his father's house, I will go up and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me:

32 And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

33 And it shall come to pass when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?

34 That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle, from our youth even until now, both we and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

m Num. 26:15. Deut. 10:22. Josh. 24:4. 1 Sam. 12:8. Ps. 105:23. Is. 52:4. Acts 7:15. n Ex. 1:1—5. 1 Chr. 2:12. 2 Chr. 2:12. 45:4. Ex. 6:14. Num. 1:20, 21. 2:10—13. 26:5. Deut. 33:6. 1 Chr. 5:13. p 29:33. 34:25, 30. 49:5—7. Ex. 6:15. Num. 1:22, 23. 2:12, 13. 26:12, 13. q Or, Nemuel. r Or, Jarib. s Or, Zerah. 1 Chr. 4:24. q Ex. 6:16. Num. 3:17—22. 26:57, 58. Deut. 33:8—11. 1 Chr. 6:1—3. s Or, Gershon. 1 Chr. 6:16. r 38:1—3, 24—30. 49:9—12. Num. 1:23, 27. 26:19—21. Deut. 33:7. Judg. 1:2. 1 Chr. 2:3—5. 4:1. 5:2. Ps. 78:69. Matt. 1:1—3. Heb. 7:14. Rev. 5:5. 49:14, 15. Num. 1:23, 29. 26:23—25. Deut. 33:8. 1 Chr. 12:32. || Or, Puch. f Or, Jahbul. 1 Chr. 7:1. 149:13. Num. 1:30, 31. 25:26, 27. Deut. 33:18, 19. u 29:32—35. 30:17—21. 35:23. x 30:21. 34:1. &c. y 30:11. 49:19. Num. 1:24, 25. Deut. 33:20, 21. Or, Zephion. || Or, Ozni. || Or, Arodi. Num. 26:15—17. f 49:20. Num. 1:40, 41. 26:44—45. Deut. 33:24. 1 Chr. 7:30, 31. a 29:24. 30:10.

earnest; and Joseph would be with him in his dying moments, to perform the last offices of filial affection, and to close his eyes. Thus the Lord assured him, that his beloved Joseph would survive him, and that no heavy calamities would come on his seed during his life.

V. 7. *His daughters, &c.*] Jacob had but one daughter, (15;) but perhaps his sons' wives were intended. His sons' daughters are also mentioned; yet only one of them is named, (17;) and it does not appear on what account she was distinguished from the rest.

V. 12. Judah was the fourth son of Leah, and Joseph was born when Jacob had been married about seven years: (29: 35, 30:24, 25.) consequently Judah might be about three or four years older than Joseph; yet he could not be above forty-four at this time, for Joseph was only forty.—His two sons Er and Onan had been married to Tamar, and a considerable time after their death had elapsed before Pharez was born. (38:.) It can then hardly be conceived, that this event took place much before Judah was forty years old. So that Pharez could not be more than four or five years old at this time. The heads of families, therefore, which were born in Egypt during Jacob's life, seem to have been included.

V. 15. *Thirty and three.*] When Er and Onan are deducted, the whole number amounts only to thirty-two; but Jacob himself must be added to complete the number.

V. 21. The marginal references show, that several of these were Benjamin's grandchildren. It is evident that Benjamin was born after Dinah had been defiled, and she was about Joseph's age: supposing her therefore but in her fourteenth year at that time, Benjamin could not now be more than twenty-five or twenty-six years old; we can then scarcely conceive, that he could have several grandchildren.—It is therefore most probable that the historian mentions some born in Egypt during Jacob's lifetime, who afterwards be-

b 29:18. 30:24. 35:16—18, 24. 47:7. c 37:39. 40:45. 47:49. 22—27. 50:1. &c. Num. 1:36, 37. 26:39—41. 1 Chr. 33:12—17. d 41:51, 52. 48:4, 13, 14. Num. 1:32—35. 26:23—37. e Or, prince. 41:45, 50. marg. e 1 Chr. 7:6—12. 8:1—7. f Num. 26:38. Ahiram. g Num. 26:39. Shupham. 1 Chr. 7:12. Shupham. h Num. 26:39. Hupham. i 49:16, 17. Num. 1:38, 39. Deut. 33:22. k Num. 26:42, 43. Shupham. l 49:21. Num. 1:42, 43. 26:48—50. m 1 Chr. 7:13. Jahziel. n 29:29. 30:4—8. 35:25. || Heb. 14:3. || Ex. 1:5. marg. o Deut. 10:22. Acts 7:14. p 43:8. 44:16—34. 49:8. q 31:21. r 34. See on 45:10. || 41:43. 45:19, 21. 33:4. 45:14. Luke 15:20. Acts 20:37. u 45:28. Luke 2:29. x 45:16—20. 47: y 4:2. 31:18. 37:2. 47:3. Ex. 3:1. 1 Sam. 16:11. 17:15. Ps. 67:2—72. Is. 40:11. Zech. 13:5. || Heb. they are men of cattle. 34. z 45:10. a 47:3, 4. Jon. 1:9. b 32. 34:5. 37:12. c 43:32. Ex. 8:29.

came heads of families in Israel, as it was before intimated. (Note, 12.)

V. 27. Threescore and six were before mentioned, (26;) so that Joseph and his two sons, together with Jacob himself, complete the seventy persons here enumerated; and the numbers stated in verses 15, 18, 22, 25, amount to seventy.—The Septuagint, adding some of the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who became heads of families in these tribes, makes the number seventy-five: and perhaps St. Luke took the number as it stood in this version, in recording the speech of Stephen before the council. Other methods, however, have been devised for reconciling the sacred historians. (Note, Acts 7:14.)

V. 28. *To direct.*] To give Joseph notice of his arrival, that he might meet him in Goshen. This region lay near the entrance of Egypt, bordering on Arabia.—Judah seems to have been selected on this occasion, as having acted nobly in Joseph's presence before.

V. 29. As a prince, Joseph went forth to meet his father in a chariot, showing him proper respect: but for Jacob, always a plain man and now in years, he sends a convenient but less splendid conveyance; as the varied term evidently implies.

V. 32—34. 'It is observable, how careful Joseph is to keep his brethren clear of the snares of Egypt. . . . He is more concerned for their purity than their outward dignity. . . . If we wish to destroy our souls, or the souls of our children, let us seek for ourselves, and for them, great things but if not, it becomes us, having food and raiment, therewith to be content. Fuller.—Abomination, (34.) Note, 43:32. This would more effectually keep them distinct and separate from the Egyptians.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In those events and undertakings, which appear most jo

CHAPTER XLVII.

Joseph presents, first his brethren, and then his father, to Pharaoh; with the conference between them, 1—12. The terms on which Joseph dealt out corn to the Egyptians; and the compact which he finally setled between Pharaoh and his subjects; with their grateful acknowledgments, 13—26. Jacob on the approach of death calls Joseph, and gives orders concerning his burial, 27—31.

THEN Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and behold they are in the land of Goshen.

2 And he took some of his brethren, *even five men*, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, *What is your occupation?* And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers.

4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

6 The land of Egypt is before thee; in the

best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell, in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou?

9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage.

10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Ramesses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

12 And Joseph nourished his father and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread according to their families.

a 45:16, 46:31. b 45:10, 46:28. Ex. 8:22, 9:26. c 2 Cor. 4:14. Col. 1:28. Jude 24. d 46:33-34. Am. 7:14-15. Jon. 1:3. 2 Thes. 3:10. e 12:10, 15:13. Dent. 36:15. Ps. 105:23. Is. 52:4. Acts 7:6. 14:3. Acts 7:11. f 45:4. h 19:9, 20:13, 34:10, 45:18-20. i 1 Sam. 21:7. 1 Chr. 27:29-31. 2 Chr. 28:10. Prov. 2:2-3. k See on 10. * Heb. *How many are the days of the years of thy life?* 9. l 1 Chr. 29:15. Ps. 39:12. Heb. 11:9-16. 13:14. 11 et. 2:11. m Job

14:1. Ps. 39:5, 89:47-48. 90:3-12. Jam. 4:14. n 28:5-27. 11:11, 24:25, 25:7, 35:28, 50:26. Ex. 7:7. Dent. 34:7. Josh. 24:29. 2 Sam. 19:32-35. Job 42:15, 17. c 14:19. Num. 6:22-27. Dent. 33:1. Ruth 2:4. 2 Sam. 8:10, 15:39. Ps. 118:46, 129:8. Heb. 7:7. p Ex. 1:11, 12:37. q Matt. 15:4-6. Mark 7:10-13. r 7:11. 54:8. i Or, as a little child is nourished. Heb. according to the little ones. 50:24. 1 Thes. 2:7.

were very numerous, and highly valued; (16. Ex. 9:3-6, 19-21.) nor is there any intimation, that they did not use them for the same purposes as other nations did; or that at so early a period they worshipped them. Perhaps shepherds were held in abomination in Egypt, only as a low and vulgar set of men, compared with princes, sages, and soldiers.

V. 7. With the gravity of old age and the piety of a believer, and even with the authority of a patriarch and a prophet, Jacob pronounced a blessing upon Pharaoh: that is, he solemnly supplicated the Lord to bestow his blessing upon him. Thus he acted in character, as not ashamed of his religion, and as desirous of expressing his gratitude to the benefactor of himself and family, and of recompensing him in the only way in which he was able. And though Jacob thus in some sense assumed the superiority, Pharaoh seems to have been well pleased with this token of his regard; having, in the character and usefulness of Joseph, abundantly experienced the value of the blessing of Jacob's God, and perhaps being himself favourably disposed to his worship.

V. 8. Pharaoh observed somewhat peculiarly venerable in the aspect of Jacob; and conceiving perhaps that he was older than he really was, (to which appearance his various hardships and trials might contribute,) he was curious to know his age.

V. 9. We have here a very uncommon answer to a very common question; but it is an answer full of pertinent instruction and admonition. Jacob calls his life a *pilgrimage*; that is, the sojourning of a stranger in a foreign country, or his journey home to his own country; intimating that he was not at home on earth, and that his habitation, his inheritance, and his treasures were in heaven, whither he was daily journeying, in the bent and desires of his heart, and the tenor of his conduct. "For they which say such things confess that they seek a better country, that is, a heavenly." (Note, Heb. 11:13-16.) He also numbers his life by the *days of his years*: it consisted of a few years, each year composed of a few days. One day goes, and another, and soon a year is gone: and thus year after year imperceptibly glides away, till life, with its many sorrows and scanty pleasures, comes to an end; just as a wearisome journey gradually is finished, and we arrive at home. Though Jacob had now lived a hundred and thirty years, yet he accounted them but few, in comparison of the lives of his forefathers; and as nothing compared with eternity. They were *evil* also; not only as the lives of others are, but in that he had had an uncommon share of troubles.—Such an answer, from so venerable a person, could not fail to impress the mind of Pharaoh, and almost to extort the reluctant sigh, by reminding him of the insufficiency and short continuance of all human prosperity and felicity; and that after a life of vanity and vexation, man goes down into the grave, from the throne as well as from the cottage; and that nothing can make him happy, but the prospect of an everlasting home in heaven, after the close of his short weary pilgrimage on earth.

V. 11. Those parts of Egypt which lay low might perhaps afford good pasture, especially in the plains near the Nile; though the upland countries, and most parts of Canaan especially, were totally burnt up during the years of famine. There was more grass in the marshes and many parts of Egypt, when the Nile did not overflow enough to make plenty of corn. *Augustine.*

V. 12. Besides pasture for the flocks and herds, Joseph

ful, there are probable consequences involved, which may remind us to "rejoice with trembling," and warn us not to proceed without seeking counsel, assistance, and a blessing from the Lord. Attending on his ordinances, and receiving the pledges of his covenant-love, we may expect his presence, and that peace which it confers: and when we are satisfied that we are his people, and in the path which he marks out to us, being assured of his supports and consolations, we may not only enter into the iron furnace of bondage and oppression, but into the fiery furnace of persecution.—In all our removals, we need to be reminded of our removal out of this world: and though it is desirable to be surrounded at the eve of life with our beloved friends and children; yet nothing can encourage us to fear no evil, when "passing through the valley of the shadow of death," but the presence of Jesus Christ to receive our souls.—Be our families never so large, God's providence can with perfect ease support them: and be repenting sinners never so numerous, the unsearchable riches of Christ are sufficient, and in Heaven there is room enough for them all.—However generous our friends may be, it is prudent to be modest, and not to give them any ground to suspect us of encroaching, or to complain that we are burdensome. In general the further from *courts*, the nearer to *Canaan*; and however obscure and despised our lot be, if it prove advantageous to our souls, and favourable to communion with God, we ought to be thankful for it. Our lives are in the Lord's hands, whatever we wish and desire; and though we should be willing to die, yet we should be also willing to wait his time. In the mean while, if even the abhorrence of the world keep us separate from it, we have cause to rejoice and be glad on that account.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLVII. V. 2. Joseph, by thus presenting his brethren, both showed respect to Pharaoh, and intimated that he would do nothing without his knowledge and approbation: he also put honour upon them, manifesting that he was not ashamed of them, though now his inferiors; and that he did not harbour resentment against them.

V. 3. Pharaoh took it for granted, that Jacob's sons had some peculiar occupation; and though a shepherd was had in abomination among the Egyptians, they did not attempt to conceal their employment. Thus they showed a hearty concurrence with Joseph, in choosing to remain in their obscure, but more safe and advantageous employment. (Note, 46:32-34.)

V. 4. Probably, Jacob and his sons only meant to continue in Egypt till the famine was over; but, meeting with kind treatment, they remained there: at length another king arose; and they were detained in bondage, *contrary to their intention*, but according to the purpose and prediction of God.

V. 6. Pharaoh seems to have been fully sensible of Joseph's excellent services, and very grateful for them. He would, however, have none but men of activity advanced even as shepherds. It does not seem to have been the custom at that time, for kings to prefer the dependents of great statesmen, out of compliment to them, whether fit for preferment or not. It is at least evident, that Joseph did not require, and Pharaoh did not propose, neither did the sons of Jacob expect, such advancement: they only desired pasturage for their flocks. If the rich and great are disposed to overlook and neglect their poor relatives; these on the other hand are often equally culpable, in expecting such things from them, as it would be very improper to confer. The cattle of the Egyptians, as it appears from the subsequent history,

13 ¶ And there was no bread in all the land: for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.

14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses; and he fed them with bread, for all their cattle, for that year.

18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent, my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not aught left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands.

19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people, he removed them to

cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt, even to the other end thereof.

22 Only the land of the priests bought he not: for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their lands.

23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

27 ¶ And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen: and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was a hundred forty and seven years.

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt.

30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their bu-

r 41:30. 1 Kings 18:5. Jer. 14:1-6. Lam. 2:19,20. 4:9. s Jer. 9:12. Joel 1:10
12:1. 4:36. u Luke 16:1,2,10-12. 1 Cor. 4:2. 1 Pet. 4:10. v 19. Ps. 37:33.
1s 33:16. Matt. 6:1. x Ex. 9:3. 1 Kings 10:23. 1s 31:1. y Heb. let them
2 Kings 6:26. z Neh. 5:2,3. Job 2:4. Lam. 5:6,9. Matt. 16:26. Phil. 3:8,9.
a See on 23. b 41:48. [Or, princes. 41:45,50. marg. c Ezra 7:24. d 19.
e 41:27. 45:6. 1s 107:36,37. Prov. 12:11. 13:23. 1s 24:23,25. 55:10. 2 Cor. 9:
10. 141:34. Lev. 27:32. 1 Sam. 8:15-17. Ps. 112:5. g 41:45. marg. 45:8-9.

supplied the several branches of his father's family with corn, by a stated allowance, according to the number of their households.

V. 13. *Fainted.*] A strong metaphor, taken from the fainting or languor of an individual for want of sustenance, and applied, in a manner emphatically descriptive, to the distress of the whole nation. This was about the end of the third year of the famine.

V. 14. *Into Pharaoh's house.*] None of it being appropriated to Joseph's own use, or given in presents or pensions to his family.—Thus the people were sustained during the fourth and fifth years.

V. 17. *Horses.*] This is the first time that horses are mentioned in Scripture. The patriarchs, as far as we can learn, had no horses, nor are any mentioned among the possessions of Israel when they left Egypt. (*Eze.* 12:35.)

V. 19. *Give us seed.*] As this was the seventh year of the famine, and as every particular had hitherto accorded to Joseph's prediction, the people fully expected an end to the calamity. Probably the Nile had begun again to overflow; and therefore they wanted corn for seed as well as for bread.

V. 21. This verse may only mean that Joseph removed the people from the distant villages to the cities, where the corn was stored up, in all parts of the land, for the convenience of supplying them with food: but, if the common interpretation be adhered to, the state of affairs in Egypt might require this regulation, as conducive to public tranquillity, and to the more equitable distribution of property.

V. 22. *Priests.*] This word is sometimes translated *princes*; and seems here used, not only for the ministers of the superstitious worship of the Egyptians, but for the officers of state, and for their wise men and diviners, who, having their maintenance from Pharaoh, were not under the necessity of selling their lands.

V. 23-26. Adverting to the words of the people, Joseph says, "I have bought you;" but it is evident he took no advantage of this part of the agreement. It does not appear that even their political liberty was materially abridged in consequence; but they held their lands, either their former estates, or others assigned to them, by a new tenure; on condition of paying one fifth of the clear produce as a constant tax to Pharaoh: and this was made a law, which remained in force when Moses wrote his history, probably above two hundred years after. This reserve seems to have been made instead of all other taxes, and it does not appear to have been at all oppressive; it is indeed evident that the people did not consider it as a hardship, but the contrary.—The absurd opinion, that Joseph reduced the Egyptians to personal slavery,

is contrary to the whole tenor of the narration, and not the least trace of it can be discerned in the subsequent history. But it seems to have originated with those who are glad of any pretext to criminate approved characters of Scripture, as their only way of answering the arguments which demonstrate it to be divinely inspired.—Joseph was raised up by the Lord for this very service, and he is every where commended in it, and no where censured: the friends of revealed truth should, therefore, be very cautious, how they start objections to his conduct, of which at this distance of time and place they cannot be competent judges. The customs and maxims of different regions and ages are exceedingly dissimilar. No doubt, the government of Egypt, both before and after this transaction, was far more arbitrary than Britons would approve. It is manifest, however, that the Egyptians were entirely satisfied with Joseph's management, both at the time and long after; and regarded him with the warmest gratitude as a public benefactor. And though we may not perceive the reason of some arrangements; yet the whole transaction is strongly marked with such equity, benevolence, disinterestedness, and impartiality, as have seldom, if ever, been equalled. Joseph acted between Pharaoh and his subjects in the fear of God, and without any undue attachment to the interests of his brethren, or even of his own children. (*Note*, 48:5).—It was also necessary that the corn should be sold, not given; nay, that it should be sold at a high price: otherwise it would have been improvidently used; and in that case a destructive famine must have followed, before the end of the seven years; and to complete the misery, the seed to sow the land might not have been reserved. Raising the price of corn in a real scarcity, by increasing the difficulty of obtaining it, reduces a nation to short allowance, and so preserves the inhabitants from destruction.—Joseph, by giving the Egyptians seed, encouraged them to cultivate their land, and sanctioned, in his prophetic character, their expectation of a crop.—In Egypt the harvest follows the seed-time much more closely than in this country; so that hope now dawned on the afflicted inhabitants.

V. 29, 30. Jacob was sensible that death was speedily approaching, and he greatly desired the presence of his beloved Joseph, who lived at court, while himself was at a considerable distance; for not even affection to his parent could induce Joseph to relax his unremitting attention to the important duties of his station.—Jacob's dying request, "not to be buried in Egypt," evidenced his belief of the Lord's promise concerning Canaan, of which land he would thus take and keep possession. It also intimated, that he desired to have his lot after death, not with the Egyptians, but with his

rying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

31 And he said, Swear unto me: And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Jacob being sick, is visited by Joseph with his two sons, 1, 2. He adopts Joseph's sons as his own children; with an affectionate mention of Rachel's death, 3-8. He blesses Joseph and them, prophetically preferring the younger to the elder, 9-20. He predicts the return of his family to Canaan, and assigns a portion there to Joseph, 21, 22.

AND it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

r 48:2. 1 Kings 1:47. Heb. 11:21. a John 11:3. b 41:50-52. 46:20. 50:23. Job 42:16. Ps. 128:6. c Deut. 3:28. 1 Sam. 23:16. Neh. 2:18. Ps. 41:3. Prov. 23:15. Eph. 6:10. d 17:1. 28:3. 35:11. Ex. 6:3. Rev. 21:22. e 28:12-15. 35:6, 7, 12.

fathers Abraham and Isaac, in that heavenly rest which Canaan typified.

V. 31. *Israel bowed, &c.*] In an act of solemn worship, yet in feebleness thus supporting himself, and expressing his full satisfaction and his willingness to leave the world. (Note, Heb. 11:21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The kindness of liberal benefactors, so far from encouraging us to encroach upon them, should remind us to show them all proper attention and deference: and in attending to some peculiar relative duties, we should look round upon the whole circle, and so proportion them as not to trench upon others.—When Joseph selected five from his eleven brethren to present before Pharaoh, he doubtless had good reasons for his conduct, though not made known to us, nor probably to them. Thus the Lord Jesus, in dispensing his special benefits as he sees good, acts in perfect wisdom, though we are not acquainted with the grounds of his distinguishing grace: and thus, neither despising our meanness, nor ashamed even in his highest exaltation “to call us brethren,” nor resenting our past misconduct, however base, he presents us, when we submit and believe in him, for acceptance before his Father's throne.—Industry, in any honest employment, is always creditable; and indeed all, who are not in some way diligent, are worthless encumbrances on the community. Nor ought a man, in compliance with fashion or prevalent notions, to be ashamed of the lowest useful occupations; for nothing that is not sinful is disgraceful, in the sight either of God, or of wise and good men.—It is generally best to abide with God in our own calling; for what the world calls *mending ourselves*, is frequently little better than renouncing peace, content, and a situation favourable to the prosperity of our souls, for gilded cares, encumbrances, and manifold temptations.—Indeed, our life is but a pilgrimage: few and evil are the days of it; and provided they be spent with God, and to his glory, the rest is of very little consequence. If we have a prospect that, when we go hence and are no more seen, we shall go home to our Father's house, we shall not want, and ought not to desire, the paltry interests of the world; why then should we burden ourselves with unavailing cares and sorrows? Why covet riches, shortly to be left behind? Why engage in projects to be left unfinished? or aspire at distinctions which death will terminate? We do not act thus on a journey, when our heart is at home: the conveniences or inconveniences which we meet with, but little affect us to retard our progress; we do not want to erect stately mansions, or to lay up wealth, in a country which we are leaving, and to which we shall return no more; nor do we encumber ourselves with those things which we are not in need of, and which must be left behind when we embark for our native country.—“Godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into this world; and it is certain we can carry nothing out; and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.” But oh! how miserable are they, who have all their good things during the few and evil days of this present life, and whose last comfort must expire with their dying breath!—Let us then “give diligence to make our calling and election sure;” and, as our days are likely to be so much fewer than Jacob's, let us often ask ourselves seriously, how old we are: that our life may not vanish unimproved, nor death approach while we are unprepared for it. “A hoary head is a crown of glory,” only “when it is found in the way of righteousness;” and they whose consistency of character will bear them out, need neither be ashamed nor afraid to bear testimony for God before the greatest princes, who, if wise, will highly value their pious prayers.

V. 11-31. They who have been exalted, cannot too carefully avoid the appearance of despising their former equals; and they who have been injured, the appearance of resenting former ill treatment: and when we receive kindness from men, we should acknowledge the kindness of God in raising up such friends.—A useful life consists in a constant succession of duties: exalted stations, properly filled, call for unremitting labour and attention; and they who occupy them need great wisdom, firmness, disinterestedness, and impartiality, to ward off envy, to silence reproach, and to keep a clear conscience; rendering to God, to the prince, and to the peo-

2 And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel ‘strengthened himself,’ and sat upon the bed.

3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, “God Almighty, appeared to me at ‘Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me.

4 And said unto me, Behold, ‘I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an ‘everlasting possession.

5 And now thy ‘two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, ‘are mine; as ‘Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

Hos. 12:4. f Judg. 1:23. g 12:2. 13:15, 16. 22:17. 26:4. 28:13. h 17:8. 141: 50-52. 46:20. Josh. 14:4. 16: 17: k Lev. 20:26. Is. 43:1. Ez. 16:8. Mal. 3:17. 2 Cor. 6:18. Eph. 1:5. 11 Cor. 5:1, 2.

ple, their respective dues. But if Providence calls a man to such a station, he ought to seek grace sufficient for it, and expect that God will bestow it upon him.—If withholding the rain from heaven, or other customary advantages, so soon reduces the most opulent nations to poverty and distress; how absolute must our dependence be upon Him, whom we so often wantonly offend and foolishly forget! And if Joseph extorted this confession from the Egyptians, “Thou hast saved our lives,” what multitudes will gratefully say to Jesus at last, “Thou hast saved our souls from the most tremendous destruction, and in the season of uttermost distress!” The Egyptians were willing to part with all their property, and even their liberty, for the saving of their lives: can it then be too much, for us to count all but loss, and part with all, at his command and for his sake, who will thus both save our souls, and give us a hundred-fold even in this present world? And surely, if saved by Christ, we shall willingly become the devoted servants of him and his Father, whose glory he consults in harmony with our salvation.—Yet they who lived on Joseph's provision, and even Jacob who was so dear to him, must die; but Jesus gives us the true Bread, that we may eat and live for ever. To him then let us apply, and devote ourselves to his service; and when we draw near to death, he who supported us through life, will meet us, and assure us of an everlasting inheritance. Then, on the very bed of death, we may bow down and worship with joyful hearts, and breathe out our spirits into his faithful hands, with the most entire composure and satisfaction.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLVIII. V. 1. As Jacob did not appear to be immediately in the state of a dying person, Joseph had returned to his important employments: but being informed by a messenger of his relapse or increasing sickness, and expecting his death, he went to visit him, and took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him; either by Jacob's express desire, or in hopes that the solemn scene, together with the dying benediction and discourse of the venerable Patriarch, would make a useful impression upon their minds. They were at this time above twenty years of age.

V. 2. *Strengthened himself, &c.*] Jacob, being animated by the presence of Joseph and his sons, exerted all his strength to improve this last opportunity. He was also endued with inward strength, and raised above himself by the Holy Spirit, that he might utter those prophecies with which he was inspired.

V. 3, 4. Jacob had called Luz by the name of *Beth-el*. (28:19.) The Lord had twice appeared to him there; but he especially referred to the time when he fled from Esau. That unexpected visit of a gracious God, in his extreme distress, could never be erased from his memory; and, as he had already experienced in a great degree the fulfilment of the promises then made to him, he mentioned them with much thankfulness, before he pronounced the subsequent blessings on his posterity.

V. 5. Thus Jacob adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, that being numbered with his own sons, they might, as heads of distinct tribes, have a proportionable share in the inheritance of Canaan. This he spake by the Spirit of prophecy.—Considering Joseph's rank and prospects in Egypt, a carnal mind would have regarded this remote inheritance, with the rest of Jacob's sons, as a very inconsiderable matter. But it does not appear that Joseph either purchased estates, or amassed wealth in Egypt, for his sons; and this, not only because he was disinterested, but because he was a believer, and was unwilling to attach his children to Egypt; desiring, on the contrary, to lead their thoughts to Canaan, and to the inheritance of the children of Israel, as their proper portion. Jacob also wished them to consider, that to be numbered with his sons, who was the heir of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, and who had been named Israel, because he prevailed with God, and would certainly prevail with man, was far more honourable and desirable, than to be the richest of Pharaoh's courtiers. Probably, this led them to unite interests with the Israelites, and to adhere to the worship of God, in preference to the Egyptians and their superstitions, with which, in their station, they were peculiarly in danger of being infected.—Reuben and Simeon were the two eldest sons of Jacob.

6 And thy issue which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, *and* shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, ¹Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way: when yet *there was* but a little way to come unto ²Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath, the same is Beth-lehem.

8 ³And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, *Who are these?*

9 And Joseph said unto his father, *They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place:* And he said, *Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.*

10 (Now ⁴the eyes of Israel were ⁵dim for age, so that he could not see.) And he brought them near unto him; and he ⁶kissed them, and embraced them.

11 And Israel said unto Joseph, *I had not thought to see thy face; and lo, God hath showed me also thy seed.*

12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he ⁷bowed himself with his face to the earth.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near unto him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and ⁸laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, ⁹guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh *was* the first-born.

m 33:9-16, 19. n Ruth 1:2. 1 Sam. 1:1, 17:12. Mic. 5:2. c 30:2. 33:5. Ruth 4:11-14. 1 Sam. 1:20, 27. 2:20, 21. Ps. 127:3. Is. 8:18. 56:3-5. p 27:4, 28, 29, 34. 40:2. 23:3-4. 49:28. Deut. 33:1. Heb. 11:21. q 27:1. 1 Sam. 3:2. 4:15. ¹Heb. heavy. 1:10. 59:1. r 27:27. 31:55. 45:15. 1 Kings 19:20. s 37:33. 12:36. 45:26. t 18:1. 19:1. 23:7. 33:3. 42:6. Ex. 20:12. u Num. 8:10, 19. Deut. 34:9. Mic. 19:13, 15. Mark 6:5. 16:18. Luke 4:40. 14:33. Acts 6:9. 8:17-19. 13:3. 1 Tim. 4:14. 3:22. ²c 19. y Heb. 11:21. ³s 22-23. 5:12, 18. 6:7. Is. 33:16. Col. 2:6. 1 Thes. 2:12. a 28:20. Ps. 7:3. F. 2:1-23. 5:12, 18. 6:7. Is. 33:16. Matt. 6:23-24. 1 Tim. 6:6-10. b 16:7-13. 38:15. 8:11-12, 21. Ex. 3:2-6. 23:20. Judg. 2:1-4. 6:21-24. 13:21, 22. Ps. 34:7. Hos. 12:4, 5. Mal. 3:1. Acts 7:30. Josh. 17:14-18.

V. 6. It does not appear that Joseph had any other children; but, according to this limitation, if he should have, they must be incorporated with the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

V. 7. The manner in which this is introduced, intimates how much Jacob laid that stroke to heart. He seemed still to feel the anguish of it, and to assign it as a reason of his peculiar attachment to Rachel's posterity. This tender mention to Joseph of his beloved parent must have been peculiarly affecting.—The circumstance of Rachel's dying in childbirth, while on a journey, explained the reason why she was not buried in the cave of Machpelah, where Jacob desired to be buried with the rest of his family; and it was introduced no doubt for that purpose.

V. 8. Jacob could discern that two persons besides Joseph were present; but he was so dim sighted, that he could not certainly tell who they were. (10.)

V. 9. "Whom God hath given me, in this place," whither I was sold as a slave, where I was long imprisoned, and where I have received so many mercies.—The piety of this language should not pass unnoticed.

V. 12. *He bowed, &c.* Joseph thus showed, that his external greatness did not render him forgetful of the respect due to his father, or of the veneration to which his age and piety entitled him; and evinced the high value which he put upon the adoption of his children, to be partakers of the promised blessings.

V. 14. Though Manasseh was the first-born, and Jacob knew it, yet under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he by this token gave Ephraim the preference.—"God was wont from the beginning to prefer the younger . . . to show that divine benefits were not confined to the order of nature, but dispensed freely, according to God's most wise goodness." *Theodoret*.—Laying on of hands is here first mentioned in Scripture. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. Jacob first blessed Joseph, and then his sons; or he blessed Joseph in blessing his sons.—Abraham and Isaac walked before God, by habitually through faith, maintaining communion with him in his ordinances, devoting themselves to his service, acting as under his eye depending on his protection, and rejoicing in his loving kindness and mercy. (*Note*, 5:21-24.)—Jacob had often been in outward straits, and especially with his numerous posterity had been in great distress by famine; but God had always provided for him, and had sent Joseph beforehand to make preparation for him in Egypt. There God had fed him seventeen years in his infirm old age by Joseph, just as long as he had fed Joseph by Jacob's hand in his infancy and youth; thus enabling the son to requite his parent.—This divine interposition was therefore very properly introduced; and as Jacob had been fed, he did not complain, though he had not been enriched, but greatly impoverished.

15 And he ¹blessed Joseph, and said, *God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac ²did walk, the God which ³fed me all my life long unto this day.*

16 The ⁴Angel which ⁵redeemed me from all evil, bless the ⁶lads; and let ⁷my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them ⁸grow into ⁹a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it ¹⁰displeased him: and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, *'Not so, my father: ¹¹for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head.*

19 And his father refused, and said, *'I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become ¹²a multitude of nations.*

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, *In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh: ¹³and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.*

21 And Israel said unto Joseph, *'Behold, I die: but ¹⁴God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.*

22 Moreover, I have ¹⁵given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of ¹⁶the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

—35. e Matt. 6:13. John 17:15. Rom. 8:23. 2 Tim. 4:18. Tit. 2:14. d 5. 32:29. Deut. 28:10. Jer. 14:9. Am. 9:12. Acts 15:17. ¹Heb. as father increase. 1:21. 22. e Ex. 1:7. Num. 26:28-37. Deut. 13:17. Josh. 17:17. ²Heb. was evil in his eyes. 28:8. Num. 22:34. *marg.* 1 Kings 16:25. (19-18. Ex. 10:11. Matt. 25:9. Acts 10:14. 11:8. g 27:15. 29:26. 43:33. 48:3. h 17:20, 21. 25:23. Num. 1:33-35. 2:19-21. 3:2. 37:17. Is. 7:17. Ez. 37:19. ³Heb. fulness. 1:24-60. Ruth 4:11, 12. k Num. 2:18-21. 7:48, 51. 10:22, 33. 13:8, 11, 16. 1:50, 24. Ps. 146:3, 4. Zech. 1:5, 6. Acts 13:36. Heb. 7:3, 8, 23-25. m 28:15, 16. 46:4. Deut. 31:8. Josh. 1:5, 9. 3:7. Ps. 18:46. n 33:19. Josh. 24:32. 1 Chr. 5:2. John 4:5. o 15:16. 34:28. Josh. 17:14-18.

V. 16. Jacob here called "God, before whom Abraham and Isaac had walked," and who had "fed him all his life long," "the Angel." As God does not give his glory to the creatures, we may be sure that such things were not spoken of a created angel. This is one proof therefore among many, that he, who is by Malachi called "the Messenger," or Angel, "of the Covenant," even Jesus Christ, was known by the Patriarchs, to be distinct from the Father, yet One with him; and that as such he manifested himself to them, and was worshipped by them. (*Notes*, 32:30. *Hos.* 12:3-6.) The deliverances from misery and danger of sinful men, who believe in him, according to his word, by the interposition of God, coming through the ransom of the blood of Christ, are frequently in Scripture entitled *redemptions*. Jacob, now closing his eyes in death, joyfully considered himself as "redeemed from all evil;" and therefore expected henceforth good, and nothing but good.—He prayed for his grandsons, that they might stand in the place, inherit the privileges, and walk in the steps, of their progenitors; but especially, that his new name, ISRAEL, "might be named on them." (*Rev.* 2:17. 3:12.) This would be a NAME of nobler import than any which Egypt could afford.

V. 17-20. Joseph was not satisfied with his father's conduct; supposing that he was influenced by a groundless partiality, and not by the guidance of the prophetic Spirit.—The pre-eminence belonged to Manasseh by general custom, and thus it was afterwards commanded in the law: yet in many parts of Scripture we have instances of the younger being preferred to the elder. The law teaches us what is just and proper for us to do; but a sovereign God, in conferring *unmerited favour*, claims an indisputable right of "doing what he will with his own." He however always exercises it in perfect equity, faithfulness, and wisdom.—Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph in *faith*, and in consequence of an immediate revelation; and the prediction was fully accomplished in their subsequent history. (*Notes*, 49:22-26.)

V. 22. Jacob first bought this piece of ground of Hamor: but probably after the slaughter of the Shechemites, the Amorites seized upon it; and afterwards he recovered it by force of arms, in a way, and at a time, of which we are not informed. Though it does not appear that he or his sons at this time or long after, had any advantage from it; yet in faith he bequeathed it to Joseph, as an accession to the portion which would be assigned by lot to his posterity, when put in possession of Canaan.—Here Joseph's bones were at length deposited. (*Josh.* 24:32.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. The death-beds of eminent believers often afford most instructive lessons. "This is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart;" and such scenes, with the prayers and counsels of dying persons, are so suited to make

CHAPTER XLIX.

Jacob calls his sons together to receive his prophetic benediction, 1, 2. He addresses each of them by name, and utters predictions concerning their posterity, 3-28. He gives them a charge respecting his burial, and dies, 29-33.

AND Jacob called unto his sons, and said,
 a Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in b the last days.

2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and c hearken unto Israel your father.

3 ¶ Reuben, thou art d my first-born, e my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.

a Deut. 31:12-26; 33:1. Am. 2:7. Rev. 1:1. 1 N. m. 21:11. De. 4:1. 3 Jo. 15: 2. 2. Jer. 23:20. Dan. 2:23. Acts 2:17. 1 Tim. 4:1. 2 Tim. 3:1. Heb. 1:2. c Ps. 34:11. Prov. 1:8, 9. 4:1-4. 23:22. d 29:32. 49:18. Num. 1:20. 1 Chr. 5:3. e Deut. 21:17. Ps. 78:51. 105:36. f Jam. 1:6-8. 2 Pet. 2:14. 3:16. * Heb. do not thou exalt. g 35:22. Deut. 27:20. 1 Chr. 5:1. f Or, my couch is gone. h 29:33, 34. 34:29.

serious impressions on the young, the gay, and the prosperous, that we do well in taking our children with us on these occasions, when it can be done with propriety.—It is very desirable, if the Lord please, to bear our dying testimony to the truths of God, to his faithfulness, and to the pleasantness of his ways. One would wish to be strengthened at such a solemn season, to render our last service to our survivors; and we should have regard to this in our whole conduct, that we may so live as to give energy and weight to our dying exhortations: yet, after all, the Spirit dispenseth in this matter severally, as he willeth. Abraham and Isaac died in faith and in peace, yet we have no record of their dying testimony; but Jacob spoke with great copiousness and energy. All true believers are blessed at their death; but all do not depart equally full of spiritual consolation, nor are all alike edifying to the spectators.—The joint inheritance of the promised blessing with the true Israel of God, let who will despise it, is infinitely preferable to the sole inheritance of all the kingdoms of the world: and the best expression of particular affection for our children and relatives consists in recommending to them our God and our religion; and in seeking for them his grace by earnest prayers, that they may be his adopted children and heirs, according to the promise. Though we cannot bless them in Jacob's Spirit of prophecy, yet we may with his spirit of faith; and humbly hope that our prayers for them will be answered, and our exhortations followed, even after we are dead. But alas! too many parents, who profess themselves Christians, act in direct opposition to the example of Joseph, by anxiously and covetously, if not dishonestly, heaping up wealth for their children; as if they meant to teach them to forget the promised land, or to prefer a plentiful portion of this present world!

V. 9-22. There is nothing more comfortable to the dying believer himself, or more edifying and affecting to those around him, than to reflect upon and speak of the promises of God, and his experience of their faithful accomplishment; to be mindful of his Bethels and Peniels, and to acknowledge that, notwithstanding his trials and troubles, all hath been done wisely and graciously. In this view, even temporal mercies and deliverances, yea, our daily bread, when considered as the gift of the great "Angel of the covenant," the purchase of his redemption, and earnest of better things reserved for us, become most precious blessings. And when a dying man can consider himself with confidence as "redeemed from all evil;" as pardoned and sanctified; and about to have done with conflict, labour, sin, temptation, darkness, sorrow, and the danger of any more offending or dishonouring God; and having good, and nothing but good, before him to all eternity; with what comfort may he "walk through the valley of the shadow of death!" And though flesh and heart fail, though the eyes grow dim, and nature sink in decay, how may he triumph in that God, who is "the Strength of his heart, and his Portion for ever!" Having experienced that the Lord hath been better to him, not only than his desponding fears, but even than his most sanguine hopes, he may cheerfully descend into the grave, leaning on the tried faithfulness of God to his promises.—But would we thus die the death of the righteous, we must "walk before God in the land of the living;" and, in the exercise and obedience of faith, bear the name and tread in the steps of these ancient believers: then, though our comforts are dying all around us, our heavenly Father will be with us, to countervail all losses, and to fulfil his largest promises.—Whatever we think while we live, we shall at death know, that to be "fed all our life long," is all that we can have in this world. Little indeed can those possessions profit us, about which there are so many cares and contentions: and though it may be proper, to adjust with exactness every thing respecting them, lest we bequeath discord to our posterity; yet soon a burying-place will be all that the amplest patrimony can afford us.—How poor then are they, who have no other riches! and how miserable is a death-bed to those who have no well-grounded hope of good, but dreadful apprehensions of evil, and nothing but evil for ever! Let us then fear being put off with a portion in this world, or with a hypocritical religion and a presumptuous hope, which will at last leave us in despair. Rather, whatever we lose or go without, let us "choose that good part,

4 ¶ Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel, because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.

5 ¶ Simeon and Levi are brethren: instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

6 ¶ O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall.

7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

[Practical Observations.]

31. Prov. 18:9. f Or, their swords are weapons of violence. 34:25. 1 Judg. 5:21. Ps. 42:5, 11. 43:5. 103:1. Jer. 4:19. Luke 12:19. k 34:30. Ps. 25:4, 5. 28:3. 94:20. 21. 139:19. Prov. 1:11. 1 Jer. 27:34. Ps. 64:2. m s. 16:9. 30:12. 57:8. n 34:25. 38. f Or, I thought open. o 2 Sam. 13:22-28. Prov. 26:21, 25. 27:3. p Josh. 19:1-9. 21: 1 Chr. 4:24-31.

which shall never be taken from us;" and then poverty, pain, reproach, and death itself, will be as so many favourable gales, to waft us to the haven of eternal bliss.

NOTES.—CHAP. XLIX. V. 1, 2. All Jacob's sons were still living; and now at his command they collected round his bed, perhaps with their children, to hear his dying words. The repetition of this call might intimate his desire, that they should keep together, and live in harmony as one family, without intermingling with the Egyptians.—This dying address to them should not at all be considered as the expression of his private affection, or resentment, or partiality; but as the language of the Holy Spirit, declaring the purpose of God respecting the character, circumstances, and situation of the several tribes descended from them, in the last times, or in after ages: for the prophecy evidently looks forward beyond the coming of Christ, and some of it seems to be yet unaccomplished. In this and in some other passages, such as Noah's prophecy, (Notes, 9:24-27.) and Moses blessing the tribes, (Notes, Deut. 33:) there is so large an extent of prediction comprised in a few words, that brevity will allow us to adduce but a small part of what might properly be said, by way of elucidating them. In many instances, we have only the scriptural history to proceed upon, if we attempt to illustrate the prophecy by its accomplishment: and this mentions but little concerning several of the tribes. Had we a more particular account of the distinguishing character, situation, and success of each tribe, we should probably perceive a more striking exactness in all these predictions, than we now discern in any of them.

V. 3, 4. Reuben, being Jacob's eldest son, might expect the precedence: as "the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power," the larger portion of the inheritance, and the principal authority among his brethren, properly belonged to him. But he had incurred a forfeiture; and therefore his father, as it were, arrayed him with the insignia of royalty, that he might the more solemnly and judicially degrade him.—The word rendered unstable, seems to denote especially a haughty, arrogant disposition, which, like swelling waters, overflows or breaks through all restraints, and renders a man altogether unworthy of confidence, and unfit for useful services. Or it may mean an inconstant spirit, which turns this way or the other, at the impulse of every temptation, as water driven by the wind.—(Marg. Ref.)—Some think the word means licentious, but that is not clear. It is used in the following passages, and not elsewhere: Judg. 9:4. Jer. 23:32. Zeph. 3:4.—Probably an insolent self-preference, on account of his primogeniture, concurred in emboldening Reuben to commit incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine, as in some respects laying a claim to the inheritance. (2 Sam. 16:21. 1 Kings 2:17, 21, 22.) But, by that very action, he forfeited all the privileges of the distinction which so elated him. Reuben's incest had been committed forty years before, and probably was repented of, and pardoned as to its eternal punishment: yet, being a crime of so infamous a nature, it was on this occasion remembered, and his tribe was degraded on account of it; to testify not only Jacob's, but the Lord's abhorrence of such abominable practices, for a warning to the Israelites, and to others in all future ages. Thus children actually do suffer for their parents' crimes in this world: but this is for wise, equitable, and merciful reasons; namely, to warn them not imitate their sins, lest they both be punished themselves, and entail misery on their beloved offspring.—The descendants of Reuben seem to have resembled him in character; and, according to this prediction, his tribe never had the pre-eminence in any respect: nor is any mention made in the subsequent history, of either judge, king, prophet, or renowned person, descended from Reuben; except of Dathan and Abiram, who, according to the character here describe, proudly rebelled against Moses and against God: and of Adina, one of David's captains. (1 Chr. 11:42.)

V. 5-7. Simeon and Levi, the next in seniority, were degraded also, and with still deeper abhorrence of the crime which they had committed. They were brethren, not only descended from the same parents, but as being of the same fierce and untractable disposition. The swords, those "instruments of cruelty" with which they massacred the Shechemites, remained in their houses, as monuments of their

10 The ^{*}sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
nor a ^ylawgiver from ^zbetween his feet, ^auntil

23:24, 24:9. Hos. 5:14. Rev. 5:5. x Num. 24:17. Jer. 30:9. Ez. 19:11, 14. Zech. 10:11. y Num. 21:15. Ps. 60:7, 108:3. z 1 Pet. 28:7. a Is. 9:6, 11:1, 62:11. Jer. 23:6. Dan. 9:25. Matt. 1:21, 21:9. Luke 1:26, 3:4. John 9:7, 18:31, 19:12, 15.

23:24, 24:9. Hos. 5:14. Rev. 5:5. x Num. 24:17. Jer. 30²¹. Ez. 19:11, 14. Zech. 10:11. y Num. 21:15. Ps. 60:7, 108:8. z 1 Pet. 28:5. w Is. 9:6. 11:1, 62:11. Jer. 23:6. Dan. 9:25. Matt. 1:21. 21:9. Luke 1:31³². 3. John 9:7. 18:31. 19:12, 15.

7:12.) It had the first lot in Canaan, even in preference to Ephraim, Joshua's own tribe, (*Josh. 15:1*) After Joshua's death, "the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up." (*Judg. 1:1,2*) Othniel, the first judge, was of this tribe, and Caleb also, who almost equalled Joshua in reputation.—At length the Lord chose David, of the tribe of Judah, to rule over his people; and made a covenant with him concerning the perpetuity of the kingdom in his family, which evidently prefigured the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Accordingly, David and his son Solomon ruled over all Israel, with great prosperity and renown; Judah was praised and had in honour; "his hand was in the neck of his enemies, and his father's children bowed down to him.—He was a lion's whelp; he went up from the prey; he stooped, he couched down as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?"—After Solomon's death, this glory was in some degree eclipsed by the revolt of the ten tribes. Yet the kingdom of Judah, for above 400 years, was governed by his descendants in lineal succession. The tribe of Benjamin and that of Levi, with numbers from the other tribes, united themselves to Judah, from whom the whole kingdom was called Judah, and the land was distinguished as the land of Judah. This kingdom was far more prosperous than that of the ten tribes. Above half of their kings were pious men, and many of them very zealous in the cause of God; their reigns were remarkably long in proportion; and consequently religion prospered much more in Judah than in Israel. While their pious princes adhered to the worship of God, their most powerful and haughty foes were intimidated, or subdued: and even when the nation, for idolatry, was given up for a time into the hands of their assailants, they soon returned to the Lord, and were restored and prospered. During the last contest with the Chaldeans, their power and courage were very conspicuous, in the long struggle which they made against the victorious and potent Nebuchadnezzar.—After the captivity, the Jews alone, as a nation, returned; while the Israelites were either finally scattered, or incorporated with them. From this period all the remainder of Jacob's descendants have been called from Judah, Jews or Judeans, and the distinction of tribes gradually fell into disuse; and this is the name by which they are at this day known all over the earth: a most remarkable event, that the people should neither be called after Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor one of his three elder sons; but from Judah, his fourth son. Thus it is manifest, that Judah has been unspeakably more known and celebrated than any other of Jacob's sons; his brethren have praised and honoured him, but he has been the most glorified and the most beloved.

him; they have bowed down to him, and have preserved their most valued distinctions, by standing related to him and bearing his name.—His has been, in all respects, the conquering and the ruling tribe, though more especially distinguished by giving birth to Christ, the Lord of all and the King of glory.—Indeed, the power and reputation of the Jews after the captivity, never equalled their preceding eminence: yet the stand which they made against the Syrian king, especially the successes of the Maccabees (who, though Levites, were closely united with Judah) against Antiochus Epiphanes, and afterwards against the Roman generals, especially before the last destruction of Jerusalem, proves that they were very powerful and formidable. Many of the other tribes joined with them, and frequently possessed authority, and headed their armies; but the body of the people descended from Judah, and the whole was called by his name. And though Jerusalem was situated in the lot of Benjamin, yet the tribe of Judah inhabited part of that city: the throne of David and his descendants was placed in Jerusalem; there the family of Judah ruled over their brethren; and thither the other tribes resorted to the courts of justice, as well as for the worship of God. It is therefore undeniable that events, even to this day, during more than 3,000 years, have, with astonishing exactness, corresponded to this ancient prediction, in a manner which no human sagacity could have foreseen or conjectured.

V. 10. The word here translated "sceptre," properly signifies a *rod*; though sometimes it is rendered a *tribe*: and it simply denotes the exercise of dominion or authority, of which the *rod* or *sceptre* was the badge. Judah was at this time merely the head of a family; for Israel, properly speaking, was no more divided into tribes, than governed by kings: but it was thus prophetically intimated that Judah would shortly acquire authority, not only as a distinct tribe, but likewise over his brethren.—The word rendered "lawgiver," in general signifies a ruler or judge; and implies, that rulers and magistrates, descended from Judah, or called by his name, would succeed each other for a length of time. This authority in Judah, however assailed, or changed^{as} to external form, should not finally depart till SHILOH came,

Shiloh come, and unto him shall be the gathering of the people be.

11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.

12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

13 Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon.

Isa. 2:2, 11-10; 42:3, 4; 49:6, 7, 22, 23; 53:4, 5, 60; 57:21, 27; Hag. 2:7; Zech. 2:11, 8-20;—Matt. 23:32; Rom. 15:12, 2; 1 Cor. 5:10; c 1 Kings 4:20, 25, 2 Kings 18:32; Joel 3:18; Mic. 4:4; Rev. 7:14; d Prov. 23:29; e 30:20; Deut. 33:18, 19; Josh. 19:10-16; 130:18; Deut. 33:18; Josh. 19:17-23; Judg. 5:15, 10-1; 1 Chr.

on whom the legislative and judicial authority would devolve; and in this, compared with the preceding part of the prophecy, it is implied, that the *regal* dominion would be exercised by SHILOH however previously interrupted; for as Shiloh, to whom "the gathering of the people would be," was to descend from Judah, the meaning evidently is, that the authority would remain with Judah, till he came, whose right it was, and with him it would thenceforth remain for ever. As to the time of his coming, it is foretold clearly, that it should be before the sceptre and lawgiver should depart from Judah, or about that time. And it is at least hinted that it would not be long before that departing of civil policy from Judah; and that it would be after its departure from the other tribes: for if it was to continue with them, as well as with Judah, till Shiloh came, the patriarch's words would not be suitable to the obvious design of them. *Maclaurin*. We have seen how the sceptre and the authority remained with Judah till the captivity.—Even in Babylon the Jews seem to have been under some internal government, exercised by the family of David. After their return from Babylon, Zerubbabel, of David's race, was their leader; and the tribe of Judah, and those who incorporated with them, had regular magistrates and rulers from among themselves, under the kings of Persia and Syria, and afterwards under the Romans.—The Sanhedrim, constituted in great measure of the tribe of Judah, and the other courts dependent on it, possessed great authority till the coming of Christ, according to the concurrent testimony of ancient writers. The tribe of Judah likewise was preserved distinct, and could trace back its genealogies without difficulty. In all respects, the *sceptre*, though gradually enfeebled, did not depart; nor was the exercise of legislative and judicial authority, though interrupted, finally suspended till after that event.—The word SHILOH may mean, *He who is sent, or The Seed, or the Peaceable, or Prosperous One*; but all allow that the Messiah was intended, who was sent into the world, as the promised Seed, to be "the Prince of Peace." Till his coming, Judah possessed considerable authority: but shortly after his crucifixion, this authority was vastly abridged; and within that generation, according to his express predictions, Jerusalem was destroyed, the whole civil and ecclesiastical state was subverted, and all distinctions among the poor harassed remnant were confounded; they were scattered abroad over the face of the earth; and to this day, after almost 1800 years, they have been more destitute of sceptre and lawgiver, than even during the Babylonish captivity. This consideration so perplexed a learned Jew, about 700 years ago, that he wrote thus to his friend: "I would fain learn from thee, out of the testimonies of the law, and the prophets, and other Scriptures, why the Jews are thus smitten in this captivity wherein we are; which may be properly called, the PERPETUAL ANGER OF GOD, because it hath no end. For it is now above 1000 years since we were carried captive by Titus; and yet our fathers who worshipped idols, killed the prophets, and cast the law behind their back, were only punished with a seventy years' captivity, and then brought home again; but now there is no end of our calamities, nor do the prophets promise any." *S. Moracanus, in Bp. Patrick*.—This inquiry must press the Jews, if they duly consider it, more and more every century. Compared with the astonishing prophecy before us, it undeniably shows that SHILOH is come; that Jesus the Son of Mary was he; and that the Jews filled up the measure of their national guilt by crucifying Him, and have ever since been left, as wretched outcasts dispersed through the nations, to be a living demonstration, that "the Scriptures cannot be broken."—The inspired Patriarch added, "To him shall the gathering of the people be."—If we understand this of Judah, its exact accomplishment has been already shown. The other tribes gathered to that of Judah, during their encampments in the wilderness; they collected themselves as one body to make David king; and afterward they came from all the other tribes, to attend his courts, and form his armies, and those of his son Solomon. After the revolt of Jeroboam and Israel, vast multitudes from other tribes left their possessions to join themselves to Judah. The people gathered to Judah, both in serving under the kings of David's race, attending on the courts of justice, and even in celebrating their solemn feasts. After the captivity, many out of the other tribes joined the Jews, and were gradually incorporated among them; and the whole nation has ever since been called after Judah.—But the clause seems more

14 Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens.

15 And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.

16 Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path; that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

12:32; k Josh. 14:15; Judg. 3:11, 2 Sam. 7:1, 1 Pa. 81:6; Ez. 29:18; Matt. 23:4; m 30:6; Num. 10:25; 1 Pet. 33:22; Judg. 13:2, 24, 25, 18:1, 2; n Judg. 14: 15; 16:22—30, 18:22—31, 1 Chr. 12:35; * Heb. *an a-row-snake*.

immediately to refer to SHILOH. After his coming, when the sceptre departed from Judah, the gathering both of Jews and Gentiles was to Him, as their Prince and Saviour. It has continued to be so even to this present time; and we are taught to expect that this will be the case, more and more, till "the earth shall be filled with his glory;" and that the very Jews, now without prince or sceptre, will ere long be gathered to him as his willing people. (*Note, Hos. 3:4, 5*.) But, "when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations." And, finally, the unnumbered millions of the redeemed shall be gathered to him into his heavenly kingdom, to behold his glory, and to rejoice in his love for ever.—Some render the clause, "To him shall the obedience of the people be;" and if this translation should be preferred, it may easily be seen, that the accomplishment in all respects has answered the prediction in this sense, as well as in the other. Indeed, for what purpose did the people gather either to Judah, to David and his royal race, or to Jesus Christ, but in order to submit to them, and render them willing, loyal, and cordial obedience?—Before the coming of Christ, the Jews, under their greatest difficulties, had a government of their own; but since that time, they have had none; except as Christ, of the tribe of Judah, is the Prince of Peace and the King of Glory, to whom both Jews and Gentiles are required to yield obedience. The actual success of the Gospel, and the vast multitudes who have, through many revolving centuries, bowed in willing subjection to the Saviour's authority, is as striking an accomplishment of this part of the prophecy, as the present state of the Jews is of the other.

V. 11, 12. These verses relate to the lot of Judah in Canaan, and the advantages which they would enjoy, along with the other tribes, until the coming of SHILOH. It was foretold, that Judah's inheritance should abound in vines so strong, that they would tie their young asses to them, and so fruitful, that their garments would be stained with the juice of the grape.—They would have plenty of wine for exhilaration, which would sometimes be abused in intemperance, so that their eyes would be "red with wine;" and "their teeth white with milk," with which also their lot should abound, the pasture-ground being very fertile and luxuriant.—We have seen much of the preceding prophecy applied to Christ, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," terrible to his obstinate foes, but merciful to those who submit; and we may also observe that he is "the true Vine;" that wine is the appointed symbol of "his blood, which is drink indeed," as shed for sinners and applied in faith; and that all the blessings of his gospel are "wine and milk, without money and without price," to which every thirsty soul is welcome.

V. 13. According to this prediction, the tribe of Zebulun had a portion assigned to it, which extended nearly, if not entirely, from the sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean sea, on which some think it had sea-ports. The maritime situation in which this tribe was placed tended greatly to enrich it, both by fisheries and commerce; (*Note, Deut. 33:18, 19*.) and its inheritance reached to the borders of that country, of which Zidon was the capital.—As the land of Canaan was long after this divided by lot, it was the more surprising, that Jacob should thus exactly describe the situation of the tribes. Zebulun was younger than Issachar, yet Jacob mentions him first; and accordingly his inheritance was first allotted to him. (*Josh. 19:10-17*.)

V. 14, 15. Issachar is described under the emblem of a strong ass, as Judah had been under that of a fierce lion. This implied that the tribe of Issachar would be industrious and unambitious; bearing labour or tribute peaceably, of which burdens others grievously complained. The expression, "couching down between two burdens," is variously interpreted; but it certainly denotes a quiet, persevering industry. He was sensible that rest, not from labour, but from war and contention, was profitable; and, being satisfied with the pleasantness of a remote part of the country, he little intermeddled with the affairs of the state, or of war; or with maritime affairs as Zebulun did.—Accordingly, this tribe is seldom mentioned in the subsequent history. There is, however, one remarkable exception. (*1 Chr. 12:32*.)

V. 16, 17. Dan signifies judgment; and Jacob foretold that, though he was the son of one of his concubines, and the first of them whom he mentions, he should be the head of a separate tribe, and have a share in public affairs; even as

18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.

19 ¶ Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.

20 ¶ Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.

21 ¶ Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.

22 ¶ Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall.

23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.

24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the

hands of the mighty God of Jacob: (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee, with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

o Ps. 119:166,174, 130:5, 1. 25, 28, Luke 2:25, 30, Rom. 8:25, Gal. 5:5, 1 Thes. 1:10, p 30:11, Deut. 33:20, 21, 1 Chr. 5:11—22, 26, q 30:13, Deut. 33:24, 25, r 30:8, Deut. 33:23, Judg. 4:6, 10:3, 5:18, Matt. 4:15, 16, Nephthalim, a 30:24, 41, 52, 48, 16, Deut. 33:17, Josh. 17:14—17, * Hob daughters, s 137: 33, 42, 21, Ps. 61:3, 118:13, u Neh. 6:9, 1 s 27:14, Col. 1:11, 2 Tim. 4:17, x Job 29:20, Ps. 37:15.

if he had been descended from Leah or Rachel.—What follows is a sketch of the character of the Danites, as subtle and mischievous, like serpents and vipers; and of their success in stratagems; and the propriety of these emblems would probably appear to us far more striking, if we knew their history.—Samson was of this tribe, who unexpectedly buried the Philistines in the ruins of the temple of Dagon; as the viper, which lies on the sandy road, causes the horse to throw his rider; and indeed all his previous successes had been obtained in the same unexpected and extraordinary manner. The tribe of Dan, in general, seems to have excelled more in stratagems than in open war.

V. 18. Many expositors imagine, that Jacob here meant to offer up his prayers, with reference to the conflicts and victories which he had predicted; but it is far more natural to suppose, that being exhausted with speaking to his sons, he here paused and spake unto the Lord, by way of refreshing his spirits in the recollection of the near approach of that complete salvation, for which he had so long waited. (Note, 48:16.) Mr. Henry on the passage observes, "That the pious ejaculations of lively devotion may sometimes appear incoherent, but ought never to be censured as impertinent."—Old age is the time for "the patience of hope" to bear its richest fruits: and a pleasant thing it is to see this and other graces in full bloom, while the powers of nature are falling into decay." Fuller.

V. 19. Gad signifies a troop; and both the character and situation of this tribe are here described. The Gadites were renowned for valour: (1 Chron. 12:8.) and, having their inheritance beyond Jordan eastward, they lay open to incursions from troops of Ammonites, Moabites, Syrians, and others, by whom doubtless they were frequently annoyed; but they maintained their ground, gained decisive victories, and under David and his posterity they subjugated their enemies.—This blessing aptly describes a Christian's conflict: he is overcome in many combats, but is more than conqueror in the final event of the war.

V. 20. Asher signifies blessed; and Jacob, by the Spirit of prophecy, assigned him a plentiful country, yielding abundance for himself and others; even royal dainties, to supply the table of kings, at home and abroad. His inheritance bordered on Carmel, which was fruitful to a proverb. (Josh. 19:24—26, 1s, 35:2.)

V. 21. This may be considered as a sketch of the character of this tribe. Unlike the laborious ox and ass; affecting ease and liberty; insinuating and affectionate; active but volatile; more noted for despatch, than for steady labour and perseverance; and more disposed to exult in national blessings, than to fight in defence of them; like the hind which flees from the enemy, not like the lion who feres and overcomes him; like the suppliant, who with goodly words craves mercy, not like the warrior who disdains to ask or even accept of quarter; yet in this way maintaining his ground, as the hind stands firm even on the craggy and steep rocks.—Barak and many of his soldiers were of this tribe, and though at last they fought successfully, at first they were very timorous. I recollect no other warriors of this tribe. (Notes, Judg. 4:5.)

V. 22—26. Part of what Jacob says concerning his beloved Joseph is historical, and relates to his past life: much however is prophetic.—He is here called "a fruitful bough," or young tree planted by the water-side: he had no more than two sons, yet from them sprang two very numerous tribes; but his prosperity was preceded by base injuries and heavy afflictions. "The archers," or such as were most skillful in the use of the bow, "had sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him." His brethren pursued him with unrelenting envy and enmity, and spared his life only to sell him for a slave. Potiphar's wife tempted and then slandered him; Potiphar condemned and imprisoned him; and though we do not read of it, it is a singular case indeed, if some of the Egyptians did not revile and envy him. This part may likewise be considered as prophetic of the terrible wars, which his descendants waged, especially with the kingdom of Judah.—His weapons, however, in this warfare failed him not, as a broken or weakened bow would have done: and his hands and arms, notwithstanding the most fatiguing exertions, were strengthened to use them by the power of the God of Jacob; who in

y 35:10, 11, Ex. 3:6, Ps. 132:2, 5, 15, 7, 47, 12, 14, 22, Num. 27:16—18, Deut. 34:9, Josh. 1:1—5, 1 s 30:1, a Ps. 118:22, 1 s 25:16, Zech. 3:9, 1 Pet. 2:4—8, b 25:12, 43:23, Deut. 33:13, 17, c 17:1, d Deut. 28:12, 1 s 84:11, Eph. 1:3, 1 Tim. 4:8, e 27:37—39, 40, 28:3, 4, f Deut. 33:15, Jon. 2:6, Hab. 3:6, g 37:28, Ps. 105:17—22.

providence outwardly protected and prospered him, and by his Spirit endured him inwardly with such strength of faith and of grace, as produced invincible courage, resolution, and perseverance: and thus he was enabled to stand his ground, and to repel every attack of his enemies. His life was preserved, his reputation was cleared, his integrity remained unimpeached: when he rose superior to all opposition, his brethren sued to him, and became dependent on him; and all his enemies bowed before him and sought his favour. By the divine assistance and blessing, and through all these trials and troubles, he at length became "the shepherd of Israel," to sustain his father and family, and to take care of them with all their flocks and herds; and "the stone of Israel," the foundation and strong support of their interests. In these respects, as in many other things, he was a remarkable type of the good Shepherd, and tried Corner-Stone, of the whole church of God.—Indeed, though the royal dignity, and the honour of being the progenitor of Christ, were conferred on Judah, yet Joseph was the especial type of the Saviour among Jacob's sons, and all that is here spoken of him ought to be considered as descriptive of the great Antitype. He too was greatly grieved, shot at, and hated; but his bow abode in strength: and by the power of the Holy Spirit, he will not fail nor be discouraged, till his enemies are put under his footstool, and his brethren are brought to be with him where he is, to behold and share his glory.—Thus Joseph, being helped by the God of his father Jacob, was personally, and in his posterity, triumphant over all his enemies.—It was also predicted, that God would bless his posterity with a temperate climate, a fruitful soil, the treasures that are dug from the bowels of the earth, a numerous and healthful progeny, and extensive and durable blessings of every kind; being like the mountains, which shall endure as long as the earth itself, and as precious as their most desirable productions. All these benefits were typical of the vast and everlasting blessings that are conferred upon the spiritual seed of Christ.—Thus Jacob blessed all his sons, more particularly, copiously, and clearly, than Abraham and Isaac had done: the promises also drew nearer to their accomplishment, and his Seed were multiplying very fast. But especially he blessed Joseph, "who was separated from his brethren," not only as sold by them into Egypt, but as possessing eminent dignity, and as far more excellent than they. The words may be rendered, "a Nazarite from among his brethren," one devoted unto God; and the expression, "on the crown of the head," may refer to the Nazarite's vow, which seems to have subsisted before the giving of the law, and only to have been regulated by it. (Notes, Num. 6:1.) In this also he was a type of Him who "was holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners."—If we compare this prophecy with that contained in the preceding chapter, we shall readily perceive, that, according to the words of the dying patriarch, Ephraim and Manasseh would be the heads of two distinct tribes in Israel, and that the descendants of Ephraim would be more numerous, powerful, and renowned, than those of Manasseh. This accordingly took place in after ages. No one of Jacob's other sons was the progenitor of two distinct tribes; yet each of these was as numerous and illustrious as any of the other tribes of Israel, Judah excepted.—When the Israelites were first numbered in the wilderness, the descendants of Joseph amounted to 72,200, and those of Judah to 74,600, which was a vast proportion out of 600,000. At the second numbering, they amounted to 85,900, or 3,400 more than Judah. At this period, Ephraim was so decreased, as to be above 20,000 less than Manasseh: yet, when Moses blessed them just afterwards, he confirmed Jacob's prophecy, saying, "They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh;" and it is evident from the whole history, that the Ephraimites were shortly increased to an immense multitude, and in all respects exceeded the Manassites. For while the two divisions of Manasseh, on each side Jordan, belonged to the kingdom of Israel, the political influence of Ephraim so vastly preponderated, that the whole kingdom was called Ephraim, as distinguished from Judah, during the whole term of its continuance.—It is well known that Joshua, the conqueror of Canaan, was an Ephraimite; but, instead of taking measures to advance his own tribe, he rejected the application of both Ephraim and Manasseh, when

27 ¶ Benjamin shall be as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.

28 ¶ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

29 And he charged them, and said unto me, I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

30 In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying place.

1. 35:18. Deut. 33:12. 1 Judg. 3:15—29. 20:1 Sam. 11:4—11. 14:15. Acts 8:3. 9:1. Phil. 3:5. 2 Jer. 5:6. Ez. 22:25, 27. Zeph. 3:3. Matt. 7:15. 10:16. Acts 20:22. 1 Num. 23:24. Psal. 8:11. 10:10. Zech. 13:1—7. 1 m Ex. 23:21. 1 Kings 18:31. Acts 23:7. Jam. 1:1. Rev. 7:4. 15:15. 23:8, 17. 35:29. Heb. 12:23.

they requested a larger inheritance, because they "were a great people, and the Lord had blessed them hitherto." (Josh. 17:14—18.) In the days of Jephthah, the Gileadites slew 42,000 Ephraimites at once, which might have been supposed sufficient to annihilate their political importance; yet they were so increased, that it seems to have had no effect in that respect; and the prophecy was evidently and undeniably fulfilled. In short, through revolving centuries to this day, the names of Judah and Joseph have been far more celebrated, than those of Jacob's other sons; which in the history, as well as in this prophecy, are comparatively obscure. The tribes of Judah and Ephraim have eclipsed all the other tribes, by giving names to the two grand divisions of the nation; and Ephraim has been far more illustrious than Manasseh. This is precisely what might have been supposed, even on a cursory reading of these chapters as prophecy: and how can it be accounted for, that events through remote futurity should so accord to this ancient book, if it had not been divinely inspired? Let those who deny or doubt its divine inspiration solve this difficulty if they are able.

V. 27. According to the emblem here used, the character of this tribe would be *fierceness and cruelty*; which especially appears in the history of the Levite's concubine; when after the wickedness was committed, the Benjamites singly withstood all the other tribes, and had the advantage in two battles; nor did they yield till almost entirely destroyed. (Notes, Judg. 19:20.) Ehud, the second judge, and Saul the first king, were of this tribe.—In the former part of the history, we read frequently of the Benjamites as a warlike people; and in the latter times they joined themselves to the tribe of Judah, and thus divided the spoil, and shared with them in their privileges.—Paul was of this tribe, who, as it were, in the morning of his life, ravaged as a wolf, and devoured the prey in persecuting the Christians; but in the evening of his days, as a preacher of the gospel, he shared the blessings with Judah's Lion, assisted in his victories, and thus divided the spoil.—Benjamin was peculiarly dear to Jacob, yet little is spoken of him in this blessing; and there is nothing of the tender and fervent affection, which marks the blessing pronounced on Joseph: for Jacob spake by the Spirit of prophecy.—The tribe of Benjamin did not join itself to the descendants of his brother Joseph; but to those of Judah.

V. 28. *Every one, &c.* That is, according to the blessing, which God intended in after times to bestow upon them.—Though some of Jacob's sons were reproved and disgraced, yet none of them were excluded (as Ishmael and Esau had been) from the promised land, and the peculiar privileges of Abraham's seed; and when we compare their situation with the Gentile nations, it clearly appears that they were all indeed blessed with most invaluable blessings.

V. 29, 30. Jacob charged all his sons in this matter, as he had done Joseph before. One design seems to have been, to draw off their thoughts from Egypt, to weaken their attachment to that country, and to lead them to fix their hearts upon Canaan, as their promised inheritance.

V. 31. By burying Leah, and wishing to be buried himself, not where his beloved Rachel lay, but where Abraham and Isaac lay, Jacob expressed his faith in the God of Abraham and Isaac, and his desire of having his portion with them beyond the grave. (Notes, 23.) Of Leah's death and burial, nothing further is recorded.

V. 33. Thus Jacob, having been enabled to finish all for which he wished to live, lay down and died with the utmost serenity and composure.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7. The gracious consolations and aids of the Holy Spirit, can make men forget pain, raise them above the feeling of an exhausted frame, and enable them to speak on a death-bed, with pleasure to themselves and profit to others. But views into futurity, except as they respect the felicity of heaven, would afford us little satisfaction. Had not Jacob looked forward to the coming of *SHILOH*, and "waited for his salvation," he could have rejoiced but little in these prophetic benedictions of his family, with respect merely to this

31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife: and there I buried Leah.

32 The purchase of the field, and of the cave that is therein, was from the children of Heth.

33 And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

CHAPTER L.

Jacob mourned for, and embalmed, 1—3. Joseph requests Pharaoh that he may go and bury his father, and obituary notice, 4—6. Jacob is buried in Machpelah, 7—13. Joseph and his brethren return to Egypt; their suspicious fears of him; and his kindness to them, 14—21. Joseph's age, posterity, prophecy, and charge concerning his bones; his death and interment, 22—25.

AND Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.

1. 47:30. 2 Sam. 19:37. p 22:16—20. 50:13. Acts 7:16. p 29:19. 25:9. 35:29. r 50:24—25. Josh. 24:27—29. Huh. 11:22. 12:23—17. 33:29. Job 5:25. 30:23. Luke 2:29. Heb. 11:13—16. a 16:4. b 83:2. 2 Kings 13:14. Mark 5:38, 39. John 11:35, 38. Acts 8:2. 1 Thes. 4:13.

present world: so vain is the best state of earthly bliss!—Whatever therefore tends to draw off our affections from things below, and raise them to things above; whatever tends to cement our union with the people of God, and to disunite us from the world, must be good for us. And such in general is the tendency of the admonitions, and even rebukes, of pious parents, especially at the close of life, and when mixed with prayers for their children's welfare.—Sins long since committed, if not washed away in the blood of Christ, will at last rise up against us to our condemnation: and, even when repented of and pardoned, we may be reminded of them, by the correction of our merciful Father, the rebukes of kind friends, and the upbraidings of unkind enemies; and in many ways be made to bear the reproach, and to "possess the iniquities of our youth," in our circumstances, constitutions, and reputations. We should therefore remember them for our humiliation, and that we may bear such rebukes with patience and meekness; for if our violations of the divine law do not exclude us from heaven, we shall have great cause for thankfulness; and if we be truly penitent, our very sufferings will be converted into blessings to ourselves and others.—Those who are of eminence in the profession of religion, should be peculiarly steadfast in protesting against the wickedness of other professors; and in wiping away every suspicion of conniving at their sins, though it should leave infamy upon their nearest relations: for it is far better that they should bear the reproach, than that it should rest upon the gospel.—Revenge or sensual pleasure may be sweet at the time, but will leave a lasting sting behind: such men as are *unstable, insolent, and arrogant* will never be eminent either in the world or in the church; and they who are self-willed, commonly make themselves and others miserable.

V. 8—23. In severely animadverting on the sins of atrocious criminals, we must take care neither to condemn whole families or collective bodies indiscriminately, nor to magnify every offence into a crime of deep malignity. Notwithstanding defects, some persons merit our commendation: and though all are not of the same disposition or alike prosperous, God dispensing to men variously as he pleases; yet he blesses all with many unmerited mercies, and especially those who live under his ordinances, and enjoy the means of grace.—But praise is chiefly due to him who sprang from Judah, in whom the most opposite excellencies harmonize. As "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," he will terribly avenge upon his enemies his slighted love; and, as "the Lamb of God," by the sacrifice of himself "he taketh away the sin of the world." He stretches forth his sceptre of grace from the mercy-seat, and invites us perishing sinners to draw near, and accept of his salvation, that we may not feel the stroke of his iron rod: and "if his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, blessed are all they who trust in him." Assuredly, the Messenger of Peace is come, and unbelieving Jews without sceptre or governor are his unwilling witnesses. But may they and the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered unto him, and with us enjoy blessings, incomparably better than the richest fruit of the vine and the cornfield, and all royal dainties; than treasures dug from mines, gained by commerce, or seized by conquest; blessings more firmly secured than the foundations of the hills, and more durable than creation itself; even everlasting felicity. With the earnestness of this happiness comforting our hearts, "his yoke will be easy and his burden light;" nor will the hardest service, or the heaviest tribute, which he imposes, prevent our finding rest for our souls; his grace will be sufficient for us; so that we shall conquer our most powerful, and supplant our most subtle foes. We may indeed be grieved and galled by the arrows of temptation and slander, but "no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and every tongue that ariseth against us in judgment, we shall condemn;" because Jacob's God will be on our side.—Under the care of the Shepherd of Israel, we shall lack nothing; built upon the Rock of salvation, we shall abide immovable, until our work be finished; and then, breathing out our souls into his hands, for whose

2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 And forty days were fulfilled for him, (for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed;) and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.

4 And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

5 My father made me swear, saying, ^hLo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7 And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt.

8 And all the house of Joseph and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen.

9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

10 And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

c 25. 2 Chr. 16:14. Matt. 23:12. Luke 24:1. John 19:39,40. * Heb. wept. d Num. 20:29. Deut. 34:8. e 10. f Esth. 4:2. g 47:29-31. h 24. 48:21. i eut. 4:22. 1 Sam. 11:43. 12:1 hr. 16:14. Is. 22:16. Matt. 27:60. k 3:19. Job 30:23. Eccl. 12:7. 1 Matt. 8:21,22. Luke 9:59,60. m 14:16. n Ex. 10:8,9. Num. 32:24-27. o 4:43. 46:32. Ex. 14:17,28. 2 Kings 18:24. Cant. 1:9. p 4. 1 Sam. 8:13. Job 2:19. q 10:15-16. 13:7. 24:5. 34:30. T That is, *The mourning of the*

salvation we have waited, we shall depart in peace, and leave a blessing on our children after us.

NOTES.—CHAP. L. V. 2, 3. The Egyptians were eminent for the art of preserving dead bodies from putrefaction, by the skillful use of spices and drugs. Several of these bodies remain to this day, and are called Egyptian mummies, being preserved as great curiosities; and some of them have probably continued in this state above 2000 years.—The same persons, who were consulted as physicians for the living, embalmed the dead bodies; and at least forty days were requisite to complete the process. These physicians were generally retained as servants in the courts of princes, and in the families of great men; and Joseph, in his high station, had several of them in his household. As therefore the custom was not sinful, and as in the case of Jacob's body, which was to be buried at a distance, it was very expedient; Joseph complied with it on this occasion; and for similar reasons the survivors afterwards embalmed his body. (26.)

V. 4. The days of public mourning, or, as we should say, court-mourning, were past; but the mourning of Joseph and his brethren could not be supposed to terminate till after the funeral, (10.)—Perhaps it was not allowed to come into the presence of the king in mourning: (*Note, Esth. 4:2.*) or Joseph wished to make his request to Pharaoh with all the modesty and decorum possible; and, in sending his message by the courtiers, he at once showed his respect to him and to them.

V. 5. Joseph did not choose to appear weary of application to business, or negligent of the interests of Egypt and of Pharaoh, in thus requesting leave of absence: he was therefore careful to represent the matter, not so much as his own inclination, as the dying request of his father, who was so earnest in it, that he laid him under the solemn obligation of an oath, to bury him in Canaan.—The cave at Machpelah seems to have been large, with many separate burying places in it; so that Jacob, in addition to those before prepared, had previously formed one for the reception of his body at his decease.

V. 6. The king would not have Joseph violate an oath for his sake.—Such heathen kings will rise up in judgment against those Christian princes who make a jest of their oaths. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 7-9. Perhaps it would be difficult to find any funeral, either in ancient or modern times, more distinguished by the numerous attendance of great and eminent persons than this of Jacob: yet he was neither monarch, nor conqueror, nor lawgiver; but a plain shepherd to the end of his days!—As this distinguished honour was conferred on Jacob, principally for the sake of his son, it shows in what esteem Joseph was held in Egypt: and serves to prove that, whatever modern adversaries may say of his conduct, he was considered at the time as the great benefactor and deliverer of the country.

11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians; wherefore the name of it was called ^hAbel-mizraim, which is ^hbeyond Jordan.

12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them.

13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah; which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.

14 And Joseph returned into Egypt, he and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

[*Practical Observations.*]

15 ¶ And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, ^hJoseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, ^hForgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now we pray thee forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face: and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

19 And Joseph said unto them, ^hFear not: for am I in the place of God?

Egyptians. r Deut. 3:25,27. 11:30. s 47:29-31. 49:29-32. t Eccl. 7:16. 123:16-18. 2 Kings 21:18. u 27:41,42. x 42:17. Lev. 26:36. y Matt. 12:14,15. 18:35. Luke 17:3,4. Eph. 4:32. Col. 3:13. z 20. Job 33:27,28. Prov. 8:13. Jam. 5:16. a 31:42. 49:25. Matt. 25:40. Philom. 8-20. b 42:31-34. 45:4,5,8. c 37:7-11. d Matt. 14:27. Luke 24:37,38. e 30:2. Deut. 32:33. Job 34:29. Rom. 12:19. Heb. 10:30.

V. 10, 11. Moses wrote or revised his history on the east side of Jordan; and therefore in his five books, *beyond Jordan* means *west-ward of Jordan*; in other parts of Scripture it generally means *east-ward*.—During seven days Jacob's sons performed solemn funeral obsequies, as it seems, before they came to the cave of Machpelah; perhaps because the place which they chose was more convenient for the encampment of so large a company. The inhabitants of Canaan naturally called them all Egyptians, as coming out of Egypt; though some of them must know to whom the sepulchre belonged.

V. 14. Various motives concurred to induce the descendants of Jacob to continue in Egypt, notwithstanding Abraham's prophetic vision of their bondage there. Some might forget it, or disregard it if remembered; others might submit, and not deem themselves allowed to move without command from God; while fear, interest, love of ease and plenty, and similar inducements, would concur in detaining them, and effecting the purpose of God. At this time, however, Joseph had engaged to return; he could not have done otherwise without the greatest impropriety and ingratitude; and both he and his brethren had left their families and possessions in Egypt, to which they must return. (*Ex. 10:9-11,24.*)

V. 15-18. Joseph's brethren perhaps supposed that tenderness to Jacob had hitherto restrained him from inflicting punishment on them, which they were conscious they had merited; and judging of him from the general temper of human nature, they apprehended that he would now avenge himself on them; and, not being able to resist or flee away, they attempted to soften him by entreaties. A deep conviction of their criminality, in their conduct to him, rendered them unreasonably suspicious; but their fears and submissions were calculated still more to humble and soften them, as well as to accomplish the purposes of God.—They first sent messengers to Joseph; but afterwards they were encouraged to go in person. They did not say, *"our father,"* but more pathetically, *"thy father."* They urged the dying words of Jacob, who doubtless had given them some injunction to this purpose, that he might render them more deeply sensible of their guilt; and they pleaded with Joseph for pardon, in the character of the servants of Jacob's God. This shows with what care and prudence they had concerted the business; and we need not wonder that Joseph was greatly affected, at witnessing this most exact accomplishment of his dreams.

V. 19. It belongs to God to execute vengeance, and Joseph did not intend to usurp his prerogative. Thus he instructed his brethren not to fear him, but to fear God, to humble themselves before God, and to seek his forgiveness.

V. 20. Joseph's brethren, in selling him to the Ishmaelites, had acted with extreme malice and wickedness; and they

20 But as for you, ^fye thought evil against me; but ^gGod meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

21 Now therefore fear ye not: ^hI will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake ⁱkindly unto them.

22 ¶ And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years.

23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children, of the third generation: the children also of Machir,

f 37:4,18-20. g 45:5-8. Ps. 76:10, 105:16,17. Is. 10:7. Acts 2:23. 3:13-15. 26. Rom. 8:28. h 45:10,11. 47:12. Matt. 5:44. Rom. 12:20,21. * Heb. to their hearts. 34:3. Is. 40:2. marg. i Num. 32:33. Josh. 17:1. Job 42:16. Ps. 128:6.

intended that he should live and die a destitute slave. But God, in permitting it, "meant it unto good" to Joseph, to Jacob, to his brethren, to their families, to Egypt, to Canaan, and to the neighbouring nations; nor can we number up all the important purposes answered by it to the church and to the world; or calculate how many important events depended on it, through all succeeding generations.—The same is observable in many other instances in Scripture; and we cannot possibly account for the dispensations of Providence, without admitting that God leaves evil men and evil spirits to themselves to commit wickedness, as far as he intends to overrule it for good, but no further. They are influenced only by a desire of gratifying their own wicked and hateful passions, and are therefore justly condemned; but He, in omniscience and infinite wisdom, purposing most extensive and durable good, is on that very account worthy of all adoration and praise.

V. 22. *A hundred and ten years.*] Joseph survived Jacob about fifty-four years, and probably continued in authority to the last.

V. 23. *Upon Joseph's knees.*] Thus he expressed his affection, and the pleasure which he took in them.

V. 24-26. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones." He fully expected that the promise of God would be verified, and desired to have his lot beyond the grave with the Israelites, and not with the Egyptians. It is probable that he required, not only his brethren, but the chief persons in their several families, to take this oath: yet he did not order his body to be carried directly to Canaan for burial, but to remain in Egypt until God should visit them. It was therefore embalmed, and kept in a coffin in Egypt, most likely by the Israelites; and this circumstance would keep alive the expectation of a speedy departure from Egypt, and preserve Canaan continually in their mind. It would also tend to attach Joseph's posterity to their brethren, and to prevent them from incorporating with the Egyptians.—It is not expressly said, how long each of the other sons of Jacob lived, or where they were buried; but it is generally thought that their bones likewise were carried to Canaan by the Israelites. (*Note, Acts 7:15,16.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. Though our pious friends have lived to a good old age, and we are confident that they are gone to glory, we may well regret our own loss, and should pay respect to their memory by lamenting for them: for grace does not destroy natural affection; but purifies, moderates, and regulates all our passions.—Others, besides relatives, have cause to

the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

26 So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

† Heb. born. k 30:3. 121:1. Ex. 4:31. m. 15:14-16. 26:3. 35:12. 46:4. Ex. 3:16,17. n 47:29-31. o Ex. 13:19. Josh. 24:32. Acts 7:16. Heb. 11:22. p 22 47:9,28. Josh. 24:29. q 3.

mourn the death of eminent believers: for as their prayers, example, and influence were a public benefit, so is their death a public loss. But alas! such mournings in general are a mere compliment; and men are scarcely in earnest about any thing, but the pursuits of ambition, wealth, or pleasure.—The attention paid to the dead, though commonly the effect of custom or superstition, should result from faith in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. Our deceased friends still live, and we shall meet again; though separated from the body, a reunion shall certainly take place. Therefore we commit the body, with decent respect, unto the ground, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life" of all true believers; and whatever our hopes or fears may be, God is the only infallible Judge who are, and who are not, true believers.—We ought scrupulously to observe the last will and dying requests of our deceased friends; and much more should we most religiously reverence the oath of God. But, in the most exact attention to necessary affairs, we should consult in what manner to do them; that we may give as little umbrage as possible, and interfere with other duties no more than can be avoided.

V. 15-26. "There are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand;" and while men are often influenced by the worst of motives, God, by means of them, effects his own most righteous purposes.—How guilt dismays the heart in times of danger! It would however be well if it excited us to as diligent and humble endeavours to obtain forgiveness from God, as it often does to appease the displeasure of man, and to avert temporal calamities.—True religion will teach us, not only to forgive those who are conscious of having injured us, and whom we have in our power; but effectually, by kind actions as well as words, to obviate their fears, assure them of our forgiveness, and exhort them to seek pardon from him to whom vengeance belongs.—But the kindest friends, and the most durable of our earthly comforts must die: let us then look off even from Joseph, that we may look unto Jesus, who ever liveth to bless those who trust in him. Notwithstanding former crimes, and present unbelieving injurious suspicions, he acknowledges for his brother every humble sinner who supplicates his mercy; and as such he will comfort his heart, provide for his wants, and receive him to glory. Let us then seek his favour, rely on his mercy, and submit to his will; and when we come to die, give him charge of both soul and body: so shall we find him faithful and "able to keep that which we have committed to him," until the great decisive day, so that "when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory."

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

EXODUS.

IN the Hebrew Bible this book is called *SHMOTH*, or, *Names*, from the clause (שְׁמוֹתָם) with which it begins: but the translators of the Old Testament, into that Greek Version called the Septuagint, entitled it *EXODUS*, or *The Departure*: because the departure of Israel out of Egypt is the grand subject recorded in it. A general view is indeed given of the circumstances of the Israelites in Egypt, from the death of Joseph to that event, which took place about a hundred and forty years after: but the sacred historian dwells very fully on all the particulars which made way for this grand catastrophe, and which attended or immediately followed it. The subject is introduced by Moses with an account of his own parentage, birth, perilous exposure, marvellous preservation, education in Pharaoh's court, espousing the cause of his enslaved brethren, fleeing into Midian, and living there as a shepherd, and at length being expressly commissioned and instructed by *JEHOVAH*, to lead Israel out of Egypt. He then records the miraculous plagues, by which proud Pharaoh was compelled to liberate the enslaved Israelites, and the manner in which the Red Sea was divided, and they were led through it as on dry land; while Pharaoh and his army were overwhelmed by its waters, and perished. We are next informed how *JEHOVAH* miraculously conducted his people in the wilderness, notwithstanding their murmurings and rebellions; and how he spake the *moral* law to them from the fiery summit of Sinai, and delivered many parts of the *judicial* and *ceremonial* law to Moses; entered into covenant with the nation, appointed the Aaronic priesthood, commanded the erection of a Tabernacle, and instituted his worship among them; notwithstanding the interruption of these gracious plans, by the idolatry of the golden calf.—It is worthy of peculiar notice that the events recorded in this book are constantly referred to both in the Old and New Testament, as matters of undoubted certainty and notoriety, and with many express quotations from it, both by the sacred historians, in the Psalms, by the prophets, and by our Lord and his apostles: and this, in such language as implies most evidently, not only that they regarded this narrative as the genuine word of "Moses, the servant of the Lord," but as *divinely inspired*; so that the miracles recorded are constantly referred to, as actually wrought by a divine power, to prove the laws promulgated and the doctrines established, to be the oracles of God himself. The Reader, by consulting the marginal references, may easily satisfy himself that this remark is well grounded.—This book likewise contains some prophecies, which were fulfilled before or soon after the death of Moses, and also others which were verified in after ages: especially that which is given in these words, "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God, thrice every year;" which the whole history shows to have been exactly accomplished. (Note, 34:24.) Indeed the Types with which it abounds more than any book in Scripture were real prophecies; the exact accomplishment of which, after 1490 years in the great Antitype, is a divine attestation that this book was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.—Learned men have also sufficiently shown, that many of those fables with which ancient profane history uniformly begins, were nothing more than distorted traditions of those events which Moses plainly relates, blended with various imaginations suited to the corrupt taste of mankind; and that Pagan writers had heard some reports of the transactions, of which we have here an authentic history.—Having therefore so firm ground for our confidence, that the narrative before us is the infallible word of God; let us read it with reverence and attention, and we shall find it replete with most important instruction, as to the real nature and effect of true religion.

B. C. 1634.

CHAPTER I.

The names of Jacob's sons, 1-5. The death of that generation, and the vast increase of their posterity, 6, 7. The public, but vain attempts of the king of Egypt to check their increase, 8-14. His cruel orders to the midwives, and their pious disobedience accepted by the Lord, 15-21. Pharaoh commands his subjects to destroy the male infants, 22.

NOW ^athese are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, every man and his household came with Jacob.

2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah;

3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,

4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob, were ^bseventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt ^calready.

6 And ^dJoseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

7 And the children of Israel were ^efruitful, and

^a 6:14-16. Gen. 29:32-35. 30:1-21. 35:13-23. 26. 46:8-26. 49:3-27. 1 Chr. 2:13. Rev. 7:8. ^b Heb. *high*. Gen. 46:26. Judg. 8:30. *many*. 1 Gen. 46:26:27. Deut. 10:22. ^c Gen. 50:26. Acts 7:14-16. d Gen. 1:20:28. 9:1. 12:2. 13:16. 15:5. 17:16. 22:17. 26:4. 28:14. 35:11. 46:3. Deut. 26:5. ^e Ec. 2:12. 19:9.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 5. *Notes*. Gen. 46:27. Acts 7:14.

V. 7. The energetic expressions of this verse, being varied and accumulated, and some of them taken from the immensely rapid increase of insects, and of fishes, or other aquatic animals, are admirably suited to excite the reader's attention to the unparalleled multiplication of the Israelites in Egypt, according to the repeated promises of God to their ancestors; and also to show that they were as remarkably strong and healthy. It is computed, that the number of the Israelites was doubled every fourteen years, from the going down of Jacob and his family into Egypt, until the Exodus. Thus their multitude and power became so great, that they became very formidable to the Egyptians.

V. 8. This must have been some years after Joseph's death, perhaps not less than sixty. Whether this king sprang from another family, or was a descendant of Joseph's patron, is not certain; but having no personal knowledge of Joseph, he had no regard to his memory, esteem for his excellency, or sense of the benefits which Egypt had received from him: and therefore he preferred his own supposed political interests to the claims of honour and gratitude, after the too general maxims of kings and rulers.

V. 9, 10. Pharaoh took occasion, from the great increase of the Israelites, compared with that of the Egyptians, to excite suspicions of them in his subjects, and thus to cover his intentions of enslaving them. As if he had said, 'In order to keep them under, let us begin without delay, or they will become too powerful.'—For when he afterwards expressed his apprehension lest they should "get them up out of the

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increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ Now there arose up ^aa new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, ^bthe people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we.

10 ¶ Come on, let us deal ^cwisely with them: lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

11 Therefore they did set over them task-masters, ^dto afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses.

12 ¶ But the more they afflicted them, the more

^a 15. Ac. 7:18. 1 Ps. 105:24:25. Prov. 14:28. ^b Ps. 10:2. 63:3,4. Prov. 1:11. ^c Job 5:13. Prov. 16:25. 21:30. Act. 7:19. 1 Cor. 3:15-20. Jan. 3:15-16. 13. 7. Gen. 15:13. Deut. 26:6. ^d 2:11. 54:5. Ps. 81:6. 1 Gen. 47:11. 1 Heb. And as they afflicted them, so they nullified.

land," he discovered, that he feared nothing but missing his opportunity of subjugating them, and of enriching himself by their labours.—He had probably heard, that the Israelites sometimes spoke of an approaching season, when they should leave Egypt, to take possession of their promised inheritance; and this would the more excite his fear of losing such a number of useful subjects.—There are several intimations in Scripture, that the Israelites generally conformed to the idolatry of the Egyptians, for which they were thus chastised by them. (Josh. 24:14. Ez. 20:7,8. 23:8.)

V. 11. Various labours seem to have been exacted of the Israelites, as a kind of tax, but in a degree which reduced them to slavery; and the *task-masters* were Egyptians, appointed over them by public authority, to enforce these iniquitous exactions.—By this policy the Egyptians seem to have intended not only to enrich themselves, but to break the spirits of the Israelites, that they might not affect liberty, or aspire after dominion; and also to prevent their *too rapid increase*, by immittering domestic life.—The cities which they builded, were either intended (after the pattern which Joseph had set them) for granaries to lay up corn in store against a year of scarcity; or they were fortified places. They were however useful works, and as Israel's toil saved both the labour and the purses of the Egyptians, we may be sure these would favour the oppression.

V. 12. It exceedingly chagrined the Egyptians to find their schemes prove abortive; and excited alarms in their minds, lest in process of time the Israelites should resent and revenge the inhuman treatment which they had received.

they multiplied and grew. And they were "grieved because of the children of Israel.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.

14 And they made "their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

15 ¶ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, (of which the name of one *was* Shiphray, and the name of the other Puah:)

16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it be a son, "then ye shall kill him, but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

17 But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men-children alive.

18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, "Why have ye done

m Job 5:2. Prov. 27:4. John 12:19. Acts 4:2-4. 5:28-33. n 2:23. 6:9. Num. 20:15. Deut. 4:20. Ruth 1:20. o 1s. 68:13. Nah. 3:14. p 19. 5:7-21. Lev. 25:43, 45, 53. Is. 14:6. 51:23. 52:5. 58:6. Jer. 50:33, 34. Mic. 3:3. q 22. Rev. 12:4. r Gen. 20:11. 42:18. Neh. 5:15. Prov. 13:6. Dan. 3:15-18. 6:13. Hos. 5:11.

Thus Egypt's persecution could not prevent Israel's increase, but Israel's increase could disturb Egypt's comfort; for such is the warfare between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

V. 14. *In the field.*] That is, in cultivating the ground, digging trenches to convey the waters of the Nile, carrying out the dung to manure the land, and other mean and laborious services.—The Egyptians treated the Israelites with rigour, both in the excess of their labours, and the severity of their punishments.—Many have supposed that, besides the useful works here mentioned, the Israelites were employed in building those enormous piles called the pyramids, which remain to this day, and probably will continue till the end of the world; monuments, not so much of the greatness and wisdom, as of the folly, caprice, exorbitant power, and cruel tyranny, of the monarchs who projected them. It cannot indeed be denied, that the skill by which they were planned equals the vastness of the labour with which they were completed; but then, it is evident that they never could be useful, in any degree adequate to the toil and expense with which they were erected. The supposition, however, is entirely groundless: for the Israelites were employed in making bricks, while it is well known that the pyramids were built of hewn stone.—But whatever were the works in which the Israelites were compelled to serve, the Egyptians could give *as good reasons* for thus cruelly oppressing them, as any at this day can urge in favour of the detestable *slave-trade*: for all the arguments adduced on the subject, when fairly weighed, mean nothing more than that, without this oppression, men could not amass so large estates, nor gratify their sensual appetites with such refined excess.

V. 15-17. These midwives, who feared God, seem to have been Hebrew women, and not Egyptians, appointed to this office, as some have conjectured.—Pharaoh might think that he could awe or bribe them into compliance, even to so inhuman and treacherous a conduct towards their own nation: for princes are not often refused in such cases. We may consider these two as the chief of the midwives, whose conduct would influence that of the others; for there must have been many more.—Pharaoh and his servants did not fear female slaves, however numerous, but accounted them their riches.

V. 19. Through the peculiar blessing of God, we may suppose, that this was generally the case; yet not so but that the midwives might have had many opportunities of murdering the infants, had they been so disposed.—Provided we do not speak falsehood, the strictest veracity does not at all times require us to speak all that we know, though our silence should lead men into error; provided such error be no injury to them, or to others; and silence must still more evidently be allowable, when it prevents the commission of sin.—When, however, a measure of infirmity or error undesignedly attends the conduct of those who uprightly fear God, and aim to do his will; he graciously *pardons* what is defective, and *recompenses* what is good: for in this case there is no intention of "doing evil that good may come."

V. 21. God rewarded the midwives, for their concurrence in the increase and prosperity of Israel, by the increase and prosperity of their own families.

V. 22. Probably Pharaoh proposed considerable rewards for these services.—Thus the land would be filled with mercenary informers and murderers: numbers of infants would doubtless be slain in the arms and before the eyes of their distressed and almost distracted mothers; and had not he who says to the swelling ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou go and no further," undertaken for the increase of Israel, they must have been desolated.—Pharaoh at this time, (as Herod did long after,) proved his relation to that great dragon, who

this thing, and have saved the men-children alive?

19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women: for they *are* lively, and *are* delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

20 Therefore "God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied and waxed very mighty.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he "made them houses.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

CHAPTER II.

Moses is born, and exposed in an ark among the reeds, 1-4. He is found by Pharaoh's daughter, 5, 6: who employs his own mother to nurse him, and brings him up as her son, 7-10. He visits his brethren, slays an Egyptian who had injured one of them, and flees into Midian, 11-15. The priest of Midian entertains him, and gives him his daughter, of whom Jeremiah is born, 16-22. The king of Egypt dies, and the Lord regards the cry of the Israelites, 23-25.

AND there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.

Mic. 6:16. Matt. 10:23. Acts 4:19. 5:29. a Ec. 8:4. t Josh. 2:4. 2 Sam. 17:19. 20. u Is. 41:1, 2. Prov. 11:18. Ec. 8:12. Is. 3:10. Heb. 6:10. x 1 Sam. 2:35. 2 Sam. 7:11—13, 27-29. 1 Kings 2:24. 11:35. Ps. 127:1. y 7:19-21. Acts 7:19. Rev. 16:4-6. a 6:16-20. Num. 28:9. 1 Chr. 6:1-3.

sought to destroy the man-child as soon as it was born. (Rev. 12:4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. The very titles of these first two books in the Bible remind us, that the history of man is little more than a narrative of his beginning, and of his departure. Thus one generation is swept away after another, and nothing remains except the names of a very few, and some of them covered with infamy! Happy they whose names are written in the book of life, and enrolled there as true Israelites and heirs of Heaven!—How soon may the sun of prosperity be darkened by the deepest cloud of adversity, and the place of our refuge become the scene of our misery! our best friends succeeded by enemies, and our best services repaid with ingratitude! We should therefore trust the Lord alone: for as nothing can hasten the accomplishment of his purpose before the appointed time, so nothing can retard it when that season arrives.—For the space of above two hundred years, while Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their families lived at liberty, in peace, and in prosperity and affluence, they only increased to seventy persons: but afterwards, in about the same number of years, under galling oppression and cruel bondage, they multiplied into a large nation! Nor did their most rapid increase commence till after the death of Joseph, their chief friend; for God will secure to himself the glory of fulfilling his own promises. Thus was the Christian church more especially increased after the death of Jesus; and thus hath vital religion, in all ages, most prospered under the pressure of severe persecutions. By this the Lord covers his enemies with confusion, and teaches his people "not to fear them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."

V. 8-22. It is an old practice of "the accuser of the brethren" and his servants, to vindicate their cruel treatment of God's people, by aspersing their characters, pretending to suspect them of bad designs, or averring that their increase would be dangerous to the state: they therefore should endeavour, by well-doing and patient suffering, to confute such calumnies, and prove themselves quiet and useful members of society. But though we may suffer unjustly from men, God is just in all that he inflicts upon us by their hands: and it is a singular favour to be kept from sinful compliances, or conformity to the world, even by severe corrections.—The word of God frequently calls that deceit, injustice, cruelty, yea folly, which men account acting "wisely," for such "wisdom is earthly, sensual, devilish," and such politicians are eventually "taken in their own craftiness."—There is no degree of treachery and inhumanity to which the spirit of persecution will not prompt; and they who are actuated by it, seldom fail of finding instruments as destitute of honour and conscience as themselves. But if they meet with those who truly *fear God*, neither bribes nor terrors will prevail upon them to sin against him; and he will plead their cause, and recompense their conscientious disobedience to the unlawful commands of men.—But as we see, in this history, the church of God groaning under persecution, so we may, by viewing the object in another light, see the miserable condition of Satan's wretched bond-slaves, who are so enslaved to their lusts that they never can deliver themselves, however miserable or affrighted, until the Lord sends them redemption by his word and powerful grace. Nor should we here forget that this enemy, who by Pharaoh aimed to destroy the church in its very infancy, is equally busy to stifle the first risings of serious reflections in the heart of man; and thence to "take away the seed of the word, lest we should believe and be saved," and lest these feeble beginnings should increase, and we grow strong enough to renounce his service. Let them therefore who would escape, "take

2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

3 And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

4 And this sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river, and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and behold the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go, and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take

this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out with his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren.

12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

o Acts 7:20. Heb. 11:23. c 1:22. Matt. 2:13,16. Acts 7:19. d Is. 13:2. e Gen. 6:14. 11:3. 14:10. 11:5,20. Num. 12:1-15. 20:1. 26:59. Mic. 6:4. g 1 Kings 17:6. Ps. 45:1. 76:10. Prov. 21:1. Jon. 1:17. 2:10. h 1 Kings 8:50. Neh. 1:11. Ps. 106:46. Acts 7:21. 1 Ps. 27:10. Is. 46:3,4. Ec. 16:3. k Gen. 48:5. Acts 7:21,22. Gal. 4:5. 1 John 3:1. * That is, *Draw out*. l Gen. 4:25. 16:11.

1 Sam. 1:20. Matt. 1:21. m Acts 7:25. Heb. 11:24-26. n 1:11. 3:7. 5:9-14. Is. 58:6. Matt. 11:28. Luke 4:18. o Acts 7:24-26. p 1 Cor. 6:7,8. q Gen. 19:9. 37:8-11. 19:20. Num. 16:3,13. Ps. 2:2-6. Matt. 21:23. Luke 12:14. 19:14,27. Acts 7:26-28,35. † Heb. a man, a prince. r Prov. 15:12. 28:25.

more earnest heed to the things which they hear;" be afraid of sinning against the testimony of their consciences; and without delay cry fervently to the Lord for deliverance, and continue to pray with persevering constancy.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 2. Miriam, Moses's sister, must have been at least ten years older than he, as it is evident from the history in this chapter: and Aaron was three years older than Moses: but it does not appear that his preservation was attended with any peculiar difficulty; and from this we may infer, with some degree of probability at least, that the last bloody edict was not then enacted. Aaron was born eighty-three years before the Exodus, and Joseph died about a hundred and forty-five years before that event: the edict therefore could not be passed less than sixty-two years after the death of Joseph. But it is not known how long that prince, "who knew not Joseph," had reigned before the edict was made.—Moses when born appeared to be a goodly child; and the notice taken of this in several places, indicates that something extraordinary was observed in him, which was considered as an intimation of his future greatness. His mother therefore hid him three months, which the apostle informs us was done in faith. (Heb. 11:23.) Either she had some peculiar assurance given her of his preservation, or believing in general the promises of deliverance to Israel, she was encouraged to conceal her infant, in dependence on God, though perhaps at the hazard of her own life.

V. 3, 4. It is probable that the mother of Moses had received some intimation that she was discovered, and expected that the executioners would come and murder the child in the house before her eyes. She therefore took for him an ark, or a small basket, formed of rushes, and made waterproof by being coated with a kind of bitumen and pitch within and without. (Note, Is. 18:2.) Expecting some providential interposition in his behalf, and under the secret guidance of the Lord, she placed Moses in this ark, concealed it among the flags on the side of the river, and set his sister to watch it. This expedient did not seem likely to answer for any time; as the infant must at length have perished, or been devoured by the crocodiles with which the Nile abounds, if Pharaoh's servants had not found him. But she acted in faith, and the Lord answered her expectation.—Perhaps she intended to take him home in the evening, if nothing had intervened; and to carry him out again in the morning, so that if sought after he might not be found.

V. 5-9. Had any other persons found the exposed infant, they would scarcely have dared to preserve its life, even if they had been disposed to do so: but Pharaoh's daughter, with her attendants, passing near that part of the river, in going to some convenient place for bathing, (which was customary, not only for refreshment, but as a religious observance,) she discovered the ark and sent for it. The beautiful babe weeping excited her compassion, so that she determined to bring him up: and when his sister, (probably after some delay, and observing that the company was at a loss how to proceed,) offered to fetch a Hebrew woman to nurse the child, she was sent for one: thus his own mother was employed to nurse him, and well rewarded for her pains!—The manner in which the great Ruler of the world accomplishes his secret purposes, without at all interfering with the free agency of his rational creatures, by imperceptibly leading them, in following their own inclinations and judgments, to such measures as coincide with his plans, is very observable in all these circumstances.—With what admiring joy and gratitude must Moses's mother have engaged in her delight-

ful office! And how must she have adored the hand of God in so marvelously answering, and far exceeding, her believing expectations!—A great variety of traditions are handed down to us concerning these events: but as there is no certainty in any of them, and they are neither interesting nor edifying, they may very properly be omitted. The narration, as we have it, is beautifully simple and concise.

V. 10. After Moses had continued a proper time with his mother, (from whom he no doubt learned whose son he was, and received the general principles of true religion,) he was educated and provided for, as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. Tradition reports that she was Pharaoh's only child, and had no offspring of her own, and that Moses was looked upon as presumptive heir to the crown; but all this is very doubtful.—We know however from better authority, that "he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds." He was certainly much trusted and employed; and in Egypt he acquired those accomplishments, which were afterwards requisite for him in the important services of standing before Pharaoh and governing Israel.

V. 11, 12. (Note, Heb. 11:24-26.) During forty years Moses seems to have lived as an Egyptian, and as men of high rank generally do, and not particularly to have regarded his oppressed brethren; but at this time "it came into his heart to visit them," under a firm persuasion that "God by his hand would deliver them," and supposing they would thus understand it. He likewise deliberately purposed to renounce the honours, wealth, and pleasures of his rank among the Egyptians; to cast his lot among Abraham's seed, and to participate in their privileges, especially their relation to the promised Saviour; for the sake of which he was willing to share in the reproach and affliction which they endured as the people of God. We suppose that his mother had informed him of his real descent, and he would naturally feel an attachment to his people; but he was now made a partaker of that "faith which overcomes the world;" and, supremely valuing the blessings of the new covenant through the Redeemer, he was willing, not only to risk, but to renounce and suffer all for his sake; assured that Israel was the people of God, and that the promises made to them would certainly be accomplished. He therefore went out to seek an opportunity of delivering Israel: perhaps he intended openly to join their interests, expecting that they would cordially welcome him, and concur with him in suitable measures; and considering himself as acting under a divine commission, in defence of the oppressed, he took an opportunity of executing just punishment on one cruel oppressor. In this he seems to have acted rather prematurely; for the spirits of the Israelites were sunk, their dispositions become servile, and faith and hope were almost extinguished among them.

V. 13-15. When Moses had entered on the execution of his design, he seems to have intended daily to proceed in it: but he was discouraged by finding that his brethren, in their quarrels with each other, were no more disposed to submit to his authority or award than the Egyptians were; and discovering that his conduct, in slaying the Egyptian, was known, he was aware that the Egyptians would deeply resent it. Perceiving also that the Israelites would not stand by him, and learning soon after that the king sought to slay him, his faith and courage failed him, and he too hastily concluded that his only safety lay in leaving the country.—Thus the deliverance of Israel was delayed sixty years, he-

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh; and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.

16 Now the ¹priest of Midian had seven daughters: and ²they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to ²Reuel their father he said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to-day?

19 And they said, ^aAn Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, ^band also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where ~~is~~ *is* he? Why *is* it *that* ye have left the man? •Call him that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was ^dcontent to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses ^eZipporah his daughter.

22 And she bare *him* a son, and he called his

name Gershom: 'for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land. .

23 And it came to pass ⁱⁿ process of time, that the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage.

24 And ¹God heard their groaning, and God ²remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25 And God ^ulooked upon the children of Israel,
and God ^thad respect unto *them*.

CHAPTER III.

Moses feeds the flock of Jethro, 1. God appears to him in a flame of fire in a bush; and sends him to deliver Israel, 2-12. Moses inquires, and is told, the name of God, 13, 14. He is instructed what to speak to Israel, and to Pharaoh, whose decided opposition is foretold, 15-19; and is assured that at last the people shall leave Egypt greatly enriched, 20-22.

NOW Moses ^akept the flock of Jethro ^bhis father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to ^cthe mountain of God, *even to* ^dHoreb.

a 4:19, 1 Kings 19:1–3, 13, 14, Jer. 26:21–23, Matt. 10:23, Acts 7:29, 1 Gen. 25:24, u Gen. 24:11, 29:22, John 4:6, * Or, *prince*, Gen. 14:18, 41:45, marg. x Gen. 24:14–20, 29:6–10, 1 Sam. 9:1, 1 Gen. 21:25, 26:15–22, z 3:1, 4:18, 18:1–12, *Jethro*, Num. 10:29, 19:29, *Raguel*, a Gen. 50:11, b Gen. 29:10, c Gen. 24:31–33, 29:13, 31:54, 43:25, d 10, Gen. 31:38–40, Phil. 4:12, 1 Tim. 6:6, Heb. 11:25, 13:5, Jam. 1:10, e 4:20–25, 18:2–6, Num. 12:1, f 18:3, Acts 2:29, Heb. 11:13, g 7:7, Acts 1:70, h 4:19, Matt. 2:19, 20, Acts 12:10

cause they rejected their deliverer. In the mean time Egypt filled up, and Canaan was filling up, the measure of their iniquities; the Israelites were rapidly increasing; and Moses was learning to endure hardship, to exercise faith, patience, and meekness; and to walk with God in the lowly and retired life of a shepherd.

V. 16. *Priest.* Or *prince*. (*Marg.*) Probably Reuel (18) was prince of a small district upon the eastern shore of the Red Sea; and, still retaining among his people some knowledge of the true God, and regard to his worship, he acted also as a priest over them. The Midianites were the descendants of Abraham by Keturah. (*Gen.* 25:2.)

V. 17. Perhaps these shepherds were the servants of some other neighbouring person, who was rich in flocks and herds. The scarcity of water in those hot and sandy regions, gave occasion to these contentions.

21. *Content.*—This was a singular example of one, brought up as Moses had been, submitting cheerfully to so laborious a business, and to be a servant also in that employment. Yet without doubt these forty years were the happiest of his life.—The events of a long period are here very briefly touched on.—Probably Moses had lived a considerable time with Reuel, before he gave him his daughter; or else he was long married before Zipporah had any children; for after forty years one of his sons seems to have been very young. (4:25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10. We should take occasion, from reading of the cruel scenes which these Hebrew parents witnessed, and the bitter sorrows which they felt, to be thankful that we can bring up our children with security and comfort. Still however they are exposed to so many perils, that the heart of a tender parent must often heave with anxious sighs about them: except as enabled, by the prayer of faith, to commend them to the care of the Almighty; and to use all means for their welfare, temporal and spiritual, in dependence upon his providence and grace. Then, indeed, we are prepared for every event: for if the Lord have any service for them to perform, he will preserve their lives, though in the midst of dangers; and surely every Christian parent would rather resign the dearest infant to death, than wish it to live wicked, mischievous, and miserable. And methinks our gracious God says to the believer, when presenting his infant-offspring to him in baptism, or pouring out his prayers in its behalf: "Take home this child, and bring it up for me, and I will pay thee thy wages." In obedience then to his command, and in expectation of his blessing, let us bring up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and cheerfully leave the event with him.—Even among the blood-thirsty Egyptians, we meet with a beautiful example of humanity, which will rise up in judgment against numbers who live under the light of revelation, and are called Christians, but who are so far from compassionating the children of others, that they are indolently and negligently cruel to their own offspring!—They who carefully watch the conduct of God's providence, experience many signal interpositions in their favour which excite their admiration and gratitude, strengthen their faith, and encourage their hope for the future, and thus well recompense their attention. They frequently find their wants supplied, perhaps even from their very enemies, and their sharpest trials end most comfortably: and God takes care in his providence to qualify both them and theirs for whatever service or situation he intends for them. For he very often furnishes the minds of those whom he means to employ, even while inattentive to religion, with those acquisitions of knowledge which afterwards

prove very useful in fitting them for the services to which they are appointed; but which they would neither have had leisure nor inclination to attain, had they previously minded "the one thing needful."

V. 11.—25. How powerful principle is true faith! How it overcomes the love of the world and the fear of the cross, even when they oppose it with their utmost force! The favour of God, an interest in Christ, and an inheritance among his people, are the pre-eminent objects of every believer's desire: this, joined to the love of Christ and attachment to his cause, prepares him for making every requisite sacrifice; and that faith which refuses to do this is not genuine.—But they, who boldly enter upon services for God, must not only expect fierce opposition from his avowed enemies, but great discouragement from the lukewarmness, contempt, cowardice, and ingratitude of his professed servants. And while contentions among brethren disgrace and weaken the common cause of religion, he that would "set them at one again," however gently, must expect to be reproached, as taking too much upon him: and this perhaps by both parties, but assuredly by the party which is most in the wrong, and which is always the most impatient of control. These disappointments, however, help to correct the forwardness and self-sufficiency of hasty zeal, and to prepare men for their work in its due season.—But our impatience is apt to interpret delays as denials; to yield to discouragement, when we should only be humbled; and from rash impetuosity to sink into unbelieving negligence: and perhaps it requires stronger faith to be contented in obscurity and neglect, cheerfully labour without any prospect of applause, and patiently to prepare and wait for future opportunities of service, without despondency, than to face danger, outrage reproach, and suffer persecution in some eminent sphere of usefulness.—The providence of God will find a refuge, and raise up friends, for his people; communion with him sweetens every solitude and trial; and it is our wisdom to inure ourselves to self-denial, that we may be fit for whatever is before us.—To assist the weak and vindicate the oppressed, to show kindness, and use hospitality, and requite those who have been serviceable to us, are always becoming; nor is modest diligence in any business useful or lawful, a disgrace to the daughters either of a prince or a priest.—When assistance appears to us most distant, and deliverance most improbable, they are often near at hand. To God all things are easy, and his whole plan lies before him: he remembers his holy covenant; and, for the purposes of his own glory, he will appear for his people, notwithstanding their sins. Even then groans, extorted by oppression, have a share of his compassionate attention; and in the darkest night of affliction, when they begin to cry to him, the day of deliverance will speedily dawn.—Finally, if Satan's work ceases not, for want of a succession of instruments, the Lord, in answer to our prayers, will certainly furnish labourers for his harvest, in all ages, unto the end of the world.

NOTES.—СНАР. III. V. 1. Some expositors are of opinion that Reuel, or *Raguel*, was grandfather to Zipporah, that Jethro was her father, and that Hobab, afterwards mentioned, was her brother: others suppose that Reuel was her father, and that Jethro was her brother, and *brother-in-law* to Moses, which the word may signify: but the Septuagint use the names Reuel and Jethro, indiscriminately, for the father-in-law of Moses. (2:18. *Num.* 10:29.)—Horeb was called “the mountain of God” by way of anticipation; as Moses wrote for those who knew it by that title after the law had there been given.—Sinai and Horeb are supposed to be two summits of a mountain, which had the

2 And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.

4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: *put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. [Practical Observations.]

7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters: for I know their sorrows.

8 And I am come down to deliver them out

of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land, unto a good land, and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; *and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee; when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto

e 4,6, Gen. 16:7-13. 22:15, 16, 48:16. 1. eut. 33:16. Is. 63:9. Hos. 12:4, 5. Mal. 3:1. Acts 7:30-35. f Gen. 15:13-17. Deut. 4:20. Ps. 66:12. Is. 43:2. Dan. 3:27. 2 Cor. 1:8-10. g Ps. 111:2-4. Acts 7:31. h Gen. 22:11, 40:2. 1 Sam. 3:10. Acts 9:4, 10: 8, 13. 11:2, 21. Lev. 10:2. Heb. 12:20. k Gen. 28:16, 17. Josh. 5:15. Eccl. 3:1. Acts 7:33, 15. Gen. 17:8. 23:13. 1 Kings 18:36. Matt. 22:32. Acts 7:32. n Gen. 17:3. 1 Kings 19:13. Job 12:5, 6. Is. 6:1-5. 1. an. 10:7, 8. Matt. 17:6. Heb. 12:21. Rev. 1: 17. n 2:25. Gen. 29:32. 1 Sam. 9:16. Ps. 106:44. Is. 63:9. Heb. 4:15. o Gen. 11:5. 18:21. Ps. 18:9. Is. 64:1. John 3:13, 6:38. p 8-8. Gen. 15:14. 50:24. q 13:5, 33:

2, 3. Gen. 15:18. Num. 13:27. 14:7, 8. Deut. 1:7, 25. 8:7-9. 11:9. 26:9-15. Neh. 9: 25. Jer. 11:5. 32:22. Ez. 20:6. r Gen. 15:18-21. Deut. 7:1. Josh. 9:1. Neh. 9:8. s 7. Prov. 22:22. Eccl. 4:1. 5:8. Jer. 50:33, 34. Am. 4:1. Mic. 2:1-3. t Ps. 103:6, 7. 103:26. Mic. 6:4. Acts 7:35. u 4:13. 6:12. 1 Sam. 18:18. Is. 6:5-8. Jer. 1:6. Acts 7:23-25. v 4:12, 15. Deut. 31:23. Josh. 1:5. Is. 41:10. 43:2. Matt. 28:20. Mark 16:20. Acts 11:21. Rom. 8:31. x Is. 7:14. 57:30. Jer. 49:10, 51:63, 64. y 18:1, &c.

same base. It was situated in the interior parts of the desert, at some considerable distance from Jethro's habitation; and probably Moses led the flock thither for better pasturage.

Moses was taken from the sheepfold, (as David in after times,) to be ruler of God's people: "for as hunting of wild beasts," says Philo, "is proper to men of a martial genius, and fits men to be captains and generals of armies, so the feeding of sheep is the best exercise and preparation for a kingdom, and the gentle government of mankind." Bp. Patrick.—These governors were also types of the "Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep."

V. 2. This Angel is afterwards called JEHOVAH, and ('and, 4, 6.)—"God called to him out of the midst of the bush," and he said, "I AM THAT I AM." With what propriety can this language be used, in a revelation expressly intended to instruct men in the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to withdraw them from idolatry of every kind, if we do not allow the doctrine of the coequality and deity of the Son of God, and that he is the Speaker in this place?—Fire is a scriptural emblem of the divine holiness and justice; of that vengeance which, in his righteous indignation, God inflicts on sinners; of the afflictions and trials by which he proves and purifies his people, whether immediately, or by instruments; and even of that baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which the dross of sinful affections is consumed, and the soul transformed into its own nature and image. (Note, Matt. 3:11, 12.)—This fire was seen in a bush, not in a cedar. A bramble or thorn-bush is prickly, and of little use except for fuel, but easily and speedily burned; yet the bush was not consumed. The emblem was primarily intended to describe the state of Israel in Egypt; their meanness and unworthiness, their extreme distress, and their marvellous preservation by the power and presence of God: but Israel was in this a type of the Church, exposed to persecution; and of a believer, grievously harassed by temptations and afflictions. It has also been thought, that the fire in the bush represented the manner in which the law would be given from the adjacent mountain; the nature of that law as given to sinners; and the deliverance of the people from the destruction to which they were thus exposed.—The name Sinai seems derived from the word (סני) rendered a bush, either with reference to this bush, or to the bushes which grew upon it.

V. 4, 5. No appearance of the Lord is recorded since Jacob's descent into Egypt, above two hundred years before; and Moses, when addressed by name, must have been as much surprised by what he heard, as by what he saw.—He might reverently at a distance contemplate the object before him, for his instruction and encouragement; but he must not presume to gratify his curiosity, by a nearer approach, or by particular examination. He was also directed to put off his shoes, as an external token of humble reverence; for the spot became holy ground by this vision of the Almighty, and should thus be regarded by him. Probably, this was, at that time and in those countries, a customary expression of reverence and veneration. (Note, Josh. 5:13-15.)—It is supposed by many learned men, that the priests officiated barefoot in the tabernacle and temple; but we meet with no express command enjoining it.

V. 6. JEHOVAH was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being the Object of their worship, confidence, love, and obedience; and their Salvation, Portion, and everlasting Felicity in body and soul. But this declaration was intended to remind the Israelites of the promises made to their fathers, especially with reference to the land of Canaan: for JEHO-

VAH was the God of Israel, as a nation; and not the God of the Ishmaelites and Midianites, though descended from Abraham, or of the Edomites, though descended from Isaac. Amram, Moses's father, is also supposed to be personally included, as a believing descendant of Abraham.

V. 7. "I have surely seen," or, "Seeing I have seen," (that is, with attention and compassion,) "the afflictions of my people."—Notwithstanding the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness of the Israelites, the Lord acknowledged them as his people, because of their relation to Abraham, because they constituted the visible Church, and because there was a remnant of true believers among them.—The severity of the task-masters extorted their bitter cries, which in most of them were merely the expression of distress, not of faith; the prayer of nature, not of grace: yet the Lord noticed and pitied their sorrows. Perhaps they almost universally despaired of deliverance; and Moses, having been forty years a shepherd, probably expected and desired nothing more than to live and die in that situation, and had given up all thoughts of delivering Israel: yet then the very time was come.

V. 8. Come down.] This was spoken after the manner of men, and expressed with energy the intent of JEHOVAH's appearance to Moses. (Marg. Ref. o.)

V. 11. Moses had before deemed himself in a measure competent to this service, which he had some intimations that he was to perform; and he set about it probably with undue haste, and not without some improper dependence on his rank, influence, and reputation among the Egyptians; but now, when he was unexpectably better qualified with heavenly wisdom, experience, patience, meekness, steadfastness, humility, and piety; and was, without competition, the most proper person on earth for it, he was also become conscious of his insufficiency! This was in a great measure the effect of increasing knowledge of God and of himself: but there was also a deep sense of the vast difficulty of the business, not without some culpable fear of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and of contempt and opposition from Israel. Before, self-confidence mingled with, and assumed the appearance of, strong faith and great zeal: but now, some degree of sinful distrust of God was associated with deep humility; and induced him timely to shift, as well as humbly to decline, the important service.—So very defective are the strongest graces, and the best duties, of the most eminent saints!

V. 12. Certainly I, &c.] All objections, expressed or implied, were thus answered at once: "As I send thee, I will certainly go with thee: and then all thy insufficiency, and all possible difficulties, can form no hindrance at all." (Note, Matt. 28:19, 20.)—The token annexed was made not to sense, but to faith; and therefore the sign was consequent to the event confirmed by it: as if God had said, "I promise to meet thee and Israel at this mountain: this promise is thy assurance of success: depend on my power and faithfulness, and go fetch them forth, nothing doubting." (Marg. Ref.)—It was also a private token to Moses, and not intended as a sign to Israel or to Pharaoh.

V. 13. Moses had seen enough in Egypt, forty years before, to convince him of his people's ignorance and ungodliness; and he was not sanguine in his expectations of finding them more favourably disposed towards him, than they had been. He was therefore afraid that they would scarcely understand, much less believe him, when he spake to them of "the God of their fathers." He had before been scornfully asked, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" and he was not prepared to answer the question: therefore he

them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, "What is his name? what shall I say unto them?"

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, "I AM hath sent me unto you."

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, "The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: 'this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

16 Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.

17 And I have said, "I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."

r 14. 15:3. Gen. 32:29. Judg. 13:6,17. Prov. 30:4. Is. 7:14. 9:6. Jer. 23:6. Matt. 1:21,23. a 6:3. Ps. 68:4. 50:2. Is. 44:6. Matt. 12:1. 28:20. John 8:58. Heb. 13:8. Rev. 14:8,17. r 6. 4:5. Gen. 17:7,8. Deut. 11:35. 4:1. 2 Chr. 26:9. Matt. 22:32. Acts 7:32. c Ps. 135:13. d Ps. 102:12. Hos. 12:5. e 4:28. 18:12. 24:11. Gen. 50:7. Matt. 26:3. Acts 11:30. 20:17. 1 Pet. 5:1. 7:4. 31. Gen. 21:1. 50:24. Luke 1:68. 19:44. c 15:14. 1 Pet. 2:12. g Gen. 15:13. 21. 46:4. h See on 8. i 4:31. 2 Chr. 30:12. Ps. 110:3. k 5:1-3. 7:16. 9:1.

desired at this time to have fuller instructions and better authenticated credentials. The patriarchs had received revelations from God; but Moses seems to have been the first, after the deluge, who was expressly sent to speak to others in his name.

V. 14. I AM THAT I AM, (or, I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE), signifies, *I am, he that exists*; and implies self-existence, independence, unchangeableness, incomprehensibility, eternity, and consummate perfection. "I am, and there is none else beside me." All else have their being from God, and are entirely dependent on him.—There is a majestic simplicity and an expressive dignity in this language, which disgraces beneath contempt the high-sounding, pompous titles, which mortals have been proud to arrogate to themselves.—JEHOVAH, (a name of similar signification), thus distinguished himself from the idols of the nations, which are nothing in the world; and from all creatures, which have only a derived, dependent, mutable, existence in him and from him. Thus he proposed himself as the only Object of his people's worship, the sure Foundation of their hopes, and the all-sufficient Fountain of their felicity. I AM THAT I AM. Not *I was*, but *I am*, and *will be*. With him the past, the present, and the future are all one, as alike open to the view of his omniscience.—Let us not here forget him whom the apostle declares to be "The same yesterday, to-day and for ever;" whom another apostle introduces saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;" and who, dwelling in human flesh, said, with a noble disregard to the rules of human language, "Before Abraham was I am." This evident assumption of the title, I AM THAT I AM, the unbelieving Jews at that day fully understood, and for it attempted to stone him; though modern unbelievers cannot or will not perceive it! There is no doubt, however, but the Speaker is the same in both places; for "no man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—When the Lord subjoined "I AM," or HE THAT EXISTS, (*5* *Qv*, *Sept*.) "hath sent me unto you," it was intended to give authority to the message, and to ensure the accomplishment of his purpose by his incomprehensible power and perfection.

V. 15. The title of JEHOVAH, the God of Abraham, &c. would remind the Israelites of his relations and engagements to them, as the descendants of these illustrious patriarchs.—The Lord had before declared his name, as signifying eternal self-existence; and he here adds his covenant-relation to the seed of Abraham, as the perpetual memorial of his former mercies, and security of future blessings to his Church. The title "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," is the same to us, under the Christian dispensation, as the Name here expressed was to Israel.

V. 18. Such a willingness to be delivered, as would induce the Israelites to use the means, encounter the difficulties, and face the dangers, requisite for that purpose, was so contrary to their dispirited and desponding frame of mind, that it could only be effected by the powerful influence of God upon their hearts: but he here engaged to Moses, that he would thus prepare them in due time to concur decidedly in his efforts for their deliverance.—The Elders seem to have been the more aged and distinguished persons in the several tribes and families; but it does not appear that they were invested with any authority.

V. 19, 20. The Lord, when he engaged for Israel's willingness, warned Moses of Pharaoh's obstinate and final unwillingness, that he might know what to expect.—Pharaoh reluctantly consented, when under the terror of imminent

18 And 'they shall hearken to thy voice: 'and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, "The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, 'three days' journey into the wilderness, 'that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God."

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, 'no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and 'after that he will let you go.

21 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that when ye go, ye shall not go empty.

22 But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall 'spoil the Egyptians.

13. 10:3. m 4:24. 5:3. Num. 23:3,4,15,16. Is. 64:5. n 8:27. o 12. 7:16. 8:25-28. 10:12-29. 'Or, *but by a strong hand*. 6:1. Ps. 136 11:12. Is. 63:12. p 6:6. 7:5. 9:15. Ez. 20:33. q 7:3. 11:9. Deut. 4:34. 5:22. Num. 9:10. Ps. 105:27. 106:22. 135:9. Is. 19:22. Jer. 32:20,21. Acts 7:36. r 11:8. 12:31,39. s 11:13. 12:35. Gen. 38:12. Neh. 1:11. Is. 106:46. Prov. 16:7. Acts 7:10. (11:2. 12:35. Gen. 15:14. u Job 57:16,17. Prov. 13:22. Is. 33:1. Ez. 39:10. 'Or, *Egypt*.

destruction; but he retracted that consent, and perished in opposing Israel's departure.

V. 21, 22. The circumstances in which the Egyptians were placed, were overruled to induce multitudes of them to favour Israel; while others were hardened to their destruction. The Israelites were directed to borrow, or rather to ask, of the Egyptians, their richest furniture and ornaments: and he who is the great Proprietor of all things, and giveth to all men as he pleases, seeing the Egyptians enriched by oppressing the Israelites, thus constrained them to refund, and to pay them the wages which their labour justly deserved. (Notes, 11:2,3. 12:35,36. Gen. 31:10-16.)—The word borrow suggests the idea of fraud in the transaction; which the original word does not imply. It means to ask, whether as a gift or a loan.—A great part of this gold and silver was afterwards used in building and furnishing the tabernacle.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. When the Lord exercises the faith and patience of his servants, they should rest assured that he acts in wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy; and that when the best time is come, their expectation shall be abundantly answered: but such is the human heart, that the best of men generally need preparing, by a long course of humiliating discipline, for behaving, when greatly prospered, in a manner honourable to God and religion. It is therefore "good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." But quietness and patience must be distinguished from indolence: for the Lord always requires his servants to be employed, and meets them at their employments; and the meanest honest labour is more reputable to the greatest characters, than inactivity.—The discoveries of himself, which God vouchsafes us in his holy word and in his works, should be regarded with reverent attention, at an equal distance from contemptuous indifference, and bold curiosity.—Whatever stands in relation to God is consecrated and made holy; and though "bodily exercise profiteth little," yet it is proper to express our inward reverence and adoration by such external tokens as are customary and significant. A decent exterior behaviour indeed may be hypocritical; but the neglect of it betrays a heart not properly impressed with awe of the majesty and purity of God, nor suitably humbled under the sense of its own meanness and unworthiness: and the condescending kindness of the Lord should not abate, but increase this holy awe.—In accommodation to our infirmities, God very graciously condescends to address our senses, as well as understandings: and by the burning bush he teaches us many useful lessons. We need not tremble for the Church of God in its lowest estate, though it appear contemptible to the carnal eye, and seem ready to be consumed by the flames of persecution; for the Lord is in the bush, and it cannot be injured. Never was bush so honourable as that in which JEHOVAH dwelt, though it was on fire: and since the Son of God dwelt in frail human nature, and passed through the hottest fire of Satan's temptations, of the world's hatred, and of the wrath of God for our sins; we need not be apprehensive about any poor burning bush, in which JEHOVAH dwells.—This is the privilege and security of every true Christian, with whom, when afflicted and tempted, we should sympathize; but we need not be anxious about the event.—While men are strengthened to maintain the conflict, and to persevere in the path of duty, they are not deserted by God, whatever their fears or feelings may be; nor can the fire, however hot, consume any thing but the dross of remaining sinful inclinations.—But let the mere professor of the gospel tremble, even when exempt from temptation, oppo-

CHAPTER IV.

The Lord assures Moses of his effectual assistance, by miraculous signs and gracious promises, 1-12; and is angry at his backwardness to the service; yet appoints Aaron to assist him, 13-17. Moses leaves Jethro, and sets out on his journey; and is charged with a message to Pharaoh, 18-23. He is rebuked by the sea; Zipporah circumcises her son: Aaron meets Moses, and they are welcomed by the Israelites, 24-31.

AND Moses answered, and said, But behold, ^athey will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.

2 And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thy hand? And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground; and he cast it on the ground, and ^cit became a serpent: and Moses fled from before it.

4 And the Lord said unto Moses, ^dPut forth thy hand, and take it by the tail. ^eAnd he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand.

5 That ^fthey may believe that ^gthe Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

6 And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thy hand into thy bosom; and he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was ^hleprous as snow.

7 And he said, Put thy hand into thy bosom

a 31. 2:14, 3:18. i 7:25. b 17:20. Lev. 27:32. Ps. 110:2. Is. 11:4. Mic. 7:14. c 7: 10-15. Am. 5:10. d Ps. 51:13. Mark 16:18. Luke 10:19. Acts 28:3-6. e John 2:5. f 3:13, 15:9. John 5:39. 11:19-22. 20:31. g 3:15. h Num. 12:10. 2 Kings 5:27. 12 Kings 5:14. Matt. 8:3. i 30:31. Is. 24:10. John 12:37. 1 Dent. 32:39. 2 Kings 5:7. Job 5:13. * Heb. shall be, and shall be. m 1:22. 7:19-25. Matt. 7:2. John 2:8-11. Rev. 16:3-6. † Heb. a man o' to ord. 1 Cor. 2:1-4. 2 Cor.

sition, or conflict; these he escapes because he "walks according to the course of this world," with which he will be condemned. And let the careless and presumptuous sinner also take warning; for he is proper fuel for the fire of God's vengeance, which will burn for ever, but never consume those who finally sink under it.

V. 7-12. Oppressors and prosperous tyrants should remember, that however they may elude or outrave human justice, and however God may defer to take vengeance, yet all their crimes are noted in his book; that their measure of iniquity is filling up; and they will speedily be made to disgorge the prey which they have ravenously devoured, and to experience the vengeance of the Almighty; unless repentance and fruits meet for repentance prevent their doom. (Luke 19:8.)—And let the oppressed recollect that God is their peculiar Patron; that he counts their sighs and groans; and if he answers the mere cry of distress, "shall he not avenge his own elect, who cry day and night to him, though he bear long with them? Yea, he will avenge them speedily." But when he comes to avenge his people on their oppressors, "he will find faith on the earth." Alas, "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and though true faith will not totally fail; yet at such times it will often be very feeble, and expectations even of promised blessings extremely languid.

V. 13-22. Let us be careful not to distrust and dishonour the power, faithfulness, and love of God. He is the great I AM; "a thousand years with him are but as one day;" he remembers his holy covenant; he deals with his people according to the abundance of his mercies; he forgives the multitude of their transgressions; and he sends deliverance in its appointed season.—When God employs any one in his service, he will certainly go with him: but "before honour is humility;" and success is frequently delayed or denied, to instruments otherwise qualified, because they do not possess a humble spirit.—Yet nothing good is unalloyed in man, and the most unaffected humility may prove an occasion to irresolution, or reluctance to the work which the Lord requires of us. They who would be useful, must depend upon God to make their endeavours acceptable to their brethren; especially where such benefits are intended as require men to exert themselves, to endure hardship, and to face danger: and, if we go in this dependence, he will secure our success with some; while we deliver our message to all, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."—But in Pharaoh's tyranny, and Israel's oppression, we see a picture of the sinner's miserable and abject submission; however galled with the yoke of Satan, he still drudges on, till the Lord sends redemption. With the invitations of his gospel, he communicates the life-giving, drawing, and teaching influences of his Spirit; and thus men are made willing to seek and strive for deliverance; then Satan loses his power to retain them; they come forth with all they have and are, and consecrate the whole to the glory of God and the service of his Church.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1-5. The Lord had expressly assured Moses, that the people should hearken to him, (3:18.) so that his objection was unreasonable, and a proof that his faith was wavering. Yet it was proper he should be informed, that the Lord would authenticate his commission by miracles, both to Israel and to Pharaoh.—The rod in his hand was probably a common staff, or shepherd's crook; but it was now consecrated to God, to be the token of his pre-

again: and he put his hand into his bosom again and plucked it out of his bosom, and behold, ⁱit was turned again as his other flesh.

8 And it shall come to pass, ^jif they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that ^kthey will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour ^lit upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river, ^mshall become blood upon the dry land.

10 And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not ⁿeloquent, neither ^oheretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am ^pslow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the Lord said unto him, ^qWho hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12 Now therefore go, and ^rI will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, ^ssend I pray thee, by the hand of ^thim whom thou ^uwilt send.

14 And ^vthe anger of the Lord was kindled

10:10, 11:6. † Heb. since yesterday, nor since the third day. n 6:12. Jer. 1:6. Acts 7:22. o Ps. 51:15, 94:9. Is. 35:5, 6. Ez. 3:26-27, 33:22. p Is. 49:2, 50:4. Jer. 1:9. Matt. 10:19, 20. Mark 13:11. Luke 12:11, 12, 21:14, 15. Eph. 6:19. q 1 Kings 19:4. Jer. 20:9. Ez. 3:14, 15. Jon. 1:3. § Or, shouldst. r Luke 9:59, 60. Acts 15:38. Phil. 2:21.

sence and operation, and was therefore afterwards called "the rod of God." When waved by the hand of Moses or Aaron, it was a token to Israel of guidance, encouragement, and protection; but to Egypt it was the appointed token of desolating judgments, like the mortal bite of the most poisonous serpent.—In this it was also a type of the gospel, "the rod of the Redeemer's strength," (Ps. 110:2.) which is a saviour of life to some and of death to others.—Though Moses was greatly affrighted at the serpent thus miraculously produced, which seems to have been very formidable, yet his faith was so far strengthened by the sign, that he ventured, at God's command, to seize it by the tail, and it again became a harmless rod. This was intended to show him, that the performance of a similar miracle before his people, would convince them that the Lord had sent him.

V. 6, 7. This sign denoted, that God could easily remove Israel's sin, though they were unclean as the leprous hand; that he could employ Moses's ministry, though feeble and unworthy in itself, and by him inflict his plagues on Egypt, or remove them as he pleased; and that he could effect the deliverance of his people by the most unlikely means, notwithstanding the most powerful opposition.—It is very probable that the absurd story, mentioned by Josephus, of Moses and the Israelites being driven out of Egypt, because infected with leprosy, was derived from some distorted tradition of this miraculous sign.

V. 10. Moses supposed that great eloquence would be requisite, both to persuade Israel and to plead before Pharaoh: and he objected, that in the Egyptian court he had, at all former times, been defective in the gift of a ready and graceful elocution; and that even since the Lord had spoken to him, he had experienced no alteration in this respect. We read, however, that he "was mighty in words" as well as deeds; and so was St. Paul, though he affected no eloquence, and was deemed by some "in speech contemptible." They both could speak with energy and to the purpose, though not with the enticing words and delusive charms of human oratory.

Slow of speech. Ισχυροφωνος.—Of a slender voice, or speaking with hesitation and interruptions of voice.

V. 11, 12. The Lord alone originally gave to Adam and his posterity the inexplicable power of articulate speech; and he is the sole Author of the disparity which subsists among men in these and other endowments: could he not therefore easily remove from Moses this impediment, if he saw that a more fluent and graceful utterance was requisite for him?—It may be useful to compare JEHOVAH's promise to Moses with our Lord's words to his disciples, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, or resist." Can any but God "give a mouth and wisdom"? (Note, Luke 21:12-19.)

V. 13. "Send by any one else, only excuse me as incompetent." (Notes, Is. 6:5-8.)

V. 14. Moses's unbelief, and reluctance to engage in this arduous and dangerous service, excited the divine displeasure; which probably was shown by some sensible token, perhaps by the fire in the bush becoming more vehement: yet the Lord did not supersede his commission; but in condescension to his weakness, and perhaps also as a gentle rebuke he assigned him an assistant, who should share the danger, the burden, and the honour. Thus Christ sent out his disciples

against Moses; and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.*

15 And thou shalt speak unto him; ¹and put words in his mouth: ²and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and ³will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* ^{ye} he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

17 And thou shalt take ²this rod in thy hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs. [*Practical Observations.*]

18 ¶ And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, ^aLet me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren, which ^bare in Egypt, ^cand see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, ^dGo in peace.

19 And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: ^dfor all the men are dead which sought thy life.

20 And Moses took his wife, and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took^e the rod of God in his hand.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put

in thy hand : but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, *Israel is my son, even my first-born.*

23 And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, ^hI will slay thy son, *even* thy first-born.

24 ¶ And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that ¹the LORD met him, and ²sought to kill him.

25 Then Zipporah took a sharp ¹stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and ²cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

26 So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

27 And the LORD said to Aaron, ^mGo into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in ⁿthe mount of God, and kissed him.

28 And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD, who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

29 And Moses and Aaron went, and ^pgathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.

30 And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and ⁹did the signs in the sight of the people.

31 And the people ¹believed: and when they heard that the LORD had ²visited the children of Israel, and that he had ³looked upon their affliction, then they ⁴bowed their heads and worshipped.

* 27, 1 Sam. 10:1—7, Mark 14:13—15, 2 Cor. 2:13, 7:6, 7, 1 Thess. 3:6, 7, 4:7, 1
 2, 2 Sam. 14:4, 15:16, 59:1, u Num. 22:33, 23:5, 12, 16, Deut. 18:18, Matt.
 23:20, 1 Cor. 11:23, 15:21, x Dent. 5:23, y 7:12, John 10:34, 35, z 7:9, 19;
 * Heb. *Jether*, *Seon* 3:1, a 1 Tim. 6:1, b Gen. 45:3, Acts 15:35, c 1 Sam.
 1:17, Luke 7:50, Acts 15:35, d 2:15, 23, Matt. 2:9, e 17:9, Num. 20:8, 9, f
 7:3, 9, 12, 35, 11:20, 14:8, Gen. 6:3, Dent. 2:30—33, 36, Josh. 11:20, 1 Kings
 22:42, 15:6, 10, 63:17, John 12:40, Rom. 12:38, 9:18, 11:8—10, 2 Cor. 2:16,

2 Thes. 2:10-12, 1 Pet. 2:8, p 19:5,6. Dent. 14:1. Jer. 31:9. Hos. 11:1. Rom. 9:4. Heb. 12:23, h 11:5, 12:29. Ps. 78:5, 143:36, 135:5. 3 Is. Num. 22:22, 23:16. 1 Chr. 21:16. Hos. 13:8. k Gen. 17:14. Lev. 3:1. 1 Kings 13:24. 1 Josh. 5:2,3, 1 Or, *knife*. k Heb. *made it touch*. m 14-16. Acts 10:5,6,20. n 3:1, 19:3. 20:18. 24:15-17. 1 Kings 19:12. o Jon. 3:2. Matt. 21:29. p 3:16 24:11, q 2-9. r 3:18. Ps. 105:12, 13. Luke 8:13. s See on 3:16. t 2:25, 3:7. u 12:27. Gen. 1:7. 1 Chr. 29:20. 2 Chr. 18:13.

by two and two; and several of them were brethren.—We are not informed in what station Aaron had hitherto lived; but he seems to have enjoyed many advantages of education, probably by means of Moses; and he had become remarkable for eloquence. Perhaps this might occasion his being called "*Aaron the Levite*," as a person of eminence among the descendants of Levi.—The Lord had revealed himself to Aaron, at the same time as he did to Moses, and had directed him to meet him, (27.) This remarkable concurrence would encourage both of them.

V. 15. *With his mouth.*] Though Aaron was eloquent, yet he could not speak to any good purpose without the teaching and assistance of the Lord.

V. 16. Moses, though the younger brother, was the superior in this commission: the word of God came first to him; and he dictated to Aaron what he should speak, as God put his words into the mouth of his prophets.

part 18. Moses now resolved to obey the heavenly vision, mimicked to Jethro, (who had behaved with great kindness,) that he was about to leave him, as one who asked his permission to visit his afflicted brethren: (*Gen. 31:30*) but it does not appear that he informed him of the particulars. Thus he parted amicably from him, and the mutual affection between them was not interrupted.—The intercourse between nations was at that time very difficult; and the peculiar circumstances in which Moses was placed, might preclude him from inquiring after, or learning, the condition of his brethren.

V. 19. This revelation to Moses in *Midian*, seems to have been distinct from that at Horeb.—A secret dread of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, as incensed against him for his former conduct, was one cause of his reluctance: and it does not appear that the Lord informed him that his enemies were dead, till he had first set about obeying his command.

V. 21. *Harden.*] God never communicates "hardness," or wickedness to the heart of man, by a positive act; "for he cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man." But, when provoked by atrocious crimes, he gives a person up to his own heart's lusts; he permits Satan to entice, deceive, and blind him; and he takes off those providential restraints, by which many are kept from wickedness, because they have not opportunity or power to commit it, or dare not through fear or shame. When a man is thus left, commands, warnings, judgments, and deliverances, every truth in Scripture and every dispensation of Providence, prove the occasion of increasing obduracy and insensibility, pride and presumption.—By this general declaration, Moses was taught to expect and prepare for difficulty and opposition; and the subsequent history will give an abundant opportunity of stating the several stages by which Pharaoh's obduracy was induced, and the import of the several words made use of, in this remarkable instance and illustration of the Lord's dealing with obstinate sinners.

V. 22, 23. Israel was despised by the Egyptians as a contemptible people; but was honoured of God, being near and dear to him as a child is to his father, and as having that pre-eminence among the nations which the first-born has among the brethren. Pharaoh therefore might be assured

that God would defend, avenge, deliver, and provide for Israel: and that if he attempted to retain in bondage that people, who stood related to **JEHOVAH**, as his first-born son, and forbid them to worship and serve him; he must expect to feel the effects of omnipotent indignation, which would at length slay his eldest son, with all the first-born in the land of Egypt.—True believers are “the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.” and though rulers are entitled to honour and civil obedience from them, they have no right to prohibit them from serving God, according to the dictates of their conscience; and they may expect severe **re-**bukings if they attempt it.

V. 24—26. Either the Lord appeared to his servant, by some external token of his presence, as if about immediately to slay him; or, as some suppose, he inflicted on him a sudden and very dangerous disease. Moses seems, however, to have understood that he was rebuked for neglecting to circumcise his son; probably from regard to Zipporah, who was averse to it. It is supposed that circumcision was in use among the Midianites, as descended from Abraham; and that Zipporah had merely induced Moses to defer the performance of it beyond the appointed time, on account of the journey, or on some other pretence. But he was raised up for an extraordinary service, and it was proper he should set an example of exact obedience in his own conduct, and therefore he was thus sharply rebuked.—As he was either under great perturbation of mind, or dangerously ill, Zipporah immediately circumcised her son with a knife made of a sharp flint, such knives being common in some countries; and this may intimate the haste in which the rite was performed.—The words which she spake when she laid the foreskin of her son at the feet of Moses, are differently understood: some think that she rashly reproached both him and his religion, which required this bloody ordinance; but others are of opinion that she spake in great affection, as having anew espoused him, by circumcising her son; seeing the blood shed in that rite had been the means of restoring him to her again. For when it had been performed, the Lord delivered Moses and allowed him to prosecute his journey.—It is probable that on this occasion Zipporah returned to Jethro for a time. (*Note*, 18:1—5.) Some render the clause, "So he let him go," *so she left him*, as referring to this; but the translation cannot be supported, as the Hebrew text now stands; both words being masculine.

V. 27. The Lord had directed Aaron to meet his brother in the wilderness.—Moses seems to have been retarded by his family concerns, while Aaron made great haste; and thus he met Moses almost as soon as he had set out upon his journey, which would be a great encouragement to him. Probably, they had not seen or heard of each other for a long time before.

V. 30. *Signs.*] Moses gave the people this proof of his divine mission, to ensure their concurrence, before he applied to Pharaoh in their behalf.—It is supposed that Moses performed the miraculous signs, while Aaron delivered the message of God to the people, (15–17).—“And he did the signs.” &c.

V. 31. Thus the Elders of Israel acknowledged **JEHOVAH**

CHAPTER V.

Moses and Aaron deliver their message to Pharaoh, who disdainfully rejects it; 1-5. He increases the task of the Israelites, allows them no straw, and silences their complaints; 6-19. They despair and murmur, and Moses complains to the Lord; 20-23.

AND afterwards Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, 'Thus said the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

2 And Pharaoh said, 'Who is the LORD that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? 'I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

1 Kings 17:20. 1s. 119:46. Ex. 2:6. Jon. 3:3, 4. Matt. 10:13, 23. Acts 4:29. b. 10:9. Is. 25:6. 1 Cor. 5:8. c. 3:19. 2 Chr. 32:13, 19. Job 21:15. Ps. 10:4. 12:4. 11:1. d. 1 Sam. 2:12. John 16:3. Rom. 1:28. 2 Thes. 1:8. e. 3:19. Jer. 44:16, 17.

as the true God, and the God of their fathers, and Moses as his messenger for their deliverance; and they testified their gratitude and expectation, in an act of solemn worship.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. How indisposed are men to believe the testimony of God! Whether he denounce vengeance upon obstinate offenders, or promise acceptance, assistance, and salvation to the returning sinner, they are always prone to question his veracity; and to act as if his word could not absolutely be depended on, or was not likely to be accomplished! Thus some are hardened in presumption, others sink into despondency, and others are discouraged and faint-hearted in all their endeavours.—But the Lord, being slow to anger and of great mercy, deals not with us according to the multitude of our sins; else the strongest believer upon earth, instead of being saved by his faith, might be righteously condemned for his unbelief.—When we shrink from trouble and self-denial, or the reproach or danger of any service, self-love soon suggests some excuse, which appears sufficient to us, however trivial it may be in the judgment of others; and it is no uncommon case, for those who have been rebuked for rashness and precipitation, afterwards to become timidly negligent of their evident duty. But let unbelief, sloth, and cowardice start ever so many objections against our doing the duty of that station to which it hath pleased God to call us, his word furnishes us with answers to them all; and the assurance of his assistance and protection should in every case fully satisfy our minds.—When God gives revelations of new truths, or introduces new dispensations, materially differing from all which have preceded, he always sets his seal to them, and enables his servants to authenticate their mission by some conclusive sign: but they who are employed to enforce the old authenticated revelation, need not such testimonials; as both their character and doctrines must be tried by the oracles of God, to which they appeal.—The miracles, which he enabled his servants of old to perform, were not doubtful and equivocal, nor merely effects of power to excite wonder; but they were expressive of his justice and goodness, and instructive tokens of his favour to his people, and vengeance on his enemies.—He does not always make it appear, that he hath furnished men for services, till they are actually called to engage in them; but we may depend upon him to qualify us for whatever he commands us to do. All knowledge, wisdom, and utterance, with every good gift, are derived from him: but many endowments are supposed needless or useful in the public service of God and his church, which he pours contempt upon, as mere tinsel; worthless, if not pernicious. Such are all the studied and affected arts of human oratory, which the great apostle would not condescend to employ, "that the faith" of the people "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Yet to this day they are highly valued by most professed Christians and many true Christians; and many seem to think that little or nothing can be done without them. (Notes, 1 Cor. 2:1-5.)—Even when the Lord is displeased with the sins of his servants, he condescends to their infirmities; and in arduous undertakings, it is a great favour to have helpers who cordially unite with us; though they should share, or even eclipse, our reputation. But while we censure Moses for shrinking from this dangerous service, let us ask our own hearts, whether we are not neglecting such duties as are unspeakably more easy and less perilous.

V. 18-31. In obeying the commands of the Lord our God, we should take care to give no needless offence, and always be ready to give up our own inclinations, rather than prejudice our friends and relatives; yet after all, we shall frequently be constrained to cross the humours, endure the reproaches, and forego the comforts, of our nearest connexions, if we determine not to deviate in any thing from our known duty.—Even sinful omissions will draw upon us severe rebukes: and to neglect the seals and pledges of the new covenant is a sin of no small aggravation; being more replete with contempt of God, and ingratitude for his distinguished mercies, than professed Christians generally suppose.—They who are employed in calling others to trust and obey God, should be careful themselves to set an example of implicit confidence and obedience; and if they, in any remarkable instance, fail of this, they will surely experience some very painful effects from their misconduct. Yet when they are zealous, and repent, and attend to their duty, the Lord will return to them his mercy.—The reproaches cast upon religion and its conscientious

3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.

1 Kings 17:25. 2 Chr. 30:8. Ezra 7:23. Zech. 14:16-19. g. Jer. 38:4. Am. 7:10. Luke 23:2. Acts 16:20, 21. 24:5. h. 1:9-11. Prov. 14:28.

tious professors, redound to the lasting disgrace of those who vented them; none can provoke God more than those, who by terrors or temptations deter or entice his children from his service: nor are scarcely any more in danger of being given up to judicial hardness of heart, than cruel tyrants and persecuting oppressors.—It frequently happens that less difficulty is found than was expected in such undertakings as are according to the will of God, and for his glory; and that many are inclined to concur in them, from whom we looked for opposition. Let us then arise and attempt our proper work, and the Lord will be with us and prosper us.—But if Israel welcomed the tidings of temporal deliverance, and worshipped the Lord, how should we welcome the glad tidings of eternal redemption, embrace it in faith, and adore the Redeemer! and "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. Moses and Aaron, having obtained the concurrence of the people, requested an audience of Pharaoh; and were admitted to him as the representatives of the nation, probably accompanied by some of the elders. (3:18.) But when introduced, they delivered to him a message from "JEHOVAH, the God of Israel."—This is the first time this title is given to the Lord, with respect to Israel as a nation: though Jacob erected an altar to *El-Elohe-Israel*, to God, the God of Israel, referring to the name which he had just before received. (Note, Gen. 33, 20.)—In the name of JEHOVAH, who thus honoured Israel in his low enslaved condition, Moses and Aaron demanded, that the people should be allowed to hold a sacred feast, according to the observances of their religion; and as they could not perform this solemn service in Egypt, surrounded by those who held their sacrifices in abomination; they required permission to retire to a distance into the wilderness, where their worship would not be liable to interruption, and could give no umbrage to the Egyptians.

V. 2. Pharaoh had probably heard some general report of JEHOVAH, as claiming by his servants to be the only "living and true God," the Creator and Governor of the whole earth: but he and his predecessors had long tyrannized over his professed worshippers; and as they seemed to have derived so little advantage from his favour, he concluded that he had as little to fear from his wrath. He therefore treated the message delivered to him with contemptuous indifference, ranking JEHOVAH among, or rather beneath, the gods of the nations, and especially the gods of Egypt.—His language is very emphatical; 'Shall I, who was king of Egypt, lord it over Israel, obey the God of Israel? No, I scorn to regard him!'—Pharaoh had no knowledge of the Lord, and therefore he set him at defiance. 'Nor did he desire to know [him:] being so transported with anger, that he would not examine their commission, but only resolved he would not obey it.' *Bp. Patrick*. Israel was a numerous people, by whom the wealth of his subjects, and his own greatness, were exceedingly increased; and it would not consist with either his honour or interest, (to speak in the language of politicians,) thus to risk the depopulation of his kingdom. He had been accustomed to tyrannize over them: and shall he now *meanly*, on such a summons, consent to liberate them? But if he determined not to yield to this, he must crush their first attempts, and not allow them to feel their own strength, or at all to taste the sweets of liberty. Thus pride, ambition, covetousness, and worldly policy, engaged him in the contest; and a point of honour, that is, an obstinate determination not to have it said he was overcome, hardened him to persist in it to his destruction.

V. 3. It may be supposed that Moses and Aaron declared to Pharaoh some of the grand distinguishing particulars of their religion, and spake in general terms of the perfections and works of JEHOVAH. But it does not appear that, on this occasion, they either wrought any miracle, or threatened any punishment; but only stated the danger to which they themselves should be exposed, if they neglected to worship the LORD their God. This gentle and submissive application was suited to illustrate the character of the tyrannical oppressor; for as he disdained such a message, no wonder he raged when he more fully understood the commission under which Moses and Aaron acted.

V. 4, 5. Pharaoh seems entirely to have disregarded all that had been said concerning the appearance and commandment of the Lord to Moses and Aaron; supposing the whole plan to originate from ambitious, interested views, and that

6 And Pharaoh commanded the same day the task-masters of the people, and their officers, saying,

7 Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves.

8 And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God.

9 'Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And the task-masters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

11 Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not *ought* of your work shall be diminished.

12 So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble instead of straw.

13 And the task-masters hastened them, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw.

14 And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's task-masters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick, both yesterday and to-day, as heretofore?

i 10.13,15,19. Prov. 12:10. * Heb. Let the work be heavy upon the m. m. k 2 Kings 18:20. Job 16:3. zech. 1:6. Mal. 3:14. Eph. 5:6. 1:11. Prov. 29:12. 1 Heb. a matter of a day in his day. in Matt. 26:48. John 6:27. 2 Thes. 3:10,11. n Ez. 18:18. Dan. 2:9-13. o Deut. 32:36. Eccl. 4:1. 5:8. p 6:9. Gen. 16:5. q Eccl.

they abused the people's superstition to promote their own selfish designs.—He therefore ordered them to their burdens, as well as the elders who attended them; and it must be ascribed to a divine interposition, that he did not send them to a dungeon, or to execution; considering his character, and the nature of their message.—He also represented them as doing a public injury to Egypt, and endangering the peace of the community, by taking so large a multitude off from their work, and putting thoughts of another kind into their minds.

V. 7. Some suppose that the straw was cut short, and mingled with the clay in making bricks; the nature of the clay, and the imperfection of their skill, requiring it: and others supposed that they burned the bricks with it.—But in many places straw is now used in covering the clay before the bricks are formed, and covering the bricks before they are burned, to defend them from the burning sun or heavy rains; and indeed something of this kind is indispensably necessary.

V. 8, 9. Though the fruits of Israel's industry were many and great, Pharaoh took it for granted, without examining, that the people were not fully employed: and too many of the rich and powerful imitate his example, and act in such matters upon report or conjecture, without inquiry. He therefore determined to fill their hands with work, that they might have somewhat else to think on, than such vain or lying words, as he supposed those of Moses and Aaron to be.

V. 12-14. A large proportion of the people being employed in gathering stubble, part of which they were constrained to fetch from a great distance, it was impossible that the rest could furnish the usual quantity of bricks. Yet the Egyptian task-masters, by Pharaoh's orders, insisted on this being done: and when for two days a deficiency was found, the Israelitish officers, whom the task-masters had placed over their brethren to superintend their labours, were severely beaten; and thus an attempt was made to drive them, in their own defence, to join in this cruel oppression!

V. 15-23. It seems that the Israelitish officers were informed of Pharaoh's decision, by the Egyptian task-masters (6.); and they might suspect that they had misrepresented his words: but their appeal to Pharaoh was answered in that cruel and sarcastical manner, which was calculated to break their spirits, or drive them to desperate measures; as well as to make them conclude, that all their hopes of deliverance from the Lord were groundless. As their prospects were very gloomy, and there is no reason to suppose that many of them were partakers of the courage and patience of faith, it is the less wonderful that they spoke sharply to Moses and Aaron; who, being deeply interested in the concerns of their brethren, were waiting to learn what answer they had received. It must have been a severe trial to them to find, that while Pharaoh reproached them for taking off the people from their work, the officers of Israel complained of them, as if they had intentionally set Pharaoh against them, and given him a pretence for putting them to death, as well as for increasing the burdens of Israel; and that they even called on God to plead their cause against them. Thus while the king of Egypt denied that the Lord had sent Moses and Aaron, the Israelites themselves overlooked the proofs which they

15 ¶ Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants?

16 There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and behold, thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people.

17 But he said, *Ye are idle, ye are idle*: therefore ye say, Let us go, and do sacrifice to the Lord.

18 Go therefore now, and work: for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks.

19 And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in *evil case*, after it was said, Ye shall not diminish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task.

20 And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh:

21 And they said unto them, The Lord look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

22 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord, Wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me?

23 For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

10:1. Joel 2:20. 2 Cor. 2:15,16. 2 Heb. to strike. Gen. 34:30. 1 Sam. 13:4. 27:12. 2 Sam. 10:6. 1 Chr. 15:6. 17:4. 1 Sam. 30:6. Jer. 12:1. a Num. 11:14,15. 1 Kings 15:4,10. Jer. 20:7. 1 Ps. 116:36. Jer. 11:21. John 5:43. 5 Heb. delivering, thou hast not delivered. 1a. 26:17,18. 28:16. Heb. 10:36,37.

had witnessed of their divine commission!—Yet we may the less wonder at this, as even Moses, when thus tried, was led to murmur against the Lord, for honouring him with this important commission; to forget that he had been forewarned of Pharaoh's opposition; and almost to despair of success!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The servants of God may be called into very perilous situations: but while they adhere to their instructions, they may "set their faces as a flint;" for he will bear them out against their most haughty and imperious enemies. The reasonableness of the divine commands always leaves the disobedient without excuse. If we decline from the path of duty when comparatively easy, we shall never confine ourselves to it when greater self-denial is requisite; and if we refuse to devote a portion of our time and substance to the service of God, how shall we obey, should he call us to leave all, to take up our cross, to endure persecution, and to lay down our lives for his sake! Yet unless we are prepared for this, we cannot be Christ's disciples. But sinners are afraid of losing the pleasure or profit which they derive or expect from transgression; not knowing that "the service of God is perfect freedom," a continual feast, and an enduring inheritance.—Without that knowledge of God, which is derived from faith and experience, there is no true fear or love of him: and therefore they who know him not habitually disobey him, and often insolently despise him, and presumptuously set him at defiance, when his precepts and denunciations interfere with their ambitious and worldly projects. But this ignorance of God is no excuse; as it arises not so much from want of information, as from men "not liking to retain God in their knowledge."—It is common for the irreligious to treat all the fears, hopes, conscientious scruples, and experiences of true believers, as superstition and enthusiasm; and to censure them as vain words and foolish fancies. It must indeed be allowed that there is much superstition and enthusiasm in the world; yet true religion cannot but be experimental; for it must produce its effects upon the judgment, heart, and conscience, before they can appear in the life and conversation. We should therefore learn to distinguish between "the precious and the vile," according to the standard of the Holy Scriptures.—It is very common for worldly people to condemn an attention to the ordinances of God, as *idleness*; and to consider all the time or money which is expended in religion, as wasted to no purpose. To this day we find numbers disposed to exclaim against some of their neighbours, for spending a few hours, spared from business, in the service of God; crying out, "Ye are idle, ye are idle;" and yet they do not censure, or only with great lenity, those who allot *the* time to dissipation and intemperance! Thus is God despised among men, as if nothing could be so misemployed as that which is devoted to him! Nor is it to this day an obsolete device of Satan, to fill men's hands with business, their heads with projects, and their hearts with cares, in order to divert them from the worship of God, and from attention to "the one thing needful."

V. 10-23. The yoke of Satan and of sin is in itself immensely more dreadful than that of cruel Pharaoh and his

CHAPTER VI.

God encourages Moses, by his name JEHOVAH, and by promises; 1-8. Moses in vain attempts to encourage the Israelites, 9. He and Aaron are charged to go again unto Pharaoh, 10-13. The genealogy of Reuben and of Simeon; and of Levi the ancestor of Moses and Aaron, 14-25. The history is resumed, 26-30.

THEN the LORD said unto Moses, "Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, "I am the LORD:

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of 'God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, 'the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

5 And I have also heard the 'groaning of the

children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage: and 'I have remembered my covenant.

6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and 'I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage: and I will 'redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments.

7 And I 'will take you to me for a people, and 'I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

8 And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which I did 'swear 'to give it, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for a heritage: 'I am the LORD.

[Practical Observations.]

9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they 'hearkened not unto Moses, for 'anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

a 14:13. Num. 22:23. Deut. 32:39. 2 Kings 7:2-19. 2 Chr. 20:17. Ps. 125. b 3: 19, 20. Deut. 1:4. 1 Chr. 17:21. Neh. 1:10. o 19:5, 6. Gen. 17:7, 8. Deut. 4:20. 7:8. 14:2. 26:18. 2 Sam. 7:23, 24. Jer. 31:33. Hos. 1:10. 1 Pet. 2:10. p 29:45, 46. Deut. 29:13. Zech. 13:9. Matt. 22:32. Heb. 11:16. Rev. 21:7. q Ps. 81:6. Heb. 1:14. 4:6. 5:5. 6:5. John 8:54. Rev. 1:1. Gen. 6:18. 15:13. 17:13. 2 Sam. 23:1. Is. 53:3. b 10:1. 17:8. 22:1. 23:3. Ps. 105:12. Acts 7:5. 12:24. 3. 7. Is. 63:9. k 2:24. Gen. 31: 9:15. Ps. 105:8. 105:45. Luke 1:54, 72. 1 See on

2. Ex. 20:7-9. m 3:17. 7:4. Deut. 26:8. Ps. 81:6. n 15:13. 1 Pet. 7:8. 15:15. 2 Kings 17:36. 1 Chr. 17:21. Neh. 1:10. o 19:5, 6. Gen. 17:7, 8. Deut. 4:20. 7:8. 14:2. 26:18. 2 Sam. 7:23, 24. Jer. 31:33. Hos. 1:10. 1 Pet. 2:10. p 29:45, 46. Deut. 29:13. Zech. 13:9. Matt. 22:32. Heb. 11:16. Rev. 21:7. q Ps. 81:6. Heb. 1:14. 4:6. 5:5. 6:5. John 8:54. Rev. 1:1. Gen. 6:18. 15:13. 17:13. 2 Sam. 23:1. Is. 53:3. b 10:1. 17:8. 22:1. 23:3. Ps. 105:12. Acts 7:5. 12:24. 3. 7. Is. 63:9. k 2:24. Gen. 31: 9:15. Ps. 105:8. 105:45. Luke 1:54, 72. 1 See on

task-masters: and when sinners begin to feel their misery, and the Lord is preparing deliverance for them, the discoveries which they continually make of the strictness and spirituality of the divine law, the evil of sin, and the strength of their evil propensities, often concur with the temptations of the devil in urging them to conclude, that it is impossible to overcome their corrupt passions and evil habits; for these seem rather irritated than subdued by convictions, while they remain ignorant of the gospel. Then indeed they suppose themselves to be in an evil and a hopeless case; and are ready to wish they had never attended to that doctrine which has thus disquieted them; nay, to quarrel with the instrument, as if he were the cause of their distress and misery! On this account, as well as others, they who desire to be honoured by God in any public sphere of usefulness, should well count their cost; and not only expect to meet with opposition from the world, but to experience still more painful trials from the impatience, and even ingratitude and reproaches of the very persons whose good they are earnestly seeking; and to be accused, not only of those crimes of which they are innocent, but, by men of different characters, of things directly contrary to each other. Such as seem to believe, will "in time of temptation fall away," and they who really believe, under the pressure of severe trials, often forget all they knew, and distress faithful ministers with their distrust, impatience, and peevish complaints. But indeed the ministers themselves, being conscious how they also dishonour and offend God, and admiring his forbearance and compassion to them, should learn to imitate him in bearing with their brethren. For the most faithful, on some occasions, not at first perceiving the fruits of their labours, or not duly understanding the Lord's method of preparing sinners for the liberty and consolations of the gospel, by very humiliating and painful experiences; while they return to spread the case before God, are apt to discourage themselves, and impatiently to complain that they are sent to no purpose, and that he doth not by them deliver the people at all: but this is their sin and their folly, of which at length they will be ashamed.—Let us not however close this chapter, without contrasting our mild and benign government, and the civil and religious liberty which we enjoy, with the cruel tyranny and oppression of Pharaoh: and, uniting gratitude to God and man for such blessings, let us pray for the continuance of them to us and to our posterity, and for the choicest blessings upon those who are the instruments of God in them: and let us remember how much we are bound to live, (especially under such rulers,) in all godliness and honesty, and in quietness and conscientious submissiveness.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. Moses found that his interference had only rendered the condition of Israel worse than before; for Pharaoh set JEHOVAH at defiance, and the people were sinking in abject despondency. But at this crisis the Lord declared that he would display his own power, and effect their deliverance himself, that he might have all the glory of it.—When Pharaoh felt the power of God's indignation, he not only consented to Israel's departure, but he and his people urged and hastened it: yet this consent was extorted by force, and was entirely contrary to Pharaoh's habitual inclinations.—It is not said in what way the Lord spake unto Moses on each of these occasions; but we have reason to believe, that there was, in general, some personal appearance and an audible voice, like that with which the patriarchs had been favoured. (33:1. Num. 12:8.)

V. 2, 3. "I am," said God, "that unchangeable, and all-perfect Being, who am known by the name JEHOVAH, and always act consistently with that name."—The Lord was known to the patriarchs, as "God Almighty," or the all-sufficient God, who possesses all wisdom, power, and domi-

nion, to contrive and effect the purposes of his love.—It is most probable that the latter clause should be read with an interrogation: "And was I not known to them by my name JEHOVAH?" For Moses had constantly used the name JEHOVAH in the preceding history; the patriarchs built their altars, and "called upon the name of JEHOVAH;" Abraham called the place where he was about to sacrifice Isaac, JEHOVAH-jireh; and God, speaking to Jacob in Bethel, saith, "I am JEHOVAH, the God of Abraham."—The intention of these words seems to have been this. Moses was discouraged, because the difficulties before him appeared insurmountable; but this was unreasonable: the same glorious God, who revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as Almighty, and who pledged the honour of his name for the accomplishment of the covenant which he made with them, that he would give their posterity the land in which "they were strangers," was indeed JEHOVAH, the self-existent, eternal, and unchangeable God, and was known to them by that name also. No difficulty therefore had arisen, or could arise, but what he foresaw when he made the promises; nor any, which his power was not able to remove. As if he had said, "Remember, Moses, who it was that made the promises to the fathers; and assure thyself he is well able to fulfil them.—Thus Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever," said to Martha, over the grave of Lazarus, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" referring to what he had said before, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." (John 11:37-40.)—Some however think, that though the patriarchs knew the same JEHOVAH, they were not instructed in this meaning and application of it; and that this is the purport of the passage; especially as Moses was the first, as far as we know, who was sent with a message to others in the name of JEHOVAH, and enabled to confirm that message by public and incontestable miracles.

V. 5-7. JEHOVAH, the righteous and compassionate Patron of the oppressed, and the covenanted Friend of Israel, was absolutely engaged and determined to put forth his omnipotence to rescue them from bondage; as a man stretches forth his arm and employs his whole force to effect any thing about which he is in earnest. And as this had respect to the redemption of the promised Saviour, and would also be accomplished at the price of desolating Egypt; the deliverance was spoken of in language taken from the ransoming of slaves and captives. (Note, Is. 43:3, 4.) He therefore engaged to take them under his especial care and protection, and to maintain his truth and worship among them, while other nations were suffered to walk in their own ways. "To know the LORD," is often used in Scripture for that knowledge of the being, perfections, and omnipotent dominion of God over all his works, which is the effect of experience; whether of his mercy and love, or of his righteous vengeance. But, to know him as "the LORD our God," implies either a spiritual relation to him as our Friend and Father, or at least those religious advantages which are the outward signs and means of so great a blessing. Israel would know that he was the Lord, in the experience of his powerful and faithful loving-kindness; and might thus discover that he was justly entitled to all that love and service which his law required.

V. 9. The people were so crushed by oppression, and so filled with anguish by their late distressing disengagement; that, perceiving no sensible tokens of approaching deliverance, but an increase of their oppressive burdens, they quite desponded, disregarded the message of God, and refused to make any further attempts.

For anguish of spirit.] Απο της ολιγοψυχίας, from weakness, or dejection of spirit. See, 1.—1 Thes. 5:14. Gr

11 Go in, ^a speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

12 And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold ^a the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of ^a uncircumcised lips?

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and ^a gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

14 ¶ These be ^a the heads of their fathers' houses: ^a The sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel; Hanoeh, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: ^a these be the families of Reuben.

15 And the ^a sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these are the families of Simeon.

16 And these are the names of the ^a sons of Levi, according to their generations: Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the b.c. life of Levi were ^a a hundred thirty and ^{1619.} seven years.

17 The ^a sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families.

18 And the ^a sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: and the years of the life of Kohath were a hundred thirty and three years.

19 And the ^a sons of Merari; Mahali, and Mushi: these are the families of Levi, according to their generations.

20 And ^a Amram took him Jochabed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: ^a and the years of the life of Amram were a hundred and thirty and seven years.

21 And the sons of Izhar; ^a Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri.

22 And the ^a sons of Uzziel; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri. [B. C. 1530.]

23 And Aaron took him ^a Elisheba, daughter of ^a Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him ^a Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

24 And the sons of ^a Korah; Assir, and ^a Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these are the families of the Korhites.

25 And Eleazar Aaron's son took him ^a one of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him ^a Phinehas: these are ^a the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families.

26 These are ^a that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, ^a Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies.

27 These are they which ^a spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, ^a to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these are ^a that Moses and Aaron.

28 ¶ And it came to pass on the day when the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,

29 That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ^a I am the LORD: ^a speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee.

30 And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I am of ^a uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

u 29, 3:10, 5:1, 23, 7:1. x 3:13, 4:29—31, 5:19—21. y 30, 4:10. Lev. 26: 41. Dent. 30:6. Is. 6:5. Jer. 1:6. 6:10. 9:25. Acts 7:51. z Num. 27:19, 23. Dent. 31:14. Ps. 91:11. Matt. 4:6. 1 Tim. 1:18. 5:21. 6:13, 17. 2 Tim. 2:2, 4:1. a 25. Josh. 1:11, 19:51. 1 Chr. 5:34, 7:2, 7:35. b Gen. 46:9, 4:34. Num. 26:5. 1 Chr. 5:3. c Num. 26:7. Josh. 13:15, 23. d Gen. 46:10. Num. 26:12, 13. 1 Chr. 4:24. Nemu. 1. Jer. 2:2. e Gen. 46:11. Num. 3:17. 1 Chr. 6:1, 16. f 13:20. Gen. 35:28. 47:28. 50:26. g Gen. 46:11. Num. 3:18. Shimei. 1 Chr. 6:17, 23:7. Laadan. Shimei. h Num. 3:19. Izhar. 26:57. 1 Chr. 6:2, 18. i See on 16. k Num. 3:20. 1 Chr. 6:19. 23:21. 12:1, 2. Num. 26:59. m See on 16. a 21.

V. 12. Even Moses himself was so discouraged, that his faith almost entirely failed, and he was ready to give up the service as hopeless. He forgot that the Lord had engaged to deliver the people by a strong hand, and not by persuasive words; so that his *uncircumcised lips*, or want of eloquence, could not prevent his success.—*Uncircumcised* often denotes *unsuitableness and incapacity*, through some defect or impediment; as the carnal heart of man is entirely unsuited to the spiritual service of God, and the purposes of his glory. (Marg. Ref. y.)

V. 13. The Lord here absolutely commanded Moses and Aaron, without further objections or delays, to deliver his message to Israel, and also to Pharaoh, to whom they seem to have been directed to speak with more authority than before; and to denounce the vengeance of the Lord upon him if he proved refractory. Indeed, they were not only charged to attempt bringing Israel out of Egypt, but absolutely to effect it; and this charge was calculated to increase their faith, and raise their expectations.

V. 14—20. Before the historian proceeded with his narrative, he digressed from the subject, to give some account of the persons to whom this charge was given.—Reuben was the first-born, and accordingly is first mentioned, to mark the accomplishment of Jacob's prediction; seeing he was passed by, and the deliverer did not spring from him.—For the same reason Simeon also is mentioned, who was the next in seniority; yet the deliverer of Israel did not descend from him, but from Levi, the third son, who, though he had been disgraced, began now to be dignified. (Notes, Gen. 49:3—7.) Levi, though older than Joseph, survived him above twenty years; and his son Kohath attained nearly, and his grandson Amram fully, to the same age. It is not recorded how long the other sons of Jacob lived. Moses was no more than a hundred and twenty when he died: yet his age was deemed extraordinary; and he fixes the term of man's life to seventy or eighty years, (Ps. 90:10.) which from about that time have in general been its appointed bounds.—According to the Septuagint and the Jewish traditions, Jochebed was *cousin*, no *aunt* to Amram: but this construction was probably put on the original word to save the credit of Moses and Aaron; because the marriage of an *aunt* is afterwards forbidden. (Lev. 18: 12, 14.) For the meaning of the word here used is fixed by another passage, in which it is said: "The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to Levi in Egypt." (Num. 26:59.) It is probable that Jochebed was born when Levi was old, and was as young as Amram.—The impartiality of the historian appears in his recording that he was born of a marriage, which the law afterwards condemned as incestuous; and by his silence in other respects concerning his parents, though

there is sufficient ground to conclude that they were pious persons.

V. 23—25. *Elisheba* is the same as *Elisabeth*. She was the sister of Naashon, or *Nahshon*, who was of the tribe of Judah, and an ancestor of Christ. Thus an alliance was formed between the family of the priests and that of the kings; which might shadow forth him who was both Priest and King in one Person.—It is observable that Moses in this place records nothing of his own descendants, who were left among the ordinary Levites; though he mentions such of the other branches of his family as were afterwards in any way distinguished, and especially the descendants of Aaron, the priest of the Lord.

V. 26, 27. The transactions which Moses was about to record, were exceedingly important in themselves, and in their consequences; and there could be no doubt that other nations and ages would hear the report of them. Accordingly, some traditions concerning them are found in many pagan writers; but they are greatly misstated; and especially the *parentages*, and even the *tribe* of Moses are mistaken in them. It was therefore of great importance, in order to give the stamp of authenticity to his history, that a very particular and clear account should be given of the principal persons mentioned. This has frequently been done by other historians, who have on such occasions spoken of themselves in the third person; as Ezra, Daniel, and the apostle John: so that there is not the smallest reason for any objection, on this account, to these books having been written by Moses, according to the general testimony of all antiquity, sanctioned by the express attestations of our Lord himself. (John 5:46, 47.)

Armies. (26.) When the Israelites left Egypt, they marched in good order, without repitiation or confusion; and when the several tribes were regularly encamped, they appeared as so many armies prepared for battle, under the immediate conduct of the Lord of armies himself.

V. 28—30. Having stated the above particulars, the sacred writer resumes his narrative. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. We are most likely to prosper in our endeavours to glorify God and serve our generation, when we are convinced by experience that we can do nothing of ourselves; for when we can truly say that our whole dependence is placed on the Lord, and "our expectation is only from him;" we are prepared to mark and to record his works of power and love, and to render him our tribute of adoring, thankful praise. He therefore previously proves and humbles those whom he loves and employs, and brings them to *feel*, as well as acknowledge, their insufficiency: but while he is thus mortifying their pride and ambition, Satan often takes the

CHAPTER VII.

The Lord encourages Moses and Aaron to go unto Pharaoh, 1-6. Their ages are noted, 7. Aaron casts down his rod, which becomes a serpent, and the magicians do the same; but their rods are swallowed up by Aaron's rod: yet Pharaoh's heart is hardened, 8-13. Another message is sent to Pharaoh, and the river is turned into blood, 14-25. The distress of the Egyptians, 24, 25.

AND the LORD said unto Moses, "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

2 Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

4 But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine arm's, and my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments.

5 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

a 16:29. Gen. 19:21. 1 Kings 17:23. 2 Kings 6:32. Ec. 1:10. b 4:15, 16. Ps. 93:6. Jer. 1:10. John 10:35, 36. c 6:29. Deut. 4:2. 1 Kings 22:14. Jer. 1:7, 17. 2:3, 10. 17. Matt. 28:20. Acts 20:27. d See on 3:21. e 9:16. 11:9. Deut. 4:34. 7:19. Neh. 9:10. Ps. 78:14-51. 107:27-36. 139:3. Is. 51:9. Jer. 32:20, 21. Mic. 7:15. John 4:18. Acts 2:42. 7:36. 19:3. 10:1. Judg. 2:15. Lam. 3:3. e 6:26. 12:41. Lev. 6. Rev. 1:9, 10. Is. 40:9. Ez. 14:21. 25:11, 30:14, 15. Rev. 15:4. 16:7. 19:3. 9:10, 22. 14:18. Ps. 9:16. Ec. 23:17. 28:32. 39:23. 39:7, 22. See on 3:20. k 10.

opportunity of tempting them to discontent, impatience, and discouragement; that "their hands may hang down and their knees wax feeble," and that they may be reluctant to the work assigned them. In such circumstances, they are apt to displease the Lord by unbelieving objections and hesitations; yet he graciously pities and pardons them, and obviates their discouragements. And nothing is more effectual for this purpose, than discovering to them his immutable perfection, his incomprehensible wisdom and power, his uncontrollable dominion, his condescending compassion, love, and faithfulness; and his oath and covenant, by which he hath engaged to fulfil his largest promises to his church, and to every living member of it. Calling these things to remembrance, and recollecting his wonders of old, the drooping heart revives, faith recovers strength, larger expectations are formed, and the servant of God rises superior to despondency, and patiently proceeds in the work assigned him.

V. 9-30. Our compassionate Lord regards our groanings under temporal calamities; but when the guilt and power of sin and temptation become our chief complaint, and extort the exclamation, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" he particularly notes it, and will certainly perform to us "the oath which he swore unto . . . Abraham, . . . that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." (Luke 1:72-75.) When we find that we cannot deliver ourselves, he will show us what he can do; and redeeming us by his strong hand and stretched-out arm, from the power of our enemies, he will take us to be his people, and will be our God. He will guard us safely all the way to that good land where tears, groans, sins, and enemies are known no more for ever; and there he will give us everlasting felicity. But even these glorious and joyful assurances afford no consolation to the soul which is overwhelmed with present trouble, finds matters apparently grow worse, and has no sensible tokens of the divine favour. For we are very prone to expect the continuance and increase of such dispensations as we at present experience. Even universal observation of the mutability of human affairs does not prevent those in prosperity from expecting greater prosperity, and those in adversity from expecting deeper scenes of affliction: and this gives Satan an immense advantage, in attempting to buoy up some men in careless presumption, and to depress others in heartless despondency. If then we would be safe, and walk comfortably in such a world as this, "we must walk by faith, not by sight." For he, and he only, who habitually believes the testimony and relies on the promise of God, will find his heart prepared for humble watchfulness, patient hope, and cheerful submission: while frequent reflections on his own unworthiness, connected with lively prospects of heavenly felicity, tend to silence his complaints, animate his admiring love and gratitude, and render him persevering and active in the duties of his place and station.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1, 2. Moses, as the ambassador of JEHOVAH, representing him and speaking in his name, possessed and exercised an authority over Pharaoh, and laid injunctions, denounced threatenings, and called for judgments on him, with a power which Pharaoh, proud and great as he was, could not resist, and was unable to despise, or to endure. Thus Moses had a decided superiority over Pharaoh, and did not stand in awe of his authority, but made him tremble before him. All this seems to be implied in his strong expression, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh;" and, in answer to Moses's objection that he was "of uncircumcised lips," it was assured that Aaron should de-

6 And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they.

7 And Moses was fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

9 When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, "Show a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, "Take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent.

10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

11 Then Pharaoh also called the wise men, and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.

12:28. 39:43. 40:16. Gen. 6:22. 22:18. John 15:10, 11. 1 Gen. 41:46. Deut. 29:5. 31:2. 34:7. Ps. 90:10. Acts 7:23, 30. m Is. 7:11. John 2:18. 6:30. 10:38. n 10-12. 4:2, 17, 20. 9:23. 10:13. o 4:3. Am. 9:3. Mark 10:16. Luke 10:19. p Gen. 41:8, 39. Is. 19:11, 19. 47:12, 13. Dan. 2:2, 27. 4:7-8. 5:7, 11. 2 Tim. 3:8. Rev. 1:20. q Deut. 13:1-3. Matt. 21:24. 2 Thes. 2:9. Rev. 13:11-15. r 8:18, 19. 9:11. Acts 8:9-13. 13:8-11. 19:19, 20. 1 John 4:4.

liver his message faithfully and properly to Pharaoh, and thus be "his prophet."—The last three verses of the foregoing chapter might be more conveniently placed at the beginning of this.

V. 3, 4. Notes, 13. 4:21. 6:26, 27.

V. 5. Know.] By the dreadful judgments inflicted on them, especially the destruction of all the first-born, the Egyptians had a full demonstration that the God of Israel was the great JEHOVAH, "the Lord of the whole earth." (Note, 6:5-7.)

V. 6, 7. At length Moses was delivered from his fears; and being strengthened in faith, he no longer objected, but went about his arduous work with undaunted courage, and proceeded in it with indefatigable perseverance; Aaron also heartily assisting him, in the same courage and constancy of faith.—Being matured in years and experience, and venerable on that account, they were more proper to speak in the name of God, before Pharaoh and his courtiers, than younger men would have been.

V. 9, 10. It is here supposed that extraordinary divine commissions should be attested by miracles; and, unless brought in proof of such doctrines as evidently contradi (the first grand principles of all religion, or of revealed truth in particular, they may be considered as the seal of Heaven affixed to the prophet's commission; so that open, undeniable, and repeated miracles, are a divine attestation in behalf of the person by whom they are wrought. (John 3:2. 5:36. 6:27. 10:38. 14:11. 15:24.) And indeed it cannot be supposed that God will allow his seal to be so counterfeited, as to impose on the attentive, humble, and impartial inquirer, however he may leave the proud and prejudiced to be deceived by delusive appearances. There is likewise a vast difference between miracles wrought publicly before enemies, in proof of a doctrine which has got no establishment in the world, and which by its very nature, and the circumstances of those who promulgate it, is never likely to succeed, unless the miracles are undeniable, so that the whole cause rests upon them; and miracles, supposed to have been performed in private, or among friends, in proof of a system already established, and supported by the wealthy, the powerful, and the learned, to whom it is the interest of others to pay court. All the miracles wrought by Moses and Aaron were of the former kind; and their success itself, in so extraordinary an undertaking, demonstrates that they were wrought by the power of God. Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who in general gave the token for the performance of the miracles.—The command given to him by Moses before Pharaoh, implied a prediction of the miracle, which tended to render it the more undeniable.

A serpent.] (תנין) which the LXX render δράκων, a dragon, as also the plural in the twelfth verse δράκοντες. The word (תנין) is used before, (4:3.) and is rendered by the LXX οφίς.

V. 11, 12. No doubt Pharaoh and his servants were both astonished and alarmed, when they saw Aaron's rod become a terrible serpent before them. But as magicians and sorcerers were in high repute in Egypt, being called wise men, and supposed capable of performing very extraordinary things by their skill in the occult sciences; probably Pharaoh and his courtiers endeavoured to believe, that Moses and Aaron were nothing more than two great magicians, and that the sorcerers and magicians of Egypt were able to contend with them. Accordingly, some of the most renowned among them were called in, of whom we find Jannes and Jambres were the principal: (2 Tim. 3:8.) and "they also did in like manner with their enchantments; for they cast down every

13 ¶ And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.

15 Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water, and thou shalt stand by the river's brink, against he come: and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

16 And thou shalt say unto him, "The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, 'Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear.

17 Thus saith the LORD, In this 'thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in my hand, upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood.

18 And 'the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river.

19 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand

upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood: and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.

20 And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded: and he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants: and fall the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.

21 And 'the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river: and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

22 And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them: as the LORD had said.

23 And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also.

24 And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink: for they could not drink of the water of the river.

e 21. 8, 13, 16, 17, 27, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

man his rod, and they became serpents."—No doubt many of these professors of sorcery, or magic, were expert in *legerdemain*, and imposed on the spectators by various artifices: yet they who reverence the Scriptures will hardly deny that many of them had a real intercourse with evil spirits, and by their help actually made discoveries, and produced effects, beyond the reach of human power or sagacity. It remains therefore to inquire into the fact here briefly recorded, what it was, and how performed. Some expositors consider it as merely an *illusion*, by which the magicians made the spectators think that they saw serpents when they did not. Others imagine that the magicians had contrived to convey serpents thither, concealing their rods, to make it appear as if they were changed into serpents. Others think that the power of Satan produced *appearances like serpents*, instead of the rods which were conveyed away. But some expositors are not satisfied with any of these interpretations, because it is expressly said, "they became serpents:" and "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." They therefore conclude that the rods actually became real living serpents, and in that form were swallowed by the serpent into which Aaron's rod was changed. We cannot, indeed, in general assign exact bounds to the power of evil spirits, who, when permitted, seem capable of any thing which created beings can do; yet, *creation*, in every instance, is commonly supposed to be exclusively the *work of God*. And on this account, they who adhere to the literal interpretation conclude, that while the magicians used their enchantments, expecting the interposition of the demons to whom they applied, the Lord himself was pleased to interpose, and to effect a real change of their rods into serpents, and, as they could not certainly know how far the power of their demons extended, they would naturally suppose that this was the effect of their enchantments.—Pharaoh was evidently seeking some pretence for disregarding the miracle which he had witnessed, and proudly disobeying the divine command; and it was the Lord's design to give him up to final obduracy. It does not therefore appear that there is any thing, on this supposition, inconsistent with the divine perfections, or materially different from his dealings with other haughty and obstinate rebels in similar circumstances. (Notes, 1 Sam. 28:11—19, 1 Kings 22:19—23, 2 Thes. 2:5—12.)—But, however this may be determined, when "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods;" that is, when the serpent into which his rod had been changed swallowed the serpents into which their rods had been changed; and when it again became a rod in Aaron's hand, but their rods were vanished, and were no more found; the event would have satisfied any impartial person, on which side the truth lay: and had not a previous bias lain upon Pharaoh's mind, this must have convinced him that Moses and Aaron spake and acted by divine authority.

V. 13. *He hardened Pharaoh's heart.*] Or rather, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened;" for nothing is here said concerning any interposition of God in the case. The same words are afterwards rendered, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened," (22,) and this accords with the subsequent words of God, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened," (14.) "The heart of Pharaoh" became *strong, presumptuous, unfeeling*, (*καταχρηστικῶς*, Sept.) Probably, he had been at first alarmed and ready to yield: but he would now say, that the magicians had produced serpents also, and that Moses and Aaron were only greater adepts in magic than they; that JEHOVAH had no

8:8, 16:3—6, e 21, d 24, Num. 11:20, 21:5, e 8:5, 6:16, 9:22, 23:33, * Heb. gathering of their waters, Gen. 1:10, 1:7:5, 6:9—12, Num. 20:12—12, g See on 6, 17, John 2:9—11, h See on 18, Rev. 8:9, i See on 11, 8:7, 8, Jer. 27:18, k See on 13, 19:21, Deut. 32:36, 1 Sam. 4:20, Marg. Job 7:17, Ps. 62:10, Prov. 24:32, marg. 29:1, Is. 26:11, Jer. 5:3, 36:24, Ez. 40:4, Am. 4:7—12 Hag. 1:5, marg. Mal. 2:2, m 16:21.

concern in it; and that there was no occasion to liberate the Israelites. Thus the effect produced tended to embolden him in rebellion, and to fortify him against conviction. The Lord foresaw, and foretold, that this would be the case, and he formed his whole plan accordingly.

V. 15—20. Moses was the ambassador of JEHOVAH to Pharaoh, and Aaron was appointed to be his assistant: but Pharaoh haughtily rejected the embassy, and demanded their credentials; and he continued obstinate, after having witnessed a *menacing* but *harmless* miracle. Moses was therefore sent to him the very next morning, with his rod in his hand, as denoting the authority by which he acted, and reminding Pharaoh of the preceding miracle.—Some suppose that Pharaoh went to pay his devotions to the river Nile, or to its supposed tutelary deity, and that Moses was directed to take that occasion of addressing him: for perhaps it was not, at this time, easy to find admittance to him in his palace.—Moses was commanded solemnly to renew to Pharaoh the demand, which he had before made in the name of JEHOVAH; and if he still answered, "I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go," he must denounce the dreadful judgment on him and his people, of which smiting the river would be the signal. And, as the warning produced no effect, Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who smote the river, and stretched out the rod over all the large collections of waters, which were directly converted into blood.—The vessels of wood and of stone, it is probable, were the cisterns, in which the Egyptians preserved the waters of the river: when the annual inundation took place, the water was, by various contrivances, conveyed even to those parts of the country, which were most distant from the river, and there kept in large reservoirs for use, till the next inundation. But this water also was turned into blood.

V. 21. The very sight of such immense quantities of entire blood must have been very horrible; the effects of such a change distressing and calamitous beyond expression! The Egyptians gloried in the river Nile, by the inundations of which the whole country was enriched; and probably they even then adored it, as one of their principal deities: but now they could not look at it, without horror and dismay! They had cruelly cast the children of Israel into the river, and now the river itself was turned into blood! A great part of their provisions consisted of fish; but now this was generally destroyed; their waters were useless or noxious; the most tremendous consequences might be apprehended from the continuance of this judgment, and it awfully foreboded all the desolations which followed.—The first miracle of Christ turned water into wine, the first plague upon Egypt turned all their water into blood. (Notes, and P. O. John 2:1—11.)

V. 22, 23. The magicians should have attempted to remove the plague, and to remedy or prevent its fatal consequences, in order to make a fair trial of the efficacy of their art, in opposition to the miracles wrought by Moses: but they only amused Pharaoh, and increased the distress of Egypt, (either in reality or in appearance,) by imitating, or rather apeing, the surprising miracle of Moses; and by pretending at least to turn into blood some of the little water, which the mercy of God had spared. Yet this sufficed to embolden and harden Pharaoh's heart, and to prevent him from acknowledging the hand of God even in this judgment; which, probably, he attributed to the superior skill in magic,

25. And "seven days were fulfilled after that the LORD had smitten the river.

CHAPTER VIII.

The plague of frogs is threatened and sent, 1-6; is imitated by the magicians, 7; and removed in answer to the prayer of Moses, made at Pharaoh's request, 8-13. And yet hardned his heart, 8-13. The plague of lice, which the magicians could not imitate, 16-19. The plague of flies, 20-24; Pharaoh relents, the plague is removed, and his heart is hardened, 25-32.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, "Go unto A Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, "Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 And if thou refuse to let them go, behold I will smite all thy borders with frogs.

3 And the rivers shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thy house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading troughs.

4 And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thy hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

6 And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt: and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

7 And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Entreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people, "and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD.

9 And Moses said unto Pharaoh, "Glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee, and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only?

10 And he said, "To-morrow. And he said, Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God.

11 And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only.

that Moses and Aaron had acquired: hoping at the same time, but by further study or new enchantments, his magicians would yet be able to contend with them. Being therefore indignant against Moses and Aaron, and bidding defiance to JEHOVAH, he seemed to be regardless of the distress of his subjects, and careless about the consequences!

V. 25. Seven days.] Thus long the awful calamity continued, and was then it seems removed: for the LORD would give respite to Egypt and to Pharaoh, and make way for other plagues; that his own power and justice, and the obstinacy of Pharaoh and his servants, might be more fully displayed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. When the Lord has humbled and proved his servants, and qualified them for their work, he will put honour upon them: and the least of those who are intrusted with his message, and employed to speak in his name, are, in this delegated character, and while faithfully executing their office, superior to the greatest and haughtiest of those to whom they are sent. They ought therefore to speak with firmness and authority, without fear of the anger, respect of the persons, or desire of the favour, of those who are living in disobedience to God; and in this spirit the prisoner Paul may expect to make even Felix tremble.—But to deliver the message of God to proud persecuting tyrants, requires that strength of faith, that intrepid courage, and that meekness of wisdom, with which very few are endued: and we have cause to be not only satisfied, but thankful, that we are not called to such arduous services.—Indeed, gravity, wisdom, experience, fortitude, patience, and meekness are requisite for all those who, in any circumstances, speak in the name of God, and declare his truth and will: yet they who do not rashly intrude themselves, but are "allowed by him to be put in trust of the gospel," need not be discouraged by an humble consciousness of their defects. Let them simply trust in his promised teaching and assistance, and observe his directions; and he will bear them out, and carry them through every service to which they are called.—If sinners will not attend to the message of grace and salvation, and so learn to know and love the LORD our God; they will certainly experience the effects of his wrath, and know him as a God of righteous vengeance. How careful then should men be, not to provoke him to give them up to hardness and impenitence! If they would escape that awful judgment, they must neither continue to practise presumptuous sins, nor procrastinate in the great concerns of salvation: they must watch against heedless and proud insensibility under affliction, and insolence in prosperity. They must not turn away their ears from instruction and reproof; or smother convictions of conscience by dissipation, business, or company; by rushing into sin, or by hating and shunning the awakening light of divine truth. For these are some of the steps, by which multitudes proceed to the brink of that awful precipice.

V. 8-25. No evidence suffices to convince men while left to themselves, that those doctrines are true and divine which affront the pride of their hearts, and condemn their beloved iniquities: but the least shadow of an argument, though counterbalanced by demonstration itself, induces the belief of those opinions which they wish to find true. Thus all mental errors in religion originate, in some degree, from the state of the heart, and from the contrariety of revealed truths to men's prejudices, interests, or inclinations. "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." John 8:45.—Our merciful God always accompanies the word with sufficient evidence of

its divine authority, were we but suitably disposed to attend to it; but, when men are bent upon disobedience, and inclined to cavil and object, he often permits a snare to be laid, in which they are entangled. Nor are any deceivers more instrumental to the destruction of sinners, than such as resist the truth, in the same manner as the magicians withstood Moses; namely, by amusing men with some resemblance and counterfeit of it: indeed Satan himself is most to be dreaded, when "transformed into an angel of light."—But "madness is in the heart of man," or he would never dare to provoke that God, who can so easily turn his choicest comforts into the most dreadful plagues; and who may so righteously render those things which have been the fuel of men's pride, or the instruments of their cruelty, the weapons of his indignation: and then no human help can avail to alleviate or remove the inflicted misery.—In the mystery of Providence, subjects often suffer through the crimes of their princes; yet for their own sins, which provoke God to send them wicked rulers: and they, for their own profit or pleasure, join their iniquity, and are involved in the punishment.—"The righteous Lord so delights in mercy," that he proceeds by slow degrees to extremities, even with the most atrocious offenders: but, if neither judgments nor mercies bring them to repentance, destruction will at length overtake them without remedy.—We seldom duly value our comforts, till we are deprived of them: but let us remember, that as the anger of God converts the most valued advantages into scourges, or curses, to his enemies; so the love of Christ renders the most common mercies special blessings to his disciples.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-6. It is probable that this message was sent at the end of the seven days, and just about the time when the former plague was removed. The prediction of each judgment was an additional proof, that it was wrought by the power of JEHOVAH, and was not the mere effect of second causes. The plague of frogs must have been peculiarly distressing; as the immense multitudes of them infested every place, harassed all ranks of the Egyptians night and day, and rendered them incapable of either eating, drinking, or sleeping, in peace and comfort. As it was limited to Pharaoh's servants and people, we may infer, that in this as well as in the preceding miracle, the Israelites were in a great measure, if not entirely, exempted.—Here again Moses issued the mandate; and Aaron, who bare the rod, the token of the divine presence and power, gave the signal for the miracle.

V. 7, 8. The magicians succeeded in their attempt to imitate this miracle also, but they should rather have shown their skill in removing the frogs, . . . which, one would think, Pharaoh expected from them. . . . So *Aben Ezra* observes, "He called for Moses, because he saw that the magicians had only added to the plague, but could not diminish it." *Ipp. Patrick*. The continuance of the plague was so intolerable that Pharaoh, notwithstanding his haughtiness and impiety, was constrained to tremble before the power of JEHOVAH, thus exerted against him; and even to honour Moses and Aaron, by entreating them to intercede for him and his servants. Under the anguish of this most humiliating and disgusting judgment, he seemed inclined to dismiss Israel; but it was an extorted, reluctant consent, and therefore it was not durable, but was soon retracted.

V. 9-11. In order the more fully to convince Pharaoh that the power of JEHOVAH alone had inflicted the judgment, Moses allowed him to "glory over him," or to have the honour of fixing the time when, in answer to his prayer, the

12 And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh: and Moses cried unto the LORD, because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh.

13 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses: and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.

14 And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

[Literical Observations.]

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

17 And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice, in man and in beast: all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18 And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man and upon beast.

19 Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

20 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up

early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, (lo, he cometh forth to the water,) and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

21 Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are.

22 And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know, that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth.

23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to-morrow shall this sign be.

24 And the LORD did so: and there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies.

25 And Pharaoh called for Moses, and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.

26 And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?

27 We will go three days' journey into the

n See on 8:20, 9:23, 10:18, 32:11, 1 Sam. 12:23, Jam. 5:16—18, Jer. 24, 7:21, Is. 34:3, Ez. 39:11, Joel 2:20, a 14:5, Ec. 8:11, Is. 26:10, Jer. 34:7—11, Hos. 6:4, c See on 4:21, 7:13-14, Prov. 29:1, Zech. 7:11, 12, Heb. 3:8, 15, Rev. 16:9, u 5, x Ps. 105:31, Is. 23:9, Acts 12:23, y 9:11, Gen. 41:8, Is. 19:12, 47:12, 13, Dan. 2:10, 11, 4:7, 5:8, z 1 Sam. 6:9, Is. 8:3, Dan. 2:10, 11, 19, Matt. 12:28, Luke 11:20, John 11:47, Acts 4:16, a See on 15, b 1:5, "Or, a mixture

of frogs should be destroyed, whether immediately or afterwards: for Moses earnestly desired that Pharaoh by submitting might escape destruction. 'Appoint (ῥατα) to me when I shall pray for thee.' Sept. The Lord was pleased thus to influence his servant, that all cavils and objections might be the more effectually obviated; the very time of the removal of the plague having been exactly foretold.—But why did not Pharaoh choose to be delivered from the frogs immediately? He seems to have still indulged some hopes that they would go away of themselves; and then he should not be obliged to Moses, or under the necessity of submitting to JEHOVAH, and letting Israel go; and therefore he would stand out till the next day, that if possible he might escape this most bitter mortification. Perhaps he had learned from the magicians to count some days more fortunate than others: and Moses, knowing this, allowed him to fix his own time, that the power of JEHOVAH might be rendered the more conspicuous; and he preferred the next day, in order to try whether that power could remove the frogs at the appointed time.

V. 14. It thus appeared that they were real frogs, which God in his judgment at first created, and afterwards in mercy destroyed.

V. 15. Pharaoh had now no pretence to question, either the power of JEHOVAH, or the divine mission of Moses. While the plague pressed upon him, he was inclined to submit, for it was insupportable: but when it was removed, and he had, (as the word denotes,) time to take his breath, he mistook a respite for a deliverance. Ambition, pride, and interest again influenced his mind; and thus he was induced to break his promise, and persist in disobedience. Having engaged in the contest, the further he proceeded the more he was infatuated; that which at first appeared a loss, and a weakening of his kingdom, was now considered as an insufferable degradation of his dignity; and he thought himself engaged in honour not to be threatened and forced into submission. This being the state of his mind, judgments and mercies alike combined to increase his obduracy.

V. 16, 17. Had the Lord sent a great number of lions and tigers to devour the Egyptians, or armies of victorious enemies to desolate the land; Pharaoh, though crushed, would have appeared, in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, of some consequence: but it was inconceivably humiliating, and rendered him extremely contemptible, to be thus vanquished by creatures so insignificant and despicable, as frogs, lice, and flies, which however he could neither escape, nor oppose, nor endure.—This judgment seems to have been sent without any previous warning; as an awful declaration, how greatly the Lord was provoked by the recent instance of Pharaoh's prevarication and obstinacy.

V. 18, 19. The Lord allowed the magicians to proceed till his righteous purposes were answered, and then they could do nothing; to convince them that they had no power against Moses, but "what was given them from above," or exercised by the permission of God. Some suppose, from the concluding part of the verse, that they at length attempted to remove the plague, but could not. Probably the lice harassed the magicians, as well as others; and this extorted from them a

confession that it was "the finger of God." They might also intend to vindicate their art and their skill in it, by intimating that no power, but that of God himself, could thus have overcome them. (Note, Dan. 2:10—13.) Yet this declaration produced no effect on Pharaoh, whom their enchantments had helped to harden: for he was too deeply engaged in the contest, and had too often done violence to his convictions, to be influenced by their opinion. Probably he still endeavoured to believe, that Moses was only a magician of superior attainments; and that his magicians intended, by this concession, to conceal their own deficiency in professional skill.

V. 21. Swarms of flies. מְצוּצִים: 'a mixture of noisome beasts.' (Marg.) Der. from מְצוּצִים, *confundi*. The idea of mixture is supposed to be implied in the different modifications of words from this root. מְצוּצִים a mixed multitude, or mingled people: (12:38. *Neh.* 13:3.)—Insects, however, of different kinds, are generally supposed to be meant.—'מְצוּצִים, a mixture of insects, or various animals; as wasps, hornets, locusts, beetles.' *Robertson's Thesaurus*. ὀφιδόφαι, the dog-fly. Sept. The same word is retained in the Hebrew, and translated in the same manner by the LXX. (Ps. 78:45, 105:31.)—Winged insects, most noxious and harassing to mankind, seem intended. The common fly is called מְצוּצִים: whence *Baal-zebub*. Locusts were afterwards sent as a separate plague; and they kept together in a compact body: we may therefore conclude that they did not form a part of this mixture; and the effects described do not comport with the idea of the larger destructive animals. But immense swarms of winged insects of various kinds, such as have been mentioned, would form a most distressing and mortifying judgment on this proud monarch and his haughty nobles and people.

V. 22, 23. Perhaps the Israelites, for their correction, had in some small measure felt the former plagues. At least the distinction between them and the Egyptians had not been so particularly noticed, as it would be rendered on this occasion, when the express prediction, and exact accomplishment, would so mark the difference, that it could not be overlooked. Thus it must appear that JEHOVAH, the God of the whole earth, protected the region inhabited by his worshippers, while he executed judgment on his enemies who dwelt close by them.—The very nature of the plague of flies, which so readily move from place to place, would render the exemption of Israel the more remarkable.—'I will greatly honour (פָּאָרָה אֶתְּכֶם) the land of Geseh.' Sept.

V. 24. This plague seems to have been sent, without the token of waving the rod of Moses, or striking the ground with it; perhaps lest Pharaoh should ascribe the effects to some magical virtue in the rod itself, instead of considering it as a token of the divine operation.—When we consider, that flies in general propagate by maggots of one kind or another, we shall perceive the emphasis of the expression, "the land was corrupted by them;" for it would not only be desolated by the flies themselves, but filled with stench and filthiness by their maggots; as no doubt the insects intended were in a state of maturity, however produced.

V. 25—27. Pharaoh was aware, that if the Israelites went

wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, 'as he shall command us.

28 And Pharaoh said, 'I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: 'Entreat for me.

29 And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the LORD, that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, 'to-morrow: but let not Pharaoh 'deal deceitfully any more, in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.

30 And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD.

31 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one.

32 And 'Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

CHAPTER IX.

The plague of murrain predicted, and sent on the cattle of the Egyptians; while the cattle of Israel were exempted, 1-7. The plague of boils, 8-12. Moses expostulates with Pharaoh, and predicts the plague of hail, which is sent, and causes immense devastation, 13-23. Pharaoh confesses his wickedness, deprecates further judgments, and promises to let Israel go, 24-35. Moses intercedes, the hail ceases, and Pharaoh continues hardened, 1, 29-35.

THEN the LORD said unto Moses, 'Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD

10:26. 34:11. Lev. 10:1. Matt. 28:20. p Hos. 10:2. q See on 8. 9:28. 10:17. 1 Kings 13:6. Ps. 6:7. r 10. s 15. Ps. 66:3. mrg. 78:31-37. Jer. 42:20:21. Isa. 5:3, 4. Gal. 6:7. (See on 1:21. 7:13. 14. Is. 63:17. Acts 25:27. Jam. 1:11. 1:13. 3:13. 4:22. 5:1. 1:13. 10:8. 1:4. 25. 2:10. 1. 1. 25. 36:14-16. 31:24. 27:23. Ps. 7:11. 12. 21. Is. 1:21. Rom. 2:8. Rev. 2:21. 22. 16:9. 17:1. 1 Sam.

into the wilderness to offer sacrifice, they would not readily be brought back again; and he intimated, that if they only meant to sacrifice to JEHOVAH, they might do it in the land, and he would make no farther opposition. But Moses objected, that according to the rites of their religion, they must sacrifice to JEHOVAH "the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes," who would thus be provoked to stone them. It is well known that the Egyptians in after times worshipped oxen or calves, and other animals; and it seems natural to conclude, that the Israelites had in Egypt imbibed the idea of making an image of God in the form of a calf, and that this worship prevailed there at that time: if so, to offer the very animals as sacrifices, which the Egyptians adored as deities, would be an abomination in their eyes, even as their idolatry was an abomination in itself. It was therefore necessary for the Israelites to retire to a great distance in the wilderness.

V. 29. *To-morrow.*] In the former instance, Pharaoh had chosen to wait till the morrow for the removal of the plague: and on this occasion he was left to suffer under the rod till the morrow, perhaps to remind him of his folly in that instance; and to warn him not deal deceitfully any more by breaking his promise, as he had repeatedly done. (8.15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. How dangerous is it to provoke that God, who hath such a variety of ways in which he can inflict dreadful punishment on his rebellious creatures! He can employ the most despicable insects as formidable executioners of his vengeance: he can turn all our pleasures into loathing; our comeliness and decorations into deformity and corruption, and pour contempt on all our pride and self-importance! Nor is there any resistance or escape from his tremendous indignation. Yet he still continues merciful; he is ready to forgive every sinner who submits; and he pursues with vengeance such alone as persist in their rebellion. But let us not mistake transient relentings, or hasty determinations of amendment, for that *unreserved submission* which the word of God requires. Under the weight of incumbent affliction, and the dreadful expectation of still heavier sufferings, the proudest and hardest heart feels some pangs of remorse: the despised and hated servants of the Lord may then perhaps be called for; their prayers requested, and amendment promised; but alas! such appearances are entitled to small regard. Even the evil spirits once besought Christ not to torment them; and experience shows, that prayers offered, under severe sufferings and urgent terrors, frequently spring from no higher principle. For when there is a respite, men again harden their hearts, throw off their assumed and constrained shows of piety, return to their sins, and commonly proceed to more daring ungodliness. But though we must not countenance the delusion of men living in sin, and expecting to die penitent, or give unscriptural encouragement to fallacious appearances; yet, knowing that "nothing is too hard for the LORD," we should be ready to assist, with our counsel and prayers, even those persons who have been our most injurious enemies; rendering them every kind of service, and showing them every species of courteousness, (except that of flattering them in false confidence,) without being wearied of well-doing by reiterated disappointments.

V. 16-32. It is peculiarly necessary to remind such persons as repeatedly show tokens of remorse, that on former occasions they relapsed into their evil courses; and to warn

God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 For 'if thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still,

3 Behold, 'the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep; *there shall be* a very grievous murrain.

4 And the LORD shall 'sever between the cattle of Israel, and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all *that* is the children's of Israel.

5 And the LORD appointed 'a set time, saying, To-morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land.

6 And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and 'all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.

7 And Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And 'the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

8 '¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, and unto Aaron, 'Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it towards the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh.

9 And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be 'a boil breaking forth *with*

5:6-11. 6:9. Acts 13:11. d 9:22. 10:23. 12:13. Is. 63:13. 14. Mal. 3:18. e 13. 13:23. 10:4. Num. 16:5. Job 24:1. Ec. 3:1-11. Je. 24:15. 17. Matt. 27:63. 64. 1:25. Ps. 78:43. g 12. 7:18. Job 9:4. Prov. 23:1. s. 4:34. Dan. 5:20. Rom. 9:18. h 8:16. i Deut. 28:27, 35. Job 2:7. Rev. 16:2.

them no longer to deal deceitfully: for the love of sin, and its supposed advantages and pleasures, joined with the pride of the human heart, if not effectually subdued by the grace of God, will certainly prevail against all convictions. Hence, "many seek to enter in, and are not able:" they seem in earnest, but there is some reserve, some Herodias, some beloved secret sin, of which they are ready to say, as Lot of Zoar, "Is it not a little one?" They are unwilling to think themselves exposed to everlasting misery; they hope for some abatement or some allowance; they propose to make some compromise; they refrain from other sins; they do many things, and give liberally, yea, punish themselves severely: they even abstain at some-times, and, as it were, let their sin depart a little way, provided it may remain with in call. But finally to divorce Herodias, to sell all, and follow Christ, bearing the cross; alas! if this be the case, they must have longer time to consider; they must postpone, though not forego, the thoughts of eternal life; they are sorrowful, but depart from Christ, determined to keep the world at present, and hoping for some future season, when salvation may be had without such costly sacrifices. Yet the word of God is peremptory: "He is of one mind, and who can turn him?" The expected abatement, the favourable season, is waited for in vain; the conviction wears off, the heart grows hard; and at length the poor sinner is "driven away in his wickedness," and left without hope to exorcise his own folly and madness. Would we escape this dreadful end, we must earnestly pray for grace to enable us, "if our right hand, or eye, or foot offend us," resolutely to part with it. Without reserve or delay, we must hearken to the voice of Christ, which bids us finally to break off every sin, and to renounce all that leads to evil; and we must stand prepared, when called to it by his command and in Providence, to forsake all for his sake. Nor let us forget, that they who would serve God must separate from the society of sinners, whose conduct is an abomination to the true Christian, and who reciprocally hold him in abhorrence.—We may also observe, for our comfort, that though wicked men and deceivers often "practise and prosper," yet their power is limited; and however they may impose on others, they cannot hurt the servant of God; but in due time shall be constrained to confess that the Lord is with him. And whether God do, or do not, exempt his people from the common afflictions of the world, he will make all at last to "return and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." *Mal. 3:18.*

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 6. No mention is made in the narrative of this miracle of the rod of Moses, probably for the same reason as before. (Note, 824.) The subsequent history shows, that some of the cattle were preserved, but vast multitudes of every kind were suddenly destroyed throughout the whole land of Egypt.—It is supposed that, even at this early period, the Egyptians idolized some kinds of cattle, and represented their deities under images in the shape of them; and this terrible calamity was well suited to expose the stupidity of this practice, as well as to show the power of God, both in destroying the cattle of the Egyptians, and preserving the cattle of Israel.

V. 7. It does not appear, that Pharaoh had in any former instance sent to inquire, whether the Israelites were involved in the calamities, or not; for he had treated the nation with contempt: yet on this occasion he sent to in-

heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt, since it became a nation.

25 And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

27 ¶ And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time; the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

28 ¶ Entreat the LORD (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer.

29 And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD: and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know, how that the earth is the LORD's.

30 But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.

31 And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolted.

32 But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.

33 And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD:

19:16, 20:18, 1 Sam. 12:17, Job 37:1-5, Ps. 29:3, 77:18, Rev. 16:18, 21, 4 Josh. 10:11, Job 33:22-23, Ps. 18:13, 78:47-48, 105:32, 33, 148:3, Is. 30:30, Ez. 38:22, Rev. 8:7, e 10:6, Matt. 24:21, f 8:22, 10:23, 11:7, Is. 32:18, 19, g 10:16, Num. 11:31, 1 Sam. 15:24, 30, 26:21, Matt. 27:4, h 2 Chr. 12:6, Ps. 145:17, Lam. 1:13, Dan. 9:14, Rom. 2:5, 3:19, i 1:83, 23, 10:17, Acta 8:24, * Heb. *cloves of Gov.* Ps. 29:3-4, k 11:1, l 1 Kings 8:22, 39, 2 Chr. 6:12, 13, Ezra 9:5, Jer. 11:13, Ps. 143:6, Is. 1:15, m Deut. 10:14, Ps. 24:1, 2, 50:12, 95:4, 5, 1 Cor. 10:26, 28, n Is. 10:26, 63:17, o Ruth 1:22, 2:23, p Heb. *hidden, or, dark.* 10:18, 19, Jam. 5:17, 18, q 8:15, Ec. 8:11, r 2 Chr. 28:22, 39:13, Rom. 2:4, 5.

V. 25. *Man.*] Hitherto the lives of the Egyptians had been spared; but this plague first began to destroy them.

V. 30. Moses knew that Pharaoh and his servants would not give up the contest, both as he was made acquainted with the purpose of God, and as he knew the human heart. He was sensible that Pharaoh's confessions and promises were not the effect of any radical change of mind and heart, of special grace; but extorted merely by terror and anguish. He would not, however, leave him the least shadow of excuse for his conduct, and therefore readily complied with his request.

V. 31. *Was bolted.*] The flax was grown up into stems or stalks; and, as some think, had begun to form pods for he seed. 'The flax was forming seed.' (Τὸ δὲ λινὸν σπέρμα-*Gov.*) Sept.

V. 32. The wheat and rye were not destroyed, because they were hidden. (*Marg.*) They were tender and flexible; and, not being yet eared, the hail did not much injure them.—It can hardly be supposed that the barley was in ear, and the wheat not above ground, as our version seems to imply; for this is contrary to known fact, as to the different kinds of grain in those countries.—The LXX read, 'They were eared,' or 'backward,' (ὀψιμα γὰρ ἦν.)

V. 33. Moses, assured of the divine protection, expressed his confidence before Pharaoh and his servants, by fearlessly going forth from the city in the midst of this destructive tempest: for it is evident, that he went forth before them with any abatement of the storm. (29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil," and they are emboldened in sin, because God is long-suffering and slow to anger.—But, "evil pursueth sinners" and, with rapid though often unnoticed steps, approaches nearer and nearer: nor is there any possible escape without repentance, and works meet for repentance.—God hath various methods of impoverishing those who have grown rich by injustice, and depriving men of the things which they have idolized: and if they will not take warning, and submit to him, when he bereaves them of their substance, he can fill their bodies with disease, and their hearts with terror, and at length cut them off in their wickedness.—Satan encourages his servants with hopes of great advantages, but he cannot ensure even their present impunity: and they who wait patiently, shall see the folly of all seducers and deceivers made as manifest, as that of these magicians was. They who perish in rebellion, have none to blame but themselves; as nothing but their own depraved inclinations renders them obstinate in pride and ungodliness, and impels them

and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth.

34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders were ceased, he sinned, yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

35 And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

CHAPTER X.

Moses is sent to denounce the plague of locusts, 1-8. The servants of Pharaoh drive him away, 8-11. He sends for Moses, treats with him, but drives him away, 8-11. The plague of locusts, 12-14. Most, 15-18. For and enters the land; the locusts are removed, and Pharaoh is hardened, 16-20. The plague of darkness; Pharaoh again treats with Moses, but is again hardened, and drives him away with menaces, 21-29.

AND the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto A Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants; that I might show these my signs before him:

2 And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them: that ye may know how that I am the LORD.

3 And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, 'How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me.

4 Else if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to-morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast.

5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they

s:21, 7:3, 4, 11:9, 10. t Heb. *by the hand of Moses.* a See on 4:21, 7:13, 14, 9:34, 35, b 2:20, 7:4, 9:16, 14:17, 18, 15:14, 15, Josh. 2:9, 10, 4:23, 24, 1 Sam. 4:8, Rom. 9:17, c 13:9, 21, Deut. 4:39, 6:20-22, Ps. 44:1, 71:18, 78:56, Joel 1:3, d See on 7:17, Ps. 58:11, Ec. 20:26, 38, e 9:17, 16:23, Num. 14:27, 1 Kings 18:21, Prov. 1:22, 24, Jer. 13:10, Is. 5:6, Heb. 12:25, f 1 Kings 21:25, 2 Chr. 7:14, 33:12, 19, 34:27, Job 42:6, Prov. 19:12, Is. 2:11, Jer. 13:18, Jam. 4:10, 1 Pet. 5:6, g 5:10, 23, 9:5, 18, 11:4, 5, h Prov. 30:27, Joel 1:4-7, 2:2-11, 23, Rev. 9:3, * Heb. *eye.*

to pervert the bounty and patience of God into an occasion and encouragement to sin; and in whatever way the Lord hardens the hearts of men, he always does it judiciously, as a punishment of former sins; and generally of the sin of hardening their own hearts under solemn warnings, deep convictions, severe rebukes, and remarkable deliverances.

V. 13-35. The haughty and powerful may despise the Lord, and set him at defiance; but they cannot defeat his purposes; and many have been advanced to thrones, and greatly prospered and exalted, in order to manifest the extreme wickedness of their hearts, that the justice and power of God might be displayed in their destruction, for the glory of his great name.—Even in wicked nations, which are ripe for vengeance, some are more desirous of all fear of God, and more daring in sin, than others. But, alas! men in general are vastly more careful of their cattle and property than of their immortal souls!—Would we escape the threatened vengeance of God, we must notice his warnings, and flee for refuge at his appointment; for they who disregard his word will be convinced of its truth when it is too late.—Under the prospect of impending destruction, the anguish of suffering, and the dismay of conscience, the proudest sinner is often appalled, and the most humiliating confessions are extorted from him: nay, he may even use the language of piety; not because he thoroughly means it, but because he feels a momentary conviction that it suits his case and situation. These reluctant and transient convictions cannot indeed avail those who remain impenitent; but they are honourable to God, and illustrate his justice in punishing such as, having respite, return to their crimes, and are hardened in iniquity.—While all things concur in hastening the obstinate sinner's condemnation, the Lord gives his people safety, amidst storms and tempests; and the most tremendous scenes sometimes fail of disturbing, even at the moment, the sweet serenity of their souls; for "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. The Lord here says, "I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants;" the servants of Pharaoh had copied his wickedness, and were involved in his punishment, (7.)—As these awful judgments were inflicted on purpose that the power and glory of JEHOVAH might be illustrated for the instruction of future generations; it was proper that Moses should again and again go to Pharaoh, and warn him of the approaching plagues, that his obstinate defiance of God might more fully show the justice of his condemnation.

V. 3. *Refuse, &c.*] The point in contest was whether Pharaoh would humble himself before God, or not. Refusing

shall eat 'the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field.

6 And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians: 'which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth, unto this day. "And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

7 And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, "How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet, 'that Egypt is destroyed?

8 And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but 'who are they that shall go?

9 And Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go: for we must hold a feast unto the LORD.

10 And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: 'look to it, for evil is before you.

11 Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD, for that ye did desire. "And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

[Practical Observations.]

12 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, "Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left.

13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night: and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; 'before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

15 For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, 'I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you.

17 Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me 'this death only.

18 And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD.

19 And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea: there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.

20 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

21 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, 'Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, seven darkness which may be felt.

22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven: and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.

23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: 'but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

24 And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, "Go ye, serve the LORD: only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: 'let your little ones also go with you.

on 8:8. Acts 8:24. f 2 Kings 4:40. 2 Cor. 1:10. g See on 8:9, 29. Matt. 5:44. Luke 6:28. h 13. i 1 Heb. fastened. j 13:18. 15:4. Joel 2:20. k See on 4:21. 7:13, 14. 9:13. 11:10. Deut. 2:30. 1a. 6:10. John 12:34, 40. Rom. 9:13. 2 Thes. 2:11, 12. 19:22. m Ps. 78:49. 105:28. Prov. 4:13. 1a. 5:21, 22. Matt. 27:45. Mark 15:33. Luke 22:44. 2 Pet. 2:17. Jude 6:13. Rev. 16:10, 11. s Heb. that one may feel darkness. n 20:21. Deut. 4:11. 5:22. Joel 2:2, 31. Am. 1:13. o 8:22. 9:4, 26. 14:20. Josh. 10:7. 1a. 60:1-2. 65:13, 14. Mat. 3:18. p 8:9. 8:28. 9:25. q Gen. 31:23. r 10.

i 9:32. k 8:3. 11:15. 2:24. 11:6. Joel 2:2. m 11. 11:8. Heb. 11:27. n 3. 22:33. Josh. 23:13. 1 Sam. 18:21. Prov. 28:6. Ec. 7:26. p 1a. 14:20. 8:9. Jer. 48:4. 51:8. Zeph. 1:18. q 15:24. 12:31. s Heb. who and who, &c. r Gen. 50:8. Deut. 31:12, 13. Josh. 24:15. Ps. 148:12, 13. Ec. 12:1. Eph. 6:4. a 3:18. 5:1, 3. 8:25-28. 13:8. Num. 29:2. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. t 2 Chr. 32:15. Lam. 3:37. u 28. 54. x 7:19. y 14:21. Ps. 78:26. 107:23-28. 148:8. Jon. 1:4. 4:8. z Deut. 28:42. 1 Kings 8:57. Ps. 78:45. 105:34, 35. a 6. b Joel 16:7. 2:1-11. c Heb. hastened to call. c 9:27. Num. 22:34. 1 Sam. 15:24, 30. 26:21. 2 Sam. 19:20. Job 34:31, 32. Prov. 28:13. Matt. 27:4. d 1 Sam. 15:25. e See

to do this was his ruin; and the case is the same with all impenitent sinners. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 6. The ravages which locusts make in those eastern countries are frequently extremely terrible. They even darken the earth, by intercepting with their inconceivable multitudes the light of the sun; they turn fruitful countries into desolate deserts, and leave the wretched inhabitants to perish with famine; nor can they by any means be resisted or escaped. But the locusts sent on Egypt were dreadful beyond example and comparison, in size and multitudes, and in the desolations which they occasioned: and the plague was thus foretold, that the hand of the Lord in sending it might be the more evident.—Pharaoh had repeatedly violated his promises; and Moses seems to have left his presence abruptly, without waiting for an answer.

V. 7. Some of Pharaoh's servants were less hardened than others of them, and embraced this occasion of expostulating with him.

V. 10, 11. Let the LORD, &c.] This was either spoken in scorn and contempt, as if Pharaoh would say, 'Let the LORD be with you, and take care of you if he can; but I will not let you go.' or by way of imprecation; 'I would, that the LORD may as certainly cease to be with you any more, as I shall refuse to let you go with all your company, for to this I never will consent.' He intended to keep the children, and probably the women also, as hostages to ensure the return of the men. Nay, he threatened to punish Moses and Aaron, if they continued to trouble him; and his mad presumption was such, that he certainly would have attempted it, had not God dismayed and restrained him. Some suppose that he charged them with the design of stirring up the people to a revolt, when he said, "evil is before you."—As, however, they were not satisfied with his proposal, he drove them with violence from his presence.

That are men. (11) גִּבּוֹרִים *vir, masculus, quasi validus*. Robertson's Thes. 'Οι ανδρες. Sept.

V. 13. East wind.] "Being lifted up by the wind, they fly in the air in a great cloud; . . . people looking on them in great fear, lest they fall down and cover the country." Pliny.

V. 16, 17. Pharaoh now had nothing before his eyes, but merited death to himself and his people by famine, unless some respite could be obtained; for all vegetation was totally

destroyed. He therefore confessed his sins to Moses, craved forgiveness of him, and entreated him to pray for him; but it does not appear, that he confessed his sins unto the Lord, or besought him to forgive him.

V. 19. Red Sea.] "The sea of weeds," or flags, as it is in the original.—The Greek translators of the Bible call it 'the Red Sea,' either from the colour of the waters, the soil, or the weeds, or flags; or from the neighbourhood of the Edomites, whose name signifies red. This is a large arm of the sea, which runs up between Arabia and Idumea on one hand, and Egypt on the other, and separates the continents of Africa and Asia; except as they communicate by the narrow isthmus of Suez, which lies betwixt the end of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.—The Red Sea in most ancient writers means what is now called the Indian Ocean.

V. 20. (Note, 9:12.)

V. 21. Darkness.] It is generally supposed, that some extraordinary fog which combined in occasioning this plague, extinguished all the lamps of the Egyptians, and left them in total darkness: and that this was felt in the pain which it excited. Certainly it was such a darkness as we have no conception of; and not wholly unlike the "blackness of darkness for ever."

V. 22. Thick darkness.] מִשְׁתָּהוּ, *misty and thick darkness, full of obscurity*. (From the radical noun שָׁהוּ which has a similar signification.)—Σκοτος γνόφος, *θυσλα σπυ, κ. τ. λ.* Darkness, thick darkness, a tempest upon, &c. Sept. Γνόφω και σκοτος, και θυσλλα, "to blackness and darkness and tempest." Heb. 12:18.

V. 23. It is a tradition of the Jews, that the Egyptians were affrighted with horrible noises, occasioned by evil spirits and that this is the meaning of the expression of the Psalmist, "He sent evil angels among them." (Note, Ps. 78:46-49.) Doubtless their consciences were filled with horror, and inflicted torment upon them, when thus enclosed in this tremendous darkness.—The Israelites might now have marched off unmolested; but it was the Lord's pleasure, that they should go forth, not as abject fugitives, but as triumphant conquerors.

V. 24. After the end of the three days, when the darkness terminated, Pharaoh called for Moses to feast again with him.

25 And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices, and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God.

26 Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind: for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD until we come thither.

27 But the LORD ^uhardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

28 And Pharaoh said unto him, ^{*}Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more: [†]for in *that* day thou seest my face thou shalt die.

29 And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, ¹I will see thy face again no more.

CHAPTER XI.

The Lord shows Moses that one more plague is coming on Egypt, and directs that the Israelites should ask jewels of the Egyptians, 1, 2. Moses is honoured by the Egyptians, 3. He denounces the death of the first-born, and goes out from Pharaoh, 4-8. The Lord hardens Pharaoh's heart, 9, 10.

AND the LORD said unto Moses, ^aYet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and

upon Egypt; ^bafterwards he will let you go hence : when he shall let *you* go, he shall surely ^cthrust you out hence altogether.

2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

3 And ^{the} LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the mar.
4 Moses *was* very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD,^hAbout midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt.

† Heb. *into our hands*. a 12:32. Is. 23:18, 60:5–10. Hos. 5:6. Acts 2:44, 45. 2 Cor. 8:5. (Prov. 3:9. Heb. 11:8. a 7:3 on 4:1–4, 14:4, 8. Rev. 9:20, 16:10, 11. x 11. y 2nd Heb. 16:10, 25:16. Am. 7:13. z 11:8–8, 12:30, 31. Heb. 11:27. a 9:11. Lev. 24:21. Dent. 4:31. 1st Sam. 6:1. Job 10:17. Rev. 15:9. 22:18. 13:23. Gen. 15:11. c 12:41–33:38. d 3:22, 12:35–38. Gen. 31:9. Job 27:16, 17. Ps. 21:1, 105:37. Prov. 13:22. Hag. 2:8. Matt. 20:15. e 32:2–4, 24, 35:22. Ez. 16:10–

13. Hos. 2:8. f 3:21. 12:36. Gen. 39:21. Ps. 106:46. Acts 7:10. g Gen. 12:2. 2 Sam. 7:9. Esth. 9:4. Is. 60:14. Acts 7:22. Rev. 3:9. h 12:23,29. Job 34:20. Am. 4:10. 5:17. Matt. 25:6. 1 Sam. 5:24. Ps. 60:10. Is. 42:13. Mic. 2:13. Zech. 14:3. k 4:23. 12:12. 13:15. Ps. 78:51. 105:36. 135:8. 136:10. Heb. 11:28. l Judg. 16:21. Is. 47:2. Lam. 5:13. Matt. 24:41. m 3:7. 12:30. Prov. 21:13. Is. 15:4,5,8. Jer. 31:15. Lam. 3:8. Zeph. 1:10. Luke 13:28. Rev. 6:16,17. 18:18,19.

V. 27. It is worthy of notice, how frequently, in the concluding part of the narrative, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is unreservedly ascribed to God. (1,20. 11:10.) Different language was previously used; which shows, that God's hardening Pharaoh's heart was the punishment of his hardening his own heart.

V. 29. The first three verses of the next chapter may be read as a parenthesis; for Moses seems to have warned Pharaoh of the death of all the first-born, before he quitted his presence at this time; and then he went out purposing never more to see his face.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11. The manifestation of his own glory is the ultimate end of all the Lord's dispensations, whether of judgment or mercy; and though we do not at present clearly discern it, yet we shall hereafter behold it in full splendour: and all his servants with joyful acclamations proclaim, that he is "righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works." Then "the wicked shall be silent in darkness;" for "every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world shall become guilty before God."—Again and again he sends to demand of his rebellious creatures, "How long will ye refuse to humble yourselves before me?" But the haughtiness and stoutness of the human heart induce men to defer this mortifying submission, even when severely suffering the effects of their obstinacy, in former instances; when expostulated with for acting in no ruinous a manner to themselves and others; and when nothing but the patience of God keeps them from utter destruction. But "hast thou," O sinner, "an arm like God? and canst thou thunder with a voice like his?"—The examples of severity and goodness, recorded in the sacred Scriptures, were written for our profit; and if we duly regard them, our own experience will prove their extensive and lasting usefulness.—Whatever we learn from the word and works of God, we should point out, and interpret to our children, and show them his power, wisdom, justice, and love, as displayed in them; for they were intended, not only for our good, but for that of our children also.—We should likewise remember, that Satan and his instruments are extremely averse to our serving God with our sons and our daughters; and that they employ various methods of keeping them from joining in his service. We ought therefore to be very peremptory in this concern, and be careful to initiate them, even when "little ones," in the ways and worship of God; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But alas! many apparently religious parents act as if they were of Pharaoh's opinion, and supposed that the service of God was intended for men alone: for they allow their children to stay behind when they go to worship, and permit them to spend their time in dissipation and vanity; as if they would leave them under the yoke of Satan, "the god of this world," as hostages for their own return to his service.—But let young people themselves observe, that the Lord himself says, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;" while Satan and his servants are they who counsel them to put off the thoughts of God and religion till some future period.

Y 12-29. It is incumbent upon us to serve God, not only with our households, but likewise with all our substance: neither avariciously hoarding any part of it, nor spending it upon our pride and self-indulgence of any kind, but considering the whole as the Lord's property committed to our stewardship. And not knowing what he may immediately demand, we should be prepared to expend, or part with, any proportion which may be required, without hesitation and reluctance. But if we would sincerely and decidedly serve the Lord, we must learn to disregard the contempt, reproach

and even menaces of wicked men. They may indeed haughtily affirm that "evil is before us;" but if we simply and faithfully trust and obey God, we need not "fear what flesh can do unto us." For he will be for us; and perhaps they will ere long be constrained to address us with respect, and entreat our prayers or assistance. Assuredly in the days of adversity, and in the gloomy vale of death, when the wicked are consumed with terrors, and tormented by their own consciences, believers will walk in the light of God's countenance, and rejoice in his salvation: and when the wicked are driven into the blackness of eternal darkness, believers will have an inheritance among the saints in light eternal. Let us then "lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth near;" "yet looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God;" for the most hardened sinner often trembles, the most insensible is sometimes self-condemned; nay, many that are finally lost, have "been almost persuaded to be Christians." But pride, the love of sin, and aversion to the immediate exercises of piety, with procrastination, as the result of it, form the threefold cord which men cannot break; and upon persons thus enslaved, all counsel is thrown away, though enforced with the evidence of the most undeniable facts, and the certain prospects of destruction. They would treat about reconciliation; but they will not yield unreservedly to part with *every* sin, and cast themselves wholly on the Lord's mercy. He therefore rejects their proposals with disdain: and every relenting and respite leaves them still harder; as the winter sun thaws the *snow*, which, when its beams are withdrawn, congeals into *ice*. Such persons often use good words, and put the Lord's servants in his place, as if they were *gods* to them, (7:1.) and seem to expect salvation from them: but they do not pray earnestly and constantly for themselves; and therefore sin retains its dominion, and Satan his possession, and "their last state is worse than the first."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1. It is probable that this was a secret revelation to Moses while in the presence of Pharaoh; in order that he might denounce the last dreadful judgment on Egypt before he went out from him. Moses, no doubt, would be glad to hear that this contest, which desolated Egypt in order to deliver Israel, would so speedily be determined.—¹ When he shall send you away with every thing, he will cast you out with an *expulsion*.² (Εκβολή, Acts 27:18. Gr.) Sept.

V. 2, 3. The original does not in the least imply, that the Israelites asked the Egyptians to *lend* them the jewels, or vessels of gold and silver, as promising to return them; but rather that they *requested*, or even *required* them: and the Lord engaged to dispose the Egyptians to comply with their requirement; for the words may be rendered, "And the Lord *will* give the people favour, &c." (Note, 3:21,22).—The Egyptians revered Moses, as an extraordinary person, of wonderful courage, wisdom, and sanctity; and endowed with powers of inflicting judgments, or removing them, at pleasure; and probably many of them were persuaded that he had justice on his side, and blamed Pharaoh, as the real cause of their calamities. For while oppressors pursue infatuated counsels, and are flattered by hireling courtiers, it often happens that their subjects secretly favour the cause of the oppressed, even where themselves have no personal ground of complaint; considering a measure of liberty as the common right of mankind.

Borrow. (2) Αιτησάτω. *Sept.*

V 4. The Lord went out on this awful occasion, as a mighty Conqueror, to trample down and triumph over his enemies.

7 But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

8 And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out: and he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you: that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

CHAPTER XII.

The month of Israel's deliverance is appointed to be the first of their year, 1, 2. The institution of the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, 3, 28. The first-born throughout Egypt are cut off at once, 29, 30; the Israelites are sent away in haste, 31—33; they spoil the Egyptians and march out, attended by a mixed multitude, 34—39. The term of their sojourning, and the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, 40—42. Further rules respecting the passover, 43—51.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

3 "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel,

n Josh. 10:21. o See on 7:22, 10:23. Mal. 3:18. 1 Cor. 4:7. p 12:31—33. Is. 43:23. Rev. 1:10. q Heb. is at thy feet. Judg. 4:10. 1 Kings 20:10. 2 Kings 5:9. marg. 1 Heb. heat of anger. Deut. 29:24. 32:24. Ps. 6:1. Ez. 3:14. Dan. 3:19. 2 Chr. 19:10. 1 Sam. 9:17, 18. r See on 7:3. s See on 4:21. 7:13, 14. 10:20, 27. Deut. 2:30. 1 Sam. 6:6. Job 9:4. Rom. 2:4, 5. 9:22. a 13:4. 23:15. 34:18. Lev. 23:5. Num. 28:16. Dent. 16:1. Ruth. 3:7. b 13:9. 6:6. 14:15. 20:19. 34:18. 12. c 6. John 12:12. d Gen. 4:4. 22:8. 1 Sam. 7:9. John 12:36. 1 Cor. 5:7. Rev. 5:6—13. 7:14. 13:8. * Or, kid. Lev. 5:6. Num. 15:11. 2 Chr. 35:7. e Lev. 1:3, 10. 22:19—24. Deut. 17:1. Mal. 1:7, 14. Heb. 7:25. 9:13, 14.

V. 5. (Note, 12:29, 30.)—Behind the mill.] Watermills and windmills were not known till many ages after this time; but the female slaves ground the corn for use, by handmills. (Marg. Ref. 1.)

V. 6. "The calamity being in every house, it made a general and loud lamentation: men, women, children, and servants, bewailing the loss of the prime person in the family." Bp. Patrick.

V. 7. Move his tongue.] "No one shall dare to do the Israelites harm, or to speak any evil of them; but all shall stand in awe of them."—The expression seems to have been proverbial.

V. 8. Moses thus expressed his abhorrence of Pharaoh's obstinacy, who probably treated this last message with contempt; and he solemnly left him to the judgment of God, as an incurable rebel.

V. 9. This may be rendered, "For the Lord had said, &c." (7:3. Note, 4:21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the Lord has inflicted so many and severe judgments, that man can conceive of nothing worse, he has still more terrible plagues in reserve; yet he generally executes those last, which he denounced first: (4:23.) for "he endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, that he may show his wrath and make his power known." (Notes, Rom. 9:19—23.) But what are all these ten plagues combined, when compared with "the wrath to come," that one plague reserved for all obstinate rebels in another world!—"The Lord can make his people "a burdensome stone to all who burden themselves with them;" (Zech. 12:3.) and render all men sensible that it is at their peril they touch them: nay, he is able to give them favour in the sight of those who have been their enemies.—When he enables his servants to maintain a consistency of character, he will put such honour upon them, as shall silence and confound all those who slander and despise them; and constrain men in general to approve of their conduct, reverence their persons, and even to bow down before them: and when the people of God shall triumph in his redemption, and their enemies cry out under the anguish of his indignation, the difference will be too evident to remain any longer unnoticed. They who are employed by him in public services, may, consistently with the deepest humility, "magnify their office;" and, without deviating from the most exemplary Christian meekness, they may and ought to express deep indignation, as well as sorrow, at the wickedness of mankind; after his example, who looked round with "anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." Such anger against the sin of those, whose good they have perseveringly sought in vain, and for whom their prayers have again and again prevailed, is a terrible indication, and usual forerunner of the wrath of God. The Lord, however, will at last be glorified in all his dispensations; and as he hath foretold that his gospel would be slighted and abused, we must not think the worse of it on that account.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1. These instructions must have been given to Moses and Aaron some days before the last message was delivered to Pharaoh, and perhaps before

saying, "In the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house."

4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it, according to the number of the souls; every man, according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb.

5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep or from the goats.

6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

7 And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night; roasted with fire, and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire: his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning: and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire.

1 Pet. 1:18, 19. † Heb. son of a year. Lev. 23:12. 1 Sam. 13:1. marg. 1 Lev. 23:5. Num. 9:3. 28:16, 18. 1 eut. 16:1—6. 2 Chr. 30:15. Ez. 45:21. e Lev. 23:6. Matt. 27:20, 25. Mark 15:1, 8, 11. Luke 23:1, 18. Acts 2:23. 3:14. 4:27. 11:1. between the two evenings. Matt. 27:46—50. b 23:23. Eph. 1:7. Heb. 9:13, 14, 25. 10:14, 29. 11:28. 1 Pet. 1:2. 1 Matt. 26:28. John 6:52—57. k Deut. 16:7. Ps. 102:14. Is. 53:10. 113:3, 7. 34:25. Dent. 16:3. Am. 4:5. Matt. 16:12. 1 Cor. 5:6—8. Gal. 5:9. m Num. 9:11. Zech. 12:10. 1 Thes. 1:6. n 8. Lam. 1:13. o 23:18. 28:34. 34:25. 1 Lev. 7:15—17. 22:30. Deut. 16:4, 5.

the plague of darkness was inflicted; for the tenth day of the month was not come when they were given, (3:) yet the people observed the passover on the fourteenth, which seems to have been the very day on which Moses went out from Pharaoh. (11:4.)

V. 2. The month called *Abib*, (which signifies an ear of corn, because the corn was then eared,) and also *Nisan*, answers nearly to the latter part of our March, and the beginning of April. This had hitherto been reckoned the seventh month; and the Israelites continued afterwards to compute several of their civil concerns by this reckoning, which agreed with that of the surrounding countries: but in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, when they were formed into a nation and a church, and received, as it were, a new kind of existence, it was appointed to be the first month of the year to them, and their sacred institutions were regulated according to it. This new style began the year with the spring, when the face of the creation was renewed.

V. 3—10. It may be supposed, that the people had been ordered to prepare for leaving Egypt at the shortest notice, and had a variety of engagements to occupy their time; yet, amidst them all, they were required to observe a sacred festival. For on this occasion the passover was instituted, to be then celebrated as a token, or means, of their deliverance, and afterwards as a sacramental memorial of it, and a prefiguration of redemption by the promised Saviour. (Note, 11—14.)—The Israelites, though not guilty of the same crimes as the Egyptians, were in many respects deserving of the wrath of God: and this institution was suited to show them, that they were preserved and rescued, not for their own righteousness, but by the mercy of God through an atoning sacrifice. (Notes, Ez. 20:5—9.) They were therefore directed, on the tenth day from the new moon, to select a lamb or kid for every one of those households, into which the families of their tribes were subdivided; unless when the small number of persons in the household made it proper to join with some of their neighbours. They were allowed to take either a lamb, or a kid; but, as Christ is commonly represented under the emblem of a Lamb, and never under that of a kid, it is supposed that lambs were generally preferred. This lamb must be "without blemish, a male of the first year," or under a year old; as typifying the "Lamb of God," "without spot and blemish," who was "slain from the foundation of the world."—After four days of preparation, which would afford time leisurely to examine the intended victims, they were slaughtered on the fourteenth by the whole congregation; the head of each household killing the lamb selected for it, as it is probably concluded. This was done between the two evenings: (marg.) and it is supposed, that the first of these evenings began when the sun had passed the meridian, and that the second ended at sunset. The paschal offerings, therefore, seem to have been slain from three o'clock in the afternoon till sunset: and afterwards the people ate the passover, when the fifteenth day of the month had begun: for they reckoned from sunset to sunset.—Learned men are of opinion, that the Lord Jesus, our passover, entered Jerusalem on the tenth of the first month, at the very time when the paschal sacrifice was sacrificed: and

11 And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste; *it is* the LORD's passover.

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; *I am* the LORD.

13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations: ye shall keep it a feast for an ordinance for ever.

p Matt. 26:19, 20. Luke 22:35. Eph. 6:14. 1 Pet. 1:13. q Luke 7:38. 15:22. Eph. 6:15. r 27. Lev. 23:5. Num. 28:16. Dent. 16:2-6. 1 Cor. 5:7. s 23. 11:4, 5. Am. 5:17. t See on 23:30, 11:4-6. u Num. 33:4. 1 Sam. 5:9. 6:5. 1 Chr. 14:12. Is. 19:1. Jer. 43:13. Zeph. 2:11. * Or, prince. 22:24. Ps. 82:1, 6. John 10:34, 35. x 6:2. Is. 43:11-15. Ez. 12:16. y 23. Gen. 17:11. Josh. 2:12. Heb. 11:28. † Heb. for a destruction. z 13:9. Num. 16:40. Josh. 4:7. Ps. 111:4. 135:13.

the language of the Evangelist may be thus interpreted: for if the *three days*, after which Christ should rise from the dead, contained only one complete day and part of two others, according to the custom of the Jews in computing time; five days before the passover may mean three whole days and part of two others. (John 12:1, 12.) It is likewise supposed, by many expositors, that Christ was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month, and expired soon after the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, at the very time when the paschal lambs were slain: but the Evangelists expressly state, that he ate the passover at the accustomed time, on the evening of the fourteenth day; and if so, it is certain that he was crucified on the fifteenth. (Matt. 26:17. Mark 14:12. Luke 22:7.) He was, however, put to death, in the midst of the assembled congregation of Israel, and at their united request; and he expired, just before the hour when the paschal lamb began to be sacrificed, though not on the same day.—The blood of these victims, having been preserved for that purpose, was ordered to be sprinkled, with a bunch of hyssop, on the side-posts, and on the upper door-posts, of the houses in which the passover was eaten; and this was the token of the Israelites being preserved when the first-born of Egypt were destroyed: it was also a type of our avowed dependence on the atonement of Christ, while 'we feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.' But the blood was not sprinkled or poured on the threshold, which would have implied contempt; and this seems to have been intended as a typical caution against apostasy and abuse of the gospel. (Heb. 10:29.)—*Leaven* is the known emblem of hypocrisy, malice, and wickedness; *unleavened bread* therefore was the representation of sincerity, truth, and love. (1 Cor. 5:8.)—The bitter herbs might be an emblem of godly sorrow, deep repentance, self-denial, and mortification of depraved passions; and of those outward tribulations which accompany the exercise of living faith in Christ: and the roasting of the lamb by fire, (the emblem of divine wrath,) might prefigure the varied and excruciating sufferings which Christ endured, in bearing our sins, and preparing our blessedness.—It was likewise ordered that the whole of the lamb should be thus prepared and eaten. This might imply that true faith receives the entire salvation of Christ, and depends upon him in every part of his mediatorial character, without any exception: while the annexed order, that if any part of the lamb was left, it should before the morning be burned with fire, and not reserved either for food or any superstitious purposes, implied that it was a solemn propitiatory sacrifice of awful import, and not merely a cheerful festival.

Eat not of it raw. (9) This by no means proves, that the Israelites were accustomed to eat raw flesh at their meals, as some have concluded from the expression: for no other intimation of the kind is any where given in the whole Scripture: but merely that they were not, in this religious service, to adopt any such practice. It is well known, that idolaters have in many instances eaten the flesh of their sacrifices, or part of it, raw, and even drunk the blood of them: but these superstitions must have no sanction in the ordinances of the people of JEHOVAH.

V. 11-14. The Israelites were directed at this time to eat the paschal lamb, in the attire and posture of men, who were setting out on a journey, and in haste to depart. It does not appear, however, that the passover was afterwards celebrated in this manner; and our Lord and his apostles seem to have eaten it, in the posture commonly used at their meals. Indeed several things, required at this institution, were not afterwards observed. No intimation is given, that the lamb, which our Lord used at his last passover, was selected four days before; and he with his apostles left the house soon after the celebration of it. But the circumstances in which the Israelites were placed, at this time, rendered these observances significant and proper: for they were taught, that it

15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread: even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

16 And in the first day, *there shall be* an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you: no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

17 And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations, by an ordinance for ever.

18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

Zech. 6:14. Matt. 26:13. Luke 22:19. 1 Cor. 11:23-26. a 17:24, 43. 13:10. Lev. 23:4, 5. Num. 10:8. 18:8. 1 Sam. 30:25. 2 Kings 23:21. Ez. 46:14. b See on 8. 13:6, 7. 23:15. 34:18. Lev. 23:6. Num. 23:17. Dent. 16:5, 8. Acts 12:3. c 19:20. 31:14. Gen. 17:14. Lev. 17:10, 14. Num. 9:13. Mal. 2:12. Gal. 5:12. d Lev. 23:2, 3, 7, 24, 25, 27. Num. 28:18, 25. 29:1, 12. e 16:23. 20:10. 35:2, 3. Jer. 17:21, 22. † Heb. soul. f 7:5. 13:8. g See on a. 14. h See on 16. Lev. 23:5, 6.

was the "LORD's passover," that he was about to go through the whole land of Egypt, destroying every first-born of man and beast without exception, triumphing over the idols, as well as the princes, of that country: and that he would respect the sprinkled blood on the doors of the Israelites; and pass by or over them, may effectually protect them, at the time of this general desolation. They must therefore be ready to march, on the shortest notice within the course of that night.—The manner and posture in which the passover was then eaten, might represent the Christian's deliverance from the bondage of sin, and his heavenly pilgrimage by faith in Christ.—It is probable, that a devastation of the temples and idols of Egypt was miraculously effected on this occasion; as Dagon afterwards was broken before the ark of God.—The observance of the passover, by the Israelites in Egypt, was an open avowal of their relation to JEHOVAH as his people; a profession of their faith in his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; a means of grace, and an act of solemn worship and obedience. Most of them, probably, rested in the outward observance, which was connected with their temporal deliverance; but, had any disobeyed the command, they would have been involved in the judgments executed on the Egyptians. In after ages, it was a memorial of the power and love of God, in delivering Israel, and of the miracles connected with that deliverance. Had not these events taken place, the nation could not possibly have been persuaded, that they were eye-witnesses of them, and induced to adopt such a memorial of them; and if it had not been adopted at the time, when these public and extraordinary events were said to have occurred, at what future time could the nation be persuaded, that they had, from age to age, believed and commemorated them? It was thus a demonstration that Moses spake and acted by divine authority, and that the religion which he established was from God; while it exceedingly favoured the instruction of the people, and of young persons especially, in the nature and obligation of that religion. (26, 27.)—It was also, a prefiguration of Christ our Passover: and believers would discover, from the promises and prophecies, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, something of the nature of redemption through him, and of all other blessings; and in them it would not only be a joyful tribute of gratitude for former temporal mercies, but an act of humble faith and dependence on the promised Saviour, even until his coming.—Learned men have indeed pointed out many customs among the pagans with reference to which they suppose these several circumstances were arranged; especially in order to keep the Israelites at a distance from the idolatrous worship of their neighbours: but it may be questioned, whether the origin of those customs was not of much later date than the institution of the passover.

I will pass over you. (13) Σκεπασω υμᾶς.—(I will cover, or, shelter you.) Sept.

V. 15-18. From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, till the evening of the twenty-first, the Israelites were forbidden to eat any leaven: and every person who violated this precept was sentenced to be "cut off from Israel." It does not appear, that the magistrate was required to put the offender to death, even if his offence were known; but the Lord himself threatened to inflict punishment on him, however secretly he violated the command.—It is not agreed, what is meant by this expression, (Marg. Ref. c.) but something beyond exclusion from the religious privilege of an Israelite must be intended, as the strangers also are included in it, (19.)—During all the seven days, sacrifices were appointed to be offered; but, on the first, and on the last, "a holy convocation" was held, or an assembly of the people for solemn worship. These days were accounted holy, like the sabbaths, and no manner of work was permitted to be done, except preparing their food. (Marg. Ref. e.)

19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whatsoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land.

20 Ye shall eat nothing leavened: in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

21 ¶ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.

22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel, and the two side-posts, with the blood that is in the basin: and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

23 For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee, and to thy sons for ever.

25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land, which the Lord will give you according as he has promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

[Practical Observations.]

1 See on 15, 14:48, 13:16, 17:5, 19:7, Num. 11:16, 13, Num. 9:2-5, Josh. 5:10, 2 Kings 23:21, 2 Chr. 30:15-17, 35:56, Matt. 26:17-19, * Or, kid, 3, marg. m Lev. 14:6-7, Num. 19:18, Pa. 51:7, Heb. 9:1, 14, 19, 12:24, 1 Pet. 1:2, n Matt. 26:30, o See on 12, p 2 Sam. 24:16, Is. 37:36, Ez. 9:8, 1 Cor. 10:10, Heb. 11:28, Rev. 7:3, 9:4, q See on 14, Gen. 17:8-10, r Deut. 4:5, 12:8, 9, 16:5-9, Josh. 5:10-12, Pa. 105:44-45, * 13:8, 9, 14:15, Deut. 6:7, 11:19, 32:1, Josh. 4:5, 7:21-24, Pa. 78:3-6, 145:4, 15:38:19, Eph. 6:4, t See on 11:23, 34:25, Deut. 16:2-5, 1 Cor. 5:7, u 4:31, 34:8, 1 Chr. 29:20, 2 Chr. 20:18, 29:30, Neh. 8:6, 16:25, 12, 11:4, 13:15, Job 34:20, 1 Thes. 5:2, y Num. 3:13, 29:17, 33:4, Pa. 105:3, 105:36, 135:8, 136:10, Heb. 11:23, 24:22, 11:5, † Heb. house of the pit, Is. 24:22, 51:13, Jer. 38:6, 13, Zech. 9:11, * See on 11:5, Prov. 21:13, Am. 5:17, Jam. 2:18, b 3:19, 20, 6:1, 11:1, Pa. 105:38, c See on 10:9, d See on 10:25, e 8:28, Gen. 27:34, 38, Ezra 6:10, 11:1, Pa. 105:38, g Gen. 20:3, Num. 17:12, 13, 1 Cor. dough, 8:3, h 3:22, 11:23, Gen. 15:14, Pa. 105:37, 13:21, 11:3, Gen. 39:21, Prov. 18:7, Dan. 1:3, Acta 2:47, 7:10, k 1:11, Gen. 43:11, 138:26, Gen. 15:5, 46:3, Num. 1:46, 11:21, m Num. 11:4, Zech. 8:23, § Heb. a great mixture.

29 ¶ And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.

30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both you and the children of Israel, and go serve the Lord, as ye have said.

32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

33 And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste: for they said, We be all dead men.

34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

35 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses: and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment.

36 And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required: and they spoiled the Egyptians.

37 And the children of Israel journeyed from Ramesses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children.

38 And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.

39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened: because they were

him in anger, as before related. (Note, 11:8).—The first words may be rendered, "And he called to Moses and Aaron."

V. 35, 36. In their extreme terror, the Egyptians were willing to purchase the favour, and the speedy departure, of Israel at any price: and thus the Lord both took care that their hard-earned wages should at last be paid, and that the people should be well provided for their journey. They therefore left the country laden with the wealth of the Egyptians, as if they had plundered them in war. (Notes, 32:1, 22, 11:2, 3.)

Borrowed. (35) "The word significeth also to ask or require. Junius renders it *petierunt*. Montanus, *postulaverunt*. Leigh.—Jewels. יָסָדָם. Sept. Not only ornaments, but also vessels of gold and silver: plate as well as jewels.—Lent. (36.) הֶשְׁתָּחוּ, *heshachav*. Sept.—"I have lent him (הֶשְׁתָּחוּ) to the Lord." (1 Sam. 1:28.) This seems to be the only other place in which the Hiphil of *שָׁחַ* occurs: and the word lent does not well suit the transaction here recorded. (Note, 1 Sam. 1:28.)

V. 37, 38. It seems the Israelites made a general rendezvous at Ramesses, and from thence marched to some distance, where they pitched their tents: for the word *Succoth* signifies tents.—The word rendered *men*, literally denotes *strong men*: and it is generally supposed, that not only the minors and women, but such men as were incapable of great exertion by reason of age, were excluded in this computation; and the subsequent numberings of the people confirm the supposition. So that the whole company could not be much less than two millions; an immense increase from seventy persons, in little more than two hundred years.—Of "the mixed multitude" that followed Israel, it is probable, that some left Egypt because it was desolated, others because they were distressed or discontented; and others out of curiosity to see what would become of Israel, and how they would serve the Lord: some might be connected with the Israelites by marriage; and perhaps a few accompanied them from love to them and their religion. But these were few indeed: for the bulk of this multitude became a snare to them, and probably after a time returned into Egypt. (Num. 11:4).—Cattle seem to have been almost the only property which the Israelites possessed in Egypt; and these the Lord had lately caused exceedingly to increase.

V. 39. The Israelites, though no doubt warned to prepare

V. 19, 20. The people were commanded to put away all heaven from their houses, that none might be found by any person, to tempt him to transgress. Heathen slaves, therefore, and strangers, seem to have been included; and not merely proselytes who had been circumcised. Indeed, the latter alone might eat the passover; but all without exception were required to abstain from leaven.—This was a shadow of the holy life of the true believer, who, by the grace of Christ, through faith in his atonement, puts away the old leaven of sin with abhorrence, and walks with God in newness of life: (Note, 1 Cor. 5:6-8.) and also, of that pious attention to his domestics, as to their external conduct, which is required of him.

V. 22, 23. The blood of the paschal lamb, sprinkled on the lintel and door-posts, was the only security to the Israelites from the destroyer who smote the Egyptians; and under that protection they must abide during the whole night, if they would be secured from destruction.—Thus we must abide in Christ by faith to the end of our days.

V. 26. (Notes, 11-14, 13:8-10.)

V. 27. Sacrifice.] The passover was a "sacrifice," as offered to God and typical of Christ; but it differed from all the other sacrifices, in that no part of it was consumed upon the altar. The Jewish writers indeed say, that the fat was burned on the altar; but the Scripture is silent on that head.

V. 29, 30. The hour chosen, for this most tremendous execution, was suited to enhance the consternation. Probably, the persons smitten expired with agonizing cries, which awakened every family; and the report would rapidly spread from house to house. The Egyptians, for three days and nights just before, had been kept in perpetual solicitude and horror by the darkness; and now their rest was broken by a still more terrible calamity. By the death of the first-born, they were righteously punished for murdering the children of the Israelites; as well as for keeping that nation in bondage, which God honoured by calling it "his son, and his first-born."—Words can never express the terror and bitterness of this sudden blow, from an invisible hand, destroying the pride, and hope, and comfort of every family of all ranks, throughout this populous kingdom; the whole nation at once mourning over the dead, and trembling for themselves!

V. 31, 32. It is probable, that Pharaoh only sent a message to Moses and Aaron, allowing and requiring Israel to depart; and that Moses never saw him again after he left

"thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

40 ¶ Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.

41 And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

42 It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord, for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel, in their generations.

[Practical Observations.]

43 ¶ And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: 'there shall no stranger eat thereof.

44 But every man's servant, that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45 A foreigner, and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46 In one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house: neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

49 One law shall be to him that is home-born and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

50 Thus did all the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

51 And it came to pass the self-same day, that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, by their armies.

n 33. 6:1. 11:1. o Acts 13:17. p Gen. 15:13. Acts 7:6. Gal. 3:17. q Ps. 102:13. Dan. 9:24. Hab. 2:3. John 7:8. Acts 1:7. r 7:4. Josh. 5:14. * Heb. a night of observations. s 14. Deut. 16:1-6. t 48. Lev. 22:10. Num. 9:14. Eph. 2:12. u Gen. 17:13, 23. x 1 Cor. 12:13. Eph. 2:19-22. y Num. 9:12. John 19:33, 36.

z 3:6. Num. 9:13. † Heb. do it. a 43. Num. 9:14. 15:15, 16. b Gen. 17:12. Ez. 44:9. 47:22. c Gal. 3:28. Col. 3:11. d Lev. 24:22. Num. 15:15, 16, 29. e Deut. 4:1-2. 12:32. Matt. 7:24, 25. 28:20. John 2:5. 13:17. 15:14. Rev. 22:14. 14:1. 6:26. 7:14.

for a speedy departure, were at last driven out of Egypt so suddenly, that they had not provided themselves with victuals for the journey. But being constrained to set off while they were about to lay in a stock of bread, when the dough was yet unleavened, they took it with them in that state: and when they came to Succoth, they baked cakes of it for the present use. Probably this was their principal supply till the manna was sent. Thus the Lord took care that they should keep the feast of unleavened bread, which otherwise they would perhaps have neglected.

V. 40. From the first calling of Abraham, to the departure out of Egypt, exactly four hundred and thirty years seem to have passed.—The Septuagint read it, 'the sojourning of Israel ... in Egypt and the land of Canaan.' But this is merely a comment, though a just one. (Notes, Gen. 15:12—16.)

V. 42. To be observed, &c.] It was thus observed when the passover was duly celebrated. (Προφύλαξι, a vigil, or a watching. Sept.)

V. 43—45. Every person in each household, including women and children, ate this first passover, none being excepted but uncircumcised males. The law was not yet given; and whatever traditional customs prevailed, no restriction is mentioned in this chapter in respect of ceremonial uncleanness. Yet afterwards, even before the ceremonial law had been explicitly given, we read of those, who "being defiled by the dead body of a man, could not keep the passover on that day." (Note, Num. 9:6—8.) The ceremonially unclean, therefore, were thenceforth excluded. The women and children were not indeed commanded to go up to the tabernacle, where alone it was celebrated; but when they did, they joined in this sacred feast.—It does not appear that any servant or stranger was compelled to be circumcised: but till he was circumcised, he must not be allowed to eat the passover.—This may intimate, that without regeneration or "the circumcision of the heart," we cannot share the benefits of redemption by the death of Christ; and by parity of reason, we are not meet communicants at the Lord's table.

V. 46. When two households joined for one lamb, they were not allowed to divide it, either before or after it was roasted; but they must meet in one house and eat it together. This coincided with the direction before given, (9 :) and implied that all believers receive the whole of Christ's salvation and have fellowship one with another, while they live on his fulness, and share the blessings derived from his cross.—The injunction, "neither shall ye break a bone thereof," may be considered also as prophetic, to be literally fulfilled in the great Antitype, and which the apostle thought worthy of special notice. (John 19:36.)

V. 48, 49. A stranger, though he renounced idolatry, and by circumcision professed himself a worshipper of the God of Israel, was not allowed to eat the passover, unless all the males in his family also were circumcised: and, as there was "one law to him that was home-born and to the stranger," it seems that even an Israelite, who retained uncircumcised persons in his household, must not eat the passover. It is therefore probable, according to the opinion of Jewish writers, that if any heathen slave after a year's trial, persisted in refusing to be circumcised, he was sold to some of the heathen neighbours. As to other persons, who refused to embrace the religion of Israel, and to profess it by circumcision, they were allowed to remain with them. The practice, indeed of open idolatry must not be tolerated; but such as professed to worship the true God, though not according to the ceremonies of the law, might live in the country, but not in the households of the Israelites.—A great part of the observations of learned men on this chapter, and on other parts of the ceremonial law, consists of citations from Jewish writers, concerning the manner in which they suppose the several rules were ob-

served by their ancestors: but as they were not authorized to add to the divine law, or to take from it, we can make no other use of their information, than as it sometimes helps us to understand more clearly the meaning of the scriptural expressions. In other respects, their traditions form a kind of comment on the Mosaic institutions, not much dissimilar from that of Popish writers on the Christian sacraments; and only show, how far they have ventured to deviate from the simplicity of their written rule.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—28. The Lord makes all things new to those whom he delivers from the bondage of Satan, and takes to himself as his peculiar people; and the era of their enlargement is the commencement of a new life, of new hopes, pleasures, and employments. They who in early life are devoted to the service of God, are peculiarly happy: and we should begin every year, and month, and week, and day, with the great duties of religion; endeavouring to engage our families likewise. For nothing is more honourable to God, or more profitable to men, than harmonious family religion: it is the best bond of domestic peace, the best solace of domestic afflictions, and the best security for the continuance and increase of domestic felicity; while it affords an important advantage for constant "growth in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ."—In order to attain these advantages and communicate them to others, we should diligently study the holy Scriptures, that we may understand the true nature and meaning of every part of our religion, and be enabled to explain it to our children; who ought to be encouraged in their inquiries, and informed by clear and satisfactory answers, that, in the most easy and agreeable manner, they may become acquainted with the word and works of God, and join with us in celebrating the praises of his truth and mercy, and the wonders of his powerful arm.—But, in attending on the ordinances of God, we should carefully observe the stated order and season: and, while we must not neglect or despise any of his appointments, we may properly take time for serious inquiry and conscientious preparation, that we may at length attend on them with more solemnity, and to better purpose. But, if we would have the comfort of acceptance in our religious services, we must watch against the leaven of hypocrisy, malice, and wickedness, which, in numberless instances, have rendered, and still do render, attendance on the very ordinances that God himself has appointed, an abomination in his sight. (Notes, Is. 1:10—20.) And whatever we offer to the Lord, should be the best which we possess.

V. 29—42. When the Lord's time comes to perform his promises, mountains melt and flow down at his presence, and nothing creates any more difficulty, than is proper to illustrate his powerful operation.—The greatest and proudest sinner is not exalted out of the reach of his omnipotent vengeance, and the least are not beneath his notice: and if a temporal calamity filled Egypt with universal, inexpressible terror and lamentation, what words can describe, or imagination conceive the consternation and anguish of the wicked at the approaching judgment-day!—For fear of impending death, the Egyptians were willing to part, not only with their bond-slaves, but with their gold and silver: and "what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Alas! riches will not profit in the day of wrath, for it costs more to redeem souls from destruction: but if we would escape, we must moderate our worldly attachments, renounce our sinful projects, and hold ourselves in continual readiness to leave all and follow Christ; and if we should be called to part with, not only our wealth, but every temporal comfort, the perfect freedom of his service will give a relish to our meanest provisions.—But alas! a very numerous

CHAPTER XIII.

The first-born of man, and firstlings of cattle, as sanctified to God, 1, 2. The Feast of unleavened bread is appointed to be kept annually as a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, 3-10. Their children must be instructed, meaning of these observances, 11-16. The Lord guides forth the people, 17, 18; who take with them the bones of Joseph, 19; and, under the guidance of a pillar of cloud and of fire, arrive at Eltham, 20-22.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

3 ¶ And Moses said unto the people, Remem-
ber this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

4 This day came ye out, in the month Abib.

5 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month.

6 Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD.

a 12-15. 22-23. 33. 34. 19. 20. Lev. 27:26. Num. 3:13. 8:16-17. 18:15. 19:15. 19:16. Luke 2:23. Heb. 12:23. b 12:42. 20:8. Deut. 5:15. 16:3. 12:42. c 12:32. 1 Chr. 16:12. Pa. 105:5. Luke 22:19. 1 Cor. 11:24. e 14. 20:2. Deut. 5:6. 6:12. 8:14. 13:5. 10. Josh. 24:17. Judg. 6:8. f Heb. *avram*, 46:1. Deut. 4:34. 11:23. Neh. 9:10. Eph. 1:19. e See on 12:3-15. f 23:13. 34:18. Deut. 16:1. g 3:8. 34:11. Gen. 15:18-21. Deut. 7:1. 12:29. 19:1. 26:1. Josh. 24:11. h 6:8. 33:1. Gen. 17:78. Deut. 16:18. 26:3. 50:24. Num. 14:16. 30: 32:11. 1 See on 3:17. j See on 12:25. k See on 12:15-20. 34:18. Lev. 23:8. 11:29. Matt.

mixed multitude have hitherto accompanied the camp of Israel; who, from various worldly motives, or transient convictions, seem to leave Egypt, and to set out for the heavenly Canaan. While they retain their profession, they often prove snares and tempters to others, and at length in "time of temptation they fall away," and "their last state is worse than the first." Let us then "look diligently," that we may not prove such as "draw back to perdition;" but be found among "those who believe to the saving of their souls." While we hear even hardened Pharaoh, under the dread of immediate destruction, not only consenting to let Israel go, according to the utmost demand of Moses and Aaron, but even entreating them to "bless him also;" we may know what in general to think of the confessions and pious language, which are extorted from many wicked men, when death affrights them; and which, being *injudiciously attested as genuine repentance*, by some Christians and ministers, often give encouragement to others to procrastinate, in hopes of being saved at last in the same manner.

V. 43-51. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;" his blood is the only ransom for our souls; without the shedding of it there could have been no remission, without the sprinkling of it there can be no salvation. But have we, by faith, sheltered our souls from the deserved vengeance of God, under the protection of his atoning blood? Do we keep close to him, in habitual dependence on his merits, and access to the throne of grace through his intercession? Do we so profess our faith in the divine Redeemer, and our obligations to him, that all who pass by may know, as by the blood-besprinkled door, to whom we belong? Are we careful not to pervert or disgrace this our profession, by any inconsistent conduct, lest we should trample the blood of the covenant under our feet? Is Christ, indeed, the Food and Feast of our souls? Do we feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving, deriving all our life, strength, hope, and consolation from his fulness of truth and grace? Do we receive him in his whole character, and for all the purposes of salvation, from wrath, from sin, from this evil world, and from the powers of darkness? Do we in consequence stand prepared for his service, and prompt to walk in his ways: to separate ourselves from his enemies, and assert that liberty with which he makes his people free? These are questions of vast importance to our souls: the Lord direct our consciences to give an honest answer to them! Without the daily exercise of godly sorrow and true repentance, we can never eat of this true Passover; and though we must also bear our cross, and have our feast alloyed by the bitter herbs of tribulation and temptation; we shall find the life of faith and grace a feast indeed, a source of joy, such as the world can neither give nor take away.—Finally, the Lord's supper is our unbloody passover, our feast upon the atoning sacrifice, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Having previously "examined ourselves whether we be in the faith," and seriously as sinners applied to the Lord Jesus for his salvation, and devoted ourselves to his service; let us frequently and constantly, in this appointed way, remember our Redeemer's love and sufferings; let us make this confession of our sins, this profession of our faith, this declaration of our gratitude, and this surrender of ourselves to his service, as "bought with a price to glorify him, both in body and spirit, which are his." Thus uniting ourselves to him, and having fellowship with him and his people here, we shall receive from his fulness,

7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days: and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.

8 And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt.

9 And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes; that the LORD's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

10 Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season, from year to year.

11 ¶ And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,

12 That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix: and every firstling that cometh of a beast, which thou hast, the males shall be the LORD's.

13 And every firstling of an ass thou shalt

16:6, 12. m See on 12:25, 27. Deut. 4:9, 10. Pa. 44:1. 78:3-8. Is. 38:19. Eph. 6:4. n 16. Num. 15:39. Deut. 6:8. 11:18, 19. Prov. 1:9. 6:20-23. Is. 49:16. Jer. 22:24. Matt. 23:5. o Deut. 30:14. Josh. 1:8. Is. 59:21. Rom. 10:8. p 3. 6:6. Josh. 1:9. Neh. 1:10. Pa. 89:13. Is. 27:1. 46:10. 51:9. Joel 2:11. Rev. 18:3. q 12:14-24. 23:15. Lev. 23:6. Deut. 16:3-4. 1 Cor. 11:26. r See on h. 5. s See on 2. t Heb. *cause to pass over*. u 34:19. Num. 3:12. 18:15. v 34:20. Num. 18:15-17.

rejoice in his ways on earth, and at length sit down with him in his heavenly kingdom.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 2. In remembrance of the destruction of the first-born of Egypt, both man and beast; and of the preservation of Israel, and their deliverance out of bondage by means of that judgment; the first-born males of the Israelites must be solemnly presented and dedicated to the Lord, and a price was appointed to be paid for their redemption.—This represented to them that their lives were preserved through the ransom of the atonement, which in due time was to be made for sin; and that they ought to consider themselves, thus ransomed from death, as consecrated to the service of God.—The *first-born* may mean either the first son of his father, or the first son of his mother. Reuben was the first son both of Jacob and Leah, and Joseph was the first-born of Rachel; but Jacob acknowledges Reuben only as his first-born. (Gen. 49:3. Deut. 21:15-17.)—In many cases the eldest son of the father, who was entitled to some peculiar privileges, might not be the first-born of the mother: but the first-born of the mother, exclusively, was dedicated to God out of Israel, as the language used clearly shows; and it may be supposed, that the destruction of the first-born in Egypt was made by the same rule.

V. 3-7. On the arrival of Israel at Succoth, Moses seems to have again enforced the injunctions before given in Egypt, lest the people should forget them; and to show that these institutions were to be considered as of perpetual obligation, especially after they were settled in the promised land; for they could not regularly observe them in the wilderness. This Moses did with varied expressions, concerning the *leaven*. Accordingly we are told that the Israelites were very careful in searching every corner of their houses, that no leaven might remain; and what they found, they burned, buried, or in some way destroyed, before the feast of the passover.—The first day of unleavened bread was particularly observed, in remembrance of Israel's setting out from Egypt on that day; and many expositors supposed that they passed the Red Sea on the seventh day, and that it was likewise the Sabbath day.

V. 8-10. The constant observance of these institutions, with plain and easy explanations of the meaning to the young persons, would render the deliverance out of Egypt familiar to the Israelites from generation to generation; and be a continual memorial, as well as an open profession of their obligations to love and serve the Lord: as those who wish to remember and fear to forget any thing, use a variety of methods to remind them of it. Inscripting it upon the hand, placing it before their eyes, or as a frontlet upon their foreheads, seem to have been used in those times for such purposes.—"That the LORD's law may be in thy mouth;" "that their children might be able to declare to their posterity, the law of the Lord about these matters." Bp. Patrick.—In like manner Baptism and the Lord's Supper, if clearly explained and duly attended on, would render the nature of Christianity, and the obligations of Christians, familiar to the minds of one generation after another; and remind them, or give them occasion to remind one another, of their obligations, their duty, and the vows of God which are upon them.

V. 11-16. The first-born males alone were thus set apart for God; if a female preceded, the first succeeding male was not considered as the first-born. The firstling males of such animals as were appointed for sacrifice were offered

redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.

15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem.

16 And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

17 And it came to pass when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near: for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.

18 But God led the people about, through the

way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.

19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

21 And the Lord went before them, by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.

22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

CHAPTER XIV.

The way taken by Israel proves the occasion of hardening Pharaoh's heart, 1-4. He pursues them, 5-9. Being affrighted, they murmur; but are encouraged by Moses, 10-14. God instructs Moses, 15-18. The cloud removes behind the camp, the Red Sea is divided; the Israelites pass through it; but the Egyptians following them are drowned, 19-30. The Israelites are suitably affected, 31.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.

* Or, *kid*, 12:3, 21. *margine.* y Num. 3:46-51. Rev. 14:4. x See on 12:26. Deut. 6:20-24. Josh. 4:6, 21-24. Ps. 145:4. † Heb. *to-morrow*. Gen. 30:33. Deut. 6:20. Josh. 4:6. 22:24. *margine.* y See on 12:29. z See on 12. a 9. See on 12:13. b Deut. 6:7-9. 11:18. c 9:14. d 14:11, 12. Num. 14:1-4. Deut. 20:8. Judg. 7:3. Luke 14:27-32. Acts 13:13. 15:38. 1 Cor. 10:13. e 16:2. f 8. Neh. 9:17. Acts 7:39. f 14:28. Num. 35:6-8. Ps. 107:7. x Or, *by fire in a*

at the altar; but others must either be exchanged, or killed. The firstling of an ass is mentioned, as asses were common among the Israelites; but that of horses or camels likewise, which were not common, seem to have been under the same regulation. The Levites were afterwards taken instead of the first-born children. (*Notes*, Num. 3.)—This custom, likewise, would give parents an important opportunity of instructing their children, in respect of the wonderful works of God in behalf of his people.

V. 17, 18. The nearest road from Egypt to Canaan was only a few days' march; as it must be evident to every reader, who considers the journeys of the sons of Jacob into Egypt. But the Philistines were a hardy warlike people; and the Israelites were unarmed, dispirited by long bondage, and not acquainted with war; and they might have been greatly discouraged, had they been reduced to the necessity of engaging so soon with these formidable enemies. This was one reason, and probably the avowed reason, why the Lord led them another way: so that, by his express command, the Israelites took their route much more to the south than the direct road lay; and they marched towards the banks of the Red Sea, instead of going directly to the isthmus of Suez, which communicates between Africa and Asia. It is probable, that at this time, the Israelites had scarcely any weapons of war: though they seem to have procured some from the dead bodies of the Egyptians, before the Amalekites attacked them. (17:8-13.)—The margin intimates that the word, translated *harnessed*, may signify, *by five in a rank*; but the room such a multitude must have taken from the van to the rear, is immense, had they marched in this manner; as there would have been 120,000 lines of five men each, besides women and children. It seems rather to mean that they marched in five distinct squadrons; or in general, that though unarmed, they journeyed in regular order, and not as a disorderly multitude. The LXX translate it *in the fifth generation*.—The Psalmist informs us, that "there was not one feeble person among their tribes." Ps. 105:37. This was a very extraordinary circumstance, which the history of the world cannot parallel: yet it was very suitable to the situation of those, who had sufficient encumbrances in their march, without having invalids to take care of. It also completed their triumph over Pharaoh and the Egyptians, since they were not constrained to leave one of the company behind them.

Harnessed, (18) קָשְׁיוּ. Rendered by the LXX ἐκτακτοί, Josh. 14:2. and διατακταί, Josh. 4:12.—It occurs also Judg. 7:11.

V. 19. The bones of Joseph had long been a pledge of Israel's deliverance, and of their inheriting Canaan. Some think that the bones of the other sons of Jacob likewise were carried with the Israelites to Canaan, though it is not here expressly mentioned. (*Note*, Gen. 50:24-26.)

V. 21, 22. The Lord manifested his gracious presence with Israel, by a miraculous appearance in the air, in form like a pillar, the base of which was so large as to overshadow the camps of Israel. This was seen by day as a cloud, and by night it gave light as fire; and it seems to have been continued with them, to direct their marches, and as a pledge of the divine protection, till they entered Canaan.—This pillar represented the guidance, comfort, and security, which the Lord affords his true people, from the time when they renounce the service of sin and Satan, until they safely arrive in heaven.

rank, 12:51. *marg.* g Gen. 50:24, 25. Josh. 24:32. Acts 7:16. h 4:31. Gen. 48:21. Luke 1:58. 7:16. i Num. 33:5, 6. k 14:19-24. 40:34-38. Num. 9:15-22. 10:24. 14:14. Deut. 1:33. Neh. 9:12, 19. Ps. 78:14. 99:7. 106:39. Is. 43:5, 6. 1 Cor. 10:1-2. 13:12. 121:5-8. m Rev. 10:1. a 9. 13:17, 18. Num. 33:7. b Jer. 41:1. 46:14. Ez. 29:10. *Heb.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. We are so unteachable in divine things, that we need the same lessons over and over, in a variety of ways, before we make any tolerable proficiency: repetitions therefore are neither impertinent nor useless.—The instructions of the Holy Scriptures are suited to render divine truths and precepts very plain and familiar to our minds, that we may have them continually in view, frequently converse about them, and regulate our conduct by them. Ministers when teaching their congregations, and parents when educating their children, should keep this constantly in sight; and embrace every opportunity of deeply impressing the minds of those committed to their charge, with a sense of their obligations to the Lord for all his benefits. They should use every means of rendering them well acquainted with his wonderful works, especially the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, and his harmonious perfections, displayed in that grand design, that they may thus be led to know, trust, love, and serve the God of their salvation.—But if we sincerely desire to devote ourselves to God, we must be as careful to search out, and put away, all remains and occasions of sin, and to mortify and subdue every carnal and corrupt affection, as the Israelites were to remove the leaven from their houses, when they celebrated the passover.

V. 11-22. By creation, and as preserved and sustained by him, we are the Lord's property, and he has a right to dispose of us as he pleases; but redemption gives him a new and more endearing title to our bodies, souls, and services; and exemption from the desolations which come on the wicked, and deliverance from the malice of our enemies, flow from his mercy, through the ransom of the Redeemer's blood, and by the power of his mighty arm. If we are really made partakers of these benefits, we belong to "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven;" and we are required to "present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service." Nor shall we ever enjoy so much liberty, or so much comfort in our children and substance, as when we most unreservedly devote ourselves and them to him. "The strong man, armed" with our lusts and passions, our inveterate habits and intimate evil connexions, vehemently opposes our conversion, and "will hardly let us go;" but "when a Stronger than he comes upon him, he takes from him his armour wherein he trusted, and divides the spoil." Then, being delivered from bondage, putting ourselves under the Lord's care and protection, and joining ourselves to his people, we learn to walk before him in all his ordinances and commandments: and though the way in which he leads us is widely different from that which we should choose for ourselves; we shall find that he in every particular regards our weakness, and that he orders all things for our good, and in such a manner as may most effectually keep us from returning back to sin and the world.—Through all the intricacies and dangers of the way, he will guide and guard us by his word and Spirit; he will enlighten every dark night of affliction by his holy consolations, and shelter us from the burning sun of temptation, until he bring us to his heavenly rest with everlasting songs of joy and praise.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 2. The Israelites before this had marched, not in the direct road to Canaan, but more to the south, towards the Red Sea; until they came to the edge

3 For ^aPharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ^bThey are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.

4 And ^cI will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them, and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; ^dthat the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD. And they did so.

5 And it was told the king of Egypt, that the people fled: and ^ethe heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, ^fWhy have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?

6 And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him:

7 And he took ^gsix hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them.

8 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out ^hwith an high hand.

9 But ⁱthe Egyptians pursued after them, (all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horse-

men and his army,) and overtook them ^jencamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahior before Baal-zephion

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold the Egyptians marched after them, ^kand they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel ^lcried out unto the LORD.

11 And they said unto Moses, ^mBecause these were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? ⁿWherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt:

12 ^oIs not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, ^pLet us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? ^qFor it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

13 And Moses said unto the people, ^rFear ye not, stand still, and ^ssee the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to-day: ^tfor the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ^uye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 ^vThe LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

c 7:3, 4. Deut. 31:21. Ps. 139:2, 4. Ez. 39:10, 11, 17. Acts 4:28. d Judg. 16:2. 1 Sam. 23:23. Ps. 71:11. Jer. 20:10. e 8:17. See on 4:21. 7:3, 13, 14. Rom. 11:8. f 18. 9:16. 15:10, 11, 14—16. 18:11. Neh. 8:10. Is. 2:11, 12. Ez. 20:9. 28:22. 39:13. Dan. 4:30—37. Rom. 9:17, 22, 23. Rev. 19:1—6. g See on 7:17. h 12:33. Ps. 105:25. Jer. 35:10—17. Luke 11:21—26. 2 Pet. 2:20—22. k 28. 15:4. Matt. 17:16—18. Judg. 3:15. Ez. 30:17. Is. 37:34. 1 Sam. 4:1. 16:1. 13:9, 16:1. Neh. 8:33. 1 Euz. 32:27. Ps. 98:13. Acts 13:17. n 15:9. Josh. 24:6. o See on 2. p Ps. 53:5. Is. 7:2. 8:12, 13. 51:12, 13. Matt. 8:26. 14:30, 31. q Josh. 24:7. 2 Chr. 18:

31. Neh. 9:9. Ps. 34:17. 107:6, 13, 19, 28. Is. 26:16. Jer. 22:23. Matt. 8:25. r 15:32, 24. 16:2, 3. 17:2, 3. Num. 11:1. 14:1—4. 16:41. Ps. 106:7, 8. s 5:22. Gen. 43. 6. Num. 11:15. t 5:21. 6:9. u Hos. 4:17. Mark 1:24. 5:7, 17, 18. x Jon. 4:3, 3. y Num. 14:9. Deut. 20:3. z Kings 6:16. 2 Chr. 20:15, 17. Ps. 27:1, 2. 46:1—3. Is. 26:3. 30:15. 35:4. 41:10, 14. Matt. 28:5. s 30. 15:1. 1 Chr. 11:14. Matt. 11:43. 11. Jer. 5:28. Lam. 3:28. Hos. 13:4, 9. Hab. 3:13. * Or, for whereas ye have seen the Egyptians to-day, &c. n 30. 15:4, 5, 10, 19, 21. b 25. 15:3. Deut. 1:30. 3:22. 20:4. Josh. 10:10, 14, 42. 28:3. Judg. 5:20. 2 Chr. 20:17, 28. Neh. 4:20. Is. 81:4, 5.

of the wilderness, whither the Egyptians expected they were retiring to offer sacrifices to the LORD. (13:20.) But now they received orders to turn still further out of the way, into some impervious straits, or narrow defiles. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. It was the avowed design of God to harden the heart of Pharaoh; and he knew how to effect it, without being in any sense or degree the Author of sin. It would suffice for this purpose to remove all restraints from his heart and conscience; to leave him entirely to his own pride, and impetuous lusts, and to the instigations of Satan; and to arrange the dispensations of providence, so as most effectually to encourage his hopes of yet prevailing in the contest. The heart of Pharaoh had been sorely galled, but it was not in the least humbled. He had been repeatedly baffled and frightened, and forced to yield; yet his daring spirit was not subdued, but revolted more and more against the violence done him, so that he was fired with resentment and thirsted for revenge. His covetousness and ambition had been severely disappointed; his kingdom had been desolated and almost depopulated, and his first-born son slain: he had suffered an ignominious defeat; and nothing, but despair of success, and the urgent terror of death, could have extorted his consent to Israel's enlargement.—While under the immediate pressure of the last dreadful visitation, every thing except the preservation of his life was forgotten: but when his terror and anguish were somewhat subsided, and his convictions abated, then his stoutness of spirit returned; and the thoughts of the mortifications, ignominy, and loss which he had sustained, with all their probable and possible effects, no doubt rushed into his mind. Then every thought or counsel would be welcome, which could point out the way, or revive the hope, of reducing Israel, or of wreaking his vengeance on them.—Had they marched directly towards Canaan, they would, probably, have been out of his dominions, before he had recovered from his fright, and he might have given them up in despair: but as they turned another way, and were, as he supposed, entangled in the wilderness, and shut up by surrounding rocks, mountains, and seas; he would conclude that they were not under an infallible guidance, and thence infer that they had not an almighty protection, but might yet be subdued to his will: and what he ardently wished, feeble evidence would induce him to believe.—This the Lord foresaw; and that he might be honoured upon the Egyptians, and make his power and justice known, he gave his directions to Israel accordingly.—I will 'show my power and justice in their destruction, which would not have been so visible, had they died of the pestilence, . . . as it was by hardening Pharaoh so far as to follow the Israelites into the Red Sea, where he and his whole host were overthrown; which made the terror of the LORD's wrath manifest to the world.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5—9. The Egyptians had consented to the departure of the Israelites, and even urged them to be gone; and when they liberally bestowed on them the gold and silver, and raiment which they asked, they seem to have had no expectation that they would return. But as the Israelites, probably, had not expressly declared themselves on this head; when the Egyptians heard, (perhaps by some of the mixed multitude who came back,) that they neither halted in the desert to offer sacrifices, nor kept the direct road to Horeb, (where some think they had said that they had intended to keep a feast to the LORD,) but turned aside into intricate paths:

they began to treat them as fugitive slaves. The servants of Pharaoh, while terrified by the divine judgments, and suffering severely the effects of them, had counselled him to dismiss Israel: yet considering themselves sharers in his loss and disgrace, and being again encouraged to expect better success; they blamed themselves for having let them go, and gave Pharaoh more agreeable advice: and he was so inflated by worldly policy, and so hardened in obstinate rebellion against the Lord, that, forgetting his late terrors, he determined to take vengeance on Moses and on Israel. Accordingly he collected all his forces which were at hand, especially his chariots of war and his cavalry, which was the chief strength of his army; and without delay pursued the fugitives; but they, not expecting so formidable an enemy, had marched on with great alacrity, and in good order, not at all like slaves who were fleeing from their masters; and were at that time encamping by the sea. It is generally supposed, that on the right and left of their encampment there were impassable mountains or fortifications; while the Red Sea was in the front, and Pharaoh and his army pressed upon their rear.

V. 10—12. It is evident, that all the wonders, wrought for Israel in Egypt, had excited in most of them nothing beyond transient convictions, hopes, and joy; and that in general they were destitute of true faith and confidence in God. They had therefore been in high spirits, when no danger appeared: but when they saw the army of Pharaoh marching up to them, they sunk into terror and despondency; and their cries to the Lord, having been extorted by dismay, were soon succeeded by rebellious murmurs. Yet it must be supposed that some out of the vast multitude, in this emergency, sought the Lord in fervent prayer, while the rest vented their anguish in bitter complaints against Moses. All however were sensible, that such an unarmed multitude could not withstand Pharaoh's disciplined troops: they had no thoughts therefore of fighting, no prospect of escaping by flight, no hope in submitting to so enraged a tyrant; and very few of them had any confidence in God or expectation from him, so that death seemed inevitable. They therefore expostulated bitterly with Moses, for leading them out of Egypt; as if he had done it by his own authority, and in order to expose them to the rage of Pharaoh, that he might kill them in the wilderness.—Thus, while Pharaoh, hardened in desperate presumption, forgot the wonderful works of God, which he and his people had seen and severely felt; the Israelites themselves, in unbelieving despondency, were equally regardless of them; and looked back with sad regret on the wretched slavery, under which they had before groaned!

V. 13, 14. On this trying occasion, the faith of Moses was peculiarly illustrious. He answered the injurious complaints of Israel without the least resentment and with great sedateness, meekness, and presence of mind. He expressed no fear of Pharaoh and his army; and only required the people to be still, and not put themselves into disorder, but to stand prepared to obey his word of direction; being assured that the Lord would deliver them by his own powerful arm. It would not be at all needful for them to fight against the Egyptians; but merely to look on with silent astonishment, and to witness their destruction. (*Marg. Ref.*) For this would be the last time they would ever see them, as living enemies, either to injure or afflict them. They afterwards

15 And the Lord said unto Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."

16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

17 And "I, behold I, will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen."

18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

[Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ And the Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.

20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud of darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21 ¶ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the

waters were a wall unto them, on their right hand, and on their left.

23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them, to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24 ¶ And it came to pass that in the morning-watch, the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

25 And took off their chariot-wheels, that they drove them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel: for the Lord fighteth for them, against the Egyptians."

26 And the Lord said unto Moses, "Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen."

27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it: and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

28 And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there remained not so much as one of them.

29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

30 Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of

1. Gen. 7:1. Lev. 10:4-5. d 21:26. 42:17,20. 7:9,19. e See on 21:22. f Gen. 7:1. 9:9. Lev. 25:28. Dent. 32:39. Is. 48:15. 51:12. Jer. 23:39. Ez. 5:8. 6:3. 34. 1:20. Hos. 5:14. g See on 4:23. 7:13,14. h 18. See on 4. i See on 7:5,17. k 24. 13:21. 23:20,21. 32:34. Num. 20:16. M. 63:9. Acts 7:38. l See on 13:21. m Ps. 18:11. Prov. 4:18,19. Is. 8:14. 2 Cor. 2:15,16. n 15:8. Josh. 3:13-14. 4:23. Neh. 9:11. Job 25:12. Ps. 68:6. 74:13. 78:13. 106:7. 110:114-3. 136:13. 14:1. 51:10. 15:63,12. n Num. 33:8. 1 Cor. 10:1. Heb. 11:29. p 15:8. Hab. 8:9. Zech. 2:6. q 17. 15:9,19. 1 Kings 22:20. Ec. 9:3. Is. 14:24-27. r 1 Sam. 11:11. s Job 40:12. Ps. 18:13,14. 77:16-19. 104:32. t 19:20. u 25. Job 22:13.

23:15,16. 34:20,29. Ps. 48:5. x Jud. 4:15. Ps. 46:9. 76:6. Jer. 51:21. * Or, and note that it goes gently. y Job 20:20,24. 27:22. Ps. 68:12. Am. 1:14. 5:19. 9:1. z See on 14. Dent. 3:22. 1 Sam. 4:7,8. a 7:19. 8:5. Matt. 8:27. b 1:22. Jud. 16:7. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. Rev. 16:6. c 21:22. 15:10,19. Josh. 4:18. d 15:1-7,21. Jud. 5:20,21. e Heb. shook off. f Deut. 11:4. Ps. 78:53. Hab. 3:8-10. Heb. 11:29. f 13. 2 Chr. 20:24. Ps. 106:9-11. 136:15. g Job 38:8-11. Ps. 66:6,7. 77:19,20. Is. 43:2. 51:10,13. 63:12,13. h Josh. 3:16. i 13. 1 Sam. 14:23. 2 Chr. 32:22. Is. 63:8. Jude 5.

indeed saw the dead bodies of some of them on the seashore; (Ex. 15:5,12), but it is very remarkable, that the power of Egypt was so crushed, and the spirit of the rulers so broken, by this last stroke, that the Egyptians never attempted to pursue or molest Israel, even when shut up in the wilderness during forty years.

V. 15, 16. Moses was earnest in prayer at this trying conjuncture; and it cannot be supposed, that the Lord was displeased with him: but he thus assured him, that his request was granted, and that he was about to effect the deliverance of Israel. Moses needed only to excite and encourage the people to march forward; and God would make way for them, by dividing the sea, that they might go through it as on dry land.

V. 17. *I, behold I.* This speaks the certainty of the event, as the Lord himself undertook that the heart of Pharaoh and of his subjects should be hardened. These had associated themselves with their king in rebellion, and were thus with him doomed to the same deserved punishment.

V. 18. *The Egyptians.* The miserable remains of this once flourishing people.—The expression, again and again repeated, "I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, &c." as marking the grand design of all these transactions, should be peculiarly noticed.

V. 19. *The Angel.* Either a created angel, by whose ministry this pillar was produced, and moved; or rather the great Angel of the Covenant, the eternal Son of God. (24.)

V. 20. Even in the night, the cloud caused an additional gloom to the Egyptians: yet it was a light to the Israelites, who marched as by daylight to the seashore; while their enemies bewildered in darkness could scarcely discern the prey, which they expected at once to seize upon!

V. 21-23. At the stretching forth of Moses's hand, and the waving of his rod, the Lord caused a strong east wind to blow; but even this was only the signal of his power, by which he divided the waters, till they formed two mighty walls, and a spacious road between, through which the Israelites marched securely; being encouraged outwardly by the word of Moses, but inwardly by the power of God; while the Egyptians, given up to desperate hardness of heart, presumptuously followed them. Some however think, that bewildered by the darkness, and hearing the Israelites before them, they were not aware that they had entered the sea, till it was too late to escape; but the language of the apostle seems to favour the former interpretation. (Heb. 11:29.)

V. 24, 25. The Israelites who marched foremost probably entered the channel of the sea while it was yet day; and a very spacious opening being made for them, the others followed in a broad column, so that the whole multitude was marching on the bed of the channel of the sea, at the beginning of the night, the Egyptians closely pursuing them.—The watches, into which the Israelites, and afterwards the Romans,

and probably many other nations, divided the night, were so called from the term allotted to watchmen or soldiers who kept guard, after which they were relieved. The morning-watch seems to have begun about three hours before sunrise; so that the whole company, both of Israel and of Egypt, had probably been many hours marching, with all possible speed, between the waters, piled up as walls on either side of them: and they must have gone several miles at that time. The channel of the Red Sea is thought by some to have been ten or twelve miles across, by others twenty, or more: but taking the larger dimensions, even the Egyptians might have gone far more than half the way before the morning-watch.—The Scripture uniformly states that the Lord led Israel through the Red Sea: yet the Jewish expositors, and some others, who pay far too much deference to their comments, are of opinion, that after Pharaoh and his army were overwhelmed, the Israelites came out on the same side by which they had entered. This they ground chiefly on the improbability of this large company marching so far, in the short time allotted them; which in fact amounts to nothing: for if the path through the channel of the sea was as wide as the ordinary road by which they travelled; they might as well march twelve, or even twenty miles during the night, on this occasion, as the same distance during the same time, in any other part of their journey; and they were surely as likely to make all haste, while pursued by the Egyptians, and environed by the sea, as on an ordinary march.—It is also said, that they encamped in the wilderness of Etham, the first stage after they came out of the sea; and they encamped at Eihon on the edge of the wilderness, after they left Succoth. (Comp. 13:20. Num. 33:6-8.) But it is not most likely, that the wilderness of Etham extended on each side of the extremity of the Red Sea, while Etham was a town or village, situated near the place where the Israelites first entered that wilderness, whence it took its name? (Note, Num. 33:8.) Certain it is that Horeb lay east of the sea, and they appear to have come out on that side nearest Horeb.—In the morning-watch, JEHOVAH looked upon the Egyptians, as evidently frowning on them, through the pillar of fire. (19.) It is probable, that there was a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, and other dreadful appearances, which concurred with an inward influence on their minds to trouble and dismay them; while by some extraordinary interposition, their chariot wheels were broken or taken off, so that they could not get forward, and thus they were made sensible, when too late, that JEHOVAH fought against them in behalf of his people. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26-30. We may suppose, that the Israelites were nearly arrived on the opposite shore, when Moses received this command, which was given perhaps by a voice from the pillar of fire; but there is no improbability in the opinion, that the waters began to roll back with irresistible violence to their ancient channel, in that part of the sea where the Egypt-

of the Egyptians: and Israel ¹saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.

31 And Israel saw that great ²work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people ³feared the LORD, and ⁴believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

CHAPTER XV.

The song of Moses, Miriam, and Israel, on their deliverance, 1-21. In the wilderness they want water, 22: the waters of Marah are bitter, they murmur, Moses prays, and the waters are made sweet by means which God appointed, who also gives them his charge and promise, 23-26. They encamp at Elim, 27.

THEN ¹sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will

Ps. 58:10, 51:12, 92:9-11, *Heb. *hand*, 11 Sam. 12:18, Ps. 119:120, m. 4:31, 19:9, 2 Chr. 20:20, 1s. 105:12, 13, Luke 8:1, John 2:11, 22-25, 8:30-32, 11:45, Acts 8:13, a Judg. 5:1, &c. 2 Sam. 22:1, &c. Ps. 106:12, 107:8, 15, 21, 22, 1s. 12:1, &c. 51:10, 11, Rev. 15:3, b. 21, 14:17, 18, 27, 19:11, Col. 2:15, c. Ps. 18:1, 2, 28:8, 59:17, 62:6, 7, 118:14, Hab. 3:17-19, Phil. 4:13, d. Dent. 10:21, Ps. 22:3, 109:1, Rev. 15:3, e. 14:13, 2 Sam. 22:51, Ps. 68:20, 1s. 12:2, 45:17, 45:6, Jer. 3:23, Luke 1:77, 2:30, John 4:

ians were, though they still continued a wall to Israel where they marched; and the introduction of verse 29 seems to favour it. It is however sufficient to know, that Israel was completely preserved; and Pharaoh, with the Egyptians, so entirely overwhelmed that not one remained. The returning light of the morning would show them their dreadful situation; but every effort to escape was fruitless.—The Egyptians had drowned the male children of the Israelites in the river; and now the righteous Lord took vengeance on them for those cruel and multiplied murders, by drowning all the strength and flower of the nation in the Red Sea!—It is probable that very many of the dead bodies were driven on shore, near the place where the Israelites went up out of the sea, the Lord thus ordering it; and that they were furnished with arms, as well as enriched with other spoils, by that means.—The Egyptians were renowned for their art in embalming the dead, and for their attention to the bodies of their relatives, and especially their princes and grandees; but God now poured contempt upon all the great ones of the nation, and caused their bodies to be left unburied on the seashore!

V. 31. When the Israelites witnessed this stupendous scene, they were for the time greatly affected, both with reverence of the majesty, power, and justice of the Lord, and with gratitude for their surprising deliverance; and they showed a readiness to believe his word, as delivered to them by Moses, and to trust in him for the future; but, alas! this proved only a temporary faith, as the event in a little time evinced. (*Note*, Ps. 106:12-14.)—Learned men have shown, by various citations, that a traditinary mutilated report of this grand transaction prevailed among the surrounding nations, many centuries afterwards.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The Lord, by all his commands and dispensations makes trial of men's spirits; and every thing eventually concurs to harden the hearts of obstinate rebels to their destruction, and to exercise and increase the faith of his people: that by making known the glories of his name, he may be honoured by the one, and on the other. Would we then escape the awful sentence of being judicially hardened, we should take care not to harden our own hearts in sin, when called upon to repent, and submit ourselves to God; for none are thus punished, who have not *righteously* deserved it.—Genuine faith gives the Lord credit for his wisdom, faithfulness, and love, even where they are not discernible, and expects the accomplishment of his promises in the way of unreserved obedience to his commandments, however contrary to the suggestions of human policy; it also rests satisfied, that the event will clear up every difficulty; and in this its excellence greatly consists.—Unless the heart be truly numbed, sin of every kind abhorred, and love to God and holiness implanted, no religious impressions will be abiding. Under remorse of conscience, the anguish of sufferings, and the terrors of impending destruction, and while temptations are out of sight, sinful propensities appear to be slain; but they soon revive when there is respite, when convictions wear off, terrors subside, and temptations return; and only rage with redoubled force, for having received a temporary check. Then, the past is forgotten, and the heart grows harder than ever in bold presumption; till, given up of God, and infatuated by Satan, men become even ashamed of their constrained repentance, and impetuously rush upon their own destruction! Such is the progress of those who rebel against the light, and encourage one another in wickedness, till they are involved in one common ruin. "Let us therefore fear lest we also should be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

V. 10-18. Our fallen race is prone, not only in desperate presumption to lose sight of the power and wonderful works of God, and his threatened destruction of the wicked; but also, in despondency, to forget his wonders of love and promises of deliverance to his people; and in large companies even of professed worshippers, there always have been multitudes destitute of faith and grace. These in times of trial, when others are crying to the Lord for help, manifest their impatience and rebellion against God, by quarrelling with his servants: and they often discourage others, and lead them to mingle unbe-

sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

2 The LORD is my ³Strength and ⁴Song, and he is become ⁵my Salvation: he is ⁶my God, and I will prepare him ⁷an habitation; my ⁸father's God, and I will ⁹exalt him.

3 The LORD is ⁴a man of war: ⁵the LORD is his name.

4 Pharaoh's ⁵chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his ⁶"chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

5 The ⁶depths have covered them: ⁷they sank into the bottom as a stone.

22, Acts 4:12, Rev. 19:1, 14:22, Gen. 17:7, Ps. 22:10, Jer. 31:33, 32:38, Zech. 13:9, g. 40:34, Gen. 28:21, 22, 2 Sam. 7:5, Ps. 132:5, 1s. 66:1, 2 Cor. 5:19, P. h. 2:22, Col. 2:9, h. See on 3:15, 16. i. Ps. 18:46, 30:1, 34:3, 99:5, 9, 118:28, 145:1, 1s. 25:1, John 5:23, Phil. 2:11, Rev. 5:9-14, j. Ps. 24:8, Rev. 18:11-21, k. See on 3:15, 15: 6:3, 8, Ps. 83:18, 1s. 42:8, 114:13-23, m. 14:7, n. 14:28, 1s. 27:34, Jon. 2:2, Mic. 7:18, Matt. 18:6, o. Neh. 9:11, Jer. 51:63, 64, Rev. 18:21.

lieving murmurs, and peevish complaints, with their prayers and supplications. Indeed, it is too commonly the case, that when men meet with unexpected difficulties in their first entrance on a religious life, or on any particular service, they are tempted to wish they had never gone about it, or to utter expressions equally unreasonably and sinful; and few of those who watch their own hearts, can fairly plead not guilty in this respect.—But the Lord still pities and pardons the upright; and he encourages some by the faith and boldness of others, and the meekness with which they bear the reproaches that are cast upon them. For the wisest and best of men must not expect to escape calumny, even in their most disinterested endeavours to be useful: so that we should especially arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, in "meekness of wisdom," if we would do any real good in the world.—The more we observe human nature, the fuller will be our conviction, that there is immense difficulty in prevailing with men to use the *means of salvation*, in which the Lord hath promised to meet and bless us; and to find a *willing* people to welcome a *willing* Saviour. For this also we should trust in his power, and lift up our prayers to him; and likewise exhort, admonish, and persuade those to whom we are sent, with all earnestness and perseverance. If the Lord answers our desires, so that sinners are excited to observe his directions, whether to patient waiting, or to go forward in his ways; we need not fear but he will fight for them, and open them a way through difficulties and obstacles, as insurmountable as mountains and seas; and make the number and power of their enemies subservient to his glory, and their final and abundant advantage. But he sometimes leads us into circumstances, in which we can see no possible way of escape or success; that we may the more admire his power and love in our deliverance, and be more encouraged and affected by it.

V. 19-31. How dark do all the dispensations of Providence, and even the doctrines of the gospel, (which give light and comfort to believers,) appear to those who are fighting against God! And who can stand before him, who has all creatures at his command? All men will at length see, that JEHOVAH fighteth for his church against all her enemies; but, alas! multitudes harden their hearts in mad rebellion, till they fall into destruction, beyond the possibility of escape! And how tremendous will that day be, when the wicked shall sink into the depths of hell, and "all the people that forget God!" But happy are they, who at his command march forward under his banner, enlightened by his word, comforted by his Spirit, and protected by his arm. From time to time, even here, they experience such interpositions in their favour, as silence their complaints, make them ashamed of their despondings, and excite them to animated praises and cheerful obedience. How then will their hearts exult, in adoring, triumphant love, joy, and gratitude, when, finally delivered from every enemy, they shall stand on the heavenly shore, and celebrate their great Deliverer with everlasting songs of praise!

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1. The capacity of the human mind for poetry and music, and for taking pleasure in them, has been common to every age and nation; and though too generally perverted to the worst of purposes, through the depravity of our fallen nature, (as all our other capacities have been,) it was doubtless originally implanted by the Creator for wise and holy reasons, and should be consecrated to his service and glory. Accordingly, hymns or songs of praise form a considerable portion of the sacred Scriptures; some of which were composed on particular occasions, and sung as a part of solemn worship at the time, or afterwards in commemoration of the transactions celebrated in them; while others seem to have been of a more general nature, as suiting the experience, and expressing the varied affections, of believers in every age. The poetry of these sacred hymns has been carefully investigated, and much admired by many persons of eminent attainments in ancient learning, as in many respects vastly superior to all other remains of antiquity; especially by Dr. Lytt, the late Bishop of London, in his *Praelectiones*.—This song, which Moses prepared, doubtless by divine inspiration in order to

hold upon them: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.

16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over ^{which} thou hast purchased.

17 Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, ^{which} thou hast made for thee to dwell in: in the sanctuary, O LORD, ^{which} thy hands have established.

18 The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

19 For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them: but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

20 ¶ And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

[Practical Observations.]

q Josh. 2:11-51. r Deut. 20:8. Josh. 2:9. marg. 14:8. 1 Sam. 14:16. 2 Sam. 17:10. 1 Sa. 68:2. Is. 13:7. 19:1. E. 21:7. Nah. 2:10. s Deut. 11:25. t 11:7. 1 Sam. 2:9. 25:37. u 19:5,6. Deut. 32:6. 2 Sam. 7:23. Ps. 74:2. Is. 43:1-3. 51:10. Jer. 31:11. Acta 20:25. Tit. 2:41. v Is. 2:2. 2 Pet. 2:1. x Ps. 44:2. 72:54. 55:80. Is. 51:1-4. Jer. 2:21. 32:41. y Is. 28:54. 68:69. Jer. 31:23. z Ps. 10:16. 146:10. Is. 57:15. Dan. 2:41. 7:14. Matt. 6:13. Rev. 11:15-17. a 14:23. Prov. 21:31. b 11:25. Heb. 11:29. c 2 Judg. 4:4. 1 Sam. 10:5. 2 Kings 22:14. Luke 2:36. Acts 21:9. 1 Cor. 11:5. 14:34. d 2:4. Num. 12:1. 20:1. 26:59. Mic. 6:4. e Judg. 11:34. 1 Sam. 11:7. 2 Sam. 6:14. Ps. 68:25. 149:3. 150:4. f 1 Sam. 16:7. 2 Chr. 5:13. Ps. 34:7-10. 134. g See on 1. Judg. 5:3. Is. 51. Rev. 7:10-12.

he restrained from resistance, as if petrified, and become stones, by the glory of JEHOVAH's power and indignation; seeing he had ransomed his people at the price of so flourishing a country as Egypt. (Marg. Ref.)

Pass over. (16) Note, Josh. 3:2, end.

V. 17. (Note, 13.) 'Moses seems to have foreseen, by the Spirit of prophecy, that God would place his habitation upon mount Zion; which he understood, perhaps, from the sacrifice of Isaac on mount Moriah.' Bp. Patrick. (Note Gen. 22, latter part.)

V. 18. In perfect wisdom, justice, and goodness, "JEHOVAH shall reign for ever," as the only Lawgiver and Judge over his willing people; and he will finally and eternally crush all his enemies with irresistible force.—Two distinct words are used in the original to express what is rendered "for ever and ever," which mutually confirm each other, and evidently signify eternity, in the strictest sense of the word.—The translation in the LXX is remarkable: *Κυριος βασιλεύων τον αιωνα, και εν αιωνα, και ετι.* 'The LORD reigning over eternity, and unto eternity, and beyond' (or evermore.)

V. 20, 21. Miriam is joined, by Micah, with Moses and Aaron, in leading forth the people; (Mic. 6:4.) and she is here called a prophetess: yet nothing is recorded of her in that character, but her leading the women in this song of praise, joined, according to the usages of the times, with trimbrels and dances. It may, however, be observed, that she as well as Aaron said, "Hath not the LORD spoken by us?" (Num. 12:2.) and though she was rebuked for her misconduct on that occasion, yet the context seems to imply that the LORD had spoken by her, but not in the same manner as to Moses. Perhaps on some occasions, she delivered the messages of God to the women of Israel. She was at this time about ninety years of age; and, having generally lived with Aaron, she is called his sister, rather than the sister of Moses.—It is supposed that the Israelites sang responsively; and that Miriam led the chorus of the women, when it came to their turn to take up the song of praise. Many passages of Scripture seem to denote this alternate mode of singing, some of which are referred to in the margin. (f.)

V. 22-24. This immense multitude, with their numerous flocks and herds, marching for three days without any water, except as they might carry some small quantity with them, must have experienced great distress and perhaps disease: and having found water, but not being able to drink it, they were still more disappointed. Probably, the waters of Marah were not only very nauseous, but also unwholesome, so that the trial was indeed very great. (Note, 25, 26.) When first delivered from the Egyptians, the Israelites were so impressed with the power exerted in their behalf, that "they feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses," as acting under his authority: but being again alarmed, as well as distressed, "they soon forgot his works," and began to vent their discontent and distrust, in peevish murmurs against Moses, as if he had acted of himself!—They 'should rather have prayed to God than murmured against Moses.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 25, 26. Moses did what the people had neglected to do; and, in answer to his prayer, a tree was pointed out to him, by means of which the waters became sweet and wholesome. It cannot reasonably be supposed, that this change

22 ¶ So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

25 And he cried unto the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

26 And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes; I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

27 And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

5:9. 14:3. 15:3. 19:1-6. h Gen. 16:7. 25:18. 1 Sam. 15:7. 13:18. k Num. 33:8. l That is, Bitterness. Ruth 1:20. 14:11. 16:2,8,9. 17:3,4. Num. 11:1-6. 14:1-3. 16:11,41. 17:10. 20:2-5. 21:5. 1 Cor. 10:10. Phil. 2:14. Jude 16. m 17:3. Ps. 78:19,20. Matt. 6:25. 14:10. 17:4. Ps. 30:15. 91:15. 99:6. Jer. 15:1. n 2 Kings 2:21. 4:41. 1 Cor. 1:18. o Josh. 21:21-25. a 16:4. Deut. 8:2,16. 13:3. Judg. 2:22. 3:14. Ps. 66:10. 81:7. Prov. 17:3. Jer. 9:7. 1 Pet. 1:6,7. r Lev. 26:13-18. Deut. 7:12,13,28,15. s Deut. 12:28. 18:18. 1 Kings 11:33,38. 2 Kings 22:2. Ez. 18:5. 19:10,11. 12:29. Deut. 7:15. 28:37,50. x 23:25. 2 Kings 20:5. Job 5:16. Ps. 41:34. 103:3. 147:3. Is. 57:18. Jer. 8:22. 33:5. Hos. 6:1. Jam. 5:11-16. x Num. 33:9. Is. 12:3. Ez. 47:12. Rev. 7:17. 22:2.

was made by a natural efficacy; but rather, that the wood was the appointed token of God's miraculous operation. (Notes, 2 Kings 2:19-22. 4:40,41.) It may also call to our remembrance the blessings of the gospel, which Christ obtained for us when he hung upon the tree; and which sweeten all our bitterest trials, by giving peace to the conscience, comfort, and the hope of glory.—On this occasion, the LORD was pleased to give Israel some intimations of his holy will, previous to the promulgation of the law; as well as to show them by what rule he intended to act towards them; even according to their conduct, whether obedient or disobedient. Perhaps, they were reminded to observe the Sabbath, and directed how to order their religious worship, as well as instructed in the grand outlines of the moral law. Whilst the LORD engaged to provide for them, and continue their health and comforts, if they were obedient; he also intimated that if they were rebellious, the very diseases and judgments, which they had seen inflicted upon the Egyptians, would come upon them also. Perhaps the want of water, and the unwholesome waters of Marah, which some of them had drunk, occasioned sickness, and filled the multitude with dismal apprehensions, which were thus obviated and overruled for good purposes.

V. 27. Twelve wells, &c.] A well of water to each tribe, and the palm-trees for a cooling shade and pleasant fruit.—It is remarkable that the number answers to the twelve patriarchs and the seventy elders, and to the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-21. Those events in providence, and those experiences in the life of faith, which have occasioned our most distressing apprehensions, often terminate in such a manner as to fill our hearts with gratitude, and our lips with praise: nor would the LORD lead those whom he loves into straits, did he not intend to render them subservient to his own glory, and to their comfort and advantage.—When we have patiently and quietly waited for deliverance out of trouble, and have had our expectations answered, we should proclaim to all around us the wonderful works of God: and every one, in the improvement of his talent, and the exercise of his particular endowments, should concur in so pleasant and reasonable a service.—They who oppress the people of God are his declared enemies, over whom he will at length triumph completely; and all shall acknowledge, that he is "glorious in holiness," as well as in power, in their destruction, and in that of all impenitent sinners. But they, who humbly submit to him and trust in his mercy, will find that he "is become their Salvation," and He will "compass them with songs of deliverance."—What his grace begins, his power and faithfulness will complete; and, having redeemed them from the bondage of sin and Satan, every past favour becomes an earnest of future benefits, till he shall bring them to his holy habitation in heaven.—The judgments inflicted on some enemies of God are evidences that judgment will be executed on the rest; and he often intimidates those whom he intends to punish. Ere long "every enemy shall be destroyed, which hath done evil in his sanctuary;" the whole church shall sing "the song of Moses and of the Lamb," as triumphing over the fall of every antichrist; and "the LORD shall reign for ever and ever," to the eternal satisfaction of

CHAPTER XVI.

The Israelites come to the wilderness of Sin, and murmur for want of bread, 1-4. Manna, &c. is promised, and the people are rebuked, 5-12. Quails and manna are sent, 13-15. Manna is described, and rules are given for gathering it; the people disobey in hoarding it, and in seeking it on the sabbath-day, 16-31. God commands that an omer of it should be preserved, 32-36.

AND they *took their journey from Elim; and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of^b Sin, which is between Elm and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month, after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

2 And the *whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

3 And the children of Israel said unto them, *Would to God *we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the *flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with *hunger.

4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you: and the peo-

a 15:27. Num. 33:10-12. b 17:1. Num. 33:12. Ea. 30:15-16. c See on 15:24. Gen. 19:4. Ps. 105:7, 13, 25. 1 Cor. 10:10. d Num. 20:3-5. Deut. 28:67. Josh. 7: 2. 2 Sam. 18:33. Acts 25:29. 1 Cor. 4:8. 2 Cor. 11:1. e Num. 11:15. 14:2. Job 3:1. 10:20. Jer. 20:14-18. Jon. 4:8, 9. f 2:23. Num. 11:4, 5. g 5:21. 17:3. Num. 16:13, 41. Heb. 3:3. Jer. 2:6. Lam. 4:9. i Ps. 78:24. 105:40. John 6:31, 32. 1 Cor. 10:10.

* Heb. the portion of a day in his day. Neh. 11:23. Prov. 30:5.

his redeemed people, and the eternal confusion of his adversaries.

V. 22-27. In this world we must pass through many changes: and those praises which only spring from gratified self-love, will soon be turned into rebellious murmurs. Hypocrites may have a temporary faith, and sometimes very high affections, and be very earnest in religious exercises; but, in time of temptation, they often fall away: and even true believers, in seasons of sharp trial, are frequently induced to fret, distrust, and murmur. But, in every dispensation, we should cast our care upon the Lord, and pour out our prayers before him: and we shall find that a submissive will, a peaceful conscience, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, render the bitterest trials tolerable, yea pleasant. And, let us not forget that we are preserved from destruction, and delivered from our enemies, to be the servants of God; that he proves us in order to our more unreserved obedience; that our exemptions from the afflictions which others endure, is intended to encourage us in the path of duty; and that the evidence of our being interested in his redeeming love, arises from the habitual disposition to keep his commandments. Our health, both of body and soul, depends on him: may he then sanctify our bodily sicknesses, restore our souls to the health of holiness, enable us "to draw water with joy from the wells of salvation," and "to sit down under his shadow with great delight," and find "his fruit sweet to our taste."—(Cant. 2:3. Is. 12:3.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-3. We are informed in another place, (Num. 33:10-12.) that the Israelites marched back to the Red Sea, when they left Elim. Perhaps the Lord saw good to lead them thither again; in order to remind them of his past mercies, and to renew the impressions made at first on their mind, which were in great measure erased at Marah.—They however arrived in the desert of Sin, not far from Sinai, exactly a month after they set off from Egypt: but when they came thither, having by this time consumed nearly the whole stock of provisions which they had brought with them, and seeing no prospect of a supply, "the whole congregation," including the elders and the body of the people, with very few exceptions, murmured vehemently against Moses and Aaron. As they had been liberated from Egyptian bondage, and conducted thus far, by a series of stupendous miracles; doubtless they should have expected to be provided for in a similar manner: but, instead of this confidence in God, they looked only to natural causes; and, perceiving nothing but approaching famine and desolation, they passionately wished that they had died by some sudden judgment, in like manner as the first-born of Egypt had been slain! Nay, they seemed to envy their speedy death, while they considered themselves reserved to a more lingering and painful execution! They had likewise forgotten the galling labours and oppression of their cruel bondage, and only remembered the plenty which they had enjoyed, magnifying it probably far beyond the truth: as if their enslaved condition in Egypt had been a most desirable privilege! "They ungratefully magnify their former condition, that they may represent their present to be more miserable than really it was." *Bp. Patrick*.—Not daring directly to arraign the justice of God, they passionately arraigned the conduct of Moses and Aaron: as if they had purposely intended the destruction of the whole congregation!

V. 4, 5. The conduct of Israel was ungrateful, perverse, and distrustful; yet, as their distress was real and urgent, the Lord did not execute deserved punishment on them, or so much as threaten it. But he determined to prove them, and to make it manifest, as by a fair trial, whether any rea-

ple shall go out and gather a *certain rate every day, that I may *prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall *prepare that which they bring in; *and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At *even, then ye shall know that *the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt.

7 And in *the morning, then *ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: And *what are we, that ye murmur against us?

8 And Moses said, *This shall be* when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that *the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him. And what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but *against the LORD.

9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, *Come

Matt. 6:11. 32. 33. Luke 11:3. k See on 15:25. Josh. 24:15. 1. 28. 35:2. Lev. 25:31, 32. m 22. n 8, 12, 13. o 3. 6:7. 12:31. 32:1, 7, 11. Num. 16:29-30. Ps. 77:20. Is. 63:11, 12. p 13. q 10:24. 10:16. Lev. 9:6. Num. 14:10. 16:42. Is. 35: 2. 40:5. John 11:4, 40. r 2, 3, 8. Num. 16:11. s 9:12. Num. 14:27. Matt. 9:4. John 6:41-43. 1 Cor. 10:10. t Num. 21:7. 1 Sam. 8:7. Is. 32:6. 37:29. Luke 10: 16. John 13:30. Rom. 13:12. 1 Thes. 4:8. u Num. 16:16.

sonable indulgence, or any miraculous interpositions, would induce them to obey his commandments.—The manna came from the region of the air, which is sometimes called the heavens, (Note, Gen. 1:6-8.) where it was miraculously produced; and it descended in the form of rain or dew: it might therefore properly be said, that the Lord "rained bread from heaven for them." The manna was also a type of Christ, "the living Bread, who came down from heaven to give life to the world." (Notes, John 6:30-35, 47-51.)—It was the purpose of God to keep Israel in dependence on him; and therefore this miraculous bread (for it answered the purposes of bread) was sent daily, in proportion to the wants of each day. But he promised to send on the sixth day twice the usual quantity, that they might prepare it against the Sabbath.—Whatever the custom of the patriarchs had been respecting the Sabbath, or the traditions handed down among their descendants concerning its sacred obligation, we may reasonably conclude, that the Israelites, when bond-slaves in Egypt, had not been allowed to rest from labour on that day; and probably the observance of it was almost wholly neglected, and the institution itself nearly forgotten. But if, as many learned men suppose, they left Egypt on the Sabbath, and passed the Red Sea on the Sabbath, which events were commemorated on the first and last days of unleavened bread; we may conclude, that the old traditional recollection of the institution would be now revived; and they would be prepared for more explicit instructions concerning the manner of sanctifying that sacred rest.—Indeed it is very doubtful, whether the Israelitish Sabbath was observed on the seventh day, as calculated from the close of the six days "in which God created the heavens and the earth;" and when we consider, that a whole day is lost by sailing round the world in one direction, and gained by going round it in the other, we must perceive that no great stress can be laid on such calculations. The seventh day was appointed at first in remembrance of creation being completed; one day in seven was continued to be set apart under the law, but perhaps the day was determined with reference to Israel's deliverance from Egypt: and the same proportion is observed under the Christian Dispensation, but the day is fixed in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection. In all these instances, the day observed was a memorial, through all subsequent generations, of the event, which gave occasion to its being instituted.

V. 6-8. The people saw in the evening, when the quails came, and in the morning when the manna descended, an additional, miraculous, and merciful proof, that the Lord himself had brought them out of Egypt; and that Moses and Aaron had only executed his commission, and adhered to his instructions. Thus they saw his glorious power and goodness, in supplying by miracle the urgent wants of this vast multitude. But perhaps the words, "In the morning ye shall see the glory of the LORD," may also refer to that visible display of divine glory which appeared in the cloud, (10,) as showing them from whom that supply would be sent. They would, however, evidently perceive, that the Lord regarded their murmurings with decided displeasure: for while they reproached Moses and Aaron, as if unwise, unjust, or unkind, in leading them out of Egypt; they did not consider nor recollect that all their murmurings were indeed against God himself, and a daring impeachment of his conduct towards them.

V. 9, 10. We have frequently read, that *ЖЕНОУ* appeared to his servants, and that he spake to them; and many expositors suppose, probably on insufficient grounds, that this was always, or generally, from some visible glorious manifes-

near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings.

10 And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel; speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, 'It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them,

z See on 2. 7. Num. 14-10, 16-19, 42. *x* 13-21, 22. 40:94-98. Lev. 9:5. Num. 16:42. 1 Kings 8:10-11. Matt. 17:5. *a* 4:5. 6:7. 7:17. Jer. 31:34. Ez. 34:30. 39:22. Joel 3:17. Zech. 13:9. *b* Num. 11:31-33. Ps. 78:27, 28. 105:40. *c* Num. 11:7-9. Deut. 8:3. Neh. 9:15. *d* Ps. 78:24. 105:40. *d* Ps. 147:16. *e* Or, What is this? *f* Or, It is a portion. *e* Deut. 8:3, 16. Josh. 5:12. Neh. 9:20. John

that, which they call the SHECHINAH: but on this occasion, Israel is summoned by Aaron, at the word of Moses, to draw "near before the Lord;" and when "they looked toward the wilderness, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud." It is evident that, at this time, there was some extraordinary splendour, which intimated the special presence of God; but if this had not differed from all the former appearances of God, why is the language so very different?—It is not unlikely that Moses bade Aaron go speak to the people, because he himself retired to speak to God; that is, to pray for them, and to acknowledge his great goodness in passing by their murmurings. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11, 12. It is probable, that the Lord himself audibly addressed Moses from the glory which appeared in the cloud; and thus confirmed what he had before spoken. By the miraculous and very large supply of provisions about to be sent, the people would be convinced, not only that the Lord was able, but also that he considered himself engaged, to protect and provide for them: unless they forfeited that privilege by rebellion and apostasy.

V. 13. There are different opinions concerning the meaning of the word translated *quails*. Some imagine that they were a species of locusts; but the language of Scripture uniformly leads us to consider them as wild fowl, of whatever species they might be. (*Marg. Ref. b.*)—Such a large multitude of these were miraculously brought to the camp of Israel, and lighted among the people, that without difficulty they caught as many as sufficed for the whole multitude! This miracle of mercy may be contrasted with the plague of locusts which devoured the remaining sustenance of Egypt.

V. 14, 15. After the Israelites had feasted at night upon the quails, they found in the morning that, along with the dew, there had fallen all around the camp, "a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost;" yet it had not been exhaled with the dew, but lay on the ground as a solid substance: and while they did not know what it was, and inquired of each other, they were led to say, *man hu*: "This is man," or, manna. *This is prepared or appointed, or portioned out*; that is, "This is the food before predicted, which God hath prepared or appointed for us."—The name thus first given it, has been retained, as to the substance, in most languages into which the Scriptures have been translated.—As the people seemed not to be generally satisfied, that this was the bread which God had promised to "rain from heaven for them," Moses expressly assured them that it was.—The name *manna* has also been given to several substances, procured in different ways; but it does not appear, that any of them was the same as the manna given to Israel, or at all fitted to answer the same purposes. It was indeed a miraculous provision, given immediately from God; and not the production of second causes.

It is manna. (15) מַנָּה. 'Quasi preparatus cibus, aut comparatus sine labore.' *Robertson.*—It is formed from מָנָה as *a precept* from צַו and קָ a line, from קָו. The word may be derived from the substantive מַנָּה, a portion, a distribution. The common opinion that מַנָּה means *What is this?* seems entirely destitute of foundation.

V. 16-20. The Lord sent the manna, but the people must go out early to gather it; and they were directed to take, for each individual, such a quantity as would in general suffice a healthy man; for that seems to be the meaning of the expression, "Every man according to his eating," when compared with the context. There would be in each tent several women and children, who did not require so much food as the grown men, yet these were directed to gather for every one of them,

"This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat."

16 This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating: an omer for every man according to the number of your persons, take ye every man for them which are in his tents.

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

18 And when they did mete it with an omer he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating.

19 And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

20 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses, but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

21 And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

22 And it came to pass that on the sixth day

6:31, 32, 49, 58. 1 Cor. 10:3. Rev. 2:17. *f* See on 4. Num. 21:5. Prov. 9:5. Luke 12:30. *g* 18:33, 36. *h* Heb. by the poll, or, head. *i* Heb. souls. *h* 2 Cor. 8:14, 15. 12:10. 23:18. Matt. 6:34. *k* Matt. 6:19. Luke 12:15, 33. Heb. 13:5. Jam. 5:2, 3. 1 Num. 12:3. 16:15. Mark 3:5. 10:14. Eph. 4:25. *m* Prov. 6:6-11. Ec. 9:10. 12:1. Matt. 6:33. John 12:35. 2 Cor. 6:2. *n* 5:15. Lev. 23:12, 22.

each man according to his own eating. And, as an Omer is computed to be nearly three quarts, wine-measure, it would be a competent supply for any individual. We may suppose that the several persons capable of labour, in each tent, cast all they gathered into one stock; and when the father of the family came to measure it, he was allowed to retain an Omer for each of his household: but, if he had any over, he must impart it to his neighbour who had less than that quantity; for some would be less active than others. Thus it came to pass, that he who "gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack;" but they daily gathered for every individual in that vast assembly according to the eating of a grown man, or an Omer each; and this was the case during forty years.—The apostle's argument, grounded on the passage, leads us to this interpretation; (*Note*, 2 Cor. 8:10-15.) else how could the case of Israel have been in point to that of Christians, when exhorted to impart of their superfluity, to supply the wants of their brethren, and to trust the Lord to send them a new supply, as they needed it? If this exposition be not admitted, it must be supposed, that numberless miracles were constantly wrought, without any apparent occasion, in augmenting or diminishing the quantity gathered by each person, as "some gathered more and some less." But if we allow that every head of a family who had gathered above the quantity was directed to keep an Omer for each of the several persons in his tent, and to give the surplus to his neighbour who had not gathered so much, the whole may be easily explained. Some might retain more than the Omer each, and so hoard what they ought to have imparted; and others, finding an Omer each more than sufficient for his family for the present day, might hoard part of it for the morrow, fearing lest no more should fall. But as the Israelites were taught by this way of subsisting, to live continually and cheerfully dependent on God, and in liberal love to each other; and, as the daily supply of the manna was an emblem of the life of faith in Christ: hoarding in either way was expressly forbidden. And while those who gathered much imparted to their neighbours, they who could not consume an Omer each, might, as some think, give the residue to their cattle; or burn it before the next morning, as they did the remains of the paschal lamb, and other sacrifices. But when some of them selfishly and distrustfully disobeyed this injunction, the manna which they had kept bred worms and stank, though when preserved by the Lord's command it continued perfectly good.

V. 21. As the people were required to use, impart, or destroy the manna gathered each day, before the next morning, they were under the necessity of gathering it early in the day, "every man according to his eating;" or else they would have had no food; for though it did not exhalate with the dew in the morning, "when the sun waxed hot it melted." This was a very extraordinary circumstance, that a substance, which was so easily dissolved and exhaled, should be sufficiently nutritive to support the people in health and vigour for so long a course of years, and also that what melted and totally disappeared when the sun waxed hot, might yet be baked or seethed (23) without any such effect.

V. 22-27. It is evident, that the miracle, on this occasion, consisted in the larger quantity of manna that fell on the sixth day; which caused it to be so much thicker on the ground than at other times, that the people gathered twice the quantity, with little additional labour, (29); and not in a subsequent increase of the quantity which each person had gathered.—As the rulers came to inform Moses that the people had gathered twice the usual quantity; it may be sup-

36 Now ¹an omer *is* the tenth *part* of an ephah.

4:9. a *See* on 15. b Num. 11:6,7. Cant. 2:3. c Ps. 103:12. 105:5. 111:4,5. Luke 22:19. Heb. 2:1. d Heb. 9:4. e 25:16,21. 27:21. f 28:21. g 31:18. 38:21. 40:20. Num. 1:50,53. 17:10. f Num. 33:38. Dent. 8:23. Neh. 9:20,21. s 78:24,25. John 6:30—58. g Josh. 5:12. h Num. 33:48—50. Dent. 1:8. 34:1—4. i 16:32,33.

V. 35, 36. As Moses lived till a great part of the fortieth year was past, when Israel was encamped in the plains of Moab; there is no reason to say, that the thirty-fifth verse was added after his decease.—An ephah was something more than seven gallons of our measure, and less than our bushel. The manna was a type of Christ, provided by God, and given to sinners, who must otherwise have inevitably perished, who were altogether undeserving of such a gift, and prone to despise and undervalue it. The careless multitude understand not what this heavenly manna is, or what use to make of it, till instructed that “it is the Bread which the Lord hath given them.” The hypocrite retains the doctrine as a notion, which corrupts, and produces pride and vain confidence. The true Christian, having an appetite for this heavenly provision, seeks it diligently and early, day by day, labours for it, though it is the gift of God; and ‘feeds upon it in his heart by faith with thanksgiving,’ by which his soul acquires health and vigour, and he becomes strong to labour and to fight with his enemies.—There is a sufficiency in this provision for the whole congregation of Israel, but nothing over for any one. We must have it fresh, and feed upon it daily, to the end of our journey to the heavenly Canaan; and though it appear to some light bread, it will hold out to the end: that is, we must by faith receive from Christ, as the purchase of his sacrifice, pardon and peace, grace and strength, every day till we come to heaven. And though we now seem to gather a double portion on the sabbath-day; yet, when we keep the heavenly Sabbath, we shall not need to gather any more, nor will the stock we have acquired any more corrupt; but in that holy of holies it will endure for ever, as provision for our souls, to the glory of our God.

V. 1—12. Changes are prepared for us in this world; we should therefore prepare for them, and be ready to endure hardship, and to exercise faith, patience, and self-denial, whenever called to it. But, before we severely censure others, we ought to put "our souls in their souls' stead." We may easily condemn the Israelites; but perhaps we do not readily suspect, that we also should distrust, depend, and murmur, if proved by far less trials, and left to ourselves; nor do we sufficiently regard their conduct as an intended picture of human nature; and their history, as that of the human heart under the varying dispensations of Providence. In whatever situation we are placed, we are prone to undervalue our mercies, to aggravate our troubles, and to compare the unfavourable side of our present circumstances with the favourable side of some former, or some imaginary situation; and in this way we are perversely ingenious in rendering ourselves discontented and unthankful; and are ever wishing for some change, yet ever seeming to change for the worse.—When ashamed to reflect directly upon God, we are apt to vent our impatience in complaints against the instruments, or mere occasions, of our uneasiness; not aware that our murmurings are against the Lord himself. It behoves us, therefore, to watch and pray against this rebellious, unthankful spirit, the offspring of pride and unbelief; that, confiding in the wisdom of God, and conscious of our own unworthiness, we may learn contentment; and if plain and sharp reproofs humble and quiet us, they are valuable advantages. But "the Lord is slow to anger," and mercifully considereth our frame; and he knows how hard we find it to bear reproof without impatience, and to believe his word in direct opposition to every appearance of probability. He therefore

V. 32-34. It is very probable that this direction was not given till the ark of the covenant, the *testimony* of God's gracious presence with Israel, was made, and placed in the holy of holies. The apostle informs us, (according to the Septuagint), that the pot in which the manna was preserved, like other sacred vessels, was made of gold.—Thus, by miracle, the manna, which was dissolved by the sun if not gathered, and when kept in dis'rus, sank in one nig'l, was preserved pure from generation to generation!

CHAPTER XVII.

The people want water, chide with Moses, and tempt the Lord, 1, 2; Moses ex- animates with them, and complains to God; and, at his command, smites the rock in Horeb, which pours out water, 3-6; the place is named Massah, and Meribah, 7. Amalek assaults Israel, and is overcome by Joshua, while Moses holds up his hands with the rod of God, 8-13. Amalek is doomed to destruction: and Moses builds an altar, called JEHOVAH-NISSI, 14-16.

AND all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of ^aSin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in ^bRephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

2 Wherefore ^cthe people did chide with Moses, and said, ^dGive us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? ^eWherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and

a 16:1. Num. 33:12-14. b 8. 19:2. c 5:21. 14:11, 12. 15:24. 16:2, 3. Num. 11:4-6. 14:2. 20:3-5. 21:5. d Gen. 30:1-2. 1 Sam. 8:6. Luke 15:12. e 7. Num. 14:2. Deut. 6:16. Ps. 78:19, 41, 56. 95:9. 106:14. Is. 7:7. Mal. 3:15. Matt. 4:7. 16:1-3. Luke 4:12. Acts 5:9. 15:10. 1 Cor. 10:9. Heb. 3:9. f See on 16:3. g 14:15. 15:23. Num. 11:11. h Num. 14:10. 16:19. 1 Sam. 30:6. John 8:59. 10:31.

frequently shows us his glory, and proves our obedience by supplying our wants, and exceeding our expectations; and this tends, for the future, to deprive us of all plausible pretence of saying, that we want encouragement to trust and serve him.

V. 13-21. The Lord could, at all times, supply his people with superfluities, and in some cases he does so: but, in general, he sees it best for them to have only things necessary, and that from day to day; and he constrains most of them to expect their support from him on the morrow, that they may see the glory of his power, and taste the sweetness of his truth and love, in their daily bread. If our faith were strong, we should sleep no worse, though like Israel we went to rest night after night, without one morsel in the house for the next day; or any other prospect of obtaining it, except confidence in him, who as "a Father, knoweth what things we have need of." Yet we must "labour even for the meat that perisheth," in subordination to our labouring for that "which endureth unto everlasting life," though both are the gift of God: and it is the Lord's will, that the poor should be liberal of their little, as well as the rich out of their abundance. But whether we have much or little, that which is hoarded in covetousness and distrust, corrupts, breeds worms, and stinks; and that alone is useful, which supplies our wants and relieves the necessities of others.

V. 22-36. Whatever diligence we use in worldly business on other days, we are to consider the sabbath as the Lord's gift to us; and should previously contrive every thing, even in respect of our food, in that manner which may best render it a day of holy rest from worldly business, and in spiritual employments; and he will take care that we shall eventually be no losers by so doing.—But there is in us, by nature, a spirit of perverseness, which takes pleasure in acting contrary to the Lord's commands: and by our conduct, as it were, declaring, that we will not submit to him: nor can we be his true servants, unless this proud self-will be mortified and subdued.—Whatever Providence in any honest way allows us, we should consider as "the bread which the LORD giveth us to eat," and be thankful and contented with it.—But, if we cannot merit our bodily food, what claim can we have to that "Bread which came down from heaven, to give life to our souls?" (Notes, John 6:22-58.) Let us then with thankful hearts, early and diligently go forth to gather this heavenly provision, and joyfully feed upon it: let us seek earnestly for the grace of the Holy Spirit, to turn all our knowledge of the doctrine of Christ crucified into spiritual nourishment for our souls by faith and love; that we may not rest in barren notions, feed on worldly vanities, or satisfy ourselves with former supposed experiences; but, living upon this Bread from day to day, in attendance on all the means of grace, we shall show that our souls are nourished in all holiness, and fitted for unreserved obedience. And thus also, edifying others by the way, we shall in due time arrive at the heavenly Canaan, there to feast for ever on the rich provisions of our Father's house above.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. There are other intermediate stages mentioned in Numbers; (Marg. Ref. a.) but here the sacred historian pointed out such places alone as were on some account made remarkable.—"The commandment of the Lord," respecting the journeys of the people, was made known by the moving of the pillar. They were, however, still disposed, after all they had seen and heard, even while marching under this guidance, and living upon the manna, on every new trial, to forget God, and to speak and act as if they thought, that Moses and Aaron had of themselves brought them out of Egypt! Thus they "tempted the LORD;" they put his omniscience and omnipotence to the trial; and relapsed as if they would tempt him to take vengeance on them, or to leave them to the consequences of their perverseness and unbelief; or as if they would presumptuously prescribe to him, or limit him, and put it to the proof, whether he could perform their requirements or not; being disposed to reject his authority, and refuse to believe that he was among them, if he did not. (Marg. Ref. c.)

the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle, with thirst?

4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me.

5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel: and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock ^ain Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Acts 7:59. 14:19. i Ez. 2:6. Acts 20:23, 24. k 7:19, 20. Num. 20:8. 116:10. m 3:1-5. n Num. 20:9-11. Deut. 8:15. Neh. 9:15. Ps. 78:13, 16, 20. 105:41. 114:8. Is. 48:21. 1 Cor. 10:4. o Ps. 46:4. Is. 41:17, 18. 43:19, 20. John 4:10, 13. 7:37, 38. Rev. 22:17.

V. 3, 4. When the people wanted water, they immediately showed great impatience and bitterness of spirit; but, when left for a while to experience the distress of unalloyed thirst, in order to make them sensible of their entire dependence on God, and to prepare them to receive the miraculous supply intended, with the greater admiration of his power and goodness, they became so outrageous, that they were ready to stone Moses, in a popular tumult, as the author of their calamity, which they supposed would end in the destruction of the whole multitude! But he, in the meekness and confidence of faith, stated the case before the Lord, and calmly sought his direction, assured of his seasonable and effectual interposition.

V. 5, 6. It is observable, that each of the several extraordinary interpositions of the Lord, in behalf of Israel, was preceded by some remarkable discovery of their ungrateful and rebellious disposition; and this served exceedingly to illustrate the riches of his unmerited mercy towards them.—Instead of commanding Moses to lift up his rod, and call for some dreadful plague, like those inflicted on Egypt, to destroy the ringleaders of this tumult, and dismay the rest, God directed him to take, as his attendants, some of the elders of Israel, to be eye-witnesses of the miracle about to be wrought, which the people could only behold afar off; and also the rod with which the Nile had been smitten, when its waters became blood; and at mount Horeb, which lay at some distance, he and the elders should see the visible glory of God from the cloud, resting on one particular rock, which he must smite with the rod; and then water would burst from it, sufficient for the necessities of the people.—An immense quantity of water would be required for so large a multitude, and for their flocks and herds, even in one day: but we have reason to conclude that this water followed them as a river in the wilderness from place to place, for a long time; and some think that it continued afterwards to water those parts of the desert.—The apostle calls this water "spiritual drink," as the emblem of spiritual blessings; and he says, "that Rock was Christ;" that is, a type of him; and this should direct our interpretation of the passage. (Note, 1 Cor. 10:1-5.) It is also observable, that God is never in Scripture called a Rock, till after this event, but afterwards the expression often occurs. A rock is indeed firm and unshaken, as a foundation on which to build: but from a rock of flint, as this was, we might sooner expect fire than water: and thus Christ is a tried Foundation of immovable power and stability; but sinners had more reason to expect vengeance than happiness from him. The rock must be smitten by the rod of Moses, the giver of the law, even that rod by which the plagues were inflicted upon Egypt: thus Christ was made under the law, and bore its righteous curse, even that punishment which our sins deserved. The rock was smitten by Moses, at the LORD's command, once, in the presence of the elders of Israel, the people who were then full of rebellion, beholding at a distance, while the symbol of the Lord's presence and glory rested upon it: and thus Christ was crucified by the demand of the rebellious Jewish elders, the whole multitude consenting to his death, once for all, and by man's instrumentality, but by his determinate purpose, who said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man who is my Fellow, saith the LORD of Hosts: smite the Shepherd;" (Zech. 13:7.) while evident tokens of divine majesty attended his crucifixion and death. (Matt. 27:45-54.) After the rock was smitten, the waters flowed forth abundantly, without which supply Israel must have perished: and thus after Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, the Holy Spirit, in all his humbling, sanctifying, and comforting influences, as well as in his manifold gifts and operations, was abundantly communicated. For this seems to have been especially meant, though all the blessings of salvation are included.—Immense as the congregation of Israel was, there was water enough for them all, and a constant, abundant supply; and numerous as believers are, the Spirit of Christ suffices amply; yea, there is so large and inexhaustible a fulness in him that millions of millions might drink and yet

11 And it came to pass when ^bMoses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

16 For he said, "Because ¹the LORD hath sworn *that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.*

35:3. 2 Cor. 1:11. Phil. 1:19. 1 Thes. 5:25. Heb. 12:12. Jam. 1:6. e Josh. 10:28. 32,37,42. 11:22. f 12:14. 13:9. 34:27. Deut. 31:9. Josh. 4:7. Job 19:23. Hab. 2:3. e Num. 24:12. Deut. 25:17-19. 1 Sam. 15:23,38,18. 27:8,9. 2 Sam. 1:1,8. -16. 1 Chr. 4:4. 8:18. Job 18:17. Ps. 96. Prov. 10:7. s *That is, THE LORD my Banner*. Gen. 22:14. 33:21. Judg. 6:24. Ec. 48:35. ||Or, *because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the LORD, therefore, etc.* ¶ *The hand upon the throne of the LORD*. Is. 66:1. Acts 7:49. 1 Pt. 2:18-31.

V. 15, 16. Moses ascribed the victory to JEHOVAH's banner, under which Israel fought ; and he gave him the glory of it, and considered it as an earnest of many subsequent victories.—This is the first altar that we read of since Jacob went down into Egypt ; and it does not appear that public sacrifices to JEHOVAH had been offered during the intervening period. This altar, however, was not intended for sacrifices, but as an additional memorial of God's purpose concerning Amalek.—The expression translated "The LORD hath sworn," is variously interpreted : for some think it refers to an ancient method of taking a solemn oath, by laying hold on the throne, or tribunal, according to one of the marginal renderings, "The hand upon the throne of the LORD:" but others consider it as stating the reason of this denounced extirpating war, "Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the LORD." According to this latter marginal rendering, JEHOVAH had fixed his throne in Israel, and shown his glorious power and majesty in bringing him out of Egypt : yet Amalek, unprovoked, had attacked this throne of the Lord, who therefore determined to take signal vengeance on him, for an example to all future generations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. When we are walking according to the commands of the Lord, we may surely depend on him to supply our real wants, in his own time and manner; but we must expect trials, and learn to exercise patience as well as faith. Inordinate and impatient thirsting, even for needful things, puts the mind into a ferment; renders us forgetful of the power and goodness of the Lord, when we have most abundantly experienced them; and disposes us to quarrel with our best friends, and even presumptuously to tempt, distrust, and prescribe to God himself.—They who endeavour to do important good to others, must expect much unreasonable and ungrateful behaviour; and not only to be reproached, but exposed to danger, for their best services: they need therefore to be well armed with patience, prudence, and meekness; and to have constant and near communion with God, that they may spread every case before him, and seek from him guidance, comfort, and protection.—The Lord will honour those who behave thus in trying circumstances, in the presence of their despisers, and perhaps make them instruments of their preservation.—When Moses, with the rod, so often the token of vengeance on Egypt, smote the rock to bring forth water for Israel, after all their base rebellions, how powerfully did he teach them “not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good!” But this was far more emphatically enforced, when “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse *for us*,” who might justly have sunk under that wrath, which the glorious Son of God willingly endured in our stead!—From this smitten Rock flow the streams of salvation, which follow us through the wilderness. Thence the believing soul receives in measure answerable, not only to his necessities, but to his largest expectations; while all who “are athirst,” yea, “all that *will*, are invited to come, and take of them freely.”—Indeed “where sin hath abounded, grace much more abounds.”—The Lord often meets the sinner with his converting grace, at the moment when it might have been expected that he would have made him an example of his vengeance; and the believer is sometimes surprised with the sweetest consolations, when most overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness!—Yet this gracious Lord abhors iniquity; and, while he pardons sin, and blesses penitent sinners, he still shows his abhorrence of their crimes, and takes effectual methods, that they shall remember, for their humiliation, how they have tempted and provoked him.—But, happy are his people! They can never at, wher He

V. 14. This is the first time that writing is mentioned in Scripture; though it is generally thought that Moses had before this time written the book of Genesis. Some however imagine, that even this direction was given after the law had been delivered from mount Sinai: for they consider alphabetical writing, not so much a human invention, as a divinely appointed method of perpetuating revealed truth. They therefore are of opinion, that the law, written by God himself on the tables of stone, was the first alphabetical writing in the world; and that Moses was afterwards instructed in writing his books.—Yet this is only conjecture, no intimation of the kind being given in Scripture; but it may be stated more confidently, that the command given to Moses, first to write this account in a book, and then to rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, is an internal evidence that Moses wrote this history himself, and gave it to Joshua in that form before his death. As Joshua was chosen to command in the wars of Israel, it was proper that he should be informed of this sentence, that he might embrace every opportunity of executing

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jethro brings to Mos a his wife and sons, 1-6. Moses entertains him; and relates the Lord's goodness to Israel, 7, 8. Jethro rejoices, blesses God, and offers sacrifices, 9-12. He gives good counsel to Moses, and Moses acts according to it, 13-26. He departs from Moses, 27.

WHEN Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses's father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt; 2 Then Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, took Zipporah Moses's wife, after he had sent her back;

3 And her two sons, of which the name of the one was Gershom, (for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land;)

4 And the name of the other was Eliezer, (for the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh:)

5 And Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God.

6 And he said unto Moses, I, thy father-in-law Jethro, am come unto thee, and thy wife and her two sons with her.

7 And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did obeisance, and kissed him, and they asked each other of their welfare: and they came into the tent.

8 And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them.

9 And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel; whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.

a 9:16, 21, 31, 4:18. Num. 10:29. Judg. 4:11. b Ps. 34:2. 44:1. 78:4. Jer. 33:9. Zech. 8:23. Gal. 1:23, 24. c Acts 7:35, 36. 14:27. 15:12. 21:19, 20. Rom. 15:18. d 7-10. e 10. f 20. g 9. h 9. i 11. j 11. k 11. l 11. m 11. n 11. o 11. p 11. q 11. r 11. s 11. t 11. u 11. v 11. w 11. x 11. y 11. z 11. aa 11. ab 11. ac 11. ad 11. ae 11. af 11. ag 11. ah 11. ai 11. aj 11. ak 11. al 11. am 11. an 11. ao 11. ap 11. aq 11. ar 11. as 11. at 11. au 11. av 11. aw 11. ax 11. ay 11. az 11. ba 11. bb 11. bc 11. bd 11. be 11. bf 11. bg 11. bh 11. bi 11. bj 11. bk 11. bl 11. bm 11. bn 11. bo 11. bp 11. bq 11. br 11. bs 11. bt 11. bu 11. bv 11. bw 11. bx 11. by 11. bz 11. ca 11. cb 11. cc 11. cd 11. ce 11. cf 11. cg 11. ch 11. ci 11. cj 11. ck 11. cl 11. cm 11. cn 11. co 11. cp 11. cq 11. cr 11. cs 11. ct 11. cu 11. cv 11. cw 11. cx 11. cy 11. cz 11. da 11. db 11. dc 11. dd 11. de 11. df 11. dg 11. dh 11. di 11. dj 11. dk 11. dl 11. dm 11. dn 11. do 11. dp 11. dq 11. dr 11. ds 11. dt 11. du 11. dv 11. dw 11. dx 11. dy 11. dz 11. ea 11. eb 11. ec 11. ed 11. ee 11. ef 11. eg 11. eh 11. ei 11. ej 11. ek 11. el 11. em 11. en 11. eo 11. ep 11. eq 11. er 11. es 11. et 11. eu 11. ev 11. ew 11. ex 11. ey 11. ez 11. fa 11. fb 11. fc 11. fd 11. fe 11. ff 11. fg 11. fh 11. fi 11. fj 11. fk 11. fl 11. fm 11. fn 11. fo 11. fp 11. fq 11. fr 11. fs 11. ft 11. fu 11. fv 11. fw 11. fx 11. fy 11. fz 11. ga 11. gb 11. gc 11. gd 11. ge 11. gf 11. gg 11. gh 11. gi 11. gj 11. gk 11. gl 11. gm 11. gn 11. go 11. gp 11. gq 11. gr 11. gs 11. gt 11. gu 11. gv 11. gw 11. gx 11. gy 11. gz 11. ha 11. hb 11. hc 11. hd 11. he 11. hf 11. hg 11. hh 11. hi 11. hj 11. hk 11. hl 11. hm 11. hn 11. ho 11. hp 11. hq 11. hr 11. hs 11. ht 11. hu 11. hv 11. hw 11. hx 11. hy 11. hz 11. ia 11. ib 11. ic 11. id 11. ie 11. if 11. ig 11. ih 11. ii 11. ij 11. ik 11. il 11. im 11. in 11. io 11. ip 11. iq 11. ir 11. is 11. it 11. iu 11. iv 11. iw 11. ix 11. iy 11. iz 11. ja 11. jb 11. jc 11. jd 11. je 11. jf 11. jg 11. jh 11. ji 11. jj 11. jk 11. jl 11. jm 11. jn 11. jo 11. jp 11. jq 11. jr 11. js 11. jt 11. ju 11. jv 11. jw 11. jx 11. jy 11. jz 11. ka 11. kb 11. kc 11. kd 11. ke 11. kf 11. kg 11. kh 11. ki 11. kj 11. kl 11. km 11. kn 11. ko 11. kp 11. kq 11. kr 11. ks 11. kt 11. ku 11. kv 11. kw 11. kx 11. ky 11. kz 11. la 11. lb 11. lc 11. ld 11. le 11. lf 11. lg 11. lh 11. li 11. lj 11. lk 11. ll 11. lm 11. ln 11. lo 11. lp 11. lq 11. lr 11. ls 11. lt 11. lu 11. lv 11. lw 11. lx 11. ly 11. lz 11. ma 11. mb 11. mc 11. md 11. me 11. mf 11. mg 11. mh 11. mi 11. mj 11. mk 11. ml 11. mn 11. mo 11. mp 11. mq 11. mr 11. ms 11. mt 11. mu 11. mv 11. mw 11. mx 11. my 11. mz 11. na 11. nb 11. nc 11. nd 11. ne 11. nf 11. ng 11. nh 11. ni 11. nj 11. nk 11. nl 11. nm 11. no 11. np 11. nq 11. nr 11. ns 11. nt 11. nu 11. nv 11. nw 11. nx 11. ny 11. nz 11. oa 11. ob 11. oc 11. od 11. oe 11. of 11. og 11. oh 11. oi 11. oj 11. ok 11. ol 11. om 11. on 11. oo 11. op 11. oq 11. or 11. os 11. ot 11. ou 11. ov 11. ow 11. ox 11. oy 11. oz 11. pa 11. pb 11. pc 11. pd 11. pe 11. pf 11. pg 11. ph 11. pi 11. pj 11. pk 11. pl 11. pm 11. pn 11. po 11. pp 11. pq 11. pr 11. ps 11. pt 11. pu 11. pv 11. pw 11. px 11. py 11. pz 11. qa 11. qb 11. qc 11. qd 11. qe 11. qf 11. qg 11. qh 11. qi 11. qj 11. qk 11. ql 11. qm 11. qn 11. qo 11. qp 11. qq 11. qr 11. qs 11. qt 11. qu 11. qv 11. qw 11. qx 11. qy 11. qz 11. ra 11. rb 11. rc 11. rd 11. re 11. rf 11. rg 11. rh 11. ri 11. rj 11. rk 11. rl 11. rm 11. rn 11. ro 11. rp 11. rq 11. rr 11. rs 11. rt 11. ru 11. rv 11. rw 11. rx 11. ry 11. rz 11. sa 11. sb 11. sc 11. sd 11. se 11. sf 11. sg 11. sh 11. si 11. sj 11. sk 11. sl 11. sm 11. sn 11. so 11. sp 11. sq 11. sr 11. ss 11. st 11. su 11. sv 11. sw 11. sx 11. sy 11. sz 11. ta 11. tb 11. tc 11. td 11. te 11. tf 11. tg 11. th 11. ti 11. tj 11. tk 11. tl 11. tm 11. tn 11. to 11. tp 11. tq 11. tr 11. ts 11. tt 11. tu 11. tv 11. tw 11. tx 11. ty 11. tz 11. ua 11. ub 11. uc 11. ud 11. ue 11. uf 11. ug 11. uh 11. ui 11. uj 11. uk 11. ul 11. um 11. un 11. uo 11. up 11. uq 11. ur 11. us 11. ut 11. uu 11. uv 11. uw 11. ux 11. uy 11. uz 11. va 11. vb 11. vc 11. vd 11. ve 11. vf 11. vg 11. vh 11. vi 11. vj 11. vk 11. vl 11. vm 11. vn 11. vo 11. vp 11. vq 11. vr 11. vs 11. vt 11. vu 11. vv 11. vw 11. vx 11. vy 11. vz 11. wa 11. wb 11. wc 11. wd 11. we 11. wf 11. wg 11. wh 11. wi 11. wj 11. wk 11. wl 11. wm 11. wn 11. wo 11. wp 11. wq 11. wr 11. ws 11. wt 11. wu 11. wv 11. ww 11. wx 11. wy 11. wz 11. xa 11. xb 11. xc 11. xd 11. xe 11. xf 11. xg 11. xh 11. xi 11. xj 11. xk 11. xl 11. xm 11. xn 11. xo 11. xp 11. xq 11. xr 11. xs 11. xt 11. xu 11. xv 11. xw 11. xy 11. xz 11. ya 11. yb 11. yc 11. yd 11. ye 11. yf 11. yg 11. yh 11. yi 11. yj 11. yk 11. yl 11. ym 11. yn 11. yo 11. yp 11. yq 11. yr 11. ys 11. yt 11. yu 11. yv 11. yw 11. yx 11. yy 11. yz 11. za 11. zb 11. zc 11. zd 11. ze 11. zf 11. zg 11. zh 11. zi 11. zj 11. zk 11. zl 11. zm 11. zn 11. zo 11. zp 11. zq 11. zr 11. zs 11. zt 11. zu 11. zv 11. zw 11. zx 11. zy 11. zz 11.

who commanded food from the clouds, and sent water from the rock, engages to provide.—Let us then ask and receive, and drink, and rejoice, and live for ever.

V. 8-16. We should expect that our enemies will especially assault us, when drinking most abundantly from the living streams of salvation: these will, however, prepare us for the conflict; and fighting under the Lord our Banner, we shall finally prevail, and give him the glory.—We may also observe that some men are useful in one way, and some in another; but none are so serviceable as they who serve the public by the fervent, persevering prayers of faith. Little do statesmen in the cabinet, or commanders in the field, understand, how much the success of their deliberations and efforts is influenced by the prayers of the true Christian in his closet, in his family, and in the house of God!—But alas! how soon we flag in those spiritual exercises, even sooner than the soldier wearies in the field of battle! and we have need to be supported and animated by each other; but especially we need continual assistance from the Lord, that “we may pray always and not faint.”—Oh! what cause have they to tremble, who have not only the sword of an enemy, but the prayers of God's people, and the memorials of his word, against them!—Nor let it be ever forgotten, that the complete salvation of the righteous is inseparable from the entire destruction of the wicked.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1-5. It is generally supposed, that Moses sent Zipporah to Jethro, when the Lord met him by the way in anger, because he had neglected to circumcise his son. (Note, 4:24-26.) The dangers and difficulties to be encountered in Egypt were very great; and perhaps Moses was aware, that she did not possess adequate fortitude and patience: but as soon as the Lord had brought Israel forth out of Egypt, and led them near to the residence of Jethro, Jethro brought Zipporah and her two sons back to Moses; doubtless according to some previous appointment.—The younger son of Moses seems to have been born but a short time before he set off to return into Egypt, and to have been circumcised by the way, as before related. But Moses, being at that time about to face the Egyptian monarch, recollected his deliverance from the power and anger of a former king of Egypt: and considering this as a pledge of his safety and success in the present undertaking, he called his son Eliezer, or My God is a Help, with reference to his past experience, and his present confidence.

V. 6-11. Jethro seems to have informed Moses, by

10 And Jethro said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians.

11 Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.

12 And Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, took a burnt-offering, and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses's father-in-law before God.

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses's father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto evening?

15 And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God.

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me, and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws.

17 And Moses's father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 Hearken now unto my voice: I will give

13. Rev. 5:11-13. 19:1-6. r 9:16. 1 Kings 17:24. 2 Kings 5:15. s 15:17. 1 Chr. 16:25. 2 Chr. 2:5. Ps. 95:3. 135:5. t 1:10, 16:22. 5:2. 14:3, 18. u See on 9:17. 10:3. 1 Sam. 2:5. Neh. 9:10, 16:22. Job 40:11, 12. Dan. 4:37. Luke 1:54. Jam. 4:6. 1 Pet. 5:5. x 24:5. Gen. 4:4. 8:20. 12:7. 25:25. 21:54. Job 1:5. 42:8. y 24:11. Lev. 7:11-17. Deut. 12:7. 27:7. 1 Chr. 29:21, 22. 2 Chr. 30:22. 1 Cor. 10:18, 21, 31. z 2:20. Gen. 43:25. 2 Sam. 9:7. Job 42:11. Dan. 10:3. Luke 14:1. 15. a Judge. 5:10. Job 29:7. Is. 16:5. Joel 3:12. Matt. 23:2. Rom. 12:8. 13:6. b 19:20. Lev. 24:12-14. Num. 15:34. 27:5. c 23:7. 34:14. Deut. 17:9-12. 2 Sam. 15:3. Job 31:13. Acts 18:14. 1 Cor. 6:1. d Heb. a man and his fellow. 2:13. d Lev. 24:15. Num. 15:35. 35:6-9. Deut. 4:5. 5:1. 6:1. 1 Sam. 12:23. Matt. 28:20. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2. e Heb. Fading thou wilt fade. e 2 Cor. 12:15. Phil. 2:30. 1 Thes. 2:9, 9. f Num. 11:14-17. Deut. 17:9-12. Acts 6:1-4. g 24. Prov. 9:9.

messengers, that he was arrived at the borders of the camp and by them he thus addressed him: (Notes, Matt. 8:5-9. Luke 7:1-10.) accordingly, Moses went forth without the camp to meet him, and gave him a very affectionate and respectful reception.—The joy and praise of Jethro, for the mercies shown by the Lord to Israel, was a remarkable contrast to Israel's murmurs and rebellion. He declared, that his faith was greatly confirmed, and his heart encouraged in worshipping the God of Israel, as distinguished from all idols, by this decided victory, which ЯЕУОВАН had obtained over the proud and presumptuous opposition of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and over the idols of Egypt, and by the redemption of Israel.

V. 12. The Aaronic priesthood was not yet established for there seems no ground at all for the opinion of the Jewish expositors, that these events occurred some time after the giving of the law. It is therefore evident that Jethro, as an ancient priest of the Lord, officiated in these sacrifices, in which, though not of Israel, he had fellowship with Israel: and this appeared favourable to the case of the Gentiles. Having offered a burnt-offering, which was wholly consumed he sacrificed other sacrifices; and he and Moses and Aaron with the elders of Israel, feasted together with thankfulness and cheerfulness, as before God. This was a representation of the life of faith in Christ, and the communion of the saints.

V. 13-16. Moses, the divinely appointed Deliverer of Israel from Egyptian bondage, was of course acknowledged as the Ruler, or chief Magistrate; and, in this capacity, he undertook to hear and decide all the controversies which arose among the people.—Besides the various revelations, which had been made in preceding ages, to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others, concerning the grand doctrines and requirements of true religion, which had been handed down by tradition to the descendants of Jacob; no doubt Moses had received much immediate instruction in these respects, before the solemn promulgation of the law from Sinai, and could thus answer those, who “came to him to inquire of God,” and “make them know his statutes and laws.”—The people were generally ignorant, and, we may well conclude, contentious, as well as numerous; Moses was very accessible and meek; and their suits were managed without expense to them; and therefore they would doubtless furnish him with abundance of employment.

V. 17-23. The earnestness of mind, with which Moses

thee counsel, and ¹God shall be with thee. ²Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt ³teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them ⁴the way wherein they must walk, and the ⁵work that they must do.

21 Moreover, ⁶thou shalt provide out of all the people, ⁷able men, ⁸such as fear God, ⁹men of truth, ¹⁰hating covetousness: and place ¹¹such over them, to be ¹²rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

22 And let them judge the people ¹³at all seasons; and it shall be, ¹⁴that every ¹⁵great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge; so shall it be easier for thyself, and ¹⁶they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and ¹⁷God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

h 3:12, 4:12. (Gen. 39:2, Deut. 20:1, Josh. 1:9, 2 Sam. 14:17, Matt. 28:20, i See on 15, 4:16, 20:19, Deut. 5:5, k 16, Deut. 4:1, 5:3, 6:1, 2, 7:11, Neh. 9:13, 14, 1 Sam. 12:23, Ps. 32:8, 143:8, Is. 30:21, Jer. 6:16, 42:3, Mic. 4:2, 1 Thes. 4:1, m Deut. 1:18, Ez. 3:17, Matt. 28:20, Mark 13:34, 2 Thes. 3:6-12, n Deut. 1:13-17, Acts 6:3, o Kings 3:9-12, Prov. 23:2, p 23:2-4, Gen. 22:12, 42:15, 2 Sam. 23:3, 1 Kings 15:12, 2 Chr. 19:3-9, Neh. 5:9, 7:2, Ez. 12:13, 1 Luke 18:24, q Job 29:16, Is. 18:5, 59:4, 14:15, Jer. 5:1, Zech. 7:9, 8:16, r 23:8, Deut. 16:18, 19, 1 Sam. 8:3, 12:3, 4, Ps. 26:9, 10, Is. 33:15, Ez. 22:12.

engaged in this important work, had caused him to overlook the consequences of such incessant application, which must have soon worn him down, and have eventually proved injurious to the people also; and it did not please the Lord to instruct him in this point of discretion *immediately*, but by the counsel of a wise and pious man, and a descendant of Abraham, though not an Israelite.—When Jethro therefore observed his method of procedure, he ventured to object to it, and to give him advice which he trusted God would approve and prosper.—Let him reserve himself for such causes as were more difficult; or such as more immediately referred to the ordinances and commandments of God, as far as then made known to him; and concerning which he would, by divine inspiration, receive more complete instruction that he might teach the people: and let him select proper persons for ability, piety, integrity, and disinterestedness, in due subordination to each other; who might judge and decide all those causes to which they were competent, and only refer those to Moses, which they knew not how to determine. (*Marg. Ref. n-s.*) But, in giving this wise counsel, Jethro intimated, that Moses should refer the matter to God, and only follow it in case he commanded him.

V. 24-26. (*Notes, Deut. 1:11-18.*) It is probable, that Moses consulted the Lord on this subject; and, by his appointment, carried Jethro's counsel into effect, with the concurrence of the people. (*Note, Acts 6:2-6.*) The magistrates, thus constituted over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, were distinct persons from the seventy elders chosen on another occasion, and far more numerous. (*Note, Num. 11:16.*) Probably, this arrangement was permanent in Israel, at least as far as the rulers over thousands. (*Judg. 6:15, marg. Mic. 5:2.*)

V. 27. It is evident, that after Jethro had given this counsel to Moses, and had continued some time longer with him, he returned home; where no doubt he did what he could to promote true religion, and probably with considerable success. (*Notes, Num. 10:29-32.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. The report of the Lord's power and goodness, shown in behalf of Israel, having reached distant places, confirmed the faith, and excited the joy and gratitude, of those who were not personally interested in these peculiar benefits: and the records of the same events handed down to these distant ages, should produce the same effects upon our minds, that we too may be established in the faith, and stirred up to trust and praise the Lord for his mercies to Israel.—Husbands and wives may, on some occasions, be obliged to separate for a time; but the sooner they meet again, and the more they live together, the better; and though it may be improper for the female sex to share the dangers and hardships of extraordinary undertakings; yet the wife should participate in the ordinary cares, and every comfort and honour, of the husband. Nor should children be needlessly deprived of the great benefit which they may derive from the instruction and example of pious and wise parents: and when the people witness how well they, who are intrusted with the administration of public affairs, and take care of the church of God, regulate their own families, the example will be peculiarly useful.—When we record our trials, we should be sure to record our mercies also: “persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;” exiles, but protected by the God of our fathers.—It is very becoming, when persons employed in the most important public services, pay a proper attention to the duties and regards of private life; and when they, who are highly favoured of God, are very humble and affable, and show all respect to superior relations, and gratitude to benefac-

24 So ¹Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

25 And Moses ²chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26 And they judged the people ³at all seasons. ⁴The hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

27 And Moses ⁵let his father-in-law depart: and he went his way into his own land.

CHAPTER XIX.

Israel arrives at mount Sinai, and encamps there, 1, 2. Moses hears the message of God, and delivers it to the people; they engage to obey, and he reports it to the Lord, 3-8. Preparations are made, regulations prescribed, and the time set, for the giving of the law, 9-15. The tremendous introduction to that solemn transaction, 16-25.

IN ¹the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day ²came they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.

2 For they were departed from ³Rephidim, and

Acts 20:33, 1 Tim. 3:3, 6:9-11, 2 Pet. 2:14, 15. a Num. 10:4, Deut. 1:15, Josh. 22:14, 1 Sam. 8:12, t 25, Rom. 13:6, u Deut. 1:17, 17:5, 3, x 18, Num. 11:17, y Gen. 21:10-12, 1 Sam. 8:6, 7, 22, Acts 15:2, Gal. 2:2, z 2 Sam. 18:3, 21:17, 1 Thl. 1:24, 25, a 2-5, 19, Ezra 10:2-5, Prov. 1:5, 1 Cor. 12:21, b See on 21, c Deut. 1:15, Acts 6:5, c 14, 22, d See on 15, 22, Deut. 17:8, 1 Kings 3:16-28, 10:1, Job 29:16, e Gen. 24:59, 31:55, Num. 10:29, Judg. 19:9, a 12, 2, 6, Lev. 23:16-18, b 16:1, Num. 33:15, c 17:1.

tors.—Our meeting, from time to time, with our friends on earth will be very comfortable and useful, if we converse together concerning the loving-kindness and wonderful works of God; if we unite in praise and thanksgiving; and if, by sobriety, love, gratitude, and the fear of God, we turn every festive interview into a religious ordinance, “a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to the Lord.” What then will our final meeting in heaven be, where the love, and joy, and praise will be complete, uninterrupted, and eternal!

V. 13-27. Our affectionate attention to relatives and friends must not induce us to neglect our proper business; any more than the ingratitude, which we experience, should render us weary of doing good. The most exalted stations, if properly filled, have the heaviest work connected with them: for such is human nature, that it is not only an arduous undertaking to restrain men from ungodliness, but very difficult to keep them from devouring one another: and they who would administer justice, keep the peace, and repress violence and fraud, will have enough to engross their thoughts, to burden their spirits, and to occupy their time. Yet, in “doing with our might whatever our hand findeth to do,” a prudent regard to our health is not only allowable, but a duty, which it is not good to neglect, however well we may be employed: and “wisdom is profitable to direct” men in high stations, what they *must* do themselves, and what they *may* do by others. The Lord hath also divided his gifts severally to different men; and an impartial observer, though of inferior endowments, may sometimes suggest a counsel, which the wisest may very profitably attend to: yea, his wisdom will dispose him to attend to it; for “give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Yet we must not follow the wisest counsel, until we have, by attention to the Scriptures, and by prayer, consulted the Lord also; who often counsels us by the advice of our pious friends, that we may love and be united to them, as well as dependent on him, and thankful to him.—Magistracy, as well as the ministry of the Gospel, is an ordinance of God: they, therefore, who are employed even in the most subordinate offices of government, should be chosen persons, “able men,” of clear heads and sound judgments; and such as “fear God,” and from a principle of genuine piety, are steadily “men of truth,” of integrity and fidelity; and have learned to “hate covetousness,” that they “may shake their hands from holding of bribes,” and administer justice impartially. What then ought lawgivers, supreme magistrates, and the ministers of religion to be! Happy indeed are the people, that are blessed with such rulers and teachers: “yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1. *In the third month.* Or, “on the third new moon.” The Israelites left Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month, and it is supposed that they arrived at Sinai on the first day of the third month; and, computing by the space of time between one new moon and another, which is somewhat more than twenty-nine days and a half, this will appear to have been on the forty-sixth day after their departure. Probably on the next day Moses went up to the mount, and three days afterwards the law was delivered; that is, on the fiftieth day, on which the feast of Pentecost was held, as it is supposed, in commemoration of this event.

V. 2. Rephidim could not be far from Horeb or from some parts of the mountain so called; because when Israel was encamped at Rephidim, Moses, attended by the elders, and probably followed by numbers of the people, smote a rock in Horeb, which poured forth water for them and their cattle. But the assault of the Amalekites might cause delay

were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of

priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him.

8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.

10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the

d 18:5. Acts 7:30, 38. Gal. 4:24. e 20:21. 24:15—18. 34:2. Deut. 5:5, 31. f 34: g 7:14. Deut. 4:9, 33—36, 29:2. Is. 63:9. h Deut. 32:11, 12. Rev. 12:14. i 23: 22. 24:17. Deut. 11:27. 28:1. Josh. 24:24. 1 Sam. 15:22. Is. 1:19. Jer. 7:23. 11:4. 7. Heb. 11:8. k Deut. 5:2. Ps. 25:10. 103:17, 18. Is. 56:4. Jer. 31:31—33. 1 Deut. 4:20, 7:6. 14:2. 26:18, 29. Ps. 135:4. Jer. 10:16. Mai. 3:17. Tit. 2:14. m 9:29. Deut. 10:14. Job 41:11. Ps. 24:1. 50:12. Dan. 4:34, 35. 1 Cor. 10:26, 28.

n Is. 61:5. Rom. 12:1. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9. Rev. 1:6. 5:10. 20:6. o Lev. 11:44, 45, 19:2. 20:26. 21:7, 8, 23. Deut. 7:6. 26:19. 28:9. Is. 62:12. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. p See on 3:16. q 12:30. 1 Cor. 15:1. r 20:19. 24:3, 7. Deut. 5:27, 28. 26:17—19. Josh. 24:24. Neh. 10:29. s 16. 20:21. 21:17, 16. Deut. 4:11. 1 Kings 8:12. 2 Chr. 6:1. Ps. 18:11, 12. 97:2. Is. 19:1. Matt. 17:5. Mark 9:7. Luke 9:34, 35. Rev. 1:7. t Deut. 4:36. John 12:29, 30. u 14:31. 2 Chr. 20:20. Is. 7:9. Luke 10:16.

and so they continued encamped at Rephidim for some time after the rock was smitten, before they marched to that part of the mountain, generally called Sinai, from whence the law was delivered. (Notes, 17.)

V. 3. Moses went up to mount Sinai, doubtless by the Lord's command, who "had called to him out of the mountain" by an audible voice, requiring him to come up, in order to receive his message to the people. They were now to be incorporated, as a church and nation, under the government of God, and in covenant with him; having hitherto been, first a single family, and then a multitude of slaves.

V. 4. On eagles' wings.] As the eagle carries her young upon her wings out of the reach of those who would attempt their destruction, so the Lord had rescued the Israelites from Egypt, that they might be his people, dwelling under his protection, and devoted to his worship and service. (Note, Deut. 32:11, 12.)

V. 5. Covenant.] The national covenant with Israel was here meant; the charter upon which they were incorporated, as a people under the government of JEHOVAH. It was an engagement of God, to give Israel possession of Canaan, and to protect them in it: to render the land fruitful, and the nation victorious and prosperous, and to perpetuate his oracles and ordinances among them; so long as they did not, as a people, reject his authority, apostatize to idolatry, and tolerate open wickedness. These things constituted a forfeiture of the covenant, as their national rejection of Christ did afterwards.—True believers among them were personally dealt with according to the covenant of mercy and grace, even as true Christians now are; and unbelievers were under the covenant of works, and liable to condemnation by it, as at present: yet the national covenant was not strictly either the one or the other, but had something in it of the nature of each. It did not refer to the final salvation of individuals; nor was it broken by the disobedience, or even idolatry, of any number of them, provided this was not sanctioned or tolerated by public authority. It indeed, in many respects, prefigured the dealings of God with his people, under the Christian dispensation; in which the new covenant of grace and mercy, made with all true believers, is more clearly exhibited, than under any of the preceding dispensations; yet it "had not the very image," but only "a shadow of good things to come." When, therefore, the nation had broken this covenant, the Lord declared that he would make "a new covenant with the house of Israel, . . . putting his law," not only in their hands, but "in their inward parts;" and "writing it," not upon tables of stone, "but in their hearts; forgiving their iniquity, and remembering their sins no more." (Jer. 31:32—34. Heb. 8:7—12. 10:16, 17.)—In the scriptures referred to, the covenant spoken of, "as ready to vanish away," is evidently not the covenant of works, but the national covenant with Israel, which the Israelites had vacated by their sins.—Unless we carefully attend to this distinction, we shall be liable to fall into perpetual mistakes in reading the Old Testament. Hardly any thing can be more absurd, than to suppose that the whole nation of the Jews was under the covenant of works, which contains nothing about repentance, faith in a Mediator, forgiveness of sins, or grace: yet we often meet with language in Christian authors, which conveys this idea. And it is perhaps more common to hear the whole nation of Israel spoken of, as if they all bare the character, and possessed the privileges, of true believers, actually interested in the covenant of grace; and conclusions are continually drawn from such premises, as if undeniable!—But in fact, the Israelites were under a dispensation of mercy, and had outward privileges and great advantages in various ways for salvation; yet, like professing Christians, the most of them rested in these and looked no further. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." The outward covenant was made with the nation, entitling them to outward advantages, upon the condition of outward national obedience: and the covenant of grace was ratified personally with true believers, and sealed and secured spiritual blessings to them, by

producing a holy disposition of heart, and spiritual obedience to the divine law.—In case Israel kept the covenant, the Lord promised, that they should be to him "a peculiar treasure," which is safely repositied because highly valued. The whole earth being the Lord's, he might have chosen any other people instead of Israel: and this implied, that as his choice of them was gratuitous, so, if they rejected his covenant, he would reject them, and communicate their privileges to others; as indeed he hath done, since the introduction of the Christian dispensation.

A peculiar treasure.] כִּלְיָה Deut. 7:6. 14:2. 26:18. 1 Chron. 29:3. Mal. 3:17.—The LXX render it λαός περιούσιος, "a peculiar people." See Tit. 2:14. Gr.

V. 6. Israel was formed into "a kingdom of priests," an honourable and sacred kingdom, under JEHOVAH himself as their King, who manifested his special presence among them from above the Mercy-seat. They were also distinguished from other kingdoms, by laws and statutes immediately given them from God, and bearing the stamp of his holiness. He, in an especial manner, was their Protector against every foe; and they were his professed worshippers, according to the oracles and ordinances which he gave them. Thus they were a "kingdom of priests," and "a holy nation," separated from other people, consecrated to God, permitted to approach him to offer sacrifices and supplications, and possessing a sacred character among the nations of the earth. Israel had these outward distinctions; but the nation was only a type of all true Christians, in their spiritual privileges and real character in the sight of God and before the world. (Notes, 1 Pet. 2:9, 10. Rev. 1:4—6. 5:8—10.)

V. 7—9. "The elders of the people" seem to have been the principal persons, or seniors, in each tribe and family, who in some sense represented the rest: and Moses, having assembled them, plainly stated before them the terms of the covenant, which God was about to make with the nation, that they might propose them to the people at large; and these unanimously and at once acceded to them, probably without due consideration and with too much confidence.—Upon the report made to God of the people's consent, he proceeds . . . to declare the laws by which they should be governed, (20:—23:) and then in the twenty-fourth chapter these laws pass into a covenant between God and them." Ep. Patrik. In order that this might be rendered peculiarly solemn and affecting, the Lord declared that he would "come in a thick cloud," much denser than that from which his glory had before been manifested, and indicating a tremendous tempest; for the scriptures referred to in the margin show, that most dreadful lightnings and fire continually burst from the cloud in the sight of the people. (Marg. Ref. s.) This was intended, among other reasons, to convince them, that the Lord spake by Moses, and to induce them to believe his testimony, and ever after willingly to receive the commands of God from his servant, rather than behold such a sight any more.—The thick cloud also represented the comparative darkness of that dispensation: and when Christ was transfigured, the voice came out of a bright cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." (Note, Matt. 17:5—8.)

V. 10—15. Moses was ordered to "sanctify the people;" that is, he was to instruct them in what manner they should sanctify themselves, and to enforce the observance of his directions. It is probable, that the two days which preceded the giving of the law, and the day on which it was given, were observed in some respect as a season of solemn fasting and prayer.—The washing of the clothes by the people, and the other external observances, (similar to what we meet with in the scriptures referred to in the margin,) represented the inward purification of the heart by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, when sin is repented of and renounced, sinful desires are mortified, and sinful thoughts are excluded with abhorrence; and when attention to the great concerns of religion renders men indifferent even about lawful satisfactions. All this was peculiarly proper, now that the pe. le were

people and "sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

12 And thou shalt "set bounds unto the people round about, saying, "Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death.

13 There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; "whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: "when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

14 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, "and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes.

15 And he said unto the people, "Be ready against the third day; "come not at your wives.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were "thunders and lightnings, and a "thick cloud upon the mount, and the "voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that "all the people that was in the camp trembled.

x 15. Josh. 3:5. 7:13. 1 Sam. 16:5. 2 Chr. 29:5. 34. 30:17-19. Job 1:5. 1 Cor. 6:11. y 14. Gen. 35:2. Lev. 11:25. 15:5. Num. 8:7. 21. 31:24. Zech. 3:3. 4. 11b. 10:22. Rev. 7:1. 18:20. 3:8. 34:5. Num. 11:17. Dent. 33:2. Ps. 1:8. 141:5. 15. 64:12. Hab. 3:3-6. John 3:13. 6:58. a 21:23. Josh. 3:4. b 10:28. 31:12. 1:9. c 12. 12:31. d 21:23. 29. Lev. 2:15:15. e 1:10. 17:12. 1 Thes. 4:16. f 10. c. 1. See on 10. g am. 4:12. Mf. 3:2. Matt. 3:10-12. 24:44. 2 Pet. 3:11. 12. h 11:16. i 1 Sam. 21:4. 5. Zech. 6:3. 12:12-14. 1 Cor. 7:5. k 9:23. 28. 29. 20:18. 1 Sam. 12:17. 18. Job 37:1-5. 38:25. Ps. 18:11-14. 29:3-11. 50:3. 77:19. 97:4. Heb. 12:19. Rev. 4:5. 8:5. 11:19. l See on 9. 40:

about to be admitted into covenant, as a holy nation with a holy God; who also would display his glory among them in the most evident and awful manner. The other regulations, and all the terrific solemnities of this transaction, were calculated to impress the minds of the people with a deep sense of the divine majesty and purity: to convince them of their own guilt and unholiness; and to show them, that they could not stand in judgment before God by their own obedience to that law which was about to be delivered.

V. 16-20. It is intimated, in several parts of Scripture, that these tremendous appearances and voices were effected by the ministration of angels, as attending on this sublime display of the glory of JEHOVAH. (Acts 7:53. Gal. 3:19. Heb. 2:2) When the signal had been given, by the long and loud sound of a trumpet, Moses led the congregation, who trembled at what they saw and heard, to the foot of the mount; where they took their station, and waited doubtless in great trepidation, to hear the Lord himself speak to them. But while they stood there, the appearances became more and more dreadful; the mountain itself trembled exceedingly, and every blast of the trumpet which continued sounding, was more terrible than those which had preceded; as announcing the presence of the Lord, and demanding an awful attention to his words.—It was at this crisis, no doubt, that Moses himself said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." (Note, Heb. 12:18-21.) for "he spake, and the LORD answered him by a voice," encouraging him not to fear, and calling him to come up into the mount.

Voice of the trumpet. (16) A voice, or sound resembling that of a trumpet, made, as we must suppose, by some of the attendant angels. (1 Cor. 15:52. 1 Thes. 4:16. Heb. 12:19. Rev. 1:10. 4:1.)

V. 21-25. It might have been supposed, that the terror of this prospect would have checked all presumptuous curiosity; but it is continually demonstrated by undeniable facts, that the hard heart of sinners can trifle with the most terrible denunciations and judgments of an angry God; nay, convert them into diversion and amusement, or make them the subject of curious speculations!—It is evident that Moses went up into the mount, amidst all the tremendous appearances, which at first dismayed him; and the Lord ordered him to "go down, and charge the people." Some were therefore disposed to break through, while others were appalled with terror; and Moses must go and warn them, that that if they did, God would certainly punish their presumptuous intrusion with immediate death.—It is much controverted among learned men, who the priests were, "that came near to the LORD:" but probably they were some of the chief persons in the several families, who generally took the lead in every act of religious worship, and perhaps had sometimes offered sacrifices. Presuming on this distinction, they were not suitably impressed by the solemn scene, and they had in some degree neglected the orders to sanctify themselves, in preparation for it; they were therefore warned to act with greater reverence of God. Moses, indeed, thought there was no danger that the people should attempt to break through; but he was mistaken, and was sent down to take proper precautions against such an interruption of the awful solemnity. He was also directed to bring Aaron up along with him; doubtless in

17 And "Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

18 And "mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended "as the smoke of a furnace, and the "whole mount quaked greatly.

19 And "when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, "Moses spake and "God answered him by a voice.

20 And "the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount, and "Moses went up.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, "charge the people, lest they "break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

22 And let "the priests also, which come near to the LORD, "sanctify themselves, lest the LORD "break forth upon them.

23 And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargest us, saying, "Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.

24 And the LORD said unto him, Away, get

34. 2 Chr. 5:14. m Rev. 1:10. 4:1. n Jer. 5:22. Heb. 12:21. o Deut. 4:10. 5. p 20:18. Deut. 4:11. 12. 5:22. 33:2. Judg. 5:5. Ps. 68:7. 8. 104:32. 144:5. See on 12. Is. 6:4. Hab. 3:3. Rev. 15:8. q 3:2. 24:17. 2 Thes. 1:8. 2:1 et. 3:10. r Gen. 15:17. 19:28. s 1 Kings 19:11. 12. Ps. 68:9. 77:19. 114:7. Jer. 4:24. Nah. 1:5. Hab. 3:10. Zech. 14:5. Matt. 24:7. (13:15. u Heb. 12:21. x Ps. 91:7. y See on 11. Neh. 9:13. z 3. 24:12. 13:18. 34:24. 1 Pet. 5:9. j Heb. context. 12:13. a 3:3. 5. 1 Sam. 6:19. Ec. 5:1. Heb. 12:28. 29. b 24:5. Lev. 10:1-3. Is. 52:11. c See on 5:14. 15. d 2 Sam. 6:8. 8. 1 Chr. 13:8-11. 15:1. e 2 Chr. 30:3. 15:18. Acts 5:10. 1 Cor. 11:30—32. e 12. Josh. 3:4, 5.

order that the people might learn to honour their future high-priest by seeing him thus distinguished.—If Moses and Aaron went up into the mount directly, before the law was given, as it seems they did; (for Aaron did not accompany Moses afterwards;) they soon descended again, as it appears in the next chapter. Every circumstance and expression, in this transaction, were suited to evince, that the law now about to be given, though "holy, just, and good," could speak nothing but terror and destruction to transgressors; and to fill the heart of every sinner with horror, dismay, and desperation. In subsevery to the Covenant of grace, its uses are manifold, and of vast importance, as will presently be shown. But it is extremely difficult to drive men from the absurd notion, that a sinner may and ought to seek justification before God by his imperfect, scanty, and external obedience. To counteract that propensity in fallen human nature, no doubt this tremendous scene was exhibited; as well as to teach the Israelites, that even in respect of their national covenant, though their obedience was required, yet the blessings were not merited by it, but freely given by a gracious God, in a way becoming his own holiness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. The blessedness of the Lord's people originates from his most free and plenteous mercy; yet unless we yield ourselves to his service, and willingly walk in his commandments, we can bring no proof that we belong to that happy company.—What admirable and adorable condescension and compassion hath the God of glory shown to us fallen sinners, in taking up of our apostate race to be unto him "a peculiar treasure!" But let us never forget, that he "purifies" every one of "them to himself, to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works." If we have any scriptural reason to conclude that we are of this number, let us recollect, that he who has thus distinguished us is Lord of the whole earth, and might have chosen others and passed us by, had he seen good.—We should also "remember all the way that he hath led us," in redeeming us from our far worse than Egyptian bondage, and often meditate on the kind and effectual methods by which he accomplished our deliverance, notwithstanding the power of our enemies, yea, notwithstanding our own rebellious and unbelieving opposition to the conduct of his grace. Then shall we perceive, that he "bare us as on eagles' wings, and hath brought us to himself." May we prove in all our future conduct, that we are indeed, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; to show forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." May we abound in "spiritual sacrifices, which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," yield ourselves to his service, and allow of nothing inconsistent with our holy profession and character!—But we are all naturally more disposed to profess and to resolve, than to practise. Let us not then say, that we will do these things; but beg of God to enable us to do them.—The ministers of the Lord are required fairly and plainly to lay the whole of their message before the people, and in prayer they report before him the reception with which it meets; but they are not answerable for consequences.—The more seriously we prepare for divine ordinances, and the more our minds are abstracted from all earthly objects, the greater benefit

thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.

25 So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

(See on 20, c. 20, 1-21, Matt. 11:12, Luke 13:24, 16:16, John 1:17, Heb. 4:16, 10:19-22, 1. 19-25:29, in See on d, 22, Rom. 3:15, 2 Cor. 3:7-9, Gal. 1:10, 11:19, 12:14, a. Deut. 4:33, 33, 5:22, Acts 7:38, 53, b. Gen. 17:7, 8, Lev. 26:

we receive. But in approaching to God, we must never lose sight of his holiness and greatness, and of our own meanness and pollution.

V. 16-25. How could we sinners approach the Lord upon the terrible mount Sinai? Could we rush into the midst of the fire, tempests, and earthquakes? or can we stand in judgment before him, according to the tenor of his righteous law? If so tremendous tokens of the divine justice accompanied the promulgation of the law, what will that day be when the earth shall be encircled in flames; and when all who ever dwelt upon it, through successive generations, shall be gathered before the tribunal of the Judge, to hear their final and decisive sentence! Happy they, who have discovered their need of a Mediator, have hearkened to the voice of the Saviour, and from him have obtained forgiveness of all their sins, and acceptance with God; who have received the law, disarmed of its curses and deprived of its terrors, from his loving, kind, and gracious hands, and have been taught by his grace to love it, and obey it in sincerity and truth. These, like Moses and Aaron, though at first they tremble at God's word, and are always humbled before him; yet through Christ will grow, as it were, familiar with mount Sinai. Fearless of condemnation, they will meditate on the terror of the sentence of the law, and thence draw arguments to increase their gratitude, and animate their willing services; and they will finally triumph, when the wicked shall be calling in vain to the rocks and mountains to cover them from the wrath of their offended Judge.—Blessed be God, we are yet in the land of forgiveness, of prayer, of hope; and, in this favoured country, we are all under a dispensation of mercy, and have the oracles and ordinances of God continued to us. We are not come to mount Sinai, to tremble or despair; but to mount Zion, where our God reigns upon a mercy-seat, and waits to be gracious to every returning sinner.—Let us, however, remember his awful words: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, how much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven?" Let none then rest in outward advantages or distinctions; for "our God is still a consuming Fire," and will be sanctified by those who draw nigh to him; and let none indulge a presumptuous curiosity, by attempting to "intrude into things not seen, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind," lest the Lord in vengeance break forth upon him. Finally, let us "all fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;" and perish after the manner in which an immense majority of this vast multitude fell in the wilderness, when the LORD "swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1. After the preparations recorded in the former chapter, and the glorious and tremendous display of the special presence of God on mount Sinai, had solemnized the minds of the people, and excited their awful expectations; it may be supposed that the sound of the trumpet ceased, and JEHOVAH himself immediately spake, in a voice loud enough to be distinctly heard by the immense assembled multitude. For while it is evident, that many things, on this extraordinary occasion, were effected by the ministration of angels; and probably some other parts of the law were delivered to Moses by them; (Acts 7:53, Gal. 3:19, Heb. 2:2,) the language here and elsewhere used, is so express and decided, that it cannot reasonably be doubted that God himself, by his own immediate agency, without the intervention of angels, formed that awful voice by which the following words were delivered, from the midst of the fire, to the congregation of Israel. (Deut. 4:11, 12, 33, 5:4, 22.)—The words spoken are generally called, 'The ten commandments;' and they are justly considered as the grand outlines of the holy law of God: of that law, which is commonly called the moral law, to distinguish it from the other injunctions of the Mosaic dispensation.—As the full and exact knowledge of this law is peculiarly important, in order to our clearly understanding the whole system of revealed religion, I shall introduce the exposition of it, by some observations on its nature, obligations, and uses. It is evident that there is a distinction between moral precepts, and instituted appointments. Some things are in themselves so indifferent, that the same authority which enjoined them, might, without impropriety, have prohibited them; as the use of bread and wine in one religious ordinance, and the use of water in another. But there are laws of a widely different nature: and it is absurd to suppose that God could have forbidden us to love him and one another, or to speak truth and do justice. Indeed, ritual precepts are for the time equally obligatory; except when they come in competition with moral duties, and then the Lord "will have mercy, and not sacrifice." But the ritual injunction is of temporary obligation; it had no existence before its express

CHAPTER XX.

The ten commandments are spoken in an audible voice, by JEHOVAH, to the whole congregation of Israel, 1-17. The people are alarmed, and confer with Moses, 18-20. Moses receives from God an additional prohibition of idolatry, and rules for erecting an altar, 21-25.

AND God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have

1, 13. Deut. 5:6, 6:4, 5. 2 Chr. 28:5. Ps. 50:7, 81:10. Jer. 31:1, 33. Hos. 13:4. Rom. 3:29, 10:12.

appointment, and it may be vacated by the same authority; or, having answered the purpose, its obligations may cease of course; while the moral precept is, on the contrary, of immutable and eternal validity. The different circumstances, indeed, in which rational creatures may be placed, occasion a variation arising from those changes of circumstances; as the entrance of sin and misery has rendered patience and forgiveness of injuries, exercises of our love to God and to our neighbour. These, and many other things required of us in our present situation, will cease entirely in heaven; yet the grand principle from which they are deduced would have been the same, had we never sinned, and they will remain the same to all eternity.—Some traces of the moral law are discoverable by our natural reason, and the whole perfectly accords to it. It has its foundation in the nature of God and of man; in the relations men bear to him and to each other; and in the duties which result from those relations: and on this account it is immutable and universally obligatory. Though given, on this particular occasion, to Israel, it demands obedience from all mankind; and the whole world will be judged according to this law, and to the opportunity which they have had of becoming acquainted with it, whether by reason and tradition alone, or by the light of the written word; except the believer who has obtained deliverance from its merited condemnation. The law is also spiritual: that is, it takes cognizance of our spirits, of our most secret thoughts, desires, intentions, and dispositions; and demands a holy regulation of the judgment, will, and affections. It principally requires LOVE, without which the best external obedience is condemned as mere hypocrisy. This is peculiar to the law of God, who alone can search the heart; and no other law ever attempted to enforce the obedience of the heart; but, in common with other laws, it demands perfect, unfailing, uninterrupted, and perpetual obedience; for no law can tolerate the transgression of itself. From the entrance to the close of life, God requires of us exact conformity to every precept: he that "keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all;" (Note, Jam. 2:8-13.) and the least deviation, whether by omission or commission, excess or defect, is sin; and every sin deserves wrath and needs forgiveness. (1 John 3:4.) The ten commandments are a compendium of the holy law, which is commented on in all the preceptive parts of Scripture; and the substance of its requirements is given, still more concisely, in the two great commandments, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength;" and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We are authorized by the example of Christ, to interpret every one of these commands in the strictest, most spiritual, and extensive sense, of which it is capable. Even repentance, faith in a Mediator, and all evangelical graces and duties, are exercises of this entire love to God, and are required of sinners placed under a dispensation of mercy; though originally the law had no direct connexion with redemption, but lay at the foundation of another covenant. We may therefore waive the controversy concerning the rule of duty, whether this be the ten commandments, or the whole word of God; for the one, properly understood, will be found as broad as the other: seeing we cannot love God with all our hearts, unless we love every discovery which he is pleased to make of his glory; believe every testimony and embrace every promise which he gives; seek his favour in the use of all the means that he appoints; and employ ourselves in diffusing the knowledge of his glorious excellencies and wonderful works, according to our ability and opportunity, and the station which we occupy in society.—The Lord Jesus perfectly fulfilled the extensive requirements of this holy law; yet, in his peculiar circumstances, it actually required all that love for the Father, and for his brethren, and all those expressions of it, which, subsequent to his incarnation that he might be our Mediator, he manifested in his life and death. But no apostle or prophet ever reached, in one single instance, that degree of love and purity which it demands.—The uses of this holy law, in connexion with the gospel of Christ, and in subsequence to the covenant of grace, are many and important. "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" and if it were more fully understood, in the extent and excellency of its spiritual requirements, and the justice of its awful sanctions, sinners would be at once convinced of their guilt and danger; they would learn what they ought always to have been and to have done, and thus discover their real character and situation, of which most men are entirely ignorant; they would become acquainted with their wants, and prepared to understand and value the inestimable blessings of the gospel; and they would perceive their need of regeneration, and of that repentance, that life of faith in the Son of God, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, which in general are disregarded, nay, frequently ridiculed.—Believe, say their carnal

'brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

10.—13: Lev. 19:36, 23:43, d 13:3. Deut. 5:15, 7:8, 13:10, 15:15, 26:6—8, Heb. *serpens*, e 15:11. Deut. 5:7, 6:5, 14. Josh. 24:18—24, 2 Kings 17:23—35. Ps. 29:2, 26:23, 81:9, 1s. 26:4, 43:10, 44:8, 45:21, 22, 46:9, Jer. 25:6; Matt. 4:10, 1 Cor. 8:4, 6, Eph. 5:5, Phil. 3:19, Col. 2:18, 1 John 5:20, 21, Rev. 19:

their obligations to the divine Redeemer: and receiving the law from his hands, as the rule of their grateful obedience and the standard of holiness; daily self-examination according to it serves to keep them humble, dependent on free mercy, diligent in pressing forward to the mark, and watchful against every temptation or suggestion to evil. It also directs them in acquiring an exact judgment and correct spiritual taste, in respect of every part of the Christian temper; and, in many other ways, it promotes their establishment, fruitfulness, and consolation.—Besides these uses, the law served to restrain the Israelites from gross transgression, by its strictness and terrors; and it still, in a measure, answers the same purpose even to wicked men, and, where known, serves to keep the world in some degree of order. It also discovers the holy character of God, the nature of his government of the world, and the rule and measure of the future judgment, that “day of wrath and perdition of ungodly men.” On the other hand, the bad effects resulting from ignorance or mistakes concerning the holy law of God, are manifold and deplorable. The dreams of a purgatory, either before or after the day of judgment; the flattering illusions of the merit of human obedience; the palliating excuses that are made for sin; the objections to the sovereignty of divine grace in the gospel, and to God’s method of justifying sinners; and all antinomian perversions of those precious truths of revelation, seem principally to arise from this source. Ignorance of the extensive requirements of the divine law supports careless presumption and pharisaical self-confidence; ignorance of its excellency excites murmurs and objections against the severity of its awful sanction. The same ignorance has led some to frame, in imagination, a *new law*, which has been substituted in the place of the holy law of God, since by sin man became unable to obey it; and the same ignorance has occasioned innumerable objections to the doctrine, and mistakes about the nature of regeneration; and indeed it has prevented many real Christians from glorifying God in that manner which they otherwise might have done. In short, were the law of God well understood, the person and office of the Saviour must appear most suitable and precious; and the genuine beauty of Christianity, as reinstating a lost sinner in his Maker’s favour, and recovering him to his image, in a way honourable to all the perfections of the Deity, would shine forth with unclouded lustre.

We may consider the giving of the law from mount Sinai, either as a publication to mankind of the law of their reason and nature, as originally written in their hearts, but erased or obscured by sin; or as given to Israel, for the rule and foundation of their national covenant.—For want of advertent to this obvious distinction, it has been incautiously asserted, that the law itself was given only to the *redeemed*; which sentiment not only supposes the rest of JEHOVAH’S universal kingdom without a law, but vacates redemption itself; for “where there is no law there is no transgression,” no condemnation, no occasion for redemption. On the other hand, it is often asserted, or assumed, that the believer has in no sense any thing to do with the law; nay, it is sometimes even ranked among the *enemies*, from which Christ came to deliver us! “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” All rational creatures are bound by its authority, and all transgressors are under its condemnation; but since Christ has fulfilled its righteousness and borne its curse, all who hear the Gospel are under a dispensation of mercy, and have forgiveness *proposed* to them; and all true believers are actually pardoned and justified, and are required and inwardly disposed, to render a sincere, unreserved, habitual obedience to the law, though not able to obey it perfectly.

V. 2. The great Lawgiver prefaced his injunctions, by proclaiming his own essential glory and perfection. “I am JEHOVAH.” As the Source of existence, and consequently of all power, wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness, God is the Standard of excellence and beauty; from whom all created amiableness is an emanation, and of whose glory it is a feeble reflection. To him alone the throne belongs; he alone is qualified to be the Lawgiver and Judge of the universe; and he has the sole and unalienable right to that love and service which his law demands. To this he added, “*THY God*,” to express Israel’s relations and obligations to him. We are all his rational creatures; and every benefit which he bestows binds us more forcibly to love and obedience. But the Israelites were the children of the covenant made with Abraham; they had the external seal of circumcision in their flesh; his glorious presence was among them, and they had it consented to enter into covenant with him: and professed Christians, dedicated to God in the initiatory sacrament of baptism, favoured with the light of revelation, and avowing themselves his worshippers, stand in a similar relation to him.—The recent deliverance also of Israel from Egypt laid the Israelites under additional obligations to obedience, and afterwards rendered their disobedience more inexcusable. This was a type of our redemption from sin and Satan; and

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven

10, 22:9, 32:1, 5:23, 34:17, Lev. 19:4, 23:1, Deut. 4:15—17, 5:21, 1 Kings 12:29, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

though all men ought to obey the law of God, yet none actually yield it any spiritual obedience except his redeemed people.

V. 3. The commandments are addressed, in the singular number, to each person, because every one is concerned by them on his own account; and each prohibition implies a positive duty.—This first commandment requires a disputation and conduct, suited to the relation in which we stand to JEHOVAH, as our God. He alone is the adequate Object of our love, and able to satisfy our capacity of happiness; all we are and have, is derived from him; and he possesses an unalienable right to prescribe the use which we should make of all his gifts. He has so clear a title to our love, gratitude and adoration, our reverence, submission, credence, confidence, and obedience, that we cannot withhold them from him without the most palpable injustice. Considering *Who he is*, and *what he hath done for us*; except we love him to the utmost extent of all our natural powers, we do not render him his due: and if we thus loved him, all contrary affections would be excluded, all inferior affections subordinated. Admiring his excellency, desiring and delighting in him and his favour, being grateful for his loving-kindness, and zealous for his glory, with all the energy of our whole souls; it is evident that all our love to other objects would be for his sake, and according to his will; no creature could then rival him in our affections, or prevail with us to neglect his service; and, while we rendered him the tribute of adoring love and praise, we should possess unalloyed felicity in his favour. This is the reasonable state, in which things should be; thus it has always been with holy angels; thus it will be for ever with the redeemed in heaven; and all that deviates from it is *sin*, and the effect of apostasy from God.—These reflections may prepare us for understanding the nature and extent of the prohibition, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” Mankind in general, as reasonable creatures, though fallen, have required some object of worship, and some kind of religion; but, disliking the holy attributes and spiritual worship of the true God, they have been led to substitute deities and religious rites more congenial to themselves. Thus, (to the disgrace of the human understanding,) the grossest idolatry has been almost universal; while a more refined and plausible kind of idolatry has often supplanted it, in the few places where something more rational has prevailed; and that proud ambitious spirit, who is the enemy of God and man, has been gratified in the success of his presumptuous attempts to become, by these means, “the god of this world.” This worship of creatures, whether actually existing, or only supposed to exist, is the principal violation of the commandment; as it ascribes to *them* the glory of those perfections which JEHOVAH incommunicably possesses, and seeks those blessings from them which he alone can confer. The immensely varied idolatries of the Gentiles, which the Israelites were constantly disposed to imitate, are always in Scripture spoken of with decided abhorrence, as flagrant transgressions of the letter of this command: and it is impossible for those professed Christians, who render religious worship to saints and angels, to show that their practice is not so too, or to disprove the charge of ascribing the glory of the divine perfections to mere creatures.—All pretences to witchcraft likewise, or to magic, fortune-telling, charms, astrology, or enchantments, deeply partake of the same guilt; as in these ways men expect that information or assistance from other beings, which God alone can afford.—But this spiritual precept reaches much further. To love, desire, delight in, or expect good from, any forbidden indulgence, even in the smallest degree, is evidently a violation of it; and to suffer the most valuable and excellent creature to rival God in our affections, must be a proportionable contempt of him. By atheism and irreligion, men set up themselves as gods, aspire at independence, reject subordination, and refuse to render homage, worship, love, or praise, to any superior or benefactor; as if they had created themselves, and were sufficient for their own happiness! The proud man idolizes himself, offers incense to his own deity, and expects others to do the same: therefore “God resists him” as his rival. The ambitious pays homage to the opinions of men, and seeks happiness in their applause, or in such distinctions as they can bestow. The revengeful usurps the throne of God, and invades the prerogative of him “to whom vengeance belongeth.” The covetous man deifies his wealth; the sensualist, his vile appetites; and the rapturous lover, his mistress; he lives on her smiles, his heaven is placed in her favour, and her frown would make him the most miserable of creatures. Nay, the doing husband, and the fond parent, may deify the objects of their affections; for though they ought to love them tenderly, yet this affection, and the manner in which it is exercised, should be absolutely subordinated to the will and glory of God.

But no comment can equal the extent of this command. Whatever does not consist with the most perfect love, gratitude, reverence, submission, and devotedness to God, is a transgression of it; and it requires us to love the Lord and all his creatures, according to their real worthiness; not more

image, or any likeness of *any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*

5 Thou shalt not *show down thyself to them, nor serve them:* *for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity*

of thy fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me:

nor less, except as finite beings cannot love infinite excellence in an adequate manner. Obedience to this precept would perfectly enthroned the Lord in our judgment and affections; and the whole of our love being thus given to him, we should love all others for his sake, and according to the measure which he had enjoined: while the violation of it destroys this regular subordination, and gives the creature the throne in our heart. Well therefore may it stand foremost in the Decalogue; for our obedience in all other things depends upon it. Other transgressions injure the subject, and affront the Sovereign; but the violation of this law is high treason against the majesty of heaven, and is therefore called "an abomination." At the same time it is entirely destructive to the transgressor, who "forsakes the Fountain of living waters, to hew out broken cisterns which can hold no water." Its reasonableness and excellence, therefore, are equal to its strictness and spirituality; and without conformity to it in its fullest extent, the glory of God and the felicity of rational creatures cannot be secured.—The expression, "before me," implied, that Israel might be considered as immediately in the presence of God, who in an especial manner dwelt among them; that idolatry would daringly insult him to his face; and that it could not be kept so secret, but he would detect and punish it.

V. 4. The second commandment requires us to render to the LORD our God a worship and service suited to his perfections, and honourable to his name. His incomprehensible nature cannot be represented by any similitude.—The most exquisite painting or sculpture can only give an *external* resemblance of a man: even animal life with its several functions cannot be thus exhibited, much less can a likeness be made of the soul and its operations. How dishonourable must be every attempt to represent the infinite God, "by silver or gold, graven by art and man's device!" The general disposition of mankind, to form images of the Deity, proves that low apprehensions of him are congenial to our fallen nature; and the practice has exceedingly increased the grossness of men's conceptions concerning him. The more stupid of the heathen alone worshipped the picture or image itself, others used it as a visible representation of the invisible *Numeri*, or Deity; and all that ingenious papists have urged, in behalf of their images, is equally applicable to Israel's worship of the golden calves, or to that rendered by the Ephesians to "the image of Diana which fell down from Jupiter."—A material image of the Deity is likewise an affront to the Person of Christ, the only adequate "Image of the invisible God;" and the worship of saints and angels, as mediators and *present deities*, by images, in every respect robs him of his mediatorial glory.—The commandment does not prohibit the *making* of images and pictures, for other purposes, as some have ignorantly supposed: for God commanded several of these to be made even in the construction of the tabernacle: but the *making* of them, in order to men's bowing down before them, and worshipping them; and in this case, both the maker and the worshipper of the image are involved in the guilt. The prohibition includes every kind of creature, because all are utterly unfit to represent the infinite Creator: and there are some devices common among us, as emblematic of the Trinity, which do not accord to the strictness of this injunction.—But the spiritual import of the commandment reaches much further. Superstition of every kind is an evident violation of its spirit and intent: and so are all human appointments in religious worship, when at all relied on as acceptable with God. The use of things indifferent in religion, without command from God, leads men's minds to gross conceptions of him; as if he delighted in that outward splendour, or those external forms, which excite in them lively but false affections, that are often mistaken for devotion: and it is commonly connected with a false dependence; it substitutes something else in the place of the appointments of God; and it tends to the usurpation of authority over men's consciences.—But many *circumstances* of worship must be regulated by human discretion: every man therefore should judge for himself which regulations tend to these evils, and which do not; and be candid in judging such as differ from him.—Hypocrisy and formality, arising from unworthy apprehensions of God, together with all unscriptural delineations of the divine character, are certainly here prohibited: for men, forsaking the light of revelation, and "not liking to retain God in their knowledge," frame notions of a deity according to their own opinions of excellence, warped by their predominant vicious inclinations; and then dignify this creature of their fancy with the title of the Supreme Being. But this object of their love and worship is altogether unlike "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" especially in

of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me:

6 And *showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

7 Thou shalt not *take the name of the LORD*

thy God in vain: for the LORD thy God is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of thy fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me:

respect of *justice* and *holiness*, being in general deemed so Clement that he cannot hate or punish sin.—The Jews of old supposed they worshipped the God of their fathers, yet they were declared by our Lord neither to have known nor loved him; nay, in "*hating the Son, to have hated the Father* that sent him;" and it will at last be proved in this case also, that the worshippers of these ideal deities were as real idolaters, as they who adored the work of their own hands. In short, the second commandment requires us to conceive of God, in all respects, as far as we are able, according to the revelation which he has made of himself to us: to realize his glorious presence to our minds, *by faith, not by fancy*: and to worship him as a Spirit "in spirit and truth;" not with corporeal representations of him before our eyes, or low conceptions of him in our minds; but sincerely, inwardly, with the most fervent affections, and profound reverence of his infinite majesty; in all his appointed ordinances, and in them alone; and with constancy and frequency, as performing a service reasonable in itself, and most pleasant to our own souls, as well as most honourable to his great name.

V. 5. God is so tenacious of his honour, in respect of idolatry, that the least approach to it, especially in the conduct of his professed worshippers, excites his hottest displeasure: even as the *jealous husband* is exasperated, and roused to seek vengeance, by whatever leads him to suspect his wife of adultery.—If then Israel, or any Israelites, should revolt to idolatry, they would be deemed "haters of God," as the wife would be supposed to hate her husband, when she preferred any worthless stranger to him.—It is observable, that throughout the Scriptures, the words *fury, indignation, jealousy*, as ascribed to God, and *hatred, abomination, detestable things*, and other strong expressions of abhorrence, in respect of man's conduct, are principally used when idolatry is spoken of.—It is evident that children in general are sufferers by the crimes of their parents; but Israel was under a peculiar covenant, which idolatry violated in its primary condition. If then the parents forfeited the covenant-blessings, their posterity must suffer the effects of the forfeiture. As this was intended to restrain them from sin, by means of natural affection, the third and fourth generation only are mentioned; for they could not expect to see more of their descendants, and would be less concerned about their remote posterity: or it may imply, that the Lord being ready to forgive, the effects would cease after that period, unless the children persisted in the sins of their parents.—In every age, whatever brings any family into the visible church and under the means of grace, is a benefit to that family, and often to its remote posterity; and whatever excludes any from the church, is a heavy loss to them.

V. 6. The law, as given to sinners in subserviency to the covenant of grace, (as well as to Israel with reference to their national covenant,) makes mention of the *mercy* of God, though not properly belonging to its own nature; and this with an especial reference to his character; and in order to manifest how deserving he is of that love and service, which according to it he claims as his unalienable right.—This mercy is promised unto thousands; not only unto great multitudes, or to the third or fourth generations, but to successive generations to the end of time. The Lord's dealings with the posterity of Abraham, who believed his word, loved him, and kept his commandments, illustrates this promise.

V. 7. The worshippers of the Lord must have frequent occasion to mention his name; and sometimes it will be requisite for them to call him to witness the truth of their words, and to bind themselves by vows and engagements as in his sight. This third commandment therefore forbids us to "take the name of the LORD our God in vain;" that is, to use it irreverently, or profanely, or in fraud, dissimulation, and hypocrisy. It forbids all rash and unlawful vows, and such as relate to things uncertain or impracticable. But perjury of every kind is the capital transgression of it: for by this men appeal to the omniscient, heart-searching God, for the truth of what they testify or assert, or for their sincerity in what they engage to do; when they do not know the truth of the one, or even think that it is false, and are consciously insincere in the other. This is one of the most atrocious and provoking crimes imaginable, though common among us in this land to an inconceivable degree, so that it is little noticed unless accompanied with flagrant injustice! But, alas! it is very closely connected with other instances of disregard to this law, by the unnecessary multiplication of oaths in all judicial transactions and commercial regulations, even on the most frivolous occasions; and by being administered with extreme irreverence, instead of all the solemnity of a religious ordinance, which every thinking person must

thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8 Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the

Lev. 24:16-23. Deut. 23:21-23. Josh. 2:12-17. 9:20. 2 Sam. 21:1, 2. 1 Kings 19:3. Ec. 17:13-15. Zech. 5:3, 4. o 16:23-30. 31:13-14. Gen. 2:3. Lev. 19:30. 33:2. Deut. 5:12-13. Is. 56:1-5. 58:13. Ec. 20:12. p 23:12. Luke 13:14-16. j 31:15. 34:21. Lev. 23:3. r 16:27-28. 35:2, 3. Num. 15:32-36.

allow to be reasonable.—All appeals to God in common conversation, with such expressions as 'the Lord knows,' when the matter atested is either not true, or not important, involves a measure of the same guilt.—All cursing and swearing is a most horrid violation of this commandment.—The use of the words, 'God, Lord, Christ,' or such like, without necessity, seriousness, and reverence; whether in *improper* religious discourse, or as expletives, in talking about other matters: every expression that takes the form of an adjuration or imprecation, though the name of God be not used: indeed, all that is more than "yea, yea; nay, nay," that is, every thing which, in common conversation, goes beyond a simple affirmation or denial; all jesting with the word of God or sacred things; all irreverence to whatever relates to him; and the use of his tremendous name, in religious worship, in a heedless or hypocritical manner: all these, I say, are violations of the spirit of this law. It likewise implies a command to remember habitually the infinite majesty, purity, and excellency of God; and to behave towards him, in word and deed, with that awe and reverence of his perfections, which becomes such mean and worthless creatures, in his infinitely glorious presence.

To this law it is added, that JEHOVAH "will not hold the transgressor guiltless." Men may not discover, or they may neglect to punish, this crime; and the sinner's conscience may scarcely trouble him about it: but let him know, that God will certainly detect and punish that atrocious affront, which is thus put upon him, often without even the plea of temptation, or expectation of profit or pleasure; unless men can find pleasure in disobeying and defying their Creator! But when it shall at last be said to the daring transgressor, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD?" his profane trifling will be turned into terror and despair.

V. 8-10. The form of the fourth commandment implies, that it had been previously known to the patriarchs and their descendants, though they were prone to forget it. (*Note, Gen. 2:3.*)—The separation of a portion of our time to the immediate service of God, is doubtless of *moral* obligation; for his glory, and our good, personal and social, temporal and eternal, are intimately connected with it, and therefore it is inserted in the moral law: but the exact proportion, as well as the particular day, may be considered as of *positive* institution. Yet one day in seven seems to have been fixed upon, by infinite wisdom, as the most proper, in every age of the world; though the change of the Dispensation, after the resurrection of Christ, has occasioned an alteration of the day, and an addition to the topics which call for peculiar commemoration and contemplation, on this season of sacred rest.—It is plain that the words, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work," were merely an *allowance*, and not an *injunction*; for the Lord forbade, by other precepts, all labour on some of these days: but they were assigned for the diligent performance of the business which relates to this present life, while the seventh was consecrated to the immediate service of the Lord. The concerns of our souls must indeed be attended to, and God worshipped, every day, that our business may be regulated in subseriency to his will; but on the other days of the week "we should do *all our work*," reserving none for the sabbath, except works of charity, piety, and necessity; for these alone consist with the holiness of that sacred day of rest, and are allowable, because "the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." All works, therefore, which arise from avarice, distrust, luxury, vanity, and self-indulgence, are entirely prohibited. Our affairs should be previously so arranged, that the sacred duties of the Lord's day may be interrupted as little as possible. Buying and selling, paying wages, settling accounts, writing letters of business, reading books on ordinary subjects, trifling visits, journeys, excursions, dissipation, or conversation which serves only for amusement, cannot consist with "keeping a day holy to the LORD;" and sloth is a *carnal*, not a *spiritual* rest. The sabbath should be a cessation from worldly labour, and a rest in the service of God. Serious self-examination; perusal of the Scriptures; private, social, and public worship; instruction of children and servants; meditation and pious conversation, should occupy our time from morning till evening; except as these duties are suspended by attention to such things, as really conduce to our own good, or that of others. Servants and some others may, however, be under a *real necessity* of doing things which are not *necessary* in themselves; though good management might often greatly lessen the evil; and the pious servant will prefer a place of less emolument, where he can have more entire liberty of keeping holy the sabbath-day. Were our love to God and spiritual things as intense as it ought to be, we should deem

LORD thy God: *in it* 'thou shalt not do any work thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, 'thy man servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor 'thy stranger that is within thy gates.

11 For *in* 'six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested

Luke 23:56. Mat. 23:6, 7. Deut. 5:14, 15. t 12:48, 49. 22:21. 23:9-12. Gen. 17:13-15. Lev. 19:33, 34. 22:25. Num. 15:14-16, 26, 29, 30. Deut. 16:11, 12. 24:14-22. Job. 31. 13:15-21. u 31:17. Gen. 2:2, 3. Is. 85:4-7. Mark 2:27, 28. John 20:19, 28. Acts 20:7. 1 Cor. 16:2. Heb. 4:2-9-11. Rev. 1:10.

a day thus spent our great delight; for heaven will be an eternal rest, not essentially differing from it. All our aversion from such strictness arises from "the carnal mind, which is enmity against God;" and the advantages which would accrue from thus hallowing the sabbath, to the morals, health, liberty, and happiness of mankind, are so many and so obvious, that they who doubt its obligation often allow its expediency.—But parents and masters are required, not only themselves to hallow the sabbath, and not to employ their children, servants, or slaves, in any needless work; but they should also with authority *require* them to keep holy the Lord's day, which is greatly intended for their benefit; and they are responsible to God for it, if those under their care violate this holy rest, by their command, or connivance, or negligence.—The cattle must also be allowed to rest from the hard labour of husbandry, journeys, and all employments connected with trade or pleasure; though doubtless we may employ them *too* in works of necessity, piety, and charity, and thus they may properly be used for the gentle service of conveying those to places of public worship, who could not otherwise attend, or perform the duties to which they are called. (*Note, 2 Kings 4:23.*) Yet, alas! ostentation and self-indulgence so multiply violations of the Lord's day in this respect, that it is with hesitation that this observation is admitted; and the true Christian would wish to adhere to the letter of the prohibition in all cases, when it did not interfere with its intention.—The stranger likewise, though not of the same religion, was not only to be persuaded and encouraged to hallow the sabbath; but prohibited from externally violating its sacred rest, while he resided among the Israelites: for this was the law of their land, as well as of their religion. (*Notes, 35:2, 3. Num. 15:32-36.*) And, though the government of Israel differed from that of other people, yet there seems a great propriety in nations professing Christianity making it a part of their law likewise. But, alas! how often do such laws lose their energy, for want of being sanctioned by the example of the legislators themselves, and by that of those whose office it is to carry them into execution.

V. 11. The sabbath was originally instituted in remembrance of the completion of the work of creation, and in honour of the great Creator; the Israelites had additional reasons assigned them, why they should observe it; and Christians have some of a still more important nature: but all the perfections of the Lord, as displayed in creation, providence, redemption, or in any of his works of power and love to us or to his church, should be remembered and adored by us on this solemn and joyful day.

This compendious exposition of the first table of the law suffices to prove its requirements to be very extensive, spiritual, reasonable, and beneficial; yet it must be owned to be entirely contrary to the disposition of our hearts, and diverse from the tenor of our lives. We all therefore need mercy, redemption, and a new creation to holiness, in order that we may please God and be made fit for heaven.—We now proceed to the second table.

V. 12. According to the principle which has hitherto directed our interpretation, this commandment must be considered as the abstract of relative duties. All other relations spring from that of parents and children, or partake in a measure of its nature; and this most nearly resembles our relation to the great Creator.—Children are required to *honour* their parents; which implies, that it is the duty of parents to behave *honourably*, by diligently performing the several parts of their important charge, as intrusted with the care of their offspring, both in body and soul; and by a becoming deportment in all other respects. Yet children are not absolved from their duty by the misconduct of their parents, for which they must answer to God: and such a limitation, in this and other relative precepts, would absurdly constitute all the inferior relations, judges and lords over their superiors. Children, under God, derive their being from their parents: and they are generally taken care of by them, with much labour and expense and self-denial, during helpless infancy and inexperienced youth. It is therefore reasonable, that they should so long obey them unreservedly in all things lawful; and afterwards in all things which are not manifestly injurious to them, though they may be disagreeable. They ought to love their parents; to respect their characters, counsels, and instructions; to consult their interest, credit, and comfort; to conceal their infirmities, to bear with their tempers and humours, alleviate their sorrows, and rejoice their hearts as far as possible; and when they are grown old, or become in any way incapable of maintaining themselves, children are bound, if able, even to labour for their support, as their parents did for them when infants. In all these respects, both parents are equally included; and

the seventh day : wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it.

12 Honour thy father and thy mother : *that

x Lev. 22:32. Jer. 17:20-27. Ezr. 20:20. 44:24. Matt. 6:9. Luke 11:2. y 21:15, 17. 22:24. Gen. 9:21-23. Lev. 19:3, 34. 20:9. Deut. 5:16. 21:18-21. 27:16. 1 Kings 2:19. 2 Kings 9:1. 13. 13:11. Prov. 1:8, 9. 6:20. 15:5. 19:23. 20:30. 22:22-25. 23:24. 31:11-17. 35:18, 19. Mal. 1:6. Matt. 15:4-6. 19:19. Mark 7:1-13. 12:17. Luke 18:20. Rom. 13:7. Eph. 5:21. 6:1-3. Col. 3:20. 1 Tim. 5:1, 2, 17. 6:4. Heb. 13:7. 1 Pet. 2:17. 3:1-7. 5:5, 6. Jude 8. z 4:26, 40.

should alike be honoured and obeyed, and not in disposition to one another; which should teach the parents to set their children an example of *impartiality*, and to be *harmonious* in their conduct towards them.—By parity of reason, every one, who has acted a parent's part, is entitled to a correspondent respect and deference; and all the superior and inferior relations have their several reciprocal duties, which may be referred to this command, but will hereafter be considered. (*Notes*, Rom. 13:1-7. Eph. 5:21-33. 6:1-9. Col. 3:18-25. 4:1. 1 Tim. 6:1-5. 1 Pet. 2:13-25. 3:1-7.)—The annexed promise of long life to obedient children might have a peculiar reference to the covenant of Israel; yet, careful observers of mankind have noted its remarkable fulfilment in other nations. Subordination, in the family and community, tends to personal and public felicity; and the dislike which the human heart bears to *submission* renders it proper to enforce it by motives of every kind.

V. 13. The sixth commandment requires us to "love our neighbour as ourselves," in respect of his *person and life*.—Magistrates, as "God's ministers in executing vengeance," are in some cases *commanded* to put men to death; and in others it may be *allowable*, because conducive to the public good.—Witnesses or executioners may also concur in such capital punishments without the guilt of murder. We may doubtless take away another's life in defence of our own: for he who assaults another's life, by that action forfeits his own; and there is no opportunity of referring the cause to the civil magistrate. Perhaps, in peculiar circumstances, the same may be allowable in defence of our property; especially when violence is menaced.—Some wars are necessary and unavoidable to one party, because of the injurious conduct of the other; and the blood shed in them is not imputed as murder to those who shed it: yet the guilt it must rest somewhere; and few wars indeed are so entered upon and conducted, as to leave any of the contending parties free from blood-guiltiness.—A man may by misfortune kill another: yet God condemns, as *wilful murder*, many of those actions by which life is taken away, but which are called by our law *manslaughter*. Furious passions, excited by sudden provocation or drunkenness, is no where in Scripture excepted from the general rule, "He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." The duellist is a proud and revengeful murderer of the most atrocious kind; and, in general, he is distinguished from all other criminals, by an habitual determination to commit the sin, whenever he shall be tempted to it.—All fighting for wagers, or prizes, or renown, violates this command; and the blood thus shed is *murder*.—Whatever, by force or stratagem, deprives another of his life, is prohibited. All the slaughter committed by oppressions, persecutions, or attempts to deprive of liberty, or confine in slavery, our unoffending fellow-creatures, on any pretence whatever, is wilful, cruel murder. What then shall we think of the accursed slave-trade, and how thankful should we be, that it is at length abolished!—Even laws, needlessly sanguinary, involve the persons concerned in this enormous guilt: and they, who ought to punish the murderer, and yet suffer him to escape, will be numbered among the abettors of his crime at the tribunal of God. But capital punishments are denounced, in this land, in so very many instances, that they counteract their own intention; and yet are executed in such numerous instances, and for offences so different in the degree of criminality, as almost to obliterate in the minds of numbers the disparity of crimes, and to lessen exceedingly the horror of committing murder: and impartial judges must allow, that our criminal code is in this respect both unscriptural, impolitic, and unreasonably severe.

This commandment likewise prohibits us to assault, maim, or wound others, or to assist those who do; to tempt men to crimes that destroy their constitutions, or endanger their lives, either from the sword of justice, or the resentment of the injured party; nay, to entice them, by the prospect of a large reward, to such enterprises and labours, as are known generally to shorten life. Many parents and wives are murdered by the gross misconduct of their children and husbands; and numbers will be found guilty of transgressing this commandment, by covetously or maliciously wishing the death of others. The spiritual import of it prohibits all envy, revenge, hatred, or causeless anger; all that insulting language, which provokes to wrath and murder; and all the pride, ambition, and covetousness, which prompt to it. Nay, that man will be condemned as the hater and murderer of his brother, who, seeing his life endangered by the want of food, raiment, or medicine, and having ability to relieve him, selfishly neglects to do it. (*Notes*, 1 John 3:13-17.)—But the murder of the soul is still more heinous. This is committed by seducing men to sin; by a bad example: by disseminating poisonous principles; by terrifying others from religion by persecution, or by reviling or ridiculing such as attend to it; by withhold-

ing days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

13 *Thou shalt not kill.

6:2. 17:20. 25:15. 32:47. Prov. 3:16. n 21:14, 20, 29. 22:23. Gen. 4:8-15, 23. 9:5, 6. 27:41, 45. 49:6. Lev. 24:17, 21. Num. 35:16-21, 31-34. Deut. 5:17. 19:11-13. 21:1-3. 2 Sam. 12:9, 10. 1 Kings 2:5, 6. 2 Kings 21:16. 2 Chr. 34:22. Ps. 10:8-11. Prov. 1:11, 18. 28:17. Is. 1:15. 26:21. Jer. 26:15. Matt. 5:21, 22. John 8:44. Acts 28:4. Rom. 13:9. Gal. 5:21. 1 Tim. 1:9. Jam. 2:11, 13. 4:1, 2. 1 John 3:12-15. Rev. 16:6. 17:6. 21:8. 22:15.

ing instructions, needful warning and counsels, especially such as are due from parents to their children, or ministers to their people: and it is tremendous to think, what numbers will be thus condemned as the murderers of the souls of men.—The heinousness of *suicide* likewise should be especially marked. It is in reality the most malignant of all murders; and, as scarcely ever repented of, it combines the guilt of murdering both soul and body at once. We were not the authors, and are not the lords, of our own lives: nor may we leave our assigned post, or rush without a summons into the presence of our Judge, any more than we may execute vengeance on our neighbour, or send him to the tribunal of God. Self-murder may be easily shown to be a complication of ingratitude, contempt of the Lord's gift of life, impatience, pride, rebellion, and infidelity; nor is it generally the effect of *insanity*, (as verdicts, in which perjury is deliberately committed from false tenderness, would lead us to suppose;) except as all are in some sense *insane*, who are hurried on by fierce passions and Satan's temptations. That original murderer knows this present life to be the only season in which salvation can be obtained: and therefore he tempts men to such excesses, as destroy the constitution, or render life miserable; and he urges them on to suicide, that he may destroy both body and soul by their hands, not being permitted to do it by his own power. Extravagance, discontent, and despondency should therefore be most carefully shunned; and *gratitude*, patience, and hope most diligently cultivated.—In a word, this command requires enlarged benevolence, kindness, long-suffering, and forgiveness; and a disposition to seek, in all relations, the welfare of every human being.

V. 14. The seventh commandment regulates our love to our neighbours, in respect of their *purity, and domestic comfort*; and requires the proper government of those inclinations, which God hath implanted in order to the increase of the human species.—The marriage of one man with one woman was the original institution of the Creator; and not merely a *civil contract*, as some state it to be: one man and one woman "became one flesh" in this respect, as if they formed one body, actuated by one soul; in order to promote and share one another's satisfactions, and with united attention to educate their common offspring. (*Note*, Mal. 2:13-16.) The entrance of sin and death made way for the dissolution of this union, a variety of evils began to imbitter the relation, and abuses were soon introduced. Some things were under the preceding dispensations *connived at*, which did not accord to the original institution; but Christ refers his disciples to that standard of honourable marriage, as far as the change of circumstances can admit of it.—The force acquired by men's passions, in consequence of sin, renders the "prevention of fornication" one express end of marriage; mutual forbearance and reciprocal compliances are now needful and incumbent; the sorrows of the female sex, as well as the afflictions of life, require peculiar sympathy, to alleviate the anguish of the suffering party; and the separating stroke of death leaves the survivor free to take another companion. We as Christians therefore must not explain adultery, as prohibited in this commandment, according to the *judicial* law of Moses, which will afterwards come under consideration; (*Lev. 20:10. Deut. 22:22*.) but by the decisions of Christ, with which polygamy and divorces (except for unfaithfulness) are utterly incompatible. It is evident, that marriage, recognised in some appointed way, to distinguish it from illicit connexions, gives each party such a property in the other's person and affections, that every violation of conjugal fidelity, on either side, is *adultery*, according to the New Testament; and is far more deserving of death, (if we estimate crimes by their mischievous effects,) than many offences which are capital punished. (*Notes*, Matt. 19:3-9. Mark 10:2-12. 1 Cor. 7:1-5.) On either side, it is a violation of this spiritual commandment; it militates against the ends and intentions of marriage; is inconsistent with that union of hearts and interests which it implies; is a breach of the marriage-compact; mars domestic peace; prevents the harmonious agreement in training up children; as it forms an alienation of that property, which both husband and wife have in the persons and affections of the other, and which is scarcely ever lost without the bitterest anguish and keenest resentment. Adultery on the woman's side is indeed *more generally* chargeable with the injustice of introducing a spurious offspring to inherit the husband's property: but, his infidelity is not seldom productive of a similar effect, when the husband has the disposal of that, which was the property of the wife. And though jealousy is especially "the rage of man," and produces the most fatal effects; yet sometimes female passions overpower female timidity, and dreadful consequences ensue on that side also. So that, in the impartial judgment even of reason, the difference of the injury and of its effects in the two cases is not very great.—All other commerce between the sexes is prohibited by the spirit of this

17 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house
thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, no, his
man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, no
his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

21. 52:2-4, 10:5-7. Prov. 10:18. 11:11. 1. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837.

well as calumny. In such important concerns, we should attest nothing of which we have not the fullest assurance; and all human passions should be watched over, that our evidence may not be warped by any of them. We should be exact to a word in reporting what we know, and in speaking the truth, and no more than the truth; while equal caution is required in juries, and in the judge who decides the cause.—The malicious invention and circulation of slanderous reports, to the injury of a man's character, is a very heinous violation of this commandment. To do this in sport is an imitation of "the madman, who throws about firebrands, arrows, and death," for his diversion. To spread stories which others have damaged to the discredit of our neighbour, when we suspect them to be false or aggravated; or even if we suppose or know them to be true, when there is no real occasion for it, (such as the detection of a mischievous hypocrite, or designing villain,) is prohibited by this law: for this practice results from pride, self-preference, malevolence, or affectation of wit and humour.—Severe censures, bitter sarcasm, ridicule, harsh judgments, ascribing good actions to bad motives, intentions, misrepresentations, collecting and circulating in any way family anecdotes, or anecdotes of persons in high life or conspicuous station, unfavourable to the reputation of those concerned, or exposing them and their connexions to ridicule, and various other practices of the same nature, can never consist with it.—This commandment is very frequently violated by authors: a lie or a slander is far worse when printed, than when only spoken; and religious controversy is too generally disgraced by the most abominable calumnies: for *bigots*, of all parties, agree in misstating the actions, misquoting the writings, and misreporting the words, of their opponents.—All lies are a violation of this law. They are in every possible case an abuse of speech, and of our neighbour's confidence, and a derogation from the value of truth; and almost always hurtful to mankind.—Even injurious thoughts, groundless suspicions and secret prejudices, or envy of the praises and commendations which others receive, do not consist with the spirit of this precept. For it requires sincerity, truth, fidelity, candour, and caution, in all our conversation and conduct; and a disposition to honour in every man what is honourable, to commend what is commendable, to vindicate and excuse what can be vindicated and excused, and to conceal what may lawfully be concealed; and in every respect to consult his reputation, and even to rejoice in his credit and renown, as we should were it our own; and as we might reasonably desire he also should. In our own case, we all feel the excellency and reasonableness of the precept, in its strictest sense; we value and are tender of our reputation; and expect, nay demand, to be treated with candour, respect, and sincerity; and we are greatly pained and affronted when we are imposed upon, or held forth to scorn, ridicule and censure, by the tongues or pens of others. But, through the exorbitancy of self-love, and want of love to others, we are prone, in an amazing degree, to violate the rules which we should impose on our neighbours, in our own conduct towards them, and that without much remorse, or sense of guilt. Nor can words express how heinously this reasonable commandment is every day transgressed, in almost every company, and among persons of all characters!

V. 17. This concluding commandment forbids us to covet any thing that is our neighbour's. This restriction is placed as the fence of all the rest. The apostle's reference to it, (*Note, Rom. 17, 8.*) shows that it comprises the utmost spiritual utility of the law; and it is a perpetual confutation of all those systems, by which the outward, gross crime is considered as the only violation of each command.—We are here expressly, and in the most forcible language, prohibited so much as to *desire* what is withheld from us by the command or providence of God: and, so far from wanting to level property, or seize violently on our neighbour's possessions, we may not so much as at all hanker after them.—The most secret wish for another man's wife violates this precept; but to desire a union by marriage with an unmarried woman, becomes sinful only when it is excessive, and when it is not submitted to the will of God, if he render it impracticable. We may desire that part of a man's property, which he is inclined to dispose of, if we mean to obtain it only on equitable terms; but what he chooses to keep we may not covet. The poor man may desire moderate relief from the rich; but he must not covet his affluence, or repine even if he do not relieve him. Men exposed to equal hazards, may agree to a proportionable contribution to him who suffers loss; for it accords with the law of love to help the distressed. The

18 ¶ And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off.

19 And they said unto Moses, ^kSpeak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

20 And Moses said unto the people, ^mFear not: for God is come to prove you, that and this fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

22 And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou

19:16-18. See on Deut. 4:10, 11, 36. 5:22, 23. 1 Ps. 139:7, 8. Jer. 23:23, 24. k Deut. 5:27. 18:16. Acts 7:39. Gal. 3:19. Heb. 12:18, 19. 133:20. Gen. 32:30. Deut. 5:24, 25. 1 Sam. 12:20, 24. n 15:25, 26. Gen. 22:1, 12. Deut. 8:2, 16. 13: 3. o Gen. 20:11. 2:18. Deut. 4:10, 6:2. 10:12. 17:15, 19. 28:38. Josh. 24:11. Nuh. 5:16. Job 28:28. Prov. 1:7. 1a. 8:13. Jer. 32:39, 40. Matt. 10:28. Heb. 12:28. 1a:17. Deut. 5:5. q 1 Kings 8:12. 2. hr. 6:1. Ps. 18:9, 12. 97:2. 104:2. 1 Tim. 6: 16. r Deut. 1:31. Neh. 9:13. Heb. 12:25, 26. s 3-5. See on 32:1-4. 1 Sam. 5: 4, 5. 2 Kings 17:33, 41. Ez. 20:39. 43:8. Dan. 5:23. Zeph. 1:5. 1 Cor. 10:21, 22.

exculpates *ensurance* when fairly conducted. But every species of *gaming* originates from an undue desire and hope of increasing our property, by proportionally impoverishing other men; and is therefore a direct violation of this law.—Public gaming by *LOTTERIES*, so far from being less criminal than other species of that vice, is the worst of them all; for it abets and sanctions, as far as example and concurrence by statute can do it, a practice which opens the door to every species of fraud and villany; which is pregnant with the most extensive evils to the community and to individuals; which seldom fails annually to bring several to an untimely end, by suicide or the sentence of the law; which unsettles an immense multitude from the honest employments of their station, to run in quest of imaginary wealth; and which exposes them to manifold temptations, unfits them for returning to their usual mode of life, and often materially injures their circumstances, breaks their spirits, sours their tempers, and excites the worst passions of which they are susceptible. Indeed the evils, political, moral, and religious, of *lotteries*, are too glaring to be denied, even by those who plead *necessity* for continuing them; and too numerous to be recapitulated in this place. Can it therefore consist with the law of God, “Thou shalt not covet,” or with the character of a Christian, to concur in so iniquitous and injurious a system, from a vain desire of irregular gain? Whatever argument proves it unlawful for two or three men to cast lots for a sum of money, or to game in any other way, is much more strongly conclusive against a million of persons gaming publicly by a lottery, to the stagnation in great measure of every other business: while the gain made by government, and by individuals, from the stakes deposited with them, renders it as imprudent as it is sinful in the adventurers; for every individual stakes at least *three to two on an even chance*, if a covetous appeal to Providence may be called chance. (Note, Prov. 16:33.) Even *Tontines* are by no means to be justified, as they constitute a kind of complicated wager about longevity, to be decided by Providence in favour of the survivors; and must therefore partake of the nature of other games of chance. Coveting the property of our neighbours contrary to the law of love, and enriching the survivors, commonly at the expense of the relatives of the deceased, are in innately connected with them; while they lead men into strong temptation secretly to wish the death of others, for the sake of advantages which they inordinately desire, and irregularly pursue.—In fine, discontent, distrust, love of wealth, pleasure, and grandeur, desire of change, the habit of wishing, and every inordinate affection, are the evils here prohibited; and we know them to be the sources of all other crimes, and of man’s misery. The command requires moderation in respect of all worldly things, submission to God, acquiescence in his will, love to his commands, and a reliance on him for the *daily* supply all our wants, as he sees good. This is right and reasonable, fit for God to command, and profitable for man to obey; the very temper and felicity of heaven itself: but it is so contrary to the disposition of our heart by *nature*, and so superior to the actual attainment of the best Christians on earth, that it is very difficult to persuade men in general, that God requires such perfection; still more difficult to satisfy them, that it is indispensable to the happiness of rational creatures; and most difficult of all to convince them, that every thing inconsistent with this, or short of it, is *sin*; that it deserves the wrath of God, and cannot be taken away, except by the mercy of God, through the atonement of Christ.—We cannot close this brief explication of the divine law, (in which we find nothing redundant, nothing defective, nothing injurious, but all things “holy, and just, and good,” more properly, than by the words of our church-service, “Lord, have mercy upon us,” (forgive all our past transgressions,) and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.)

V. 18-29. The thunders and lightnings continued during the whole of this awful solemnity; and we may suppose, that as soon as the Lord had ceased to speak, the trumpet again sounded loudly, as before. The people therefore, witnessing such a continuance or succession of tremendous

scenes, removed in trepidation to a greater distance; and requested that Moses would, from that time, deliver the commands and will of God to them, promising to be attentive and obedient.—“They could not endure the things which were spoken,” any more than the tremendous manner in which they were delivered: and though their request to Moses was rather the language of terror than of judgment; yet it implied that they needed a Mediator, and could not stand before God without one. Moses, however, encouraged them not to fear immediate death, which they seem to have expected: for these solemn displays were not intended for their destruction; but to prove them, whether they would be obedient or not, and to impress them with reverential fear of the authority and majesty of JEHOVAH, that they might be restrained from sinning against him.—The distinction between servile fear, and the dread of immediate vengeance, on this particular occasion, and the salutary fear of God, which habitually influences the conduct, is very observable in this passage.

23 Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.

24 An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

25 And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.

26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

2 Cor. 6:14-16. Col. 2:18, 19. 1 John 5:20, 21. Rev. 22:15. t John 4:24. u Lev. 1:3. x Deut. 15:11, 21. 16:5, 6. 26:2. 1 Kings 8:29, 43. 9:3. 2. hr. 6:5. 7:16. 12:13. Ezra 6:12. Neh. 1:9. Ps. 74:7. 76:2. 78:68. 132:13, 14. Jer. 7:10-12. Mal. 1:11. Matt. 18:20. 29:30. John 4:20-23. 1 Tim. 2:8. y Gen. 12:2. Num. 8:34. z Lev. 7:13. 2 Sam. 6:12. Ps. 128:5. 194:3. a Lev. 27:5, 6. Josh. 8:31. b Heb. build them with hewing. c Lev. 10:3. Ps. 89:7. Ec. 5:1. Heb. 12:28, 29. 1 Pet. 1:16.

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V. 21-25. At this time Moses directed the people to return to their tents, while he approached nearer to that thick darkness, from which the Lord had especially manifested his presence, and had spoken the ten commandments. There he received the following directions, enforcing what had been delivered, especially the commandments prohibiting idolatry of every kind, as being the most essential of all: particularly stating, that the precious materials, of which images might be made, would not diminish the guilt of the maker or worshipper.—It must be supposed they would now bring sacrifices, as an act of worship, which had been in use from the beginning: and in sacrificing, either burnt-offerings to be wholly consumed, or peace-offerings, on part of which they were allowed to feast, they must make no other altar than one of sods or rough stone. In due time another altar would be formed, according to special directions about to be given: in the mean while, they must remember that God principally looked to the heart and intention of the offerer, and to that Saviour whom the sacrifices typified. But he would afterwards record his name, or fix places where he would display his glory, and accept their worship; and there he would meet and bless them.—The rules prescribed about the altar might refer to some usages of the Gentiles, or in several ways be intended to exclude superstition: and they seem to have been of permanent obligation, as to occasional altars, raised on any emergency at a distance from the places where the Lord recorded his name; of which we shall hereafter meet with several instances.

V. 26. The Heathen worship was frequently attended by shameful indecencies, from which the Lord would keep his people at the utmost distance; and, as they wore loose garments, this precaution was very proper.—It is supposed, that the ascent to the altar at the tabernacle, and even at the temple, was by a gentle slope.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. Though we neither hear the thunders, nor see the lightnings, nor witness the awful circumstances with which the holy law was given; and though we are not appalled by the voice of God himself, speaking to us from the top of blazing Sinai; yet, if we attend to the things then spoken, we shall perceive, that we have as much occasion to tremble as the Israelites had, when they stood at the foot of the mountain. This law, which is so extensive that we cannot measure it, so spiritual that we cannot evade it, and so reasonable that we cannot find fault with it, will be the rule of the future judgment of God, as it is of the present conduct of man. Nor would it consist with the glory of the Lord’s perfections, the honour of his government, the interests of his universal and everlasting kingdom, or even with the felicity of his rational creatures, to reverse, repeal, or relax one precept of it; for it is all perfectly “holy, just, and good.”—Comparing the state of the world with its spiritual requirements, we see most evidently that man is a fallen creature; for his character, disposition, and conduct, so far from being perfectly conformable to this holy law, are quite contrary to

CHAPTER XXI.

Laws concerning the release or detention of Hebrew slaves, 1-8; the treatment of female slaves, 7-11: murder, manslaughter, smiting or cursing parents, man-stealing, maiming any person, killing or wounding a slave, hurting women with child, and other injuries, 12-21; mischiefs by cattle, and by pits, 22-26.

NOW these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

Lev. 18:5-26. 19:37. 20:22. Num. 35:24. 36:19. Deut. 5:1,31. 6:20. 1 Kings 6:2. 21 hr. 19:10. Neh. 9:13,14. 10:29. Ps. 147:19. Ez. 20:11,25. Mal. 4:4. 19:1. 7. 24:23,4. Deut. 4:5,9,14,45. 6:20. Matt. 23:20. 1 Thes. 4:1,2. c. 12:44. 22:3.

1: "The carnal mind" of man "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be." Examined by this rule, our own past lives appear a continued series of transgressions; our best actions, defective in their principle, end, and measure, and defiled with sin: and our judgment, will, and affections, the reverse of what they ought to be: so that, while we behold ourselves in this mirror, we cannot but use the language of the prophet, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." And we may learn to what imminent danger of hopeless misery every one is exposed, from the words of the apostle, or of the Lord by Moses, "Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them." (*Note, Deut. 27:26.*) especially, as our Lord assures us that, at the solemn day of judgment, he will thus address those on his left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" and that "these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—Yet, if we impartially consider the excellency of every commandment, we shall gradually be constrained to approve of the whole; to allow the evil of transgression; and, in some degree, to perceive the equity of that "wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." For if transgression of human laws, in any case, justly merits the death of the body, the utmost punishment which man can inflict; transgression of God's law, (considering who he is, and what are our obligations to him,) may surely be allowed justly to merit the utmost effect of his power, "who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." Thus the law, when applied by the convincing Spirit of God, shows men their lost estate, their guilt, danger, and misery; and effectually demonstrates to their consciences, that their own righteousness cannot justify them, their own arm cannot save them. Under these convictions, who can despise the gospel of Jesus Christ? Pardon of sin, justification by faith, access unto God upon a mercy-seat, the renewal of our souls to holiness, and eternal life as the free gift of a gracious God, can appear superfluous or despicable only to him, who knows not the extent, spirituality, or excellency of the divine law; or who has never carefully examined his heart and life according to it, with the day of judgment placed before his eyes.—In the person, undertaking, obedience, and death of Christ, this law was magnified and made honourable, and the justice of God satisfied; so that his hatred of sin now harmonizes with his love to sinners. Here he "gives the knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins;" for "Christ hath redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them." If we view the character of Christ, in human nature, in the midst of temptations and sufferings, even unto the death upon the cross; we shall learn that he was perfectly obedient to this law in its fullest extent: and on this obedience his divine nature stamped infinite value. This, O self-condemned sinner, is the provision God hath made for thy justification! This righteousness, being commensurate with the largest demands of the divine law, is "the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference;" and, through the atoning blood of Christ, and his intercession, we have open access to a reconciled God and Father, notwithstanding our guilt and unworthiness.—But can it be imagined, if the law is so holy and excellent, and such honour has been put upon it, by the obedience and sufferings of the incarnate Son of God, that any redeemed sinner should be allowed to disobey it? It is absurdity, impossibility, blasphemy! The knowledge of the law shows our need of repentance; the knowledge of Christ crucified is inseparably connected with repentance. In every believer's heart sin is dethroned and crucified, the law is written, and the image of God is renewed; Christ is "made sanctification" to him: the Holy Spirit disposes, inclines, and enables him to hate and flee from sin; to love, delight in, and keep this law in sincerity and truth; and to copy daily the example of him who perfectly fulfilled it. Nor will the believer ever cease to exercise repentance, or to follow after holiness, till he becomes "holy, as he who hath called him is holy." May this be indeed our religion: and while "we count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," that "we may be found in him," and "made the righteousness of God in him," may his holy precepts be "our delight and our counsellors," and may we be careful to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things!"

V. 18-26. The language of men, under terror of conscience, or in the prospect of immediate death, is often entirely opposite to their habitual conduct and character at other times; and therefore very little to be depended on.—When thus alarmed, they frequently apply with respect and earnestness

2 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: "and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

3 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

4 If his master have given him a wife, and she

Gen. 37:23,36. Lev. 25:39,44. 2 Kings 4:1. Neh. 5:1-5,8. Matt. 18:25. 1 Cor. 6:20. d Lev. 25:40-43,45. Deut. 15:1,12-15,18. 31:10. Jer. 34:8-17. e Heb. with his body.

to the ministers, whom they before treated with neglect & loaded with reproaches! And they make many promises and resolutions, how attentive and obedient they will be, if spared at that time; which they soon after violate without scruple. Not that they are always, or generally, insincere in these protestations: but they speak the language of their terrors, which form the predominant passion at the time; but which soon subside, and leave the heart under the influence of other passions, which habitually enslave them to sin.—Indeed, all convictions, which leave the heart unrenewed, and consequently alienated from God, tend eventually to drive men from him: and often terminate in a wilful and studied forgetfulness of all those subjects which have excited them; so that dissipation, excess, open impiety, and even infidelity, are not seldom the refuges to which convinced sinners flee, to escape the reproaches of a guilty conscience. On the other hand, a presumptuous confidence in the mercy of God quiets the fears of numbers, though they continue strangers to "repentance, and works meet for repentance."—The ministers of Christ, however, must use all proper methods of warning men against these delusions; and they should endeavour to abate the terrors of awakened sinners, when verging to despondency, by showing them the purposes of God in giving the law, in revealing his wrath from heaven against transgressors, and in alarming their consciences; and by holding forth the invitations and encouragements of the gospel. Thus they may expect that, in many instances, these terrors will make way for that holy, habitual fear of God, which, united with faith, and hope, and grateful love, will preserve them from sinning against him. It is in this manner, that our God "seeks men to worship him in spirit and truth," and forms "a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices" unto their reconciled God, "through Jesus Christ," such as attend wherever he records his name, to give him praise and honour, while "he comes unto them and blesses them." (*Note, Matt. 18:19,20.*)—But we must remember, that all uncommanded endeavours to decorate and embellish divine ordinances, by ingenuity, magnificence, or human devices of any kind, tend to superstition, false affections, and low thoughts of God; and so in fact pollute what they were intended to improve. "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart." Yet purity of heart will show itself in purity of manners; and a while simplicity is most suited to our spiritual worship, sure, we should carefully avoid every thing in the least inconsistent with the rule laid down by the apostle, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1. *Judgments.*] (*Marg. Ref.*) This word here evidently, and by general allowance, means *judicial laws*, or rules of judgment, by which the magistrates and judges of Israel should proceed in determining causes and trying criminals. And making some allowance for the circumstances, varying in different ages and nations, there is a spirit of equity in these laws, which is well worthy of being transfused into those of any state.—This chapter, and the two following, continue the narrative of what the Lord spake to Moses, when "he drew near to the thick darkness," after the people had removed from the mount. The whole of the judicial or political law of Israel, except some injunctions about the Sabbath, was either given on this occasion, or afterwards spoken to Moses from above the mercy-seat in the tabernacle: whence also a great part of the ceremonial law was delivered. (*Lev. 1:1.*) For little seems to have been prescribed to Moses, during his continuance for forty days in the mount, as afterwards recorded; except what related to the tabernacle and its sacred furniture, and to the holy garments for Aaron and his sons; the manner of their consecration to the priesthood; and the composition of the holy oil and of the incense.

V. 2. The Israelites sometimes sold themselves or their children, through poverty; magistrates sold some persons for their crimes; and creditors were, in certain cases, allowed to sell their insolvent debtors. In these ways slavery had been, or would soon be, introduced among the Israelites, even that of their brethren as well as of strangers; and God did not see good, in the *judicial law*, totally to prohibit this, and several other things, which are not agreeable to the perfect demands of the *moral law*.—In the government of nations, legislators must judge how far it is practicable, expedient, or conducive to the grand ends of magistracy, to require all that is right, and forbid all that is wrong *under penal sanctions* and in this respect Israel was like other nations. Indeed, the moral and judicial law were enacted by the same Lawgiver and coincided, as far as infinite wisdom saw it to be conducive to the grand ends in view; but as they were intended for very distinct purposes, they must in many things vary

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nim, or if he be ^afound in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

17 And ^bhe that ^ccurseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

18 ¶ And if ^dmen strive together, and one smite ^eanother with ^fa stone, or with ^ghis fist, and he die not, but keepeth ^hhis bed:

19 If he rise again, and walk abroad ⁱupon his staff, then shall he that smote ^jhim be quit: only he shall pay ^kfor the loss of his time, and shall cause ^lhim to be thoroughly healed.

20 And if a man ^msmite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; ⁿhe shall be surely ^opunished.

21 Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for ^phe is his money.

22 ¶ If men ^qstrive and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart ^rfrom her, and yet no mischief follow; he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay ^sas the judges ^tdetermine.

23 And if ^uany mischief follow, then thou shalt give ^vlife for life,

24 ^wEye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

a 22:4. b Lev. 20:9. Deut. 27:16. Prov. 20:20. 30:11,17. Matt. 15:3—6. Mark 7:10,11. *Or, revileth. c 22:21,3. Deut. 25:11. 2 Sam. 14:6. 1 Or, his neighbour. d 20. Num. 35:16—24. e 2 Sam. 3:32. Zech. 8:4. f Heb. his cast. g 22:2. Deut. 19:21. Prov. 22:19. Is. 53:4. g Gen. 9:6. Num. 35:30—33. h Heb. changed. Gen. 4:15,24. Num. 35:19. Rom. 13:4. i Lev. 25:45.

heathen altars and temples were generally refuges for criminals: but God would not have his altar profaned, by protecting those who deserved punishment; nor did he appoint any sacrifice for murder. (Note, 1 Kings 2:28—34.)—It is thought, that there was some place appointed in the camp, as a refuge for the unfortunate manslayer, while the Israelites were in the wilderness.

V. 15—17. To smite either father or mother, in a manner which indicated contempt or malice, or left marks of violence, was deemed a proof of so ungrateful and unnatural a disposition, that no provocation was admitted as an excuse, but the offence was made capital: nay, he who cursed his father or mother, who uttered imprecations, ill-wishes, or revilings, according as a parent, was included in the same sentence; though few crimes were made capital by the law of Moses! The authority of God, as delegated to parents, is honoured when they are honoured, and despised when they are despised. To rebel against the lawful exercise of this authority is rebellion against God: and in any case, where not only obedience is refused, but revenge and malice expressed, or violence attempted against the person of a parent, it must be considered as one of the highest crimes both against God and man, which can be conceived. (Note, Matt. 15:3—6.)—The same honour is as expressly required by the divine law, to be rendered to rulers, as the ministers of Providence in governing nations; yet both rulers and parents may often be very faulty, both in their general conduct, and in the exercise of their delegated authority.—Between these two capital offences, another is very remarkably inserted; namely, that of stealing a man in order to sell him for a slave; whether the thief had actually sold him, or whether he continued in his possession, having had no opportunity of selling him before his crime was detected.—The Jewish writers assert, that it was not a capital crime to steal one of another nation, but only when the person stolen was a Hebrew; yet this is by no means consistent with the text, which certainly implies, that he who stole any one of the human species, in order to make a slave of him, should be punished with death. It can scarcely be supposed, that the Israelites in general would purchase their brethren of those who stole them; so that this crime would commonly be aggravated, by sending them away into foreign countries, to be slaves to idolaters, at a distance from the worship and ordinances of God.—The Septuagint reverse the order, and place the two judgments concerning parents together, in the most natural order.

V. 18, 19. If on any sudden quarrel two men fought together, and one smote the other, either with his fist or a stone, or whatever came to hand; he was not to be punished as a murderer, provided the wounded person so far recovered as to walk abroad again; because, if he died afterwards, it might be supposed that his death arose from some other cause.—This exception forcibly establishes the general rule; and shows that, even in unpremeditated encounter, if one man killed another, either on the spot, or by a mortal wound, he was adjudged a murderer, and punished as such; without even determining who was the aggressor in the quarrel: nor is there any exception, in this case, in the laws respecting the cities of refuge.—Even if the person smitten recovered, the other must pay him for his loss of time, and the expenses of his being thoroughly cured.—It may be proper to notice the contrariety of this law to the usages in this nation; according to which, even those, who fight duels with weapons of death, or contend in pitched battles for prizes or renown,

25 Burring for burning, wound for wound stripe for stripe.

26 And if a man ^asmite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

27 And if he smite out his man-servant's tooth, or his maid-servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

28 ¶ If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then ^bthe ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox ^cshall be quit.

29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and ^dhis owner also shall be put to death.

30 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give ^efor the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

31 Whether he have gored a son or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him.

32 If the ox shall push a man-servant, or maid-

46. 118. k 30. Deut. 22:19,19. 1 Num. 35:31. m 26,27. Lev. 24:19,20. Deut. 19:21. Judg. 1:6,7. 1 Sam. 15:33. Matt. 5:38—40. 7:2. Rev. 16:6. n 20. Deut. 16:18. Neh. 5:5. Job 31:13—15. Ps. 9:12. 10:14,18. 72:12—14. Prov. 22:22,23. Ezech. 6:9. Col. 4:1. o 32. Gen. 9:5,6. Lev. 20:15,16. p Deut. 21:1—9. q 22. Num. 35:31—33.

and in them kill their opponents, in general escape almost, if not entirely, without punishment!

V. 20, 21. The killing of a slave, by any weapon of death, was not distinguished in the law from other murders: and if a slave died, while his master was correcting him with a rod, or staff, the master must be ^asurely punished. It is not said, "He shall surely be put to death;" and it is therefore supposed, that a discretionary power was lodged with the magistrates, to punish him according to circumstances, which might make his cruelty appear more or less atrocious. It could not however be supposed, that he meant to commit murder, and the death of his slave would be a considerable loss to him: so that if the slave lived a day or two afterwards, the master was not to be punished by the magistrate, but left to the judgment of God.

V. 22—25. In case two men strove together, and the wife of one of them, being pregnant, interposed, and received a hurt which caused her to miscarry, but produced no further mischief; the other party must be punished for the injury, by a fine laid on him to be paid to the woman's husband, who might lay his damages for the mischief; yet the magistrates must determine what compensation should actually be paid. But if any further detriment followed to the woman, the magistrates were authorized to punish the offender, even so far as to put him to death if the woman died; and in case of lighter injuries, to inflict an exact retaliation on him. These were not allowances made to private revenge; but laws to regulate the magistrate's decision, who might go thus far if the heinousness of the offence required it, but not further: and it seems reasonable to suppose, that they were also allowed to abate of this rigour, when alleviating circumstances rendered it proper.—As a variety of mischiefs are stated, some of which could scarcely happen in the case referred to: it is likely, that various other suits for personal injuries were determined by the same rule. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26, 27. It is obvious, that this merciful restraint on the passions of those who possessed slaves, though it only mentioned the eye and the tooth, was meant to extend to every other material personal injury; and that all slaves, whether Israelites or not, were to have the benefit of it. The degree of melioration, which the condition of slaves would receive from such a law impartially executed, can scarcely be conceived.

V. 28—32. To show the value of the life of man, in the judgment of God; to enhance the horror at the thoughts of murder in the mind of every Israelite; and to increase circumspection in guarding against every thing which might cause death; it was enacted, that the ox, or bull, which gored any person so that he died, should be stoned. For similar reasons, and that the owner's loss might be the greater, it was added that his flesh should not be eaten.—It is obvious, that the spirit of this statute would apply to a variety of similar cases. If this was the first instance, in which the owner had been fairly acquainted with the mischievousness of his ox, or bull, he was not liable to any further punishment; but if he had been informed of preceding instances of the same kind, and had neglected to take care of the animal, and through his neglect any one lost his life; not only must the ox be stoned, but the owner might be punished as a murderer. Yet, in case of alleviating circumstances, the magistrates were permitted to change this punishment into a pecuniary mulct, as the ransom of his life. And this statute was to be enforced, not only if a grown man or woman was killed, but

servant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

33 ¶ And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

34 The owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his.

35 And if one man's ox hurt another's that he die, then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it, and the dead ox also they shall divide.

36 Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead shall be his own.

r Gen. 37:23. Zech. 11:12,13. Matt. 26:15. 27:3-9. a 23:22. t Ps. 9:15. 119: 55. Prov. 2:10. Ec. 10:8. Jer. 18:20,22. u 29:30. 22:6,14. x 29. * Or, goat. c Lev. 6:1-6. Num. 5:7. 2 Sam. 12:6. Prov. 6:31. Luke 19:8. b Prov. 14:4.

also if it was a male or a female child, provided it were not a slave. But in case the person gored was a slave, the owner, besides the loss of the ox, must pay the fine of thirty shekels to the proprietor of the slave.—This valuation of a slave was precisely the sum for which Judas betrayed Christ!—As a compensation in this law is expressly allowed, we may conclude that it was not allowed where it is not mentioned.

If there be laid, &c. (30) "If an atonement (כִּפּוּר) be laid upon him, he shall give a ransom of his life, &c." *Eav de לִיטָרָה עֲבֹדָהּ, כ. ט. ל. Sept.*

V. 33-36. It must be supposed, that these compendious statutes were intended as general rules, according to which an immense number of particular causes would be decided by the magistrates: for it is impossible to multiply laws to meet all the vast variety of cases, which occur in the course of human affairs. But if the spirit of these laws were observed, every litigation might equitably be terminated, by a due consideration of the degree in which carelessness or selfishness had been concerned, in the injuries which one man suffered by the cattle or other property of his neighbour.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. The commandments of God, as well as his providential dispensations, not only relate to the grand outlines of his administration, but descend to minute particulars and the meanest objects; especially when righteousness, goodness, and truth, are concerned. With a condescending regard, he particularly watches over those, who are most exposed to oppression, injustice, or damage; and he has respect to all ranks, from the poorest beggar to the mightiest monarch; and to all the stages of human existence, from the newly-conceived embryo in the womb to decrepit old age. Though he no longer reigns over any single nation, in that peculiar sense in which he reigned over Israel; yet he is King over all the earth, and will at his awful tribunal arraign and condemn those violations of his law, which here escape notice, or elude or outbrave the sword of human justice.—Having his precepts and example before our eyes, and this future judgment in our remembrance; with what equity, sincerity, and humanity should we treat our servants, dependents, and inferiors! Indeed we ought so to behave towards our domestics, that, though free from other bonds, they may be attached to us by the ties of love, and count it their privilege to spend and close their days in our service.—Let us also recollect, that now the gospel "proclaims liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" nothing but love to our hateful and ruinous bondage, and to our associates in it, can keep us from enjoying true freedom in the service and favour of God. But, if we deliberately choose slavery, we must serve sin and Satan for ever. Let us then, as the redeemed of the Lord, break off every sinful connexion, and leave all for his sake; and from love to his name, let us have our cars, as it were, nailed to the posts of his door, that we may be his happy servants for ever and ever.—But, if we are his willing people, we shall be far from behaving deceitfully in the important concern of marriage. How much then shall we abhor the baseness of consigning to lasting disgrace or misery, for the sake of our own indulgence, an unhappy object, over whom in any way we have acquired an ascendancy! On the contrary, while purity, sincerity, and equity, mark our whole conduct, we shall learn habitually to sacrifice our own inclinations even in things lawful, to the general interests of humanity, or the particular advantage or comfort of the individuals over whom we have the greatest influence or authority.

V. 12-36. Let children hear, with trembling, the sentence denounced by the unchangeable God against such as are ungrateful and rebellious; and let them remember, that if they dare to lift a hand, on any account, against their parents, or to curse them in their hearts, or slander their characters, or needlessly publish their faults, either while they live, or after their death, God will severely punish them, except they repent. And let parents also hence learn to redouble their care, in educating their children, giving them good instructions, praying for them, and setting them a good example, especially in restraining their passions; and let them likewise avoid that harshness or severity, which might provoke them to wrath, and tempt them to such heinous crimes.—While we

CHAPTER XXII.

Laws concerning theft and fraud; kindling fires which occasioned damage; breach of trust; and things borrowed and hired, 1-15. Concerning sorcery, witchcraft, bestiality, idolatry, and the treatment of strangers, widows, and orphans, 16-21. Against slavery and vexing rulers; concerning the first-fruits and firstlings, and against eating the flesh of torn animals, 22-31.

1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

c Job 24:14. 30:5. Hos. 7:1. Joel 2:9. Matt. 6:19,20. 24:43. 1 Thes. 5:2. d N am. 35:27. e S: on 21:2. Judg. 2:14. 10:7. Is. 50:1.

rejoice that, in this island, laws concerning slavery are not wanted; let us remember, that if we are true Christians, we shall have no occasion for penal statutes to restrain us from stealing or enslaving our brethren of the human species; or of such varied methods to inspire us with horror of the sin of murder; for, so far from lying in wait to shed blood, or trading in the bodies of men, we shall watch for, and gladly embrace, the opportunity of preserving the liberty or life of our enemy; still repressing the rising emotions of anger, pouring out our prayers for them, and attempting acts of kindness under the greatest provocations; and instead of enforcing the law of retaliation, we shall ever be ambitious of "overcoming evil with good."—We shall also guard, though with trouble and loss, against whatever can endanger the life or property of another; and while ready in any way to make up, to the utmost of our power, the damage which we have indiscreetly, or even without blame, occasioned to others, we shall be very backward in demanding such satisfaction to ourselves.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1-4. The instances here adduced, to fix the principles on which the magistrates of Israel must proceed in regard to theft, and robbery, are taken especially from the cattle; because in these their property chiefly consisted, and these would likewise be most exposed to depredation.—If any person had stolen a sheep or goat, and had proceeded so far as to kill or sell it, he was sentenced to restore fourfold; if an ox, which besides its value was very useful for labour, fivefold. Yet, in case his theft was detected while the animal was still alive in his possession, he was only required to restore it double: probably, because in this case he seemed to discover more hesitation, and less subtlety or industry, in dishonesty, than if he had proceeded to sell or kill it. The ass is also mentioned in this clause, (4,) and no doubt the camel, and other useful animals, were included in the design of the law.—But if the thief voluntarily confessed, and restored the property which he had stolen, he was only required to add a fifth part to it. (Lev. 6:4,5.)—In case, however, any one was detected in the night, endeavouring forcibly to break into a house, it might be considered as an assault on the lives of the inhabitants, as well as an attempt to plunder their property; and if, in repelling the assault, the robber was slain, the person who killed him was not punishable. But if he was slain after sunrise, his death must be punished as murder; because there was another method of securing or recovering the property; and it is supposed that no assault was made on the life of any one.—In all cases, when the thief or robber could not make the stipulated restitution, he was sold for the theft for a limited time, not exceeding six years: and, without doubt, the injured person received the emolument arising in either way, at least when moderate expenses had been deducted.—It is not stated what restitution should be made by him, who forcibly plundered goods from a house; so that it must be supposed, that the magistrates were authorized to decide according to circumstances.

Such statutes would be deemed, at present, very inadequate to the security of property. But though the state of society in this age and nation is very different, yet human nature is the same; and we have no reason to consider the Israelites as more tractable than the rest of our species. It may in some cases be urged, that robbery among us is more commonly connected with the avowed purpose of murder, in case of resistance, which enhances the crime exceedingly; but it requires more serious consideration, how far this arises from the punishment of theft being made equal to that of murder, which confounds the disparity of the two crimes in the minds of men, and removes the restraint arising from the dread of a severer penalty. This plea, however, in very many cases, cannot be advanced; and not only the equity, but even the policy, of multiplying capital offences, is very questionable; nay, facts prove that it defeats its own end. Humane persons are reluctant to be concerned in taking away the life of one, who has only deprived them of property; and therefore they will not prosecute if it can be avoided. And, in various ways, compassion allows the young offender to escape with impunity; this encourages him to proceed with greater confidence; and having corrupted many others, as well

4 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

5 ¶ If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field: of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, he shall make restitution.

6 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field be consumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

7 ¶ If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double.

8 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.

9 For all manner of trespass, *whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.*

f21:16. g 1:7,9. Prov. 6:31. Is. 40:2. Jer. 16:18. Rev. 18:6. h 3:12. Job 20:18. i Judg. 15:4-5. 2 Sam. 14:30-31. k 9:12. 21:33-34. l Prov. 6:30-31. Jer. 2:26. John 12:6. 1 Cor. 6:10. m See on 4. n 28. mrg. 2:16. Dent. 16:18. 19:17,19. 1 Chr. 23:4. Ps. 82:1. o Num. 5:6,7. 1 Kings 8:31. Matt. 6:14,15. 18:15,33. Luke 17:34. p 19:21,22. 23:6-8. Dent. 16:18,19. 19:16-18. 23:1. 2 Chr. 19:10. q 4:7. r Gen. 35:8. Luke 12:18. 16:11. 2 Tim. 1:12. s Lev. 5:1. 6:3. 1 Kings 2:42,43. Prov. 30:9. Heb. 6:16. t 8:23:1. u 7. Gen. 31:39. x Ex. 4:

as multiplied crimes more and more atrocious, he at last perhaps is sentenced to die.—But frequent escapes give boldness in perilous attempts of all kinds; and the same self-flattery, which soothes every adventurer in a lottery with the hope of the highest prizes, though very few can gain them; far more powerfully operates on the minds of the dishonest, to expect impunity, while so very many in proportion actually escape.—The dread of a lighter punishment, yet exposing the culprit to much present pain or hard labour, and total exclusion from all congenial society, and so constantly inflicted as to appear unavoidable, would probably be far more effectual in preventing crimes, than a remote possibility of an ignominious death; especially as a future state of retribution has seldom much place in the thoughts of these unhappy men.

V. 5, 6. It is evident that these instances were intended as illustrations of the general principles of equity, by which many similar cases were to be determined. We may suppose that the fire, which did the mischief, was kindled carelessly, or on a man's own ground for some special purpose, and that for want of proper attention, it spread so far as to injure others: for wilfully and maliciously to kindle a destructive fire, is a crime deserving of far severer punishment.

V. 7-15. If money, plate, or furniture, were intrusted to any one, from which he derived no emolument, and it was lost out of his house, where he had placed it for security; he was not bound to make it good, in case it was stolen and could not be recovered. Yet if any suspicion rested on him, that he had secreted the property intrusted, the magistrates were authorized to examine the evidence, and decide accordingly.—In this and other matters of trespass or trust, their sentence was final; and breach of trust, as well as theft, was punishable by double restitution. When an ox, sheep, or ass, was committed to another's care, (probably with a compensation for its subsistence, or wages for tending it,) if it happened to die, or to receive any hurt, or to be driven away with other cattle by an invading enemy, or by robbers, when none were present to bear witness, the person intrusted, on making oath that he had not been accessory to the loss, was freed; but if it was stolen from among his cattle, and there was any reason to suppose he had not taken proper care of it, he must make it good. If, however, it had been torn in pieces by a wild beast, and he could bring any remains of the carcass in proof of it, he was not answerable.—He who gratuitously used the labour of his neighbour's ox, or ass, or camel, if it died or was hurt in the absence of the owner, must make it good: for it might be thought he had caused it to labour excessively, or been cruel to it; but if the owner was present, this could not be suspected, and he must not be compelled to make it good. When hire was paid for the labour of an animal, and any harm came to it, the owner could not demand restitution, at least unless he could prove that it had been abused.—The more attentively these statutes are examined, the more clearly will it be seen, that the spirit of them is equitable, reasonable, mild, and humane, in no common degree.

V. 16, 17. This statute relates to a case, which must carefully be distinguished from some others, that may be confounded with it. It is assumed, that no force was used, but merely persuasions and blandishments; and that the young

10 If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it.

11 Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods: and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good.

12 And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof.

13 If it be torn in pieces, then let him bring it for witness, and he shall not make good that which was torn.

14 And if a man borrow ought of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof being not with it; he shall surely make it good.

15 But if the owner thereof be with it, he shall not make it good: if it be an hired thing, it came for his hire.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her; he shall surely endow her to be his wife.

17 If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.

18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.

19 Whosoever lieth with a beast, shall surely be put to death.

14. Am. 3:12. Mic. 5:8. Nah. 2:12. y Dent. 15:2. 23:19,20. Neh. 5:4. Ps. 37:21. Matt. 3:12. Luke 6:35. z 11. 21:34. Lev. 21:18. a Zach. 8:10. b Gen. 34:2. c 1. 29. d Dent. 7:5,6. e Heb. xviij. Gen. 23:16. d Gen. 34:12. 1 Sam. 18:25. f Lev. 19:36,31. 30:27. Jer. 18:10,11. 1 Sam. 28:3,5. Is. 59:3. Acts 8:9-11. 16:16-19. 19:19. Gal. 5:20. f Lev. 18:23. 20:15,16. Dent. 27:21.

woman was not betrothed to another man. In general, it might be supposed, that promises, or at least intimations, of marriage would be made by the seducer; and therefore he was bound to "endow her to be his wife." Some expositors are of opinion, that he must either endow her, that is, give her a sum of money for the injury, or marry her: but the obvious meaning of the law is, that he must take her for his wife, and endow her, or provide for her suitably according to his station. It does not appear, that either the seducer, or the person seduced, was allowed a negative; but the young woman's father might refuse his consent, and in this case the seducer must pay a certain sum of money as a compensation for the injury. This sum is generally supposed to have been fifty shekels: but the passage from which this conclusion is made, seems to refer to a rape; and then the money was paid to the father; though the offender was obliged to marry, and not allowed to divorce, the injured damsel. (Dent. 22:28,29.)—The option here granted the father, shows that great deference is owing in respect of marriage to parental authority; and it also demonstrates, that marriage is entirely a distinct matter, in the word of God, from any voluntary intercourse between a man and a woman, however privately accompanied by reciprocal assurances, if not avowedly sanctioned by some public recognition.—It is not here stated, whether the seducer, if previously married, was bound to take the seduced damsel also as his wife; nor is it material to us. Polygamy was then an existing evil, concerning which many regulations were made; but Christianity has in general terminated it, as far as its authority has been acknowledged.—Nothing could be conceived more equitable, than some regulation like this statute, if properly restricted to real seduction by an unmarried man. But it is matter of fact, capable of full proof, that, in these licentious days, young women in inferior circumstances, and even encouraged by their parents, (shocking as it may seem,) employ their utmost address to attract the attention of young men of better circumstances; in order that, under the pretence of seduction, they may be married to greater advantage! And, in attempting to remedy the grievous evil of real seduction, this should by no means be encouraged and increased. It is, however, highly reasonable, that every unmarried man, whatever his circumstances be, who debauches a virgin with promises of marriage, or any engagements which have the same effect upon her mind, should be obliged actually to marry her; and that, if a married man, professing himself unmarried, should thus seduce a virgin, he should be obliged to maintain her, while she continues unmarried. But a young woman, who suffers herself to be enticed by a man, whom she knows to be married, seems not entitled to the same compensation, whatever punishment he may deserve.

V. 18. Witchcraft is generally understood to mean, a compact with evil spirits, by whose agency and assistance, applied for by certain incantations, effects of various kinds may be produced, by which malice, or covetousness, or other corrupt passions, may be gratified. A vast variety of practices, with different degrees of aggravation, which will hereafter be considered, agree in common with witchcraft, in avowedly making Satan "the god of the world," and the god of those who thus apply to him for information or assistance.—It is readily allowed that much imposture on the one hand,

20 He that sacrificeth unto *any* god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

21 ¶ Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

22 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

23 If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;

24 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

25 If thou lend money to *any* of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

26 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:

27 For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? And it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.

28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

Num. 25:2-5. Deut. 13:1-15. 17:2-5. 18:20. h Num. 21:9. Josh. 23:15. 16. 12:9. Lev. 19:33. 25:35. Deut. 10:19. Jer. 7:6. 29:3. Zech. 7:10. k 20: 23:9. Deut. 10:19. 15:15. 23:7. 1 Deut. 10:18. 24:17. 21:9. Ps. 94:6. Is. 1: 17:23. 10:2. Ez. 22:7. Zech. 7:10. Jam. 1:27. m Deut. 15:9. 24:15. Job 31:38. 29. 35:9. Luke 18:7. n Job 34:28. Ps. 10:17. 18. 12:6. 140:12. 146:7-9. Prov. 22:22. 23. 10:11. Jam. 6:4. o Job 31:23. Ps. 76:7. 90:11. Nah. 1:6. Rom. 2: 2:9. Heb. 10:31. p Job 17:15-15. Ps. 78:63. 84. 109:9. Jer. 15:8. 18:21. Luke

6:38. q Lev. 25:35-37. Deut. 23:19. 20. 2 Kings 4:1.7. Neh. 5:2-5. 7. 10. 11. Ps. 15:5. Prov. 28:5. Jer. 15:10. Is. 18:5. 17. M. 25:27. Luke 19:23. r Deut. 24: 6:10-13. 17. Job 22:6. 24:3. 9. 1 Sam. 2:27. Ez. 18:7. 16. 33:15. Am. 2:8. s 23:23. 24. 34:6. 72:12. Is. 19:20. t 34:6. Ps. 136:10. 11. Or, ju/ges. 9. Ps. 82:1-7. 138:1. John 10:34. 35. u 21:17. 1 Sam. 24:6. 10. 26:9. Ec. 10:20. Acts 23:5. Rom. 13:2-7. Tit. 3:1. 2. 1 Pet. 2:17. 2 Pet. 2:10. Jude 8.

(which forms a very singular kind of hypocrisy,) and much superstition, folly, and cruelty, on the other, have taken place, in respect of these practices, whether real or pretended. But it seems one of the most flagrant absurdities of modern Sadduceism, to suppose that God himself would repeatedly command the magistrates of his people to punish with death a crime which never was committed! If it should be said, that mere pretences to witchcraft might warrant laws against it, I would only desire the reader to examine the marginal references, and judge for himself, whether it be not spoken of in Scripture as a real practice.—The existence, sagacity, malice, ambition, and power of evil spirits, are sufficiently declared in Scripture: there can be no doubt, that they are both able and willing thus to interpose, if permitted: and that human nature is capable of such wickedness, as even *knowingly* to combine with them. That witchcraft may be, that it hath been, and that it still is in some parts of the world, actually practised, seems capable of proof, were any collateral evidence necessary to confirm the truth of the divine testimony.—But as, by certain degrees of cultivation, wild beasts are banished or extirpated; so, in some stages of civilization, the practice of witchcraft is nearly excluded. The truth is this: in such circumstances it no longer so well answers Satan's grand purpose of deception and destruction: he therefore changes his ground, and varies his attack; nor is he any loser, by exchanging the practice of witchcraft for the prevalence of skepticism.—Though *witch*, in the feminine, is the word here used; yet in other places, the masculine word is employed, and various things of the same nature are prohibited on the penalty of death.

V. 20. Idolatry was universally prohibited in the *moral* law; but by the *judicial* law, it was punishable by death, when committed by an Israelite, or by one that dwelt among the Israelites: for to these exclusively, laws given to the magistrates of Israel could extend. Sacrificing, being the principal act of religious worship at that time, was selected as the open act of idolatry, which constituted the capital offence. The expression *utterly destroyed* implies, that the offender should be devoted to entire destruction, as an accursed thing, or a sacrifice to the awful justice of God.—Whole cities involved in the guilt of idolatry were afterwards sentenced to utter destruction, by an universal execution of the inhabitants: (*Notes, Deut. 13:*) for this crime especially was a breach of the national covenant; but, so long as the judges punished it according to the law, it would not be accounted a national forfeiture.

V. 21-24. It was desirable that strangers should be allured by kind usage to live among the Israelites, provided they did not practise idolatry, or violate the requirements of the judicial law; in order that they might thus be induced to think favourably of true religion, and at length to embrace it. They must not, therefore, be harassed by any injury, or reproach, or vexation, which might harden them in prejudice, or drive them back among idolaters.—In thus behaving kindly to strangers, the Israelites should call to mind their late situation in Egypt, and the anguish of spirit which they had endured under oppression in a strange land.—The subsequent verses, in which JEHOVAH avows himself the Husband of the widow, and the Father of the orphan, are peculiarly illustrative of the kind and compassionate spirit of the Mosiac law; though special reasons rendered some statutes needful and salutary, which at present appear rigorous to the superficial reader. No penalty was enjoined to be inflicted by the magistrates on those who oppressed the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, unless some violation of other statutes could be proved: because the Lord himself undertook to avenge their cause, by a just retaliation on their oppressors and their families.

V. 25-27. Usury, as here stated, properly consists in taking interest from the poor, on what they borrow for present subsistence, or in urgent need; which tends to enrich the lender by still more impoverishing the borrower. This was frequently carried to such a pitch among the ancients, and even the Israelites, that the creditors constrained their debtors to sell themselves or their children for slaves; which was an aggravated violation of the law of love. (*Note, Neh. 5:1-5.*)

The Israelites were but little engaged in commerce and

their law was not only suited, but *intended*, to keep them from mingling by any means with other nations. Their land also was divided by lot, and they were not allowed to alienate their inheritances. They were not, therefore, greatly in the way of lending or taking up money upon interest, to employ in trade, or expend in estates: in which cases, and in those of the like nature, it does not appear inconsistent with either equity or love, for the lender to receive a proportion of the profits from the borrower. The original is indeed remarkable; for it may be rendered, "If thou lend money to my people, even to a *poor man*, &c." yet it is generally thought, that the Israelites were not allowed in any ordinary case, to take *interest for money*, or usury of any other kind, from their brethren. As, however, they were permitted to take it of the Gentiles, though expressly required not to oppress them; it is evident that interest on lent money is not in itself unjust, or contrary to the divine law, when not attended by oppressive circumstances. (*Deut. 23:19, 20.*) But, besides the practice of exacting exorbitant interest of the poor, it was also customary to take a pledge for the payment of the money advanced; and this was commonly either the garment which they wore by day, or the covering under which they slept at night. But if an Israelite in any case took such a pledge, he was required to restore it before night; not by compulsion of the magistrate, but as a matter of conscience towards God. The language assigning the reasons, why this should be done, is a very beautiful appeal to the tenderest emotions of pity for the distressed; and the concluding sentence,—“And it shall come to pass when he crieth unto me, I will hear; for I am gracious,”—gives a most endearing view of the perfections and government of God, for the encouragement and imitation of his worshippers. Yet the tender compassion and mercy of the Lord are stated to be perfectly consistent with his severest vengeance on the cruel oppressor of the needy who cry unto him.—How far the business of a pawnbroker, in the present state of society, consists with the spirit of these precepts, is a question which involves much difficulty. Some are of opinion, and argue with considerable plausibility, that the very practice is *radically* injurious to society, and inconsistent with Christianity; and certainly, as it is frequently conducted, it is so. But, as *receiving interest* is not in all cases absolutely prohibited, it may be doubted whether taking pledges be *always* unjust or improper. It is not, however, an employment to which a real Christian can be supposed so partial, as to choose it either for himself or his children, after he has become acquainted with the truth, power, and spirit of the gospel. But should the grace of God meet with a person already engaged in this business, as having been educated to it, or accustomed to get his subsistence by it; and should his disposition be really formed to strict uprightness, benevolence, and conscientiousness; it may be questioned whether, by rendering his employment much less lucrative, he may not make it even beneficial, or at least not oppressive, to others; so as to have the prayers of the poor for him, not their cries against him. In this case the employment may be consistent with the principles of Christianity, and perhaps in no other. If such a person should, after serious examination and fervent prayers to God for direction, find himself at liberty to continue in his calling, he will “abide therein with God;” he will consider it as his cross, and take it up as such; and disdaining the prospect of heaping up wealth by every profit which the laws of the land may allow, he will carefully consult the law of God, of equity, of humanity, and of love: and will only go so far in his employment, as he verily deems consistent with these rules. And if a man's heart be upright, the Lord will either satisfy him to proceed, or encourage him to cast himself upon his providence in renouncing it.

V. 28. The word (אלהים) here rendered *gods* is repeatedly used for *judges* in this chapter; and it is therefore probable, that the former clause of the verse referred to the magistrates of Israel in general; and the latter to their chief magistrate, who was also the high-priest, when Paul before the council quoted this statute. (*Note, Acts 23:1-5.*) The language used is very similar to that, by which *cursing a parent* was denounced a capital crime: only no particular punishment is appointed, that being left to the discretion of the magistrate

29 Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits and of thy liquors: the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

30 Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam: on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.

31 And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field: ye shall cast it to the dogs.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Laws forbidding slander, false witness, wresting judgment, bribery, and oppression; and requiring kindness to enemies. 1—9. *The law of the sabbatical year and the weekly sabbath, with a caution against idolatry.* 10—13. *The three great annual feasts appointed.* 14—19. *The Lord promises to conduct Israel safe to Canaan, to put them in possession of it, to enlarge their borders and destroy their enemies; and adds some cautions and precepts.* 20—33.

THOU shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

x 23:19. Deut. 26:2—10. 2 Kings 4:42. 2 Chr. 31:5. Prov. 3:9,10. Ez. 20:40. Matt. 6:33. Rom. 8:23. Jam. 1:18. * Heb. thy fulness. † Heb. fear. y 13:2. z Lev. 22:27. a 19:56. Lev. 11:45. 19:2. Deut. 14:21. 1 Pet. 1:15,16. b Lev. 17:15,16. 20:25. 22:3. Deut. 14:21. Ez. 4:14. 4:31. Acts 10:14. 15:20. c 17:20,16. Lev. 19:16. 2 Sam. 16:3. 19:27. Ps. 15:3. 101:5. 120:3. Prov. 10:18. 14:7. 25:23. Jer. 20:10. Matt. 28:14,15. Rom. 3:8. * Or, receive. b Deut. 5:20. 19:16—21. 1 Kings 21:10—13. Ps. 147:12. 35:11. Prov. 6:19. 12:17. 19:5,9. 21:28. 25:18. Matt. 19:18. 26:59—61. Luke 3:14. 19:8. Acts 6:14—13. 2 Tim. 3:1. 1 Pet. 3:16. Rev. 12:10. c 32:1—5. Gen. 6:12. 7:1. 19:47—9. Num. 14:—10. Josh. 24:15. 1 Sam. 15:9,24. 1 Kings 19:10. Job 31:34. Prov. 1:10,11,15. 4:14. Matt. 27:24—26. Mark 15:15. Luke 23:24,51. John 7:50,51. Acts 24:27. 25:3. Rom. 1:32. Gal. 2:11—13. † Or, answer. d Lev. 19:15. Deut. 1:17. Ps.

or rather these precepts towards the close of the chapter were proposed, as binding on the conscience in the sight of the Lord. But, as the word generally translated God, is used, many think that blasphemy against God, as well as reviling or cursing the magistrate, was intended; and some even contend that the Israelites were by that clause forbidden to revile or curse the gods of the heathen.

V. 29—31. These were ceremonial appointments, some of which have been in part considered, (Notes, 132—16.) and others will be more fully spoken of afterwards.—The first-fruits of the orchard and vintage being presented to God, were used by the priests: but the proportion was left to the liberality of the offerer.—No animal must be presented to God before the eighth day from its birth, the day fixed for the circumcision of the male child; and probably this referred to that institution.—As a holy people, the Israelites must not eat any thing torn by beasts; for it had the blood in it. (Marg. Ref. b. Note, Matt. 7:6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15. A careful comparison of these ancient statutes, given to Israel, with the most celebrated productions of heathen lawgivers, whether in Greece, Rome, India, or China, must effectually convince any impartial person, that Moses had a right to say, "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of all the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people!"—And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Nay, were he on earth at present, he might safely make the same challenge, in respect of the municipal laws of any country in the world; and a full investigation of the subject would evince, that the laws enacted by him were uniformly more wise, equitable, humane, mild, and salutary in their tendency, than the complex body of laws of the most civilized nations, even of those where Christianity has most flourished. For the former bear the evident stamp of a divine original; the latter are invariably tarnished by the infirmities and passions of our fallen nature.—According to the spirit of the divine law, we should, as the worshippers of God, always be inclined to mildness and mercy; tender of the lives and souls even of thieves and robbers; and not value our property so highly, as to put it in competition with concerns of such immense importance. We ought never to be willingly accessory to the death of another, except in the defence of our own lives, or in the execution of public justice: and then we should go about it as a most painful duty, with reluctance and sorrow of heart; not urged on by resentment or self-interest, but by conscience, to sacrifice the life of an individual to the general good. We should likewise remember that we are answerable in the sight of God for the consequences not only of what we do maliciously, but of what we do heedlessly; and are chargeable with injustice, for abuse of confidence, double dealing, carelessness of things borrowed, and various kinds of selfishness, which are not punishable by human laws. If then we are conscious of having injured our neighbour in any of these ways, and are truly penitent, we shall endeavour to make restitution to the utmost of our ability, though not compelled to it by the sentence of the magistrate.

V. 16—31. If the fear of God rule in our hearts, and his law be written there: an humble recollection of our own transgressions, and a thankful sense of the Lord's unmerited mercies to us, will induce an habitual disposition to show kindness and mercy, as well as to do justice, to our neighbours; to subject all our passions and appetites to the will of God; and to

2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause, to decline after many to wrest judgment.

3 Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.

4 If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.

5 If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him: thou shalt surely help with him.

6 Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.

7 Keep thee far from a false matter: and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.

8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

72:2. Jer. 17:5,21. 38:5,6,9. Ez. 9:9. Hab. 1:4. margins. e Ps. 92:3,3. Jam. 3:17. 2 Rom. 22:1—4. Job 31:29,30. Prov. 24:17,18. 25:21. Matt. 5:44. Luke 6:27,28. Rom. 12:17—21. 1 Thes. 5:15. † Or, wilt thou cease to help him? or wouldest cease to leave thy business for him: thou shalt surely leave it to join with him. g 2:8. Deut. 16:19. 27:18. 2 Chr. 19:7. Job 31:13,21,22. Ps. 82:3,4. Ez. 5:8. Is. 10:12. Jer. 6:28. 7:6. Am. 5:11,12. Mic. 3:1—4. Zeph. 3:1—4. Mal. 3:5. Jam. 2:5,6. 1 Jer. 19:11. Deut. 19:16—21. Job 29:23. Prov. 4:14,15. Is. 33:15. Luke 3:14. Eph. 4:25. 1 Thes. 5:22. 1 Deut. 27:25. 34:7. Prov. 17:15. Nah. 1:3. Rom. 1:18. 2:5,6. k Deut. 16:19. 1 Sam. 8:3. 12:3. Ps. 26:10. Prov. 15:27. 17:8,23. 19:6. 29:4. Ec. 7:7. Is. 1:23. 5:23. Ez. 22:12. Hos. 4:18. Am. 5:12. Mic. 7:3. Acts 24:26. § Heb. the seeing.

shun all evil, and every occasion and appearance of evil. Kindness and humanity to the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless; and liberal compassion to the poor and needy, will freely flow from the principle of genuine love implanted in our hearts, and from a desire of adorning our holy religion, and recommending it to those who are without. And while we study to submit to those who are placed over us, and show due respect to all men; we shall not forget to "honour the Lord with our substance and with the first-fruits of all our increase," and to devote ourselves to be a holy people unto his name.—What a contrast do such characters form to those, whose selfish and filthy hearts are capable of crimes far more than brutal, nay, truly diabolical! who need to be held in with strict laws and dreadful punishments, from the most detestable crimes, and yet burst through even these restraints! who have the cries of the oppressed, the widow, the orphan, and the poor, with the wrath of God, against them, and who must be cut off by the avenging sword of human justice, to prevent further mischief! The one is human nature unchanged and unrestrained: the other is the effect of true grace converting and ruling in the heart.—"Turn thou us, O Lord, and we shall be turned," that we may be "unto thee a peculiar people zealous of good works," through Jesus Christ. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—3. These verses seem especially to relate to the trial of causes, and to the conduct of all parties concerned on such occasions, though they also contain general rules of universal application. He who invents a slander, or first raises a vain report, and he who receives and propagates it, (marg.) are at all times very criminal; but the iniquity is most atrocious, when the calumny is advanced or taken up in a court of justice; and when the witnesses thus "put their hand with the wicked," to give success to an unrighteous cause, by lying testimony, or by attesting as fact the vain rumours circulated against the other party. Even if such reports had obtained general credit, the witnesses must "not follow a multitude to do evil," in sanctioning them, not knowing them to be true; nor the judges in deciding according to them; nor the pleader, in adducing them "to prejudice the minds of the magistrates or audience. In no case must any party be influenced to act contrary to strict equity and impartiality, either by public opinion, or by the sentiments or inclinations of the great and powerful; or even by compassion for the poor man whose cause was unjust.—The word rendered countenance, signifies adorn, and seems to refer to the arts of oratory and the sophistry of law, by which the badness of a cause is varnished over.—Neither parties, friends, judges, witnesses, nor vulgar opinions, must move us to lessen great faults, aggravate small ones, vindicate offenders, accuse the innocent, or misrepresent any thing, to procure an unjust sentence." Brown.

V. 4, 5. The connexion of these verses has suggested to several expositors the observation, "That there are ways innumerable of showing pity and kindness, without supporting a poor man in an iniquitous cause." Yet, the precepts do not specify the poor, but an enemy, and one that hateth: and no doubt persons of every nation and character were included, though the Jewish writers expounded them only of Israelites.—Besides the reluctance men naturally have to a laborious and troublesome action, from which no advantage is likely to arise: the circumstance of the owner being an enemy, an unrequited bitter enemy, would have much influence. Yet regard to the interest even of such an enemy, as well as mercy to a poor animal, and above all, the will of God thus made known, would induce every conscientious Israelite to bring back the

9 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. [Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof.

11 But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy olive-yard.

12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy hand-maid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

13 And in all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect: and make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

[See on 22:21. Deut. 10:19, 24:14—18. 27:19. Ps. 94:6. Ez. 22:7. Mal. 3:5. m Matt. 18:33. Heb. 2:17, 18. * Heb. *evul*. n See on Lev. 25:2—7, 11, 12, 30, 32. 26:34, 35. † Or, *olive-trees*. o See on 20:18—11. 31:15, 16. Luke 13:14. p Deut. 5:13—15, 18, 58:3. q Deut. 4:15. Josh. 22:3—23:11. 1 Chr. 22:7—9. Ps. 39:1. Eph. 5:15. 1 Tim. 4:16. Heb. 12:15. r Deut. 12:3. Josh. 23:7. 1s. 16:4. Jer. 10:11. Hos. 2:17. Zech. 13:2. Eph. 5:12. s 24:2. Lev. 23:5, 16, 34. Deut. 16:16. t 12:14—28, 43—49. 13:7, 34:18. Lev. 23:5—8. Num. 9:2—14, 28:16—25. Deut. 16:1—8. Josh.

ox or ass that had gone astray; nay, to assist an injurious and malicious adversary, whose very presence would be uneasy to him, to lift up the animal which had sunk under his burden! It does not appear, whether the magistrates were authorized to punish those who neglected this duty. The spirit of these laws entirely coincides with the precepts of Christ, though the Jews in general do not acknowledge it; and many Christians speak, as if there was no marked coincidence, and affirm that love and kindness to enemies are peculiar to the New Testament dispensation.

V. 6—9. It may reasonably be supposed, that the preceding verses implied an instruction to the judges, as they are included between two passages, which evidently relate to them in particular.—There might in some cases be danger, lest compassion should induce unjust partiality to a poor man in a legal process; but far more instances must occur, in which the magistrates would be tempted to neglect or pervert his cause, either to oblige a rich opponent, or to save trouble, or because the poor man had not money to pay the requisite expenses; or finally, because nothing could be gained by doing him justice, and nothing risked by deciding against him. But the expression, *thy poor*, is supposed to imply an answer to such evil thoughts and surmises. 'He is of the same nature, of the same blood, and the protection of him in his right is committed, O magistrate, to thee especially, by the great Judge of the world: therefore "wrest not his cause," and refuse not on any account to do him justice.'—In order to enforce this general principle, of doing impartial justice without respect to persons, and without fear, favour, or affection; the judges were reminded, that if they *wilfully or incautiously* hearkened to false testimony, or decided wrong in a case of life and death, either directly or by consequence, they would be deemed the murderers of the *innocent and righteous*. Did they tremble at the thoughts of such an atrocious crime? They should remember, that the righteous God would not judge according to the frivolous distinctions, which men invent to shade the malignity of their conduct; but would consider every man as a murderer, who aided, from corrupt motives, or wilful negligence, in putting an innocent man to death: for "he would not justify the wicked." And, by parity of reason, they who thus concurred in depriving others of their property, would be guilty of theft or robbery.—In order to keep at a distance from such wickedness, the magistrates were forbidden to take any *gift* from the persons whose cause they were about to decide, though no express condition were annexed to the acceptance of it: for such is human nature, that a *gift* tends exceedingly to blind the understanding of the most sagacious, and to pervert the words, or decisions, even of those who were otherwise righteous.—It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that upon his circuit as a judge, he refused to try the cause of a gentleman, who had sent him the *customary present* of venison, until he had paid for it: for he well understood the *spirit* of these excellent laws.—The concluding verse is nearly the same as one before considered: (22:21.) but it seems here introduced as a caution to the judges to beware of prejudice against foreigners, in deciding causes in which they were concerned; and to be sure not to oppress them; for they knew how strangers *felt* on such occasions, having themselves been oppressed by Egyptian magistrates.—The glosses of the Jewish expositors on these laws, which almost totally invalidate them, show the need there was for this caution: but alas! it seems to have been but little noticed. (Note, Matt. 5:43—48.) The very question of the lawyer, "But who is my neighbour?" with our Lord's answer, may give some faint idea of those corrupt glosses, by which the scribes explained away, and made void the law of love, as to their whole conduct towards strangers. (Notes, Luke 10:25—37.)

V. 10, 11. The Israelites were commanded to commemorate the creation of the world, not only by sanctifying one

14 ¶ Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.

15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty.

16 And the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God.

18 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning.

5:10, 11. 2 Kings 23:21—23, Mark 14:12. Luke 22:7. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. u 34:20. Lev. 23:10. Deut. 16:16. Prov. 3:9, 10. x 22:29. Lev. 23:9—21. Num. 28:26—31. Num. 16:9—12. Acts 2:1. y 34:22. Lev. 23:34—44. Num. 29:12—39. Deut. 16:14—15. Neh. 8:14—18. Zech. 14:16—19. John 7:37. z 34:23. Deut. 12:5. 31:11. Ps. 81:7. Luke 2:42. a 12:8, 15. 34:25. Lev. 2:11. 7:12. Deut. 16:4. † Or, *feast*. b 12:19. Lev. 7:15.

day out of seven, as a holy rest to the Lord, but also by intermitting the culture of their land every seventh year. Yet a promise was implied in this command, that the ground should, even in that year, produce spontaneously a considerable increase; which they were required to allow the poor, who had no lands in possession, to gather for their use and enjoyment: and on the residue the beasts of the field might feed. It is evident that the owners were not allowed to reap any harvest, or gather in the increase of the vineyard or olive-yard, during this sabbatical year; yet it is generally thought that they might, along with their poor neighbours, gather some of the fruits, which could not be preserved, for present use.—The law seems to have been intended to teach the people that they were merely the Lord's tenants for their estates; and that they would incur a forfeiture, if they did not observe his rules in cultivating them. It was also suited to teach them dependence on his Providence; and to lead them to observe his faithfulness, in sending a proportionate increase on the sixth year. It evidently and cogently inculcated indifference to worldly wealth; and liberality, without grudging, to the poor. The institution, as far as observed, likewise gave the Israelites leisure to attend on more important concerns; and no doubt was a real advantage to the ground, by letting it sometimes lie fallow: while it typified the rest of heaven, when all earthly labours, cares, and interests shall cease for ever.—Some expositors think, that the seventh thousand years of the world will be in some respect analogous to this sabbatical year. (Notes, Lev. 25:1—7, 20—22.)

V. 12. Even on the sabbatical year, the holy rest of the sabbath-day must be observed, as well as at other times. (Notes, 20:8—11. Deut. 5:12—15.)

V. 13. In order to exact circumspection in keeping these commandments, and especially in avoiding all occasions of idolatry, or approaches to it, the Israelites were forbidden to *mention, or cause to be remembered*, the names of other gods, or to let them be heard from their mouths. No doubt, on some occasions, they might mention the names of idols, in order to express their abhorrence of them; for thus, and thus only, the sacred writers mention them: but the use of their names in common conversation, would tend to abate this abhorrence, and to make way for the worship of them.—It is worth while to inquire, how far the familiar acquaintance with the heathen mythology, which generally accompanies a classical education, and is considered as essential to it, consists with this law; and whether it do not subvert the cause of skepticism and immorality, and prove very unfavourable to genuine Christianity. The characters and anecdotes of Jupiter, Bacchus, Apollo, Mars, Mercury, Venus, and other abominable idols, told in the fictions of the poets in a fascinating manner, lose their horror, and fill the youthful mind with delight and admiration: and an imagination stored with ideas, and a judgment perverted by examples, of this kind, promise nothing very desirable, either in respect of purity, integrity, or piety. It were to be wished that such books as Ovid's Metamorphoses, and many others of that cast, were either totally kept out of the hands of inexperienced youth, or more cautiously intrusted to them.—As to the places of public diversion, they subvert by accommodation to the more plausible passions of depraved human nature: and the *heathenism* of them only forms an additional proof of their unfavourable aspect on Christianity, and an additional reason why real Christians should keep themselves and their children from them.

V. 14—18. Three solemn religious festivals were instituted to be observed by the Israelites, during all succeeding generations, while they continued to be the peculiar people of God.—"The feast of unleavened bread," in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, has been considered. (Notes, 12:13:8—10.) "The feast of harvest," when it became ripe, called also "the feast of pentecost," seems to have been

19 The "first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not ^aseeth a kid in his mother's milk.

20 ¶ Behold, I send an ^aAngel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have ^aprepared.

21 ^aBeware of him, and obey his voice; ^bprovoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions: for ^amy Name is in him.

22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be ^aan enemy unto thine enemies, and ^aan adversary unto thine adversaries.

23 For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring ^athee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

24 Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor ^ado after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.

25 And ^aye shall serve the Lord your God, and

he shall bless thy bread, and thy water: and ^awill take sickness away from the midst of thee.

26 There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in thy land: ^athe number of thy days will fulfil.

27 I will send ^amy fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their ^abacks unto thee.

28 And I will send ^ahornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee.

29 I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.

30 By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

31 And ^aI will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will ^adeliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.

e22:29, 34:29, Lev. 23:10-17, Num. 18:12,13, Deut. 12:5-7, 26:10, Neh. 10:35, 1 Cor. 15:20, Rev. 14:1, d34:26, Deut. 14:21, Prov. 12:10, Jer. 10:3, e3:2-6, 22:34, 33:14, Gen. 48:16, Num. 20:16, Josh. 5:13, 6:2, 1s. 63:9, Mal. 3:1, 1 Pet. 1:5,10, 1 Gen. 15:18, Matt. 25:34, John 14:3, g1a:2,12, Matt. 17:15, 18:12, 19:13, 1 Cor. 14:11, Ps. 78:40,55, Eph. 4:30, Heb. 3:10,16, 132:34, Num. 11:1, Deut. 18:19, Josh. 24:19, Heb. 3:11, 10:28-29, 12:29, 1 John 5:1, 1s. 3:14, 11:1-7, Ps. 72:19, 83:18, 1s. 7:14, 9:6, 42:8, 45:6, 47:15, Jer. 23:1, Mic. 1:1, 2:1, 10:30,38, 14:9,10, Col. 2:2, 1 Cor. 15:28,3,5,7, 1 Tim. 2:12, Num. 21:2, Deut. 3:7, Jer. 30:25, Zech. 2:5, Acts 9:13, ^aOr, I will afflict them that afflict thee. See on 3:17, Gen. 15:18-21, 34:2, Josh. 21:34-11, 1s. 30:25, e Lev. 18:26-30, Deut. 12:30,31, 2 Chr. 35:2,9.

instituted in remembrance of the promulgation of the Law from mount Sinai; and the "feast of ingathering" when the harvest was completely secured, called also "the feast of tabernacles," in remembrance of the people dwelling in tents in the wilderness. This was observed in the seventh month, called here "the end of the year;" for the year began in autumn, till Israel was delivered out of Egypt.—Various oblations were required on all these occasions, which we shall hereafter consider; as also the command, that every male should appear before the Lord at his tabernacle or temple, at those times, and not appear empty.—No leavened bread was allowed to be offered with the blood of the sacrifices; that is, say expositors, the sacrifice of the passover: but the other sacrifices at that festival were also intended; as likewise in the caution, not to leave any of the fat until the morning, lest it should be in danger of corrupting. A similar injunction had before been given respecting the flesh of the paschal lamb. (12:10. Notes, Lev. 23: Deut. 16:1-17.)

V. 19. *Not seeth, &c.* This singular practice, which is more than once prohibited, might be deemed to have some semblance of cruelty; or it might be considered as an unnatural gratification of the appetite: but probably it was a superstition, or a sort of incantation, in use among idolaters, by which they thought to secure a plentiful harvest. (*Marg. Ref. d.*)

V. 20-23. After the Lord had enacted all these laws, he concluded this revelation to Moses, by him to be delivered to Israel, with many encouraging promises, interspersed with warnings and exhortations. He engaged especially to "send his Angel before" the people, to conduct them to Canaan; but he cautioned them to take heed and obey him, and not be refractory and rebellious; as he would not endure their provocations, but take signal vengeance on them, if they persisted in that "for," says JEHOVAH, "my Name is in him." (*Marg. Ref. k.*)—When we recollect the many scriptures, which call an Angel, that appeared to the people of God, by the names, JEHOVAH, and ELOHIM, that is, God, we can hardly doubt who this Angel was, who had power on earth to forgive, or not to forgive, and in whom was the name of JEHOVAH; which seems naturally to mean the participation of the divine perfections, as well as acting with divine authority.—"But," adds the LORD, "if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I command thee," then I will confer the promised blessing.

V. 26. *Number, &c.* The righteous Governor of the world has established such a connexion between causes and effects, that the wickedness of men conduces, in an immense degree, to shorten their lives, and those of others, even to succeeding generations: so that very few of the human race live so long as they might, did not their own misconduct, or that of other men, bring them to an untimely end. No doubt in this, as in all other respects, the council of the Lord is accomplished: and this is one of his methods of restraining or punishing vice.—But "the number of their days," which the Lord promised "to fulfil" to the Israelites, while obedient, refers to that term of human life, which men of a good constitution might be expected to attain to, if they did nothing to impair their health, were preserved from the effect of other men's vices, and by the blessing of God, were protected from external injuries, and exempted from pestilences and fatal

diseases. We ought not to suppose, that such assurances, as we meet with in the close of this chapter, engaged to every individual long life, health, and fruitfulness; but only that a special blessing should attend them, in addition to the natural tendency of a sober, righteous, and godly life; and that they would in this respect be evidently distinguished from other nations.—When a universal prevalence of genuine Christianity shall terminate wars, oppressions, enfeebling poverty, intemperance, and licentiousness, men will far more generally than at present, live to old age. (Notes, Lev. 26:3-13. 1s. 65:20-23.)

V. 27. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 28. The sting of the hornet, or large wasp, is very terrible; they are also exceedingly courageous insects, and not to be got rid of but by destroying them: vast swarms of them might therefore effectually drive away the inhabitants of Canaan, and prove even a more dreadful plague to them, than the frogs, lice, flies, or locusts had been to Egypt.—No account indeed is found, in the subsequent history, of hornets assailing the armies which fought against Israel: but Joshua attests the fulfilment of the promise, in respect to the two kings of the Amorites, in a manner which proves that it was well known by all the people. (Note, Josh. 24:12.) It may be inferred, from the texts referred to in the margin, that the hornets attacked the devoted nations, either before they engaged in battle, thus weakening and dismaying them; or after they were put to flight, and attempting to hide themselves in caverns or desolate places, to consume the remains of them, or drive them out of the land. And this may account for the silence of the history on the subject. Probably, the three tribes here mentioned were more dreadfully harassed by the hornets than the rest were.—Learned men have shown from ancient historians, that traditions prevailed of nations forced by swarms of different kinds of insects to leave their country; most of which, probably, originated from some confused report of the Lord's dealings with the Egyptians and Canaanites. (Note, 8:24.)

V. 29, 30. The Israelites might conclude, from the promises made to their fathers and to them, that the Lord would at once expel or destroy the old inhabitants of the land before them; and, experiencing delays, they might question whether he had not failed of his word. But this consequence was obviated by the intimation here given; and the reason assigned, for a gradual extirpation of the devoted Canaanites, shows that the country assigned to Israel was far more than sufficient for that generation, which yet consisted at least of two millions: and as they could not occupy the whole till they were still more increased, it would be better for them, that some of the ancient inhabitants should remain, than that the country, lying desolate, should be infested with wild beasts.—Other causes however combined, in preventing the Israelites from at once obtaining possession of the whole country assigned them.

V. 31. The boundaries of the promised land, as here stated, if compared with the passages referred to in the margin, may be thus explained. The northern extremity of the Red Sea was at no great distance from the river of Egypt, which ran into the Mediterranean, on the shore of which the Philistines dwelt. From the extremity therefore of the Red Sea, across to the Mediterranean Sea, and the course of its shore, as far as mount Lebanon, was the western boundary from

32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.

33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Moses, being called to go up to the mount, delivers the laws to Israel, and they consent to covenant with God, 1-3. An altar and twelve pillars are prepared, and the covenant is ratified, with sacrifices and the sprinkling of blood, 4-8. Moses, Aaron, and his sons, and the elders of Israel, are favoured with a vision of God, and feast before him, 9-11. Moses ascends the mount, Joshua of first accompanying him; he leaves Aaron and Hur to rule the people; and abides in the mount forty days and nights, 12-18.

AND he said unto Moses, ^aCome up unto the LORD, thou and Aaron, ^bNadab and Abihu,

c 34:12,15. Deut. 7:2. Josh. 9:14-23. 2 Sam. 21:1,2. d Num. 25:1,2. Deut. 7:16. e 1 Kings 14:16. 2 Chr. 35:9. f Deut. 12:30. Josh. 23:13. Judg. 2:3. Ps. 106:36. g 2 Tim. 2:26. a 3:5. 19:9,20,24. 20:21. 34:2. b 6:23. 28:1. Lev. 10:1,2. 1 Chr. 6:3. 24:1,2. c 9:1,5. Num. 11:16,24,25. Ez. 8:11. Luke 10:1,17. d 15:18. 20:

south to north. The great desert, at the southern extremity of Canaan; and at the south-east of the adjacent countries behind the Dead Sea and beyond Jordan, as far as the great river Euphrates, formed the southern and eastern boundaries; while a line from the Mediterranean Sea, passing by mount Libanus to the river Euphrates, would mark its boundaries on the north, or on the north-west.—There are considerable difficulties, at this distance of time, in ascertaining these limits with any tolerable exactness, and consequently different opinions in some particulars prevail; but this statement seems to accord with the most approved authorities.—It is generally supposed, that the promise of driving out the ancient inhabitants, related only to the devoted nations of Canaan: for when the other countries, included in this grant, were subjected to David and Solomon, they never attempted to expel or extirpate the inhabitants; nor does it appear that they had any command or authority to do it.

V. 32, 33. When the Israelites were forbidden to "make any covenant with the devoted nations or their gods," it seems to intimate, that individuals or collective bodies, that were willing to renounce idolatry, and to embrace the religion of Israel, might be spared, and admitted into covenant with them; and the subsequent history favours this supposition. But while the devoted nations continued idolaters, they must not be tolerated in the land, if the Israelites could by any means expel or destroy them: for, the Lord's purpose of "driving them out by little and little," did not excuse the negligence of the people, who willingly allowed them to live among them; the consequence of which was, that they were either tempters or scourges to them.—The last clause may be rendered, "For thou wilt serve their gods; for it will be a snare unto thee." If idolaters were allowed to live among the Israelites, it would prove a snare to them, and they would be induced to worship their idols.—The latter part of this chapter primarily relates to the national covenant, the solemn ratification of which is recorded in the next chapter.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. How manifold are the temptations, and occasions of sin, in this evil world! He who would "keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man," must not only mortify his own covetousness, pride, resentment, envy, and sensuality; but likewise take heed that his judgment be not biassed, and his heart prejudiced, by the authority, example, or reasonings of men, who are held in reputation for wisdom, learning, and virtue; by the influence of the rich and great; by gratitude to benefactors; by natural affection to relations, or by partiality to beloved friends; by fear of offending those on whom he depends, or from whom he has expectations; by reverence to superiors; by popular clamours; by a party-spirit; by vulgar reports; by conformity to the maxims, customs, and fashions of the world; or even by an easy and friendly temper, and compassion for the poor and afflicted. For there is no passion or propensity in the human heart, however amiable in its general exercise, which will not betray us into imprudence, injustice, and even impiety, unless it be regulated by divine grace, and subordinated to the fear and love of God.—The laws delivered by Moses, however misunderstood by the scribes and Pharisees, and by many professed Christians, required the same equity and truth, the same tenderness of men's reputation and comfort, the same regard to their liberty and property, the same love even to enemies, and the same disposition, however injured or exasperated, to mortify malevolence, and to return good for evil, which are inculcated by our blessed Saviour and his apostles. It is likewise very useful to examine and meditate on these statutes, as select instances, familiarly illustrating the more general rules of equity and love, and teaching us how to apply them in the ordinary concerns of life. Indeed, the more we thus compare one part of Scripture with another, the better we shall understand every part; and the fuller will be our conviction, that the whole is "the word of God."—Integrity, impartiality, and benevolence; a noble disinterestedness; firmness and boldness; an habitual fear of God, and a constant expectation of the great day of retribution; are peculiarly requisite for legislators, magistrates, lawyers, juries, witnesses, or prosecutors, and all concerned in courts of justice. For when human wisdom has done its utmost, they

and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.

2 And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him.

3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words, which the LORD hath said, will we do.

4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

21. Num. 16:5. Jer. 30:21. 49:19. Heb. 9:24. 10:21,22. e 21:-23. Deut. 41:5. 45:5. 1:31. 6:1. 11:1. f 7. 19:8. Deut. 5:27,28. Josh. 24:22. g Deut. 31:9. Josh. 24:28. h 20:24-25. i Gen. 28:18,22. 31:45. Josh. 24:27. j 1al. 2:9. k 28:21. Lev. 24:5. Num. 17:2. Josh. 4:2,3,8,9,20. 1 Kings 11:30. Ezra 6:17. Luke 22:30. Rev. 21:14.

will often be strongly tempted to wrest or pervert judgment; perhaps to the oppression of numbers, and even to the murder of the innocent and righteous; nor will opportunities be wanting. Such legal murders have in many ages and nations been extremely frequent; but, with considerable confidence and gratitude, we may assert, that they are well guarded against in this favoured nation; how desirable is it that we might without hesitation add, *and in all its distant provinces!* But, wherever committed, they are the most malignant of all murders, and will be found so at the day "when the earth shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain."—"We have all great need to "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation," and to shun all occasions of sin: for the remaining evil of the heart is attracted by the evil that is in the world, with a kind of magnetic force, which increases as they approach each other. Hence it is, that a near prospect of secular advantages so frequently "blinds the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous." Let us then "take heed and beware of covetousness;" pray earnestly for contentment with food and raiment; and learn to expect needful supplies from the Lord, day by day, in the conscientious performance of the duties to which we are called. And, as we must be sensible, (whether we "know the heart of a stranger," by painful experience, or not,) that oppressions would be very galling to us; let us on no consideration concur in oppressing any human being: on the contrary, "whatsoever we would that men should do unto us, let us do even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

V. 10-33. While we carefully observe the rules of justice, truth, and mercy, in our conduct towards our brethren and neighbours, we must not forget our still higher obligations to the LORD our God: and if we be indeed his people, we shall cheerfully devote ourselves to his service, submit to all his will, and seek his glory, in the conduct of our secular affairs, in the use of our property, and in the spending of our time. We shall count his sabbaths and ordinances our refreshment and pleasure; we shall readily dedicate to him the first and best of all his gifts, and share our portion, even if small, with those who have still less than we; depending on his promise and providence for the future.—But in all these things, and even in the government of our tongues, it behoves us to be "circumspect;" for we can neither "work out our own salvation," nor glorify God and do good, without great diligence and attention; and the ruinous consequences of mere heedlessness are seldom duly considered. Let us then put ourselves under the guidance and banner of the great Angel of the covenant, in whom is the name of JEHOVAH: let us obey his voice, submit to his will, fear nothing but his indignation and failing of his forgiveness, desire the comforts of his Spirit, depend on his arm, and expect the fulfilment of his promises; and thus march forward towards the heavenly Canaan, through hosts of opposing foes, all of which he will enable us to overcome. We shall then learn by experience, that his ways are ways of pleasantness and peace, notwithstanding conflicts and self-denial; that, in the ordinary course of things, obedience to his precepts conduces to health, long life, and domestic comfort; and that the provisions which he sends, (though often such as the world counts mean and scanty,) being accompanied by his blessing, are far better than the greatest affluence of ungodly men. (Note, Ps. 37 16,17.) And though it is not his will to destroy our inward enemies at once, but by little and little; yet they too shall finally be extirpated; and he will make us more than conquerors in the event. Nay, in the mean while, he will take occasion, from their existence and opposition, to display his own glory, and to promote our good; so that the whole shall terminate in our deeper humility, and in more admiring love and ardent gratitude, for ever.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XXIV. V. 1, 2. After Moses had received the foregoing laws, he was sent down from "the thick darkness where God was," (20:21.) to deliver them to the people: and at the same time the Lord gave him directions concerning the subsequent solemn transactions. He and Aaron, with Aaron's two eldest sons, and seventy elders of Israel, were directed to come up into the mount; after they (and probably the congregation with them) had worshipped at a distance, to express their humble reverence of

5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered "burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord.

6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.

8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people; and said, Behold "the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

9 Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.

10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

14922. m See on 18:12. Lev. 1: 1. Lev. 3: 7:11-21. o 8. 12:7,22. Col. 1:20. 11—12:21. p 14:23. q 29:16—20. Lev. 1:5,11. 3:2,8,4:6. q 4. Heb. 9: 1—23. r 10:1—14. Acts 13:15. Col. 4:16. 1 Thes. 5:27. s See on 3. Jer. 7:23,24. t See on 6. Lev. 8:30. Is. 52:15. Ez. 36:25. Heb. 9:18,19. u Zech.

9:11. Matt. 26:28. Mark 14:24. Luke 22:20. 1 Cor. 11:25. Eph. 1:7. Heb. 9:20. 10:15. 13:20. x See on 1. y 29:35. 32:20,23. Gen. 28:20. Judg. 13: 21,22. Is. 6:1—5. Ez. 1:28. John 1:18. 14:9. 1 Tim. 5:16. 1 John 4:12. s Ez. 1:25. 27. 10:1. Rev. 4:3. 21:19—23. a Cant. 6:10. Matt. 17:2. Rev. 21:11,18.

the divine majesty, and to produce in their minds proper solemnity for a nearer approach. Yet only Moses was permitted to ascend the top of the mountain, where the glory of God was peculiarly manifested; while the others must keep at a great distance, though some would be admitted nearer than others.—It is not evident who the seventy elders were. They are spoken of as part of a larger company. Some think they were a part of the rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, who had been appointed by the advice of Jethro; but these are not called *elders*: elders are repeatedly spoken of before that time: and the seventy elders mentioned in another place, were evidently appointed some time after. (*Marg. Ref. c.*) It is, however, very natural to suppose, that in each tribe there were some persons who on one account or another, bore the chief sway; and from these seventy were selected, who were also called "the nobles" or *princes* of Israel" (11.) and who attended as representatives of their several tribes, in solemnly covenanting with God.

V. 3, 4. When Moses had set before the people "all the judgments," or the judicial law which he had received, with the moral law of ten commandments delivered from mount Sinai, and the promises made to them of special blessings while obedient; they unanimously and willingly consented, and engaged to obey. Accordingly, he wrote in a book the four foregoing chapters, as the conditions of the *national* covenant, which was now about to be solemnly ratified. For such it certainly was: as "the covenant of works" has nothing to do with altars, sacrifices, and the sprinkling of blood; and "the covenant of grace" is not made with whole nations, or collective bodies of divers characters; but only *representatively* with Christ, as the Surety of those given to him, and *personally* with true believers. But while this covenant was made with the nation of Israel, in regard to their outward blessings, it was a "shadow of good things to come;" and in many respects their situation under it accorded to that of those, who live under the gospel, and have the benefit of the ordinances and oracles of God.—The day on which Moses went down from the mount having been thus employed, he arose early the next morning, and made the necessary preparations, by building an altar and raising twelve pillars. The altar seems to have been intended to denote JEHOVAH's presence, as a party in this covenant; and the twelve pillars, the twelve tribes of Israel, as the other party; and between the two covenanting parties Moses acted as a typical mediator.

V. 5. *Young men.*] It does not appear whether these were the persons before called *priests*, or not; (19:22.) but they acted merely as assistants to Moses, who officiated as priest on this and several other occasions. The opinion, confidently maintained by some learned men, concerning a primeval right to the priesthood, vested in the eldest son of each family, is destitute of every shadow of scriptural support, and indeed at variance with the only *facts* to which an appeal can be made. Abel, the younger son, sacrificed at the same time as Cain, and was accepted, while Cain was rejected. Noah, not one of his sons, sacrificed after the flood. (*Gen. 8:20.*) Abraham was commanded to sacrifice, and Isaac, instead of being the priest, was to be the oblation: and afterwards Abraham, not Isaac, offered the ram. Israel, not Reuben, nor any of his sons, sacrificed at Beer-sheba. (46:1.) Job officiated as priest, and offered sacrifices for his sons. (*Job 1:6.*) Nor is there the least trace of any thing in Scripture that favours the sentiment, which is a mere human invention, by whomsoever originally devised.—Oxen only are here mentioned; but we learn from the apostle that other animals were sacrificed. (*Heb. 9:18—20.*)

V. 6—8. Half the blood of the sacrifices was immediately sprinkled on the altar; and the other half, being reserved for that purpose, was afterwards sprinkled on the people: either on the seventy elders, as personally representing the congregation, or on the twelve pillars which had been erected along with the altar, as an external sign or emblem of the twelve tribes; or, as some think, it was carried in basins, and sprinkled on the people in general: for this part of the solemnity preceded the ascent of the selected company into the mount. (9.) We learn from the apostle, that the book was also sprinkled. Moses had read, or proclaimed, the contents of it in the audience of the people, as the terms of the covenant about to be ratified with them; and they had renewed their consent to it, before the sprinkling of the blood on them and on it; and then afterwards he subjoined, "This is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you

concerning all these words." The whole transaction was calculated to impress their minds with the important instruction, that the covenant was made with them, only through the blood of the atoning sacrifice; that neither their persons, moral obedience, nor religious services, could be accepted by a holy God, except through the shedding and sprinkling of blood; that even the blessings of the *national* covenant were all of mercy; and that, though they were secured to them only during their obedience, the Lord would deal with them in kindness, and not construe every act of disobedience into a forfeiture of the covenant. In this manner was the business transacted before all the people: and we learn from apostolical authority, that it was intended as a shadow or type of the manner, in which the true Israelites are admitted into covenant with God, through the atoning blood of Christ; and, yielding themselves to his service, willingly receive his commandments as the rule of their subsequent grateful obedience. (*Note, Heb. 9:18—23.*)

V. 9—11. After this part of the important solemnity had been concluded, Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders, went up to a higher part of the mount; and there "they saw the God of Israel." Many commentators understand this vision of an appearance of the Son of God in human form, anticipating his incarnation. And though the expression, "Ye saw no manner of similitude," (*Deut. 4:15.*) seems to militate against this opinion: yet it may be answered, that this was spoken concerning the people in general, as receiving the law in an audible voice from the mount; but the words here used relate to a few individuals and to a subsequent time. It is said of Moses, "The Similitude of the Lord shall he behold." (*Note, Num. 12:4—8.*) Christ is the "Image of the invisible God;" the Effulgence of his glory, and the Character of his subsistence. (2 Cor. 4:4. *Notes, John 1:18. Col. 1:15—17. Heb. 1:3,4.*) The two appearances under consideration were a direct contrast: the former was that of the holy Lawgiver and Judge, in terrible majesty delivering to sinners "the ministration of condemnation;" the latter that of a Saviour, through the sacrifice and sprinkling of blood, admitting believers into communion with himself. Now it is only in Christ, that God manifests himself as reconciled to sinners, or admits any of them into communion with him.—No doubt "God in Christ," the Saviour of sinners, was the God of Israel, who manifested himself on this occasion: yet, it may reasonably be doubted, whether it was a visible appearance in human form. The expressions, "There was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness," accord with some passages in Ezekiel's first vision, in which it is evident, the idea of a personal appearance in human form is carefully excluded; and they seem rather to imply some grand display of glory, which might feebly be illustrated by such similitudes. (*Note, Ez. 1:26—28.*)—It appears therefore more consistent with the narrative, to understand it of a most resplendent manifestation of the divine glory; but in mild majesty, and not with the terrific displays which attended the promulgation of the law; yet even this visible glory itself could not be represented by any similitude: but that which appeared beneath the feet of the God of Israel, (that is, under the resplendent majesty, or as it were beneath the glorious throne on which he manifested his presence, as Israel's King,) might be compared to a pavement of sapphires, which are of a beautiful blue colour; or to the azure sky, as most visible in its splendour on a bright night when spangled with stars. But, while this was a far more distinct vision of the glory of God, than that which had been made at the giving of the law, when nothing was seen but clouds, darkness, fire, and tempest: yet, through the sacrifice and sprinkling of blood, and the covenant now ratified, this glory did not inspire terror, but confidence; and the representatives of Israel received no harm, but much comfort, while they feasted on the peace-offerings, in full view of the divine glory. Not only was this the case with Moses, the typical mediator; with Aaron, the intended high-priest; and with his two eldest sons, who were next to him in the priesthood; but also with the nobles of Israel, as the seventy elders are called, being the principal persons of their several tribes. Even on them the Lord laid not his hand, to injure them, but admitted them to feast before him with safety and comfort.—Thus the believer, beholding, in the face of Jesus Christ, far clearer discoveries of the glorious justice and holiness of God, than ever he saw under his most terrifying

*they 'bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering.

3 And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,

4 And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair,

5 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim-wood,

6 Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil and for sweet incense,

7 Onyx-stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

8 And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell amongst them.

9 According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

10 ¶ And they shall make an ark of shittim-wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it; and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.

12 And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it.

13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.

14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings,

by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.

16 And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

17 And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

18 And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold: of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat.

19 And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even so of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof.

20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another: toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.

21 And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

22 And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

23 ¶ Thou shalt also make a table of shittim-wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and

2 Kings 11:12, 2 Chr. 24:14, 15, Acts 7:44, Heb. 9:4, a 26:54, 57:6, 40:20, Lev. 16:12, 1 Chr. 22:11, Rom. 3:25, 1 John 3:2, c 37:7-9, Gen. 3:24, 1 Sam. 4:4, 1 Kings 6:23-28, 8:6-7, 1 Chr. 23:18, Ezr. 10:20, 41:15, 12, Heb. 9:5, 5 Or, of the matter of the mercy-seat, a Ezr. 2:14, x Gen. 28, 12, Is. 6:1-5, Ezr. 1:20, Matt. 24:31, John 1:51, 1 Cor. 4:9, 11:30, Eph. 3:10, Col. 2:10, Heb. 1:14, 1 Pet. 1:12, 3:22, Rev. 5:11, 2, y 17, 26:24, Rom. 16:4, z See on 16, a 20:20, 31:16, Gen. 18:33, Lev. 1:1, 16:2, Num. 7:89, 17:4, Deut. 5:36-31, Judg. 20:27, b 29:42, 31:6, 1 Sam. 4:4, 2 Sam. 6:2, 2 Kings 19:15, Ps. 80:1, 89:1, Is. 37:16, c 37:10-16, 40:22, 43, Lev. 21:6, Num. 3:31, 1 Kings 7:48, 1 Chr. 23:16, 2 Chr. 4:8, 19, Ezr. 40:41, 42, Heb. 9:2.

any means obtained; yet this oblation, called a *heave-offering*, (*marg.*) probably because lifting it up towards heaven was the ceremony by which it was devoted to God,) was neither exacted by compulsion, nor regulated by prescription; but every one was left to give as he was "disposed in his heart." (2 Note, 2 Cor. 9:6, 7.)

V. 4-7. Wool, and linen, and goats' hair, or other materials for working into clothes, dyed of the colours here mentioned, were highly valued.—The Lord so ordered it, that the Israelites had received of the Egyptians all the materials required for building the tabernacle, and setting forward the worship to be there performed, according to the several particulars here mentioned; and this not only intimated favour to the Gentiles, but also represented the use, which God often makes of the abilities and substance of strangers, in supporting and promoting true religion.

V. 8. The word (שִׁטִּים) from שָׁטַף, to sanctify, or make holy,) rendered *sanctuary*, denotes a holy habitation for the Lord's immediate residence. This was intended for a visible pledge and token that he was present with his people, to protect, instruct, guide, and govern them; to pardon their sins, to accept their services, and to supply their wants.—The tabernacle was also a type of the human nature of Jesus Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" of the Church of God, which, as one with him, is a spiritual house: of every true believer, who, as a part of that great temple, is "a habitation of God through the Spirit;" and of heaven, where the presence of God is visibly displayed, and he dwells among his holy angels and redeemed sinners, as their everlasting Felicity, and accepts their holy worship.

V. 9. The Lord not only directed Moses by words, how to build the tabernacle, and form its sacred furniture; but he showed him a model, exactly representing the form of every part, and the proportion of each to all the rest. It is observable, that this related to the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture alone, or perhaps the priestly garments; and has no reference to the rest even of the ceremonial law, as it is frequently supposed. (Note, 40.) Indeed it is not easy to form an idea of a pattern, or model, of any thing which is not material.—During the continuance of Israel in the wilderness, and during four hundred and forty years after their settlement in Canaan, the sanctuary was only a tent, or moveable building; but afterwards a temple was built upon mount Zion, and the typical ordinances were confined to one place. This may mark the difference between the church on earth and the church in heaven: wandering and journeying through this wilderness, we take our religion, and the ordinances of it, along with us all the way; but in heaven there is rest for the Church of God, and no more removals for ever.

V. 10-21. "The ark of the covenant" was so called,

not only as it contained the tables of the law, which were the basis of the national covenant; but also because it was an abiding symbol of God's gracious presence with his people, and typified those peculiar benefits, which belong to the covenant of peace, mediated by Christ in behalf of the true Israel. It was a chest, made of wood not liable to rot, of about four feet in length, and two feet and a half in breadth and in depth, plated all over, both within and without, with plates of pure gold, having a border, or cornice of gold round about it; and covered with a covering all of massy gold, which was called the *covering*, or "the propitiatory," or "the mercy-seat," and it was kept firm in its place by the *cornice*, as the word rendered "crown" seems here to mean. In this ark the two tables of stone, which contained the law of the ten commandments were put: it was placed in the holy of holies; before it the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled, and the incense burnt, by the high-priest on the day of atonement; and above it appeared the visible glory, which was the symbol of the divine presence.—This was an evident type of Christ, as to his sinless human nature, (which "saw no corruption,") in personal union with his divine nature, magnifying the law, and covering our transgressions of it, by "having it in his heart," obeying it in his life, and atoning for the violations of it by his death. Through the sprinkling of his blood, and the intercession which, as our High-Priest, he makes in the true holy of holies, God appears to sinners with mild glory upon a mercy-seat, and accepts the persons and services of believers, dwelling among them and abundantly blessing them.—"The testimony" signifies the tables of the law, which testified God's authority over the Israelites, his regard for them, and his presence with them: they also testified, that while he was merciful to them, he required them to be obedient; and the same would testify against them, if they neglected or forsook his service and worship. The two cherubim were emblematical representations of the angels, "desiring to look" into the mysteries of redeeming love: they were therefore formed with their faces towards the mercy-seat, as contemplating it and the mysteries which it contained.—Various conjectures have been advanced concerning the form or shape of the cherubim; but the text in this place mentions no more than their faces and wings, and arguments taken from other emblematical parts of Scripture are not satisfactory.—It is thought they were formed of the same mass of gold as the propitiatory, and that this is the meaning of the word rendered *beaten-work*; though others interpret it to denote the polish and finishing of the workmanship.—As the ark and propitiatory were intended to be carried about, there were golden rings at the four corners, and staves plated with gold; which were not taken out of the rings, even when it was stationary.

V. 22. After the tabernacle had been constructed, and u

a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

24 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about.

25 And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand-breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about.

26 And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof.

27 Over against the border shall the rings be, for places of the staves to bear the table.

28 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with them.

29 And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof to cover withal: of pure gold shalt thou make them.

30 And thou shalt set upon the table show-bread before me always.

31 ¶ And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold, of beaten work shall the candlestick be made; its shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers shall be of the same.

32 And six branches shall come out of the sides of it: three branches of the candlestick out of the

one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side.

33 Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick.

34 And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers.

35 And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick.

36 Their knops and their branches shall be of the same, all of it shall be one beaten work of pure gold.

37 And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.

38 And the tongs thereof, and the snuff-dishes thereof, shall be of pure gold.

39 Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

40 And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount.

d See on 11. 1 Kings 6:20—22. e 30:3, 37:2. f See on 12. g 14:23, h 14:27. Num. 10:17. Acts 9:15. 1 Kings 16: 17:16. Num. 4:7. 7:13, 19:31. Eccl. 1 Kings 7:50. 2 Chr. 4:22. 2 Chr. 1:9—11. 3:1. 5:1. 19. * Or, to pour out withal. Lev. 24:35—9. Cant. 5:1. Rev. 3:20. k 35:13, 39:36. Num. 4:7. 1 Sam. 21:6. 1 Chr. 9:32. 23:29. 2 Chr. 13:11. Matt. 12:4. 1 Chr. 14:37—47. 40:24, 25. 1 Kings 7:49. Zech. 4:2. Heb. 9:2. Rev. 1:12, 20. 2:1, 3, 4, 5. m 1 Kings 6:18. 7:24. n 37:19, 20. Zech. 4:3. o 19. Num. 8:4. 1 Kings 10:16, 17. 2 Chr. 9:15. p 37:23. Rev. 1:12, 20. 2:1, 4:5.

ark of the covenant had been put in the most holy place, the Lord displayed his glory from above the mercy-seat, between the cherubim; and thence he delivered to Moses the rest of the ceremonial and judicial law; communing with him, probably in an audible voice, and answering all his inquiries.

V. 23—30. Nothing but the ark of the covenant, with the propitiatory or mercy-seat, was put within the most holy place; but without the veil, a table was fixed, of the same height as the ark, but neither so long nor so broad. It was made of the same materials as the ark, and with a golden cornice; but it had also another cornice below the edge and one at the bottom; with a border between the two of a hand-breadth; though some think one border only was below the edge, and that this was towards the bottom, to keep the feet or legs more closely united. The table also had rings and staves for the convenience of removing it.—To it were annexed several vessels; as dishes, in which some think the show-bread was placed; or, according to others, the flour of which it was made, or the oil used for various purposes.—spoons, which were employed about the incense offered on the golden altar, or carried within the veil in a censer on the day of atonement; and some think the word denotes vials, as we read of vials full of odours, or incense. (Rev. 5:8.)—covers, which seem to have been put over both the loaves and the incense; yet some suppose, they were vessels used in drink-offerings; but that is more reasonably considered as the use of the bowls, mentioned in the last place.—The show-bread will more conveniently be spoken of hereafter: (Note, Lev. 24:5—9.) but, in general, this part of the ceremonial institution seems to have typified the communion, which in his ordinances the Lord holds with his redeemed people; the provisions of his house, and the feasts with which they are sometimes favoured; the food for their souls, which they always find when they hunger after it; and the delight which he takes in their persons and services, as presented before him in Christ Jesus. (Cant. 5:1. Rev. 3:20.)

V. 31—39. The candlestick was made entirely of pure gold, beaten into plates and burnished. It is generally thought, that it might be taken in pieces, for the convenience of removing it. The shaft, or trunk, is supposed to have had a foot, on which the whole candlestick stood firm; yet no mention is made of this foot. On each side of the shaft were three branches, shaped like reeds, or canes, one above the other, being six in all. Each branch was ornamented by three bowls, shaped like almonds, (which perhaps were so placed as to receive any thing that fell from the lamps;) and by a knop like a pomegranate and a flower. These seem to have been placed above the uppermost bowl, just under the lamp, which was at the top of each branch.—On the shaft, or main pillar, called on that account the candlestick, were four bowls like almonds, and four knops and four flowers.—Three of these are supposed to have been made on the shaft, immediately under the place where each of the three branches arose out of it, on either side. The knop and the flower being above the bowl. And the fourth bowl, knop, and flower, were fixed beneath the lamp, which was on the top of the shaft, and which, with those on each of the branches, made the number seven in all. The height of the candlestick is not mentioned, nor indeed the dimensions of any part; but with its vessels, or the tongs and

snuff-dishes for dressing the lamps, it contained a talent of pure gold, or about a hundred-weight. This might suffice to direct the workmen in respect of the proportions to be observed; especially as Moses would remember the model shown him in the mount.—There were no windows in the tabernacle; but the candlestick being placed over against the table of show-bread, each lamp would cast its light to the part of the tabernacle over against it, and the whole would thus be sufficiently lighted.—This typified the light of revelation, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, afforded to the church in this dark world, to direct her worship and obedience, and administer to her consolations; but in heaven, “the LORD will be unto her an everlasting Light, and God himself her glory.”—All these sacred vessels were so framed, that the Israelites might take them with them in their journeys; and they were highly decorated. Thus the religion of Christ must accompany his people through life; and it is fitted to be diffused through all nations: there is in him all beauty and glory; and he adorns his church with the graces of the Spirit, and all the beauty of holiness.—They were all made of the most precious metals: for Christ is most precious in himself, and in the estimation of the Father, of his people, and of all the inhabitants of heaven. His Church also consists of the excellent of the earth; he requires us to consecrate unto him the best and most valuable of every thing, of our time, our substance, our abilities, and especially our affections; and he will accept of nothing but that which is the very best of the kind.

V. 40. The ceremonial law was altogether instituted worship, which derives all its obligation from the express appointment of God. It was likewise in every part typical of Christ and his salvation: but especially the sanctuary and its furniture, were a shadow of him, in his person, righteousness, mediation, and grace; and of our life of faith and communion with him. It was therefore highly proper, that every particular should be fashioned exactly according to the model set before Moses on the mount; and nothing at all left to human invention. Indeed, it is evident, that uniformity in worship, as far as related to the services at the tabernacle, and afterwards at the temple, was prescribed by the law, though it was seldom adhered to; but it is equally plain, that such a uniformity, according to a precise rule, in the externals of worship, was not intended under the new dispensation: and the very disputes, which this subject has so long occasioned, are a complete demonstration that no such exact and explicit rule subsists; for if it did, the controversy must cease of course, or rather could never have been started. The old ritual is evidently antiquated, and nothing of the same kind is substituted in its place; therefore a latitude is allowed us by the Lord, and we have no right to impose our sentiments on others, or to condemn those who differ from us. Yet we must remember, that we are accountable to God for the use which we make of this liberty. We should take heed, that we do not reject the truths or “commandments of God to keep our own traditions;” and that we consider every thing of this kind as a mere circumstance, though in our judgment expedient for the more regular attendance on God’s ordinances, profession of his truths, and obedience to his commandments. (Heb. 6; 5. Note, 9.)

CHAPTER XXVI.

Directions for making the ten curtains of the sanctuary, 1-6. The eleven curtains of goats' hair; and the coverings of rams' skins and badgers' skins, 7-14. The boards, sockets, and bars, 15-30. The veil and pillars to separate the most holy place, 31-33. The arrangement of the furniture in the sanctuary; and the hanging for the door, 34-37.

MOREOVER thou shalt make ^athe tabernacle with ten curtains of ^bfine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; with ^ccherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.

2 The length of one ^dcurtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure.

3 The five curtains shall be ^ecoupled together one to another: and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another.

4 And thou shalt make ^floops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain, from the selvedge in the coupling: and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of ^ganother curtain, in the coupling of the second.

5 Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another.

6 And thou shalt make fifty ^htaches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be ⁱone tabernacle.

a 23:8, 36:9-19, 40:4, 7-19, 1 Chr. 21:29, John 1:14, 2:21, Heb. 6:2, 9:9, 23:24, Rev. 21:3, b 36:25,4, 35:6, 35, Rev. 19:8, c See on 23:18, * Heb. the work of a cunning workman, or, embroiderer, d 7:8, Num. 4:25, 2 Sam. 7:2, 1 Chr. 17:1, e 9:36, 10:10, John 17:21, 1 Cor. 12:4, 12-27, Eph. 2:21, 22, 4:3-6, 16, Col. 2:12, 19, f 5:10, 11, 36:11, 12, 17, g 11:33, 35:11, 36:13, 18, 39:33, h Eph.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In all things the Lord prevents us with his bounty, and we can present nothing to him, but what was previously his gift. (*Note, 1 Chr. 29:10-19.*) In the great concerns of salvation, his love suggested the gracious design, and his wisdom formed the wonderful plan: the Father loved the world, and gave his Son for our redemption; the Son loved us, and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins; his word reveals this salvation; his providence by special designation hath sent it to us; the ordinances, in which he will meet us, are of his appointment, and rendered effectual by his blessing; and his preventing grace produces at first the willing mind to attend on them. But while he reveals himself in Christ Jesus, as a reconciled Father upon a mercy-seat, affords us the light of his word, and promises the teaching of his Holy Spirit, to direct us to the Bread of life, and guide us into sweet communion with him, that we may feast upon the plenteousness of his holy temple; he reasonably requires that we diligently attend on his ordinances, come to his mercy-seat, inquire his will, feed upon the Bread of life, walk in the light, and present our bodies, souls, and all we have, to him, to be employed according to his will, and for his glory; and that we, with a willing and liberal mind, according to the ability which he giveth us, actually separate to his service, both for the support of religion and communicating to the poor, a proportion of our substance, to prove the sincerity of our faith and love. If we have no inclination to this, we have no proof that we are his true people; but if we have indeed a willing mind, and give the best which we possess in simplicity, we may take the comfort of this good evidence, that God hath bestowed on us his saving grace. Though no exact proportion is prescribed, yet the Lord saith, that "he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully,"—in peace and assurance on earth, and in abundant glory in heaven. Finally, let us remember, that if we are true Christians, we are the temples of the Holy Spirit, have the law of God written in our hearts, live a life of communion with God, feast on his ordinances, and are the light of the world. The Lord help us to try ourselves by this view of Christianity, and to walk according to it.

NOTES.—**CHAP. XXVI. V. 1-6.** As these rich curtains formed the principal covering of the sanctuary, they are called the *Tabernacle*, or *Dwelling-place*, namely, of Israel's God and King. They were made of the finest linen, dyed of the richest colours, spun and woven in the most curious manner, and beautifully embroidered all over with *cherubim*, the emblematic representation of angels, as joining in the worship of the God of Israel. Each curtain was about fifteen yards long, and something more than two yards wide: but though woven and wrought separately, they were afterwards joined together into two grand divisions of five curtains each; probably by needlework. Each of these divisions would be about eleven yards wide; and they likewise were joined together into one *tabernacle*. Fifty loops of blue tape, or riband, were fastened to the edge or selvedge of the outermost of the five curtains, on that side by which it was to be coupled to the outermost of the other five curtains; on the selvedge of which, fifty loops were placed exactly answering to the others.—These loops seem to have been joined together, by being passed through each other: *see fifty taches, or buttons, or clasps, of gold, were*

7 ¶ And thou shalt make ^acurtains of ^bgoats hair to be ^ca covering upon the tabernacle; ^deleven curtains shalt thou make.

8 The ^elength of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure.

9 And thou shalt couple ^ffive curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the fore-front of the tabernacle.

10 And thou shalt make ^gfifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second.

11 And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the ^htent together ⁱthat it may be one.

12 And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half-curtain that remaineth shall hang over the back side of the tabernacle.

13 And ^ja cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side ^kof that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side, and on that side to cover it.

14 And thou shalt make ^la covering for the

1-22, 23, 4:16, 1 Pet. 2:4, 5, i 35:26, 36:14-18, Num. 4:25, Ps. 45:13, 1 Pet. 3:4, 5:5, k 25:4, 35:6, 23, Num. 31:30, l 1:1, Is. 4:5, m 1:9, 12, a 2:13, o 3, p 4-6, j 1 Cor. covering, q See on 3:6, r 9: a 2:8, 7 Heb. in the remnant, or, surplusage, t 36:19, Num. 4:5, Ps. 27:5, 121:4, 5, Is. 4:6, 25:4

also made, to each of which, two loops, one of either outside curtain, were closely fastened, in order to render the whole compact: yet so that the two grand divisions might easily be separated, when there was occasion to remove it. Thus firmly joined together, it was spread over the top of the sanctuary, and reached on each side, within less than a yard of the ground, covering also the whole length of it. The ten curtains were forty cubits wide, (except any thing should be deducted for the seams and joinings,) yet the sanctuary was not much more than thirty cubits long: hence it has been thought, that one division of the covering was exactly spread over the *holy place*, which was twenty cubits in length; and that the other covered the *most holy place*, which was ten cubits square; and that the residue hung over on the west end towards the ground. But this is not here mentioned: and perhaps this inner covering being spread rather loosely over the sanctuary, did not extend much beyond the ends of it; which is the more likely, as mention is expressly made of the surplus of the second curtains.

V. 7-14. The curtains of goats' hair were above a yard longer than the rich curtains, and would therefore extend above half a yard lower on each side, that is, almost to the ground. Being one more in number than the others, and of the same width, they would, when joined, be more than two yards wider, and so much the more would be left to hang over at the ends of the sanctuary: but it seems that the greater part of the additional curtain, was brought to the east end or opening of it: and there doubled up, perhaps for ornament as a festoon; yet some also remained at the west end, to cover the curtains and the boards. They were joined together, as the rich curtains were, except that the *taches* were made of brass instead of gold. The language, however, describing the way in which they were fastened to each other, is varied, and perhaps may be thus more clearly rendered: "Thou shalt make fifty loops at the border of the first curtain, which is outmost next to the coupling, and fifty loops in the border of the curtain that coupleth, *even* of the second." For these were the two curtains by which all the rest were coupled together: and on the outmost border of each of these, fifty loops were fixed; which by means of the taches, or clasps, or buttons, were firmly joined together into one *tent* or *covering*.—Thus the coarser curtains completely covered, and concealed, the richer: yet a two-fold security against the effects of the weather was added, in the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and that of badgers' skins, which was spread over all the rest.—The whole represents the person and doctrine of Christ, his true church, and all heavenly things, which are outwardly, and to the carnal eye, mean; but are inwardly, and in the sight of God, exceedingly glorious and precious. The secure protection which he prepares for those who are precious in his sight, may also be denoted: and the unity of the whole, formed of so many pieces, and of such different materials, into one covering of the sanctuary, represents the spiritual temple, formed of persons of different nations, dispositions, abilities, and attainments, compacted together into one church, by the uniting influence of the Spirit of love.

V. 15-29. The sockets of silver, each weighing a talent, that is, about a hundred weight, were placed in rows upon the ground; forty on the south, forty on the north, twelve on

tent, of "rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.

15 ¶ And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle, of shittim-wood, standing up.

16 Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board.

17 Two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle.

18 And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side, southward.

19 And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards: two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons.

20 And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side, there shall be twenty boards.

21 And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board.

22 And for the sides of the tabernacle westward, thou shalt make six boards.

23 And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides.

24 And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners.

25 And they shall be eight boards and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets: two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board.

26 And thou shalt make bars of shittim-wood: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle,

27 And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle for the two sides westward.

28 And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.

29 And thou shalt overlay the beards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold.

30 And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount.

31 ¶ And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made.

32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.

33 And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil, the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

34 And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony, in the most holy place.

35 And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side.

36 And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework.

37 And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold: and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for the same.

Heb. 9:3-8. 10:20, 21. x 25:4. 35:6, 25, 35. 36:8. 1. 1. 28:15. 28:23. 2 Chr. 2:7-13. Ps. 137:5. Cant. 7:1. 1. See on 25:18. 1. 37. 38:38. 12th. 1:5. m 27:10. 38:35. n Heb. 9:4, 5. o See on 25:16, 40:21. p 1 Kings 8:6, 10. 2 Chr. 5:7-10. Heb. 9:2, 3. q See on 25:21, 40:20. Heb. 9:5. r See on 40:22. Heb. 9:2, 8, 9. s See on 25:31-37, 40:24. t 36:37, 40:23. John 10:9, 14:6. o 35:11, 39: 33, 40:29. Num. 3:25, 9:15. 2 Sam. 7:6. Ps. 78:50. x See on 81. y 36:48.

the west, and two at each corner on the west end. In every corner of these sockets, and by two tenons fitted to the hollows of them, was fixed a substantial board of shittim-wood, covered with plates of gold: the boards seem also to have been fastened together by mortises and tenons, or by a *convex* in the one exactly fitted to a *convex* in the other. The corner boards were also joined to the boards on either side of them, both at top and bottom, by a ring or staple, no doubt of gold.—Thus a wall was formed on three sides of the sanctuary; which was still further strengthened by five bars of shittim-wood, covered with gold, passing through rings of gold. As the middle bars alone are said to "reach from end to end," it may be supposed that the others were not so long. The whole was so firmly compacted together, that it could not be shaken or thrown down much more easily than an edifice of stone; though it might readily be taken down, and afterwards put together again; its materials also were very costly.—In all these things, it was a type of the church of God, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:20, 21.

V. 30. (Notes, 25:3, 40.)

V. 31-33. This veil separated "the holy place," or what the apostle calls "the first tabernacle," "from the most holy place;" and it was hung upon pillars fixed in sockets of silver, in the manner of the boards.—It was formed of the same materials, and with the same ornamental work, as the innermost curtains; but it is generally thought to have been made exceedingly thick, that it might completely conceal the most holy place, and the ark of the covenant.—We need only hint, that sin had excluded man from the gracious presence of God, so that nothing short of the death of Christ could remove the obstacle, rend the veil, and give the sinner free access with boldness to the mercy-seat.

V. 36, 37. This hanging was suspended on five pillars, overlaid with gold, at the east end of the sanctuary, and served instead of a door; on the removal of which the priests might enter the sanctuary between the pillars. It seems to have been less ornamented, in all respects, than the inner veil, and without cherubim; and the sockets for the pillars were made of brass instead of silver. In veneration of the rising sun, many of the Gentiles worshipped towards the east; but Israel was required to protest against that idolatry, by turning their backs upon the east in worshipping God; for we must disregard the most excellent and useful creatures, when they would divert our homage and affections from the Creator.

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PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

With this typical description of Christ and his church before our eyes, let us ask ourselves what our judgment on these subjects is. Do we see any glory in the person of Christ? any excellency in his character, or preciousness in his salvation, or wisdom in the doctrine of the cross? Do we perceive any beauty in holiness, or any amiableness in the character of Christians? These things are hidden under external meanness, from the carnal eye of the superficial observer, but are spiritually discerned by every true believer: who sees, through the exterior covering, the internal glory and hidden excellency of heavenly things. As our judgment, choice, and consequent practice are, so is our state towards God. "To you that believe, Christ is precious."—Let us also examine ourselves, as to the state of our own hearts; whether we possess a consciousness of dependence on God, love to him, hatred of sin, desire after holiness, and a full purpose of heart, through divine grace, to glorify him? Will our religion bear examination? and are we more careful to approve our hearts to God, than our characters to men? For notwithstanding all our imperfections, this state of mind is in the sight of God of great price.—The hypocrite is the reverse of all this: he keeps up a specious appearance before men, but he shrinks from examination; for "his inward part is very wickedness;" and God knows it.—Thus also the Christian's comfort and his inheritance are not an outside show of mirth and prosperity, covering an aching heart, and a soul doomed to destruction; but an inward sweetness and peace unobserved of men, and a glorious inheritance, reserved within the veil. Nay, the mean appearance of the church, and of the Christian, is often a security from persecution and temptation.—As every part of this spiritual building of God, in subserviency to his power and love, conduces to the stability of the whole, let us consider how much it behoves us to "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" let us watch against discontent, envy, ambition, and contention; and, each in his proper place, study to serve the common interests of genuine Christianity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1-8. The altar for the sacrifices made by fire, at the entrance into the sanctuary, was almost three yards square, and above a yard and a half in height. The frame was of shittim-wood, forming a hollow square within. And on each corner was a small turret, or pinnacle, of the same wood; to which, on some occasions at least, the animals to be sacrificed were bound; and to which part of the blood was applied. The frame of the altar was covered with plates of brass, probably of a considerable

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Aaron and his sons are appointed to the priesthood, 1. The holy garments prescribed for the high-priest, 2-5; consisting of the ephod and girdle, 6-14; the breastplate of judgment with Urim and Thummim, 15-30; the robe of the ephod, the mitre, and the coat of fine linen, 31-39. The garments of the other priests, 40-43.

AND take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.

2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty.

3 And thou shalt speak unto all *that are* wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the Spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

4 And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy

brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

5 And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.

6 ¶ And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet and fine twined linen, with cunning work.

7 It shall have the two shoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together.

8 And the curious girdle of the ephod which is upon it, shall be of the same according to the work thereof: *even* of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

9 And thou shalt take two onyx-stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel.

10 Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth.

11 With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave

a Lev. 8:2. Num. 16:9-11, 17:2-9. Heb. 5:1-5. b 41. 29:1, 34. 30:30, 31:10, 35:19. Num. 18:7. Deut. 10:6. 1 Chr. 6:10, 2 Chr. 11:14. Luke 1:8. c 6:23, 24:19. Lev. 10:1, 12. Num. 2:4, 26:61. 1 Chr. 21:1-4. d 29:5-9, 30:30, 31:10, 39:1, 40:13. Lev. 8:7-9, 30. Num. 20:26-28. Ps. 132:9, 16. Is. 61:3, 10. 64:6. Zech. 3:3, 4. Rom. 3:22, 13:14. Gal. 3:27. Heb. 7:26. Rev. 19:8. e 40:19, 5. Num. 27:20, 21. Job 40:10. Ps. 60:16, 17, 96:6, 149:4. Is. 42:7. 9:23, 24. 1 Cor. 1:30, 31. f 31:3-6, 35:31-35, 36:1, 2. Is. 23:24-28. g Deut. 34:9. Is. 11:2. 1 Cor.

the lamp to burn always;" and the expressions, before referred to, may only denote, that in the evening they paid an especial attention to the lamps, preparatory to their care of them through the night. Upon the whole, it seems probable that the light never went out in the sanctuary, except when the priests neglected or mistook their duty.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Of what vast importance, in true religion, must the Person, the priesthood, and the sacrifice of the Son of God be, when they are forced upon our attention in such a variety of types and representations!—He indeed is our Prophet, and we must welcome and submit to his teaching; our King, and we must willingly obey him; our Example, and we must imitate him: but he is also our Altar, our Priest, our Sacrifice, our Mediator; and we have neither been truly taught by him, nor have we rendered him any genuine obedience, unless we have learned to come to the Father, as lost sinners, through him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; to draw all our sufficiency from his fulness, as the Fountain of grace; and to rely on his merits, as the Foundation of our hope.—We have abundant cause to bless our God, that we are within the enclosure of his visible church, and favoured with the means of grace: let us not however rest in outward profession, but be very earnest and diligent, to be found of the number of those who "truly have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." We should also recollect, that even the Scriptures will not prove effectual to enlighten our minds, in those things which belong to eternal salvation, without the union of the Holy Spirit, communicated to us through that great High-Priest, of whom Aaron and his sons were types, and who "walketh amidst his golden candlesticks." But at the same time we must consider, that ministers, by opening and applying the Scriptures, and preaching the gospel continually; and private Christians, in performing the duties of their several stations; and all, by their fervent and frequent prayers; are instrumental in diffusing the divine light in this dark world. Let us then diligently tend the lamp of the sacred Scriptures, that we may walk in the light ourselves, and communicate it to all around us. And may the Lord send forth many able and faithful ministers, to diffuse the light throughout the earth: for, blessed be his name, it is not now confined to the sanctuary in Israel, but is intended to lighten the gentiles in every part of the world.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. Several intimations had before been given of the Lord's purpose; but this is the first express appointment of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. The heads of families seem hitherto to have officiated as priests, and to have offered sacrifices; but now that practice was terminated, and the sacerdotal office was restricted to the family of Aaron. Moses not only gave a decided proof of his disinterestedness, in leaving his own posterity in the rank of private Levites, while he confirmed Aaron and his descendants in this important and honourable service; (1 Chr. 23:14-17. Note, 14.) but he also fully evinced, that he acted entirely by divine direction: and this is further proved by the remarkable circumstance, that no provision was made for the succession to the priesthood, in case Aaron's family should be extinct. According to human observation, this was a very probable event, especially after the death of Nadab and Abihu: and it must have been followed by the entire subversion of the religious system at this time established; for it was fundamental to it, that no person, in any age or in any case, should officiate as priest, under the penalty of death, except he were of Aaron's family: yet Moses left the whole dependent on an apparent contingency! This, human policy never would have done. But the providence of God took

12:7-11. Eph. 1:17. h 39:9-21. Is. 59:17. Eph. 6:14. 1 Thes. 5:8. Rev. 9:17. 16-14. 39:2-5, 21. Lev. 8:7, 8. 1 Sam. 2:18. 22:18. 23:6. 30:7. 2 Sam. 6:14. k 31-34. 39:25, 26. 139:40. Lev. 8:7. m 39:25. Lev. 8:9. Zech. 3:5. n See on 25:3, 4. 39:2, 3. o See on 26:1. p 39:4. q 27:26. 29:5. 30:30, 31. Lev. 8:7. Is. 11:5. 1 Pet. 1:13. Rev. 1:13. r Op. embroidered. s 20:39, 13. Gen. 2:12. Job 28:16. Ex. 28:13. s 36:39, 6. 2 Chr. 2:7. Cant. 8:6. Is. 49:16. t 1:1-4. Gen. 43:33. u 21. Jer. 22:24. Zech. 3:9. Eph. 1:13. 4:30. 2 Tim. 2:19. Rev. 7:2.

care of that, which was thus simply committed to him; and the priests of the family of Aaron increased, and continued as long as that dispensation, and until the Christian dispensation was introduced.—The word (כֹּהֵן) rendered "that he may minister in the priest's office," seems originally to have meant *serving in an honourable station*; and therefore it is used concerning the sons of David, who could not be priests, strictly speaking. (2 Sam. 8:18.) Hence it is in several places in the margin rendered *princes*. And as *princes* or courtiers wait on the king, and are honoured by nearer access to him than others; so the priests under the law, both in respect of their office, and as types of Christ, waited on the Lord in his courts, and were admitted nearer to him than other Israelites. Therefore "no man took this honour to himself, but he who was called of God, as was Aaron;" for it was absolutely requisite that the Lord should select the persons, whom he would admit into his special presence, and distinguish as the types of his beloved Son, in mediating between him and his sinful creatures.—Wherever the word (כֹּהֵן) is connected with any of the names of God, it seems always to denote a *priest*; but when it stands alone, it sometimes means a *prince* or eminent person.

V. 2. Whatever was separated from common uses, and consecrated to the immediate service of God, was called HOLY. These garments were intended to distinguish the priests, and to render their persons and ministrations respected by he people: they were also emblematical of that holy conversation and conduct, which should ever be the "glory and beauty," the distinguishing mark, of the ministers of religion; without which they, and the services which they perform, will be had in contempt. But especially they were typical of the glory of the divine majesty, and the beauty of perfect holiness, which rendered Jesus Christ "such a High-Priest as became us," and stamped infinite value on his whole work. (Note, Heb. 7:26-28.)

V. 3. Whoever is endued with skill and ability to perform the service assigned him, especially in promoting true religion, and does it uprightly and diligently, is *wise-hearted*, and will give God the glory of making him so; for all natural wisdom is the gift of God: but this seems to have been *supernaturally* bestowed; as it is added, "whom I have filled with the Spirit of wisdom." (Notes, 3:1-6.)

V. 4, 5. The different parts of the priestly garments will be briefly considered, as they are afterwards more particularly described.—They were made for Aaron and "his sons, that he might minister in the priest's office;" and it is generally thought that the priests never wore the sacred vestments, except when ministering at the sanctuary. All the garments seem to have been made of *linen*, though some writers, without any scriptural proof, assert that part of them was made of *wool*. Where no colour is mentioned, the linen was white.

V. 6-14. The ephod, or the outer garment of the priests which they wore over the rest to keep them close about them, was a short coat without sleeves; but made with two shoulder-pieces, one for each shoulder, to join the whole garment together, and to retain it in its place. Ephods were worn by the inferior priests, and even by others on some occasions; as by Samuel when a child, and by David when he danced before the ark. (1 Sam. 2:18. 2 Sam. 6:14.) But these were made only of linen; whereas the ephod of gold was richly dyed and curiously embroidered, and had much gold wrought upon it. According to our translation, and the general sense of expositors, it was likewise girt on with a girdle over the breast, dyed, embroidered, and interwoven with gold, like the other parts of the ephod: but it is not

x 13.14.25. 39.6.13.13. y 7. Ps. 89:19. Is. 9:6. 12:2. Zech. 6:13.14. Heb.
 7:25-28. z 29. a 12.14. 13.9. 39.9. Gen. 9:12-17. Lev. 24:7. Num. 16:40.
 21:54. Josh. 4:7. Is. 62:6. *marz*. Luke 1:54.72. 1cts 10.4. b 24. 39.15. c 22-
 25. 39.17.18. 1 Kings 7:7. 2 Kings 25:17. 2 Chr. 4:12.13. d See on h. 4.30.
 39.3. *lax*. e 7.14.6. 26.1 f See on g. 11.39.10. Mal. 3:17. * Heb.
flin it flinings of stone. g Ex. 28:13. Rev. 21:19-21. f Or, ruby. Job 28:
 18. *lax*. y 3.13. 8.11. 20.15. 21.10. Lau. 4.7. h Job 28:19. Or, ruby. i Is.

30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of

x 13,14,25.39:6,13,18. y 7. Ps.89:19. Is.9:6,12. Zech.6:13,14. Heb. 7:25-28. z 29. a 12,14,13,39,39. Luke.9:12-17. Lev.24:7. Num.16:40. 31:54. Josh.4:7. Is.62:6. marg. Luke.1:54,72. Acts 10:4. b 24. 39:15. c 22-25. 39:17,18. 1 Kings 7:17. 2 Kings 25:17. 2 Chr.4:12,13. d See on h. 4,30. 39:3. e See on g. f See on g. 26:1. f See on g. 9:11. 39:10. Mal.3:17. * Heb. fill in the fillings of stone. g Ez.28:13. Rev.21:9-21. f Or, ruby. Job. 18:19. 18:19. y 15. 18:20. 20:15. 21:10. Lam. 4:7. b Job 28:19. Rev.21:20. i Is.

54:11,12. & 39:11. Ez. 27:16. 124:10. Job 28:6,16. Cant. 5:14. Ez. 1:26. 10:1.
Rev. 4:3. 21:19. m Jer. 17:1. Ez. 28:13. n 39:12. o Is. 54:12. p Ex. 1:16.
10:9. Dan. 10:6. Rev. 21:20. q See on 9. r 39:12. 54:11,12. s Heb.
Hittings. 13. s⁹—11. t 1 Kings 18:31. Luke 22:30. Jam. 1:1. Rev. 7:4—8. 21:
12. u 14. x 7. y See on 8. z 31:37. 39:30,31. Num. 15:38. a See on 15.
39. b See on 12. Jer. 30:21. Rom. 10:1. c Cant. 8:6. Is. 49:15,16.

v. 30. The Scriptures nowhere inform us, what the URIM and THUMMIM were; nor was any direction given to Moses how to make them. The original words signify THE LIGHTS, (or illuminations,) and the PERFECTIONS; and a variety of conjectures have been made on the subject. Some suppose that the precious stones, engraven with the names of the sons of Israel, are meant; which are thus called from their brilliancy, and because they were the most perfect of their kind; but the context seems to imply that something further was intended, and this interpretation is not satisfactory. Others think, that the words אֲרָמִים וְתֻמִּים were either wrought in the substance of the breastplate, or engraven on a plate of gold, and fixed upon it, as HOLINESS to the LORD was upon the mitre; intimating, that divine illumination and strict integrity or soundness of heart, were requisite in the sacred office of the high-priest; or rather, that the clearer sight and knowledge, with the most perfect counsel and direction, would be obtained by thus consulting the Lord. This interpretation seems not inconsistent with the narrative: but it is objected, that no direction is given how these words were to be put into the breastplate, as there is afterwards concerning the inscription on the mitre, (36.) Others therefore think, that the URIM and THUMMIM were something given to Moses on the Mount, to be privately enclosed in the breastplate, as a pledge that the Lord would answer the high-priest when he thus inquired his will: and that it was the Lord's express intention none should know what they were. Several other opinions have been formed, but these seem the most plausible. Yet, after all, it may be doubted, whether any thing were put into the breastplate, distinct from the things before described: and whether the use to which it was to be appropriated were not principally attended. - When

judgment ⁴the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall ⁵bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

31 ¶ And thou shalt make ⁶the robe of the ephod all of blue.

32 And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, ⁷as it were the hole of an habergeon, ⁸that it be not rent.

33 And beneath, ⁹upon the hem of it, thou shalt make ¹⁰pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and ¹¹bells of gold between them round about.

34 A ¹²golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about.

35 And it shall be upon Aaron, to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he ¹³goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, ¹⁴that he die not.

d Lev. 8:8. Num. 27:21. Deut. 33:8. Judg. 1:1. 20:18. 23:27. 1 Sam. 23:9-12. 28:6. 30:7. 8. Ezra 2:64. Neh. 7:65. e Zech. 6:13. 14 Cor. 6:11. 12. 7. 3. 12:13. Phil. 1:7. Heb. 2:17. 4:15. 9:12. 24. g 4:28. 39:22. Lev. 8:7. h 39:22. 2 Chr. 26:14. Neh. 4:16. Job 41:26. i John 19:23. 24. Eph. 4:3-16. k 39:24-26. * Or, skirt. l 1 Kings 7:18. 2 Kings 25:17. m Zech. 14:20. n Is. 89:15. Cant. 2:5. 4:3. 13. 6:7. 11. o 39:30. Lev. 9:10. 10:3. 12:3. Is. 38:5. Ez. 48:12. Zech. 14:20. P See on 5:11. q 39:30. Lev. 9:10. 10:3. 12:3. Is. 38:5. Ez. 48:12. Zech. 14:20. R Heb. 7:26. 12:14. 1 Pet. 1:15. 16. 2:9. r See on 28. s 4:29. 39:30. 31. Lev. 8:

however the high-priest, as Israel's representative, wearing the breastplate, inquired for the ruler and congregation of Israel, what they ought to do; he was illuminated and instructed to give perfect counsel in the most difficult cases. Various opinions are also formed concerning the manner in which these answers were given; but only two seem at all probable: either the high-priest was answered by an audible voice from above the mercy-seat within the veil, or he was inspired as a prophet, to declare the will of God on the occasion. It is evident that none but the high-priest was authorized to inquire of God in this manner; and he only at the tabernacle, in the holy place without the inner veil: but some instances, hereafter to be considered, render it probable, that on particular occasions, the Lord answered inquiries made in this manner, at a distance from the tabernacle. (1 Sam. 14:18, 36, 37. 23:1-12.)—The Jewish writers say, that this method of inquiring the will of God was terminated, when Solomon had built the temple; and it is certain, that little is afterwards recorded concerning it; but it seems rather to have fallen into disuse, because the high-priests in general neglected their duty; and the prophets, as extraordinary messengers of God, were appointed to supersede them. It however finally ceased at the captivity; till Christ, the great Antitype, arose, as a Priest with Urim and Thummim, who communicates to his true Church, from his treasury of divine wisdom and grace, through his word, and by his Spirit, all wisdom, knowledge, and righteousness, and every perfect gift, in measure sufficient for every emergency. And as the Urim and Thummim were on Aaron's heart, whenever he entered the sanctuary to inquire the will of God; and he never approached the Lord in this manner, on his own personal concerns, as distinct from those of his people, but as "bearing the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart continually," so Christ "appears in the presence of God for us," and ever bears the interests of his whole church and of every believer on his heart, in his unremitting intercession for us.

V. 31-35. The robe of the ephod was the middle garment, which was worn under the ephod, and above the coat, (39.) It had a hole through which the head passed when it was put on; and it seems to have been formed carefully of one piece, that it should not be rent. This may remind us of Christ's coat "without a seam, woven from the top throughout," and which was not rent, but cast lots for by the soldiers; an emblem of his perfect uninterrupted obedience to the divine law, and of the unbroken harmony which ought to subsist in his church.—Upon the hem, or lowermost border of the robe, which is supposed to have reached to the ankles, were fixed artificial pomegranates, which were richly dyed, though the rest of the robe was entirely blue, and between every two of the pomegranates was fastened a golden bell. It is not said how many there were of each; but it is much more probable that they accorded to the twelve tribes of Israel, than that there should be seventy-two, as some writers assure us.—These may represent the sound of divine truth, preached or professed, being joined with the precious fruits of holiness, in the ministers of the gospel and in true Christians; but it especially typified the glad tidings which Christ is anointed to preach, and the fragrant fruits of his priesthood which he confers upon his Church. The bells were also intended to give notice to the people when the high-priest entered into the most holy place, perhaps that they might join his ministrations within the sanctuary with their prayers. (Luke 1:10.) It is also added, "That he die not," which might expect to

36 ¶ And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and engrave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, ¹⁵HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

37 And thou shalt put it on ¹⁶a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre: upon the fore-front of ¹⁷the mitre it shall be.

38 And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may ¹⁸bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be ¹⁹accepted before the LORD.

39 And thou shalt ²⁰embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make ²¹the girdle of needlework.

40 ¶ And ²²for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and ²³bonnets shalt thou make for them, ²⁴for glory and for beauty.

41 And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him: and shalt ²⁵anoint them, and ²⁶consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may ²⁷minister unto me in the priest's office.

9. Zech. 3:5. t 43. Lev. 10:17. 22:9. Num. 18:1. Is. 53:6, 11, 12. Ez. 4:4-6. John 1:29. 2 Cor. 5:21. Heb. 9:28. 1 Pet. 2:24. 3:18. u Lev. 1:4. 22:27. 28:11. Is. 53:7. v See on 4. x See on 4. a Ps. 45:14. b 4. 39:27-29. 41. Lev. 8:13. Ez. 41:17. c 29:9. d See on 2. 1 Tim. 2:9. 10. 6:3-11. 7:1. 27:10. 1 Pet. 3:4. 5:5. e 29:7. 30:23-30. 40:15. Lev. 10:7. 16. 10:27. 61:1. John 3:34. 2 Cor. 1:21. 22. 1 John 2:20. 27. f 29:9. 35. Lev. 8:7. 33. Num. 3:3. Ez. 43:26. Heb. 7:28. † Heb. fill their hand. 29:24. g See on 1, 4.

do, if he did not act according to the prescribed rules, in this sacred and typical interposition between sinners and a holy God.

V. 36-38. The mitre was made of fine linen, rolled up, not much unlike the turbans worn at this day in the eastern countries, as the original name evidently indicates. (כִּנְיָה, אֶבֶן *vertere, volveri, circumdare*.) On this crown, or turban, was fastened, by a blue riband or lace, passed through it and tying behind, a plate of fine gold, beaten into the form of a leaf, or one of the petals of a beautiful flower, and rendered as bright as possible; for so the word seems to mean. On this plate were engraven the Hebrew words קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, signifying HOLINESS TO THE LORD; and it was placed on the mitre exactly over the high-priest's forehead, so that every one whom he faced might read the inscription. This was suited to remind him of the sanctity of his office and character, as the typical mediator between JEHOVAH and his people; and so especially required to be in all respects devoted in holiness to the service of a holy God: and to warn him neither to disgrace, nor attempt to conceal, his sacred function. It likewise instructed the people to honour his person and ministrations.—In wearing constantly, when officiating as high-priest, this holy crown, he was also reminded that he "was to bear the iniquity of the holy things," which Israel offered to the Lord. If any thing was neglected, or done contrary to law, he must be answerable for it, and should therefore be circumspect; and their involuntary imperfections must be expiated by his typical services. In all this he represented our great High-Priest, whose perfect holiness, and voluntary dedication of himself in our behalf unto the Father, to fulfil his will and magnify his law by his obedience unto death, have prepared the way for his being "made to us Sanctification," by his Holy Spirit. Through the same he also "bears the iniquity of our holy things," and, by his prevailing intercession, renders our sinful persons and imperfect services acceptable to a holy God.

V. 39. We read before of an embroidered coat, but no particular directions were given how it was to be made. It is supposed to have been the innermost garment worn by the high-priest, having sleeves down to the wrists, made rather close to the body, but hanging loose, except as fastened by a girdle. It was made of fine linen, (as the mitre also was,) probably white, but curiously embroidered: and the girdle was not only embroidered, but dyed of various colours. (39: 29.) Some affirm likewise that it was made so long, as to reach many times round the body, like a sash; and to have ends hanging down almost to the ground, which, when employed, the high-priest threw across his shoulder. (Rev. 1:13.)

V. 40, 41. The coats and girdles of the ordinary priests are thought to have been made, in all respects, like those of the high-priest: but the bonnets worn on their heads were different from his crown or tiara, as another word is used: (מִנְיָה) but the precise difference is not certainly known. They too had ephods, but of plain white linen; and the breastplate, the robe of the ephod, and the golden crown inscribed HOLINESS TO THE LORD, were peculiar to the high-priest. Yet the garments of the ordinary priests were made "for them for glory and for beauty," as well as his. They typified the glorious and beautiful holiness of Christ, our great High-Priest, which is communicated to all the royal priesthood of his true disciples: and, while it required great care in the priests to keep their garments pure and white, they were reminded of the holiness which they ought diligently to observe

42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness: from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.

43 And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die. *It shall be* a statute for ever unto him, and his seed after him.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The ceremonies and sacrifices to be used in consecrating the priests and the altar, 1—37. The daily oblation, 38—41. Gracious promises, 42—46.

AND this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish,

2 And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened

*b 20:26, 39:28, Lev. 6:10, Ez. 44:18, Rev. 18:16, 15; * Heb. flesh of their nakedness, 1 Heb. 6:1, Lev. 5:1, 17, 20:10, 29:32, Num. 6:13, 18:32, Matt. 22:12, 13, k 21:21, Lev. 17:7, a 21:20, 28:41, Matt. 6:9, b See on 23:3, c Lev. 8:2, 9:3, 16:3, 2 Chr. 13:9, d 12:5, Lev. 8:3, 5:15, 16:6, 22:30, Mal. 1:13, 14, Heb. 7:28, 11:1, 19, e See on 12:8, Lev. 2:4, 6:2—22, 2, 1 Cor. 5:7, 7, 23, Lev. 2:13, 15, 7:10, Num. 6:15, g Lev. 7:12, 8:26, Num. 6:15, 19.*

in all their conduct.—It is said by the Jewish expositors, that these garments were never washed; but when soiled, they were used for other purposes about the sanctuary, and supplied by new ones.—The particulars of the arraying, anointing, and consecrating Aaron and his sons, will hereafter be considered.

V. 42, 43. The indecencies attending the worship of idols, were strongly protested against by the care taken to avoid every approach to them, and every accidental appearance of them, in the ministration of the priests of the true God. They were therefore required to wear linen breeches, or drawers, at all times, when they officiated at the sanctuary; though it does not appear that the Israelites in general wore any other than loose garments, according to the general custom of the east to this day. And it seems especially with reference to this part of the priestly clothing, that the concluding caution was given: if they were negligent in this matter, they would bear iniquity and die; for this was "a statute for ever to Aaron and his sons," that is, perpetually, as long as that priesthood endured. This was suited to impress both priests and people with a sense of the holiness of God and their own sinfulness; and to show that he would be sanctified by all who approached him, especially by his priests.—As no shoes or sandals are mentioned among the sacred vestments, it is supposed that the priests always ministered barefoot; for Moses was ordered to pull off his shoes, when the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush. (*Note*, 3:4, 5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Blessed be God, that we have such a High-Priest as is in this chapter typically delineated: one solemnly appointed by God and consecrated to his work; furnished for his high office by the glory of his divine majesty, and the beauty of perfect holiness; who bears the names of all his people upon his shoulders, and upon his heart, presenting them and all their several cases before the Father in heaven, and ever living, by his continual intercession, to apply the salvation which his sacrifice has purchased: in whom are ILLUMINATIONS AND PERFECTIONS, even inexhaustible treasures of wisdom and grace, to be communicated to them; who, himself HOLINESS TO THE LORD, is made Sanctification to his people, that they may be "holiness unto the LORD also," in their measure in this world, perfectly in that to come. Happy are we, if we are so well instructed in the spirituality of the divine law, the evil of sin, and our own sinfulness, as to be deeply convinced that "such a High-Priest became us;" that we can have no access to a holy God, nor acceptance with him, but by Jesus Christ; no light, no wisdom, no perfection but from him; no glory nor beauty, but in conformity to him. If this be our judgment and experience, let us take encouragement from the power, love, and compassion of our High-Priest to the meanest of his people, "to draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Yet, "let us have grace to worship him with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire;" not forgetting, that garments were at first necessary to hide the shame of our fallen parents; that when we use them for ostentation we glory in our shame; that they who prefer ornament to modesty are still more basely criminal; and that this vanity and indecency is most of all abominable in the courts of the Lord. Let us then make a bold and consistent profession of our devotedness to God, and be careful to adorn it by the fruits of righteousness in our lives; making Christ our Counsellor, by whom we may inquire of the Lord, and learn his truth and will, that we may be wise-hearted for every service to which he shall appoint us. By daily meditating upon his word, let us endeavour, "with open face," as in a glass, so to behold his glory, that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.—Clothed in his righteousness for glory and for beauty, who in his death hath borne the iniquity of our holings, let us, through him, as his "spiritual priests," offer unto God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving

tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of wheaten flour shalt thou make them.

3 And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams.

4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.

5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod.

6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.

7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him.

b Lev. 8:2, 25:31, Num. 6:17, 126:36, 40:23, Lev. 8:3—6, k 30:18—21, 40:12, Lev. 8:6, 14:8, Deut. 23:11, Ez. 36:25, John 13:9—10, Psh. 5:26, Th. 3:5, Heb. 10:22, 1 Pet. 3:21, Rev. 1:5, 1 See on 2:4, Lev. 8:7, 8, m See on 2:26—39, Lev. 8:9, n 2:41, 30:23—31, Lev. 8:10—12, 10:7, 21:10, Num. 35:25, Ps. 89:20, 133:2, Is. 61:1, John 3:34, 1 John 2:27.

thanks unto his name;" and let us see to it, that "our loins are girt about with truth;" that we wear the breastplate of righteousness, and that we "are sober, and hope to the end;" for "blessed are those servants, whom their Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 1—7. Directions having been given, about making the sacred garments for Aaron and his sons; the manner of their consecration to the priesthood is next prescribed. Though appointed by office to expiate the sins of the people by the typical sacrifices; they must be reminded that they themselves likewise were sinners, and needed an expiation; a young bullock therefore, (or rather bull,) for a sin-offering, a ram for a burnt-offering, and a ram of consecration as a peace-offering; and bread, cakes tempered with oil, and wafers anointed with oil, all unleavened, for a meat-offering, were first prepared. The distinguishing nature and meaning of the several kinds of sacrifice, with the manner in which they were offered and used, will hereafter be considered.—This preparation having been made, and the meat-offering in a basket, as well as the young bull and the two rams, brought to the door of the tabernacle; Moses, who would officiate as priest on this occasion, was directed to bring Aaron and his sons to the same place, and there to wash them with water. Probably, they were at that time washed all over, though on many other occasions they only washed their hands and feet. Moses was then directed to clothe Aaron with the sacred garments; completing the whole, by "putting the holy crown upon the mitre." (*Note*, 28:36—38.) The golden plate, inscribed HOLINESS TO THE LORD, being called "the holy crown," not only showed how honourable Aaron's office was, but further intimated that the High-Priest, whom he typified, would also be a King; and there seems to be a reference to the two words, used for this plate of gold, in the former chapter and here, when the Psalmist says of the Messiah, "Upon himself shall his crown flourish." (*Ps.* 132:18.) for in the original both the words are used.—When Aaron had been thus arrayed, Moses was directed to anoint him with the sacred oil, the composition of which is afterwards prescribed, which being poured on his head, "ran down to his beard," and "even to the skirts of his raiment;" or, as some with probability suppose the word to mean, the upper border of his raiment, that fastened round his neck. (*Note*, *Ps.* 133:2.)—In all this, Aaron was evidently a type of Christ. He indeed, being without sin, was not admitted to his sacerdotal office by atoning sacrifices; but, being "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," he submitted to be baptized by John, before he entered on his sacred work; which ordinance in its general use denoted the washing away of the pollution of sin, as the washing of the priests also did. We have seen that the sacred garments likewise typified his endowments and qualifications for his High Priesthood: and he was also anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure, not for himself only, but for all his people.—The ceremonies of this consecration seem, likewise, to denote the admission of sinners into the spiritual priesthood, to offer "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." They must be washed in regeneration; clothed in that righteousness, which is upon all them that believe; anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit; and have an interest in the one great Sacrifice for sin, before they can glorify God as his holy priesthood, or rejoice in their own invaluable privileges.

V. 8, 9. The sons of Aaron, when they had been washed with water, needed only to be arrayed with the garments prescribed for them; for they were not anointed on the head with the sacred oil, which was peculiar to the high-priest. The words rendered "consecrate," literally mean fill the hands. Probably this was done by putting the sacrifice into their hands, to be waved before the Lord. The ministers of God have their hands filled, when they enter upon their office; and will continue to have their hands full of work of one sort or another, if they duly seek for it and attend to it: but far

8 And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them.

9 And thou shalt gird them with girdles, (Aaron and his sons,) and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.

10 And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock.

11 And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

12 And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar.

13 And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul that is above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and burn them upon the altar.

14 But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: it is a sin-offering.

15 ¶ Thou shalt also take one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.

16 And thou shalt slay the ram, and thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle it round about upon the altar.

17 And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put them unto his pieces, and unto his head.

18 And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a burnt-offering unto the Lord: it is a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

19 ¶ And thou shalt take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.

20 Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

21 And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

22 Also thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and the right shoulder; for it is a ram of consecration:

23 And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, out of the basket of the unleavened bread, that is before the Lord.

24 And thou shalt put all in the hands of

o 28:40, 41. Lev. 9:13. * Heb. bind. p 28:1. Num. 16:10, 35, 40. 18:7. Heb. 5:4. 5:10. 7:11-14. 1 Heb. fill the hand of. 28:41, 32, 29. marg. Lev. 8:26-28. Heb. 7:23-28. q 1. r 15:19. Lev. 1:4. 3:2. 8:14, 13. 16:21. Is. 53:6. 2 Cor. 5:21. s Lev. 14:5. 8:15. 9:8, 12. t See on 4. Lev. 1:3. u Lev. 8:15. 9:9. 16:14, 18, 19. Heb. 9:13, 14, 22. 10:4. x 27:2. 3:2. 38:2. y Lev. 4:7, 15, 25, 30, 34. 5:9. 9:9. z 22. Lev. 3:3, 4, 9, 10, 14, 16. 4:3, 9, 28, 31, 35. 6:12. 7:3, 21. Ps. 22:14. Is. 1:11. 34:6. 43:24. a Lev. 8:16, 25. 9:10, 19. 1 Or. midriff. b 18:25. Lev. 1:9, 15, 16. 25:17. Num. 15:17. 1 Sam. 2:16. c Lev. 4:11, 12, 21. 8:17. 16:27. Heb. 13:11. 13. d 30:10. Lev. 4:3, 25, 29, 32. 5:6, 8. 6:25. 9:2. 16:3, 11. Num. 7:16. 2 Chr.

29:21. Ezra 8:35. e 8:19. Lev. 8:18-21. f See on 10. g See on 11, 12. h Lev. 1:9, 13. 8:21. 9:14. Lev. 4:14. Matt. 23:26. i Or. upon. j Gen. 22:7, 13. Lev. 9:24. 1 Sam. 7:9. 1 Kings 3:4. 18:38. Ps. 50:8. Is. 1:11. Jer. 6:20. 7:21, 22. Mark 12:33. Heb. 10:6-10. k Gen. 8:21. Lev. 1:17. Eph. 5:2. Phil. 4:18. k 3. Lev. 8:22-29. l See on 10. m Lev. 14:1. Is. 50:5. Mark 7:33. n Lev. 14:7, 16. 16:11, 15, 19. Is. 7:15. Heb. 9:19-23. 10:22. 12:91. 1 Pet. 1:2. o 7:1. 20:25-30. Lev. 8:9. 14:15-15, 22. Ps. 134:2. Is. 11:2-3. 61:1-3. p See on John 17:19. Heb. 9:22. 10:29. q 13. Lev. 8:25-27. r Lev. 9:9. 7:3. 9:19. s Lev. 7:32, 33. 9:21. 10:14. Num. 18:18. t 2, 3. u Lev. 8:27.

more covet the emolument or honour of the ministry, than its work. Indeed, the case is the same with all Christians: each may have his hands filled with work, if his heart be disposed to do it. (Mark 13:34.)

V. 10, 11. "Putting the hands on the head" of the sin-offering, not only implied the surrender of it as an oblation to God; but also, and especially, it denoted a confession of guilt, which was thus typically transferred to the sacrifice that it might be expiated by it; so that the priests thus acknowledged themselves deserving of death, and that they could not offer sacrifices for others, unless the Lord first accepted their sin-offering, and forgave their transgressions.—Moses, as priest on this extraordinary occasion, slew the several sacrifices; though in ordinary cases the offerers themselves might slay them. (Notes, Lev. 1:4-9.)

V. 12 When Moses had slain the bull for a sin-offering, he was required to apply part of the blood with his finger to the four horns of the altar of burnt-offering; and then to pour all the remainder at the bottom of it, where no doubt there was a trench, by which whatever was redundant might be carried off. Thus the altar itself must first be sanctified, by sacrifice and blood, before it could sanctify the gift: for every creature of God on earth has been so polluted by man's sin, that none is meet to be set apart for his immediate service, till purged with blood: and all the ministrations of sinners are so defiled, that the best would condemn them, even their most solemn sacrifices, unless sprinkled with the blood of Christ. This was evidently intended to teach the Israelites the holiness of God, the defiling nature of sin, their own sinfulness, and their need of the promised Saviour, who should "take away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

V. 13, 14. According to the law of the sin-offering, afterwards given, (Notes, Lev. 4:3-11.) all the fat of this bull was directed on this occasion, as by anticipation, to be burnt on the altar; but the flesh, skin, and dung, were to be burned with a strong fire, (the word is altered,) without the camp. It should be observed, that the fat, which the Israelites always burnt on the altar, was not what is blended with the flesh in every part of the body; but the suet and loose inward fat. When an animal is opened, the several intestines appear covered with fat, which forms an integument both suited to keep them separate, and to preserve a proper warmth. These integuments, and the suet with the kidneys covered by it, are evidently meant in all the passages in which this is instituted, though learned men have differently explained the terms used on the subject.—The flesh of the other sin-offerings, the blood of which was not carried into the sanctuary, was eaten by the priests; but this was the sin-offering of the priests, who could neither bear nor atone for their own sins. In this incipient state therefore of the Levitical priesthood, though the blood was not carried into the holy place, (the high-priest not being yet fully authorized to perform that service,) the flesh was burned without the camp as it was after-

wards appointed in respect of the sin-offerings for the high-priest, congregation, or ruler, the blood of which was carried into the holy place.—The word rendered "sin-offering" is merely *sin*; "It is *sin*." This implied, that it must be treated with abhorrence and consumed by the fire, which represented the justice of God, as if it were *sin* itself; and the expression helps to explain the apostle's energetic language in the following passage, as also other similar passages in the New Testament: "Christ was made *Sin* for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him."

V. 15-18. One of the rams, before-mentioned, was directed to be offered as "a burnt-offering," with the ceremonies in that case prescribed. (Notes, Lev. 1.) Every sacrifice of innocent useful animals, implied the sinfulness of the offerers, and prefigured the vicarious sufferings of the Holy Jesus: the priests therefore were required to lay their hands on the head of the ram for a burnt-offering, and even on that of consecration, (as well as on that of the young bull for a sin-offering,) implying the translation of their guilt to the animal about to be sacrificed. The whole of the blood was to be sprinkled about the altar; or as some suppose, poured on the altar round about, to be consumed by the fire along with the flesh. The entire animal, except the skin, being burnt, no separation was made between the loose fat and the intestines; but the whole, being previously well cleansed, was laid, with the flesh and the head, on the altar. In connexion with the typical import, this sacrifice denoted the offerer's profession of unreserved devotedness, in body and soul, to the service of God, according to the duties to which he was called.

V. 19-21. "The ram of consecration" was evidently a sacrifice of peace-offering, though presented on a particular occasion. (Notes, Lev. 3.) With reference to this occasion, part of the blood was applied, not as that of the sin-offering to the horns of the altar, but to Aaron and his sons; to the tips of their right ears, the thumbs of their right hands, and the great toes of their right feet: implying their obligation to hearken diligently to the word of God, to do his work in the best manner which they could, and to walk in his ways with steady perseverance; and also, that they could not do these things acceptably, except through the atoning blood received and applied by faith. Then part of the blood reserved upon the altar, probably in a basin for that purpose, was mingled with the holy anointing oil, and sprinkled on the garments both of Aaron and his sons, to hallow them to the Lord. "This may be looked upon as a lively representation of our purification by the blood of Jesus Christ, and by his Holy Spirit." *BP. Patrick*. We may add, that these always go together. (Notes, Rom. 6:16-19. 12:1.)

V. 22-28. In ordinary peace-offerings of the herd, the fat alone was burnt on the altar; but of sheep the rumps also, which are often exceedingly large and fat in those countries; and in this particular case, the right shoulder, with a portion

Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and shalt wave them for a wave-offering before the Lord.

25 And thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn them upon the altar for a burnt-offering, for a sweet savour before the Lord; it is an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

26 And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave it for a wave-offering before the Lord: and it shall be thy part.

27 And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave-offering, and the shoulder of the heave-offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up of the ram of the consecration, even of that which is for Aaron, and of that which is for his sons.

28 And it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever, from the children of Israel: for it is an heave-offering: and it shall be an heave-offering from the children of Israel, of the sacrifice of their peace-offerings, even their heave-offering unto the Lord.

29 ¶ And the holy garments of Aaron shall he and his sons after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them.

30 And that son, that is priest in his stead, shall put them on seven days when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy place.

31 ¶ And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seeth his flesh in the holy place.

32 And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh

of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

33 And they shall eat those things, wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy.

34 And if aught of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning; then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

35 And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all things which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them.

36 And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering, for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it to sanctify it.

37 Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar and sanctify it: and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.

38 ¶ Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day continually.

39 The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even.

40 And with the one lamb a tenth-deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil: and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink-offering.

* Heb. shake to and fro. v. 25, 27. Lev. 7:30, 9:11, 10:14. y Lev. 7:29—31, 8:28. Ps. 98:5, z Sacerd. 18, a 41. Lev. 1:9, 13:2, 9:16, 13:3, 9:5, 9:11, 14:16, 7:35, 10:13, 1 Sam. 2:28, b Lev. 7:35—34, 8:29, 2:21, 10:15, Num. 6:20, 18:18, 19, c 23, 24. Lev. 7:37, 8:28—31, d Lev. 7:32—31, 10:14, 15, Deut. 18:3, e 27. Lev. 7:14, Num. 15:19, 20, 18:24, 28, 31, 29, 41, f Lev. 3:7, 11, & c. g 28, 3, 4, h Num. 20:26—28, i 5—7, 30, 30, 40, 15, Lev. 8:7—12, Num. 18:8, 35:25, i Heb. he of his sons. Heb. 7:26, k 35, 12:15, iien. 8, 10, 12, Lev. 8:33—35, 12:2, 13:5, Josh. 6:14, 15, Ez. 43:25, Acts 26:7, l 1, 2, 20, 27, m Lev. 8:31, 1 Sam. 2:13, 15, Ez. 46:20—24, n 24, 9—11, Lev. 10:12—14, o 2, 23, 29, p Lev. 10:16—18, Ps. 22:28, John 6:53—55, 1 Cor. 11:24, 25, q Lev. 22:10—13, Num. 1:51, 3:10, 38, 16:40, 18:4, 7, r Num. 16:5, s 22, 25, 28.

of each part of the meat-offering, having been first put into the hands of Aaron and his sons, to be waved by them, were presented by Moses, as a burnt-offering to the Lord, and laid on the altar with the fat. From this circumstance, the sacrifice was called "the ram of consecration," or of fillings, as the hands of Aaron and his sons were first filled with these parts of it, before they were presented to God; implying, that they did not set themselves to work, but undertook their sacred services by his express direction. The breast of the ram having been waved by Moses himself, was allotted to him, as priest, for his portion of the peace-offering. In other instances, however, after Aaron and his sons had been fully initiated in their office, both the right shoulder and the breast of every peace-offering were allotted to the priests.—The heaving these parts of the sacrifices upwards towards heaven, and the waving of them to the right hand and left, or to the four quarters of the globe, implied, that they were thus dedicated to the God of heaven and of all the earth; and were then used by his priests as given by him to them: and perhaps the right shoulder and the breast being thus presented, might intimate, that the priests and offerers also should devote themselves to the service of God, with all their power, and with their whole heart.

Consecration. (26) והקדשם, from קדש to be full, or to fill. (Note, 8, 9.)

V. 29, 30. On this occasion, another general law was given, respecting the appointment of one of Aaron's sons, at his death, for his successor in the high priesthood; who must be clothed in the sacred vestment of his father, that he might be anointed and consecrated in them; and must put them on seven days before he performed the peculiar functions of the high-priest; in order that he might be habituated to the dress, and have time to learn what was necessary to a due performance of these sacred services.

V. 31—34. The remainder of the ram of consecration, with that of the meat-offering, was to be eaten by the priests, as their portion of their own peace-offering: but, as the occasion was peculiar, they must eat it in the court of the tabernacle and not elsewhere, for none, even of their families, might join with them in thus feasting before the Lord in his courts; and the residue must be burned, and not be kept till morning. In these particulars it was ordered differently from most other peace-offerings.

V. 35—37. The consecration of Aaron and his sons was to be continued for seven days, during which time a young bull for a sin-offering, according to the form before established, (Notes, 10—14.) was every day offered for atonement, (or rather atonements,) both for them and for the altar, which must thus be cleansed, (or expiated, as the word signifies,) and anointed, before it was fully consecrated as an altar. Some expositors are of opinion, that these seven days for the cleansing of the altar, were distinct from the seven days of

consecrating the priests; and that they preceded them, and attended the erection of the sanctuary by Moses. And they argue in favour of this opinion, that the purifying of the altar must have preceded all sacrificing upon it; but that Moses offered a burnt-offering and a meat-offering upon it, when he placed it in the court of the tabernacle. (40:29.) The language, however, here used, by no means admits of this construction: as the bull for atonement was offered on each of the days, in which Aaron and his sons were consecrated, and with the blood of these very bulls the altar was expiated. It seems evident that some things, in the first introduction of the Levitical ceremonial, must necessarily have come short of the exact regularity which it required when completed. Moses had never been consecrated to the priesthood, as Aaron was; yet he acted as priest during this interval: and can we wonder, if he sacrificed on the altar before it had been fully dedicated? When the burnt-offering was slain, he would put the blood on the horns of the altar, or sprinkle it round about; and this would be a sufficient confession, that all things, with which sinners have to do, need purging with atoning blood, when used in the service of a just and holy God. And when Aaron and his sons were consecrated, the more solemn expiation or dedication of the altar was carried on at the same time, and by the same sacrifices, from applying the blood of the first sin-offering to the horns of it, till it was finished on the seventh day. Then it was made an altar "most holy; whatsoever toucheth it should be holy." None but priests of Aaron's family might approach it: from that time Moses sacrificed no more, and every oblation presented at it was "holy to the Lord."

V. 38—41. When the priests had been fully consecrated, and the altar sanctified, two lambs of the first year must be offered daily, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon, as a burnt-offering. This observance might never on any account be omitted, whatever additional sacrifices were appointed for the sabbaths and solemnities, or presented on various occasions by the rulers, priests, or people; for it especially typified "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;" the constant efficacy of his one all-sufficient atonement; and our continual need of it, in all our approaches unto a holy God. It likewise taught the people, that God must be worshipped every day continually, morning and evening at least, with prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving, and not only on sabbaths and solemn festivals: and that this should be considered as a sacred feast, to which they were admitted, and in which the Lord condescended to meet with them.—To render this idea of communion with God more familiar to their minds, the several particulars requisite to a feast accompanied the sacrifice; especially bread and wine, in the form of a meat-offering and a drink-offering.—The word rendered "tenth-deal" means a tenth that is, of an ephah, or about three quarts

41 And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

42 This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.

43 And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.

44 And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office.

45 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.

46 And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God.

1 Kings 18:29-36, Ezra 6:4, Ps. 111:2, Ez. 46:13-15, Dan. 9:21, 129:8, Num. 26:6, Dan. 10:12, 12:11, m 25:22, 30:6, 36; Lev. 1:1, Num. 17:4, * 7:4, 1 Kings 8:11, 2 Chr. 5:14, 7:1-3, 1s 6:1-3, 60:1, Ez. 43:5, Hag. 2:7-9, Mal. 3:1, 2 Cor. 3:18, 4:6, 1 John 3:2, Rev. 21:22, 23, 6:1, 21:2, 32:9, 16, John 10:36, Rev. 1:5, 6, 15:17, 25:8, Lev. 26:12, Pa. 68:18, Zech. 2:10, John 14:17, 23, 2 Cor. 6:16, Eph. 2:22, Rev. 21:3, q See on 20:2, Jer. 31:33.

being the same as an omer. A hin contained the sixth part of an ephah, or about five quarts wine-measure. So that about three quarts of fine flour, mixed up with a quart and half a pint of the very best oil, was morning and evening burned upon the altar, along with the lamb of the daily sacrifice; and a quart and half a pint of wine was poured as a libation upon it. The whole of this oblation, both in its typical import, as an act of solemn worship, and as denoting the gracious communion of the Lord with his people, was "a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD." (*Marg. Ref. Note, Gen. 8:20-22.*)

V. 42-46. The continual burnt-offering must be sacrificed nowhere except at the door of the tabernacle. The word rendered "the congregation," here, and in very many places, undoubtedly refers to the LORD's meeting with the people, and not to their assembling together at the tabernacle: for the reason of the name is expressly and particularly shown. So long as the atoning sacrifice was daily offered, the Lord promised to meet his people at the tabernacle in mercy. There he intended to meet Moses, and deliver to him, doubtless in an audible voice, all the remaining parts of the law. And there he would likewise meet Israel, and the nation (rather than the tabernacle, *marg.*) should be sanctified as a holy people, by the Lord's glory manifested to them and put upon them. Thus he would likewise sanctify the tabernacle, the altar, and the priests, by his glorious presence, and by especially appropriating them to his own worship, that he might dwell among the children of Israel, as their King, their Protector, and their God; communicating all blessings to them, and accepting their persons and services, through these institutions; which were shadows of the good things to come, by which all the true Israel of God are indeed sanctified as his redeemed people, that he may dwell among them, as the LORD their God, for evermore.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Blessed be God, our High-Priest is not altogether like the high-priests of the family of Aaron.—He indeed is solemnly set apart to his office, and has "his hands filled;" for he has the interest of all his people to maintain, and their cause to plead; and all power and authority in heaven and earth are given unto him for that purpose: he is also clothed with majesty and honour, and has not only the holy anointing, but the fulness of the Spirit treasured up in him. He however needed not to offer any sacrifices for himself; and by one single sacrifice he hath fully atoned for all the sins of all his people, through all generations, and opened for them the gates of heavenly felicity. There could be no occasion, in his case, to prescribe rules for the appointment of his successor: because "he hath an unchangeable priesthood, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us." Yet is he at the same time, our Sin-offering, our Peace, our Altar, yea, our true Tabernacle, in which "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—Here the righteous Lord meets, and blesses, and sanctifies his people by his glory; and there they meet him, and present themselves as living sacrifices, while they offer him "the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to his name."—"Truly," may every real Christian say, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." But are we of that number? Do we wash our souls, as humble penitents, "in the Fountain which he hath opened for sin and for uncleanness?" Do we present ourselves to God, day by day, arrayed in the priestly garments of Christ's righteousness, trusting only in his merits, and not at all in ourselves or in our services, for acceptance with God? Are we anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit, purifying our hearts from the love of sin, and shedding abroad in them the

CHAPTER XXX.

Directions concerning the altar of incense, 1-10; the half shekel of ransom-money, 11-16; the brazen laver, 17-21; the holy anointing oil, 22-33; and the incense, 34-38.

AND thou shalt make "an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim-wood shalt thou make it."

2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, four-square shall it be; and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same.

3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof: and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.

4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.

5 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.

6 And thou shalt put it before the veil, that is by the ark of the testimony; before the mercy-

r Lev. 11:44, 18:30, 19:2, Ez. 20:5, a 37:25-28, 40:5, Lev. 4:7, 18, 1 Kings 6:20, 2 Chr. 26:16, Rev. 8:3, b See on 27:2, c 25:11, 24, * Heb. roof, † Heb. walls, d 25:12, 14, 27, 28, 29, 37, 4, 7, † Heb. ribs, e 25:13, 27, † 28:31-35, 40, 3:5, 26, Matt. 27:51, Heb. 9:3, 4, g 25:21, 22, Lev. 16:13, 1 Chr. 28:11, Heb. 4:16, 9:5.

love of God? Do we, as confessing our sins and exercising faith, lay our hands upon the head of the great Sacrifice? And are our hearts and "consciences purged, by his blood, from dead works to serve the living God?" and our bodies presented, not as a burnt-offering, but as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God; whilst the members of them, which once were instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, are now made instruments of righteousness unto him? Do we maintain daily communion with him, presenting our morning and evening sacrifice of secret and family worship, acceptable through the atonement of "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world?" And are our hands filled with his work, and our time and talents offered to the Lord as a wave-offering, and improved to his glory? Is this the sincere intention and desire of our hearts, all the day long? Alas! how little do the most of professing Christians know of this spiritual consecration unto God through Christ Jesus! yet all else is but the name and the form: this, and nothing less than this, is the religion of the "royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, whom he hath called out of darkness into marvellous light, to show forth his praise." Let us not then rest in any thing short of it, but press forward to this mark: then will God speak to us in his word, meet us in his ordinances, make himself known to us as our God and Saviour, and fill our hearts with his holy consolations.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1-6. The altar of incense was made, like the ark of the covenant, of shittim-wood covered with plates of gold. It was something more than half a yard square, and above a yard in height; and from the four corner posts arose four horns, or pinnacles, which were covered with plates of gold. It was surrounded on the top with a cornice of solid gold, underneath which were placed two golden rings, probably on two opposite corners, for the convenience of carrying it on staves, during the marches of Israel in the wilderness, and afterwards when removed to different places in Canaan!—This altar, and the incense burned on it, typified the Son of God, in our nature, making intercession for us; as the altar of burnt-offering and its oblations, typified his sacrifice. The former was therefore placed within the sanctuary, the latter in the court without; for his sacrifice was offered on earth, his intercession is in heaven. But it was not put in the most holy place; because the continual intercession of Christ was represented by the other priests, as well as the high-priest, daily burning incense upon it morning and evening. It was therefore placed without the veil, but nearer to it than the table or the candlestick; and in the centre of the tabernacle, directly over against the ark, except as the veil was between.

V. 7, 8. Aaron alone is here mentioned as burning incense on the altar; but it is generally agreed, that not only succeeding high-priests, but also the ordinary priests in their courses, performed this service. (*Notes, Luke 1:5-10.*) When Aaron or his sons had offered the morning sacrifice, one of them went into the tabernacle, and on that occasion he trimmed and ordered the lamps for the day, and perhaps cleansed and burnished the candlestick: he also burned incense on the golden altar, while the people were offering their prayers without. In the evening likewise, when the lamb had been sacrificed, the priest again entered the sanctuary, and both lighted the lamps and burned incense on the altar.—It is probable, that no more than one priest at a time entered the sanctuary to burn incense; and that if the high-priest were present, and had no impediment, he performed this service, at least in the first ages of the church of Israel. As the oil might be nearly burned out, and perhaps some of the lamps extinguished; it is here called lighting the lamps:

seat, that is over the testimony, where ^hI will meet with thee.

7 And Aaron shall burn thereon ⁱsweet incense every morning: when he ^jdresseseth the lamps he shall burn incense upon it.

8 And when Aaron ^klighteth the lamps ^lat even, he shall burn incense upon it; ^ma perpetual incense before the LORD, throughout your generations.

9 Ye shall offer no ⁿstrange incense thereon, nor burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering; neither shall ye pour drink-offering thereon.

10 And ^oAaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year, with the blood of ^pthe sin-offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it, throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.

11 ^qAnd the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 12 When thou ^rtakest the sum of the children of Israel, after ^stheir number; then shall they give every man ^ta ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them: that there be ^uno plague among them, when thou numberest them.

13 This they shall give every one that passeth among them that are numbered; half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs: ^v) ^wan half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD.

14 Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, ^xfrom twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD.

15 The ^yrich shall not ^zgive more, and the poor shall not ^{aa}give less than half a shekel, when they

give an offering unto the LORD, to make ^{ab}an atonement for your souls.

16 And thou shalt take the atonement-money of the children of Israel, and shalt ^{ac}appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, that it may be ^{ad}a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

17 ^{ae}And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 18 Thou shalt also make ^{af}a laver of brass, and his foot ^{ag}also of brass to wash ^{ah}withal; and thou shalt ^{ai}put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt ^{aj}put water therein.

19 For Aaron and his sons shall ^{ak}wash their hands and their feet ^{al}thereat.

20 When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they ^{am}die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD.

21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not; and it shall be ^{an}a statute for ever to them, ^{ao}even to him, and to his seed throughout their generations.

22 ^{ap}Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

23 Take thou also unto ^{aq}thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred ^{ar}shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, ^{as}even two hundred and fifty ^{at}shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty ^{au}shekels,

24 And of cassia five hundred ^{av}shekels, after ^{aw}the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil-olive an ^{ax}hin.

^h 36. 29:43. Num. 17:4. ⁱ Heb. *incense of spices*. 34-38. 127:20. 1 Sam. 2:28. 3:3. 1 Chr. 23:13. Luke 1:9. Acts 6:4. ^j Or, *setteth up*. Heb. *causeth to ascend*. 1 Chr. 1:1. ^k Heb. *between the two evens*. 12:6. marg. k Rom. 8:34. 1 Thes. 5:17. Heb. 7:93. 9:24. 1 Heb. 10:1. m 29:36, 37. Lev. 16:29, 30, 32-37. Heb. 1:3. 9: 22, 23. 1 Heb. 16:5, 6. o 33:23, 25. Num. 1:2-3. 26:2-4. 2 Sam. 21:2. ^p Heb. *thou shalt number them*. p Num. 31:50. 2 Chr. 24:6. Job 33:24. 36:18. Ps. 49: 7. Matt. 20:28. Mark 10:45. 1 Tim. 2:6. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. q 2 Sam. 24:13, 15. 1 Chr. 12:12, 14. 27:24. ^r Lev. 27:25. Num. 3:47. Ez. 45:12. ^s 38:26. Matt. 17: 24. Gr. t Num. 1:3, 18, 22. 14:21. 26:2. 32:11. u Job 34:19. Prov. 22:2. Eph.

6:9. Col. 3:25. ^t Heb. *multiply*. ^u Heb. *diminish*. x Lev. 17:11. Num. 31: 50. 2 Sam. 21:3. y 38:25-31. Neh. 10:32, 33. z See on 12:14. Num. 16:10. Luke 22:19. a 31:5. 38:8. 1 Kings 7:23, 38. 2 Chr. 4:2, 6, 14, 15. ^{aa} Zech. 13:1. ^{ab} Tit. 3:5. Gr. 1 John 1:7. b 40:7, 30-32. c 40:31, 32. Ps. 26:6. 1a 52:11. John 13:8-10. 1 Cor. 6:9-11. ^{ac} Tit. 3:5. Heb. 9:10. 10:22. Rev. 1:5, 6. d 1:15. Lev. 10:1-3. 16:1, 2. 1 Sam. 6:18. 1 Chr. 13:10. Ps. 89:7. Acts 5:5, 10. Heb. 12: 28, 29. e 28:45. f 37:29. Ps. 45:8. Prov. 7:17. Cant. 1:3, 13. 4:14. Jer. 6:20. Ez. 27:19, 22. g Num. 3:47. Ez. 45:12. h 29:40. Lev. 19:36. Num. 15:5.

and as Aaron and his sons were directed to "order them from evening to morning," we cannot suppose that they left them from the time of the evening sacrifice to the ensuing morning; but that the priest, whose office it was to burn incense, ordered them at that time, and that some other of the priests, in rotation, tended them during the rest of night. (*Note*, 27:20, 21).—The daily sacrifices represented the perpetual efficacy of Christ's atonement, and the burning of incense morning and evening typified his continual intercession for us; while the dressing and lighting of the lamps prefigured the preaching of the word, which could only be rendered effectual by that intercession, bringing down a blessing, in answer to the prayers of his people.—As no *grate* is mentioned in this altar, nor any thing said about cleaning it, expositors generally think, that a censer with coals was placed on it when incense was burnt.

V. 9, 10. Nothing except the incense afterwards described, might be offered on the golden altar: but once every year, on the great day of atonement, the high-priest must apply to the horns of it the blood of the sin-offering; to show that all the services performed at it needed purging with blood, to be accepted by a holy God. This denoted that the intercession of Christ in heaven derives all its efficacy from his sufferings on earth; and that we need no other sacrifice or intercessor but Christ only.

V. 11-16. The Israelites were twice numbered in the days of Moses, by divine command; and doubtless on both these occasions this law was observed. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) Indeed, the collecting of the half shekel, if exactly done, would itself be equivalent to numbering them.—Women and minors were exempted from the tax, not being numbered; and so were the Levites, as it is manifest from comparing the number of those who paid the tax, with the sum total of the congregation, besides the Levites. (38:26. Num. 1:46, 47.) Indeed it is probable, that the old men, who were incapable of war, were also exempted. (Num. 1:42, 45.) The shekel of the sanctuary, where the standard weight was kept, was nearly half an ounce troy-weight; so that the sum paid by each person was about fifteen pence.—This silver was at that time used for the sockets of the sanctuary, and for hooks for the curtains, and for plates, to fillet or cover the chapters of the pillars round the court. (*Note*, 38:26-28.) But it is probable, a similar assessment was made as often as necessary, being the same as was demanded of our Lord: (*Note*, Matt. 17:24-27.) and it was in general expended in purchasing sacrifices, wood, and other things, for the service of the sanctuary; or perhaps in repairs. Other contributions were voluntary, and proportioned to the ability or liberality of the offerer; but this was the ransom of the souls or lives

of the people, and the same sum was paid by every man, whether rich or poor; and if they refused to pay it, they could have no interest in the sacrifices, and might expect to be visited with the plague for their contempt. Some think that David's offence, in numbering the people, was enhanced, by his neglecting to raise this capitation tax. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. 24:).—The law implied that the souls of all are of equal value, equally forfeited, and equally in need of a ransom; Christ is equally proposed to all who hear the gospel, and all believers have an equal interest in him; but, without this interest in him, we can have no benefit from his sacrifice; and, instead of ransom for our souls, may expect additional vengeance for neglecting so great salvation. And though we can add nothing to the all-sufficient atonement of Christ, which is freely given without money and without price, to all who believe in him; yet we may, by our worldly substance, assist in maintaining the expenses of religious ordinances, which are *memorials* to us of the atonement made for our souls.

V. 18-21. The laver of brass was a large cistern, probably circular, in which was continually kept a quantity of water; and perhaps the *foot* was a circular vessel which received the water out of the cistern, by several cocks or spouts, for immediate use. For the priests, though washed at their consecration, were commanded, on pain of death, to wash their hands and feet every time they officiated, or at least every day; which intimated the continual guilt which they contracted in their daily employments and converse with the world. (*Note*, John 13:6-11.) But, besides this use, much water would be wanted for washing the sacrifices, the vessels, and other things about the sanctuary, in order to preserve the court clean and sweet, when so many animals were slaughtered, so much blood sprinkled and poured out, and so much fat and flesh consumed on the altar.—The laver was placed nearer to the door of the sanctuary than the altar was; and the Levites replenished it as often as it was necessary.

V. 22-33. The several spices here mentioned, being the very best of those kinds, which were most highly valued at that time, and amounting in all to a hundred and twenty pounds troy-weight, with about five quarts of oil of olive added to them, doubtless of the purest sort, were mixed into a rich and highly aromatic ointment, or oil, according to the methods used by the makers of unguents or perfumes. It is generally supposed that it still continued a *liquid*, and that the dreggy part of the spices was strained out of it.—With this holy oil, all the furniture belonging to the sanctuary was anointed. It was poured on the head of Aaron and his successors, when they were consecrated to the high priesthood; and, with the blood of the burnt-offering, it was sprinkled on the garments both of the high-priests, and of the other

25 And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary : it shall be an holy anointing oil.

26 And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony,

27 And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense,

28 And the altar of burnt-offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot.

29 And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy : whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.

30 And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

31 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me, throughout your generations.

32 Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it : it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.

33 Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.

34 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and

galbanum ; these sweet spices with pure frankincense : of each shall there be a like weight.

35 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together pure and holy.

36 And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee : it shall be unto you most holy.

37 And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof : it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.

38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Bezaleel and Aholiab are appointed and qualified to erect the tabernacle, and make the sacred furniture, 1-11. T. c. obsecration of the sabbath is enforced, 12-17. The tables of the law are delivered to Moses, 18.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.

4 To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

* Or, perfume, 1 Chr. 9:30. 1 Num. 35:25. Ps. 89:20. 133:2. Heb. 1:9. k 40:9-15. Lev. 8:10-12. Num. 7:1, 10. Is. 61:1. Acts 10:38. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. 1 John 2:20. 12:19, 27. Lev. 6:18. Matt. 23:17, 19. m 29:7. 40:15. Lev. 8:12, 30. Num. 3:3. n See on 28:3. 29:35. o 37:29. Heb. 8:12. 21:10. Ps. 89:20. p Lev. 21:10. Matt. 7:6. q Luke 12:1, 2. Heb. 10:32-39. r 29:33. s 12:13, 19. Gen. 17:12. 22:13. 26:1. 27:17. 31:13. 32:23. Num. 9:13. t 25:6. 37:29. u Lev. 2:1, 15. 5:

11. 24:7. 1 Chr. 9:29. Neh. 13:5. Cant. 3:6. Matt. 2:11. x Prov. 27:9. Cant. 1:3. 3:6. John 12:3. y Heb. saltd. Lev. 2:13. y See on 16:34. z 5. 23:22. 29:42, 43. Lev. 16:2. a 32:33. b 29:37. Lev. 2:3. c See on 33. a 33:12, 17. 35:30. Mark 3:16-19. John 3:27. b 37:1. 1 Chr. 2:19, 20. c 35:31. Is. 28:6. 26. 1 Cor. 12:4-11. d 25:32-35. 26:1. 28:15. 1 Kings 7:14. 2 Chr. 2:7, 13, 14.

riests, when admitted to their office. The anointing with this holy oil especially completed the consecration of the priests, and the dedication of the sanctuary and its furniture, as most holy ; and therefore it must not be used for any common purposes, or made by any other person, on peril of death.—It is indeed generally supposed that the kings of Judah were by the LORD's express appointment anointed with it : for it is reasonable to conclude, in opposition to Jewish traditions, that it was made, under the inspection of the high-priest, as often as it was wanted, which would frequently be the case in successive generations. This sacred oil or ointment typified the Holy Spirit, especially as given to our great High-Priest without measure ; and all his personal and mediatorial excellencies, as the "well beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased," and whose name is to the believer "as ointment poured forth." It also intimated, that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," not one of his holy priesthood ; and that we cannot attend on any divine ordinance, or officiate in any sacred service, acceptably or usefully, without his sanctifying influences.—The concluding prohibition reminds us, that hypocrisy which counterfeits, and profaneness which ridicules, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, brings swift destruction on the guilty ; and, in general, that Christ himself, and his holy gospel, are "a savour of death" to unbelievers. (Note, 2 Cor. 2:14-17.)

V. 34-38. The spices, or gums, of which this perfume, or incense, (for so the word is elsewhere rendered,) was composed, are not all certainly known ; because some of the words are seldom used in Scripture.—The stacte is supposed by the most approved commentators to have been the purest part of myrrh ; and the onycha, an odiferous shell, though some think it was the gum called Ladanum. The galbanum is thought to have been of a different sort from the gum called now by that name, the smell of which is very disagreeable. The frankincense is well known.—The word, rendered tempered together, signifies salted : (marg.) and it is supposed, that salt was mingled with the other ingredients ; as indeed it was used in every oblation. This incense being beaten small, was placed within the sanctuary, probably on the table ; that it might be ready for the priests to take and burn on the golden altar, before the testimony, or ark, as nothing but the veil interposed : (Note, 1-6.) for this daily burning of incense within the sanctuary was as necessary, in order to Israel's communion with God, as the daily sacrifices on the altar of burnt-offering.—Let the attentive reader compare the language used on these subjects, with the account of the giving of the moral law from Mount Sinai ; and study the difference, between a sinner meeting God as a Lawgiver and a Judge, and his coming before him on "a throne of grace," as a God of salvation, through the atonement and intercession of the great High-Priest of our profession. But they, who corrupt or pervert the doctrine of free mercy, to gratify their own carnal and sensual inclinations, and they who constitute other intercessors, alike violate the spirit of the annexed prohibition.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If men do not wilfully shut their eyes to the things which

are written in the word of God, they cannot but see in these ceremonial institutions, compared with the New Testament, that Jesus Christ is the grand Subject of the Scriptures ; and the sum of all true religion, as "made of God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption." To assert that the language of the New Testament concerning his priesthood, oblation, entrance into the holiest, and intercession for his people, were accommodations to these Old Testament rites, is to suppose that, in building the spiritual temple, the all-wise Architect, without any previous design, planned and formed a very intricate and unnecessary scaffolding, and then erected the building for the sake, and according to the pattern, of that scaffolding ! But "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." He first formed the plan of salvation in his own infinite mind, then showed as much of it as was needful to Moses in the mount ; and according to it this scaffolding was formed, for the sake of the intended building, which accordingly has since been erected exactly answerable to it.—From this chapter let us observe, that our duty, and our urgent wants call upon us daily to approach our Creator and Benefactor, with our thanksgivings and supplications ; but that we are not worthy to draw nigh in our own name, or in any other way than through the meritorious and prevailing intercession of the Son of God. Though we are without on earth, and he is ascended into heaven, and is out of our sight ; let us by faith behold him, and realize him to our minds, as ever living to receive and present our worship, perfumed with the sweet incense of his intercession, before the Father's mercy-seat for acceptance. We must therefore not be slack, infrequent or doubtful in our supplications : nay, we should ask abundantly and constantly, and expect copious blessings, that our joy may be full, and our God be glorified. Blessed be his name, the Priest, the sacrifice, the incense, and anointing oil, are all ready prepared to our hands, without any concurrence of ours ; but, if we know the value of this great salvation, we shall not grudge either time, labour, or expense, which the maintaining, or attending on, divine ordinances may require ; and it is to be feared that we have no interest in the sacrifice, if we hesitate to contribute. Nor should we forget, that the poor are as welcome to Christ as the rich ; and the rich as much in want of his ransom for their souls, as the poor : for, in this grand concern, no external distinctions make any difference, and all are alike bound to express their valuation of Christ and of his salvation. Even they who are washed, in their first conversion, from the sins of their past lives, and from prevailing sin in their hearts, have occasion for renewed repentance, forgiveness, and grace, from day to day ; and must still approach as sinners washed in the blood of Jesus, anointed by the Spirit, and pleading the Saviour's merits. But let us beware of attempting to render a religious profession subservient to our secular interests ; of treating heavenly things with irreverence or contempt ; or of gratifying our sinful inclinations under the pretence of Christian liberty : for these are most dangerous and fatal perversions of the gospel of Christ.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXI. V. 1-5. I cannot be sup-

5 And ⁱⁿ cutting of stones to set *them*, and in carving of timber to work in all manner of workmanship.

6 And I, behold, I have given with him ^{to} Aholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are ^{wise}-hearted I have put wisdom; that they may make all that I have commanded thee:

7 The ^{tabernacle} of the congregation, and the ^{ark} of the testimony, and the mercy-seat that is thereupon, and all the ^{furniture} of the tabernacle,

8 And ^{the} table and his furniture, and the ^{pure} candlestick with all his furniture, and ^{the} altar of incense,

9 And ^{the} altar of burnt-offering with all his furniture, and ^{the} laver and his foot,

10 And ^{the} cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office,

11 And ^{the} anointing oil, and ^{sweet} incense for the holy ^{place}: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do.

12 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel,

saying, ^{Verily} my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a ^{sign} between me and you, throughout your generations: ^{that} ye may know that I *am* the Lord, that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall ^{keep} the sabbath therefore: for it is holy unto-you. ^{Every} one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever ^{doeth} *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

15 ^{Six} days may work be done, but in the seventh is ^{the} sabbath of rest, ^{holy} to the Lord: ^{whosoever} doeth *any* work in the sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for ^a perpetual covenant.

17 It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* ^{six} days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and ^{was} refreshed.

18 ¶ And he ^{gave} unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with ^{the} finger of God.

• 28:9-21. (4:14, 15:6, 26. Exa 5:12. Ec. 4:9-12. Matt. 10:2-4. Luke 10:1. Acts 13:2. 15:39-40. g 36:1. h 28:3. 35:10, 25, 26, 36:8. i Kings 3:12. Jam. 1:5, 16:17. 126: 27:9-19. 36:8-28. k 23:10-22. 37:1-9. * Heb. g-a-ele. l 25:23-30. 37:10-16. m 25:31-40. 37:17-24. n 30:1-10. 37:25-28. o 27:1-8. 38:1-7. p 30:15-21. 38:8. 40:11. q 28: 39: 18:7, 8, 13. Num. 4:4-14. r 30:21-23. 37:29. s 30:34-38. t Ser. on 20:8-11. Lev. 15:3. 30. 23:3. 25:2. u 17. Ex. 20:12, 20. 44:24. v Lev. 20:8. 21:8. Ez. 37:28. John

17:17, 19. 1 Thes. 5:23. Jude 1. y Gen. 3:12-15. Neh. 9:14. Is. 54:2-6, 56:13. 14. z Is. 56:2, 6. Ez. 20:13, 16, 21, 24. o 25:23. b 17. He. 4. 44:24. 1 Cor. 23:3. Ez. 46:1. Luke 13:14. c 16:23. Lev. 23:3, 32. 1 Cor. 2:4. d 126: 106. Gen. 1:1. holiness. e Num. 15:32-36. Jer. 17:21-27. f 18. 17:11. Jer. 30:5. f Gen. 2:2. Heb. 4:3, 4, 10. g Gen. 1:1. Job 23:7. Ps. 104:31. Jc. 32:41. h 24:12, 13. 32:15, 16. 34:1-4. 23:29. Dent. 4:13. 5:22. 9:9-11. 2 Cor. 3:3. 18: 19. 32:16. Jer. 31:33. Matt. 12:28. Luke 11:20. 2 Cor. 3:7, 8.

posed that the Israelites, who had been employed as bond-slaves in Egypt, were in general qualified for such curious workmanship as had been described; any more than that the apostles, taken from their fishing-boats, and other low occupations, were capable of speaking fluently and correctly in the languages of all nations to whom they were commanded to preach: but the same Spirit, who gave the apostles utterance in divers tongues, miraculously endued the persons here appointed with requisite skill, or exceedingly improved them in it; for they might have acquired some knowledge in particular branches of these ingenious arts, which are thought to have been very successfully cultivated in Egypt, at this early period.—Neither Moses, nor Aaron, nor any of Aaron's sons were appointed to this service: the honour already conferred must suffice for them; and if they attended to their proper employment, they would find that also sufficient. Nor were Moses's sons appointed; for it was the Lord's will that his disinterestedness and divine legation, should appear *illustrious* in the obscurity of his posterity! If Hur was (as some think) Miriam's husband, and in consequence Bezaleel a distant relation of Moses; as the Lord expressly called him by name, to preside in the whole business, all occasion of murmuring was precluded.

V. 6. Aholiab was also expressly appointed to be assistant to Bezaleel, and next under him, in this service: yet not only to these two, but to many others, the Lord gave wisdom and understanding, as well as a willing heart, to perform various parts of the work, under their superintendency.—They were not, however, allowed to exercise their ingenuity, in *contriving* any decorations to embellish the sanctuary; but merely to *devise* how to execute the commands of God, with exactness, readiness, and elegance.—*Dan.* Huram, the principal workman in building Solomon's temple, was "the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan." (2 Chr. 2:13, 14. 4:11—18. Note, 1 Kings 7:14.)

V. 8. *Pure candlestick.*] Thus called, because it was made entirely of pure gold; and not merely overlaid with gold, as other parts of the sacred furniture were.

V. 10. *Cloths of service.*] These are supposed to have been the coverings, prepared for the sacred furniture, when it was to be removed. (Num. 4:6—14.)

V. 13—17. The injunction, to sanctify the sabbath, seems to have been repeated and enlarged on at this time, to show the people, that the sacred rest must not be interrupted, even while they were employed in erecting the tabernacle. The appointment of the weekly sabbath was a *sign*, or token, of the Lord's special favour to Israel. Their strict and constant observance of it would not only distinguish them, as the worshippers of God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh, from all the surrounding idolaters; but, through successive generations, it would be a *sign* of their covenant relation to him, and an important means of bringing them more fully acquainted with his glorious perfections, and of rendering them indeed a holy people devoted to his service. It was therefore at this time expressly made a part of the *judicial* law, that every Israelite should hallow the Sabbath: if any one violated it, he must be put to death by the magistrate, provided his crime were known; and if he kept it secret, he might expect to be cut off by some *divine* judgment. Other seasons were set apart, as a kind of *sabbath*: but this was the principal; "a sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord;" the public observance of which by the nation,

and the punishment of such as violated it, formed one condition of the national covenant throughout their generations. For it was kept in honour of the Creator, who *rested* and *was refreshed*, when he had completed his design: such satisfaction did he take in that display of his glory! Surely then his worshippers ought to find refreshment and delight, in contemplating his works, rendering him the tribute of adoring and grateful praise, and performing the duties of that holy day.

V. 18. After all the preceding laws and instructions (which probably were given at different times,) when the forty days of Moses's continuance on the mount were nearly ended, the Lord gave him the tables of stone before spoken of, (24:12.) with the ten commandments written on them by his own immediate power. They are here called the "two tables of testimony;" because the laws written on them were the substance of that will of God, which he *testified* to them; and likewise because, by giving this law to them, and by placing it in the ark under the mercy-seat, from above which he displayed his glory, he *testified* his special favour to that nation, and the way in which it would be continued to them. The *stones*, on which the law of the ten commandments was written, denoted its perpetual, unchangeable obligation; in which it differed from the other laws, which would after a time be superseded.—*By the finger of God*, the Holy Spirit may be meant, as the texts referred to show, (i Marg. Ref. i.) and he writes this law in the hearts of all the spiritual children of Israel, having prepared them for that purpose.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord confers his *unmerited* favours on whom he pleases; but the honour which cometh from him is always attended with a work to be done; and to be employed by him is indeed the highest honour, and the noblest privilege.—Men are not now called forth by name, as in the days of Moses: yet our God generally marks out the persons whom he hath made choice of, by endowing them with correspondent dispositions and qualifications by his Spirit, and opening the way to their work in his providence. We may indeed certainly know that we are not appointed to any service, for which we continue utterly unqualified. Yet there are cases, in which men are unexpectedly and evidently called to situations, and engaged in services, for which they are humbly conscious of being in themselves wholly insufficient; but they may depend upon God to give them "the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge" for their work, even after they are engaged in it; if they simply seek his glory, do his will, and are employed by him. He confers different gifts on different persons; that they may feel their need of each other, and receive mutual benefit, as the members in the human body: let then each person mind his proper work, and improve his own talents diligently; remembering that whatever wisdom any man possesses, the Lord hath put it into his heart, to the end that he may do *all* his commandments. Let no one envy, despise, intermeddle with, or depreciate, the gift or work of his brethren: and let each "study to be quiet, and to do his own business;" and to rejoice in the superior endowments of others, without murmuring or disputing, or by ostentation provoking their envy or resentment.—Every useful work is beautiful in its season; but the more immediate exercises of religion belong especially to the sanctification of the sabbath; and as the appointment itself is an *external* sign of the Lord's good will to sinful men; so our love to it, and delight in hal-

down: for ^{the} people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have ^{corrupted themselves}.

8 They ^{have} turned aside quickly out of the way ^{which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.}

9 And the Lord said unto Moses, ^{I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people.}

10 Now therefore ^{let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.}

11 And Moses ^{besought the} Lord his God, and said, Lord, ^{why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand?}

12 Wherefore ^{should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.}

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, ^{to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.}

14 And the Lord ^{repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.}

[Practical Observations.]

u 1, 11. x Gen. 6:11, 12. Deut. 4:16, 32:5. Judg. 2:19. Hos. 9:9. y Deut. 9:16. Deut. 2:17. z 20:34. a See on 4. b Deut. 9:13. Jer. 13:27. Hos. 6:10. c 33:3, 5. d 34:9. Deut. 9:6. 10:16. 31:27. e 31:18. Neh. 9:17. Ps. 78:5. Prov. 29:1. f 41:4. Zech. 7:11, 12. Acts 7:51. d Gen. 13:22, 32:26—28. Num. 14:19, 20:16. 22:4—9. Jer. 14:11, 15:1. Jam. 5:6. e 11, 19, 22, 24. f Num. 14:12. Deut. 9:14. g Deut. 9:18—20. Ps. 106:23. ^{Heb. the face of the Lord} h Num. 11:11, 16:22. Deut. 7:11—12. 63:17. Jer. 12:1, 2. 17. k Num. 14:13—16. Deut. 9:28. 32:27. Josh. 7:9. Ps. 74:13, 79:10. Ez. 20:5, 14:22. 1 Deut. 13:17. Josh. 7:26. Ezra 10:14. Ps. 78:58. 35:3. m 14. Gen. 6:6. Deut. 32:36. Ps. 90:13, 105:35. Am. 7:3, 5. Jon. 3:8. Zech. 8:1. l Lev. 23:42. Deut. 7:8. 9:27. Luke 1:54, 55. Deut. 16:26, 34. Heb. 6:13. p Gen. 12:7, 13:15, 16. 15:5, 18. 28:4. 28:13, 14. 35:11,

them within some bounds, and by allowing the use of an *image*, to keep them from directly worshipping *other gods*. He therefore proclaimed, that on the morrow a feast would be held to JEHOVAH: and the people, with great alacrity, brought burnt-offerings and peace-offerings: (for the use of these was known before;) and having offered sacrifices to the image of the calf, they feasted on the residue of the oblations, and were engaged in mirth and diversion, if not more gross sensuality, when interrupted by the return of Moses.

V. 7—10. The Lord had before given Moses the tables of the law, in order that he might go down from the mount: but at length he urged his departure, in language which implied, that the people had rejected JEHOVAH, as their Deliverer out of Egypt; and thence Moses might conclude that he had rejected them. Considering the short time which had passed, since they heard the law from mount Sinai, and promised obedience, and afterwards were warned not to “make to them gods of silver or of gold” (20:23.) it might well be said, they “had turned quickly out of the way;” and though they intended their idol as a representation of an invisible deity, or deities; yet they must have had very confused and erroneous notions of the divine Unity, when they used the language here ascribed to them. Their conduct therefore formed an additional proof, after all preceding instances of their rebellion, that they were “a stiff-necked people” that is, stubborn and untractable, like unruly bullocks, upon whose neck the yoke could not be put, without great difficulty.—But, as Moses was preparing to intercede for them, the Lord said to him, “Let me alone” for should his faithful servant interpose, he could not, as it were, proceed to execute deserved vengeance upon them. This, which seemed to forbid, in reality encouraged the prayer of Moses.—The proposal of exceedingly multiplying his posterity, that the promises made to the patriarchs, which Israel had forfeited, might be entailed on his family, was intended to prove and manifest the sincerity and fervour of his love to his people, and the extent of his disinterestedness.

V. 11—14. Instead of all mentioning the proposal, which God had made to him, or neglecting to pray for his people, Moses interceded for them with such earnestness, as put him into an agony of mind; for so the word (מַרְיָה) seems to signify. He did not, however, attempt to palliate or excuse their sin; but he pleaded the glory of the divine perfections as concerned in the event: for if the Lord should destroy Israel, (of whom he says, “thy people, whom thou hast brought out,”) the Egyptians would impeach his justice and clemency. The destruction of the nation could not *apparently* be reconciled with his promises and oath to Abraham,

15 ¶ And Moses ^{turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.}

16 And ^{the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God graven upon the tables.}

17 And when ^{Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp.}

18 And he said, ^{It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.}

19 And it came to pass as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that ^{he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses's anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.}

20 And he ^{took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.}

21 And Moses said unto Aaron, ^{What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?}

22 And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: ^{thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief.}

23 For ^{they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.}

12. 48:16. q 2 Sam. 24:16. 1 Chr. 21:15. Ps. 106:45. Jer. 18:8. 26:13, 19. Joel 2:13. Jon. 3:10. 4:2. r 24:18. Deut. 9:15. s See on 16:34. 40:20. Deut. 5:22. a 13:7. 1 Rev. 5:1. u 31:18. 34:14. Deut. 9:8—11. 10:1. 2 Cor. 3:7. Heb. 8:10. x 3 v on 17:9. 24:12. y 18. Ezra 3:11—13. Ps. 47:1. z Josh. 6:5, 10, 16, 20. Julg. 15:14. 1 Sam. 4:5, 6. 17:20, 52. Job 39:25. Jer. 5:14. Am. 1:4. 2:2. 1 Heb. weakness. a 15:1, &c. Dan. 5:4, 23. b 4—6. 1 ent. 9:16. c 15:20. 2 Sam. 6:14. Lam. 5:15. d 11. Num. 12:3. Matt. 5:22. Mark 3:5. 10:14. Eplh. 4:26. e 1 ent. 9:17. 22:25. Jer. 31:32. Zech. 11:10, 11, 14. Deut. 7:5, 25. 9:21. 2 Kings 6:15. f Prov. 1:31. 14:14. h Gen. 20:9, 25:19. Deut. 13:1—2. 1 Sam. 7:14. 1 Kings 14:16. 21:22. 2 Kings 21:9—11. 14:11. 15:24. 16:2—4, 20, 28. 17:3—4. Deut. 9:7, 24. j 1 Sam. 15:24. Ps. 36:4. 1rov. 4:16. k Se m 1—4, 8.

Isaac, and Israel: and, whatever their sin deserved, surely JEHOVAH would not give occasion to any injurious reflections being cast upon his own great name. (Note, Deut. 32:26, 27.) This regard to the divine honour was well pleasing to the Lord, who graciously intimated his design of sparing them, as he had before *seemed* determined upon their destruction: which change, in the *external discovery* of his purpose, is called “repenting of the evil, which he thought to do to his people.” (Note, Gen. 6:6, 7.)—Thus Moses did not go down from the mount till mercy was promised; and his example instructs us in the most affecting manner, how to pray, what pleas to urge, and whence to deduce encouragements for persevering in our supplications.

V. 15. *On both their sides.*] This is differently interpreted. Some think, that the ten commandments were written on only one side of each table, part on the one and part on the other; that so they might close together as a book, when laid in the ark: but others are of opinion that each table was written on both sides.

V. 17. Joshua had waited patiently, during all the foregoing days, in the place where Moses had left him; below the summit of the mount, at a distance from the people, and out of the way of temptation.

V. 19. Moses's anger was hot, and he intended to express his abhorrence of Israel's crime: yet his breaking of the tables of the covenant was no rashally of passion, as some have imagined; but a significant action, done probably by a divine suggestion, to denote that the covenant was broken, and that the people lay exposed to the severest vengeance of God.

V. 20. The people seem to have been overawed by the presence of Moses, and not to have attempted any resistance, while he took away their idol to destroy it. As it is very difficult to reduce gold to powder, many conjectures have been formed on the manner in which it was done on this occasion: but the text leads us to consider Moses, as first destroying the *form* of the idol, by melting it down; and then proceeding to reduce it, by violent friction or filing, to a fine powder. (Marg. Ref.) No doubt this would require much labour; but many might assist him, both of those who had clear of this vile idolatry, and of such as were brought to a sense of their guilt; and it is absurd to suppose that it was impossible to be done.—It was proper that the treasure thus employed in idolatry, should finally perish, as an accursed thing; and that the idol itself should be rendered as contemptible as possible, before its stupid worshippers. By *strewn* the powder in the stream, which ran perhaps rapidly from the rock, the people would be forced to drink some of it

24 And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let him break it off. 'So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame, amongst their enemies;)

26 Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, 'Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

27 And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out, from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.

28 And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

29 For Moses had said, 'Consecrate your-

14. Gen. 3:12, 13. Luke 10:29. Rom. 3:10. m 33:4-6. Gen. 3:10. Hos. 2:3. Rev. 3:17, 18, 16:15. n Deut. 9:20. 2 Chr. 26:19. o Ex. 16:63. Dan. 12:2. Rom. 6: 3:17. p Heb. those that rose up against them. q Josh. 5:13. 2 Sam. 20:11. 2 Kings 9:32. Matt. 12:30. q 26:29. Num. 25:7-12. Deut. 33:8, 9. Luke 14: 26. 2 Cor. 5:16. r Num. 16:32-35, 49. 1 Cor. 10:8. Heb. 2:2, 3. 1 Or, And Moses said, Consecrate yourselves to-day to the Lord; because every man hath been against his son and against his brother, &c. s Num. 25:11-13. Deut. 18:6-11. 1 Sam. 15:18-22. Zech. 13:3. Matt. 10:37. t Heb. fill your hands.

it with the water: which intimated, that they must expect to experience the fatal effects of their sin, as bringing a curse upon all their comforts.

V. 21-24. Moses did not inquire of Aaron, what induced him to concur with the people in this detestable idolatry; but in what they had offended him, that he should revenge himself by leading them into so great a wickedness. This most emphatically declares his judgment of Aaron's conduct, and confutes all the pleas which have been invented to palliate it. Indeed, no wise man ever made a more unmeaning and foolish excuse, than Aaron did. We should never have supposed "that he could speak well," were we to judge of his eloquence by this specimen. If the people were bent upon mischief, Aaron, the saint and servant of the Lord, who was intrusted with authority over Israel, should have ventured and suffered all extremities in opposing their mad design: but while he was as pliant as they could wish, and very active in the business, he charged all the blame on others, and spake as if the golden calf had been produced almost by accident, without his concurrence, and beyond his expectation; and he seemed only intent to deprecate the anger of Moses, not that of God!—No wonder that "the Lord was angry with him also for having destroyed him;" but Moses prayed for him too; (*Deut. 9:20*.) and we may be sure that he was ever after deeply humbled, and greatly ashamed of his conduct.

V. 25. The sin of the people had despoiled them of all claim to the Lord's protection, and had left them exposed without excuse to his righteous vengeance, and the scorn and rage of their enemies. They had stripped themselves of part of their ornaments to make the golden calf; and they were ordered to lay aside the rest in a way of humiliation, on this shameful occasion. (*Note*, 33:4-6.) Perhaps, also, in their dancing and sensual festivity, many of them had uncovered themselves in an indecent and shameful manner; as well as exposed themselves to the danger of being assaulted, and ignominiously scattered by their enemies.—Idolatrous feasts have scarcely ever, in any age or nation, been free from shameful indecencies.

V. 26-29. The Levites with one consent, having come promptly at the call of Moses, as decidedly "on the Lord's side," in this general defection, were commissioned to slay the ringleaders in this wickedness, without respect to friendship, relation, or any other social tie: for idolatry was a crime to be punished by their magistrates. Yet it seems none were executed, but those who openly and boldly stood forth as disposed to vindicate their conduct: while those who retired as ashamed were spared. This commission, being faithfully executed, brought a great blessing upon the tribe; and was a preparation for its being appointed to the service of the sanctuary, which was a very honourable and advantageous distinction. For, however men might blame them, they made it manifest, that though doubtless some individuals were guilty, as the words, "Every man upon his son, and upon his brother," imply; (*Note*, *Deut. 33:9*.) yet, as a tribe, they had been peculiarly free from this national idolatry, notwithstanding Aaron had set them so bad an example; and that they were valiant for God and for his honour. And as they were seconded by the divine power, which confounded and intimidated the transgressors, no opposition was made to the execution. It does not however appear, that any from the other tribes joined the Levites; and it is thence supposed, that all the rest had concurred in the idolatry.

V. 30-33. It may be supposed, that Moses expatiated before the people on the exceeding heinousness, and the many aggravations of their crime; and attempted to bring them to humble themselves in deep repentance on account of it while he went to intercede in their behalf before God.

selves to-day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother, that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.

30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, 'Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; 'peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

31 And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

33 And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34 Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine angel shall go before thee: nevertheless,

c 31. 1 Sam. 2:17. 12:20. 2 Sam. 12:9. 2 Kings 17:21. Luke 7:47. u 2 Sam. 16: 12. Am. 5:15. Jon. 3:9. 2 Tim. 2:25. x 32. Num. 16:47. 25:13. Rom. 9:3. Gal. 3:13. y 34:28. 1 Pet. 9:18, 19. z See on 30. Ezra 9:6, 7, 15. Neh. 5:13. Dan. 9:5, 8, 11. 20:42. b Num. 14:19. Deut. 9:18, 19. Am. 7:12. Luke 23:34. c 10. Deut. 9:14. 25:49. 29:20. Ps. 69:28. Ex. 13:9. Rom. 9:3. Rev. 3:5. 22:19. d Ex. 18:4. e Ps. 109:13, 14. Phil. 4:3. Rev. 13:8. 20:12. f 23:20. 33:2, 14, 15. Num. 20:16.

His words were suited to preserve them in a due medium between desponding fear and presumptuous confidence: "Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." Perhaps he expected that a sin-offering for the nation might be appointed, and that through this typical atonement their crime might be pardoned: or he referred to the proposal which he was about to make. His words however imply, that without an atonement there could be no forgiveness; and that they could make no atonement for themselves. He had received some intimation from the Lord, that he would spare the nation, before he went down from the mount; yet he was so affected by a nearer view of the guilt which they had contracted, that he seems almost to have questioned, whether this could consist with the honour of God. When therefore he went to meet him, (probably not on the top of the mount Sinai, but at a distance from the camp,) he mournfully deplored the great sin of his people; and pleaded for them in an imperfect sentence, implying rather an ardent desire, than a direct request. The meaning of his vehement language has been much disputed; and some contend, that he expressed his willingness to be blotted out of the book of life, and finally to perish, provided this might be accepted as an atonement for the sin of his people; and they put the same construction on the words used by St. Paul, on a somewhat similar occasion. (*Note*, *Rom. 9:1-3*.) But this interpretation seems inadmissible; for the spiritual law of God requires us to "love our neighbour as ourselves," and not more than ourselves, which surely is implied, in being willing to be for ever miserable, either for their temporal or eternal salvation. Even Christ, of whom Moses is supposed to be a type in this proposal, was only willing for our salvation to die a temporal death, with every possible circumstance of inward and outward suffering; not to be eternally miserable: and the apostle says, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;" not that we ought to devote our souls to destruction for them.—No doubt, zeal for the honour of God glowed in the heart of Moses, when he thus expressed himself; and perhaps he could not conceive, how that could be secured and manifested, either by destroying or sparing his people. But it should be remembered, that not only final misery, but final desperate enmity to God, is implied in the proposal, if thus understood; and it is wonderful how any man could ever think, that a willingness to be eternally wicked, and a desperate hater of God, can spring from love to him, and be a proper expression of zeal for his glory!—If therefore Moses referred to this proposal when he said, "Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin;" the words may be thus paraphrased: "O Lord, instead of destroying Israel as a sacrifice to thy justice, and making of me a great nation; let me be the sacrifice, and spare them: and if it may not consist with thy glory to spare them otherwise, and my death may suffice for that purpose, exclude me from Canaan, and take me out of life, in any way which thou seest good, that my people may be preserved and thy name glorified."—Or perhaps he only meant to say, "If my people must be destroyed, cut me off also, and let me not survive or witness their destruction."—The expression, "Blot me out of thy book," is an allusion to the affairs of men, which is used in various senses in the Scriptures. (*Marg. Ref. e*.)—Whatever Moses meant by the request, the Lord did not accede to it, at least on that occasion; but only answered, that he would "blot those who had sinned out of his book;" that is, he would punish the guilty, not the innocent: yet, when Moses afterwards offered up God, and was excluded from Canaan while his people inherited it, he would no doubt remember this request.

If thou wilt, &c. (32) *Εἰ μὴ ἀφ᾽ ἐμοῦ τοῖς τ. ἢ ἐμῷ τῷ ψ. β*

5 For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, by the mount Horeb.

7 And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the LORD, went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation which was without the camp.

8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent-door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle.

9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses.

10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent-door.

See on 17: 34-9. h Ps. 25:4, 27:11, 96:11, 119:33. Cant. 1:7, 8. Is. 30:21, 1:19. Joby 17:3, Eph. 1:17. Col. 1:10, 2 Pet. 3:18. 1 Jer. 27, Deut. 9:26, 29, 16, 53:19, Joel 2:17, Rom. 11:22, k 18:21, 40:34-38, Josh. 1:5, 16:63, Matt. 28:20, 1 Dent. 3:20, Josh. 21:44, 22:4, 23:1, Ps. 95:11, Jer. 8:16, Matt. 11:23, Heb. 4:9, m 3:49, n Num. 14:4, Matt. 1:23, o 8:22, 19:5, 6, 34:10, Num. 23:9, Deut. 4:7, 34, 2 Sam. 7:23, 1 Kings 8:53, Ps. 147:20, 2 Cor. 8:17, e 1:7, 2:15, 3:19, 18, 19, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 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he would not have a tabernacle, or dwelling-place, among the people, or in any way manifest his special presence and glory in the midst of them; seeing that they were disposed to treat him with such insufferable contempt, that these favours would only serve to increase their guilt, and to provoke his jealousy to their destruction.

V. 4-6. The people had parted with some of their ornaments to make the golden calf; yet doubtless they had generally arrayed themselves in festive garments to worship the idol; but they laid the whole aside when they heard of the Lord's hot displeasure against them, and no more attempted to resume them. For the Lord had intimated an intention of destroying them in a moment; yet at the same time he had ordered them to assume the habit of mourners or penitents, while he, as it were, deliberated how to act towards them. This implied a design of mercy, provided they showed signs of repentance; and as they complied without hesitation, and seemed more grieved because the Lord refused to go with them, than on account of the terrible execution recorded in the foregoing chapter, it may be supposed that several of them were truly humbled; and the others, by an external humiliation, gave glory to God, which made way for him honourably to avert the national judgment. (Note, 1 Kings 21:27-29.)—The words (הורב) rendered "by the mount Horeb," seem to mean, at a distance from the holy mount; which was another token of humiliation.

V. 7. The tabernacle here mentioned seems to have been a tent that Moses had prepared, in which he administered justice, and answered the inquiries of those who applied to him. It is also probable that before the Tabernacle was erected as prescribed on the mount, the people assembled here to worship, and the pillar of fire and cloud appeared on the top of it. We may suppose that Moses did not inform the people, how far he had succeeded in making up the breach; as it was his purpose to bring them to repentance; and, in removing this tent to a distance from the camp, no doubt by divine direction, he gave them another indication of the Lord's heavy displeasure, who, as it were, refused to dwell any longer among them.—On this occasion he called it "The Tabernacle of the congregation," or of meeting (אהל מועד); that is, the place where the Lord met his people; the name given to the sanctuary afterwards erected. But the Israelites in general were not worthy of being thus honoured and favoured; and if any were desirous of seeking God and humbling themselves before him, or of offering sacrifice to him, they were required to follow the tabernacle out of the camp.

V. 8-11. When Moses left the camp, and went to the tabernacle now pitched at a distance, the people in general came out to see what the event would be, and kept their eyes on him till he had entered the tabernacle. It is probable, that after the making of the golden calf, the cloudy pillar had disappeared; but now it again descended, and rested at the door of the tabernacle. This reappearance of it, not over the camp, but at a distance, where Moses was, ratified all that he had done; and the people were so impressed by it, that they prostrated themselves in solemn worship, at the door of their tents, before the symbol of the divine presence.—In the mean while, the Lord conversed with Moses, not as in a

11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. [Practical Observations.]

12 ¶ And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.

13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

14 And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

16 For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

17 And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

See on 17: 34-9. h Ps. 25:4, 27:11, 96:11, 119:33. Cant. 1:7, 8. Is. 30:21, 1:19. Joby 17:3, Eph. 1:17. Col. 1:10, 2 Pet. 3:18. 1 Jer. 27, Deut. 9:26, 29, 16, 53:19, Joel 2:17, Rom. 11:22, k 18:21, 40:34-38, Josh. 1:5, 16:63, Matt. 28:20, 1 Dent. 3:20, Josh. 21:44, 22:4, 23:1, Ps. 95:11, Jer. 8:16, Matt. 11:23, Heb. 4:9, m 3:49, n Num. 14:4, Matt. 1:23, o 8:22, 19:5, 6, 34:10, Num. 23:9, Deut. 4:7, 34, 2 Sam. 7:23, 1 Kings 8:53, Ps. 147:20, 2 Cor. 8:17, e 1:7, 2:15, 3:19, 18, 19, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

dream or vision, but by an audible voice, in the most familiar manner; even as when a man speaketh face to face with his friend. There does not seem to have been any visible appearance in human form at the time; but it may be supposed, that the cloud appeared within as well as above the tabernacle; and that the voice came from the cloud, as when our Lord was transfigured. After some time Moses returned to the camp, probably to instruct and encourage the people; and, as it does not appear why Joshua should remain at the tabernacle when Moses left it, the latter clause has been thus rendered by some expositors; "He turned again to the camp with his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man." But "He" (that is, the Lord, as appearing in the cloud) "departed not out of the tabernacle." Thus the Lord still refused to manifest himself in the camp of Israel.—Joshua was at this time about fifty-three years old; but he was a young man compared with Moses, and this was a common title for those who acted as servants to others.

V. 12-16. This is either the substance of the conference before spoken of, (11,) or else Moses returned to the tabernacle, and thus pleaded and prevailed for his people.—The Lord had promised to send an angel with him, to put Israel in possession of Canaan; but his refusal to accompany them implied that this would be merely a created angel, the minister of his providence. (Notes, 1-3.) Moses therefore pleaded, that God had not informed him whom he would send with him; though he had given him the fullest assurances of his special grace and favour. But if indeed he was thus distinguished, as one known by God; he prayed that he would "show him his way," the method according to which he purposed to deal with Israel, or the way in which he would have his people walk before him; that he might more fully know him, and continue to enjoy his special favour. Yet even this was not all he desired; for he earnestly requested the Lord to consider, that Israel was his people whom he had chosen, and who alone of all nations worshipped him. He could not endure to have his interests separated from those of his brethren; and this emphatically implied a request, that the Lord, though offended, would vouchsafe his special presence with his people, and set up his tabernacle among them, over which the cloudy pillar might rest, and in which his glory might appear above the mercy-seat. This plea, resulting from disinterested love to Israel, united with zeal for the honour of God, prevailed; and the Lord assured Moses, that his gracious presence should accompany him, in leading Israel to Canaan, the promised rest. But he, desiring still more particular and explicit assurances, entreated that they might proceed no further without that presence, and the religious advantages which it implied; as these only could fully prove, that the Lord specially favoured him and his people; and thus alone they would be distinguished and kept separate from all other nations on earth.

V. 17. The Lord at length, well pleased with Moses's importunity, fully granted his requests; and for his sake, (who was in this transaction a remarkable type of Christ,) the breach was made up. Accordingly, in the following chapters we read that the tabernacle was erected, and the ordinances appointed, by which Israel was separated from

18 And he said, I beseech thee, *show me thy glory.*

19 And he said, I will make *all my goodness* pass before thee, and I will *proclaim the name of the LORD* before thee; and will *be gracious* to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

20 And he said, *Thou canst not see my face:* for there shall no man see me, and live.

21 And the LORD said, Behold, *there is a place* by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock.

22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee *in a cleft of the*

rock; and will *cover thee with my hand* while I pass by.

23 And I will take away mine hand, and *thou shalt see my back-parts:* but my face shall not be seen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Moses is commanded to have two tables of stone, and to ascend mount Sinai alone, 1-4. The Lord proclaims his name, and Moses worships, 5-9. The Lord renews his covenant with Israel, and reopens many laws before him, 10-27. Moses, after forty days' fasting, returns with the tables of the law: his face shines, and he covers it with a veil, 28-35.

AND the LORD said unto Moses, *Hew thee* two tables of stone like unto the first: and *I will write upon these tables* the words

r 26. Ps. 4:6. John 1:18. 2 Cor. 3:18. 4:6. 1 Tim. 6:16. Tit. 2:13. Rev. 21:23. s Neh. 9:23. Ps. 25:13. marg. 65:4. Jer. 31:12, 14. Zech. 9:17. Rom. 2:4. Eph. 1:6-8. t s e on 3:13-15. 34:5-7. Is. 7:14. 9:6. 12:4. marg. u Rom. 9:15-18, 23. x 21:10. Gen. 32:30. Deut. 5:24. Judg. 6:22. Is. 6:5. John 1:18. Rev.

other nations: and though Moses never entered the rest of Canaan, he found rest to his soul in the ways of the Lord, and in the comfort of his presence; and entrance into "the rest which remaineth for the people of God."

V. 18, 19. Encouraged by the condescending mercy of God, Moses ventured to request that he would "show him his glory," as a pledge of his special favour, and an earnest of the accomplishment of his promises.—He seems to have meant something distinct from the external displays which he had witnessed, and of a more spiritual nature. Accordingly, the Lord promised to "cause all his goodness to pass before him," that he might have a clear discovery of his holy perfections, which, though transient in itself, would leave a permanent impression on his mind.—The goodness of God may either mean, in general, the holy excellence of his nature, which is altogether lovely; or his kindness to sinful men, in all its varied exercises; but especially his unflinching love and mercy, as manifested, in harmony with infinite justice and holiness, in the salvation of Christ: for this is the grandest display which we are capable of beholding, and to us by far the most interesting. (1 John 4:8-10).—At the same time, the Lord promised to proclaim his name before Moses; and an account of this transaction is recorded in the next chapter. He also added, "And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." As if he had said, "I will pardon what sinners I please; nor shall any degree of guilt bar this sovereign exercise of my mercy." (Note, Rom. 9:15-18.) Thus, while some, whose crimes appear to us of inferior malignity, are left to hardness of heart, and suffer the *deserved punishment of their evil deeds*; in other instances, "where sin hath abounded, grace much more abounds."

V. 20-23. "No man hath seen God at any time," for he "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto;" so that "no man hath seen him, or can see him." It is therefore evident, that all the appearances of God, spoken of in Scripture, were far different from a visible display of his essence, or essential glory, which in its own nature is invisible; and this applies equally to the familiar appearances with which the patriarchs were favoured; the more awful and glorious manifestations which were made to the prophets in vision; the *Shekinah*, or visible glory which appeared above the mercy-seat; and the manifestations vouchsafed to Moses, when "the LORD spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend." And not only must the divine essence always continue invisible to our bodily eyes; but even the full discovery of the divine glory to our souls, or such an external splendour as might be rendered visible, would overwhelm and dissolve the feeble frame of man in his present state. In this sense, it seems to have been, that the Lord said to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Yet, as far as mortal man could endure the sight, Moses should have his request granted. In some place, near the spot where he was communing with God, he should stand upon a rock: (perhaps the rock in Horeb, whence the waters miraculously flowed;) and while the Lord passed by, in some most august display of his glory, he would put him in a cleft of the rock, and "cover him with his hand," or shelter him by his power, or perhaps veil the glory by a cloud. But when the overwhelming splendour was past, he would remove his hand, that Moses might behold his glory; as if a man should see, not the countenance, but the back of some august personage who passed by him.—It is not agreed what external appearance attended this display; but there is no sufficient reason to conclude that it was in human form, as the words, *face, hands, and back-parts*, seem to be used figuratively. The transaction, however, was doubtless emblematic. We can, in this world, see the glory of God, only as reflected from his works, or as revealed in his word: for the more direct display of his essential glory to the soul is reserved for the beatific vision.—The rock on which Moses stood, and in the cleft of which he was sheltered, was doubtless an emblem of Christ; in whose person, character, and salvation alone, we sinners may by faith see the glory of God and live: for there it appears in softened splendour; as the sun, when his brightness is diminished by a mist, is beheld more distinctly by the human eye.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. While multitudes of professed Christians perish

in sin, God knows how to secure the honour of his faithfulness.—He often confers outward prosperity in anger on wicked men, who take it as their portion and look no further. But, while the conscience remains tender, prosperous ungodliness, and the removal of divine ordinances, will be dreaded as the heaviest judgments.—Yet obstinate wickedness, under the means of grace, ensures the severest vengeance.—Every commandment of God to sinners implies some degree of encouragement; and in humble obedience they should wait to see what the Lord will do with them.—When he calls to weeping and mourning, those enjoyments and ornaments, which at other times are allowable, will be laid aside and slighted by the true penitent: and indeed it is most shameful, if Christians refuse to part with their ornaments, in compliance with the demands of decency, charity, and perhaps justice, while idolaters give up theirs for the sake of their worthless idols!—Yet alas! external expressions of humiliation do not *always*, or indeed *generally*, prove that the heart is truly humbled before God.—When the Lord appears about to leave a degenerate church or people, we must be decided in protesting against prevailing iniquities, in withdrawing from obstinate offenders, and in following the word and ordinances of God, whithersoever they go, let who will stay behind: and when young persons love his courts, it promises a useful and honourable old age. (Note, Ps. 92:13-15.)

V. 12-23. The Lord will show such tokens of his favour to his approved servants, as shall be evident to all their opposers; and in communion with himself will make them rich amends for all their troubles.—Whatever interest we have at a throne of grace, we should improve it in behalf of others; remembering that our God delights in and honours importunity: and we should take encouragement from success, to request still more and more.—If we have any useful knowledge of him, it arises from our having been first noticed by him with distinguished regard: and it will lead us to desire to know more of him, of his ways, and of his special grace, day by day. We shall therefore in every undertaking, and in all our removals, urgently desire to be under his guidance: earnestly pray, "that unless his presence go with us he will not carry us up thence;" and be careful that covetousness or convenience do not draw us from our proper place, or to a distance from his ordinances. Nor should we forget, that as the Lord's people are distinguished and separated by peculiar privileges from others; so they are called to separate themselves, that they may "be unto him a peculiar people zealous of good works;" which is both the effect of divine teaching, the evidence of divine grace, the present rest of the soul, and the earnest of everlasting rest.—They, who have been favoured with a glimpse of the Lord's glory and a taste of his goodness, will ardently desire more full discoveries and communications; and, as here "they see through a glass darkly," they will by that desire be gradually rendered willing to depart hence, that they may "see him face to face." In the mean time they will thankfully, as sheltered in the rock of salvation from the consuming fire of his holiness and justice, contemplate his footsteps and the discoveries made of his glorious perfections in all his works, but especially in the work of redemption: and these views are peculiarly suited to humble them; to wean them from the world, and to eclipse all its vain splendour; and gradually to transform them into the image of him, whom they thus contemplate by faith, through the teaching of his Holy Spirit. (Note, 2 Cor. 3:17, 18.) If then he causes all his goodness to pass before us, and makes us acquainted with his NAME, as a God of grace and mercy; while we acknowledge our obligations to our heavenly Advocate, who by his prevailing intercession hath completely repaired the breach which sin hath made; we may well be willing to wait for further discoveries, till we depart hence to be with him.—Finally, let not sinners forget that "he, who is gracious to whom he will be gracious, and hath mercy on whom he will have mercy," hath also assured us, that "him, who cometh unto him, he will in nowise cast out."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1. (32:15, 16.) To remind the people of the sin, through which the former tablets had been broken, the Lord would not prepare these himself; but Moses was ordered to hew them, or prepare them, for the writing; which it seems was not a work of very great

that were in the first tables, ^dwhich thou brak-
est.

2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me ^ein the top of the mount.

3 And no man shall ^fcome up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount: neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

5 And the LORD ^gdescended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed ^hthe name of the LORD.

d 32:19. Deut. 9:15-17. e 19:20, 24. 24:12. Deut. 9:25. f 19:12, 13, 21. Lev. 16: 17. 1 Tim. 2:5. Heb. 12: 29. g 19:18. 33:9. Num. 11:17, 25. 1 Kings 8:10-12. Luke 9:45. h 33:19. i 33:23. j 33:23. k 33:23. l 33:23. m 33:23. n 33:23. o 33:23. p 33:23. q 33:23. r 33:23. s 33:23. t 33:23. u 33:23. v 33:23. w 33:23. x 33:23. y 33:23. z 33:23. aa 33:23. ab 33:23. ac 33:23. ad 33:23. ae 33:23. af 33:23. ag 33:23. ah 33:23. ai 33:23. aj 33:23. ak 33:23. al 33:23. am 33:23. an 33:23. ao 33:23. ap 33:23. aq 33:23. ar 33:23. as 33:23. at 33:23. au 33:23. av 33:23. aw 33:23. ax 33:23. ay 33:23. az 33:23. ba 33:23. bb 33:23. bc 33:23. bd 33:23. be 33:23. bf 33:23. bg 33:23. bh 33:23. bi 33:23. bj 33:23. bk 33:23. bl 33:23. bm 33:23. bn 33:23. bo 33:23. bp 33:23. bq 33:23. br 33:23. bs 33:23. bt 33:23. bu 33:23. bv 33:23. bw 33:23. bx 33:23. by 33:23. bz 33:23. ca 33:23. cb 33:23. cc 33:23. cd 33:23. ce 33:23. cf 33:23. cg 33:23. ch 33:23. ci 33:23. cj 33:23. ck 33:23. cl 33:23. cm 33:23. cn 33:23. co 33:23. cp 33:23. cq 33:23. cr 33:23. cs 33:23. ct 33:23. cu 33:23. cv 33:23. cw 33:23. cx 33:23. cy 33:23. cz 33:23. da 33:23. db 33:23. dc 33:23. dd 33:23. de 33:23. df 33:23. dg 33:23. dh 33:23. di 33:23. dj 33:23. dk 33:23. dl 33:23. dm 33:23. dn 33:23. do 33:23. dp 33:23. dq 33:23. dr 33:23. ds 33:23. dt 33:23. du 33:23. dv 33:23. dw 33:23. dx 33:23. dy 33:23. dz 33:23. ea 33:23. eb 33:23. ec 33:23. ed 33:23. ee 33:23. ef 33:23. eg 33:23. eh 33:23. ei 33:23. ej 33:23. ek 33:23. el 33:23. em 33:23. en 33:23. eo 33:23. ep 33:23. eq 33:23. er 33:23. es 33:23. et 33:23. eu 33:23. ev 33:23. ew 33:23. ex 33:23. ey 33:23. ez 33:23. fa 33:23. fb 33:23. fc 33:23. fd 33:23. fe 33:23. ff 33:23. fg 33:23. fh 33:23. fi 33:23. fj 33:23. fk 33:23. fl 33:23. fm 33:23. fn 33:23. fo 33:23. fp 33:23. fq 33:23. fr 33:23. fs 33:23. ft 33:23. fu 33:23. fv 33:23. fw 33:23. fx 33:23. fy 33:23. fz 33:23. ga 33:23. gb 33:23. gc 33:23. gd 33:23. ge 33:23. gf 33:23. gh 33:23. gi 33:23. gj 33:23. gk 33:23. gl 33:23. gm 33:23. gn 33:23. go 33:23. gp 33:23. gq 33:23. gr 33:23. gs 33:23. gt 33:23. gu 33:23. gv 33:23. gw 33:23. gx 33:23. gy 33:23. gz 33:23. ha 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labour or exactness, for it was speedily performed.—When God made man in his own image, the moral law was written in his heart without any external created concurrence: but since the covenant then made with him was broken, the ministry of men has been used, both in giving the Scriptures, and in bringing sinners to believe and obey them. Yet the whole writing is the Lord's: all Scripture was given by inspiration from him; and he alone can write the law in the heart, so as to produce true conviction of sin, penitent faith in Christ, and willing and unreserved obedience.

V. 2, 3. The people were tried forty days more, whether they would wait for the return of Moses, though they "knew not what was become of him;" and the injunctions given on a former occasion, being now rendered still more strict, would tend also to impress them with an awful sense of the divine holiness, their own exceeding unworthiness, and the Lord's special regard for Moses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. It does not appear whether any persons were left in authority at this time, or not. Aaron had greatly offended, and Hur is no more mentioned in the history. (23:14.)

V. 5-7. According to the promise made in the preceding chapter, the Lord met Moses in a cloud on the mount, and thence proclaimed his NAME, or concerning his NAME: that is, those perfections, and that character, which are denoted by the name JEHOVAH. This was proclaimed in an audible voice, that Moses, and from him Israel, and all the earth, might know the God with whom they had to do: not only that there was a God, but what his moral perfections were; and consequently what he must require of them, and what they might expect from him. When the Lord made himself known to Moses by the name I AM THAT I AM, he declared unto him (as in this passage, by the words "the LORD, the LORD God") his self-existence, unchangeableness, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence; with his authority, as everlasting, absolute, and universal Sovereign, Lawgiver, and Judge; who, having created the whole world, and still upholding and providing for it, demands all love, worship, and obedience from his rational creatures. But here especially are made known the moral perfections of this eternal God: for he first, in a variety of expressions, declared his mercy and grace, with which sinners are especially concerned; that they may both be certified there is hope, and know from whence that hope arises. "The LORD God is merciful;" that is, condescending and compassionate, as a father to his children; ready to relieve the indigent, and to rescue the miserable: *gracious*, or propense to bestow unmerited benefits, nay, to be kind to such as deserve his hot displeasure. and *long-suffering*, or slow to anger, patiently bearing the multiplied provocations of his rebellious creatures, affording them space for repentance, and not delighting in their misery; but only punishing when the honour of his name and law, and the welfare of his universal and everlasting kingdom, require it. He is also "abundant in goodness and truth;" that is, the riches of his liberality and bounty are infinite; the whole creation is replete with his benefits; all creatures, even sinners, abundantly receive them, though they abuse them and are ungrateful for them: and all that he reveals is infallible truth; all that he proposes is in absolute sincerity; and all that he promises, is in perfect faithfulness; while he hath revealed, proposed, and promised, even to us sinners, such abundant goodness, as can neither be expressed nor conceived.—"Keeping mercy for thousands;" that is, continually showing mercy in all its various exercises, to thousands of sinners, and having still inexhaustible treasures for thousands more, yea, for increasing numbers till the end of time; doing all good to those who trust in his mercy at present, and *reserving* good for them in future, even to eternity; and not for them only, but for their "children's children;" for his mercy endureth for ever.—"Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin;" because all his mercy and goodness

6 And the LORD ⁱpassed by before him, and ^kproclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, ^lmerciful and ^mgracious, ⁿlong-suffering, and ^oabundant in goodness and ^ptruth,

7 ^qKeeping mercy for thousands, ^rforgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that ^s'will by no means clear the guilty'; ^tvisiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

8 And Moses made haste, and ^ubowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

9 And he said, ^v"If now I have found grace in thy sight, O LORD, ^wlet my LORD, I pray thee, go among us; (for it is ^xa stiff-necked people;) and ^ypardon our iniquity and our sin, and ^ztake us for thine inheritance.

[Practical Observations.]

9:9. Matt. 6:14, 15. 12:31. 18:32-35. Luke 7:42, 43. Acts 5:31. 13:38. Rom. 4:7. 8. Eph. 1:7, 4:32. 1 John 1:9. r 21. Num. 14:18-25. Text. 32:35. Josh 24:19. Job 10:14. Ps. 9:16, 17. 11:5, 6. 5. 10:11. 135:10, 15. In 45:21. Mic. 6:11. Nah. 1:3, 3:8. Rom. 2:4-9. 3:19-26. 9: 22:38. Heb. 12:29. Rev. 20:15. 21:4. s See on 20:5. t 4:31. Gen. 17:3. 2 Chr. 20:18. x 33:13, 17. y See on 14:14-16. Matt. 28:20. z See on 32:9. 33:3, 5. In 48:4. a Num. 14:19. In 25:11. b 19:5. Deut. 32:9. Ps. 28:9. 33:12. 78:62. 94:14. 135:4. Jer. 10:10. Zech. 2:12.

either make way for the full, free, and everlasting forgiveness of every kind and degree of sin which can be specified; or they consist in it, or result from it.—"And that will by no means clear the guilty;" all this mercy and grace consist with the most entire hatred of all moral evil, and the most absolute determination to punish it: indeed, the holiness and justice of God are a part of his goodness and love, considered in their exercise towards all his rational creatures, throughout universal space and everlasting duration. For mercy and forgiveness are never exercised by our holy and righteous God, but through the atonement of the death of Christ, and to those who believe in his name: and in the sufferings which he endured, the holiness and justice of God have their grand display, and the evil of sin is most fully manifested. None are pardoned but those who *repent*, and forsake the allowed practice of every sin; forgiving mercy being always attended by converting and sanctifying grace. Nay, even they, for whose sins the blood of Christ hath fully atoned, are severely chastised in this world for those failures, into which, through the remaining sinfulness of the heart and the power of temptation, they are betrayed. But that sinner, who remains *guilty*, having not, by repentance and faith, obtained an interest in the great Sacrifice for sin, shall by no means be acquitted or escape: nor any who pervert, neglect, or despise so great salvation, in impotence and unbelief. The severest vengeance of God shall fall upon the heads of such persons; the very mercy which they have perverted into an encouragement to sin, shall occasion their deeper condemnation; and if Israel, or any other nation, dare to abuse such a proclamation of the name of a merciful God, national judgments on them and their posterity shall vindicate the honour of his insulted justice. (*Notes*, 20:5. Num. 14:13-19. Nah. 1:2-6.)—As the word *guilty* is not in the original, many commentators interpret the words to mean, 'that, in executing judgments, the Lord will not proceed to extremities with his people.' But the words literally signify, *clearing he will not clear*: and in such a solemn proclamation of the NAME of JEHOVAH, it would be wonderful, if no intimation should be given of holiness and justice; which are as essential to the perfection of his character, and the honour of his government, as even his grace and truth. Yet if this interpretation be adopted, these attributes are not so much as hinted at.—The marginal references will show the careful student, that the exposition above given accords to the general tenor of Scripture: and every one, who knows the plan of Christianity, must see the importance of the views thus set before us, to the right knowledge of God, our Lawgiver and Saviour. There should then be very cogent arguments adduced, before we consent to give up the instruction conveyed by our translation; which indeed seems clearly to express the genuine meaning of the original.

Will by no means clear the guilty. (7) נקה לא ינקר. Καὶ οὐ καθαρὶ τοὺς ἐνόχους. Sept. The same words, (Num. 14:18.) are rendered Καθαρίσας οὐ καθαρὶ τοὺς ἐνόχους. But the same expression, (Nah. 1:3.) is rendered Ἀθωοὺς οὐκ ἀθωώσει, 'Will not absolve the innocent'; which gives no clear meaning. The doctors explain it, He cleanses those that repent; but those who are unwilling to repent, he does not cleanse. . . . Who so repents sin, that he may sanctify himself, and prove himself just.' In Robertson.

V. 8, 9. This proclamation of the name of God had its proper effect upon Moses, who, immediately bowing down in reverential worship, seized, as it were, the encouraging words from the mouth of the Lord, and pleaded his mercy, as an argument with him to forgive Israel, to continue his special presence with them, and to take them for his inheritance, "though a stiff-necked people." Or, if we retain our translation, he makes even that circumstance an additional reason; as they, being a stiff-necked people, needed the conduct of such a merciful and gracious God; they could no otherwise

drink water: and she wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

29 ¶ And it came to pass when Moses came down from mount Sinai, with the two tables of testimony in Moses's hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone, while he talked with him.

30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him.

31 And Moses called unto them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them.

32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh; and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai.

33 And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.

q 1. 31:18, 32:16. Deut. 4:13. 10:2-4. 2 Cor. 3:7. * Heb. words. r See on 32:15. s 16:15. Josh. 2:4. 8:14. Judg. 16:20. Mark 9:6. 14:40. Luke 2:49. John 5:13. Acts 12:9. 23:5. 1 Matt. 17:2. Luke 9:29. Acts 6:15. 21 or 3:7-9. Rev. 1:16. 10:1. u Num. 12:8. Mark 9:3, 15. Luke 5:8. x 3:16. 24:1-3. y Gen. 45:3, 15. z 1 Kings 22:14. Matt. 28:20. 1 Cor. 11:23. 15:3. a Rom. 10:4. 2 Cor. 3:13-18.

templation of the divine glory caused an irradiation of the soul of Moses, which was miraculously represented to the people, by this external brightness of his countenance: but he himself was not conscious of it. His countenance did not shine when he came down the first time from the mount: but he seems, during the second time, to have had far more clear discoveries of the glorious perfections of the divine character, even of the goodness, mercy, righteousness, holiness, and truth of God, than before. Thus the Lord put honour upon him before the people, and made them stand in awe of him; so that even Aaron did not venture to approach, till Moses called him and the princes and people to him. Yet even then, the splendour of his face was too much for them to bear; and therefore he covered it with a veil when he spoke to them, but took it off when he appeared before the Lord, to inquire his will and commune with him.—Some think that this splendour continued as long as Moses lived; and others, that it ceased when the law had been fully given, and the worship at the tabernacle, under the conduct of Aaron and his sons, was fully established.—The Latin translation of the Bible, called the *Vulgate*, which is exclusively sanctioned by the church of Rome, understands the word, translated *shone*, to mean *horned*; though it seems only to refer to the manner in which rays of light are reflected. Yet, on this slender ground, painters have almost universally proceeded in drawing Moses with something like horns on his head!—The veil which he used marked the obscurity of this dispensation, compared with that of the New Testament; it was also an emblem of that veil, which pride and carnal-mindedness have put upon the hearts of men respecting spiritual things; and it represented the veil, that was and is upon the minds of such multitudes of the nation of Israel, respecting the true meaning of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; which can only be taken away by the Spirit of the Lord, showing to them "Christ, as the End of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Notes, 2 Cor. 3:12-18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The giving of the law to sinful man, was an indication that the Lord had purposes of mercy to him; and the writing of it in our hearts is the only sure evidence that our sins are forgiven, that God hath taken us into covenant with himself, and that we are become his people: so that he who can truly say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," notwithstanding the infirmities, conflicts, and remaining sinfulness, which cause him to "groan, being burdened," is certainly a true believer, and reconciled to God by Jesus Christ.—When we obey the Lord's commands, implicitly and without delay, and resort to those places and ordinances which he hath appointed, he will certainly condescend to meet us, and fulfil his kindest promises. But the NAME of the Lord proclaimed to Moses, as a just God and a Saviour, can alone give relief to a burdened conscience, or encourage the prayers of an humbled sinner. Let no inquiring soul overlook this NAME: for it is intimately connected with the "great Mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh," purchasing the Church with his own blood." Let no discouraged sinner despond with these words of grace and truth sounding in his ears: yet let none abuse such mercy; for God knows how to punish as well as pardon; to punish consistently with the glory of his mercy, as well as to pardon consistently with his justice and holiness; as those guilty wretches will one day know, who "sin on that grace may abound." But a true discovery of the Lord's glory will produce a happy union of filial confidence with profound reverence, in the heart of an experienced believer, and put life and vigour into his prayers and supplications; and every perfection of the name of God will furnish him with an argument, which he may plead with him, for the forgiveness of his sins, the sanctification of his heart, and the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

34 But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out and spake unto the children of Israel, that which he was commanded.

35 And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses's face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again until he went in to speak with him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Moses shows the will of God concerning the sabbath, the voluntary offering, and the tabernacle and its furniture. 1-19. The people readily contribute and assist, 20-29. Bezaleel and Aholiab are called to the work, 30-35.

AND Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, "These are the words which the LORD hath commanded, that ye should do them.

2 "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holyday, a

4:4-6. b Heb. 4:16. 10:19-22. c 29:30. Ec. 8:1. Dan. 12:3. Matt. 5:16. 13:43. John 5:35. Phil. 2:15. a 25: 31:1-11. 34:32. b Matt. 7:21-27. Rom. 2:13. Jam. 1:22. c 20:9, 10. 23:12. 31:13-16. 34:21. Lev. 23:3. Deut. 5:12-15. Heb. holiness.

V. 10-35. Whilst we take encouragement from the promises of God, we must observe to do his commandments; else every external advantage will only serve to increase our condemnation: and in seeking assurance that the Lord hath made with us an everlasting covenant of peace, we must break every covenant with sin, renounce all needless connexion with sinners, shun every snare and temptation, avoid all appearance of evil, and not spare or covet any object that tends to it: for "the LORD whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God," and will endure no rival in our affections. Nor is any thing more ensnaring to souls, or more destructive to religion, than the marriages of God's people with those who are ungodly, or of a false religion.—Such is our forgetfulness in the concerns of our souls, that we need not only to have the same things repeated in our ears, but to have them committed to writing, that we may have them ever before our eyes. (Note, 2 Pet. 1:12-15.)—While we devote ourselves to the Lord's service, and attend with delight on his worship, we may intrust ourselves and our possessions to his keeping, with confidence that none can do us any real hurt: and when a due portion of our time and substance is consecrated to his immediate service, we secure a sanctified and comfortable enjoyment of the remainder.—What true believer would not willingly forego all sensual pleasures, to enjoy with Moses the sacred pleasure of the holy mount? But alas! though "it is good to be there," how backward are we to begin the sweet service of prayer and praise, and how apt to grow weary of it! In heaven it shall be otherwise: no leisure for such things as here occupy our time and engross our hearts, no thought of them, no desire after them.—The more we now set our affections on things above, seek communion with the Lord, and enjoy the contemplation of his glory in the gospel, by faith and serious meditation; the more shall we be "changed into his image, from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord:" and when we come forth from our devotion, we shall shine in our holy conversation before men, and show by our good works that we have been with God. But it is well when others behold it, and glorify him on our behalf: while we ourselves are unconscious of it, being "clothed with humility." Indeed, while we are in this world we must accommodate ourselves to our situation, and to what those around us are able to bear: and not only should we avoid ostentation in respect of our religious experiences, and the especial favours which the Lord hath vouchsafed us; but prudently avoid speaking of them, lest we "throw our pearls before swine, which may trample them under foot, and turn again and rend us," contented to rejoice in them, and be thankful before God in secret; for it is "a joy which a stranger intermeddleth not with."—Indeed, in every thing we should endeavour to abate envy by condescension and courtesy, if the Lord has at all distinguished us; and to accommodate ourselves to the capacity of our weaker brethren, for their edification. But let us not forget, that we must appear before God without any veil, and just what we are, whether better or worse than men suppose us to be.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXV. V. 1. *These, &c.*] This especially relates to the directions given to Moses in the mount, concerning the tabernacle, the worship to be there performed, and the several things which pertained to it. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2, 3. The sanctification of the sabbath, being essential to every part of religion, is again and again repeated, and enforced in a variety of ways. The annexed penalty of death to the transgressor shows this to have been a judicial statute; and the connexion favours the opinion, that the prohibition "to kindle a fire throughout their habitations on the sabbath-days," was meant of fires used in manufactories or trades, by smiths, plumbers, and others, of which many would be required in preparing the sanctuary: but none even of that work might be done on the holy day of God.—If fires in gene-

sabbath of rest to the **LORD**: ¹Whosoever doeth work therein, shall be put to death.

3 Ye shall ²kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath-day.

4 ¶ And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This ³is the thing which the **LORD** commanded, saying,

5 Take ye from among you an offering unto the **LORD**: ⁴Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the **LORD**: gold, and silver, and brass,

6 And ⁵blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and ⁶goats' hair,

7 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim-wood,

8 And ⁷oil for the light, and ⁸spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense.

9 And ⁹onyx-stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate.

10 And every ¹⁰wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that the **LORD** hath commanded;

11 The ¹¹tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets,

12 The ¹²ark, and the staves thereof, ¹³with the mercy-seat, and ¹⁴the veil of the covering,

13 The ¹⁵table and his staves, and all his vessels, and the show-bread,

14 The ¹⁶candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light,

15 And ¹⁷the incense-altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and ¹⁸the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle,

16 The ¹⁹altar of burnt-offering with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, ²⁰the laver and his foot,

17 ²¹The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court,

18 ²²The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords,

19 ²³The clothes of service, to do service in the

holy place, ²⁴the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office.

20 ¶ And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.

21 And they came, every one ²⁵whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, ²⁶and they brought the **LORD's** offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

22 And they came both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought ²⁷bracelets and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and ²⁸every man that offered, ²⁹offered an offering of gold unto the **LORD**.

23 And every man with whom was found ³⁰blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought them.

24 Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass, brought the **LORD's** offering: and every man with whom was found shittim-wood for any work of the service, brought it.

25 And all the women that were ³¹wise-hearted, did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, ³²both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen.

26 And all the women ³³whose heart stirred them up in wisdom, spun goats' hair.

27 And the rulers brought ³⁴onyx-stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate;

28 And ³⁵spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense.

29 The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the **LORD**, every man and woman ³⁶whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the **LORD** had commanded to be made, by the hand of Moses.

30 ¶ And Moses said unto the children of Israel, ³⁷See, the **LORD** hath called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

31 And he hath filled him with the Spirit of

a Num. 15:32-36. John 5:16. Heb. 2:2, 3. 10:28, 29. e 16:23. 1s. 58:13. f See on 25:7-9. Judg. 5:9. Ps. 110:3. 2 Cor. 8:12. 9:7. g See on 25:1, 31, 36. 28:5, 6, 15, 33. h See on 26:7-14. i See on 27:20. k See on 25:5, 30:23-28. l See on 28:5, 17-21. 36:14. m See on 31:1-6, 36:1-4. n See on 31:7-9, 36:8-34. o See on 25:10-22, 37:1-9. p See on 26:31-33, 36:35, 36. q See on 25:23-30, 37:10-16. r See on 25:31-39, 37:17-24. s See on 30:1-10, 22-39, 37:25-28. t See on 36:37, 37:39. u See on 27:1-8, 38:1-7. v See on 30:18-21, 38:9. y See on 27:9-15, 38:9-20. z See on 31:10, 39:1, 41. Num. 4:7-15. a See on 28: 38:1-31.

b 5:22, 25, 21. 25:2. 36:2. Judg. 5:9, 9. 2 Sam. 7:27. 1 Chr. 28:2, 9, 29:5, 6, 9, 14, 17, 18. Ezra 1:5, 6. 7:27. Ps. 110:3. Jer. 30:21. 2 Cor. 8:12, 9:7. e 32:3. Num. 31:50. Is. 51:18. Ez. 16:11. d 1 Chr. 29:5, 7. 2 Chr. 24:9-14. Ezra 2:68, 69. Neh. 7:76-72. Is. 60:9, 13. Matt. 2:11. Mark 12:41-44. e See on 6:10, 25:2-7. f 28:3. 31:6, 36:1. 2 Kings 23:7. Prov. 14:1. 31:19-24. Luke 8:2, 3. Acts 9:39. Rom. 16:1-4, 6. Phil. 4:3. g 21:29, 36:8. h 9. 18. 30:23-38. k 21:22. 14. Deut. 12:32. Matt. 23:20. l See on 31:2-6. 1 Kings 7:14. Is. 28:26. 1 Cor. 12:4, 11. Jam. 1:17

ral be understood, we must suppose, either that was a temporary institution for the time during which the people in the wilderness were miraculously provided for; or that some exceptions were allowed in favour of the sick, infirm, and children, who must suffer extremely at some seasons, even in warm climates, for want of fire; or, that a fire which was burning might be kept up, though a fresh one might not be kindled. The subsequent parts of Scripture give no light on the subject; and among the various instances recorded, in which the Israelites were reprov'd and individuals punished, for neglecting to sanctify the sabbath, this is not once mentioned; nor is any intimation given, that the Jews in the times of Christ and his apostles, had no fires on that day, or even that they prepared no victuals. The sacred festivals would sometimes happen on the Sabbath, and the paschal lamb was roasted in the house where it was eaten: some exceptions must therefore be supposed, if we understand the prohibition concerning fires in general.—The modern Jews expound it *literally*: yet they use fires in various ways on their sabbath, but employ other persons to kindle them, or keep them up! While, however, we conclude, that fires for ordinary purposes on the Lord's day are allowed us; we should recollect, that the permission of works which are necessary, or conducive to our own or other men's real advantage, does not warrant us to "make provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts."

V. 4-18. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 25:27-30: 31:1-9.

V. 19. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 28:31:10.

V. 20-24. When Moses had delivered his message to the people, they departed to their tents, to fetch their several oblations; and on this occasion a peculiar influence was felt, enlarging their hearts to liberality. Many of those, no doubt, who had offered towards the golden calf, were now willing to retrieve their character with Moses and their brethren, or to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and such as had kept clear of that crime, were desirous of showing themselves more zealous for the worship of God than the idolaters had been for their idol. Yet the language used seems to imply, that only some of the people were thus liberal; and that

others did not offer at all, or less freely: no compulsion, however, or persuasion, was employed, but each was left to follow the dictates of his own mind. Nothing but *ear-rings* seem to have been given to make the golden calf; but various other golden ornaments were offered on this occasion, principally of the spoils of Egypt; both men and women being willing to part with their newly acquired adornments, to beautify the sanctuary of God. A rare example! But besides these articles of manufactured gold, some of the people presented such as was unwrought, and used as money; for this is thought to be meant by the words rendered "Every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the **LORD**."—When this oblation was completed, those who had less valuable things to offer, brought them. Afterwards the rulers brought the precious stones, &c. (27:28.)

V. 25, 26. *Wisdom*, in this connexion, means skill to perform the work in the best manner. As the *blue, purple, and scarlet*, are distinguished from the *fine linen*; it has generally been thought that wool dyed of these colours was meant. But wool is not once mentioned: either in the directions given to Moses, or the execution of them; as the goats' hair and badgers' skins are. All the sacerdotal garments had fine linen in their texture; and the law forbade the people to wear linen and woollen mingled together in the same garment. (*Lev.* 19:19. *Deut.* 22:11.)—The Jews indeed say that an exception was made to this law, in the case of the high-priest alone; but the other priests also wore girdles of the same, (39:27-29.) and the Scripture does not mention this exception. In Ezekiel's vision, the priests are expressly forbidden to wear wool in their ministrations. (*Ez.* 44:17, 18.)—The word rendered *fine linen* is used for linen of a peculiar kind, and it is allowed that several sorts were then in use; and perhaps this fine linen was woven without dyeing, and then embroidered with other linen, dyed of the several colours here mentioned.

V. 30-35. (*Notes*, 31:1-6.) The supernatural qualifications of Bezaleel and Aholiab proved their divine appointment; yet they had an express nomination to their work

God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;

32 And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

33 And in the cutting of stones to set *them*, and in carving of wood to make any manner of cunning work.

34 And *he* hath put in his heart that he may teach, *both* he and *Aholiab* the son of *Ahisamach* of the tribe of *Dan*.

35 *Them* hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, *even* of *them* that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Bezaleel and Aholiab receive the oblations and begin to work, 1-3. The liberality of the people is restrained, 4-7. The several parts of the sanctuary are made, 8-38. (Notes, &c. 26.)

THEN wrought *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the *LORD* put wisdom and understanding, to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the *LORD* had commanded.

2 And *Moses* called *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart the *LORD* had put wisdom; *even* every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it.

3 And they received of *Moses* all the offering which the children of *Israel* had brought, for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it *vithal*. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning.

4 And all the wise men that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made;

5 And they spake unto *Moses*, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the *LORD* commanded to make.

6 And *Moses* gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

7 For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

8 ¶ And every wise-hearted man, among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle, made ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; with *cherubims* of cunning work made he *them*.

9 The length of one curtain *was* twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits; the curtains *were* all of one size.

10 And he coupled the five curtains one unto another: and the other five curtains he coupled one unto another.

11 And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain, from the selvedge in the coupling: likewise he made in the uttermost side of another curtain, in the coupling of the second.

12 Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty

loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the coupling of the second: the loops held one curtain to another.

13 And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches. So it became one tabernacle.

14 ¶ And he made curtains of goats' hair, for the tent over the tabernacle: eleven curtains he made *them*.

15 The length of one curtain *was* thirty cubits, and four cubits *was* the breadth of one curtain: the eleven curtains *were* of one size.

16 And he coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves.

17 And he made fifty loops upon the uttermost edge of the curtain in the coupling; and fifty loops made he upon the edge of the curtain, which coupleth the second.

18 And he made fifty taches of brass to couple the tent together, that it might be one.

19 And he made a covering for the tent, of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of badgers' skins above *that*.

20 ¶ And he made boards for the tabernacle, of shittim-wood, standing up.

21 The length of a board *was* ten cubits, and the breadth of a board one cubit and a half.

22 One board had two tenons, equally distant from another: thus did he make for all the boards of the tabernacle.

23 And he made boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side southward.

24 And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards: two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons.

25 And for the other side of the tabernacle which is toward the north corner, he made twenty boards,

26 And their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board.

27 And for the sides of the tabernacle westward, he made six boards.

28 And two boards made he for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides.

29 And they were coupled beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one ring; thus he did to both of them in both the corners.

30 And there were eight boards, and their sockets *were* sixteen sockets of silver, under every board two sockets.

31 ¶ And he made bars of shittim-wood: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle,

32 And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the sides westward.

33 And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other.

34 And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings of gold to be places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

35 ¶ And he made a veil of blue, and purple,

n Exod. 2:10-37, Neh. 2:12, Jer. 1:16-17, 1 Cor. 2:14, 1 Cor. 15:7, 12:7, p Job 7:6, Is. 38:12, a See ex. 21:1, 25:31-35, b Job 4, Num. 7:9, Heb. 8:2, c Ex. 31:6, 35:10-21-35, Acts 6:3, d 35:21-25, 1 Cor. 29:5, e See n. 1, f 21:39, 1 Ps. 53, Is. 51:4, Jer. 21:12, g Matt. 24:45, Luke 12:42, 1 Cor. 11:4, h 2 Cor. 24:14, 31:6-10, 2 Cor. 8:2,3, Phil. 4:13, i See on 31:6, 35:10, j See

on 25:1-6, k See on 25:18-22, l Zeph. 9:9, Acts 2:1, Eph. 4:3-6, 1 Th. 2:2, m 1 Cor. 12:20, Eph. 2:20-22, 1 Pet. 2:4,5, n See on 26:1-13, o See on 26:14, p See on 26:15-25, 40:18,19, q 25:10, Num. 25:1, Dent. 10:3, r Heb. 1:1, i Heb. two sockets, 11 o sockets, under o e ho r l, 26:25, r See on 26:26-29, 30:5, s See on 26:31-35, 30:6, Matt. 27:51, Heb. 10:20.

they are also miraculously qualified to instruct their assistants, as well as to superintend them. Christ alone builds the temple of the *LORD*, and bears the glory; but ministers and private Christians, under his direction and by his grace, may be fellow-workers together with him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Let us here observe the faithfulness of *Moses*, and learn to imitate it, in every thing intrusted to us; and through him look unto *Jesus*, who was "faithful as a Son over his own house."—"Without a willing mind the most costly offerings would be abhorred; but with it, the meaneast will meet with a gracious acceptance; and our hearts may be said to be willing, when we cheerfully contribute and assist, according to our ability, in promoting the cause of God and his truth: but, as even this is the gift and work of God, we should beseech him daily to increase in us a willing mind, to abound unto every good work.—They, who in mean employments are diligent and humbly contented, are as acceptable to God,

as those who are engaged in more splendid services. The women who spun the goats' hair were wise-hearted, as well as the persons who presided over the work of the tabernacle, or as *Aaron* who burned incense there; because they "did it heartily to the *LORD*." (Note, Col. 3:22-25.) Thus the labourer, mechanic, or menial servant, who conscientiously attends to the work of his situation, in the faith and fear of God, may be as wise for his station as the most useful minister, and will certainly meet with the divine acceptance as well as he. In short, our wisdom and duty consist in giving God the glory and use of our talents, be they more or less; neither abusing nor burying them, but occupying with them till our Lord shall come; being satisfied that it is better to be a door-keeper in his service, than the most mighty and renowned of the ungodly.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

CHAP. XXXVI. The promptitude and alacrity with which these builders set about their work, the exactness of

and scarlet, and fine twined linen; *with* cherubims made he it of cunning work.

36 And he made thereunto four pillars of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold: their hooks *were* of gold, and he cast for them four sockets of silver.

37 ¶ And he made ^aan door for the tabernacle-door, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of ^bneedlework,

38 And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapters and their fillets with gold: but their five sockets *were* of brass.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The ark and mercy-seat made, 1—9. The table of show-bread, 10—16. And the candlestick, 17—24. The altar of incense, 25—28; and the holy oil and incense, 29. (Notes, &c., 25: 30: 1—10, 22—38.)

AND Bezaleel made ^athe ark of shittim-wood: two cubits and a half *was* the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it.

2 And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about.

3 And he cast for it four rings of gold, *to be set* by the four corners of it: even two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the other side of it.

4 And he made staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold.

5 And he put the staves into the rings, by the sides of the ark, to bear the ark.

6 And he made the ^amercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

7 And he made two ^acherubims of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy-seat.

8 One cherub ^aon the end on this side, and another cherub ^aon the other end on that side: out of the mercy-seat, made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof.

9 And the ^acherubims spread out *their* wings on high, and covered with ^atheir wings over the mercy-seat, with their faces one to another: *even* ^ato the mercy-seat-ward were the faces of the cherubims.

10 ¶ And he made ^athe table of shittim-wood: two cubits *was* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

11 And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round about.

12 Also he made thereunto a border of an hand-breadth round about: and made a crown of gold for the border thereof round about.

13 And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings upon the four corners, that *were* in the four feet thereof.

14 Over against the border were the rings, the places for the staves, to bear the table.

15 And he made the staves of shittim-wood and overlaid them with gold, to bear the table.

16 And he made the vessels which *were* upon the table, his ^adishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to ^acover withal, of pure gold.

17 ¶ And he made ^athe candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work made he the candlestick, his shaft and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers were of the same:

18 And six branches out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof:

19 Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds, in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds, in another branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches, going out of the candlestick.

20 And in the candlestick *were* four bowls made like almonds, his knops and his flowers.

21 And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches going out of it.

22 Their knops and their branches were of the same: all of it *was* one beaten work of pure gold.

23 And he made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff-dishes, of pure gold.

24 Of a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof.

25 ¶ And he made the ^aincense-altar of shittim-wood: the length of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit, (*it was* four-square,) and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same.

26 And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round about.

27 And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal.

28 And he made the staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold.

29 And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure ^aincense of sweet spices, according to the work of ^athe apothecary.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The altar of burnt-offering made; and the laver, the pillars, and the hangings for the court, 1—20. The money collected and the use made of it, 21—31. (Notes, &c., 27: 30: 1—21.)

AND he made ^athe altar of burnt-offering of shittim-wood: five cubits *was* the length

^a See on 25:36, 37. * Heb. *the work of a needleworker, or, embroiderer.* ^b See on 25:16—16. 26:33. 31:7. 40:3, 20, 21. Num. 10:33—36. ^b See on 25:17—22. Lev. 16:12—15. Rom. 3:25. 1 John 2:2. c 1 Kings 6:23—29. Ps. 80:1, 104:4. ^c Ex. 10:2. * Or, *out of, &c.* ^d Or, *out of, &c.* ^e d Gen. 3:24. 28:12. John 1:51. 1 Tim. 3:16. Heb. 1:14. ^e Eph. 3:10. 1 Pet. 1:12. ^f See on 25:23—30, 35:13. 40:4, 22, 23. Ez. 40:39—42. ^g See on 25:29. ^h Or, *pour out withal.* ^h See

on 25:31—39. 40:24, 25. Zech. 4:2, 11. Matt. 5:15. John 1:4—9. Phil. 2:15. Rev. 1:20. ⁱ Rev. 1:12, 20. 2:1. 5:5. ^k See on 3:1—5. 40:5, 26, 27. Luke 1:9. Rev. 8:3, 4. ^l See on 30:73—38. Is. 11:2. 61:1. John 3:34. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. 1 John 2:20, 27. m Ps. 141:2. Heb. 7:25. n Ec. 10:1. ^a See on 27:1—8. 40:6, 29. 2 Chr. 4:1. Ez. 43:13—17. Heb. 13:10.

which they performed it, and the disinterested fidelity with which they objected to the people's bringing any more contributions, are well worthy of our imitation. Thus should we serve God, yea, and our earthly superiors for his sake, in all things lawful; and thus should all, who are employed in public trusts, abhor filthy lucre, be superior to covetousness, and avoid all occasions and temptations to it, or appearances of it; for robbing the public is robbing man, which is worse than private theft; as murdering a multitude is worse than killing an individual.—Nor is the people's liberality less worthy of commendation: for this proclamation to restrain their bounty was far more reputable for them, and honourable to God, than one would have been, which required an addition to their too scanty contributions.—It should however be carefully observed, that though the rich can never devote their substance too entirely to the service of God, yet they may exceed in the particular application of it: and there have been ages of the church, and there may still be instances, in which an ill-judged liberality has introduced pride, indolence, and luxury, where there should be bright examples of humility, diligence, and self-denial. But this is not the general fault of the age in which we live: and though some few individuals may err on this side; yet the circumstances of too many, of every denomination, who labour in the word and doctrine, as well

as the appearance of many places of worship, evidently prove that most men, in our days, are sufficiently careful not *thus* to injure the cause of godliness. Wisdom, however, is profitable to direct: and when God puts wisdom and grace into the heart, the hands will be diligently employed in every good work, or cheerfully stretched out to contribute to it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

CHAP. XXXVII. After what hath been already said, we need only observe, that such repetitions were peculiarly useful to the Israelites; for in these types they chiefly had their gospel, and they were not permitted to see the things themselves, as they were placed within the sanctuary: and thus in the New Testament we have the same things related in two or three places, with not very material variations, yet not without usefulness.—The exactness of the workmen to their rule is worthy of our imitation: and it is never unreasonable to observe, that through the great Antitype, the substance of all these shadows, our way being opened to the mercy-seat, we should continually draw near in faith; feeding daily upon him and his fullness, as the nourishment of our souls; walking through this dark world according to the light of his word, and seeking for renewed and enlarged anointings of his Holy Spirit: that here we may ^arejoice in him and glorify him, and at length be forever with him in heaven.

thereof, and in cubits the breadth thereof, (it was four-square,) and three cubits the height thereof.

2 And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass.

3 And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basins, and the flesh-hooks, and the fire-pans: all the vessels thereof made he of brass.

4 And he made for the altar a brazen grate of net-work, under the compass thereof, beneath unto the midst of it.

5 And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, to be places for the staves.

6 And he made the staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with brass.

7 And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it withal: he made the altar hollow with boards.

8 ¶ And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

9 ¶ And he made the court: on the south side southward, the hangings of the court were of fine twined linen, an hundred cubits.

10 Their pillars were twenty and their brazen sockets twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets were of silver.

11 And for the north side, the hangings were an hundred cubits, their pillars were twenty, and their sockets of brass twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets of silver.

12 And for the west side were hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets of silver.

13 And for the east side eastward, fifty cubits.

14 The hangings of the one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their sockets three.

15 And for the other side of the court-gate, on this hand and that hand, were hangings of fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their sockets three.

16 All the hangings of the court round about were of fine twined linen.

17 And the sockets for the pillars were of brass: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets, of silver: and the overlaying of their chapters of silver: and all the pillars of the court were filleted with silver.

18 And the hanging for the gate of the court was needlework of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits was the length, and the height in the breadth was five cubits, answerable to the hangings of the court.

19 And their pillars were four, and their sockets

b See on 30:18—21. 40:7,30—32. 1 Kings 7:23—26,38. Zech. 13:1. John 13:10. Tit. 3:5,6. Heb. 9:10. c Job 37:18. Is. 3:23. Jam. 1:23,24. * Or, *brass* glasses. † Heb. *assembling by troops*. 1 Sam. 2:22. Prov. 8:34. Luke 2:37. 1 Tim. 5:5. d See on 27:9—18. 40:3,33. 1 Kings 6:36. Ps. 92:13. 100:4. e 27:19. Ezra 9:3. Eccl. 12:11. Is. 22:23. Eph. 2:21,22. Col. 2:19. f 25:16. 40:3. Num. 1:50,53. 9:15. 10:11. 17:7,8. 18:2. Acta 7:44. Rev. 11:9. g Num. 4:28,33. Ezra 8:26—30. h 6:

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 8. *Of the looking-glasses, &c.* These are supposed to have been plates of the finest brass, highly polished, which, before the invention of glass, served for the purpose of mirrors, and cast a much stronger reflection than those made of silver. Some women, peculiarly devoted to God, and zealous for the establishment of his worship, who were used to assemble together at the door of the tabernacle, where the Lord met his people, before the sanctuary was erected, at a time when much brass was wanted, and perhaps no great quantity was in the camp, expressed their zeal by parting with their mirrors; which are generally deemed necessary, and which must be allowed to be very convenient. (Note, 1 Sam. 2:22.)

V. 18. *Height, &c.* The hangings of the court were five cubits in height; but that which was the height of the hanging for the gate, when hung up, was its breadth, not its length, as it lay on the ground.

V. 21—24. After the making of the several parts of the sanctuary, the sacred historian interrupts the narrative, to state some particulars concerning the gold and silver employed in that work. By the command of Moses, the Levites performed the service here mentioned, under the direction of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son.

An embroiderer. (23) This confirms what was before

of brass four, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their chapters, and their fillets, of silver.

20 And all the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, were of brass.

21 ¶ This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar son to Aaron the priest.

22 And Bezaleel the son of Uri the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the Lord commanded Moses.

23 And with him was Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen.

24 All the gold that was occupied for the work, in all the work of the holy place, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

25 ¶ And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation, was an hundred talents and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

26 ¶ A bekah for every man, that is, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty year old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men.

27 And of the hundred talents of silver, were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the veil; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.

28 And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five shekels, he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapters, and filleted them.

29 And the brass of the offering was seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels.

30 And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar,

31 And the sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the court-gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The several garments of the priests made. (Notes, 3c. 28.) 1—31. The whole work finished, and received by Moses, who blesses the workmen, 32—43.

AND of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made clothes of service, to do service in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the Lord commanded Moses.

23. 1 Chr. 6:3. 24. 4. 131:2,6. 35:30—35. k 1 Chr. 22:14—16. 29:2—7. Hag. 2:8. 130:13,14. Lev. 5:15. 27:3,25. Num. 3:47. 18:16. m 30:13,16. n 2. Heb. a poll. n 12:37. Num. 1:46. 26:51. o 26:19,21,25,32. p 26:37. 27:10,17. a 25: 4. 35:23. b 31:10. 35:19. c Ez. 43:12. Heb. 9:12,25. d 26:2,4. 31:10. Ez. 42:14.

advanced, that the fine linen was embroidered with these colours. (Note, 35:25,26.)

V. 26—28. A shekel is about half an ounce troy-weight. At half a shekel each, 6000 persons collected a talent of silver; consequently a talent consisted of about a hundred and twenty-five pounds troy, or rather more than a hundred weight. This passage fixes the weight of a talent at 3000 shekels; for both the round sum and the residue agree with this computation, and can agree with no other. This seems indeed to have been the weight of a talent, of whatever metal; and it may easily be computed how much it would be worth of our current coin.—The silver called “the ransom of their souls,” was raised as a tax which each must pay, but all the rest was voluntary. (Note, 30:11—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In all ages there have been some persons more devoted to God, more constant in their attendance upon his ordinances, and more willing to part with lawful things for his sake, than others. These are never censured, but always commended and honoured in the word of God: for when relative duties and social obligations are not neglected or violated, we cannot too much renounce the world, deny ourselves, and devote our all to the Lord, and seek our whole happiness from him. (Note, Luke 2:36—38.)—It may also be added, that the en-

2 And he made ^{the}ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

3 And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, *with cunning work.*

4 They made shoulder-pieces for it, to couple it together: by the two edges was it coupled together.

5 And the curious girdle of his ephod that was upon it was of the same, according to the work thereof: of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, as the Lord commanded Moses.

6 And they wrought onyx-stones enclosed in ouches of gold, graven as signets are graven, with the names of the children of Israel.

7 And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, *that they should be stones for a memorial to the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses.*

8 ¶ And he made the breastplate of cunning work, like the work of the ephod; of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

9 It was four-square; they made the breastplate double: a span was the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, *being doubled.*

10 And they set in it four rows of stones: *the first row was a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this was the first row.*

11 And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

12 And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.

13 And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper: *they were enclosed in ouches of gold in their enclosings.*

14 And the stones were according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes.

15 And they made upon the breastplate chains, at the ends, of wreathen work of pure gold.

16 And they made two ouches of gold, and two gold rings: and put the two rings in the two ends of the breastplate.

17 And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate.

18 And the two ends of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, before it.

19 And they made two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, upon the border of it which was on the side of the ephod inward.

20 And they made two other golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the other coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod.

21 And they did bind the breastplate by his rings unto the rings of the ephod, with a lace of blue, that it might be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate might not be loosed from the ephod; as the Lord commanded Moses.

22 ¶ And he made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue.

23 And there was a hole in the midst of the robe, as the hole of an habergeon, with a band round about the hole, that it should not rend.

24 And they made upon the hems of the robe pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and twined linen.

25 And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates, upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates.

26 A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to minister in; as the Lord commanded Moses.

27 ¶ And they made coats of fine linen, of woven work, for Aaron and for his sons.

28 And a mitre of fine linen, and goodly bonnets of fine linen, and linen breeches of fine twined linen.

29 And a girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, of needlework; as the Lord commanded Moses.

30 ¶ And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

31 And they tied unto it a lace of blue, to fasten it on high upon the mitre; as the Lord commanded Moses.

32 ¶ Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.

33 And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent, and all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his pillars, and his sockets,

34 And the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the veil of the covering,

35 The ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof, and the mercy-seat,

36 The table, and all the vessels thereof, and the show-bread,

37 The pure candlestick, with the lamps thereof, even with the lamps to be set in order, and all the vessels thereof, and the oil for light.

38 And the golden altar, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the tabernacle-door,

39 The brazen altar, and his grate of brass, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot,

40 The hangings of the court, his pillars, and his sockets, and the hanging for the court-gate, his cords and his pins, and all the vessels of the

• See on 28:6–12, Lev. 8:7. † See on 29:9, Is. 11:5. Rev. 1:13. ‡ See on 33:9, Job 28:16, Ez. 28:13. § 28:29, Josh. 4:7, Mark 14:32–25. ¶ See on 28:13–22, Lev. 8:8–9, Is. 54:17, Eph. 6:14. ¶ See on 28:17–21, Rev. 21:19–21. • Or, ruby. † Cant. 1:10. ‡ See on 28:31–35. m Cant. 4:3, 13. 6:7. n Deut. 22:12, Mat. 9:20. o See on 28:40–42, Lev. 8:13, Is. 61:10, Ez. 44:

18, Rom. 3:22, 13:14, Gal. 3:27, 1 Pet. 1:13. p See on 28:36–38, Heb. 7:26, q Zech. 14:20, Tit. 2:14, Rev. 5:10, r 25:40, Deut. 12:32, 1 Sam. 15:22, 1 Chr. 28:19, Mat. 23:20. s See on 31:7–11, 35:11–19. † Heb. the incense of sweet spices.

closure of this court, being only of curtains, might intimate that it should in due time be removed; and so we may take occasion to bless God for the enlargement of his church, by the calling of us Gentiles into it; and to pray that all remaining boundaries may be removed, and the whole earth filled with the knowledge of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIX. V. 3. The art of drawing metal into wire was not known at that time, as appears from this verse; otherwise the gold might have been drawn out to any length and fineness which they chose.

V. 43. The words, “as the Lord commanded Moses,” or to that effect, are used no less than ten times in this chapter. This shows the importance of the exact observance of the directions given, to the acceptableness of the service; without which the liberality and activity of the people, and the skill of the workmen, would have been of no avail.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When unanimity, diligence, and zeal animate the hearts of

numbers in a good cause, much may be done in a short time: and when the commandment of God is continually attended to, as the rule and standard of every service, the whole will be done well.—We ought indeed daily to prove our own work, to take the counsel and regard the judgment of others, to present all we do before the Lord, and beg to be shown how far he approves or disapproves it: but the grand trial of all our actions will be at the conclusion of them. We ought not therefore rashly to judge others, or their works, before the time; nor be elated by man's applause, or cast down by his reproach, which are often alike erroneous and unmerited: but we should exercise ourselves to keep a conscience void of offence, be contented with its testimony, and wait that day, “when the Lord shall come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.” For though the glory of all the good we do belongs to him, and our best needs much forgiveness; yet, if by his grace our hearts are humbly upright and willing, and we walk by his

service of the tabernacle, for the tent of the congregation,

41 The cloths of service to do service in the holy place, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments to minister in the priest's office.

42 According to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work.

43 And Moses did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.

CHAPTER XL.

Moses, at God's command, sets up the tabernacle, and consecrates it with its furniture, 1-33. The Lord by the cloud and glory, takes possession of it, and guides and protects Israel, 31-38.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation:

3 And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil.

4 And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it, and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof.

5 And thou shalt set the altar of gold, for the incense, before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle.

6 And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt-offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.

7 And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein.

8 And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court-gate.

9 ¶ And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy.

10 And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt-offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.

11 And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.

12 ¶ And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.

13 And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy

garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

14 And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats:

15 And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood, throughout their generations.

16 Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, in the first month, in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up.

18 And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars.

19 And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses.

20 And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy-seat above upon the ark.

21 And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the veil of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the LORD commanded Moses.

22 And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward without the veil.

23 And he set the bread in order upon it, before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

24 And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward.

25 And he lighted the lamps before the LORD as the LORD commanded Moses.

26 And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation, before the veil.

27 And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses.

28 And he set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle.

29 And he put the altar of burnt-offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering; as the LORD commanded Moses.

30 And he set the laver between the tent of

t. 1, 31-10. u. Gm. 1:31. x. Gen. 14:19. Lev. 9:22-23. Num. 6:23-27. 2 Sam. 6:18. 1 Kings 8:14. 2 Chr. 30:27. a. 17. 12:1, 2. 13:4. Num. 7:1. b. 6:16. 26:33, 34. 27:21. 30:36. 35:11. 36:18. Job. 21:28. marg. c. 21. See on 25:17-22. 26:33, 34. Num. 4:5. Lev. 11:19. 15:5. d. 22. See on 25:23-30. 26:35, 36. e. Heb. 'he o-der thereof'. Lev. 24:5. f. 24:25. See on 25:31-39. 1:29, 27. See on 30:1-5. 37:23-28. 1 John 2:1, 2. g. 28. 26:36, 37. 36:37, 38. h. 29. See on 27:1-8. 38:1-5. 7:130-32. See on 30:18-21. 38:8. Ps. 96:6. Zech. 13:1. k. 33. See on 27:9-19. 38:9-19. 130:23-33. 37:29. Ps. 45:7. Is. 11:2. 61:1. Matt. 3:16. John 3:

34. 1 John 2:20. m. 26:36, 37. Lev. 9:11. n. Heb. 'holiness of holinesses'. u. See on 29:1-35. Lev. 8:1-13. o. See on 28:41. John 3:34. 17:19. Heb. 10:10-29. 1 John 2:20, 27. p. 12:14. 30:31. Num. 25:13. Ps. 110:4. Heb. 7:3, 17. 24. q. 2. Num. 7:1. 9:1. r. 26:15-30. 36:30-34. s. 28:1-14. 35:8-15. t. 16:24. 25:16-21. 31:18. Ps. 40:8. u. 37:6-9. Rom. 3:25. 10:4. Heb. 4:16. 10:18-21. 1 John 2:2. v. 3. 36:33. 35:12. y. 1. z. 24. 25:35. a. 25:30. b. 25:31-35. 37:17-24. John 8:12. Rev. 1:20. 2:5. c. 30:1-10. Rev. 9:3, 4. d. 5. 26:36-37. 38:9-19. e. 6. z. 1-8. 38:1-7. Heb. 13:10. f. 7. 30:18-21. 38:8. Ex. 36:25.

rule, for his glory, and in dependence on his teaching and assistance, he will graciously applaud us, and say, "Well done, good and faithful servants;" and his blessing will abundantly repay our labour, which indeed is even here its own reward. After his example, therefore, as well as that of Moses, parents, masters, ministers, magistrates, and others, should learn not to be always finding fault; but to show themselves pleased with, and to commend, the honest endeavours of others to do well.—They who serve the cause of religion have a claim to our prayers, even as if they were our own benefactors; and we should both thank God for them, and beg of him to bless them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XL. V. 2. On the fifteenth day of the first month the Israelites came out of Egypt; on the fifteenth day after that event the law was given; and with several intervening delays, Moses spent at least eighty days upon the mount. Half the year must therefore have passed, or perhaps more, before they began to work upon the tabernacle; in half a year, or somewhat less, the whole was completed; and immediately Moses received directions for setting it up.—"The tabernacle" means the whole building; "the tent" the curtains by which it was covered. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3, 4. Marg. Ref. c—e. Notes, 25:10-39.

V. 5. Marg. Ref. f, g. Notes, 26:36, 37. 30:1-8.

V. 6. Marg. Ref. Note, 27:1-8.

V. 7, 8. Marg. Ref. i, k. Notes, 27:9-19. 30:18-21.

V. 9-11. Marg. Ref. l, m. Notes, 29:35-37. 30:22-33.

V. 12-14. Marg. Ref. n, o. Notes, 29:1-37.

V. 15. Everlasting. This priesthood endured, in the

family of Aaron, till Christ came; and in him, the Substance of all these shadows, it rests for ever.—The sons of Aaron were anointed with the same holy oil as their father; but it is not generally supposed, that it was poured on their heads, as it was on his. At least this is never mentioned concerning any other than the high-priest. (29:7. Heb. 8:12. 21:10. Ps. 133:2.) The anointing oil was "sprinkled both on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons, and on their garments." (29:21. Lev. 8:30.)—In this respect, "Moses anointed them, as he anointed their father;" and perhaps some of the oil might be applied to their heads, though not poured on them, as on that of their father. The distinction between the anointed priest, or high-priest, and the other priests, seems marked through all the subsequent part of the Old Testament, wherever the subject is introduced.

V. 16. Moses took the same care in erecting the tabernacle, and disposing every thing in its place, that the workmen had done in making all things according to the mind of God. Bp. Patrick.

V. 17-33. (Marg. Ref.) In the whole of this solemn service, Moses acted as a priest, and as a type of him, who unites in his own person the offices of a Prophet, Priest, and King. (Note, Deut. 18:15-19.) But after Aaron and his sons were fully established in their office, it does not appear that Moses performed any of the services to which they were especially appointed. As however he went into the tabernacle to inquire of the Lord, it may be supposed that, on these occasions, he washed his hands and feet at the laver as Aaron and his sons did in their daily ministrations.—The time, in which the anointing and consecrating of the sacred

the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash *withal*.

31 And Moses, and Aaron and his sons, washed their hands and their feet thereat.

32 When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses.

33 And he reared up ^bthe court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate: so Moses finished the work.

34 ¶ Then ^aa cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

^g John 13:10. ^h 8. 27:9—16. 139:32. 1 Kings 6:9. Zech. 4:9. John 4:34. 17:4. 2 Tim. 4:7. Heb. 3:2—5. ^k 13:21, 22. 14:19, 20, 24. 25:8, 22. 29:43. 33:9. Lev. 16:2. Num. 9:15—23. 1 Kings 8:10. 2 Chr. 5:13. Is. 6:4. Ez. 43:4—7. Hag. 2:7.

vessels took place, seems to have been the same, as that in which Aaron and his sons were consecrated; though Moses in this general narrative did not specially mention it.

V. 34, 35. The Lord testified his acceptance of the services of the people, and his entire reconciliation to them as a nation, by his gracious residence among them in the cloud, the symbol of his special presence. This rested above the tabernacle, while a more resplendent glory filled it, so that Moses himself could not enter for a time; but probably it afterwards was confined to the holy of holies, above the mercy-seat between the cherubim.

V. 36—38. (*Note, Num. 9:16—23.*) In allusion to this special guidance of Israel, many pious persons use the expression, "moving of the cloud," as denoting the providential and gracious direction which God now affords his people; and doubtless it is allowable thus to accommodate and apply these *typical* passages to our own circumstances, provided it be done with sobriety, judgment, and caution. But we should be careful not to introduce a new rule of duty; or give occasion to uncertainty, error, or enthusiasm, by a vague and indeterminate use of such allusions. We are not under the same evident infallible guidance that Israel was: the word of God, soberly explained, is our only and our sufficient rule of duty; and in understanding it, and in applying general precepts to particular circumstances, good counsel, fervent prayer, and a careful observance of Providence, should be employed. Some things are always our duty, when we have opportunity and ability; and these need no other direction: other things are lawful in themselves; but it may be doubtful, whether in our case and situation they are advisable; that is, whether they are likely, all things considered, to conduce to the glory of God and our own real good, and the good of our brethren and neighbours. When, after mature consultation and fervent prayer, such matters *still remain doubtful*; the events of Providence may be of some weight in the decision, especially in cases where self-denial must be exercised, and danger encountered. But, when any undertaking is evidently wrong, or plainly inexpedient, or unadvisable in the opinion of impartial judges, and yet the inclination leans that way; in this case, that which men call the "moving of the cloud," or the opening of Providence, is generally no more than a temptation of Satan. The suggestions of that enemy

35 And Moses ^hwas not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

36 And ^mwhen the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel ^hwent onward in all their journeys:

37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not, till the day that it was taken up.

38 For the cloud of the LORD *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and "fire was on it by night in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

^{9.} 1 Kings 8:11. 2 Chr. 5:14. 7:2. Rev. 15:8. ^m Num. 10:11—13, 33—36. Neh. 9:19. 1 Cor. 10:1. ^h Heb. *journeyed*. ⁿ Ps. 78:14. 105:39. Is. 4:5, 6.

are often mistaken for divine impressions; and men fancy they are following the Lord, when they are gratifying their own wayward inclinations. Upon the whole, in all matters, let us refer "to the law and to the testimony." Plain precepts and maxims of wisdom are far surer rules, than the most ingenious allusions; and the book of Providence, as well as the supposed guidance of the Spirit, must be examined by, and brought to the test of, the plain rules of the written word, "which are the light of our feet and the lantern of our paths."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The several parts of divine revelation, the distinct offices of Jesus Christ, and the various graces of the Christian character, are never seen in their glory and beauty, till they are viewed as united in one harmonious *whole*; which *whole* the believer values, desires, and seeks to call his own.—The periodical return of the seasons should remind us of the duties to God and our souls, to which we are called; and we may hope for a good year, month, week, or day, if we begin it with serious attention to the worship of God, and solemn dedication of ourselves to him. But when we remember that within this very year, which was entered upon in so promising a manner, the Lord was not well pleased with the most of the Israelites, and doomed "their carcasses to fall in the wilderness;" we may justly fear, lest we should amuse and deceive ourselves with a form of godliness: and the consideration, how few of them entered Canaan, should warn young people not to postpone the care of their souls till they are settled in life, lest that should prove too late.—Happy they, who like Moses receive repeated testimony from God, that they do his will and keep his commandments! But, through him, let us look unto Jesus Christ, who collects his people from all nations and ages; and according to the will of the Father, having washed them in his blood, and anointed them with the unction of his grace, forms them into one holy temple, "a habitation of God through the Spirit," in which he dwells to illuminate, to purify, to guide, and to defend them through life, and in which he will dwell for ever. Being then taught by the Spirit to imitate Christ, as well as to depend on him, devoutly to attend on his ordinances, and obey his precepts; we shall be preserved from losing our way, and be "led in the midst of the paths of judgment," till we come to heaven, the habitation of his holiness

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

LEVITICUS.

In the Hebrew Bible this book, like the preceding, is named from the first word (לֵוִי) but, after the Greek translation, we call it **LEVITICUS**: because it records the solemn consecration of Aaron and his sons, who were of the tribe of Levi, to be the priests of the Lord, and the confirmation of the priesthood to their descendants in all subsequent ages, while that dispensation endured; and because directions for their various ministrations are here very particularly given; though many things respecting the separation of the rest of the tribe, and the services allotted to them, are recorded in the subsequent book. It contains little history, except the awful death of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, as soon as consecrated, for irreverence in their sacred office: and it principally consists of ritual laws, delivered to Moses from above the mercy-seat, during the first month after the Tabernacle was erected; though moral precepts are frequently interspersed.—In these ceremonies the gospel was preached to Israel: and the solemn and exact manner, and the many repetitions, with which they are enforced, are suited to impress the serious mind with a conviction, that something immensely more important and spiritual, than the external observances, is couched under each of them. We are indeed thus taught, that all true religion must be grounded on divine revelation, and be regulated by it; and not be left in any degree to human invention: yet one inspired apostle calls the legal institutions “beggarly elements,” and “the law of a carnal commandment;” and another allows, that they formed “a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.”—But if we look carefully into the New Testament, we shall be convinced, that these ordinances, which to numbers appear so unmeaning and unreasonable, were not only “shadows of good things to come,” but real prophecies; which, being exactly accomplished in the gospel, prove the book in which they are found to be divinely inspired. It is not known how far the Israelites observed the singular law concerning the sabbatical year, and that of Jubilee, which, it is evident, were very frequently neglected; but no impostor would have ventured to enact such statutes; much less to have committed himself by these words: “And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase. Then I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old store.” (25:20–22.) Yet, we do not find, in the whole history, a single complaint that this extraordinary promise failed of an exact accomplishment. The twenty-sixth chapter likewise contains an evident prediction of the present state of the nation of Israel, which amidst all its dispersions and oppressions has hitherto been preserved a distinct people, apparently in order to the performance of the promises made them in the close of the chapter. It seems peculiarly useful, in this skeptical age, to introduce each book in the sacred volume, by some notice of those prophecies found in it which have received an evident accomplishment, many ages after the time when we have full proof the books were extant; as this tends to establish, not only their authenticity, but also their divine authority, far more than human testimony can do.—In addition to this we may observe, that the sacred writers, in all the subsequent parts of Scripture, and even our Lord, as well as his apostles, quote or refer to this book in language which proves, both that it is the genuine work of Moses, and also that the statutes contained in it are the word of God; the two points which many, called Christians, seem at present ready to concede to skeptics and infidels. (2 Chron. 30:16. Ezra 7:6, 12. Matt. 8:4. Luke 2:22–24. Rom. 10:4, 5. Comp. 26:12, with 2 Cor. 6:16, and 19:18, with Gal. 5:14.) Let us therefore adhere to the testimony of these unexceptionable witnesses, and study it as a part of “the oracles of God;” and very important instruction will be derived from it, even to us in this remote age, though we are no longer under the obligation of its ritual appointments.

B. C. 1490.

CHAPTER I.

The law of the burnt-offering, of a bullock, 1–9; of a sheep, or goat, 10–13: of doves, 14–17.

AND THE LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

a Ex. 19:3. 24:1, 2, 12. 29:32. John 1:17. b Ex. 25:22. 33:7. 39:32. 40:34, 35. Num. 12:4, 5. c 22:18, 19. Gen. 4:3–5. 1 Chr. 16:29. Rom. 12:1, 6. Eph. 5:2. d 6:9–13. 8:13–21. Gen. 8:20. 22:2, 8, 13. Ex. 24:5. 29:18, 32. 32:6. 38:1. Num.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The laws, recorded in the book of Exodus were either delivered to the people immediately from Sinai, or to Moses on the top of that mountain; but after the sanctuary had been erected, the remaining part of the law was delivered to Moses by an audible voice from the divine glory, which first filled the tabernacle, and then rested above the mercy-seat. When this glory filled the holy place, Moses was not able to enter; but the Lord called to him to draw nigh, and as he stood without he spake the laws to him.—The word rendered *offering*, (קָרְבָּן *Corban*, Mark 7:11.) signifies *brought near*, and, in general, means any oblation presented to God; and therefore the meat-offerings, regulated in the next chapter, were intended, as well as the burnt-offerings, &c.—The sacrificing of innocent animals had been an institution of true religion from the fall of Adam; and thence by tradition it was derived into the various species of false religion, which prevailed in the world.—Among the worshippers of the true God, no animals but those called *clean* were offered. In most cases the head of the family, or the person presenting the sacrifice, officiated as priest. (Note, Ex. 24:5.) The blood of the animal was shed, and then the body was consumed by fire on an altar: or sometimes only a part of it; and then the remainder was feasted on by the person who sacrificed, along with his family and friends. (Gen. 31:54. Note, Ex. 18:12.) But, under the Mosaic dispensation, very particular laws were given upon this subject, which were connected with the exclusive appointment of Aaron's family to the priesthood. In general, all the sacrifices in various ways typified Christ; and also shadowed out the believer's duty, character, privilege, and communion with God: and indeed, if we except the divine Person, the miracles, and the meritorious mediation, of the Lord Jesus, there is scarcely any thing in the whole Scripture spoken of him, which is so appropriate, as not to have also a subordinate meaning that concerns his people; and therefore we need not hesitate to apply the same things, both to Christ and to Christians, in different respects.—Such animals only were allowed in sacrifice, as are most useful and valuable to man, which he is able

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2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, ‘If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, *even* of the herd, and of the flock.

3 If his offering be a burnt-sacrifice of the head, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall

28:3, 10, 11, 19, 23, 24, 27, 31. 29:8–11, 13. Is. 1:11. Heb. 10:8–10. e 3:1. 4:22. 22:19–25. Ex. 12:5. Deut. 15:21. Zech. 13:7. Mal. 1:14. Luke 1:35. Eph. 5:27. Heb. 7:26. 9:14. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. 2:22–24.

to possess as property, and the increase of which he promotes: and not all of them; but those only which are most domestic, harmless, patient, cleanly, and whose flesh is most commonly used for food. Neither filthy swine, nor devouring lions, nor the warlike horse, nor the subtle fox, nor the voracious dog, nor any creature which subsists on animal food, was appointed for sacrifice; nor yet the timorous hare or deer, which flees from the intercourse of man: but those alone which represented most aptly what Christ would be, and what his people ought to be; as the laborious patient ox; the gentle, harmless, and cleanly sheep; and the tender, loving dove: for even the useful goat was sacrificed far less frequently, than sheep and oxen.—It is known that the heathens offered various animals, which were deemed unclean by the Israelites; especially swine and horses.

V. 3. The burnt-offering, or the offering which ascended, that is, in smoke from the altar, was the principal sacrifice, and the most ancient. No part of it was eaten, either by the priest or the offerer; but the whole, when it had been duly prepared, was consumed by fire on the altar, as consecrated to the Lord. When an Israelite brought this offering to the sanctuary, he professed his willing devotedness to the worship of God: and the transaction aptly represented the true believer's dedication of himself without reserve, in body and soul, to the service and glory of God, whether by doing or suffering his will; “whether by life or death.” (Phil. 1:20.) but this is always accompanied by repentance, and faith in the atonement of Christ. Whatever else therefore was denoted by these sacrifices, they especially typified Christ in the *intensity* of his sufferings, both of body and soul, when he gave himself a sacrifice for our sins; and when, at the time that man shed his blood, “it pleased the LORD to bruise him and to put him to grief;” and they likewise showed forth the perfection of that zeal and love, with which he voluntarily went through his inexpressible sufferings.—A male without blemish was deemed the most complete of the kind; thus Christ was without spot or blemish; and his people must serve him with their best in every thing, and they are in

offer it of his own voluntary will, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord.

4 And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering: and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

5 And he shall kill the bullock before the Lord: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar, that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

6 And he shall slay the burnt-offering, and cut it into his pieces.

7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire.

8 And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood, that is on the fire which is upon the altar.

9 But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

10 ¶ And if his offering be of the flocks, namely,

[7:16, 22:19, 21. Ex. 35:5, 21:29, 33:3. Ps. 40:8. 110:3. 2 Cor. 8:12. 9:7. g 16: 7:17a. Ex. 29:4. Deut. 12:5, 6, 13, 14, 27. Ex. 20:40. John 10:7, 9. Eph. 2:18. b 3:2, 8, 13. 4:4, 15, 24, 29. 8:14, 22, 16, 21. Ex. 29:10, 15, 19. Num. 8:12. l. 53:1—6:1. 2 Cor. 5:31. 12:21, 27. 14:56, 7. Rom. 12:1. Phil. 4:18. j 4:20, 28, 31, 35. 5:6, 6:7, 9:7, 16:24. Num. 15:25, 32. 2 Chr. 29:24. 1 Jan 9:24. Rom. 9:25. 5:11. k 11. 3:2, 8, 13. 16:25. 2 Chr. 29:24. Mat. 6:6. 11:15. 11:25. 2 Chr. 35:11. Heb. 10:11. 11. 1:2, 8, 13. Ex. 21:5—8. 29:16. Num. 18:17. Is. 52:15. Ps. 36:25. Heb. 12:21. 1 Pt. 1:2. n 7:8. Gen. 3:21. o 8:13, 9:24. 10:1. 1 Chr. 21:

themselves the excellent of the earth. (Ps. 163.)—The sacrifices of the congregation, daily, weekly, monthly, and annually, as well as those for the great feasts, were prescribed by express laws; and so were the sin-offerings and the trespass-offerings: but the burnt-offerings here spoken of were voluntary.—The word (עֲרִיצָה) rendered *voluntary* will, may indeed signify, *for his acceptance*, that is, that he might be accepted before the Lord. Ex. 25:33. Is. 60:7. Heb.

Burnt-sacrifice.] עֲרִיצָה (אֲשֶׁר) *ascendere*. * Ὁλοκαυστια. Sept.—*Tota cremanda*.—*Holocaustum, sic dictum, quod totum igne assumptum sursum ascenderet, et evanesceret.* Robertson.

V. 4. The offerer, by laying his hand on the head of the young bull about to be sacrificed, acknowledged the Lord as the Giver of all that he possessed; and surrendered the animal entirely to him, for the purposes of his glory. But this significant action more especially implied an humble confession of sin, as deserving the wrath of God, and the penalty denounced against transgressing the law; with a desire that the guilt, (or exposedness to punishment and death,) might be transferred from the offerer to the innocent animal; and that the shedding of its blood, and the burning of its body at the altar might be accepted, instead of his bearing the deserved vengeance in his own person.—Accordingly, the Lord promised that it should be “accepted for him to make atonement for him.”—It is surprising that any one should argue, in opposition to the express words of the text, that it was not an atoning sacrifice; merely because there were other atoning sacrifices, appointed for particular occasions: for this was a general oblation, when a man was humbly conscious of sin, in numerous instances of his daily conduct, in his spirit and temper, and in his best services; though he had not committed those special offences, for which the sin-offerings or trespass-offerings were required; or those against which death was denounced, and no sacrifice appointed.—The sacrifices, which from the beginning prefigured “the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,” were generally burnt-offerings; and so were the morning and evening sacrifices offered day by day continually. Indeed, the sacrifice of Christ was prefigured more aptly, and far more frequently, by this than by any other oblation. And though it never was “possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin,” as to the conscience; yet these sacrifices were so far accepted from the Israelites in general, that their peculiar advantages were continued to them, through the typical atonement, notwithstanding their numerous offences.

V. 5—9. It is a common opinion, that none but the priests and Levites were employed in killing the sacrifices, and preparing them for the altar; but it does not seem to be founded on Scripture. Indeed Moses, who acted as a priest in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, was directed to slay the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the ram of consecration: and no doubt he observed the direction. (Note, 8:15. Ex. 29:11, 16, 20.) After the seven days of consecration were expired, Aaron slew his own sin-offering and burnt-offering, and the sin-offering of the people whom he represented. (9:8, 15, 18.) And in the days of Hezekiah, the Levites slew the paschal-lambs for such as were not clean. (2 Chr. 30:17.) But these were particular cases; and in general the person, who brought the sacrifice, was required to slay it: which more exactly typified Christ crucified by sinners, as well as for them. Indeed, these verses seem expressly to declare what the priests should do, and what the offerer. The offerer was directed to kill the sacrifice, and the priest to receive and

of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt-sacrifice he shall bring it a male without blemish.

11 And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the Lord: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.

12 And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar.

13 But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

14 ¶ And if the burnt-sacrifice, for his offering to the Lord, be of fowls; then he shall bring his offering of turtle-doves, or of young pigeons.

15 And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar: and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar.

16 And he shall pluck away his crop with this

22. 2 Chr. 7:1. Mal. 1:10. p Gen. 22:9. Neh. 13:31. q 8:18—21. 9:13, 14. Ex. 29:17, 18. 1 Kings 18:23, 33. r 13:9, 21. 3:14. Ps. 51:6. Jer. 4:1. Mic. 6:23, 25—28. s 13:12. 3:11. Ps. 66:15. Zech. 13:7. Heb. 9:14. t Gen. 8:21. 2 Cor. 2:15. Eph. 5:2. Phil. 4:18. u 2 Gen. 4:4. 8:20. Is. 53:6, 7. John 1:29. Acts 8:32. x See on 3:4, 23. 22:19. Mal. 1:14. y See on 5:26:25. 7:2. z See on 7—9. 9:12—14. b 5:7. 12:8. Luke 2:24. 2 Cor. 8:12. * Or, pinch off the head with the nail. † Or, the fifth thereof.

sprinkle the blood. Then the offerer was to strip off the skin, and cut the animal in pieces; and the priests to prepare the fire, and lay the wood in order upon it, and the several parts of the sacrifice on the wood, in that manner which best subserved the intention of speedily consuming them to ashes. It seems also that the offerer was required to wash the legs and intestines; and then the priests laid them on the other parts that they might be burned on the altar. It is however very probable, that when the Levites, and afterwards the Nehinims, were appointed to the service of the sanctuary, they assisted those who presented the sacrifices, especially such as were not expert at these employments.—A great part of the expositions of many learned men, on this part of Scripture, consists of the opinions held by the Jewish Rabbies on the subjects treated on. But I would once for all observe, that the Jewish writers knew nothing more about these ancient rites, with any certainty, than what they learned from the very words of the law, to which we have equal access. Most of them quoted as authorities on such questions, lived many centuries after sacrifices had ceased in consequence of the destruction of the temple; and the few who lived at a more early period could only know, at most, the practice of the priests, at a time when the traditions of the elders had greatly corrupted their religion. Every degree of attention therefore to their opinions, further than as they throw light upon the words of the sacred writer, is sanctioning these traditions; and always adds something to the law, takes something from it, or alters something in it.—The sacrifices offered, during the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and of the sanctuary, seem to have been consumed by fire kindled in the common way; but afterwards, the fire which came down from heaven was preserved and tended by the priests, and the sacrifices were consumed by it.—The “sprinkling of the blood” denoted the application of the atonement, to render the religious services of the offerer acceptable to a holy God: and the particular mention of washing the inwards and legs, might signify the inward purity and the outward holy walk, which became the worshippers of God, and were found absolutely perfect in Jesus Christ. The expression, “of a sweet savour to the Lord,” must be supposed to refer in a subordinate sense to the devotion of the offerer; but in a far higher, to the sacrifice of Christ thus typified, and the glorious display of the divine perfections made in it. (Notes, Gen. 8:20—22. Eph. 5:1, 2.)

V. 11. It is not said, that the other burnt-offerings should be slain on the north side of the altar; but it is generally understood, that this was peculiar to the larger victims. The reason is not known.

V. 13. Though the sacrifice of a ram or he-goat was much less expensive than that of a young bull; yet it was equally accepted when expressive of the offerer's repentance, faith, and devotedness to God; and when it accorded to his circumstances.

V. 14—17. No birds but turtle-doves, or young pigeons, (the former, say some, being best when full grown, and the latter, when young,) were allowed in sacrifice at the altar. Even the other tame fowls were passed by, either as feeding grossly, or as fierce in their nature; but the cleanly, gentle nature of the dove aptly typified the holy, harmless Saviour, and represented the character of his true disciples.—As the blood of this sacrifice also must be sprinkled or poured out by the priest, he was ordered to kill it, lest the blood should be wasted, being but little in all. The priest was also

feathers, and cast it beside the altar, on the east part, by the place of the ashes.

17 And he shall cleave it, with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priests shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: *it is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.*

CHAPTER II.

The law of the meat-offerings of flour, with oil and incense, raw or baked, 1—10. No leaven or honey to be used in them, 11. The first fruits not to be burned on the altar, 12. Salt to be used with every offering, 13. The meat-offering of fine fruits in the ear, 14—16.

AND when any will offer a ^ameat-offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of ^bfine flour; and he shall ^cpour oil upon it, and put ^dfrankincense thereon.

2 And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests: and he shall take thereof his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn ^ethe memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

3 And the remnant of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': *it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.*

4 ¶ And if thou bring an oblation of a ^bmeat-

offering baked in the oven, *it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.*

5 And if thy oblation be a meat-offering *baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.*

6 Thou shalt ^apart it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: *it is a meat-offering.*

7 And if thy oblation be a meat-offering *baked in the frying-pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.*

8 And thou shalt bring the meat-offering that is made of these things, unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.

9 And the priest shall take from the meat-offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar: *it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.*

10 And that which is left of the meat-offering, shall be Aaron's and his sons': *it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.*

11 ¶ No meat-offering which ye shall bring unto the LORD shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn ^ano leaven, nor any ^bhoney, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

c 1:12, 6:10-11, d Gen. 15:10, e 10:13, Rom. 12:1, Heb. 10:6—12, 13:15, 16:6-14—13:20—23, 9:17, Num. 15:4—21, Is. 66:20, John 6:35, b Ex. 29:2, Num. 7:13, 19, Joel 1:9, 2:14, c 4—8, 15, 16, 7:10—12, 1 John 2:20, 27, Jude 20, d Mat. 1:11, Luke 1:9, 10, Rev. 8:3, e 9, 12, 6:15, 24:7, Ex. 30:16, Num. 5:13, Neh. 13:14, 22, Is. 66:3, Acts 10:4, 16:16, 17:26, 7:9, 10:12, 21:22, Num. 18:9, 1 Sam. 2:23, g 6:17, 10:12, Ex. 29:37, Num. 18:9, h 1 Chr. 23:

29, Ex. 46:20, i 7:12, Ex. 12:8, 1 Cor. 5:7, k Ex. 16:31, 29:2, * Or, on a flat plate, or slice, m 1:8, n See on 1:2, o Ex. 28:18, Rom. 12:1, 15:16, Phil. 2:17, 4:18, p See on 3, q 6:17, Ex. 12:19, 20, Matt. 16:8, 12, Mark 8:15, Luke 12:1, 1st Cor. 5:6—8, Gal. 5:9, r Prov. 24:13, 25:16, 27, Luke 21:34, Acts 14:22, 1 Pet. 4:2.

required to prepare it for the altar, in which great exactness was needful. It was the sacrifice of the poor, and as acceptable as more costly oblations, when brought in a right spirit: it was therefore proper the priests should attend particularly to it, though neither splendid in itself, nor attended with any perquisites to them; (7:8.) to teach them, that the souls of the poor were to be as carefully watched over as those of the wealthy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It might have been said of all these sacrifices, "To what purpose is this waste?" All these bulls, and rams, and goats, might have been "sold for very much, and given to the poor," and would have supported very many indigent families: why then burn all this flesh upon the altar? Yet were they appointed by God himself, and were "a sweet savour unto him." That can never be wasted which is spent in a manner acceptable to the Lord, and honourable to his name: and be our obedience ever so expensive, we can be no losers in the event; for he can supply our wants, and repay our losses, and also furnish us with a sufficiency to give to the poor, whom we have always with us. But, if an Israelite might not grudge the expense, labour, and inconvenience of his religion; how inexcusable are we, if we ungratefully refuse the easy, pleasant, and reasonable service which is required of us under the Christian dispensation! Indeed, the Lord always prevents us with his goodness: and we can no more offer the sacrifice of a broken heart, or of praise and thanksgiving, than an Israelite could offer a bull or a goat, except as God hath first given unto us. Of his own we present unto him; and the more we do in his service, the greater are our obligations to him, both for the will, the ability, and the opportunity. (Note, 1 Chr. 29:10—19.)—Though in many things he leaves us to determine the proportion which shall be immediately spent in his service, whether of our time or of our substance; and though two doves, or two mites, may in some cases be more acceptable than thousands of gold and silver in others; yet, where Providence hath put more into a man's power, such scanty oblations will not be accepted; because they are no proper expressions of a willing mind. "But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."—While we, in all these sacrifices, have our own sinfulness and Christ's sufferings brought to remembrance, we should call upon ourselves to renew our repentance; to exercise faith in the Saviour, and love to him; to reflect deeply upon the freeness and vastness of his love to us, and the immense price which our salvation cost him: that so we may deduce arguments and motives to increase our abhorrence of all sin, and determination of heart against it; and our devotedness in body and soul to his service, whatever he may call us to renounce, venture, do, or suffer for his sake. Nor let us forget, that though our bodies should be *living sacrifices* unto God, yet the body of sin must be destroyed; the flesh with its lusts crucified; and the soul baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire, consuming all its dross, and kindling all holy affections there. Nay, *possibly*, we may not only be called to other suffering and self-denying services, but even to lay down our lives for him, who was made a sacrifice for our sins. In the mean time, contemplating those animals, which were appointed as emblems of the Saviour's purity, patience, meekness, and usefulness: let us endeavour and pray to be enabled to transcribe every amiable and heavenly *life* in his perfect

character into our own temper and conversation; that we may be conformed to his image, and walk in his steps, as an evidence that we are washed in his blood, and stand accepted in his righteousness, "in whom the Father is well pleased."

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1—3. Meat-offerings were appointed along with other sacrifices; but these, here prescribed, were offered alone, as a voluntary oblation: yet the single circumstance that a part of them was eaten by the priests, shows them to have been entirely of a different nature from the burnt-offerings. Some expositors say, that the Israelites, who could not afford any other sacrifice, might bring this: but a sufficient quantity of flour, oil, and frankincense, would not, except in very peculiar cases, be less expensive than a single pigeon.—The meat-offerings may typify Christ, as presented to God for us, and as being the bread of life to our souls; but they rather seem to have been a thankful acknowledgment to God for providential blessings: and to have represented good works as acceptable to God, when performed in the proper manner. They are therefore mentioned after the burnt-offerings; for without a believing reliance on the sacrifice of Christ, and devotedness of heart to God, other services could not be accepted.—They must consist of fine flour, one of the most useful of the productions of the earth; with oil poured upon it, which was used as butter is with us, and was therefore proper for an oblation which was food for the priests: it might also denote the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit, which are often represented by anointing with oil. Frankincense likewise was added, which might represent the intercession of Christ. All the frankincense and part of the oil and flour, as burned upon the altar of burnt-offering, might remind the people, that their best services must be offered through the atonement of the Saviour, presented through him, and done for his sake; and that their good works would thus come up as a memorial before God, and also be serviceable to men. This was signified by the residue of the meat-offering being eaten by the priests, who alone might partake of "the most holy things."

V. 4—8. Some of these meat-offerings would be prepared, before they were presented, in different ways according to the customs of those times: but oil must always be used, either as mixed with them, or poured on them; and a part must be burned on the altar, as an oblation to God, before the priests ate the remainder. It is supposed that provision was made in the court of the tabernacle and temple, for preparing these meat-offerings; and perhaps this was the case when Israel was settled in Canaan, and such oblations were greatly multiplied; but the law seems rather to imply that the offerers first made them, and then brought them to the priests.

V. 9. The priest, and not the offerer, seems to have taken the portion from the meat-offerings which he burned on the altar, though the second verse leaves this rather doubtful.

V. 11. Leavened bread, and probably honey, might be offered for the use of the priests; but no part of it must be burned on the altar. (Marg. Ref. q, r. Note. 7:12—14.)—Leaven is the known emblem of pride, malice, and hypocrisy, as honey may be of sensual indulgence: and these are opposite to the believer's character, and hindrances to his fruitfulness. Christ was perfect in humility, truth, and love: his suffering life and agonizing death were the opposite to worldly pleasure; and his people must follow him and be conformed to him.—It is thought that leaven and honey were much used by the heathen in their sacrifices: but we *are* scarcely any

12 As for the oblation of the first-fruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

13 And every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

14 ¶ And if thou offer a meat-offering of thy first-fruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer, for the meat-offering of thy first-fruits, green ears of corn dried by the sun, even corn beaten out of full ears.

15 And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon: it is a meat-offering.

16 And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

CHAPTER III.

The law of the peace-offerings, of the herd, 1-5: of the flock, 6-11: of a goat, 12-16. A prohibition to eat the fat, or the blood, 17.

AND if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace-offering, if he offer it of the herd, whether it

23:10, 11, 17. Ex. 22:29, 33:19. Num. 15:22. Deut. 26:10. 2 Chr. 31:5. 1 Cor. 15:20. (Rev. 14:4. * Heb. ascend.) 1 Sam. 7:22. Ez. 43:24. Matt. 5:13. Mark 9:39-50. Col. 4:6. U. Num. 15:19. 2 Chr. 13:5. x 23:14-17, 20. Num. 28:2. Deut. 26:2. Prov. 3:9, 10. y 2 Kings 4:42. z See on 1. a See on 2, 9. Ps. 141:2. a 7:11-21, 29-34. 22:19-21. Ex. 20:24. 24:5. 29:28. Num. 6:14. 7:17. Judge. 20:26. 21:4. 1 Chr. 21:26. 1 rev. 7:14. Ez. 15:15. Am. 5:22. Rom. 5:1, 2. Col. 1:20. 1 John 1:3. b See on 1:3. c 1:4, 5. 8:22. 16:21, 22. Ex. 29:10. Is. 53:5.

thing of their customs in those early ages; and afterwards they in some things imitated the Israelites, and in others adopted contrary observances.

V. 12. These first-fruits seem to be such as individuals brought, for a voluntary oblation out of all their increase; and not such as were offered by the congregation at the festivals. In this case, honey and leaven might form a part, as the priests used the whole for food, and no part was burned on the altar. (Notes, 23:15-21. Num. 15:17-21.)

V. 13. *Salt of the covenant, &c.* Covenants were generally ratified at an amicable feast, in which salt was always used; hence it became an emblem of friendship. Many scriptures represent reconciliation to God, and communion with him, as a feast to which the Lord invites us, and at which he ratifies his covenant with us. Salt is an emblem of incorruption; and while this use of it intimated the *perpetuity*, yea *eternity*, of the covenant made with believers; it also represented the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which their services and worship are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and their example and conversation useful and instructive to mankind; in counteracting the effects of human depravity, and communicating a savour of piety around them. (Marg. Ref. 1, u.)

V. 14-16. These first-fruits also seem to have been the voluntary oblation brought by individuals, of the finest ears of corn out of the field, before the harvest was ripe, and prepared by drying or parching them at the fire, and then beating them out for use. As this was intended to be an early acknowledgment of the Lord's goodness in giving the increase of the earth; and as corn was used in this form for food among the Israelites, (1 Sam. 25:18.) it was presented as a meat-offering, and the rules before given were to be observed in respect of it.—Cain brought this kind of oblation; but Abel brought also the firstlings of his flock. (Note, Gen. 4:3-5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There is that excellency in Christ, and in his mediatorial work, which no types and shadows, however varied and multiplied, can adequately represent: and our need of him is so entire, and our reliance on him should be so constant, that we ought never to lose sight of it in any thing we do. Even our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, our works of mercy, charity, and righteousness, yea, every good work, must spring from his grace, and from love to him; ascend, as it were, with his sacrifice from the altar of burnt-offering; and be presented through his intercession; that "whatsoever we do, in word or in deed, we may do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Thus presented, our acknowledgments of common mercies, and our most ordinary actions of justice and benevolence to men, and especially of kindness to his servants and to the poor, will be "a sweet savour unto the LORD." (Note, Col. 3:16, 17.) But let us take care, that we leave not our works with pride and ostentation, hypocrisy or malice; or spoil them with indulging "fleshly lusts which war against the soul;" and that they be seasoned with the salt of grace, and continued in with perseverance; that so they may be comfortable to us, honourable to God, and instrumental to the good of others. In all this we must look unto Jesus, and follow his example, devoting the first and best of every thing which we possess to the service of God through him.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 4. The original name for this oblation is (זבחי שלמים) a sacrifice of peace, or peace; for the

be a male or female; he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.

2 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

3 And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made by fire unto the LORD, the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards:

4 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

5 And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt-sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

6 ¶ And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace-offering unto the LORD, be of the flock, male or female; he shall offer it without blemish.

7 If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the LORD.

8 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of

2 Cor. 5:21. 1 John 1:9, 10. d 1:11. Zech. 12:10. Acts 2:36-38. 3:15, 26. 4:10-12, 25-28. e 16. 4:8, 9. 7:3, 4. Ex. 29:22. Deut. 33:9. Ps. 119:70. Prov. 23:26. Is. 6:10. Ez. 36:26. Matt. 13:15. 15:8. Rom. 5:6. * Or, uet. 10. mdriff over the liver, and over the kidneys. f 1:9. g 1:11. h 1:12. i 1:13. j 1:14. k 1:15. l 1:16. m 1:17. n 1:18. o 1:19. p 1:20. q 1:21. r 1:22. s 1:23. t 1:24. u 1:25. v 1:26. w 1:27. x 1:28. y 1:29. z 1:30. aa 1:31. ab 1:32. ac 1:33. ad 1:34. ae 1:35. af 1:36. ag 1:37. ah 1:38. ai 1:39. aj 1:40. ak 1:41. al 1:42. am 1:43. an 1:44. ao 1:45. ap 1:46. aq 1:47. ar 1:48. as 1:49. at 1:50. au 1:51. av 1:52. aw 1:53. ax 1:54. ay 1:55. az 1:56. ba 1:57. bb 1:58. bc 1:59. bd 1:60. be 1:61. bf 1:62. bg 1:63. bh 1:64. bi 1:65. bj 1:66. bk 1:67. bl 1:68. bm 1:69. bn 1:70. bo 1:71. bp 1:72. bq 1:73. br 1:74. bs 1:75. bt 1:76. bu 1:77. bv 1:78. bw 1:79. bx 1:80. by 1:81. bz 1:82. ca 1:83. cb 1:84. cc 1:85. cd 1:86. ce 1:87. cf 1:88. cg 1:89. ch 1:90. ci 1:91. cj 1:92. ck 1:93. cl 1:94. cm 1:95. cn 1:96. co 1:97. cp 1:98. cq 1:99. cr 1:100. cs 1:101. ct 1:102. cu 1:103. cv 1:104. cw 1:105. cx 1:106. cy 1:107. cz 1:108. da 1:109. db 1:110. dc 1:111. dd 1:112. de 1:113. df 1:114. dg 1:115. dh 1:116. di 1:117. dj 1:118. dk 1:119. dl 1:120. dm 1:121. dn 1:122. do 1:123. dp 1:124. dq 1:125. dr 1:126. ds 1:127. dt 1:128. du 1:129. dv 1:130. dw 1:131. dx 1:132. dy 1:133. dz 1:134. ea 1:135. eb 1:136. ec 1:137. ed 1:138. ee 1:139. ef 1:140. eg 1:141. eh 1:142. ei 1:143. ej 1:144. ek 1:145. el 1:146. em 1:147. en 1:148. eo 1:149. ep 1:150. eq 1:151. er 1:152. es 1:153. et 1:154. eu 1:155. ev 1:156. ew 1:157. ex 1:158. ey 1:159. ez 1:160. fa 1:161. fb 1:162. fc 1:163. fd 1:164. fe 1:165. ff 1:166. fg 1:167. fh 1:168. fi 1:169. fj 1:170. fk 1:171. fl 1:172. fm 1:173. fn 1:174. fo 1:175. fp 1:176. fq 1:177. fr 1:178. fs 1:179. ft 1:180. fu 1:181. fv 1:182. fw 1:183. fx 1:184. fy 1:185. fz 1:186. ga 1:187. gb 1:188. gc 1:189. gd 1:190. ge 1:191. gf 1:192. gg 1:193. gh 1:194. gi 1:195. gj 1:196. gk 1:197. gl 1:198. gm 1:199. gn 1:200. go 1:201. gp 1:202. gq 1:203. gr 1:204. gs 1:205. gt 1:206. gu 1:207. gv 1:208. gw 1:209. gx 1:210. gy 1:211. gz 1:212. ha 1:213. hb 1:214. hc 1:215. hd 1:216. he 1:217. hf 1:218. hg 1:219. hh 1:220. hi 1:221. hj 1:222. hk 1:223. hl 1:224. hm 1:225. hn 1:226. ho 1:227. hp 1:228. hq 1:229. hr 1:230. hs 1:231. ht 1:232. hu 1:233. hv 1:234. hw 1:235. hx 1:236. hy 1:237. hz 1:238. ia 1:239. ib 1:240. ic 1:241. id 1:242. ie 1:243. if 1:244. ig 1:245. ih 1:246. ii 1:247. ij 1:248. ik 1:249. il 1:250. im 1:251. in 1:252. io 1:253. ip 1:254. iq 1:255. ir 1:256. is 1:257. it 1:258. iu 1:259. iv 1:260. iw 1:261. ix 1:262. iy 1:263. iz 1:264. ja 1:265. jb 1:266. jc 1:267. jd 1:268. je 1:269. jf 1:270. jg 1:271. jh 1:272. ji 1:273. jj 1:274. jk 1:275. jl 1:276. jm 1:277. jn 1:278. jo 1:279. jp 1:280. jq 1:281. jr 1:282. js 1:283. jt 1:284. ju 1:285. jv 1:286. jw 1:287. jx 1:288. jy 1:289. jz 1:290. ka 1:291. kb 1:292. kc 1:293. kd 1:294. ke 1:295. kf 1:296. kg 1:297. kh 1:298. ki 1:299. kj 1:300. kk 1:301. kl 1:302. km 1:303. kn 1:304. ko 1:305. kp 1:306. kq 1:307. kr 1:308. ks 1:309. kt 1:310. ku 1:311. kv 1:312. kw 1:313. kx 1:314. ky 1:315. kz 1:316. la 1:317. lb 1:318. lc 1:319. ld 1:320. le 1:321. lf 1:322. lg 1:323. lh 1:324. li 1:325. lj 1:326. lk 1:327. ll 1:328. lm 1:329. ln 1:330. lo 1:331. lp 1:332. lq 1:333. lr 1:334. ls 1:335. lt 1:336. lu 1:337. lv 1:338. lw 1:339. lx 1:340. ly 1:341. lz 1:342. ma 1:343. mb 1:344. mc 1:345. md 1:346. me 1:347. mf 1:348. mg 1:349. mh 1:350. mi 1:351. mj 1:352. mk 1:353. ml 1:354. mm 1:355. mn 1:356. mo 1:357. mp 1:358. mq 1:359. mr 1:360. ms 1:361. mt 1:362. mu 1:363. mv 1:364. mw 1:365. mx 1:366. my 1:367. mz 1:368. na 1:369. nb 1:370. nc 1:371. nd 1:372. ne 1:373. nf 1:374. ng 1:375. nh 1:376. ni 1:377. nj 1:378. nk 1:379. nl 1:380. nm 1:381. nn 1:382. no 1:383. np 1:384. nq 1:385. nr 1:386. ns 1:387. nt 1:388. nu 1:389. nv 1:390. nw 1:391. nx 1:392. ny 1:393. nz 1:394. oa 1:395. ob 1:396. oc 1:397. od 1:398. oe 1:399. of 1:400. og 1:401. oh 1:402. oi 1:403. oj 1:404. ok 1:405. ol 1:406. om 1:407. on 1:408. oo 1:409. op 1:410. oq 1:411. or 1:412. os 1:413. ot 1:414. ou 1:415. ov 1:416. ow 1:417. ox 1:418. oy 1:419. oz 1:420. pa 1:421. pb 1:422. pc 1:423. pd 1:424. pe 1:425. pf 1:426. pg 1:427. ph 1:428. pi 1:429. pj 1:430. pk 1:431. pl 1:432. pm 1:433. pn 1:434. po 1:435. pp 1:436. pq 1:437. pr 1:438. ps 1:439. pt 1:440. pu 1:441. pv 1:442. pw 1:443. px 1:444. py 1:445. pz 1:446. qa 1:447. qb 1:448. qc 1:449. qd 1:450. qe 1:451. qf 1:452. qg 1:453. qh 1:454. qi 1:455. qj 1:456. qk 1:457. ql 1:458. qm 1:459. qn 1:460. qo 1:461. qp 1:462. qq 1:463. qr 1:464. qs 1:465. qt 1:466. qu 1:467. qv 1:468. qw 1:469. qx 1:470. qy 1:471. qz 1:472. ra 1:473. rb 1:474. rc 1:475. rd 1:476. re 1:477. rf 1:478. rg 1:479. rh 1:480. ri 1:481. rj 1:482. rk 1:483. rl 1:484. rm 1:485. rn 1:486. ro 1:487. rp 1:488. rq 1:489. rr 1:490. rs 1:491. rt 1:492. ru 1:493. rv 1:494. rw 1:495. rx 1:496. ry 1:497. rz 1:498. sa 1:499. sb 1:500. sc 1:501. sd 1:502. se 1:503. sf 1:504. sg 1:505. sh 1:506. si 1:507. sj 1:508. sk 1:509. sl 1:510. sm 1:511. sn 1:512. so 1:513. sp 1:514. sq 1:515. sr 1:516. ss 1:517. st 1:518. su 1:519. sv 1:520. sw 1:521. sx 1:522. sy 1:523. sz 1:524. ta 1:525. tb 1:526. tc 1:527. td 1:528. te 1:529. tf 1:530. tg 1:531. th 1:532. ti 1:533. tj 1:534. tk 1:535. tl 1:536. tm 1:537. tn 1:538. to 1:539. tp 1:540. tq 1:541. tr 1:542. ts 1:543. tu 1:544. tv 1:545. tw 1:546. tx 1:547. ty 1:548. tz 1:549. ua 1:550. ub 1:551. uc 1:552. ud 1:553. ue 1:554. uf 1:555. ug 1:556. uh 1:557. ui 1:558. uj 1:559. uk 1:560. ul 1:561. um 1:562. un 1:563. uo 1:564. up 1:565. uq 1:566. ur 1:567. us 1:568. ut 1:569. uu 1:570. uv 1:571. uw 1:572. ux 1:573. uy 1:574. uz 1:575. va 1:576. vb 1:577. vc 1:578. vd 1:579. ve 1:580. vf 1:581. vg 1:582. vh 1:583. vi 1:584. vj 1:585. vk 1:586. vl 1:587. vm 1:588. vn 1:589. vo 1:590. vp 1:591. vq 1:592. vr 1:593. vs 1:594. vt 1:595. vu 1:596. vv 1:597. vw 1:598. vx 1:599. vy 1:600. vz 1:601. wa 1:602. wb 1:603. wc 1:604. wd 1:605. we 1:606. wf 1:607. wg 1:608. wh 1:609. wi 1:610. wj 1:611. wk 1:612. wl 1:613. wm 1:614. wn 1:615. wo 1:616. wp 1:617. wq 1:618. wr 1:619. ws 1:620. wt 1:621. wu 1:622. wv 1:623. ww 1:624. wx 1:625. wy 1:626. wz 1:627. xa 1:628. xb 1:629. xc 1:630. xd 1:631. xe 1:632. xf 1:633. xg 1:634. xh 1:635. xi 1:636. xj 1:637. xk 1:638. xl 1:639. xm 1:640. xn 1:641. xo 1:642. xp 1:643. xq 1:644. xr 1:645. xs 1:646. xt 1:647. xu 1:648. xv 1:649. xw 1:650. xy 1:651. xz 1:652. ya 1:653. yb 1:654. yc 1:655. yd 1:656. ye 1:657. yf 1:658. yg 1:659. yh 1:660. yi 1:661. yj 1:662. yk 1:663. yl 1:664. ym 1:665. yn 1:666. yo 1:667. yp 1:668. yq 1:669. yr 1:670. ys 1:671. yt 1:672. yu 1:673. yv 1:674. yw 1:675. yx 1:676. yy 1:677. yz 1:678. za 1:679. zb 1:680. zc 1:681. zd 1:682. ze 1:683. zf 1:684. zg 1:685. zh 1:686. zi 1:687. zj 1:688. zk 1:689. zl 1:690. zm 1:691. zn 1:692. zo 1:693. zp 1:694. zq 1:695. zr 1:696. zs 1:697. zt 1:698. zu 1:699. zv 1:700. zw 1:701. zx 1:702. zy 1:703. zz 1:704.

word is plural.—*Peace*, in Scripture, is often used for all kinds of prosperity and comfort; and the language may imply that, through the typical priesthood and atoning sacrifices, Israel would enjoy all blessings in the favour of God, dwelling among them upon a mercy-seat, while they adhered to his worship and service.—The burnt-offerings were wholly consumed on the altar; the priests had a part of the meat-offering; but the peace-offering was divided between the altar, the priests, and the offerer, and formed a kind of feast, in which the Lord, and his priests and people, met together.—Either male or female of the herd or flock, if without blemish, might be offered in these sacrifices, both being good for food; but pigeons or turtle-doves are not mentioned: for the division of such small creatures into the proper proportions would have been inconvenient.—The peace-offerings seem to have especially represented the application of the redemption of Christ to the heart and conscience; the communications of peace and comfort through him; and the sweet communion which his reconciled people hold with him, and with each other, in his ordinances. (Matt. 26:29. Rev. 3:20.) while "his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed" to their souls; and while they are enabled to exercise faith in his atonement, love and gratitude to him, and love to each other for his sake, with enlarged hearts rejoicing in each other's comfort, and communicating to one another's necessities. The peace-offerings might likewise intimate, that all the blessings which sinners enjoy come through the sacrifice of Christ; and that the greatest sweetness even of temporal mercies arises from receiving them as the fruit of his atonement, and the pledges of his love, and from sharing them with his people. They were voluntary oblations, either in the performance of a vow, in acknowledgment of mercies received, in seeking some special blessing from God, or in expressing love to his worship, his priests, and people.

V. 2-5. When the offerer laid his hand on the head of the peace-offering, it may be supposed that he both confessed his sins, and devoted the animal to God, as a typical atonement, to suffer in his stead; and also rendered thanks for the mercies which he had received, and prayed for the blessings which he sought.—From the language here used, it seems evident, that the offerer slew the sacrifice, and brought the portion that was burnt on the altar, devoting it to God; and that the priests only sprinkled the blood, and burnt the fat on the altar, along with the daily burnt-offerings, or on the fire which had been prepared for them. (Note, 7:29-34.)—This observance might denote that we should be inward and hearty in all our services, calling "on our souls, and all that is within us" to exercise repentance, faith, love, and gratitude; and giving up our hearts to the Lord. Or it may rather imply, that our inward lusts must be mortified, if we would have peace and communion with God; especially, that the insensibility and obduracy of the heart and conscience must be removed; for *fitness of heart* is a scriptural representation of this insensibility, as the fat of a living animal is supposed to be destitute of feeling.—This was to be laid on the burnt-offering; for no self-denial, mortification of the flesh, or devotedness to God can find acceptance with God, except through the sacrifice of Christ, and by the supply of his Spirit, which, as fire, consumes our lusts and purifies our hearts.—When these appointments had been complied with, the priests had a portion of the peace-offering assigned them, and the offerer and his friends religiously feasted upon the remainder

his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar.

9 And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made by fire unto the Lord: the fat thereof and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the back-bone: and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards:

10 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

11 And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord.

12 ¶ And if his offering be a goat, then he shall offer it before the Lord.

13 And he shall play his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about.

14 And he shall offer thereof his offering, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

15 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

16 And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire, for a sweet savour. All the fat is the Lord's.

17 It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.

m 7:3, 8:25, 9:19, Ex. 24:22, n 15, 21:6, 8, 17, 21, 22, 22:25, Num. 28:2 Ex. 44:7, Mal. 1:12, Rev. 3:30, o 1:10, 9:15, 10:16, Matt. 25:32, 33, Rom. 8:3, 20:5, 5:21, p 2:2, 2:4, 2:5, 1 Pet. 2:24, 3:18, q See on 11, r 4:8-10, 7:23-25, 17:6, 1 Sam. 2:15-16, 2 Chr. 7:7, Matt. 22:37, s 6:18, 7:35, 16:34, 17:7, 23:14, Num. 19:21, 1 Deut. 12:11, Neh. 9:40, o 7:23, 17:10-14, Gen. 9:4, 1 Pet. 12:15, 1 Sam. 14:32-33, Ex. 24:25, 44:7, 15, Matt. 23:28, Acts 15:20, 21, 1 Tim. 4:4, s 3:15, 17, Num. 15:22, 29, 1 Lev. 19:4, 1 Sam. 14:27, Ps. 19:12, 1 Tim. 1:13.

V. 9. As the tail, or rump, of the sheep is large and fat in those countries, it was added to the inward fat to be burned upon the altar.

V. 11. *The food, &c.*] This part of the offering fed the sacred fire, which was emblematical of the divine justice, and typified the satisfaction made for sin by the death of Christ. Communion with God, as reconciled to believers through this atonement, is in this ceremonial constantly represented as a feast in which God meets with his worshippers; and therefore that portion of the sacrifice, which was consumed on the altar, is often called the *bread, or food*, of God; as the reader may see by turning to the scriptures referred to in the margin.—What with the daily sacrifices, the occasional burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings and other sacrifices, the fire upon the altar would generally be supplied. (16.)

V. 17. *That ye eat neither fat nor blood.*] That is, neither the blood which is contained in the larger veins and arteries, nor the suet or the fat which is within the animal: for the blood which assumes the form of gravy, and the fat which is intermixed with the other flesh, might be eaten. This law not only related to the sacrifices, but to all the cattle which the Israelites slaughtered for food; which might teach them self-denial. But especially it led them to observe the distinction between common and sacred things; it preserved them uninfected with the superstitions of idolaters, and separate from their company; and it tended to impress them more deeply with the idea of some most important mystery, inculcated in shedding the blood and burning the fat of the solemn sacrifices. (Note, 7:23—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Penitent confessions, and a believing dependence on Christ, must accompany all our thanksgivings, praises, and prayers; and even all our undertakings or enjoyments, if we would prosper and be comfortable. He, as the Prince of Peace, having "made peace with the blood of his cross," now preaches it to sinners who are afar off: through him the believer is reconciled to God; and having his peace in his conscience and heart, he is disposed to follow peace with all men. Thus peace is his legacy, his privilege, and his employment; and to be peaceable, and a peace-maker, are his distinguished characteristics. "Feeding in his heart upon Christ by faith with thanksgiving," he enjoys sweet communion with God and his saints; becomes lively and zealous in religious exercises; learns to treat divine things, and especially the blood of atonement, with sacred reverence; and grows gradually more and more indifferent about sensual indulgences, while at the same time he has double relish for common mercies. He becomes

CHAPTER IV.

The law of the sin offering for a priest, 1—12: for the congregation, 13—21: for a ruler, 22—26: for a private person, 27—35.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them:

3 If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord, for a sin-offering.

4 And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the Lord.

5 And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation.

6 And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary.

7 And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin-offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards.

9 And the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul

Heb. 5:2, 9:7, b 27, Gen. 20:9, Jam. 3:10, c 8:12, 21:10—12, Ex. 29:7, 21, d 14, 9:2, 16:6, 11, Ez. 43:19, e 5:6, Ex. 29:14, 30:10, Num. 8:8, Ezra 8:35, Rom. 8:3, 2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 5:3, 7:27, 28, f 1:3, Ex. 29:10, 11, g See on 14, 16:21, Is. 53:6, Dan. 9:26, 1 Pet. 3:18, h 16:17, 16:14, 19, Num. 19:4, 1 John 1:7, 117, 25, 30, 34, 8:15, 9:9, 16:14, 19, Num. 18:4, k 14:16, 27, 25:8, 28:18, 24, 28, Josh. 6:4, 8, 18:15, 19:16, 18, Ex. 30:1, 10, Heb. 9:21—25, m 18:34, 5:9, 8:15, Eph. 2:13, n See on 3:3—5, 9, 11, 14—16.

also liberal and zealous, and increases his social enjoyments, by sharing them with others around him; and by avoiding selfishness, pride, and contention, which are the bane of real happiness.—Thus amiable, useful, and happy are consistent Christians: may the Lord multiply grace, mercy, and peace to all who have attained to, or are aspiring after such privileges, and who would bear such a character; and may he fill all the nations of the earth with these sons of peace and love. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 2. *If a soul sin.*] That is, if any person sin. The soul is the agent, the body only the instrument, in committing sin: it must however be allowed, that this exact precision is not observed in the language of the Scriptures.—The "sin-offering" seems to have been appointed for such violations of express prohibitions, when ignorantly and heedlessly fallen into, (especially in those things which more immediately related to the worship of God,) as, if committed presumptuously, were punishable with death.

V. 3. "The priest that is anointed" is generally supposed to mean the high-priest, who was most solemnly anointed: and, as he was the typical mediator between God and the people, and their appointed representative, the whole nation was more immediately concerned in his transgression, than in that of the other priests; who, (if not here included,) were under the same law in this respect as the common Israelites. If the high-priest were so ignorant of the divine law, as to violate some express precept unwittingly; or so regardless of it, as to do this heedlessly; he must be very criminally negligent, and would be likely to mislead the people also; his crime therefore was peculiarly heinous.—The same original word (חַטָּאת or חַטֵּאת) is rendered both *sin*, and *sin-offering*; (Dan. 9:24, Heb.) and this remark may throw light on some passages in the New Testament. (Rom. 8:3, 2 Cor. 5:21.)

V. 4—7. The high-priest himself, if he were exclusively meant in this law, was required to kill the sin-offering, and to perform the several ceremonies here instituted. This might tend to awaken his conscience the more to a sense of his guilt. Laying his hand on the head of the innocent animal, as confessing his sin, and transferring to it his guilt, or desert of death; then shedding its blood, and witnessing its dying agonies; and afterwards sprinkling the atoning blood seven times before the veil, and applying it to the horns of the golden altar; evinced that this offence, though committed ignorantly, had polluted all his services: nor could any thing, which he did, be profitable either to himself or the people, except it were expiated by the blood of the sin-offering. The sevenfold sprinkling, which was only used in extraordinary cases, showed the difficulty of atoning for his heinous offence.

above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,

10 As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace-offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt-offering.

11 And ^{the} skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head and with his legs, and his inwards and his dung,

12 Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth ^{without} the camp, unto a clean place where ^{the} ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: ^{where} the ashes are poured out, shall he be burnt.

13 ¶ And if the whole congregation of Israel sin ^{through} ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *somehow* against any of the commandments of the LORD, concerning things which should not be done, and ^{are} guilty:

14 When the sin which they have sinned against it is known, then the congregation shall offer a ^{young} bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

15 And ^{the} elders of the congregation shall ^{lay} their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.

16 And ^{the} priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation.

17 And the priest shall dip his finger *in some* of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, *even* before the veil.

18 And he shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar, which is before the LORD, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

19 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar.

20 And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin-offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

21 And he shall carry forth the bullock without

the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is a sin-offering for the congregation.

22 ¶ When a ruler hath sinned, and ^{done} somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God, concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty;

23 Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish.

24 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the LORD: it is a sin-offering.

25 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering.

26 And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as ^{the} fat of the sacrifice of peace-offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

27 And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth *somehow* against any of the commandments of the LORD, concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.

29 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay the sin-offering in the place of the burnt-offering.

30 And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.

31 And he shall take away ^{all} the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace-offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, for a sweet savour unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

32 And if he bring a lamb for a sin-offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.

21. 6:30. 8:14-17. 9:8-11. 16:27. Ex. 29:14. Num. 19:5. Ps. 40:12. Heb. 13:11-13. ^a Heb. *to without the camp*. 13:46. Num. 5:3. 15:35. 19:3. p. 6: 13:11. ^b Heb. *at the pouring out of the ashes*. q See on 12:5, 2:5. Num. 15:23-29. Josh. 7:21-26. 1 Tim. 1:13. Heb. 10:26-29. r. 5:17. 6:4. Ezra 10:19. Hos. 5:15. marg. 1 Cor. 11:27. s See on 3. (Ex. 24:19. Num. 11:16, 25. Deut. 21:3-9. u See on 4. 1:4. 16:21. x See on 5-12. Heb. 9:12-14. y. 1: 4. 5:6. 6:7. 12:8. 14:15. Ex. 32:30. Num. 15:23. 1 Jn. 9:24. Rom. 5:11. Gal. 2:13. Rev. 1:3. 2:17. 9:14. 10:10-12. 1 John 1:7. 2:2. z. 16:15, 21. 2 Chr. 29:21-22. Ezra 8:35. Matt. 20:28. 2 Cor. 5:21. 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. a Ex. 18:21. Num.

V. 11. The skin and the flesh of the sin-offerings in general were the perquisite of the priests: (7:7, 8, 10, 16, 17.) but when the high-priest offered the sin-offering for himself, or for the congregation, the whole was burnt; as a more effectual expression of the greatness of the offence, and the abhorrence ^{to} which he held it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. Thus the guilt was typically conveyed away from the whole congregation, who were otherwise liable to suffer for it.—Christ, who was made *sin*, or a *sin-offering*, for us, suffered without the gate of Jerusalem, as bearing away the sin of his people; that when it is sought for, it may nowhere be found.—(*Note*, Heb. 13:9-14.) This was also expressive of the nature of true repentance, which expels sin with abhorrence, drives it to a distance out of the camp, and refuses to have any thing more to do with it.

Place where the ashes are poured out.] See *Note*, 6:9-13.

V. 13-21. The sin of the whole congregation required the same expiation as that of the high-priest. By a *criminal oversight*, or misconception of the law, it might happen, that some prohibition of the ceremonial institutions should be generally violated, and thus become the sin of the nation at large; even when the worship at the sanctuary was regularly maintained, and idolatry carefully shunned: and in this case, when the error was discovered, the national sin-offering was appointed.—The elders (who are distinguished from the congregation) were directed to lay their hands on this sacrifice, as confessing their sin and the sin of the people, and typically laying the guilt upon the animal; not only as the representatives of the nation, but also as the principals in the crime, who had misled the people. It is not said who should lay the sacrifice; but probably this was done by one of the elders, or perhaps of the priests, as the part of the high-priest is separately mentioned. The other ceremonies exactly accord with those of the high-priest's sin-offering.

V. 22-26. The word (רָשָׁא), rendered "ruler" frequently

16:2. 2 Sam. 21:1-3. 24:10-17. b See on 2:13. c. 14. 2 Kings 22:10. d. 4. 3. 34:19. Num. 7:16, 22, 28, 34. 15:24. 28:15, 30. 29:5, 11, 16, 19. Rom. 5:8. e. 1:11. 6:25. 7:2. f See on 3. g. 7. 18:30, 34. 31:15. 9:2. 16:19. Heb. 9:22. h. 3-16. 35. s See on 3:5. 6:20-20. t See on 20. Num. 15:23. i Heb. *any soul*. 2. Num. 15:27. j Heb. *people of the land*. k See on 2:13. Ex. 12:49. Num. 5: 6. 15:16, 29. l. 23. Gal. 3:28. m See on 4:15, 24. Heb. 10:4-14. n. 3:14. o. 1:9. 3:5. Ex. 29:18. Ezra 6:10. Job 42:8. Ps. 10:6, 7. 51:16, 17. 65:30, 31. Is. 42:31. 53:10. Matt. 3:17. Eph. 5:2. 1 Pet. 2:4, 5. p John 1:29. 1:19, 30. q Eph. 5:27. Heb. 9:14. 1 Pet. 2:22. 3:18.

denotes the *head of a tribe*; but the Jews understand it to mean the president of the sanhedrim or national council. When the nation had judges, or kings, or any ruler distinct from the high-priest, he, as well as those next under him in authority over the several tribes, would be concerned in this law. Yet the sin-offering to be offered for him, when he discovered his offence, was not only of less value than that appointed for the high-priest or congregation, but it was sacrificed with very different rites: for it was not expected that the civil magistrates should understand the ordinances of religion so well as the high-priests; nor was he so absolutely the representative of the nation before God, as this typical mediator.—As the ruler's sacrifice was a sin-offering of a distinct nature from those before mentioned, it was slain in the same place where the burnt-offerings were; whereas the other sacrifices were killed in any part of the court. Any priest, as far as it appears from the text, might officiate; the blood was not carried into the sanctuary, nor was the body burnt without the camp, but eaten by the priests.

V. 27-35. The sin-offering for one of the people was of something less value than that of the ruler: but it was presented with exactly the same ceremonies. The transgression of the high-priest and that of the whole congregation brought a kind of typical pollution on the interior part of the sanctuary, as endangering the very essence of religion: the blood of the sin-offering was therefore applied to the altar of incense; for without expiation the typical intercession could no longer be accepted. But the sin of the ruler, or of the private Israelite, did not interrupt this important observance; the blood of the sin-offering therefore was only applied to the altar of burnt-offering, that their sacrifices might there be presented with acceptance. We may suppose, that some place was made at the bottom of the altar, to receive and carry away the blood of the victims: and that various methods were used to preserve the court sweet and clean, while so many

33 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay it for a sin-offering, in the place where they kill the burnt-offering.

34 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.

35 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace-offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

CHAPTER V.

The law of the trespass-offering, in some special cases, 1-13: in respect of holy things, 14-19.

AND if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.

2 Or if a soul touch any unclean thing,

See on 4. 29-31. a 30. John 17:19. t See on 3:5. a 15, 17, 4:2. Ex. 19: 4, 30. b Ex. 22:11. Judg. 17:2. 1 Kings 8:31. 22, 16. 2 Chr. 18:15. Prov. 29: 21, 30, 39. Matt. 23:63. c 17. 7:18. 17:16. 19:8. 20:17. Num. 8:13. Ps. 38:4. Is. 5:11. 7:1. Jer. 2:24. d 7:21. 11:24. 28:31, 39. Num. 19:11-15. Dent. 14:3. Is. 37:31. 2 Chr. 17:17. e 17:12. Luke 11:41. f See on 4:13. g 13:45, 46. 13:21-6. Num. 1:11-16. h 25:2, &c. Josh. 2:14. 9:15. Judg. 11:31. 21:

animals were continually slaughtered in it.—It is observable that the words, “a sweet savour to the LORD,” are added to none of these sin-offerings, but that of the private Israelite; which might imply an encouragement to offenders to present their offerings when conscious of having sinned, though their sin was not known by others; for, though less costly than those appointed for other orders, they would be equally acceptable to God.—In all the cases however it is implied, that the atonement would be accepted, and the offence pardoned.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is evident that God hath never had any infallible vicegerent in his church on earth; for even the high-priest appointed by himself, with Urim and Thummim, who had access to his oracle in the holy place to inquire of him, and the whole church of God under that dispensation, were supposed liable to fall into sins of ignorance, and to sanction by their authority, example, and general usage, such practices as were directly contrary to some of the commandments of God. All pretensions therefore to infallibility, whether in an individual, or in a multitude, are presumptuous usurpations, claims of arrogance, and sure marks of Antichrist.—We are indeed all liable to err, and ignorance is an alleviation of guilt; yet it is not a sufficient excuse: with the Bible in our hands, it is generally the effect of pride, sloth, and inattention; and would be avoided, were we duly anxious to know the truth and the will of God; and our consequent transgressions arise from want of circumspection. We have need therefore to use frequent self-examination, joined with serious perusal of the Scriptures, and earnest prayers for the convincing influences of the Spirit of God, that we may detect our sins of ignorance, in order that we may repent of them, and so obtain forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ.—But let us beware of presumptuous sins: for though they also may be forgiven through his all-sufficient sacrifice; yet when they gain the dominion, they often provoke God to leave the offender to final impenitence and unbelief.—They who sustain public characters much more dishonour God and injure others by their sins, than more obscure individuals: they have therefore double need of circumspection, and earnest prayer for the divine teaching and assistance; and they have also a peculiar right to expect a place in the prayers of others, who are all interested in their conduct. This is especially the case of ministers of the gospel, in whom ignorance of God's commandments is peculiarly shameful; to whose sacred character every sin is a direct contradiction; and whose evil examples will operate as a fatal and swift-spreading infection. In all cases public scandals require public confession, however contrary to the pride of our hearts.—Nations, in their political capacity, should, by their rulers, prevent, or punish and purge, our national sins, if they would escape national calamities.—None are so highly advanced in rank, or so sacred by their office, as to be excused from exercising repentance and humiliation before God, or as to have no occasion for the atonement of Christ: and none are so low and inconsiderable, as either to be exempted from the same duties, or excluded from the same advantages. Let us then learn in this way to put away the guilt, the love, and the practice of sin. And let us adopt the language of the Psalmist, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, an the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. O LORD, my Strength and my Redeemer.” Ps. 131:1-14.

whether it be a carcass of an unclean beast, or a carcass of unclean cattle, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty.

3 Or if he touch the uncleanness of a man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.

4 Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these.

5 And it shall be when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.

6 And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin-offering; and the priests shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

7 ¶ And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass which he hath

*7, 18. 1 Sam. 1:11. 14:24-28. 24:21, 22, 25, 22. 2 Sam. 21:7. 2 Kings 6:31. Ps. 132:5. Ec. 5:2-6. Ez. 17:18, 19. Matt. 14:7, 9. Acts 23:12. 116:21. 26:40. Num. 5:7. Exo. 10:11, 12. Job 33:27. Prov. 28:13. Jer. 3:18. 1 John 1:9-10. k 1:28. 4:6. 7:1-7. 14:2, 13. 19:21, 22. Num. 6:12. Ez. 40:35. 42:13. 44:29. 46:20. 11:28. 32. m See on 4:20. n 11:28. 14:21. 2 Cor. 8:12. Jam. 2:5, 6. * They first and then confess to the sin, and then offer a lamb.*

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. If a man were adjured, or required upon oath to bear testimony in a court of justice, and did not declare what he knew, though he did not bear positive false witness, he must consider himself as guilty of a great sin; and exposed to punishment from God, however he might escape detection from men.

V. 2, 3. When a man had in any respect contracted ceremonial uncleanness, and had neglected the appointed purification; or had inadvertently attended upon sacred things while thus unclean; he, by his carelessness, contracted guilt before God.

V. 4. This relates to rash oaths and vows which a man was afterwards unable to perform, or which it would have been sinful in him to adhere to.—Of these some instances are referred to in the margin.—The expression, “he shall be guilty in one of these,” is supposed by some to mean, that he who had rashly sworn to do an unlawful thing, must be guilty either of breaking his oath, or of adding sin to sin by keeping it, and would either way need a trespass-offering.

V. 5. Confess.] This implies a voluntary acknowledgment of the offence, from conviction of conscience, previous to a discovery of it by man. Perhaps some punishment would have been awarded, if the offender had been detected before he had made his confession. The typical sacrifices could only exempt the offerer from the temporal effects of his sin, and not purge the conscience from guilt: and the benefit of the efficacious sacrifice of the great Antitype belongs only to those who humbly confess their sins, and seek an interest in it by faith. As this referred equally to the three cases before stated, and was preparatory to a trespass-offering for each, it is plain that all the sacrifices appointed in this chapter were trespass-offerings: yet many expositors are of another opinion.

V. 6. The difference between the sin-offering for the high-priest, or for the whole congregation, and that for the ruler, or for a common Israelite, was briefly noted in the former chapter: and the distinction between the latter sin-offering and the trespass-offering, should here be clearly and precisely stated. Few things have more perplexed commentators; and the discordant, and even opposite sentiments of the most learned and laborious expositors yield little satisfaction, at least to the author's mind.—It is evident on the one hand that the two words, translated sin-offering, and trespass-offering, are often used for each other, as the attentive reader even of the translation may observe; yet, on the other hand, the marginal references show, that these are frequently mentioned as distinct kinds of sacrifice; (*Marg. Ref. k*;) and indeed the blood of the sin-offering was put on the horns of the altar, while that of the trespass-offering was sprinkled about the altar. (9. 425, 30.) The word (שָׁחַת) rendered “trespass-offering” signifies also trespass, as that rendered “sin-offering” signifies also sin; which is a strong proof that the guilt or exposedness to punishment, was typically translated from the offender to the innocent animal which was to be sacrificed. The root whence it is derived signifies to be guilty, with reference either to actual criminality, or to the consciousness of that criminality; and the same word is used when the prophet says, “Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” or a trespass-offering. Is. 53:10. But this does not show the nature of the trespass-offering, or how it differed from the sin-offering.—In general, neither of them were voluntary oblations, as the peace-offerings, and many of the burnt-offerings were: but some of the sin-offerings were appointed at stated seasons, and others were required in particular cases: while all the trespass-offerings were occasional. The sin-offering

committed, ^atwo turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, unto the **LORD**; ^bone for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.

8 And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer *that which is* for the sin-offering first, and ^cwring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide ^dit asunder.

9 And he shall ^esprinkle of the blood of the sin-offering upon the side of the altar; and the ^frest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin-offering.

10 And he shall offer the second for a burnt-offering, according to the manner; and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.

11 ^gBut ^hif he be not able to bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons; then he that sinned shall bring for his offering ⁱthe tenth part of an ephah of ^jfine flour for a sin-offering; he shall put ^kno oil upon it, neither shall he put ^lany frankincense thereon: ^mfor it is a sin-offering.

12 Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, ⁿeven ^oa memorial thereof, and burn ^pit on the altar, ^qaccording to the offerings made by fire unto the **LORD**: it is a sin-offering.

13 And ^rthe priest shall make an atonement for him, as touching his sin that he hath sinned in

one of these, and it shall be forgiven him; and ^sthe remnant ^tshall be the priest's, as a meat-offering.

14 ^uAnd the **LORD** spake unto Moses, saying, 15 ^vIf a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, ^win the holy things of the **LORD**; then he shall bring for his trespass, unto the **LORD**, ^xa ram without blemish out of the flocks, with ^ythy estimation by shekels of silver, after ^zthe shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass-offering.

16 And he shall ^{aa}make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add ^{ab}the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

17 And ^{ac}if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the **LORD**; ^{ad}though he wist ^{ae}it not, yet is he guilty, ^{af}and shall bear his iniquity.

18 And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, ^{ag}for a trespass-offering unto the priest: and ^{ah}the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred, and wist ^{ai}it not; and it shall be forgiven him.

19 It is a trespass-offering: he hath certainly ^{aj}trespassed against the **LORD**.

e 1:14, 15. Matt. 3:16. 10:16. Luke 2:24. p 8:9. 9:3. 14:22, 31. 15:14, 15, 30. 16:5. Heb. 10:6-10. q 1:15. r See on 1:5. 4:25, 30, 34. 7:2. s 4:7, 14, 25. t Or, 7:13, 19. See on 1:14-17. u x Ex. 16:14, 26. y 2:1. Num. 7:19, 18, &c. 15:4-9. z 2:1, 2, 4, 5, 15, 16. Num. 5:15. a 6:5, 12. b 2 Cor. 5:21. b 2:2, 9, 16. c 15. Num. 5:28. Acts 10:4. Eph. 3:2. c 1:9, 13, 17. 2:9. 3:5, 11. 4:35. 4:6. 4:20, 31. e 2:3, 10. 7:6. 1 Sam. 2:28. Hos. 4:8. 1 Cor. 9:13. f 1:2. 4:2.

seems to have been the expiation of offences committed in matters of religion, from a mistake or inadvertency respecting the law. But the trespass-offerings were required for the casual deviations from the ritual law, when known, through inattention or surprise: or for crimes committed against the moral precepts, which implied injustice to men. In short, all the cases, in which trespass-offerings were appointed, may be referred to the following heads: First, Transgressions of the ritual law, by oversight or surprise. When a man discovered his offence in this case, he was required to bring a trespass-offering, as guilty and needing an atonement and forgiveness from God. (2, 3.) The trespass-offering of the leper seems to have been of this nature; for amidst the various and exact rules laid down for his conduct, it could hardly be supposed that he had never once deviated from any of them, at least by oversight; (14:12.) and that required in a particular case of the Nazirite, was evidently of this kind. (Num. 6:9-12.) Secondly, Such as were appointed when a man had violated the moral law, in some particular which was injurious to his neighbour; even if he had sinned wilfully and knowingly, provided some circumstances in the case exempted him from punishment by the magistrate. (Notes, 6:2-7. 19:20-22.) Thirdly, Such as were required, where an inadvertent infringement of a moral precept of the first table, might also prove injurious to man. (Note, 4.) Lastly, Such as were appointed for trespasses inadvertently committed in holy things, which violated both the ritual and moral law, and were a robbery of God and an injustice to the priests. (15-19. Mal. 3:5, 9.)—The burnt-offerings were typical atonements for sin in general, especially against the moral law; but these were superadded on particular occasions.

V. 7-10. The preceding sacrifice was the same as had been appointed for the sin-offering of the common people; and it was offered with the same observances, except that the blood was not put on the horns of the altar. (4:25, 34.) But, as deviations from some or other of the numerous and particular ritual laws would frequently be committed, even where considerable pains had been taken to understand and observe them; it was proper that a less expensive sacrifice should be appointed for the poor, who otherwise might be discouraged from owning their offences, when conscious of them: and the gracious and condescending Lord was pleased to accept two turtle-doves, or young pigeons, from him who could not afford a lamb or a kid. One of these was offered as a sin-offering, and as such was eaten by the priests, (which appointment had a typical meaning, as it will hereafter appear; Note, 10:16-18.) and the other was consumed on the altar, as a trespass-offering; for otherwise no part of the oblation would have been presented immediately to God. Thus the two distinct sacrifices made one trespass-offering; and therefore one dove could not be accepted, as in the case of the voluntary burnt-offerings. (1:14-17.)

V. 11-13. In general, it might have been supposed that two young pigeons, (the smallest animals allowed in sacrifice,) would have been procured, as readily as the oblation here substituted: but circumstances might render it impracticable, at some seasons of the year, for a poor man to procure them; and in this case of necessity, an offering of fine flour would be accepted, when presented with voluntary confession

of sin. The tenth part of an ephah was about five pints.—Part of this oblation was burnt on the altar, ^{ag}upon the offerings made by fire unto the **LORD**, (so the words may more properly be rendered,) as accepted through those oblations; and the rest was eaten by the priests.—No oil or frankincense, which were presented with the voluntary meal-offerings, were brought with this oblation, as it especially expressed the sorrow of the offender, and the sufferings of Christ for sin.

V. 15, 16. When any one had failed of paying the full of his tithes, first-fruits, or other oblations, and had unwittingly kept back any part of the portion which the Lord demanded, or had eaten of the holy things of which none but the priests should eat; he was required, not only to make restitution in standard-money, adding a fifth part to it, but also to offer a ram for a trespass-offering, as soon as he discovered his fraud.—The priest was to estimate the value of that in which the offeror had trespassed: and his estimation must be taken by the offender.

V. 17-19. This case is supposed to differ from the preceding, merely in that the person concerned was not entirely certain whether he had, or had not, committed the trespass. Upon recollection he was led to suspect, that he had eaten, or otherwise used, some portion of that which was allotted to the priests, and which God had forbidden others to partake of; but yet he could not be certain, whether this had actually been the case or not. This construction is gathered from the variety of terms used about it—^{ah}his ignorance wherein he erred, and wist (or knew) it not.—It is therefore called the doubtful-offering. Yet the man must consider himself as guilty, and burdened with the suspected iniquity; till he had brought his trespass-offering, and made restitution, according to the estimation of the priest, though without adding the fifth part. In this doubtful case, let the offender take the safest course, and bring his trespass-offering. This would serve to render the people more circumspect in such things.—As the offences in these latter instances were more complicated, than in those in the former part of the chapter, a more valuable trespass-offering was required.—The offences specified in this chapter, may serve to illustrate the apostle's meaning, when he says, ^{aj}"The law entered, that sin might abound." (Note, Rom. 5:20, 21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The law of God is so exceedingly broad, the occasions of sin in this wicked world so numerous, and we are so prone to evil, that we have need to fear always, and to pray continually that we may be preserved; to look before us every step in such a perilous path; and to keep a guard on all our senses, members, and faculties; especially on our tongues, which are unruly and mischievous, and the instruments of much iniquity. With a tender conscience and ^{ak}"the heart of flesh," we shall seldom so transact business, form engagements, spend time in company, or even alone, as in God's ordinances, as not to find somewhat upon recollection, which will grieve and humble us: and the true Christian is daily pleading guilty before God, and seeking forgiveness through the blood of Christ, on the account of much better services, than those which others boast of as meritorious.—In infinite condescension the salvation of the gospel is so free, that the poorest penitent is not excluded; and so full, that the most

CHAPTER VI.

The trespass-offering for sins done wilfully, 1-7. The law for the priest respecting the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering, 8-18. The high-priest's meat-offering, 19-33. The law of the sin-offering, 24-30.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and blie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

3 Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:

4 Then it shall be, because he hath sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found;

5 Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely, he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass-offering.

6 And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation for a trespass-offering, unto the priest.

7 And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him, for any thing of all that he hath done, in trespassing therein.

[Practical Observations.]

8 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt-offering: (it is the burnt-offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.)

10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath

consumed, with the burnt-offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

11 And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes with out the camp unto a clean place.

12 And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it, it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt-offering in order upon it, and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings.

13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out.

14 ¶ And this is the law of the meat-offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar.

15 And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat-offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which is upon the meat-offering, and shall burn it upon the altar, for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it unto the LORD.

16 And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place: in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.

17 It shall not be baken with leaven: I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire: it is most holy, as is the sin-offering, and as the trespass-offering.

18 All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it: it shall be a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD made by fire: every one that toucheth them shall be holy.

19 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

20 This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD, in the day when he is anointed: the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meat-offering perpetual,

a 15:19, Num. 5:6-8. Ps. 51:4. b 19:11. Job. 26:7. John 8:44. Acts 5:4. Eph. 4:25. Col. 3:9. Rev. 22:15. c Ex. 22:7-10. * Or, in denting, Heb. in putting of the hand. Is. 21:2. 24:16. 33:1. Heb. 1:13. d Prov. 24:28. 25:12. Is. 59:13. 15. Jer. 9:5. Am. 8:5. Mic. 6:10-12. e Ex. 23:4. Deut. 22:1-3. f 19:12. Ex. 22:9-11. Prov. 30:9. Jer. 7:9. Zech. 5:4. Mal. 3:5. g 4:13-15. 5:3, 4. h Gen. 21:25. Job 20:19. 24:2. Is. 59:6. Ex. 18:7, 12, 18. Am. 3:10. Mic. 2:2. Zeph. 1:9. 15:16. Ex. 22:14, 7, 9. Num. 5:7, 8. 1 Sam. 12:3. Prov. 6:30, 31. Is. 68:9. Luke 19:8. i Or, of his being found guilty, Heb. of his trespass. Matt. 5:23, 24. 1 Sam. 16. Is. 53:10-11. k 20:20, 25, 31. 5:10, 13, 18. Ex. 34:7. Ex. 48:31. 22:25, 37. 33:14-16. 18. Mic. 7:18. 1 John 1:7, 2:12. 1 See on 1 Ex. 29:

burdened conscience here finds complete relief; yet is the evil of sin so displayed, as to fill pardoned sinners with abhorrence and dread of it; seeing that the not least transgression can be forgiven, but through the agonizing death of the great Emmanuel. They therefore, whose sins are indeed forgiven, will walk circumspectly, and be frequently examining their hearts and lives; and when they but suspect evil, they will have recourse to this one great atonement. They will be careful to bear no false witness, and to withhold no required information; to avoid rash oaths, and carelessness in the performance of their vows and engagements; and to render to God, to the king, and to every one, their due; and should they after all discover that they have failed, they will scrupulously make ample restitution to their utmost ability, acknowledge their fault without extenuation, and seek forgiveness both of God and of the injured party.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 2-7. These verses, as they relate to a trespass-offering, would have been more properly annexed to the preceding chapter: and they are so in the Hebrew. The various offences specified in them were directly and wilfully injurious to man; but they were also trespasses against God, both in themselves, and as in some of them a false oath had been taken. "Because he hath sinned, and is guilty;" that is, he is conscious of his sin, and willing to acknowledge it. If the offender had been convicted, he would have been exposed to punishment by the magistrate; and must, in some of the cases, have made larger restitution to the injured person; but as he voluntarily confessed his crime, which seemed to imply repentance, he was only required to add a fifth part of the value of the defraud or robbery, according to the valuation of the priest, and give it to the injured person: he must, however, also bring a trespass-offering to the LORD. This was evidently intended to show, that disobedience to God is the great evil, even of those crimes which are injurious to man; and that repentance and works meet for repentance, though needful in order to forgiveness, cannot atone for sin, which can only be expiated by the blood of Christ, and pardoned through faith in his name.—Some explain the priest's estimation, as relating to the value of the ram, which was to be greater or less according to the degree of the offence.

V. 8-13. In the preceding part of this book, Moses was directed to instruct the people concerning several of the sacri-

38-42, Num. 28:3. † Or, for the burning. m 12:13. n 16:4. Ex. 28:40-43. 39:27-29. Ex. 44:17, 18. Rev. 7:13. 19:8, 14. o 1:9, 13, 17. Num. 16:21, 35. Ps. 20:3. m. 37:0. p 1:16. q 16:23, 24. Ex. 44:19. r 4:12, 21. 14:40, 41. 16:27. Heb. 13:1-113. s 9:24. Num. 4:13, 14. Mark 8:46, 49. Heb. 10:27. 1:7-9. 3:3. 8-5, 6-11, 14-16. Ex. 29:38-42. Neh. 13:31. u See on 2:12. Num. 15:4, 6, 9. John 6:32. v See on 2:9. x 2:3, 10. 5:13. Ex. 44:22. 1 Cor. 13:1-15. y Ex. 12:8. 1 Cor. 5:8. z 25, 10:12, 13. Num. 18:9, 10. a 2:11. 1 Pet. 2:22. b 25, 2:3. 7:1, 6. Ex. 39:33, 34, 37. c 29, 21:22. Num. 15:10. d See on 3:17. e 22:5-7. Ex. 29:37. Hag. 2:12-14. Zech. 14:20, 21. 1 Pet. 1:16. 2:9. f Num. 15:26-32. Heb. 5:1. 8:5, 4. g 5:11. Ex. 16:36. h 2:1, &c. Ex. 29:35-42. Num. 28:5-10.

fices to be brought by them: but here he was ordered to command the priests, respecting some particulars of their official services.—It is generally thought, that the stated evening burnt-offering was laid on the altar by pieces, so as to continue burning during the whole night, till the time of the morning burnt-offering; which was consumed more speedily, at least when other sacrifices were brought, in order to make room for them. This, however, is not deducible from the text; but only that the fire must be kept in during the night, as well as the day, and never be permitted to go out. As soon as the priests and the tabernacle were fully consecrated, the fire on the altar was kindled from heaven; and it must not be suffered to go out, and then be replaced by ordinary fire.—From this law and some report of this custom in Israel, it is probable, that the gentiles derived their sacred perpetual fires, which were very common in different nations: but they did not understand that this fire was an intended type of the eternal avenging justice of God, and the perpetual efficacy of Christ's all-sufficient atonement.—In order to keep the fire clear and pure, directions were also given concerning the ashes of the flesh and wood consumed on the altar: and, as whatever touched it was relatively holy, the priests in their sacred garments must remove them; and then put off their priestly vestments, to carry these ashes out of the camp to a clean place in the ordinary garments of Israelites. Probably, after the Levites were set apart, and given to Aaron and his sons, they performed this as well as other menial services about the sanctuary.

V. 14-18. (Notes, 2.) Many of the oblations were intended as a provision for the families of the priests: but the meat-offerings were most holy, and must therefore be eaten with, or as, unleavened bread, by the priests alone, and their male children, who were priests by birth, though not yet of age to officiate.—The priests were types of Christ; and the command that they should eat these meat-offerings and sin-offerings, seems to have intimated, that they would typically bear and expiate the sins of the people, and that they should take pleasure in their work. (Marg. Ref.)—The clause, "Every one that toucheth them shall be holy," implies that the priests must not eat of these oblations, when under any ceremonial defilement; and, as some think, that all the utensils used about them must be holy, and not be emoloy'd in any other way.

half of it in the morning and half thereof at night.

21 In a pan it shall be made with oil, and when it is baken, thou shalt bring it in: and the baken pieces of the meat-offering shalt thou offer for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

22 And the priest of his sons, that is anointed in his stead, shall offer it: it is a statute for ever unto the LORD, it shall be wholly burnt.

23 For every meat-offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt; it shall not be eaten.

24 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

25 Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin-offering: in the place where the burnt-offering is killed, shall the sin-offering be killed before the LORD: it is most holy.

26 The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

27 Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the

blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash it: whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.

28 But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brazer, pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.

29 All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.

30 And no sin-offering whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation, to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire.

CHAPTER VII.

The law for the priests, of the trespass-offering, 1-10: and of the peace-offering, 11-34. The whole summed up, 35-38.

LIKEWISE this is the law of the trespass-offering: it is most holy.

2 In the place where they kill the burnt-offering, shall they kill the trespass-offering: and the blood thereof shall he sprinkle round about upon the altar.

3 And he shall offer of it, all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,

1:2, 5, 7, 9, 1 Chr. 9, 31. k 4:3. Deut. 10:6. Heb. 7:23. 1:21. Ex. 29:22-25. Is. 53:10. m 16:17. 2:10. n See on 4:3, 8c. 21, 24, 33, 34. o 13:3, 5, 11, 4:33. p 17:21, 22. q 10:17, 18. Num. 18:9, 10. 22, 44, 28, 29, 46, 30. Hos. 4:8. r Ex. 27:3-18, 36, 4-19, 40, 33. Ex. 42:12. s 18. Ex. 29:37, 30, 29. Hag. 2:12. t 11:32. 2 Cor. 7:1, 11. u 11:33. 15:12. Heb. 9:9, 10. x See on 13, y 4:3-21, 10:18. 16:

27, 28. Heb. 9:11, 12, 13, 11. s 1:6-7, 14, 12, 13, 19, 21, 22. Num. 6:12. Ex. 40:39, 44, 29, 46, 20. b 6:17, 21, 22. c 1:3, 5, 11, 4, 24, 28, 33, 6:25. d 1:5, 3, 2, 8, 5, 9. Ja. 5:2, 15. Ex. 36:25. Heb. 9:19-22, 11:28, 12:24. 1 Pet. 1:2. s See on 3:3-5, 9-11, 4:8-10. Ex. 29:13. Ps. 51:5, 17.

V. 20-23. This oblation seems to have been required of the high-priest alone, "on the day in which he was anointed," and from that time, every morning and evening as long as he continued in the office; and then in like manner of his successor: for, by the sins of Aaron may be understood, his descendants and successors in the high priesthood, in their generations. Perhaps the words, "anointed in his stead," may signify, not only the person who succeeded to the high priesthood, when the high-priest died, but also the next in succession, as anointed to officiate in his stead, while living, should any thing incapacitate him.—The whole of this meat-offering, when duly prepared, was consumed on the altar, probably being laid upon the daily burnt-offering by the priest who officiated: and neither of this prescribed oblation, nor of the voluntary meat-offerings of the priests, must any part be eaten; but the whole must be dedicated to the Lord.—The priests typically bore and expiated the sins of the people, but they could not actually atone for them: they therefore, in respect of their own sacrifices, and some others, ate no part, but burnt the whole; which was a typical translation of the guilt from themselves and the people to Christ and his sacrifice, who actually bore and expiated them.—This meat-offering might also represent, that the best duties and services, even of the high-priest himself, could be accepted only through the great Antitype: and that he and his brethren must, nevertheless, daily abound in good works and in personal religion, in the most devoted and disinterested manner.

V. 25-29. The sin-offerings for the ruler, or for individuals, were slain where the burnt-offerings were. The priest who officiated had for his perquisite the whole carcass, on which he and his sons, and any other of the priests whom he invited, might feast in the court of the tabernacle, during the day on which it was sacrificed. But none might touch the flesh of it, except such as were holy persons, and free from ceremonial defilement: and, if the garment of the offerer or any other person was sprinkled with the blood, it must be washed in the court of the tabernacle: nay, when the flesh was sodden in an earthen vessel, which was porous and might retain some part of it, the vessel must be broken: and even a brazen one must be carefully scoured and washed. This shows that all the oblations were sodden or boiled; and none roasted, except the paschal lamb in the houses of the Israelites.—All these regulations were calculated to express the polluting nature of sin, and the translation of guilt from the sinner to the sacrifice; yet so that it was not actually taken away, but in some sense adhered to them: and they denoted that a more efficacious sacrifice was represented by them.—They might also intimate, that no one must pretend to any share with Christ in atoning for sin; that none but the spiritual priesthood, which is separated from the world and sin, and truly devoted to God, have any real benefit from the sacrifice of Christ, or truly feed upon him in their hearts; and that his atonement becomes to many an occasion of additional guilt and deeper condemnation, through their contempt or perversion of it: but that the youngest and most infirm believer is as certainly interested in this salvation, as the most mature and established, though not honoured with so much usefulness.

V. 30. (Note, 4:12.) This is an additional law concerning the sin-offerings for the high-priest, or the whole congregation: and it was also a general rule for the stated sin-offerings. These seem to have been a more explicit type of Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, as devoted to a death pronounced accursed in the law, than any other of the Mosaic institutions: while the priest at the same time carrying the blood into the sanctuary, applying it to the golden altar, and sprinkling it before the veil, most aptly represented the Redeemer rising, ascending, and appearing in the presence

of God for us; and, in virtue of his atonement and by his intercession, rendering both our persons and services accepted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. It is impossible to enumerate all the various methods, in which men, prompted by covetousness, have contrived unjustly to appropriate their neighbour's property. Human laws must indeed discriminate as to punishments, with reference to the welfare of the community: but all these methods of injustice are alike violations of the divine law; (not excepting the case of keeping what is found, when the owner can be ascertained;) and they are generally accompanied with lies, and frequently with perjury.—Would the offender, therefore, escape the vengeance of God, (though he be not exposed to punishment from man,) he must both make ample restitution, if in his power, and seek forgiveness, by faith in that one offering which taketh away the sin of the world.—Confession of sin makes no satisfaction to justice: our municipal laws, therefore, do not require the offender to plead guilty, or to criminate himself, nor will it avail for the mitigation of his sentence; and the case is the same in respect of the law and justice of God. But, before his mercy-seat, that man alone who ingenuously confesses his sin, and condemns himself, obtains the benefit of Christ's satisfaction, the free forgiveness of all sin, and the full comfort of it. Our God approves of that state of heart which produces this conduct, as right and reasonable in a sinner: and no one, who is unfeignedly of a contrite spirit, will either depend on anything for forgiveness, but free mercy through the blood of Christ, or wilfully continue in sin, or fail to bring forth the fruits meet for repentance.

V. 8-30. The efficacy of the priesthood and mediation of Christ is perpetual, and we can never approach to God in his name, by day or by night, unseasonably: thus should the fire of our holy affections, the exercise of our faith and love, of prayer and praise, be constant and without ceasing also; and we should be watchful and unwearied in well-doing. The true ministers of Christ especially should have the fire of their zeal constantly burning, and their spiritual sacrifices ascending; being "instant in season and out of season," in their important work; without sloth, weariness, or dissipation, with all reverence and exactness; and not deeming the meanest service beneath them or admitting of a careless performance.—Such ministers, though they need continual forgiveness themselves, will yet be very useful in bringing men to repent, to seek and find forgiveness, and to become "zealous of good works;" and they alone have a well-grounded claim to be maintained from the sanctuary. But they will also be the last persons to be peremptory in their demands of this nature, to be discontented with their provision, or attentive to their own interest or indulgence. Rather they will make it their study to convince the people that they "seek not theirs, but them;" that they would far rather promote their sanctification, than profit by their sins; and that they desire to be examples to the flock, in practising what they preach, in foregoing their just claims, and in seeking the glory of God and the good of souls, even when their diligence meets with no recompense, or a very ungrateful return, from man. Above all, they will teach the people, both by word and deed, to shun the defilement of sin, to treat sacred things with serious regard, to reverence the atoning blood of Christ, and in a holy manner to apply its benefits; not thence taking encouragement to sin, but deducing powerful motives for devoted obedience unto God. May the Lord send forth many such labourers into his harvest, for the honour of Jesus, the great Head of the Church!

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-13. In the case of the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, the whole sacrifice was

4 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul that is above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

5 And the priests shall burn them upon the altar, for an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a trespass-offering.

6 Every male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it is most holy.

7 As the sin-offering is, so is the trespass-offering: there is one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it.

8 And the priest that offereth any man's burnt-offering, even the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt-offering which he hath offered.

9 And all the meat-offering that is baken in the oven, and all that is dressed in the frying-pan, and in the pan, shall be the priest's that offereth it.

10 And every meat-offering mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one as much as another.

11 ¶ And this is the law of the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he shall offer unto the Lord.

12 If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

13 Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace-offerings.

14 And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation, for an heave-offering unto the Lord, and it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace-offerings.

15 And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered: he shall not leave any of it until the morning.

16 But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same

day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten.

17 But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice, on the third day shall be burnt with fire.

18 And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.

19 And the flesh, that toucheth any unclean thing, shall not be eaten, it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

20 But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offerings, that pertain unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

21 Moreover, the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace-offerings which pertain unto the Lord, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

22 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 23 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.

24 And the fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in nowise eat of it.

25 For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, even the soul that eateth it, shall be cut off from his people.

26 Moreover, ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.

27 Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

28 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

29 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace-offering

f. 13. 2:2, 9, 16, 3:16. Gal. 2:20. 5:24. 1 Pet. 4:1, 2. g. 6:16—18, 29. Num. 18:9, 10. h. 6:25, 25, 14:3. 1:16. 4:11. Gen. 3:21. Ex. 29:14. Num. 19:5. Rom. 13:14. Phil. 3:9. j. 2:4—7. k. Or, on the flat plate, or slice. 2:5. maza. 1:13. 6:16—18. 1 Cor. 7:13. Gal. 6:6. l. Ex. 16:18. 2 Cor. 3:14. m. See on 3:22, 19—21. n. 22:29. 2 Chr. 29:31. 33:16. Neh. 12:43. Ps. 50:13, 14. 23. 13:1, 2. 16:7. 2:21, 22. 16:17. Jer. 33:11. Hos. 14:2. Luke 17:16, 18. Rom. 1:21. 2 Cor. 9:11—15. Eph. 5:20. Heb. 13:15. 1 Pet. 2:5. o. 2:4. 6:15. Num. 6:15. p. 23:17. Am. 4:5. Matt. 13:33. 1 Tim. 4:4. q. See on Ex. 29:27, 28. Num. 15:10—21. 19:21. 31:29, 41. r. 2:21. Num. 18:3—11, 19:21—32. s. 22:23, 30. See on Ex. 12:10. 16:19. Ec. 9:10. John 9:4. 2 Cor. 6:2. Heb. 3:13—15. t. 2:2. 23:1. 23:38. Num. 15:3. t. 12:6, 11, 17, 25. Ps. 66:13. 116:14, 18. Nah. 1:15. u. 22:23, 29. Deut. 12:6. Ex. 6:12. x. 19:5—8. y. Gen. 22:4. Ex. 19:11. Hos. 6:

2. 1 Cor. 15:4. z. 22:23. 10:16. Ex. 12:10. 29:14. a. 10:19. 19:7, 8. 22:23, 25. Jer. 14:10, 12. Hos. 8:13. Am. 5:22. Mal. 1:10, 13. b. Num. 18:27. Rom. 4:11. c. 11:10, 14. Is. 1:11—14. 65:4. 66:3. Luke 16:15. d. 5:17. 10:17. 17:16. 19:8. 20:17. 22:23. 23:16. 1a. 33:11, 12. 12. 18:20. Heb. 9:28. 1 Pet. 2:24. e. 11:24—29. Num. 19:11—18. Luke 11:41. Acts 10:15, 16, 23. Rom. 14:14, 20. 2 Cor. 6:17. Tit. 1:15. f. 15:2. &c. g. 5:2, 3. 13:1—3. 16:3—12. 22:4. Num. 19:11—16. h. 11:24—42. Deut. 14:7, 8, 10—20. i. 11:10. 13:20, 41, 42. 1 eut. 14:3. Ex. 4:14. k. 20. 23:17. 17:14, 18, 29. Gen. 17:14. Ex. 12:15, 19. 30:33, 38. 13:16, 17. 49:8—10. 17:6. Gen. 42:35. 8:15. 2:15—17. 2. Acts 2:27. comp. s. 13:18, 19. h. See on Ex. 12:15, 22, 8. Ex. 23:31. 1 eut. 14:21. Ps. 111:43, 51. Ver. 30:27. 2 eut. 3:17. 17:10—14. Gen. 9:4. 1 eut. 14:4, 5. Ex. 23:25. Lev. 17:29, 30. Eph. 1:7. 1 Tim. 4:4. 1 eut. 21, 25. Heb. 10:29. p. 3:1. Col. 1:29. 13:10, 17.

divided between the altar and the priest; and the offerer had no share in it, as he had in the peace-offerings. The former was an expression of repentance and sorrow for sin, and was therefore more properly accompanied by fasting than by feasting, but feasting was very suitable to the occasions of the peace-offerings, which denoted communion with a reconciled God in Christ, the joy and gratitude of a pardoned sinner, and the privileges and cheerful services of a believer. The remembrance of sin is never pleasant to a true Christian; but the remembrance of the former kindnesses of God, and his answers to prayer, and the expectation of future benefits, always are so.—The priest, who offered the sacrifice, in some cases, had all that was not burnt for his own perquisite, which would encourage and recompense a constant attendance. In other cases all the priests shared alike, which might forward friendly intercourse and fellowship with each other. The skin belonged to the priest who offered the sacrifice; 'that is,' say the Jewish writers with considerable probability, 'the skins of sacrifices brought by individuals; while those of the public sacrifices were sold to defray the expenses of repairing the tabernacle.'

V. 12—14. Besides the different kinds of unleavened cakes and wafers brought with other sacrifices, leavened bread was presented with the peace-offerings for mercies received; for a thankful, cheerful meal was intended, and such bread was usual at feasts. One loaf or cake of this bread was presented to the Lord as a heave-offering, and eaten by the priest; but none was burnt on the altar. (Note, 2:11.)

V. 15—18. In the prohibition of any part of the sacrifices being kept unto the third day, when it would begin to putrefy, there might be a reference to Christ, who rose again in about the same time, and saw no corruption. But, more evidently, the Israelites were thus cautioned against procrastination in rendering thanks, in paying vows, or in seeking spiritual

blessings; against superstition; and against distrust and covetousness. And they were taught to use hospitality to their friends and to the poor, without grudging; for, if they spared, they only spared for the fire; except they would, by disobedience, prevent the acceptance of their sacrifices, and even render it an abomination.—The thank-offering must be entirely eaten on the same day on which it was sacrificed: for we should especially make haste, when recent mercies have excited our gratitude, to express it by fervent thanksgivings; and the Lord's kindness to us should peculiarly enlarge our hearts in bounty to our brethren.—If these laws were wilfully broken, the offender would "bear his iniquity;" nor was any sacrifice appointed: but an inadvertent violation of them must be expiated by a trespass-offering.

V. 20. *Cut off from his people.* We find no rule or example, leading to suppose that this was a law, which the priest or the civil magistrate was empowered to execute, either by solemn excommunication, or by death. It seems rather to have been an awful denunciation of divine vengeance. The offenders would deserve, and might expect, to be cut off by some immediate judgment of God; and no sacrifice was appointed to expiate their guilt. (Marg. Ref. k.)

V. 25—27. (Note, 3:17.) The prohibition of the fat, or suet, was restricted to such animals as were offered in sacrifice; but that of the blood was extended to all kinds of land animals. The former taught reverence to the altar and ordinances of God; but the latter had especial respect to the atoning blood of Christ.

V. 29—34. The offerer was required, with his own hands to bring these parts of the sacrifice to the priest, that the oblation of them might appear his own voluntary action. The breast, (which seems to have included the whole of what is at present, in cutting up slaughtered animals, divided into the two breasts,) having been solemnly waved to and fro, as

ings unto the LORD, shall bring his oblation unto the LORD, of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings.

30 His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire; the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved for a wave-offering before the LORD.

31 And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar; but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.

32 And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest for an heave-offering, of the sacrifices of your peace-offerings.

33 He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace-offerings and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part.

34 For the wave-breast and the heave-shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel, from off the sacrifices of their peace-offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest, and unto his sons, by a statute for ever, from among the children of Israel.

35 This is the portion of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day when he presented them, to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office;

36 Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Israel, in the day that he anointed them, by a statute for ever, throughout their generations.

37 This is the law of the burnt-offering, of the meat-offering, and of the sin-offering, and of the trespass-offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace-offerings;

38 Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

q 3:3,4,9,14. Ps. 110:3. John 10:18. 2 Cor. 8:12. r 8:27. 9:21. See on Ex. 29:24-25. Num. 6:20. s 34. 5:13. 6:16,26. 8:29. Num. 18:18. t 8:25,26. 9:21. 10:14. Num. 6:20. 18:13,19. Deut. 18:3. 1 Cor. 9:13,14. u 3. 6:26. x See on 30-32. y See on 3:17. Ex. 29:9. z 8:10-12,30. Ex. 29:7,21. 40:13-15. 1a. 10:27. 9:11. John 3:34. 2 Cor. 1:21. 1 John 2:20,27. a Ex. 29:21. 29:1. Num. 18:7-19. b 1:6-9-13. Ex. 29:38-42. c 2:6,14-18. d 4:6,24-30. e 1-7. 5:6-1-7. f 6:20-23. Ex. 29:1. g 11-21. 3. h See on 1:1. a Ex. 29:1-4. b Ex. 28:2-4,40-43. 39:1-31,41. c Ex. 30:23-37. 40:12-15. d See on Ex. 29:1,2. Heb. 7:27. e Num. 20:8. 21:16. 1 Chr. 13:5. 15:3. 2 Chr.

devoted to God, was eaten by the priests in general: but the right shoulder, having been heaved upwards, as in like manner given to the Lord, was the perquisite of the officiating priest. This might intimate, that as Christ, with his whole heart and all his power, serves the interest of his Church, so ought the priests to serve God and the congregation. (Note, Ex. 29:22-28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The faithful ministers of religion will indeed readily forego their own interest or indulgence, for the glory of God and the good of souls: yet it should be noticed, what ample provision God himself of old made for them; and that in proportion to their diligent attendance at his courts. And we have no reason to suppose from the New Testament, that he would now have them doomed to indigence; or that those persons do their duty, who live in plenty, and permit them to continue in perplexing straits: while the more willing any of them are "to suffer all things, rather than hinder the gospel of Christ," the more inexcusable are those, who allow them to be losers by their disinterestedness.—Every thing is beautiful in its season: there is a time, when the Lord calls to weeping and fasting, and a time when thankful joy admits of festivity: indeed, godly sorrow for sin, and believing meditation upon the Saviour's bitter sufferings, prepare for feasting upon his spiritual provisions, and rejoicing in his holy comfort. The infinite sufficiency which is in Christ, furnishes a plenteous feast for all even the vilest sinners, who accept of his gracious invitations: the true believer therefore longs for all around him, yea, for the whole world, to share with him in his felicity. And the same principle, counteracting natural selfishness, covetousness, and distrust, and inspiring gratitude and confidence in God, as well as good-will to man, will enlarge his heart to liberality in temporal things, and render him willing to communicate, and ready to distribute. Nor is any one a loser by so doing: rather they are losers indeed, who are of a contrary spirit; as they lose the blessing of God upon their substance, and the comfortable enjoyment of it; together with the acceptance and benefit of their religious services. For whatever professions may be made of repentance, faith, love, or holy joy: if the heart be leavened with allowed covetousness or malice, or absorbed in selfishness, every religious performance will be deemed an abomination; and the self-deceived wretch, who thus presents it, will be exposed to the

CHAPTER VIII.

The Lord commands Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons, 1-5. He washes and clothes them; and anoints Aaron; and also the tabernacle and its furniture, the altar and the laver, 6-13. The sin-offering, burnt-offering, and remission of consecration sacrificed for Aaron and his sons, with the appointed rites, 14-32. The place and time of their consecration, 33-38.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin-offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread.

3 And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

4 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

5 And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done.

6 And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.

7 And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.

8 And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.

9 And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his fore-front did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

10 And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them.

11 And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar, and all his

5:2-6. 39:2,13,25. Neh. 8:1. Ps. 22:25. Acts 2:1. f 9,13,17,29,35. Ex. 39:1,5,7, 21,26,29,31,32,42,43. Deut. 19:32. Matt. 28:30. 1 Cor. 11:23. 15:3. g Ex. 29:4. &c. h Ex. 29:4. 40:12. 1s. 51:2,7. 1s. 1:16. Ez. 36:25. Zech. 13:1. John 13:8-10. 1 Cor. 6:11. Eph. 5:26. Heb. 9:10. 10:22. Rev. 1:5,6. 7:14. 1 See on Ex. 29:4. 29:5. 39:1, &c. 1s. 61:30. Rom. 3:22. 13:14. Gal. 3:27. k Ex. 28:15-29. 39:4-21. Cant. 8:6. 1s. 53:17. Eph. 6:14. 1 Thes. 5:8. 1 See on Ex. 38:30. Ezra 2:63. m Ex. 28:4,36-38. 29:6. 39:28-30. Zach. 5:5. 6:11-14. Phil. 2:9-11. n Ex. 30:23-29. 40:9-11. o 4:6,17. 16:14,19. 1s. 52:15. Ez. 36:25. Tit. 3:6.

awful wo of "bearing his own iniquity."—Delays often cause good purposes and holy affections to wear off without effect; and we frequently lose the benefit of divine ordinances, by improperly conducting ourselves after them.—To approach the throne of grace, or the Lord's table, unclean through unrepented sin; or in proud contempt and careless neglect of the cleansing blood of Christ, and the sanctifying influences of his Spirit; is an awful presumption, and will be terribly punished, except it be repented of; yet, on such services do multitudes depend to atone for their sins, and to merit everlasting life! But indeed any presumptuous sin, unless truly repented of, must exclude a man from every well-grounded expectation of divine favour, and expose him to awful vengeance. "Let us therefore have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."—For the honour of God, and for an example to others, we should, in some cases, be as explicit as possible in our profession of faith, and in dedicating ourselves and all we have to the Lord; and we ought at all times to do his will, seek his glory, and serve his people, after the example of Christ, with our whole heart and soul. Thus performing the work that he assigns us, we may thankfully receive the portion which he allots us; and be satisfied that, whatever treatment we meet with from man, he will both graciously supply our wants, and accept of our endeavours; while with joyful hope we look forward to the period when he will "present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy."

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 2. This consecration of Aaron and his sons had been prescribed some time before, but was delayed until the tabernacle had been prepared, and the laws of the several sacrifices given. (Notes, Ex. 29:1-37.)

V. 3-5. The congregation was assembled, that they might witness the consecration of Aaron and his sons; and be impressed with the conviction that they had not intruded themselves into this important office, but were called to it by JEHOVAH himself.

V. 6-14. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 29:1-12. V. 15. The beginning of this verse may be rendered, "And Moses slew it, and took the blood, &c." We find it expressly said in Exodus, that Moses slew these sacrifices (Ex. 29:1.) yet, in general, the offerer seems to have killed his own sacrifice. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1:5-9.)

vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.

12 And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head; and anointed him to sanctify him.

13 And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the Lord commanded Moses.

14 ¶ And he brought the bullock for the sin-offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin-offering.

15 And he slew it, and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar; and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.

16 And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned it upon the altar.

17 But the bullock and his hide, his flesh and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp; as the Lord commanded Moses.

18 ¶ And he brought the ram for the burnt-offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

19 And he killed it, and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

20 And he cut the ram into pieces, and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat.

21 And he washed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it was a burnt-sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the Lord; as the Lord commanded Moses.

22 ¶ And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

23 And he slew it, and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

24 And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and

Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

25 And he took the fat, and the rump, and the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat and the right shoulder.

26 And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the Lord, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder.

27 And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave-offering before the Lord.

28 And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar, upon the burnt-offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

29 And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave-offering before the Lord: for of the ram of consecration it was Moses's part; as the Lord commanded Moses.

30 And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments, with him: and sanctified Aaron and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

31 And Moses said unto Aaron, and to his sons, Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.

32 And that which remaineth of the flesh and of the bread, shall ye burn with fire.

33 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you.

34 As he hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.

35 Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not: for so I am commanded.

36 So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.

p 4:3. Ex. 29:41. 29:7. 30:30. Ps. 133:2. q Ex. 28:40, 41. 29:8, 9. 40:14, 15. Is. 13:9. 1s. 61:10. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9. Rev. 1:6. 5:10. * Heb. bound. r 2:4:3-12. 16:6. Ex. 29:10-14. 1s. 53:10. Ex. 13:19. Rom. 8:3. 2 Cor. 5:21. Heb. 7:26-28. 1 Pet. 3:18. s s See on 14: 4:4. 16:21. 1:15, 11. 3:2, 8. Ex. 29:10, 11. u 4:7, 17. 18:30. Ex. 29:12, 35, 37. Ez. 43:19-27. Heb. 9:18-23. v 6:30. 16:20. 2 hr. 29:24. Ex. 45:20. Dan. 9:24. Rom. 5:10. 2 Cor. 5:18-21. Eph. 2:16. v 1:21. Heb. 2:17. x See on 3:3-5. 4:8, 9. Ex. 29:13. y 4:11, 12, 21. 6:30. 16:27. Ex. 29:14. Gal. 3:13. Heb. 13:11-13. z See on 1:4-13. Ex. 29:15-18. a 1:17. 2:9. Gen.

8:21. Ex. 29:18. Eph. 5:2. b 2:29. 7:37. Ex. 29:19, 31. Rev. 1:5, 6. c 14:17, 28. Ex. 29:20. Rom. 6:13, 19. 12:1. 1 Cor. 6:30. Phil. 1:20. 2:17. d See on 3:9. Ex. 29:22-25. e See on 3:10, 31. f 2:29 on 22. g 7:34. Ex. 29:26, 27. Is. 66:30. 1 Cor. 10:31. h See on Ex. 29:21. 30:30. Gal. 5:22-25. 11 et. 1:2. 1 John 2:27. 16:23. Ex. 29:31, 32. Ez. 46:20-24. k 10:17. John 6:51, 53-56. 17:17. Ex. 12:10. 29:34. m 14:8. Ex. 29:30, 35. Num. 19:12. Ez. 43:25-27. n Prov. 7:16, 27. 10:11, 12. 6:10. 1 Tim. 3:7. 9:19. Deut. 11:1. 1 Kings 2:3. 1 Tim. 1:3, 4, 18. 5:21. 6:13, 17, 20. 2 Tim. 4:1. p Ex. 29:43.

V. 16-21. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 29:13-18.*

V. 22-24. The sin-offering implied that Aaron and his sons deserved to have their blood shed; and, after death, to be made a sacrifice to the offended justice of God; instead of being able to bear and atone for the sins of the people, and being honoured as intercessors for them, and typical representatives of the Saviour. The burnt-offering denoted, that, being pardoned and accepted through the atonement of Christ, they willingly and thankfully dedicated themselves without reserve, to be consecrated unto God for this sacred ministry. The ram of consecration was their peace-offering; and represented that, as reconciled unto God, they had fellowship with him, and delighted in his service and in being wholly employed in it; that he would accept and honour their services and ministrations; that they were thankful for past and present benefits, and confided in him for future sufficiency and acceptance. Accordingly, the several laws prescribed in the foregoing chapters were observed by Moses, the officiating priest; with only such additions and variations, as had a peculiar reference to their entire separation to God for the work of the priesthood. (Note, Ex. 29:19-21.)

V. 25-32. Moses, as the priest, had the breast, and Aaron and his sons the remainder, except the right shoulder, which was laid on the altar with the fat. This, in all other peace-offerings, belonged to the officiating priest: but, as Moses was the only priest till Aaron and his sons were fully consecrated, and as the whole breast belonged to him; so it seems to have been appointed on this occasion, that the shoulder should be laid on the altar, rather than left to be burnt with the residue in some other place, according to the law of the peace-offerings. (Note, Ex. 29:22-28.)

V. 33-35. During seven days, Aaron and his sons abode constantly at the door of the tabernacle, not being yet allowed

to enter into it. We may suppose, that such accommodations were provided for them as were necessary: but it seems that they watched, at least by turns, day and night all the while. On each of these days, a sin-offering, a burnt-offering, and a peace-offering of consecration, were sacrificed, with exactly the same ceremonies as on the first day, and they were expressly warned, that it would be at the peril of their lives, if they neglected to observe the commands given them. All this was suited to show the inefficacy of these oblations and purifications: and that they were only "shadows of good things to come."—One sabbath must have occurred during the time of their consecration; perhaps it was on the last day of the seven: and it has been observed, that the Lord Jesus, our great High-Priest, came to Jerusalem and to the temple, on the day after the sabbath, and five days before the passover, which he spent in labours and watchings, and was crucified on the sixth day; then he rested on the sabbath-day, and arose the next morning, as having fully completed his consecration.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In these types we see our great High-Priest, as solemnly appointed, anointed, and invested in his sacred office; and, by his own blood, and the influences of his Holy Spirit, sanctifying the ordinances of religion to the benefit of his people; and to the honour of God, who, for his sake, accepts our worship, though we are sinners and our services polluted with sin. We may also rejoice that he, though free from sin himself, yet, "having suffered being tempted" is "a merciful and faithful High-Priest," full of tender compassion to the feeble-minded and tempest-tossed soul; and that, having finished his consecration and sacrifices upon earth as our perfect High-Priest, he "for ever appears in the presence of God for us." But when these heavenly things we see

CHAPTER IX.

The newly consecrated priests, directed by Moses, enter on their office, 1-7: and offer sacrifices for themselves and for the people, 8-21. Moses and Aaron bless the people; and the glory of the Lord appears, 22, 23. Fire from before the Lord consumes the sacrifices, and the people worship, 24.

AND it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel.

2 And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, without blemish, and offer them before the Lord.

3 And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, "Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and a calf, and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering;

4 Also a bullock and a ram for peace-offerings, to sacrifice before the Lord; and a meat-offering mingled with oil: for to-day the Lord will appear unto you.

5 And they brought that which Moses commanded, before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near, and stood before the Lord.

6 And Moses said, This is the thing which the Lord commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you.

7 And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the

8:23 14:1,23 15:14 Ex. 43:27, 47:4 43:8,14 Ex. 29:1 Heb. 7:27, 10:10-14, c. 15, 4:23 16:5,15 Ex. 6:17 10:19 18:15,30-10 Rom. 8:3 2 Cor. 5:21 Heb. 9:26-28 1 Pet. 2:24 3:15, e See on 2, f 12:6, 14:10 23:12 Ex. 12:5 f See on 3: h See on 2: 16-23 Num. 15:3-9, i Ex. 19:17, Dent. 31:12, 1 Chr. 15:3, 2 Chr. 5:2,3, Neh. 8:1, k 23 Ex. 16:10, 24:16, 40:34,35.

shadowed forth in the persons and priesthood of men; what care was taken to show that they were not appointed, for any worthiness of such an honour, or capacity for such a service, in themselves, when they were not admitted to appear before God, except through the shedding of the blood, and the burning of the bodies, of so many innocent and useful animals; through repeated washings, sprinklings, and anointings, with change of garments, and every observance which could mark them in themselves to be guilty and polluted in his sight, and show that they defiled all they touched! Surely this was intended to lead the people to expect a nobler priesthood, better sacrifices, and a more effectual atonement and intercession: and we must be blind indeed, yea, willingly ignorant, if it do not teach us, that nothing can atone for sin, or render a sinner accepted of God, but the righteousness, blood, and intercession of the holy Jesus, our great High-Priest; which are always accompanied with his sanctifying grace poured into every believer's heart.—Doubtless, when Aaron offered his sin-offering, he would remember, with mixed humiliation, admiration, and gratitude, his recent transgression in making the golden calf, and the Lord's forgiveness of it; and would acknowledge that he deserved himself to be made a sacrifice to offended justice with those who perished, instead of being appointed to so honourable an office. This would teach him lowliness of mind, and compassion and tenderness to other poor sinners, seeing "he himself was so compassed with infirmity." Thus was "boasting excluded;" the whole glory given to God, and a preparation made for Aaron's properly bearing the honour of the priesthood, and performing its duties. In like manner, our God prepares his true ministers for their office: he teaches them the knowledge of him and of themselves; he convinces them of their guilt and sinfulness, and brings them to a simple dependence on Christ for every thing needful for their own salvation. Thus they learn to consider themselves as no better than the vilest sinners; except as the Lord hath made them to differ, by interesting them in the Redeemer's sacrifice, washing them in his blood, arraying their souls in his righteousness, and anointing them with his grace. Whilst they feed upon his spiritual provision, and are happy in communion with him; and whilst their hearts are fraught with love to Christ, and compassion for their fellow-sinners: they are prepared and qualified for the work, and disposed to "give themselves wholly to it;" and to be constant, persevering, tender, and affectionate in it; and they are made willing to forego all personal considerations, that they may point out the Saviour to perishing sinners, and assist the spiritual sacrifices of believers, to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls.—But, indeed, all true Christians are consecrated to be spiritual priests: and we should seriously ask ourselves, whether we are conscious of such a consecration, as "bought with a price, to glorify God, in body and spirit which are his?" whether we are partakers of this washing, anointing, and arraying in the robes of righteousness and salvation? whether in our daily walk we study to maintain the honour of the priestly character? and whether we abound in "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ?" If so, let us not despise, disdain, or despair of our fellow-sinners; but, remembering what we have done, and how we are saved, let us seek and pray for their salvation too. Yet at last, our whole life, after our conversion, is only

altar, and offer thy sin-offering, and thy burnt-offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people, and offer the offering of the people and make an atonement for them, as the Lord commanded.

8 ¶ Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin-offering, which was for himself.

9 And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and the dipt his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar.

10 But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin-offering he burnt upon the altar; as the Lord commanded Moses.

11 And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire, without the camp.

12 And he slew the burnt-offering; and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.

13 And they presented the burnt-offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt them upon the altar.

14 And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt them upon the burnt-offering on the altar.

15 ¶ And he brought the people's offering, and

1 Kings 8:10-12, Ex. 43:2, 14:3,20, 8:34, 1 Sam. 3:14, Heb. 5:3, 7:27, 9:7, m 4:16-20, Heb. 5:1, n 14:5, 4:4,29, o 4:6,7,17,18,23,30, 8:15, 16:18, Heb. 9:22,33, 10:4-14 p See on 3:5-9, 11, 4:8-12, 8:16, Ps. 51:17, q 4:8, r See on 4:11,12, 8:17, 16:27,28, s See on 1: 8:18-21, Eph. 5:2,25-27.

a week of consecration, as God's priests, to offer up spiritual sacrifices in his courts above, throughout an eternal sabbath. Let us then improve our present opportunity, wait with patience and perseverance, and cheerfully expect this high and everlasting honour.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. 1-7. On the eighth day, after the consecration of Aaron and his sons had begun, Aaron was directed to enter on his sacerdotal ministrations: but though so many sin-offerings had been brought, and so many solemn rites of purification had been exactly observed; his first oblation must be another sin-offering for himself! As, however, no particular offence was to be expiated, but merely the defects of his preceding services, a calf of the first year, instead of a young bullock, was appointed; yet some think that he was thus reminded of his sin, in making the golden calf.—After offering this and his own burnt-offering, the next sacrifice was a sin-offering for the people; not a young bullock, as required for any special transgression, but a kid of the goats as on the great day of atonement. After this sin-offering and burnt-offering of the people had been sacrificed, peace-offerings were added, on which they might feast before God: but, as the priests would have a part of the oblations brought by the people, they presented no peace-offering. During the preceding days, there had been no peculiar discoveries of the divine presence or glory; and the sacrifices seem to have been offered with common fire, as on former occasions: but now, in honour of Aaron's typical priesthood, and to sanction what had been done, the Lord intended to display his presence and glory, and the people must therefore prepare to meet him.

V. 8-11. It seems evident from the narrative, that Aaron personally (though assisted by his sons) slew his own sacrifices; and also those of the people as their representative, though perhaps the elders assisted in this part of the service. The Levites were not yet set apart for their work; and the most laborious part of such offices afterwards devolved on them, or on the Nethinims. On this occasion, however, Aaron and his sons took the lead, as well in killing and preparing the sacrifices, as in burning the sin-offerings. It does not appear that the blood, either of the sin-offerings described in the preceding chapter, or of this for Aaron, was brought into the sanctuary: yet the bodies were burned without the camp. The priests ate the sin-offerings of the people, as typically bearing their iniquity; but they could not bear their own sin; and therefore they ate no part of any sin-offerings sacrificed for themselves, but the whole was carried forth out of the camp, as taken quite away by Christ the great Antitype.

V. 12-14. It is not certain, whether these burnt-offerings, and the fat of the other sacrifices, were consumed by common fire, as on the former days; or only laid in readiness, till the fire from the Lord fell and consumed the whole.

V. 15. Aaron prepared the sin-offering of the people as he had his own; but it is not certain, whether it was then burnt without the camp, or afterwards on the altar. It ought not to have been burnt at all, but eaten by him and his sons. (Notes, 10:16-20.)

V. 17. Beside the burnt-sacrifice, &c.] It is probable, that from the first setting up of the altar, Moses had offered on it the morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb for a burnt

took the goat which *was* the sin-offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.

16 And he brought the burnt-offering, and offered it according to the manner.

17 And he brought the meat-offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt it upon the altar, beside the burnt-sacrifice of the morning.

18 He slew also the bullock and the ram, for a sacrifice of peace-offerings which *was* for the people: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,

19 And the fat of the bullock, and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the *inwards*, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver.

20 And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar:

21 And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave-offering, before the Lord; as Moses commanded.

22 And Aaron lifted up his hand towards the people, and blessed them: and came down from offering of the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and peace-offerings.

*1 See on 4:27-31, Is. 53:10. Heb. 2:17. * Or, ordinance. 1:3-10. u2:1. 2 Heb. filled his hand out of it. x Ex. 29:38-42. y See on 3:7:11-18. Rom. 5:1. 10. Eph. 2:14-17. Col. 1:20. z See on 10. a 7:29-34. b 3:14-17. c 7:20-34. Ex. 29:27,28. d Gen. 14:18-20. Num. 6:23-27. Deut. 10:8. 21:5. 1 Kings 8:55. 1 Chr. 23:13. 2 Chr. 6:3. 7:1. 7:21. 7:27. Mark 10:16. Luke 24:50. Acts 3:26. 2 Cor. 13:14. Heb. 7:6,7. 1 Pet. 3:9. e Luke 1:21. 22. Heb. 9:24-26. 13 See on 6. Num. 14:10. 16:15. 22. Gen. 4:3,4. 15:17. Ex. 3:2. Judg. 6:21. 13:15,20,23. 1 Kings 18:38. 1 Chr. 21:26. 2 Chr. 7:1-3. Ps. 20:3. marg. h Gen. 17:3. 1 Kings 13:9. Ezra 3:1. a Ex. 6:23. 24:1. 9. 28:1. b 16:12. Ex. 27:3. 38:3. Num. 16:6,7,16,17,46. Heb. 9:4. c Ex. 30:1-9,34-36. 31:11. 37:29. 40:27. 1 Kings 13:*

offering; and accordingly, it had been offered on the morning of this memorable day.

V. 22, 23. When Aaron had finished his sacred work at the altar, he blessed the people before he left the place: that is, he prayed for them, pronounced a blessing on them in the name of God, and encouraged their hopes of the divine acceptance in their services. This seems to have been always considered as a part of his priestly office; and orders are afterwards given about it. (*Notes, Num. 6:23-27.*) He then came down; (for the altar seems to have been rather raised above the rest of the court;) and he entered into the tabernacle with Moses, who doubtless directed him how to perform the appointed services there, as he had before shown him how to order the sacrifices at the altar. Then they both united in again blessing the people; and, while thus employed, the divine glory appeared resplendent from the cloud, resting on the tabernacle, and probably filling it; which denoted the Lord's acceptance of it for his typical dwelling-place in Israel.

V. 24. This fire came forth from the visible glory before mentioned. Perhaps the former sacrifices had already been consumed, and the latter had been placed upon the altar; when fire from before the Lord rapidly consumed them. This fire was afterwards long preserved upon the altar. By this token the Lord signified his acceptance of the vicarious atonement; as the fire which represented his righteous vengeance consumed the sacrifice and spared the sinners. On witnessing this awful, but probably expected scene, the people shouted with exultation, and prostrated themselves in adoring worship.—Thus, our sins having been laid upon Christ, and divine justice satisfied by his atonement, mercy is extended and grace given to every true believer. (*Marg. Ref. g.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

After the example of Aaron and his sons, and of him whom Aaron typified, the ministers of Christ should consider their ordination as "filling their hands;" and without delay enter upon their important business: for he that properly desires that office, desires not honour, profit, ease, or pleasure, but "a good work;" so that, without waiting to receive even the congratulation of his friends, he should set about it; and not deem any thing, which is honourable to God, or useful to the Church, or to a single individual, too laborious, mean, or disgusting. He should also first take heed to himself; and be careful that his public ministrations do not interrupt his personal religion, and the care of his own soul. And all persons should remember, that the exercise of repentance, faith, and devotedness to God, and communion with him in his ordinances, is not merely the work of a few days, at the commencement of a religious profession, but the daily business of the believer's whole life.—Words can never express the energy, with which these multiplied sacrifices, all at once superseded by the death of Christ, mark the insufficiency of all other atonements, and the efficacy of his "one offering of himself;" and teach us that our best services need washing in his blood; and that the guilt of our best sacrifices needs expiating by one more pure and noble than they. Let us then be thankful that "we have such a High-Priest over the House of God," who hath no sin of his own to atone for, and who, by his "one oblation of himself once offered," hath

23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people.

24 And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering, and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces.

CHAPTER X.

Nadab and Abihu, burning incense with strange fire, are consumed by fire from the Lord, 1, 2. Moses shows the reason of this judgment, and orders their burial; while Aaron holds his peace, 3-6. Aaron and his other sons are forbidden to mourn, 6, 7; and are prohibited from drinking wine, or strong drink, when going into the sanctuary, 8-11. Moses gives directions about eating the holy things, 12-15. A mistake is discovered about the people's sin-offering; Moses reproves the priests, and Aaron excuses it, 16-20.

AND Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not.

2 And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

1, 2 2 Chr. 26:16-20. Ps. 141:2. Jer. 44:8,15,19-21. Luke 1:9-11. Rev. 8:1-5. 19:24. 16:12. Num. 16:38,46. e Ex. 30:9. Deut. 4:2. 12:32. 17:3. Jer. 7:31. 19:5. 20:35. 1 Pet. 1:6,11. Num. 3:3,4. 16:35. 20:61. 1 Chr. 24:2. g Num. 16:22. 33:49. 1 Sam. 6:19. 1 Chr. 13:10. 15:13. Acts 5:5,10. 1 Cor. 10:11. h 8:35. 21:6. 22:9. Ex. 14:4. 19:22. 29:43,44. Num. 20:12. Deut. 32:51. 1 Sam. 6:20. 1 Chr. 15:13. Ps. 89:7. 119:120. Is. 62:11. Ex. 20:41. Heb. 12:29. 29. 1 Sam. 2:30. Is. 49:3. Ex. 28:22. John 13:31,32. 14:13. Acts 5:11-18. 2 Thes. 1:10. 1 Pet. 4:17. k Gen. 15:25. 1 Sam. 3:18. Job 1:20,21. 20. Ps. 39:3. 46:10. Is. 39:8. Matt. 10:37.

fully atoned for the sins of all his people. Having offered his sacrifice, and being risen from the dead, he blessed his church before he entered the holy place, to appear in the presence of God, and to make intercession for us: (*Note, Luke 24:50-53.*) whence he will shortly come again; and with the full consent of prophets, apostles, saints, and angels, make good his benediction, in the everlasting felicity of every true Israelite. In the mean time, he will manifest himself, and show the glory of the Father to those who wait upon him, though not to the world.—Let us, however, remember with holy awe, that the same agonies of the beloved Son of God, which assure the humble penitent of exemption from the deserved fiery vengeance of divine justice, loudly proclaim the inevitable destruction of such as proudly and impenitently neglect, or hypocritically abuse, so great salvation: for he, who in awful justice "spared not his own Son," will not spare them. Finally, let us attend on the means of grace; and, as it were, lay the wood in order, and prepare the sacrifice, and wait and pray, till the "baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire" burn up our corrupt affections, kindle the flame of true devotion, and enable us to offer "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

NOTES.—*CHAP. X. V. 1, 2.* The golden calf had occasioned a lamentable delay in erecting the tabernacle; and now the sin of Nadab and Abihu caused an awful interruption in the opening of the service. Next to Moses and Aaron, none stood higher, or were more likely to be honourable in Israel, than these two young men. Perhaps they were elated with this distinction, and were influenced by pride and ostentation; it is also probable they were in some measure heated with wine. (*Note, 8-11.*) Being fully consecrated, and considering the burning of incense as the most honourable part of their office, they were impatient to enter upon it; and, at the season, when the people were prostrated in adoration of the manifested presence and glory of God, they rashly and presumptuously, without orders, which they should have waited for; both at once, which was never practised; and with fire taken, not from the altar of burnt-offering, but probably from under the peace-offerings; attempted to enter the tabernacle to burn incense, though it was not the hour at which this service was appointed to be done. Perhaps, they intended to place their censers on the golden altar. This conduct evidenced great irreverence, and might have been a very bad precedent to their brethren and successors; to prevent which, the Lord was pleased to make them an example to the Old Testament church at its first formation, by causing the fire from his presence to slay them suddenly, without consuming their bodies, or their clothes; (*Note, Num. 16:35.*) as Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead at the first establishment of the New Testament church. (*Note, Acts 5:1-11.*)

V. 3. The priests were especially intended by the words, "them that come nigh me," and some of the texts referred to in the margin show, that they had been repeatedly warned in this respect, in order that their example might edify the people. Indeed, this accords to the tenor of divine revelation in every part; and not only ministers, but all who worship God, are often reminded, that if they do not honour him, he will honour himself in their punishment.—Even the way of a

4 And Moses called Mishaël and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

5 So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

6 And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

7 And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die. *It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:*

10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean:

11 And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

[Practical Observations.]

Ex. 6:18, 22. Num. 3:19. 1 Chr. 6:2. Luke 7:12. Acts 5:6, 10. 8:2. n 13:45. 21:1-15. Num. 5:18. 6:5, 7. 14:6. Deut. 33:9. Jer. 7:22. Ez. 24:16, 17. Mic. 1:16. o Num. 16:24, 41-47. Josh. 7:1, 11. 22:18, 20. 2 Sam. 24:1, 15-17. p 21:12. Matt. 8:21, 22. Luke 9:60. q 8:12, 30. Ex. 28:41. 30:30. 40:13-15. Acts 10:38. 2 Cor. 1:21. r Num. 6:3, 20. Prov. 31:4, 5. Is. 28:7. Jer. 35:5. Ez. 44:21. Luke 1:15. Eph. 5:18. 1 Tim. 3:3, 5. 5:23. Tit. 1:7. s See on 8:17. t 11:47. 20:25.

sinner's acceptance, though full of encouragement, and an especial manifestation of the mercy of God, clearly reveals his awful justice and holiness; and solemnly and loudly proclaims that he will be approached with reverence, and in sincere abhorrence of all sin: but this is often overlooked. The Lord hath therefore seen good, under both dispensations, to deter men from perverting his mercy, by terrible threatenings and awful judgments; and we have reason to think, that the death of Nadab and Abihu had a very salutary and durable effect, especially upon Aaron and his sons, and their successors. But with what exquisite anguish must the heart of Aaron have been torn! and what dismay must have seized upon him, at this unlooked-for and most afflicting stroke! His own sons—his eldest sons—just consecrated to so high and important an office,—concerning whom he had doubtless formed the most pleasing hopes;—cut off suddenly, in such a state of mind, by the immediate judgment of God, for presumptuous disobedience, and publicly, as an example to all Israel!—Each of these reflections must have struck a dagger into his heart, and have aggravated the agony to which he was all at once reduced, from a confluence of the most delightful sensations. This must have been the effect of every reflection, but one; namely, on the justice, wisdom, and love of God; his sovereign right to dispose of him and his, as he saw good; and the important purposes, for his glory and the good of his people, which would thence result; and this thought seems to have so far quieted his mind, as to repress every hard and murmuring thought, and to bow his will into reverent submission; as well as to stop his mouth, and prevent him from uttering one complaining word!—Without doubt, he would now recollect the golden calf, with deep humility and admiration of the Lord's patience towards him. Indeed, in all respects, he seems to have been peculiarly supported by divine grace on this most trying occasion.

V. 4, 5. It is far more probable, that Nadab and Abihu were struck dead at the door of the tabernacle, than that they had actually entered; for Moses and others seem to have witnessed the catastrophe, which would not have been the case, had they been within. The sacerdotal garments being thus polluted, were no longer fit for use, and they seem to have been buried in them.—Mishaël and Elzaphan were Levites; the service allotted them was an impressive lesson; and when they carried the dead bodies through the camp, they presented to the view of the people a most affecting sight, which would be an important caution and a solemn warning to them all.

V. 6. Different opinions have been formed, concerning the prohibition contained in the words rendered, "Uncover not your heads." But, as it must denote something immediately to be done or omitted, the opinion that the priests were forbidden to put off their sacerdotal bonnets, as well as to rend their clothes, is most probable.—Aaron, however, and his surviving sons, were forbidden to express their grief by the customary tokens; that they might not seem to reflect on the divine justice and goodness; to teach them to subject their strongest passions to reason and conscience; and to remind them, that in comparison of the divine glory, even the nearest relations must be disregarded. And as they had so lately been anointed to their sacred and important office, with which even the safety of the nation was intimately connected; they must not, on any personal consideration, suffer their

12 ¶ And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat-offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar: *for it is most holy.*

13 And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it is thy due and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for so I am commanded.

14 And the wave-breast and heave-shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place; thou and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee: for they be thy due, and thy sons' due, which are given out of the sacrifices of peace-offerings of the children of Israel.

15 The heave-shoulder, and the wave-breast shall they bring, with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave-offering before the LORD, and it shall be thine and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever; as the LORD hath commanded.

16 ¶ And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin-offering, and behold it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying,

Jer. 15:19. Ez. 22:36. 44:22. Tit. 1:15. 1 Pet. 1:14-16. u Dent. 24:8. 33:10. 2 Chr. 17:3. 30:22. Neh. 8:2, 8. 9:13, 14. Jer. 23. 18:18. Mal. 2:7. Mont. 22:20. Acts 20:27. 1 Thes. 4:2. v 2: 6:15-18. 7:9. 21:22. Ez. 2:2. Num. 19:9, 10. 44:29. x 21:22. y 7:29-34. 9:21. Ez. 29:24-28. Num. 18:11. John 4:24. z 6: 26:30. 9:15. a Ez. 32:19-22. Num. 12:3. Matt. 5:22. Mark 3:5. 10:14. Eph. 4:26.

services to be interrupted. For had they also provoked the Lord to slay them, the people would have been left without priest or sacrifice, exposed to the just wrath of God. Yet neither on this occasion, nor at any subsequent period, was another family appointed to succeed, in case that of Aaron should be extinct.—The people in general, however, were allowed to bewail this event, which doubtless they did, with the usual expressions of sorrow.

V. 8-11. As the sin of Nadab and Abihu seems, in part at least, to have been occasioned by a degree of inebriation; a law was on this account enacted, that the priests should drink no wine, nor intoxicating liquor, either before or during their ministrations in the sanctuary; in order that their judgments might be unclouded by the fumes of intemperance, especially when required to practise or interpret the law of God. This command was immediately given to Aaron, to encourage him by such a token of regard; and because the Lord would not have it appear, as if Moses had not sympathized in his affliction, or had intended to charge him with criminality in this respect.

V. 12-15. (Marg. Ref.) Moses at this time repeated, or explained, and enforced, the laws before given; lest the interruption which had taken place should cause Aaron and his sons to forget them.—The meat-offering, as most holy, must be eaten by the priests, or the sons of the priests, in the holy place; but the portion allotted them of the peace-offerings might be eaten in any clean place, with their families.

V. 16-18. The sacrifice here spoken of was a sin-offering for the congregation; yet, as it was a goat, and not a young bull, (no doubt by special direction,) the blood was not carried into the sanctuary, to be put upon the altar of incense, or sprinkled before the veil; and therefore the flesh ought not to have been burnt without the camp, or upon the altar; but, when the priests had done eating, to have been consumed in the same manner as the remaining flesh of the other sacrifices. It is not evident, whether this was done by inadvertency, or because Aaron, from the state of his mind, drew a wrong conclusion. Moses, however, was angry at this deviation from the divine precept, and probably feared that further rebukes would be the consequence. He therefore expostulated with Eleazar and Ithamar; not with Aaron, lest he should add to his heavy distress.—His language is remarkable: "God hath given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, &c." Sinners, who suffer deserved punishment are said to "eat of the fruit of their own ways, and to be filled with their own devices." Prov. 1:31. Thus the priests, by eating the sin-offering of the people were represented as bearing their iniquity for them; but in burning without the camp their own sin-offerings, and all other sacrifices, the blood of which was carried into the sanctuary, they owned that they were only types; and that both their own iniquity, and that of the people, must be finally transferred to the great Antitype, and effectually expiated by him.—God bestowed upon the priests this reward of their service, that they might be more willing to take upon them the people's sins, and to make an expiation carefully for them. And indeed, the very eating of the people's sin-offering argued the sins of the people, in some sort, laid upon the priests, to be taken away by them. Which being done, they had reason to rejoice also in a feast upon this sacrifice, which God had been pleased to accept, for the taking away of the sins of the people. From whence

17 Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin-offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord?

18 Behold, the blood of it was not brought in, within the holy place: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded.

19 And Aaron said unto Moses, Behold, this day have they offered their sin-offering and their burnt-offering before the Lord; and such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin-offer-

b 16:22. 22:16. Ex. 28:38,43. Num. 18:1. Is. 53:11. Ez. 4:4-6. 18:19,20. Heb. 9:28. 1 Pet. 2:24. c 6:30. d 6:28. e 8:8,12,15. f Deut. 12:7. 28:14.

the sacrifice of Christ may be explained, who is said to bear our iniquity, (as the priest is here said to do,) all our sins being laid on him; who took upon him to make an expiation for them by the sacrifice of himself. For the priest here, by eating of the sin-offering, receiving the guilt upon himself, may well be thought to prefigure one, who should be both priest and sacrifice for sin: which was accomplished in Christ. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 19, 20. Though Eleazar and Ithamar were addressed, Aaron alone replied; conscious perhaps that the sin-offering had been burnt by his directions, or that he had not been sufficiently careful that it should be rightly disposed of. He acknowledged that, in this respect, the rule had not been exactly observed: but he intimated that, in other things, his surviving sons had been very attentive to their duty, and had offered the sin-offering and burnt-offering for the people, (for so he seems to mean,) with much circumspection. Indeed, the deviation which had been made, was by no means the effect of a presumptuous disregard to the divine command; and such things had befallen him, that he could not have eaten the sacred feast with calmness and cheerfulness, though he had submitted to the will of God in the awful dispensation. And, as his mind was agitated with various conflicting passions, and depressed with a sense of his unworthiness; he could not suppose that his service would have been acceptable, if he had attempted it.—With this excuse Moses was satisfied; being sensible that Aaron had borne his affliction in a proper manner; that he could not possibly with cheerfulness have eaten the holy things; and that he intended to do right in burning them. It seems also, that the Lord approved of this determination.

Their sin-offering, &c. (19) The priests had, on the same day "offered their sin-offering, and their burnt-offering," which were burnt; and through inadvertency, they had disposed of the sin-offering of the people in the same manner. This may be the meaning; and then the sin-offering of the people was not burned intentionally, by Aaron's direction, but by the mistake of his sons.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. With what solemn attention should we hear these words of the great and terrible Lord God, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified!" Contemplating with holy awe his majesty, purity, and avenging justice, we may well exclaim, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments." Nay, even the discoveries of his boundless mercy, as revealed in the gospel, and of the way in which that mercy is exercised, are suited to form our spirits to humble reverence united with filial confidence.—Alas! when we consider from what motives, and in what manner, great numbers of those who are called the "priests of the Lord," draw nigh to him in their sacred services; and what effects their spirit, conduct, and ministrations, are suited to produce on the people; we cannot but wonder, that examples of severity, like that before us, are not frequently made. But assuredly, unless repentance intervene, the Lord will, before the assembled world, "be glorified" in the dreadful punishment of those who have thus openly dishonoured him, and who have led others also to despise his ordinances or revile his truth.—It behooves us, however, to beware, not only of profaneness, or gross irreverence in this sacred work, but likewise of *strange fire*. Great earnestness and fervency may be shown, when we are actuated by no better motives than an eager desire of distinguishing ourselves, of acquiring honour or advantage, or of promoting the credit and success of the party to which we are attached. Our zeal may result from enthusiasm and unscriptural confidence; it may be exercised with bitterness and malevolence; it may excite us to call for fire from heaven on our opponents, or to kindle the flames of persecution on earth; and in various ways it may be no other than the heat and vehemence of selfish passions. This is *strange fire*, not kindled at the altar of burnt-offering, not the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, not a heavenly fervour of love to God and man, inducing humble, earnest, affectionate, and patient endeavours, by warranted means alone, to promote the cause of religion in the world, and especially among those with whom we are immediately connected. But not ministers alone are concerned: all who profess to worship God, "draw nigh to him;" and if their lives do not honour him, he will at length glorify himself in their awful destruction.—We need not, however, go further than ourselves: for when we

ing to-day, (should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?

20 And when Moses heard that, she was content.

CHAPTER XI.

What beasts might be eaten and what might not, 1-8: what fishes, 9-12: what birds, or flying creatures, 13-23. How ritual uncleanness would be contracted, by touching the carcasses of unclean animals; and how it must be cleansed, 24-40. Reptiles not to be eaten, 41-43. The reason of these laws, 44-47.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, and to Aaron, saying unto them,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying,

1 Sam. 1:7,8. Hos. 9:4. Mal. 2:13. Phil. 4:4. g 2 Chr. 30:18-20. Matt. 12:7,20.

duly consider the holiness of our heart-searching Judge, and the adorations of the heavenly host, and then reflect on our prayers and praises; we must be ready to say, "Wo is me, I am undone! because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts!" *Is. 6:5.* And nothing but the sense of pardoning love through the atonement of Christ, his gracious promises, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit, can embolden us in attempting to serve and worship our Holy God. Yet, even thus encouraged, we should look diligently to ourselves and to our rule, that we may approach him in the appointed manner, and in a recollected, humble spirit; fearing the rebukes with which he chastens his own people, even though delivered from the dread of the everlasting punishment reserved for his enemies.—Honours and distinctions are dangerous, because they tend to excite and invigorate the pride and ambition of our hearts; we should therefore be peculiarly watchful over ourselves, and earnest in prayer to be kept humble, when the Lord is pleased to employ us in any useful and reputable service, or in any way to advance us above our brethren. And as all, who would serve God, must "take heed, that their hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness," so the ministers of religion especially should keep at the greatest distance from this hateful vice. Above all other men they need clear heads and sound judgments, as well as upright hearts; not only that "they themselves die not," but that they may "put a difference between holy and unholy," and teach the people all that the Lord hath spoken." They are peculiarly required to watch and be sober, that they may rise superior even to their natural affections, that they may be able to govern every passion, and be examples to others of that supreme love of God, which subordinates all other regards; for the important work of their ministry must not be interrupted, lest wrath come upon the people also. Indeed, we all should learn to mourn and rejoice, as though we mourned and rejoiced not; for we may be assured, that all our comforts must be counterbalanced with trials, and all our honours with "some thorn in the flesh, lest we should be exalted above measure." But the remembrance of former sins may well stop our mouths, and produce silent submission under our bitterest sorrows: "for it is of the Lord's mercy we are not consumed;" and we have still many unmerited comforts remaining, and encouraging prospects before us. However great our inward anguish may be, we should learn to suppress the rising murmur, to "keep our mouth as with a bridle," and be careful that we do not reflect upon God. If we thus profit by these examples of his severity, we shall have "a witness in ourselves" of the wisdom and goodness of God, in this part of his dealings with mankind.

V. 12-20. Though our improper attendance on religious ordinances may expose us to wrath, yet we must not neglect them. Some indeed, by unworthily receiving the Lord's supper, "have provoked the Lord to plague them with divers diseases, and with sundry kinds of death;" yet others should not, on that account, neglect this bountiful duty and service; on the contrary, "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Nor need an humble communicant, who comes, "not trusting in his own righteousness, but in the Lord's mercy," be discouraged; for he knows how to distinguish between presumptuous rashness or contemptuous disobedience, and the involuntary infirmities or unallowed mistakes of the conscientious. After the example of Christ also, his ministers, while taking heed that all is done in the prescribed manner, noticing whatever is amiss, and on some occasions expressing a holy indignation, and rebuking with all authority; must be cautious not to confound inadvertencies with intended disobedience, or to grieve those whom the Lord has wounded: they must rather make allowances, and accept of excuses; and "restore those who have been overtaken in a fault, in the spirit of meekness, considering themselves, lest they also be tempted."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1. Aaron was at this time fully established in the high priesthood, and these laws related to such things as fell especially under the cognizance of him and his sons; he was therefore addressed along with Moses on this occasion.

V. 2. The Creator pronounced all his works separately good, and altogether, when finished, very good: (*Note, Gen. 1:31.*) yet the distinction between clean and unclean animals was known even before the flood; though probably it only

*These are the beasts which ye shall eat, among all the beasts that *are* on the earth.

3 Whatsoever ^bparteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, and ^ccheweth the cud among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

4 Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: *as* the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.

5 And ^dthe coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof: he *is* unclean unto you.

6 And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof: he *is* unclean unto you.

7 And the swine, though he divideth the hoof, and be cloven-footed; yet he cheweth not the cud: he *is* unclean to you.

8 Of their flesh ye shall not eat, and their carcass ye shall not touch: *they are* unclean to you.

9 ¶ These shall ye eat, of all that *are* in the waters: ^ewhatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.

10 And all that have no fins nor scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing, which *is* in the waters; *they shall be* an abomination unto you.

11 They shall be even an abomination unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomination.

12 Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that *shall be* an abomination unto you.

13 ¶ And these *are they which* ye shall have in abomination among the fowls, they shall not be

eaten; *they are* an abomination: ^fthe eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

14 And the vulture, and the kite, after his kind:

15 Every raven after his kind:

16 And ^gthe owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckoo, and the hawk, after his kind,

17 And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl,

18 And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle,

19 And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

20 All fowls that ^hcreep, going upon *all* four *shall be* an abomination unto you.

21 Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon *all* four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth:

22 *Even* these of them ye may eat: ⁱthe locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.

23 But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

24 And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever ^jtoucheth the carcass of them shall be unclean until the even.

25 And whosoever beareth *ought* of the carcass of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

26 *The carcasses* of every beast which divideth the hoof, and *is* not cloven-footed, nor cheweth the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.

27 And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts, that go on *all* four, those *are* unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcass shall be unclean until the even.

^a Deut. 14:3-8. Ez. 4:14. Dan. 1:8. Matt. 15:11. Mark 7:15-19. Rom. 14:2, 14, 15. 1 Tim. 4:4-6. Heb. 13:9. b Ps. 1:1. Prov. 9:6. 2 Cor. 6:17. c Deut. 6:6, 7. Ps. 132. Prov. 2:1, 2, 10. Acts 17:11. 1 Tim. 4:15. d Ps. 104:18. Prov. 30:26. e Job 35:14. Matt. 7:26. Rom. 2:18-24. Phil. 3:18, 19. 2 Tim. 3:5. Tit. 1:16. f Rev. 21:8. g Jer. 65:4. 66:3, 17. Matt. 7:6. Luke 8:33. 15:15. 2 Pet. 2:18-22. h 1 Is. 52:11. Hos. 9:3. Mark 7:15, 18. Acts 10:11-15, 28. 15:2. Rom. 14:14-17, 21. 1 Cor. 8:8. 2 Cor. 6:17. Col. 2:16, 21-23. Heb. 9:10. i Deut. 14:9, 10. j 7:18. Deut. 14:13. Ps. 139:21, 22. 1 Prov. 13:20. 28:27. Rev. 21:8. k Deut.

14:12-20. Job 39:27-30. Jer. 4:13. 48:40. Lam. 4:19. Hab. 1:8. Matt. 21:29. Rom. 3:13-17. 1 Gen. 8:7. 1 Kings 17:4-6. Prov. 30:17. Luke 12:24. m Ps. 102:6. Is. 13:21, 22. 34:11-15. John 3:19-21. Eph. 4:18, 19. 5:7-11. 1 Thes. 5:5-7. Rev. 18:2. n Matt. 6:21. Phil. 3:18, 19. 1 John 2:15-17. Jude 10, 19. o Matt. 3:4. Mark 1:6. g 27:41. 1 Cor. 1:38. 2 Cor. 1:17. 1 Pet. 2:1-3, 11. Heb. 9:28. g 28:40. 14:8. 15:5. 16:28. h 4:18-19, 11. 8:19. 19:8, 19, 21. 31:21. Zech. 13:1. 1 John 1:38. Acts 22:16. Heb. 9:10. Rev. 7:11.

related to sacrifices. But at this time, very particular laws were enacted respecting the people's diet, and the ceremonial uncleanness contracted by touching the carcasses of unclean animals. These laws seem to have been enacted, in the first place, as a test of obedience, like the prohibition to Adam of "the tree of knowledge;" and to teach the Israelites habits of self-denial, and the government of their appetites. Secondly, to keep them distinct from other nations, both by throwing hindrances in the way of their social intercourse with them, and by establishing the distinction between clean and unclean, which was applicable to persons as well as things: when therefore this distinction was no longer to be observed, Peter was instructed by a vision, which had relation to the distinction of meats, "not to call any man common or unclean." (Note, Acts 10:9-16.) Many also of these forbidden animals were occasions of superstition and idolatry to the Heathen. Thirdly, to teach them to make distinctions between holy and unholy, in the choice of companions, and in forming intimate connexions. And fourthly, the propensities of these animals taught them what manner of persons they ought to be: for if the pure, useful, gentle, patient nature of the animals appointed for sacrifice, was emblematical of the Saviour's character, it is obvious to conclude, that the exclusive prescription of some animals for the diet of the Lord's people was also significant. Some have even thought that the allowance of the slaughter of *innocent animals*, for the food of *sinful man*, forms a continued type of the purchase and application of the salvation of Christ, and of our transformation into his image, while we spiritually "eat his flesh and drink his blood."

V. 3-8. "Parting the hoof" may denote separation from sin and the world, and distinguishing between truth and error, good and evil; while "chewing the cud" aptly represents serious, pleasant, habitual meditation upon the truths and precepts of the word of God, in order to a holy conversation. These are united in the experience and character of the true Christian; but hypocrites show that they do neither in sincerity, by evidently attempting to separate between profession and practice; and therefore they are as unclean as the avowed infidel or profligate.—The fox, the dog, the lion, the wolf, and indeed animals in general which are carnivorous, neither chew the cud nor divide the hoof; other animals do only the one, and were therefore unclean. The former are apt emblems of the crafty, the covetous, the cruel, and the fierce; many of the latter, of the lewd, the sensual, and the carnally minded;

whilst the sheep and ox, and other animals which unite the two, aptly teach us what we ought to be, and with whom we should associate. The foot of the camel is divided on the upper part of it, but it is strongly joined beneath; so that he does not "part the hoof." It is doubted whether the words rendered *coney* and *hare*, be properly translated; because it is not known that these animals chew the cud. They were, however, unclean. The swine is the emblem of filthiness; but it is marked as unclean on the same ground as the other animals. It is probable, that the peculiar aversion of the Jews to the swine, arose from those animals being commonly sacrificed in the worship of idolaters. Some think that the flesh of the unclean animals was prohibited as unwholesome; yet the flesh of hares and rabbits seems to be as wholesome as that of sheep and goats.—The Israelites were not only forbidden to eat the flesh of the unclean beasts, but they must not touch their dead bodies: and consequently the use of their skins, and even of their fat, was interdicted.

V. 9-12. Frogs, amphibious creatures, sea-monsters, eels, and several species of fishes, were thus prohibited as an abomination; but the emblem is very obscure: some of them may represent such persons as attempt to reconcile in their conduct the service of God and mammon.

V. 13-20. Here the critics find abundance of word; and if this law were now in force, it would be necessary to decide upon the meaning of the original words, many of which are used in no other part of Scripture, except in the parallel passage in Deuteronomy (Deut. 14:11-20.) Many of the unclean birds are fierce and ravenous; others feed very grossly; several instinctively love darkness and desolate places; and few of them are generally eaten at present. The harmless, loving dove, and such as were of a cleanly nature, were allowed for food; and the emblem is easily applied.

V. 21, 22. The several species of locusts, here excepted from the general prohibition, (for the words rendered *beetle* and *grasshopper*, are supposed to mean different kinds of locusts,) have, besides four feet on which to walk or crawl on the earth, two longer legs on which they leap. Locusts have been eaten by many nations, and are at this day.—"After his kind," means *all* of this kind.

V. 25, 27. Not only those beasts which have single hoofs, as horses and asses, were unclean, but such likewise as divided the feet into paws, or more than two pairs, as lions, tigers, and many other beasts.

28 And he that beareth the carcass of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they are unclean unto you.

29 ¶ These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,

30 And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.

31 These are unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even.

32 And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

33 And every earthen vessel whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.

34 Of all meat which may be eaten, that on which such water cometh, shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every such vessel, shall be unclean.

35 And every thing whereupon any part of their carcass falleth, shall be unclean; whether it be oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: for they are unclean, and shall be unclean unto you.

36 Nevertheless, a fountain or pit, wherein there is plenty of water, shall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcass shall be unclean.

37 And if any part of their carcass fall upon any sowing-seed which is to be sown; it shall be clean.

¶ Ps. 10:3. 17:14. Hab. 2:6. Luke 12:15. 16:14. Col. 3:5. 2 Tim. 3:2-5. s. 14. 6:21. 16:23. 15:12. Tit. 2:14. 3:5. 1 John 1:7. a 14:43. 2 co 5:1-8. Phil. 2:1. * Heb. a gathering together of waters. x 1 Cor. 15:47. y 15:57. Num. 19:11. z See on 25. 17:15. 22:8. Levit. 14:21. Is. 1:16. Ez. 4:14. 36:25. 44:31. Zech. 13:1. 1 Cor. 6:11. 1 John 1:7. a Gen. 3:14, 15. Is. 65:25. Mic. 7:17. Matt.

V. 31-33. *When they be dead.* (31) The unclean animals did not render a person unclean, who touched them when alive; for many of them were beasts of burden, as the horse, ass, and camel. Yet, even with this limitation, the law would be to us extremely burdensome: for instance, a dead mouse, cat, weasel, or squirrel, falling upon earthen vessels, ovens, or ranges, would render it necessary to destroy them; and even when vermin or reptiles were killed, the removal of their carcasses, or those of any animal that died of itself, would occasion pollution. (32-35.) This indeed was only ceremonial; yet, it would often exclude persons from public ordinances and society; and much circumspection, in properly purifying themselves and their furniture, would be requisite, and a constant circumspection to avoid contracting defilement. This evidently represented the necessity of the "sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience." the daily pursuit of true holiness, in the exercise of "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;" and habitual watchfulness and self-examination.

V. 34-38. If water, from any vessel thus rendered unclean, fell on such food as was before clean, this must not afterwards be eaten; nor must water be drunk from such a vessel. But water in a well or pit, into which any carcass had fallen, was not unclean; but, when afterwards brought or drawn from it, might be used.—This exception seemed necessary, in order that water for the various ablutions might be procured.—Corn for food, if the carcass of any creature fell into it, must not be used till washed and cleansed: but this was not needful in seed-corn, except it was steeped in water; and then it must be washed in other water.

V. 39, 40. The carcasses of unclean animals, in whatever way they died, or were killed, rendered those unclean who touched them; but the carcasses of the clean animals did not pollute, except when they died in any way by which the blood was not separated from them. In this case, if any one inadvertently ate of them, he contracted uncleanness, and needed the appointed cleansing.

V. 41-45. The serpent, by which the devil tempted Eve, was condemned to move on his belly, and to eat dust; and deceivers, liars, slanderers, and murderers, of every description, with all who hate God and diffuse the poison of impiety among men, are in Scripture called the seed of the serpent, and the children of the devil. (Note, Gen. 3:14, 15.) Other reptiles aptly represent the earthly minded and sensual; and probably this was the implied instruction of the prohibition. The word *abomination* denotes an union of hatred and terror. The frequent use of this word concerning these animals, would have had a tendency to render the Israelites peculiarly circumspect in keeping aloof from them; and shows

38 But if any water be put upon the seed, and any part of their carcass fall thereon; it shall be unclean unto you.

39 And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcass thereof shall be unclean until the even.

40 And he that eateth of the carcass of it, shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcass of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

1 ¶ And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination: it shall not be eaten.

42 Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth; them ye shall not eat, for they are an abomination.

43 Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.

44 For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

45 For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy; for I am holy.

46 This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:

47 To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

3:7. 23:33. John 8:44. 2 Cor. 11:3, 13. Tit. 1:12. 1 Heb. doth multiply feet. b 41:42. 20:25. 1 Heb. your souls. c See on Ex. 20:2. d 10:3. 19:2. 20:7, 96. Ex. 19:5. Deut. 14:2. 1 Sam. 6:20. Ps. 99:5, 9. Is. 6:3-5. Am. 3:3. Matt. 5:49. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. 2:9. e Ps. 105:43-45. f See on 44. 1 Thes. 4:7. g 7:37. 14:54. 15:32. Ez. 43:12. h 10:10. Ez. 44:23. Mal. 3:18. Rom. 14:2, 3, 13-23.

how we should abhor and dread the contagion of wicked companions, and the poison of false doctrines.—The argument deduced from the holiness of JEHOVAH, who redeemed Israel from Egypt, and separated them from other nations, to enforce their diligent attention to these rules concerning external purity, proves much more conclusively, that his redeemed worshippers should be "holy in all manner of conversation." (Note, 1 Pet. 1:13-16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst we enjoy our Christian liberty, as exempted from burdensome observances, and are allowed the use of so many kinds of wholesome and palatable food, from which Israel was restricted, let us not forget to be thankful, and to serve God with joyfulness of heart, that we are indulged in this abundance of all things: and let us be careful not to use our "liberty as an occasion to the flesh." Even at this day, "to the unbelieving all things are unclean; yea, to all except those who receive them with thanksgiving, and to whom they are sanctified by the word of God and prayer: and such will not be slaves to their appetites; but both in the quality and quantity of what they eat and drink, will consider what fits them for God's service; and what suits their circumstances, and consists with temperance, justice, and charity, that they may do all to his glory.—The Lord hath redeemed and called his people, that they may be holy even as he is holy: we should therefore come out, and be separate from the world; we must renounce the company of the ungodly, and all intimate and needless connexions, with those who are dead in sin; we should be "a peculiar people zealous of good works;" "followers of God as dear children;" devoted to him, conformed to the image of his Son, and associating with his people; and, if we would not commit wickedness, we must watch and pray against temptation.—Let us also remember, that in this sinful world we are contracting, not ceremonial, but moral pollution every day; and except we are continually washing "in the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," we can have no fellowship with a holy God on earth, or admission into a holy heaven: and that this will be the case till the evening of death, when all who have been thus washed shall be clean for ever; but they that are found "filthy shall be filthy still," even to eternity. We should therefore spare no pains, nor grudge any expense or self-denial, which we may be called to in the pursuit of holiness; we should walk every circumspectly, frequently employ ourselves in self-examination, and be far more careful to discover, and to avoid or wash away, the pollution of sin, than the Israelite would be about his ceremonial uncleanness; waiting with glad expectation our dismissal from this sinful world. For though death, being the wages of sin, is in itself pollu-

CHAPTER XII.

The loss of a woman's uncleanness by childbirth, 1-5. Her subsequent purification, 6-8.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and borne a man-child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity she shall be unclean.

3 And in the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

4 And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days: she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.

5 But if she bear a maid-child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.

6 ¶ And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son or for a daughter: she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation unto the priest;

7 Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her, and she shall be cleansed

from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath borne a male or a female.

8 And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons: the one for the burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.

CHAPTER XIII.

Rules for distinguishing the plague of leprosy, 1-44. The conduct prescribed to lepers, 45, 46. The leprosy in garments, 47-59.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,

2 When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh, a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests.

3 And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh; it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him and pronounce him unclean.

4 If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days.

e. Gen. 1:28, 3:16. Job 14:4. 15:14. Ps. 51:5. Rom. 5:12-19. b. 15:19. c. Gen. 17:12. 1:19. 2:21. John 7:22-23. Rom. 4:11-12. Gal. 3:17. Phil. 3:5. Col. 2:11. d. 15:25-28. e. Gen. 3:13. 1 Tim. 2:14, 15. f. 1:10. 5:6-10. John 1:29. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. * Heb. a son of his year. g. See on 1:4. 4:20, 36, 31. Job 1:5. 15:28-30. 1 Gal. 3:29. 1 Heb. her hand finding not sufficiency of a lamb. k. 5:7. Luke 2:22, 24. 2 Cor. 8:9. 14:26. * Or, swelling. l. 14:56. Deut. 23:27. Is.

8:17. b. 14:3, 35. Ex. 4:6, 7. Num. 12:10, 12. 2 Sam. 3:29. 2 Kings 5:1, 27. 2 Chr. 25:19-21. Is. 1:6. c. Deut. 17:8, 9. 24:8. Matt. 8:4. Mark 1:44. Luke 8:14. 17:14. d. 7:10, 10. Ez. 44:23. Hag. 2:11. Mal. 2:7. e. 2 Tim. 2:16, 17. 3:13. f. Matt. 16:19. 18:17, 18. John 20:23. 1 Cor. 6:4-6. 2 Thes. 3:14, 15. 1 Tim. 1:20. g. Deut. 13:14. 1 Tim. 5:24.

tion, and issues in corruption, yet to the believer its sting is not only removed, but its uncleanness is destroyed; and, as a desirable messenger, it conveys him home to his Father's holy and blissful habitation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 2-5. For one week the mother of a male child, and for a fortnight the mother of a female, was ceremonially unclean herself, and rendered all who touched her unclean: during the remainder of the terms here prescribed, the mother was secluded from sacred ordinances, but communicated no pollution to others.—The time appointed for the female child was double; for by that sex sin first entered; but in Christ this stigma is removed. When the seven days were expired, and the touch of the mother no longer caused pollution, the male child was to be circumcised. This was enjoined to Abraham, as the seal of the covenant made with him; (Notes, Gen. 17: Rom. 4:9-17.) and it was also incorporated with the law, as distinguishing the worshippers of JEHOVAH from idolaters.

V. 6, 7. The sacrifices, appointed on this occasion, were not peace-offerings, as expressing gratitude and joy, which might have been expected; but a burnt-offering, implying a solemn dedication of both mother and infant unto God; and a sin-offering to make atonement, and to bring sin to remembrance, that it might be repented of and expiated.

V. 8. Here again the case of the poor is specially provided for. (Notes, Luke 2:21-24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

What could the infinitely wise God intend by all these institutions, but to bring a charge of guilt and pollution against the whole species, as born of Adam's fallen race? Doubtless this charge is well grounded: and the Lord, knowing how prone men are to deny or forget their real character and situation, thus purposed to hold up the memorial of them continually before their eyes; and "by line upon line, and precept upon precept," to teach them this salutary lesson; that man, from his conception in the womb to his grave, is an unclean creature; that he contracts guilt, through this defilement, even in the most lawful and necessary actions; and that he propagates the same depraved nature to his offspring: inasmuch that, except as the atonement of Christ and the sanctification of the Spirit prevent, the original blessing, "increase and multiply," is become to the fallen race a dire curse, and the communication of sin and misery: for "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." This should teach us habitual humiliation before God, and to rejoice in our domestic comforts with trembling; to walk watchfully; to search out the evil that cleaves to our ordinary actions; and to give diligence that we may secure the salvation of the gospel.—As we are so unworthy of every good, we have the greater reason to be thankful for all our mercies, and to unite the exercise of repentance and faith, with all our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.—When those women, who profess godliness, have been preserved in childbirth; though exempted from these burdensome ceremonies, they should deem themselves doubly bound to take the earliest opportunity of rendering public unfeigned thanks to God for such a mercy: they should acknowledge the justice of God in all the pains and perils which through sin have come upon the sex; and join all with penitent confessions of guilt, renewed application to the blood of Christ for forgiveness, and dedication of them-

selves unto God through him. And whilst these sacrifices of praise, for mercies in some sense common to both parents, are offered with united hearts by both; conscious that their infant offspring hath from them derived a depraved nature, and is come into an evil world, how proper it is that with harmonious consent they devote their child unto the Lord; and take comfort from the assurance, that the "covenant is made with them, for their good, and the good of their children after them!" for in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." Finally, let us bless God, that the Saviour "was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;" and also that "for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." (Notes, Gal. 4:4-7. 1 Tim. 2:15.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. As the law contained in the preceding chapter, was easily understood and applied, it was addressed to Moses only; but as that contained in this chapter and the next, involved many difficulties, of which the priests were the appointed judges, it was given to Aaron likewise.—Whatever diseases, in some respects like that here described, had been known in other nations; it is evident from the very language used, that this disease was in great measure peculiar to Israel.—It is called "the plague of leprosy," which implies that it was generally, if not always, inflicted by the immediate judgment of God. Indeed, this must be evident from a careful consideration of the scriptures referred to in the margin. No remedy is any where mentioned: nay, it is implied in the answer of the king of Israel respecting the leprosy of Naaman, that it could not be cured but by the immediate power of God. (2 Kings 5:7.) When any one supposed that he was visited with this disorder, or it was suspected by those about him; he was not directed to consult a physician, but to apply to the priests: great care was required, and many particular rules given, in order to distinguish it from other maladies; and when it was removed, the diseased person is more frequently said to be *cleansed*, than *healed*.—It does not appear to have been infectious, as many suppose; but, as ceremonial pollution was communicated to all who touched the leper, he was excluded from the society of the people, as well as from the courts of the Lord: and when the leprosy was cleansed, he was not readmitted, till after divers sacrifices and purifications.—All this seems to represent the state of a sinner, whose heart is entirely unsanctified, and in whom sin has dominion: whatever his profession may be, he has yet no benefit from the great Sacrifice for sin, nor is he meet for communion with God, or his people on earth, much less in heaven, unless he be cleansed; and as we proceed, we shall perceive many other things admitting of an apt accommodation.—A few hints, however, must suffice on this intricate, and to us not very interesting subject. Yet we must suppose that the all-wise Legislator had some important meaning in these institutions; and therefore we should not blame the sober attempts of those, who modestly point out what seems to them to have been intended. Indeed, the scriptures referred to in the margin generally give the best intimations on the subject.

V. 3-8. The hair turned *white*, in the diseased part, may denote the case of those who grow hoary in sin, and yet go on in it; and the plague apparently deeper than the skin, as

5 And the priest shall look on him the seventh day : and, behold, *if* the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin ; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more.

6 And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day : and, behold, *if* the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin ; the priest shall pronounce him clean : it is *but* a scab ; and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

7 But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing ; he shall be seen of the priest again.

8 And *if* the priest see, that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin ; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean ; it is a leprosy.

9 ¶ When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest :

10 And the priest shall see him : and, behold, *if* the rising be white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and *there be* quick raw flesh in the rising ;

11 It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up : for he is unclean.

12 And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague, from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh ;

13 Then the priest shall consider : and, behold, *if* the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague : it is all turned white : he is clean.

14 But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean.

15 And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean : for the raw flesh is unclean : it is a leprosy.

16 Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed into white ; he shall come unto the priest :

17 And the priest shall see him ; and, behold, *if* the plague be turned into white ; then the priest shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague : he is clean.

18 ¶ The flesh also, in which, *even* in the skin thereof, was a boil and is healed,

19 And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot white, and somewhat reddish, and it be showed to the priest :

20 And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white ; the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.

h 1:11-3:4, 42:3. Rom. 14:1. Jude 22:23. 12. Deut. 32:5. Jam. 3:2. k 11:25-32, 40. 14:9. Ps. 19:12. Prov. 20:9. John 13:8-10. 2 Cor. 7:1. Heb. 9:10. 10:22. 1 John 1:7-9. 127:35, 36. Ps. 38:3. Is. 1:5, 6. Rom. 6:12-14. 2 Tim. 2:16, 17. m See on 3. Matt. 15:7-8. Acts 8:21. Phil. 3:18, 19. 2 Pet. 2:19. n 3:4. Num. 12:10-12. 2 Kings 5:27. 2 Chr. 26:20. o Heb. the quickening of living flesh. 14, 15, 24. Prov. 12:1. Am. 5:10. John 3:19, 20. 7:7. o 1 Kings 8:35. Job 40:4. 42:6. Is. 64:6. John 16:8, 9. Rom. 7:14. 1 John 1:8-10. p 10. q Rom. 7:14-24. Gal. 1:14

opposed to a superficial, cutaneous disorder, may mark those evil courses, which result from the habitually corrupt state of the heart, as distinguished from sins fallen into through sudden temptation.—If the case were doubtful, the priest must shut up the person for a week or two, if needful: which implies the care ministers should take, in discriminating between cases which at first view appear alike. If then the disease appeared to be stopped, and no peculiar symptoms of leprosy were seen, it was concluded to be some other disorder, and the priest pronounced him clean; yet, having been considered as a leper, he must wash his clothes before he went into society, or to the courts of the Lord.—On the other hand, the spreading of the disease was a proof that it was a leprosy; as it is evident that a man who grows worse and worse, after convictions and reproofs, is under the dominion of sin.

V. 9-17. The principal symptoms to be noted in these verses, are "the quick raw flesh in the tumour," indicating a sharp corrosive humour, breaking through the skin in a particular part. It was thus distinguished from a disorder, called indeed the leprosy, but of another nature, which freely broke out in a white scurf all over the body, but without the raw flesh. The former indicated an inveterate leprosy, and whenever it appeared rendered the person unclean; but the latter did not. As these are thus contrasted, the latter aptly represents that consciousness of sin, which produces unreserved ingenuous confessions, and patience of reproof, and the former may perhaps denote the disposition of unhumiliated sinners to

21 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, *there be* no white hairs therein, and *if* it be not lower than the skin, but be somewhat dark ; then the priest shall shut him up seven days.

22 And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean ; it is a plague.

23 But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil ; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

24 ¶ Or if there be any flesh, in the skin whereof *there is* a hot burning, and the quick flesh that burneth have a white bright spot, somewhat reddish or white ;

25 Then the priest shall look upon it : and, behold, *if* the hair in the bright spot be turned white, and it be in sight deeper than the skin ; it is a leprosy broken out of the burning : wherefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it is the plague of leprosy.

26 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, *there be* no white hair in the bright spot, and it be no lower than the other skin, but be somewhat dark ; then the priest shall shut him up seven days.

27 And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day ; and if it be spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it is the plague of leprosy.

28 And if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not in the skin, but it be somewhat dark ; it is a rising of the burning, and the priest shall pronounce him clean ; for it is an inflammation of the burning.

29 ¶ If a man or woman hath a plague upon the head or the beard ;

30 Then the priest shall see the plague : and, behold, *if* it be in sight deeper than the skin, and *there be* in it a yellow thin hair ; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it is a dry scall, even a leprosy upon the head or beard.

31 And if the priest look on the plague of the scall, and, behold, it be not in sight deeper than the skin ; and *that there is* no black hair in it : then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague of the scall seven days.

32 And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague : and, behold, *if* the scall spread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the scall be not in sight deeper than the skin ;

33 He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave : and the priest shall shut up him that hath the scall seven days more.

—16. Phil. 3:4-9. 1 Tim. 1:13-15. r Ex. 9:9. 15:26. 2 Kings 20:7. Job 2:7. Ps. 38:5-7. Is. 38:21. s See on 3. Matt. 12:45. John 5:14. 2 Pet. 2:20. t Gen. 38:36. 2 Sam. 12:13. 2 Chr. 19:2, 3. Job 34:31, 32. 40:4, 5. Prov. 28:13. Matt. 26:75. 2 Cor. 2:7. Gal. 6:1. 1 Pet. 4:3, 4. u Heb. a burning of fire. Is. 3:24. u 4:18—20. x 4:5, 13. y See on 2. z 1 Kings 12:28. Ps. 53:4. Is. 1:5. 5:20. 9:15. Mic. 3:11. Matt. 6:23. 13:14, 15. John 16:2, 3. Acts 22:3, 4. 23:9, 10. 2 Cor. 4:3, 4. 2 Thes. 2:11, 12. a 34-37. 14:54. b 50. Matt. 23:5. Luke 18:9-12. Rom. 2:25.

resist conviction, and, amidst the clearest evidence of criminality, to be angry with the mildest faithful reprov.

V. 18-23. These verses direct the priests how to distinguish between any ordinary malady, which might follow an old ulcer after it had been healed, and the leprosy breaking out in the spot.—The word rendered "reddish" probably signifies very shining, and seems distinguished from a dusky white, as a symptom of leprosy.—The "leprosy broken out of the boil," may represent the return of a professed believer to the habitual practice of sin, when "his last state becomes worse than the first."

V. 24-28. This passage is supposed to state the case of such as had been hurt by fire ; for the introductory words may be rendered, "Or the flesh, when there shall be in the skin a burning of fire," &c. This would leave a scar ; and a leprosy might appear in the spot, and must be distinguished from the scar by the rules here given.—It may be discovered on careful investigation, whether sin or grace rules in the heart, from the effects produced by various external events on a man's spirit and conduct.

V. 29-37. The priests were here taught to distinguish the leprosy among the hair, on the head or beard, from other disorders which might resemble it. The yellow thin hair, instead of the white, was here the symptom of leprosy, in connexion with the marks before laid down, and the black hair of the contrary. If therefore neither of these appeared, after the person had been shut up seven days, the case still remained

34 And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and behold, *if* the scall ^abe not spread in the skin, nor *be* in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

35 But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing;

36 Then the priest shall look on him: and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean.

37 But if the scall be in his sight at a stay; and *that* there is black hair grown up therein; the scall is healed, he is clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

38 ¶ If a man also, or a woman, have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, *even* white bright spots;

39 Then the priest shall look: and, behold, *if* the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white; it is a freckled spot *that* groweth in the skin; he is clean.

40 ¶ And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he is bald: *yet* he is clean.

41 And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he is forehead-bald: *yet* he is clean.

42 And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.

43 Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh;

44 He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.

45 ¶ And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean.

46 All the days wherein the plague shall be in him, he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone, without the camp shall his habitation be.

47 ¶ The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, *whether* it be a woollen garment, or a linen garment,

48 Whether it be in the warp, or woof, of linen

or of woollen, whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin:

49 And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a plague of leprosy, and shall be showed unto the priest.

50 And the priest shall look upon the plague, and shut up *it that hath* the plague seven days.

51 And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day: if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is unclean.

52 He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.

53 And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin;

54 Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing wherein the plague is, and he shall shut it up seven days more.

55 And the priest shall look on the plague after that it is washed: and, behold, *if* the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not spread; it is unclean, thou shalt burn it in the fire; it is fret inward, *whether* it be bare within or without.

56 And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark after the washing of it: then he shall rend it out of the garment, or out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof.

57 And if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a spreading plague: thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is, with fire.

58 And the garment, either warp or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.

59 This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean.

e1 John 4:1. Jude 22. Rev. 2:2. d 23. e See on 6. f 7:27. 2 Tim. 2:16, 17. 3: 120. g Ez. 2:2. Rom. 8:28. Jam. 3:5. h Heb. head is pitted. i Job 36: 14. Matt. 6:23. 2 Pet. 2:12. 2 John 8-10. j Gen. 37:39. Job 1:20. Jer. 3:25. Joel 2:13. k Ez. 24:17, 22. Mic. 3:7. l Job 42:6. Is. 6:5. 52:11. 64:6. Lam. 4:15. Luke 5:8. 7:6, 7. 17:12. m Num. 5:2. 12:14, 15. 2 Kings 7:3. 15:5. 2 Chr. 26:21. Lam. 1:8. 1 Cor. 5:9-13. 2 Thes. 3:6, 14. 1 Tim. 6:5. Heb. 12:15, 16. Rev. 21:

doubtful, and he must be shut up other seven days.—Yet, at last, if the disorder spread much, after the priest had pronounced him clean, he was to be deemed leprous, even though no yellow hairs appeared.

V. 38, 39. Such spots as are called freckles are here distinguished from leprosy.—May not the white, very shining, yellow, gold colour, which in all cases distinguished the leprosy from other disorders, and which are opposed to black, or darkish white, be emblematic of the pride, self-complacency, and ostentation, or of the boasting and glorying in things either evil or worthless, which mark the servant of sin, as contrasted with the modesty and humility of the true penitent?—Even “the bright spots,” in this case, are said to be darkish white.

V. 40-44. The leprosy in the bald head is here distinguished from mere baldness.—The word rendered “reddish,” here also means very shining.—It is observable, that he that was leprous in the head was pronounced “utterly unclean.” This may represent the dangerous case of those who are emboldened in wickedness by infidel or heretical principles.

V. 45, 46. The leprosy was a disgrace to a man’s character; it incapacitated him for business, secluded him from the society even of his nearest friends, and that of all persons except lepers like himself; and even shut him out from the sanctuary of God: yet he must abide by the decision of the priest, and humble himself under the divine rebuke; proclaim his own shame, and show peculiar indications of self-abasement, and of submission to the righteousness of God.

V. 47-59. The leprosy in garments was evidently supernatural, and peculiar to the Israelites. The word rendered “greenish,” means the most vivid green.—The different kinds of garments mentioned are put for every sort which they should use.—This extraordinary case might denote the malignity and defiling nature of sin, and the necessity there is of parting with all occasions of transgression, “hating even the garment spotted with the flesh.” Such spotted garments

are those, however rich and beautiful, which are the incentives to pride and lust.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a question of the utmost importance, whether sin possess dominion in our hearts, or not. For if it do, we have no interest in Christ, no fellowship with Christians, no real communion with God in his ordinances, no inheritance in his kingdom, no meetness for that holy habitation: but, if sin be dethroned, though it dwell within, and cause much conflict and disquietude, and even produce defilements in our conduct and in our best services, which require us to humble ourselves before God; yet we are his children, accepted in the Beloved, and have the seal of his Spirit in our hearts. We should therefore be willing to give this important matter a fair trial, according to the sacred oracles, using the assistance of ministers and experienced Christians; but, above all, opening the case to our heart-searching, compassionate High-Priest above. Though we ought to be jealous of ourselves, and ready to suspect the worst, we should not deem every infirmity, or occasional misconduct, an evidence of hypocrisy or unconversion: but should judge impartially; duly considering, on the one hand, the imperfect state of Christians in this world, and on the other, adverting to the numbers “who think themselves something when they are nothing.”—The ministers of Christ peculiarly need exact knowledge of the Scriptures, and experimental acquaintance with the nature and effects of divine grace, as well as much caution, attention, and tenderness, when they are called upon to deal thus with men’s consciences in doubtful cases; that they may neither deceive some, nor distress others; and they must be sure to do nothing rashly, or without mature examination.—They who desire to ascertain the state of their own souls, should not decide hastily, but should wait upon the Lord, and on the ministry of the word, week after week: and if on such occasions they separate themselves more than usual from the world, that they

CHAPTER XIV.

The ceremonies and sacrifices appointed, when a leper had been healed, 1-32. The leprosy in a ruse, and the cleansing of it, 33-58. The subject closed, 54-57.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 This shall be the law of the leper, ⁱⁿ the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest:

3 And the priest shall go forth out of the camp: and the priest shall look, and behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper;

4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, ^atwo birds alive and clean, and ^acedar-wood, and ^bscarlet, and ^chyssop.

5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water:

6 As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water.

7 And he shall sprinkle upon him, that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.

8 And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean; and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.

9 But it shall be on the seventh day, that he

shall shave all his hair off his head, and his beard, and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

10 And on the eighth day he shall take two he-lambs without blemish, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenths of fine flour for a meat-offering mingled with oil, and one log of oil.

11 And the priest that maketh him clean, shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:

12 And the priest shall take one he-lamb and offer him for a trespass-offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave-offering before the LORD.

13 And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin-offering and the burnt-offering in the holy place: for as the sin-offering is the priest's, so is the trespass-offering: it is most holy.

14 And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass-offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

15 And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand:

a 51-57, 13:59. b Num. 6:9. c Matt. 9:2-4, Mark 1:40-44, Luke 5:12-14, 17:11. 13:15. d Ex. 15:26. e Kings 5:3, 7:14, Job 5:18, Matt. 10:8. 11:5. 1:16, 1:34, 7:22, 17:15-19. 1 Cor. 6:9-11. f 1:34, 5:7, 12:8. * Or, sparrows. g 1:40-52, Num. 19:6. h Heb. 9:19. i Ex. 12:22, Num. 19:18. Ps. 51:7. k Num. 5:17. l 2 Cor. 4:7. 5:1. 13:4. Heb. 2:14. John 14:19. Rom. 4:25. 5:10. Phil. 2:9-11. Heb. 1:3. Rev. 1:3. m 51-53. Zech. 13:1. Rev. 1:5. n Num. 19:18, 19. Is. 52:15. Ps. 35:25. J Am 19:34. Heb. 9:13, 19. 10:22, 12:24. 1 Pet. 1:2. 1 John 5:8. o 51, 4:5, 17:7, 8:11, 16:14, 19. 2 Kings 5:10, 14. Ps. 51:2, 7. Eph. 5:26, 27. p 13:13, 17. q 16:22, Dan. 9:24. Mic. 7:19. Heb. 9:28. i Heb. upon

the face of the field. r 11:25, 13:6, 15:5-8. Ex. 19:10, 14. Num. 8:7, Rev. 7. 14. s 8:6. 1 Pet. 3:21. Rev. 1:5, 6. 18:33-35, 13:5. n Num. 6:3, 8:7. z 13:2, 9:1. 15:13, 14. y Matt. 8:4. Mark 1:44. Luke 5:14. z 1:10. John 1:29. 1 Pet. 1:19. a 4:32. Num. 6:14. i Heb. the daughter of her year. b 23:13. Ex. 29:40. Num. 15:9. 28:20. c 2:1. Num. 15:4-15, John 6:33, 51. d 12:15, 21:24. e 8:3. Ex. 29:1-4. Num. 8:6-11:21. f 5:2, 3, 6, 7, 18, 19, 6:5. Is. 52:10. g 7:30. 8:27-29. Ex. 29:24. h 1:5, 11. 4:4, 24. 17:7, 10:17. k 2:3. 7:6. 21:22. 18:23, 24. Ex. 29:20. Is. 50:5. Rom. 6:13, 19. 12:1. 1 Cor. 6:20. 2 Cor. 7:1. Phil. 1:20. 1 Pet. 1:14, 15. 2:5, 9, 10. Rev. 1:5, 6. m Ps. 45:7. John 8:34. 1 John 2:20.

may in secret search the Scriptures, and pour out their hearts more frequently and fully in prayer, it will greatly conduce to a satisfactory solution. But even if this question is resolved, and we are humbly satisfied that we are real Christians, we must remember that "in many things we offend all;" and that we have occasion for continual washing in the blood of Christ. —On the other hand, when it is plain, on scriptural grounds, that a man is unconverted and unclean; it is right that he should know it, and that others should be warned to withdraw from his polluting society. And how dreadful is the case of those whom the decisions of faithful ministers, the conduct of true believers, and the express testimonies of God's word, concur in declaring unmeet to partake of sacred ordinances; and consequently inadmissible into the kingdom of heaven, if they live and die in this state! Even on earth all their possessions, comforts, and performances, are defiled; if they do not also contaminate the principles and conduct of others. Yet still there is hope in this case; for by the gospel that leprosy is cleansed, which the law could but discover. It is therefore the only wisdom of him who discovers this to be his case, to condemn himself, to submit to God, and to seek the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; to watch against the self-deceptions to which the human heart is prone; to beware of self-preference, on account of those splendid distinctions which men admire, but which are often abominations in the sight of God; and to apply to the Saviour, as he of old, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But would they hear him say, "I will, be thou clean;" they must renounce every other plea, be willing to part with every sin, and every occasion of sin, submit to his rebukes, attend upon his directions, and give him all the praise for their deliverance from so dreadful a malady. Finally, if we have in some measure experienced his cleansing power, we shall gradually become willing to put off this leprous garment of the body, and leave it to be refined in the grave, that we may be for ever with the Lord.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1-3. No means are here appointed for healing the leper; the cleansing mentioned being no other than his ceremonial purification, previously to his readmission to sacred ordinances and to society, when the Lord had been pleased to remove the plague; and the rules given very aptly represent many of the duties of repenting sinners, as well as those of ministers respecting them.—It seems the priests might visit the lepers, and even touch them, without contracting uncleanness; and the seasonable instruction which they might give them, as well as the assistance that they would be able to afford them in their devotions, might often render this a great mercy and comfort to them under their affliction.

V. 4-7. The "two birds," one slain over springing water in an earthen vessel, and the other set at liberty, having been dipped in this mixture of blood and water, may signify Christ shedding his blood for sinners, and then rising and ascending into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us;

or the bird that was slain may represent the Saviour dying for our sins; and the living bird, the sinner, preserved and liberated, by being washed in his atoning blood, and the purifying grace of his Spirit; and being set free from sin and Satan, "seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The "cedar-wood," a supposed emblem of the soundness of the cleansed leper's flesh, may denote the sincerity of the true convert's heart, and the incorruptible nature of true grace: the "scarlet," as distinguished from the glistening whiteness of the leprosy, might imply that the man was recovered to his former ruddy complexion, and represent the true penitent as come to himself and to his right mind; the "hyssop," a shrub commonly used in the legal sprinklings, might signify faith, of small estimation among men, but of great efficacy in applying the salvation of Christ to the soul; or it might show that mean instruments may be useful in directing sinners to Christ. These were to be dipped in the blood and water: for all our sincerity, repentance, and faith, are derived from the Holy Spirit, and are accepted only through the blood of the Saviour.

V. 8, 9. The healed leper, who was about to cleanse himself from ceremonial pollution, was required to wash his clothes, and, after "shaving off all his hair," to wash his body also. Then he was admitted into the camp; but it is supposed he was obliged there to lodge in some hut, apart from his family and all society, during seven days: and then, having again shaved, and washed his clothes and his body, he was restored, as clean, to his family and the congregation of God.—Thus the penitent, having in private conference with the ministers of Christ, and in the secret exercises of faith and prayer, got some comfortable hope of acceptance, proceeds to put away all the remainder of his sins, and seriously to prepare himself for a more solemn profession of his faith in the public ordinances of the gospel, and in communion with the Lord's people.

V. 10-20. To show that the leprosy was to be considered, both as a judgment immediately inflicted by the Lord, and also as an emblem of a transgressor under the condemnation and dominion of sin; these multiplied sacrifices and purifications were required before the healed leper was fully restored to the privileges of an Israelite. A trespass-offering, a sin-offering, and a burnt-offering, must be presented by him; perhaps the trespass-offering for the deviations from the prescribed rules, which might have been fallen into during his leprosy; the sin-offering for the offence which exposed him to this plague; and the burnt-offering as a renewed dedication of himself to the Lord. Peace-offerings might indeed afterwards be accepted as voluntary oblations, but they did not suit a leper's condition, till fully restored to communion with the people of God. Meat-offerings for each of these sacrifices were also required, and a small quantity of oil, the emblem of the sanctifying Spirit. A log was about three quarters of a pint.—The priest presented the man and his oblations, but he mar himself seems to have killed the

16 And the priest shall put his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord.

17 And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand, shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass-offering.

18 And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand, he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord.

19 And the priest shall offer the sin-offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness, and afterward he shall kill the burnt-offering.

20 And the priest shall offer the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering, upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

21 ¶ And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass-offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth-deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering, and a log of oil;

22 And two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt-offering.

23 And he shall bring them on the eighth day, for his cleansing, unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord.

24 And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass-offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave-offering before the Lord.

25 And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass-offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass-offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

26 And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand.

27 And the priest shall sprinkle with his right

finger some of the oil that is in his left hand, seven times before the Lord.

28 And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand, upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass-offering.

29 And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand, he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make an atonement for him before the Lord.

30 And he shall offer the one of the turtle-doves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get;

31 Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, with the meat-offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed, before the Lord.

32 This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.

33 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying;

34 When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession;

35 And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me there is as it were a plague in the house:

36 Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go into it to see the plague, that all that is in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house.

37 And he shall look on the plague, and, behold, if the plague be in the walls of the house, with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish, which in sight are lower than the wall;

38 Then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days.

39 And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look: and, behold, if the plague be spread in the walls of the house;

n 4:6,17. Luke 17:18. 1 Cor. 10:31. c 8:30. Ex. 29:20,21. Ex. 36:27. John 1:16. Tit. 3:3-6. 1 Pet. 1:2. p 8:12. Ex. 29:7. 2 Cor. 1:21,22. Eph. 1:17,18. q 4:26. 31:5,16. r 12. 12:6-8. Rom. 8:3. 2 Cor. 5:21. a 10. Eph. 5:2. 1:14. 5:7. 12:8. 1 Sam. 2:8. Job 34:19. Prov. 17:5. 22:2. Luke 6:20. 21:2-4. 2 Cor. 8:9,12. Jam. 2:5,6. ¶ Heb. his hand reach not. a See on 10. ¶ Heb. for a evening. y See on 10-13. z See on 14-20. Ps. 40:6. Ec. 5:1. z 15:20. Ex. 30:13,16. John 17:19. 1 John 2:1,2. 5:6. a 22. 12:8. 15:14,15. Luke 2:24. Rom. 8:3. b 2:51-57.

sacrifices.—The ceremonies, observed on this occasion, are exceedingly similar to those used in consecrating the priests. The principal difference was, that common oil was sprinkled seven times before the Lord, and put over the blood on the right ear, the thumb, and the great toe of the leper, and also poured on his head; whereas the holy anointing oil was sprinkled with the blood on the garments of the priests, and poured only on the head of the high-priest. But, in the former case, the blood was that of a sin-offering, taking away the guilt of crimes, in which the members of the body had been instruments, and thus, typically preparing them in general for the Lord's service; in the latter, it was the blood of "the ram of consecration," by which the priests were set apart to their special service. This similarity was very instructive. For every true penitent is, through Christ, a spiritual priest; and no priest, except the Saviour himself, was ever any better than a cleansed leper.—According to the emblem here given, the Christian's dedication of himself to the Lord, at his table, should be the counterpart of what has secretly passed between God and his soul; and the exercise of repentance and faith should always be followed by this public profession; in preparing for which, the counsel and approbation of pious and experienced ministers may be very useful.

V. 21-32. The condescension of the Lord to the case of the poor, in these institutions, is very instructive. Yet not one ceremony was omitted in the poor man's cleansing, though the sacrifices were cheaper. Even in this case, one lamb was absolutely necessary; which might intimate, that no sinner could ever have been saved, had it not been for "the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God with his blood."—It is remarkable, that the priest, in putting the oil upon the head of him that was to be cleansed, is said to "make an atonement for him;" which may imply, that the work of the Spirit seals our interest in the great atonement, as well as enables us to apply it.

13:59. c See on 10:21. Ps. 72:12-14. 136:23. 1 Cor. 1:27,28. d 23:10. 25:2 Num. 35:10. Deut. 12:18. 19:1. 26:1. 27:3. e Gen. 12:7. 13:17. 17:8. Num. 32:52. Deut. 12:9,10. 32:49. Josh. 13:1. f Ex. 15:26. Deut. 7:15. 1 Sam. 2:6. 14:45,7. Am. 3:6. Mic. 6:9. g Deut. 7:26. Josh. 7:21. 1 Sam. 3:12-14. 1 Kings 13:24. Ps. 91:10. Prov. 3:33. Zech. 5:4. 1 Or, prepare. h 1 Cor. 15:33. 2 Thm. 2:17,18. Heb. 12:15. Rev. 18:4. i 13:3,19,20,42,49. k 13:7,8,22,27,36,51.

V. 34-53. This extraordinary plague is expressly spoken of, as immediately inflicted by the hand of God; and it is very probable it was one method, in which he rebuked the idolatry or iniquity which men committed in their houses, and the dishonest or sacrilegious gain which they brought into them, when the magistrate did not detect and punish them. Indeed, the plague of leprosy in general may well be considered, as one of the punishments in those cases, where it is said, "that man shall bear his iniquity;" and yet the criminal escaped the sword of the magistrate.—Many expositors endeavour to account in part for this singular disorder from natural causes, and likewise consider many of these rules and restrictions, as cautions against infection: but there is not the most remote intimation in these laws, or any where in Scripture, that the disorder was at all infectious.—The methods to be taken, in respect of the leprosy in houses, are very similar to those prescribed in the other cases; and also the ceremonies of purification, when the plague was removed; only no sacrifices were in this case brought to the altar.—It might represent the prevalence of sin in families, churches, and nations; and it very aptly described the state of Israel, when idolatry had so infected the whole nation, that it must, as unclean, be demolished, and carried captive to Babylon, the unclean metropolis of idolatry.—The rules prescribed seem to imply the care with which they who fear God, should protect against prevailing iniquities, and separate from them; and the attention and pains which magistrates, ministers, and masters of families should employ, in checking, restraining, censuring, and punishing sin, in preventing its progress, and in promoting reformation. They may also be emblems of the methods which the Lord takes with nations and churches, before he proceeds to extremities; and of the certain, shameful, and miserable destruction, which awaits them, when these methods prove unsuccessful: and they likewise intimate that the Lord frequently gives men up to that filthiness, in which they have

40 Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones, in which the plague is, and they shall cast them into an unclean place without the city.

41 And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off, without the city, into an unclean place.

42 And they shall take other stones, and put them in the place of those stones: and he shall take other mortar, and shall plaster the house.

43 And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after he hath scraped the house, and after it is plastered;

44 Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: it is unclean.

45 And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house: and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.

46 Moreover he that goeth into the house, all the while that it is shut up, shall be unclean until the even.

47 And he that lieth in the house, shall wash his clothes: and he that eateth in the house, shall wash his clothes.

48 And if the priest shall come in, and look upon it, and behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plastered: then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed.

49 And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.

50 And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel, over running water.

51 And he shall take the cedar-wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

52 And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar-wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet.

53 But he shall let go the living bird out of the

city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean.

54 ¶ This is the law for all manner of plague, of leprosy, and scall,

55 And for the leprosy of a garment, and of an house,

56 And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot:

57 To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy.

CHAPTER XV.

Leaves respecting the running issues of men, 1-18; and of women, 19-35.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, and to Aaron, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a running issue out of his flesh, because of his issue he is unclean.

3 And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue: whether his flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it is his uncleanness.

4 Every bed, whereon he lieth that hath the issue, is unclean: and every thing whereon he sitteth shall be unclean.

5 And whosoever toucheth his bed, shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

6 And he that sitteth on any thing, whereon he sat that hath the issue, shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

7 And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue, shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

8 And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

9 And what saddle soever he rideth upon that hath the issue, shall be unclean.

10 And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him, shall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth any of those things, shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

11 And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, (and hath not rinsed his hands in water,) he

1 Ps. 101:5, 7, 8. Prov. 22:10, 25:4, 5. Is. 1:25, 29. Matt. 18:17. John 15:2. 1 Cor. 5:6, 13. Tit. 3:10. 2 John 10:11. Rev. 2:2, 6:14-16, 30. m. Job 36:13, 14. 1. Is. 65:4. Matt. 8:28, 24:51. 1 Tim. 1:20. Rev. 22:15. n. Gen. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. 2 Chr. 17:9. 19:5-7. 29:4, 5. Ps. 101:6. Acta 1:20-26. 1 Tim. 5:9, 10, 21, 22. 2 Tim. 2:2. Tit. 1:5-9. o. Jer. 6:28-30. Ez. 24:13. p. 13:51, 52. q. 2 Kings 17:20-23. 25:4. 12:25, 26. Ez. 4:4. Matt. 22:7, 24:2. Rom. 11:7-11. Rev. 11:2. r. See on 41. s. 11:24, 25, 28. 15:5-9, 10. 17:15. 22:6. Num. 19:7-10, 21, 22. t. See on 5, 9.

* Heb. in coming in shall come in, &c. v. 3. Job 5:18. Hos. 6:1. Mark 5:29, 34. Luke 11:21. s. See on 4-7. y. 2:32. 6:9, 14, 25. 7:1, 97. 11:48. 15:32. Num. 5:29. 6:13. 19:14. z. 13:30, 31. a. 13:47-59. b. 13:2. c. 10:10. Jer. 15:19. Ez. 44:23. t. Heb. in the day of the unclean, and in the day of the clean. d. Deut. 24:8. a. 11:1. 18:1. b. 22:4. Num. 5:2. 2 Sam. 3:29. Mark 7:20-23. * Or, running of the veins. Heb. vessel. c. 11:1, 15. d. 11:25, 28. 14:8, 9, 46, 47. 17:1. 15. Num. 19:10. Heb. 10:22. Rev. 7:14. e. 1:15. Jam. 4:3.

delighted.—Thus also sin is so interwoven with the fabric of the human body, that it must be taken down by death: but if previously the leprosy be cleansed, and sin be dethroned and mortified, the soul will be received into the holy mansions of the blessed, and the body also will be raised incorruptible; otherwise both soul and body must at last be carried forth out of the city of God, to that unclean place "prepared for the devil and his angels."—Yea, the earth itself must be destroyed by fire, as the unclean, leprous habitation of the polluted sons of men.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickens us" by his Spirit, we soon evidence the change, by sincerely repenting, and forsaking all our evil ways; we discover a right judgment, and disposition of heart, and become the servants of the Lord; but especially we are led, by the ministry of the word, to see the suitableness and preciousness of the atoning blood, and the sanctifying grace of Jesus Christ; and gladly washing in "th's fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," we in heart and affection ascend, whither the risen Saviour is gone before. They, who are thus delivered from the prevailing power of sin, endeavour continually to "cleanse themselves" more and more "from all" remaining "filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God;" and they should deem it their duty and privilege, without needless delay, yet with previous examination and serious preparation, to seek admission to the communion of the saints; that with them they may publicly profess their faith, and their grateful love to the Saviour, in the ordinance of his appointment. Considering themselves as bought with a price, they now desire to do all in the name of Christ, and through him "to glorify God with body and spirit, which are his."—This is the true cleansing of a leper, and his subsequent admission into the courts of the Lord's house; or the consecration of an unclean sinner to the spiritual priesthood.—Have we then the inward consciousness

ness of such a change? and have we thus joined ourselves to the Lord and to his people? If so, let us give him the praise; let us humbly remember what we were; let us abound in spiritual sacrifices according to our ability and opportunity; let us follow after holiness; and let us compassionate other poor lepers, and seek and pray for their cleansing also.—All these ancient institutions should remind us of the odious nature and the desert of sin, and the absolute necessity of the blood of Christ, to render our repentance, and the best of our "fruits meet for repentance," acceptable before a holy God; and that all, who are interested in the blood of the Redeemer, partake of his Spirit, and are devoted to his service. They likewise call on us to watch and pray; and to look well to our hearts, to our households, and to the Church of God; that in our places we may search and purge out our iniquity, and so prevent its prevalence to the destruction of those with whom we are connected. For the readiness of God to pardon the true believer is not more manifest, than his determination to destroy impenitent sinners.—Let us all then take warning, and cry earnestly to him to cleanse our souls before we die, that we may never enter the place where unclean spirits are tormented; but that, "when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 2. It is not needful for us particularly to consider the laws contained in this chapter: they are not binding on us; and the emblematical instruction may be sufficiently understood from the Practical Observations. In some cases, the disease mentioned was contracted by licentiousness; in others it might be the result of shameful secret practices; and even the diseases and infirmities, which were only an affliction, and had no immediate connexion with personal and actual sin, were all originally the consequence of the sinful state of human nature: nay, the cases, in which neither positive disease nor actual sin was implied, might be thus marked, to show how a fallen nature poisons every thing we do.

shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

12 And the vessel of earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken: and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

13 And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.

14 And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest.

15 And the priest shall offer them, the one for sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD, for his issue.

16 And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.

17 And every garment, and every skin whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even.

18 The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the even.

19 ¶ And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her, shall be unclean until the even.

20 And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation, shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon, shall be unclean.

21 And whosoever toucheth her bed, shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

22 And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon, shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

23 And if it be on her bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it; he shall be unclean until the even.

24 And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days: and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean.

25 And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation; she shall be unclean.

26 Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue, shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation.

27 And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

28 But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.

29 And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

30 And the priest shall offer the one for a sin-offering; and the other for a burnt-offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD, for the issue of her uncleanness.

31 ¶ Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.

32 This is the law of him that hath an issue, and of him whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith;

33 And of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her which is unclean.

15:28, 11:32, 33. 2 Cor. 5:1. Phil. 3:21. g 23:9, 33:1, 14:8. Num. 12:14, 19:1, 12. Jer. 33:8. Ez. 36:25-29. 2 Cor. 7:1. 129:30, 126:8, 14:22, 23. k 5:7-10, 14:19, 20, 30, 31. l See on 4:20, 12:7. Num. 15:25, 23:18. m 22:4. Deut. 23:10, 11. n Ex. 19:15, 1 Sam. 21:4, 5. Ps. 51:5. 1 Cor. 6:12. 1 Thes. 4:4, 5. Heb. 13:4. o 12:2. Lam. 1:8, 9, 17. Ez. 36:17. * Heb. in her separation. p See on

4-8. q 33:20, 18. Ez. 8:6, 22:10. r Matt. 9:20. Mark 5:25. Luke 8:43, a 5-8, 13:21, 17:15, 16. Zech. 13:1. s See on 13-15. u 18:17, 13:2. Num. 5:3. Deut. 21:8. Ez. 44:23. Heb. 12:15. x 21:23. Num. 5:7, 18:13, 20. Ex. 31:1, 23:38, 44:5-7. 1 Cor. 3:17. y 1-18, 13:59, 14:2, 22, 54-57. Ez. 43:12. z 19-30, a 24, 20:18.

V. 11. If the diseased person rinsed his hands in water, just before he touched any one, he did not communicate pollution; otherwise he did.

V. 13-15. The purification and sacrifices, when this disorder was removed, were not very dissimilar to some of those, which were appointed at the cleansing of a leper; but the sacrifices were less expensive, and only a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were required.

V. 16-18. In these cases, as well as that of one who contracted pollution by touching an unclean person, nothing but ablution was required. This part of the law the Jews might observe at present; but it is said they do not think themselves bound by it, now they have no temple, and live in other lands; as it had reference to the sanctuary of God and the holy land. (31)

V. 24. When this was done in presumption, it was to be punished with death if detected; and if not, the offenders might expect to be cut off by the judgment of God: (20:18.) but when inadvertently, this purification was to be observed. This restriction must not be considered as merely ceremonial; for the nature of the case, and the punishment denounced against wilful transgressors, combine to prove it to be of perpetual moral obligation.

V. 28. It is not said, that the woman must "wash her clothes, and bathe her flesh in running water," as it had been of the man. (13) The reason of this difference does not appear.

V. 31. This shows, that these laws were principally intended to impress the minds of the Israelites with reverence for the sanctuary: and on the one hand, to show them what need they had of circumspection and purity of heart and life, in order to worship the holy God with acceptance; and on the other hand, that being sinners in a world full of temptations and defilements, they would continually need forgiveness, through the great atonement typified by all the sacrifices, and the sanctification of the Spirit shadowed forth by all the purifications. While they were encamped in the desert, it would not be very burdensome to bring the prescribed oblations; but after they were settled in Canaan, many of them at a great distance from the tabernacle, this would become much more difficult.—We may however observe, that many of the cases stated only required such washings as might anywhere be performed; and that those respecting which sacrifices were appointed, would more rarely occur. We may

also suppose, that provided these were brought, when the person who had been unclean first came to the sanctuary, it would suffice; though distance or other hindrances prevented its being done immediately, at the expiration of the seven days.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have great cause for thankfulness that we need fear no defilement but that of sin; and have no occasion for any of these ceremonial and burdensome purifications; yet when we consider how nearly we are beset with occasions of moral uncleanness, by day and by night, alone and in company, nay, sleeping as well as awake, we may well say with David, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."—And these laws may remind us that God sees all those things, which are totally concealed from human eyes, and escape the censure of mortal men. Being unholiness, and having to do with so holy a God, we must for ever have been banished from his presence, had he not said, "From all their filthiness will I cleanse them;" and both provided the fountain for our purification, and appointed the means. In the daily exercise of self-examination, repentance, and faith in the one sin-offering of Christ, and by daily prayer for his sanctifying grace, we seek and find this purification, and this purity of heart, with which we shall be admitted to "see God."—While we observe the rule of God's word, and aim at his glory through Jesus Christ, all things become pure to us; but every thing is an occasion of increasing and communicating defilement to the impenitent and unbelieving. With serious recollection and humble reverence, we should approach our holy, heart-searching God in his ordinances, and in our daily walk be careful to "possess our vessels in sanctification and honour;" consulting expediency and avoiding excess in things most lawful, and being careful not to be "brought under the power of any."—Many of our diseases may remind us of our personal transgressions; all our infirmities evince that we are sinners: thence we should learn patience, and take occasion to humble ourselves before God more earnestly to seek forgiveness; and to wait with cheerful expectation for the coming of him "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself." (Note, Phil. 3:20, 21.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. I. The appointment of the annual day of atonement tended to encourage Aaron, for the

CHAPTER XVI.

The high-priest must not enter the most holy place at all times; but, on a day of atonement, yearly observed, having slain a sin-offering for himself, and another for the people, he must enter with the sprinkling of blood, and burning of incense. 1-17. The altar of incense, purified with blood, 18, 19. The scape-goat sent away, and burnt-offerings sacrificed, and the sin offerings burnt without the camp, 20-23. The day of this solemnity instituted, 23-34.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, after ^{the} death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died:

2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that ^{he} come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark; ^{that} he die not: for I will appear ⁱⁿ the cloud upon ^{the} mercy-seat.

3 Thus shall ^{the} Aaron come into the holy place: with ^a young bullock for a sin-offering, and ^a ram for a burnt-offering.

4 He shall put on the ^{holy} linen coat, and he shall be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these ^{are} holy garments; ^{therefore} shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel, ^{two} kids of the goats for a sin-offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin-offering, ^{which} is for himself, and make ^{an} atonement for himself, and for his house.

7 And he shall take the two goats, and ^{present}

a 10:2. b Ex. 26:33-34, 40:20-21. 1 Kings 8:6. Heb. 9:3-7 s. 13:20. c 13: 8. 35. Num. 4:19. 17:10. Matt. 27:51. Heb. 14:14-16. 10:19. d Ex. 10:35. 1 Kings 8:11, 12. 2 Chr. 5:14. e Ex. 25:17-22. f Heb. 9:7, 12:24-25. g 4:3. 8:14. Num. 28:7-11. h 1:3, 10. 8:18. 9:3. 16:10. Ex. 25:24, 40-43. 39:27-29. 1a. 53:2. Ez. 14:17. Luke 1:35. Phil. 2:7. Heb. 2:14. 7:25. k 8:6. Ex. 29:24. 39:20, 40:12. 51:32. Rev. 1:5, 6. 14:14. 8:2, 14. 9:8-16. Num. 29:11. 2 Chr. 29:31. Ezra 6:17. Ez. 45:22, 23. Rom. 8:3. Heb. 7:27, 28. 10:5-14. m 8:14-17. Heb. 9:7.

assurance that he would be continued and accepted in the priesthood; and to instruct him and his sons how to avoid the sin and punishment of Nadab and Abihu: for they would be perfectly safe whilst they adhered to the rule, and that example would render them attentive to it.

V. 2. The ordinary priests went into the sanctuary, where the golden candlestick and the table of show-bread were placed; and there, *without* "the veil, before the mercy-seat," they burnt incense upon the golden altar, one at a time: but they went no further. (Notes, Ex. 30:7. Luke 1:8-10. Heb. 9:6, 7.) The high-priest alone went within the veil into the holy of holies, where the ark of the covenant was; and that only on one day in the year: and it was at the peril of his life, if at any other time, or in any other manner, on ordinary occasions, he ventured into the presence of the Lord, of which the cloud of glory above the mercy-seat was the symbol; for the visible glory seems to have shone from the midst of a cloud.—When the tabernacle was to be removed, and on some other occasions, deviations from this strict rule became indispensable. (Notes, Num. 4:5. 2 Chr. 29:12-19.)—The worship appointed by the law was intimately connected with sensible objects, which are less revered when rendered familiar: but that of the New Testament, being more simple, is maintained entirely by faith; and the objects of it are admired and adored, in proportion to the frequency and intensity with which we meditate upon them: the Israelites therefore were commanded to keep their distance, but *we* are invited to draw near.

V. 3. The daily sacrifice doubtless preceded the solemnities appointed in this chapter.

V. 4. The repeated washings of the high-priest might typify Christ's perfect purity; but they more evidently reminded him of his own sinfulness.—He performed the appropriate services of this day, in the mean garments of the ordinary priests, not in his own rich robes: for Christ made atonement for us in his holy human nature, having laid aside his robes of majesty when he assumed "the form of a servant;" and as man he even now intercedes for us. (1 Tim. 2:5-7.)

V. 6. The word "offer" seems in this verse to mean no more than to present the bullock before the Lord, with confession of sins, and earnest prayer that it might be accepted as an expiatory sacrifice. (11)

V. 8-10. The word rendered "the scape-goat," (*שְׂעִיר* comp. of *שָׁח* a she-goat, and *נָח* to go away), signifies "the goat which went away." But the Jews say, that the place, to which the goat was led, is intended, and not the goat itself.—Probably, however, our translation is as expressive of the meaning of the type, as any other for which it could be changed. The other goat was allotted to the Lord to be sacrificed to him; and this was sent away into a separate place, at a distance from the tents and dwellings of Israel. (22. marg.)—The dying goat represented Christ suffering for our sins;—"the scape-goat," Christ rising to carry into effect the purposes of his death in the actual forgiveness and justification

them before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats: one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the "scape-goat."

9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.

10 But the goat on which the lot fell to be "the scape-goat," shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scape-goat into the wilderness.

11 ¶ And Aaron shall bring "the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself," and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself.

12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small and bring it within the veil.

13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that "the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony," that he die not.

14 And he shall take of "the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward;" and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

[Practical Observations.]

n 9:7. Ezm 10:18, 19. Job 1:5. Ez. 43:19-27. o 1:3. 4:4. 12:6, 7. Matt. 16:21. Rom. 12:1. p Num. 25:55. 33:54. Josh. 18:10, 11. 1 Sam. 14:41, 42. Prov. 16:33. Ez. 48:29. John 1:7. Acts 1:25-26. q Heb. Azazel. r Acts 2:38. 4:27, 28. t Heb. went up. u 21:22. v 1a. 53:10, 11. Rom. 1:25. Heb. 7:26. 9:23, 24. 1 John 2:2. 8:16. 1:17. u See on 3:6. v 10:1. Num. 16:18-46. Heb. 9:14. 1 John 1:7. x Ez. 30:34-38. 31:11. 37:29. Rev. 8:3, 4. y Ez. 25:21. Heb. 4:14-16. 7:25. 9:24. 1 John 2:1, 2. 4:5, 6, 17. 8:11. Rom. 3:24-25. Heb. 9:7, 23. 10:4-10. 12:19. 12:24.

tion of his believing people. A goat was *clean* by the law, yet not *cleanly* as the sheep in the opinion of man; nay, goats are the emblem of the wicked in the representation of the day of judgment. (Matt. 23:32, 33.) Thus Christ seemed to men a sinner, but was absolutely sinless; and when "numbered among transgressors," he died by the sentence of man as a malefactor, but in the purpose of God as a Sacrifice.—Two kids of the goats having been provided as a sin-offering, it was decided by lot which should be slain and which should escape. A lot is a solemn appeal to God in a doubtful matter, relative to practice, as an oath is in testimonies and engagements; and each of them ought to be the last resource, when other methods of decision fail, and to be used as a solemn act of religion, or not at all. It is therefore an unanswerable objection to all lotteries and games of chance, that they are a profanation of a religious ordinance: for so it is every where spoken of in Scripture. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal of it is of the LORD:" they are therefore an appeal to God to decide in a matter of covetousness, or of diversion; and so form a species of "taking his name in vain," not much unlike rash and profane swearing in trifling conversation, or when men are striking bargains.

V. 11-14. After the high-priest had slain the sin-offering for himself and his family, he seems to have left the other priests to prepare the blood, the fat, and the flesh of the sacrifice; and to have taken a censer full of burning coals from off the altar, and as much incense as both his hands would hold, which doubtless was put into a cup or plate for that purpose. With these he entered within the veil, immediately putting the incense on the coals, and causing the smoke to ascend before the mercy-seat; without which he must not have gone thither on pain of death. He then seems to have fetched the blood of his own sin-offering, and to have sprinkled it as prescribed; then to have gone forth again, and to have killed the people's sin-offerings, and with the blood of them to have entered the *third* time; and to have left the censer, till he had applied the blood to the altar of incense, and then to have entered the *fourth* time to fetch it away.—All that the Jewish writers have very copiously advanced on the manner in which the services of this day were performed, can only show how they understood the Scriptures which relate to the subject; and in some cases what variations, and additions to the divine appointments they made, which contribute little to our edification: for it should be kept in mind, that what learned men extract from them on these subjects, was written long after the temple was finally destroyed by the Romans, and the Mosaic ceremonial thus actually abolished; and many of their assertions are directly contrary to the words of the law.—As the mercy-seat was placed at the *west end* of the tabernacle, the word *eastward* must either mean, that the high-priest stood eastward of the mercy-seat when he sprinkled the blood; or that it was sprinkled on that part of the mercy-seat which faced the east.

15 ¶ Then ¹shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that ²is for the people, and ³bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat.

16 And he shall make ⁴an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that ⁵remaineth among them, in the midst of their uncleanness.

17 And there shall be ⁶no man in the tabernacle of the congregation, when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, ⁷and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

18 And he shall ⁸go out unto the altar that ⁹is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put ¹⁰it upon the horns of the altar round about.

19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and ¹¹hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

20 ¶ And when he hath made an end of ¹²reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the ¹³live goat:

21 And Aaron shall ¹⁴lay both his hands upon

^a 5, 9. Heb. 2:17, 5:3, 9:7, 25, b 2. Heb. 6:19, 9:3, 7:12, c 18, 8:15. Ex. 29:36, 37. Ex. 45:18, 19. John 14:3. Heb. 9:22, 23. * Heb. *dialecth.* d Ex. 34:3. Is. 53:6. Dan. 9:24. Luke 1:10. Acts 4:12. 1 Tim. 2:5. Heb. 1:8. 1 Pet. 2:24. 3:18. e 10, 11. f 16. Ex. 30:10. John 17:19. Heb. 2:11. 5:7, 8. g Ex. 43:18—22. Zech. 13:1. h 16. 6:30. 8:15. Ex. 45:20. 2 Cor. 5:19. i o 1, 120. Rom. 4:25. 8:34. Heb. 7:25. Rev. 1:18. k See on 1:4. Ex. 29:10. 126:40. Ezra 10:1. Neh. 1:6, 7. 9:3. &c. Ps. 32:5. 51:3. Lam. 9:3—20. m Is. 53:6. 2 Cor. 5:21. † Heb. *a man of*

V. 15-16. The uncleanness of the people, and all their manifold transgressions, contaminated even the tabernacle that was among them, and all its furniture; yea, the holy of holies; even if none either of the priests or people had entered, during the whole preceding year. 'See,' says Ainsworth, 'the horrid filthiness of sin!'—Thus the depravity of the human heart renders the best services of man defiled, so that he needs the atonement of the blood of Christ to render them acceptable.

V. 17. The high-priest was the grand type of Christ, under the Mosaic dispensation, and this solemnity more especially represented his sufferings for us on earth, and his intercession for us in heaven: the express prohibition therefore of any man, even of the priests, to enter into the tabernacle while the high-priest performed this typical service, emphatically showed, that no sacrifice, no intercession, must so much as in appearance be joined with those of Christ, in his mediatorial work.—It is said, that the high-priest spent a considerable part of the day in prayer for himself, his family, and the congregation; and without doubt this would be the case with those high-priests who fully entered into the design of the sacred service.

V. 18, 19. The altar of incense is generally supposed to be here intended; for this ceremony had been appointed for that altar, but not for the altar of burnt-offering, at the foot of which all the residue of the blood was poured out. (Note, Ex. 30:9, 10.) The typical meaning also requires this interpretation: for every thing within the sanctuary was purged with the blood shed without, at the altar of burnt-offering; as the efficacy of our Lord's intercession in heaven is derived from his sacrifice here on earth.—Aaron came out of the *most holy place* into the *holy place* for this part of the service.

V. 20—22. The word rendered "reconciling," is the same as that before translated "make atonement," and it signifies to *cover* or *hide*.—When the high-priest had sprinkled the blood of the two sin-offerings, separately, in the most holy place, upon the mercy-seat, and afterwards seven times each in the holy place before the mercy-seat, and applied it to the altar of incense; he then came out of the tabernacle, and laying both his hands on the head of the live goat, he confessed over it all the sins of Israel of every kind with their various aggravations. Thus the guilt was typically transferred to it, in respect of the temporal punishment: for such sacrifices "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;" much less could they actually remove the guilt of every individual in Israel, whether penitent or impenitent. But by this annual confession and atonement, the judgments of God were averted from the nation. The Lord still condescended to dwell among them, as his worshippers, notwithstanding their past transgressions; and they continued to enjoy the benefit of his ordinances and oracles.—In the latter days of the Jewish church the high-priest had a *form of confession*: but God prescribed none. An attentive observance of the divine law, and of the

the head of the live goat, and ¹confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, ²putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of ³a fit man into the wilderness.

22 And ⁴the goat shall ⁵bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land ⁶not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and ⁷shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there.

24 And he shall ⁸wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on ⁹his garments and come forth, and offer ¹⁰his burnt-offering, and the burnt-offering of the people, ¹¹and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.

25 And ¹²the fat of the sin-offering shall he burn upon the altar.

26 And ¹³he that let go the goat for the scape-goat, shall ¹⁴wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

27 And the bullock for ¹⁵the sin-offering, and the goat for the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall ¹⁶one carry forth ¹⁷without the camp, and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

28 And he that burneth them, ¹⁸shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

29 ¶ And ¹⁹this shall be a statute for ever unto

^a opportunity. n Is. 53:11, 12. John 1:29. Gal. 3:13. Heb. 9:28. 1 Pet. 2:24. † Heb. *de separatione*. Ps. 103:12. Ex. 18:22. Mic. 7:19. o 4. Ex. 42:14. 44:19. Rom. 8:3. Phil. 2:6—11. Heb. 9:28. p 4. 8:6. 14:9. 22:6. Ex. 2:4. Heb. 9:10. 10:19—22. Rev. 1:5, 6. q 8:7—9. Ex. 28:4. &c. 29:5. r 3, 5. s 17. t 6. 4:8—10. Ex. 29:11. u 10, 12, 22. x 23. 14:8. 15:6—11, 27. Num. 19:7, 8, 21. Heb. 7:19. y 4:11, 12, 21. 6:50. 6:17. z Matt. 27:31—33. Heb. 13:11—14. a See on 26.

people's conduct, with suitable previous consideration, would enable him to do it much more profitably without one.—When the sins of Israel had thus been "put upon the head of the goat," a proper person was sent to lead him away into the wilderness, to a place sufficiently distant from the habitations of men; and there to let him go at liberty, bearing upon him their sins, never more to be heard of.—Christ "bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" they were imputed to him, and he bare the punishment due to them: this was typified by the goat which was slain and burnt. He then ascended into heaven, and by his intercession grounded on his atonement, renders our persons and services accepted: this was typified by the high-priest entering with the blood and incense into the most holy place. In consequence of this, the sins of all believers are entirely forgiven; and they are dealt with, as if they had never committed them: this was shadowed by the scape-goat sent away into the wilderness.

V. 23—25. When the scape-goat had been sent away, "bearing on him all the iniquities of Israel," the high-priest, going into the tabernacle, put off his linen garments, and left them there; (the Jews say, never to be worn again;) and then, having "washed his flesh with water in the holy place," he put on the rich garments which were peculiar to his office: for the more humiliating, sorrowful, and penitential part of the solemn service was now ended, and way was made for joy and exultation.—The word here rendered *wash*, is very frequently translated *bathe*; (26, 28.) but it is obvious, that it cannot exclusively mean the covering of the whole body with water; for there was no provision made for this, either in the holy place, or in the court of the tabernacle, which probably induced the translators to render it *wash* in this connexion, but whether the hands and feet alone were washed, or some of the other parts of the body, or every part of it, seems to have depended on circumstances. (15:6, 7, 13, 16.) The high-priest, having touched the scape-goat, seemed to have contracted a degree of ritual uncleanness, which his washing might refer to.—He then offered his own burnt-offering: and also that of the people, which probably means one prescribed in a subsequent law: (Num. 29:8.) though some suppose this to have been offered in the morning, and that the burnt-offering here mentioned was the evening sacrifice; all the intervening time having been taken up in the solemn services of the day. By these oblations, Aaron made a further atonement for himself and the people, at the altar of burnt-offering: and thus the expiation was completed, in respect of all things pertaining to the instituted worship of Israel.—As the bodies of the sin-offerings were reserved till the other solemnities were finished, before they were carried out of the camp to be burned; so the fat of them was likewise kept to be laid on the altar upon the burnt-offerings: for we have no reason to suppose, that this also was mentioned out of its proper order.

V. 26—28. To show still further the defiling nature of sin, and the insufficiency of these typical expiations; both he

you: *that* in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you.

30 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins, before the Lord.

31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever.

32 And the priest whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments.

33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary: and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar: and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

b 23:27-32. Ex. 30:10. Num. 29:7. 1 Kings 8:2. Ezra 3:1. c Ps. 95:13. 69:10. Is. 53:3,5. Dan. 10:3,12. 1 Cor. 11:31. 2 Cor. 7:10,11. d 23:3,7,8,21,28, 31,36. Ex. 12:16. 20:10. Is. 58:13. Heb. 4:10. e Ps. 51:2,7,10. Jer. 33:8. Ez. 36:25-27. Eph. 5:26. Tit. 2:14. Heb. 9:13,14. 10:1,2. 1 John 1:7-9. f 23:32. 25:4. Ex. 31:15. 35:2. g 4:3,5,16. * Heb. fill his hand. Ex. 29:9. marg. h Ex.

who led away the scape-goat, and he who burnt the sin-offering, contracted defilement and needed purification. Note, 6:30.—Jerusalem in later ages answered to the camp in the wilderness. (Note, Heb. 13:9-14.)

V. 29-31. The Israelites, all over the camp at this time, and all over the land afterward in Canaan, were required to spend this day in solemn humiliation before God for their sins: in godly sorrow, penitent confessions, and devotional exercises, either in secret, or in their families and assemblies: and for this purpose all other business was laid aside. Fasting is not expressly mentioned; but it is generally supposed to be implied, with several other expressions of contrition, and instances of self-denial. The day must also be observed as a most solemn sabbath, on which no work might be done, either by an Israelite or a stranger; for "afflicting their souls" for sin would be sufficient employment. (Marg. Ref. c. Note. Acts 27:9.)—Various reasons are assigned, why the tenth day of the seventh month was particularly appointed: but there seems no certainty in any of them.

V. 32-34. None except the high-priest was allowed to perform the solemn service of this day; and "he could not continue by reason of death:" it was therefore appointed, that he, among Aaron's descendants, who was anointed to the high-priesthood through succeeding generations, should thus make atonement for the sanctuary, the priests, and the people, once every year.—Moses anointed and consecrated Aaron, and probably Eleazar; but it is not expressly said by whom the high-priests in succession should be anointed. It is generally thought, that the eldest son of the high-priest, (if a proper person,) or the next in succession, was previously anointed and consecrated, that he might officiate, if any thing occurred to prevent the high-priest, as sickness or ceremonial uncleanness; and then he entered on that office when his predecessor died. It is probable, in this case, that the high-priest himself anointed his successor: if this had not been done we may suppose that the chief of the priests, in age or authority, anointed the eldest of the sons of the deceased high-priest, who had no defect or impediment: or perhaps, a subsequent anointing also was used after the high-priest's death; as David, after having been anointed by Samuel to succeed Saul, was repeatedly anointed after Saul's death, when he reigned on his regal office. (1 Sam. 16:12,13. Notes, 2 Sam. 2:4. 5:3.)—The words rendered "whom he shall anoint," seem only to mean, *who shall be anointed*; and may be rendered, "whom one shall anoint."—Many learned men imagine, that these atonements expiated nothing but the guilt contracted by transgressing the ceremonial law; and they seem to think it actually prevailed for the full and final pardon of these offences, to all for whom they were offered: but the varied expressions used on this occasion, show that all kinds of sins were alike atoned for: (16:21.) and the apostle's argument (Heb. 9:8-10.) proves that no sin was thus actually pardoned, as to the conscience. All true believers, using these as means of grace, were pardoned and accepted for the sake of the great Antitype and his atonement: the temporal punishment, for sins of every kind, was averted by the offering in that case instituted; but there were many crimes for which no sacrifice was appointed. The annual expiation of national guilt, however, prevented the forfeiture of the national covenant: but in idolatrous times it was either utterly neglected, or very carelessly attended to; and when the Substance came, all these shadows lost their use and efficacy: for the words rendered "everlasting," and "for ever," in this connexion mean *perpetual* during that typical dispensation. (Note, Gen. 17:7,8.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-4. These varied shadows of good things to come lead us into almost unavoidable repetitions: for it must surely be inexcusable to shut our eyes that we may not see, or seeing to refrain from noting, though repeatedly, these mani-

34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.

CHAPTER XVII.

The blood of beasts slaughtered for food, must be offered to the Lord, that no sacrifices may be offered to devils, 1-9. No blood must be eaten, nor that which died of itself, 10-16.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, saying,

3 What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp,

4 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord; blood shall be imputed unto that man: he hath

29:29,30. Num. 20:25-28. i See on 4. k See on 16:18,19,24. 123:31. Num. 28:7. m Ex. 30:10. Heb. 9:7,25. 10:3,14. n 8,12,13,15. b Dent. 12:5-7,11-13,20-22,26,27. c 1:13. Ex. 30:40. John 10:7,9. 14:6. d 7:18. Ps. 52:2. Rom. 4:6. 5:13,20. 1 Thimelon 16,19. e Is. 66:3.

fold remembrances of sin, as chargeable upon the best of men in their most holy actions; as polluting all things that the sinner touches; yet atoned for by nothing except blood, and nobler blood than that of bulls and goats. Doubtless these are so many demonstrations, that we rightly understand what the New Testament teaches of Christ, when we consider him as the Substance of all these shadows; and his Church the building, for which all these scaffolds were prepared. Here, in a type, we view our great High-Priest, our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Saviour from sin. Thus he veiled his glory. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," and appeared in human nature, yet free from sin; though he had richer robes of glory and beauty, when angels saw and adored him "in the form of God," as their Creator and Lord. By the one sacrifice of himself he made an actual atonement for sin on earth; and with the same human nature, and with his own blood, he ascended into heaven, to appear before the Father's mercy-seat, to present the incense of his prevailing intercession for his people; in which service none, even of the spiritual priesthood, must presume to unite with him. Thence with his spiritual presence he meets his assembled disciples, and renders his ordinances sanctifying to them, and acceptable to God; and at the end of the world he "will come in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father," to complete the grand design.

V. 15-34. Here also in another glass, we see the Saviour in the sin-offering of the goat. In the likeness of sinful flesh, he suffered without the camp, by the hands of wicked men, but according to the purpose of God; while in the *scape-goat* we see him rising, and bearing the sins of all true believers into the land of forgetfulness. But in how many things do these shadows fail of truly representing the substance! It was very evident "that the way into the holiest was not made manifest," when the high-priest himself must enter so seldom, and so circumspectly, on pain of death. Jesus needed not to offer sacrifice for his own sin; for he was without sin. Though "the Lord thence to meet on him the iniquities of us all," yet he thence contracted no pollution, nor needed any purification, having perfectly expiated the whole. And feebly indeed do "the holy places made with hands" shadow forth the heaven of heavens; or the smoke of the fragrant gums, for a few hours in a year, his continued and meritorious advocacy.—Nor are the benefits which Israel as a nation derived from this annual atonement, or the external privileges thus continued to them, at all comparable to "the access with boldness to the throne of grace," the mercy, the peace, the spiritual and everlasting blessings, and consolations, which true believers in all ages enjoy through the atonement of the Son of God!—Yet let it be remembered that none but humbled souls, who "repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance," can derive true comfort from these privileges. The proud, the carnal, the impenitent and unbelieving, have but the shadow still; a shadow often of their own devising, not of God's appointing. It was not requisite that Christ should suffer more than once; but we need constantly to look to him: and, besides our daily exercise of repentance, seasons set apart from time to time to afflict our souls, to humble ourselves before God, and to mortify our sinful desires, are very profitable, and have in all ages met with the approbation of God, and been sanctioned by the example of holy men. Nor will this mar our holy joy: it will rather purify it; it will endear the Saviour, and greatly assist us, in so looking unto him, that we may not be weary or faint in our minds, either in doing his will or suffering for his sake.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 3-7. The language of this passage evidently means, that the Israelites, while in the wilderness, must not kill any of those animals which were appointed to be sacrificed, even for food, elsewhere, either in the camp, or without: but must bring them all, as peace-

shed blood; and that man shall 'be cut off' from among his people:

5 To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer ⁱⁿ the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation unto the priest, ^{and} offer them ^{for} peace-offerings unto the LORD.

6 And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD, ^{at} the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and ^{burn} the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices ^{unto} devils, after whom they have ^{gone} a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them ^{throughout} their generations.

8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man ^{there be} of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, ^{that} offereth a burnt-offering or sacrifice,

9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.

10 ¶ And whatsoever man ^{there be} of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, ^{that} eateth any manner of blood; ^I

will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

11 For the life of the flesh ^{is} in the blood, and ^I have given it to you upon the altar, to make a atonement for your souls: for it ^{is} the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, ^{neither} shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

13 And whatsoever man ^{there be} of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which ^{hunteth} and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten, he shall even ^{pour} out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

14 For ^{it is} the life of all flesh, the blood of it ^{is} for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh ^{is} the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

15 And ^{every} soul that eateth ^{that} which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, ^(whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger,) he shall ^{both} wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

16 But if he wash ^{them} not, nor bathe his flesh; then ^{he} shall bear his iniquity.

f10, 14, 19, 20, 23, 16, 18. Gen. 17:14. Ex. 12:15, 19. Num. 15:30, 31. g Gen. 21:23, 22:13, 22:19. Deut. 12:2. 1 Kings 14:22. 2 Kings 16:4. 17:10. 2 Chr. 28:4. Ez. 20:28, 22:9. h 3: 7:11-21. Ez. 24:5. 13:23, 13. 13:5, 11, 16. 4:31. Ez. 29:13. Num. 18:17. k Deut. 32:17. 2 Chr. 11:15. Ps. 106:37. John 12:31. 14:30. 1 Cor. 10:20. 2 Cor. 4:4. Eph. 2:2. Rev. 9:20. 12:9. Ez. 34:15. Deut. 31:16. Jer. 31:1. Ez. 23:8. Rev. 17:1-5. m 10, 12. Judg. 6:26. 1 Sam. 7:9. 10:8, 16. 2. 2 Sam. 21:25. 1 Kings 18:30-32. Mal. 1:11. n 11, 3:17. 7:26, 27. 19:25. Gen. 9:4. Deut. 12:16, 23. 15:23. 1 Sam. 14:33. Ez. 33:25. 44:7. Acts 15:20, 29. Heb.

10:29. o 20:2-6. 26:17. Ps. 34:16. Jer. 21:10. 44:11. Ez. 14:8. 15:7. p 8:15. 16:11, 14-19. Matt. 20:28, 28:22. Mark 14:24. Rom. 3:25. 5:9. Eph. 1:7. Col. 1:14, 20. Heb. 9:22. 13:12. 1 Pet. 1:2. 1 John 1:7. 2:2. Rev. 1:5. q Ez. 12:49. * Heb. *hunteth any hunting*. r Deut. 12:16. 15:23. 1 Sam. 14:32-34. Job 16:18. Ez. 24:7. s 11. Gen. 9:4. Deut. 12:23. c 22:8. Ez. 22:31. Deut. 14:21. Ez. 4:14. 44:31. t Heb. *a carcass*. u 11:25. 15:5, 10, 21. Num. 19:8, 19, 21. Rev. 7:14. x 5:1. 7:18. 19:8. 20:17, 19, 20. Num. 19:20. Is. 53:11. John 13:8. Heb. 9:28. 1 Pet. 2:24.

offerings, to the door of the tabernacle; that the blood might be sprinkled, the fat burnt on the altar, and the due portion allotted to the priest, according to the laws before given.—It may be supposed, that few animals, in proportion to the multitudes of Israel, would at this time be slain; the manna being their principal sustenance: and when they came into Canaan, and many of them lived far from the sanctuary, they might kill cattle for food in any place. “Even as the roe buck, and as the hart, so shalt thou eat them.” (Deut. 12:15, 22.) These animals, therefore, or any other clean animal, not appointed for sacrifice, if caught in the wilderness, might be eaten, without being brought to the door of the tabernacle. In the mean while, the transgression of this law would be imputed to any Israelite, as a capital crime; even as if he had committed murder; and, if the magistrate did not punish him, God himself would “cut him off from among his people.”—This law was intended to honour the divine institutions, and to put an end to the custom of offering sacrifices “in the open field,” or in any place indiscriminately, by habituating the people to bring all their oblations to the tabernacle; nay, to present the animals slain for food as a sacrifice to God.—It was also meant as a preservative from idolatry, which was even at that time secretly practised, in direct violation of the national covenant. For idolatry is evidently intended; when it is said, that the people “sacrificed to devils, after whom they had gone a whoring,” the common term for idolatry in the Scriptures. The word (שׂוֹמְרִים) translated “devils,” is taken from the roughness of a goat, and indeed signifies goats; and many translate it satyrs, which are fabled to have appeared in the form of goats in the woods to their votaries; and it is certain, that several imaginary deities of the Gentiles were often worshipped by images, formed nearly in the shape of goats.—Our translation, however, is not improper: for all idolatry in fact deifies devils, by rendering worship to those ambitious spirits, even as all wickedness is serving them; and by both Satan aspires to be honoured as the god and prince of this world. (Note, 1 Cor. 10:18-22.)—The prohibition of offering sacrifices elsewhere than at the sanctuary, was of perpetual obligation; though the people were afterwards allowed to kill animals for food in any place. (Notes, Deut. 12:5-7, 22.)—The whole kingdom of Israel, from the days of Jeroboam, habitually violated this law; and through the reigns of most of David’s successors, the kingdom of Judah was in great measure guilty of the same, whilst “the people sacrificed upon the high places.” In some cases the Lord dispensed with the letter of it, by accepting sacrifices from his prophets on particular occasions, which were offered elsewhere: for the typical import formed the grand intention of the ceremonial law.—The worship of God at the tabernacle represented the sinner’s approach to God in Christ, and through his mediation; but sacrifices, offered elsewhere, generally evinced a proud, contemptuous neglect of that great salvation.

V. 8, 9. A mixed multitude accompanied Israel out of Egypt, many of whom probably had before this returned; but some might still continue, and strangers from other parts might come on different occasions. None of these however were permitted, in the camp of Israel, while sojourning in the

wilderness, or afterwards residing among them in the land of Canaan, to offer sacrifices of any kind to their idols, or any sacrifice even to JEHOVAH, except at the sanctuary: and if any one resolutely violated this law, he, as well as the rebellious Israelite, would be cut off from among his people. It is certain, that in after ages many uncircumcised persons brought sacrifices to the temple, which were offered by the priests in their behalf, though they themselves might not enter into the inner court; and it does not appear that this was a violation of the law. Many learned men, however understand all these passages, in which strangers are mentioned, of proselytes, or circumcised Gentiles, and the Septuagint is thought to favour this interpretation. But the proselytes of this description, in ordinary cases, seem to have been incorporated with the Israelites; and the rules, here and elsewhere given, may relate to the case of such persons, from other countries, as were not fully proselyted to the religion of Israel, whether they ever resided among the Israelites or not.

V. 10-16. This prohibition has repeatedly been considered. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 3:17. Gen. 9:3-4. Acts 15:19-21.) The expression, “I will set my face against that man,” implies the highest degree of indignation and avenging justice; and is seldom used, except for idolatry, or some very aggravated wickedness. (Note, 20:2-5.)—The reason of the prohibition is several times repeated; namely, because the life of the animal is in the blood, and it was appointed at the altar to make atonement for the lives of the people; as a type of him, who gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, to save our souls from eternal death.—This law extended even to clean animals taken in hunting, or wild fowl, as well as all tame land-animals; and the covering of the blood with dust taught the people, that some great mystery was implied in the atonement of blood, and tended to create a reverence of it: for the same reason they were forbidden to eat the animals which died of themselves; for the blood was in them also.—Yet this is not forbidden in such energetic language as the eating of blood in other cases; and a ceremonial purification was appointed, in case of failure, which is generally understood of inadvertent transgressions. The stranger was included in this statute also; and yet the Israelites might give that which died of itself to the “strangers within their gates,” or sell it to aliens. (Note, Deut. 14:21.) This seems to establish a distinction among strangers, according as they had in some degree embraced the religion of Israel, or the contrary. It also marked a distinction between directly eating the blood, either as actually separated from the flesh, or as wisely retained in it; and eating it with the flesh when it was unavoidably combined with it. The former was expressly forbidden to all the sons of Noah, the latter only to Israel: but after the use of blood in sacrifice ceased, the reason of the restriction in both cases was taken entirely away.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We should greatly reverence all the Lord’s appointments, and it is at their peril if men contemn or change them; but the greatest danger lies in neglecting the salvation, which is in Jesus Christ. “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” “He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth

CHAPTER XVIII.

The customs of Egypt and Canaan to be avoided, and God's commands respecting, 1-5. Laws restricting marriage among relations, 6-18: and against base lusts and idolatries, enforced by the judgments about to be executed on the Canaanites, 19-30.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I *am* the LORD your God.

3 After ^bthe doings of the land of Egypt wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and ^cafter the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.

4 Ye shall ^ddo my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I *am* the LORD your God.

5 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments: ^ewhich if a man do he shall live in them: *I am* the LORD.

6 ¶ None of you shall approach to any that is ^fnear of kin to him, ^gto uncover *their* nakedness: *I am* the LORD.

7 The nakedness of thy father or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she *is* thy mother, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

8 The nakedness ^hof thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it *is* thy father's nakedness.

9 The nakedness of ⁱthy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, *whether she be* born at home, or born abroad, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.

a 11:44. 19:34, 40, 34. 20:7. Gen. 17:7. Ex. 6:7. 20:2. Ps. 33:12. Ez. 20:5, 7, 19, 20. b Ez. 20:7, 8. 23:8. Eph. 5:7-11. 1 Pet. 4:2-4. c 20:23. Ex. 23:24. Deut. 12:40, 31. Jer. 10:2, 3. Rom. 12:2. d 26. 19:37. 20:22. Deut. 4:1, 2, 6, 1. Ps. 105:45. 119:4. Ex. 20:19. 35:27. 37:24. Luke 1:6. John 15:14. e Ez. 20:11, 13. 21. Luke 10:28. Rom. 10:5. Gal. 3:12. f Ex. 6:2, 6, 23. Mal. 3:6. g Heb. remainder of his flesh. g 7-10. 20:11, 12, 17-21. h 20:11. Gen. 35:22. 49:4.

not the Father, that sent him." "And he that gathereth not with him scattereth." If then his human nature be the true temple, in which God dwells and will be worshipped;—"if his name be Emmanuel,"—"if this be the true God, and eternal Life,"—"may we not add, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols?" (Note, 1 John 5:20, 21.) Surely all who value their own souls, should look to themselves in an age and nation, where men, *called Christians*, spend their lives in degrading him, whom prophets and apostles shed their blood to glorify, and "whom all the angels of God worship." For though we may offer our spiritual sacrifices in every place, yet unless we come by Christ as our Way, trust in him as our all-sufficient Atonement and almighty Saviour, and worship God in him; our services will be found an abomination, and our hope a delusion. From such temptations of the enemy we should keep at the utmost distance, by adhering to the word of God, constantly attending on his ordinances, and depending on his grace alone; and he will in that case preserve us from the snares of our crafty and malicious enemy: while faith in Christ, and love to him and our brethren, will sanctify even our ordinary meals, and convert them into spiritual sacrifices.—Though the prohibitions we have been reading are no longer in force, we may learn from them to adore the mystery of atoning blood with deep veneration; to use our liberty without cruelty or sensuality; and to exercise habitual self-denial and circumspection, while we seek to "purify ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." But let presumptuous, careless sinners tremble: for if God "set his face against them," he will at length cut them off with terrible vengeance.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 2-4. Many of the laws, enacted in this and the following chapters, were extremely different from the maxims and customs of other surrounding nations; and this introduction, though applicable to the general conduct of Israel, seems particularly to have related to these laws. The great Lawgiver, therefore, again and again confirms his statutes by adding, "I *am* JEHOVAH your God," intimating that he would be obeyed in all his requirements.—The people were especially warned against the customs of Egypt and Canaan, because most in danger from those nations; but others doubtless were also meant.

V. 5. *Which if a man do, &c.*] By an upright obedience to the moral precepts, and a believing attendance on the appointed ordinances of the law, not only temporal advantages, but the favour of God and eternal life might be expected; though not as a *merited* recompense. But probably the Lord intended thus to warn the Israelites of the danger not only of incurring condemnation by neglecting these commandments, but of resting in their imperfect obedience, instead of looking through them to "Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," as he alone perfectly fulfilled its demands. (Note, Ez. 20:11.) St. Paul repeatedly quotes this text as descriptive of the righteousness of the law, in distinction from the righteousness of faith: and this also shows, that the words relate to something more important than temporal prosperity. (Marg. Ref. e.)

10 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs *is* thine own nakedness.

11 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she *is* thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

12 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she *is* thy father's near kinswoman.

13 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she *is* thy mother's near kinswoman.

14 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she *is* thine aunt.

15 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter-in-law: she *is* thy son's wife, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

16 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it *is* thy brother's nakedness.

17 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they *are* her near kinswomen; ⁱit *is* wickedness.

18 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, ^jto vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other in her life-time.

Deut. 22:30. 27:20. 2 Sam. 16:21, 22. Fr. 22:10. Am. 2:7. 1 Cor. 5:1. i 20:17. Deut. 27:22. 2 Sam. 13:11-14. Ez. 22:11. j 20:19. Ex. 6:20. k 20:20. 120:12. Gen. 38:18, 26. Ez. 22:11. m 20:21. Deut. 25:5. Matt. 14:3, 4. 22:24. Mark 6:17. 12:19. Luke 3:19. n 20:14. Deut. 27:23. Amos 2:7. o 20:14. * Or, one wife to another. Gen. 4:19. 29:28. p Gen. 30:15. 1 Sam. 1:6-8. Mal. 2:15.

V. 6-17. As these laws forbid marriage betwixt near relations, they certainly prohibited unchastity between them, and every approach to it: and this may account in part, for the singular manner in which they are expressed.—The marriage of parents and children, or grandchildren, &c. in all the variations here spoken of, has something in it at first glance unnatural; and would be destructive of all authority and subordination, which are of the greatest importance to society. In the marriages of nephews with aunts, somewhat of the same kind may be perceived: and it is observable that the marriage of uncles with their nieces is not prohibited, though, from the supposed parity of the case, it is included in our laws. The only collateral relations which are forbidden to marry, are brothers and sisters, by whole or half blood, or by affinity, legitimate or illegitimate. The first marriages indeed of Adam's posterity must have been of brothers and sisters; and therefore we cannot pronounce them *immoral* in themselves. But, as human nature *now* is, it is very expedient that those, who are so much together in youth, should by such a restriction be taught to look upon all intercourse as prohibited and incestuous; which must assist in keeping out temptations to evil. It is moreover desirable, that by intermarriages, relationship, and its endearments and benevolence should be diffused, and an unsocial separation of families prevented; and this is the tendency of these laws. They are therefore to be considered, either as moral in themselves, or so nearly connected with other moral obligations, as to be proper to be observed by all mankind; and in general the wiser heathens have deemed such marriages unlawful, and abstained from them. It is elsewhere enjoined, that if a man died without issue, his surviving brother should marry his widow. (Note, Deut. 25:5-10.) But, as this appointment respected special purposes under the Mosaic dispensation, the prohibition of marrying a brother's wife is absolute to us; and, by parity of reason, that of a woman marrying the husband of her deceased sister.—Some laws on this subject seem essentially necessary, and have always been judged to be so by legislators, heathen as well as Christian. Yet if these laws are not obligatory under the Christian dispensation, there is no law of God in force regulating marriages, nor any, restricting the intermarriages of the nearest relations.—Did the Lord then intend to leave his church under the New Testament, wholly *without law* in this most important concern? or hath he confirmed his own pre-existing law, as of moral obligation? St. Paul's language concerning the incestuous Corinthian,—*"Such fornication as is not named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife,"* (1 Cor. 5:1).—implies that Christians had a rule in this respect, and a stricter rule than the Gentiles: yet that rule can be found only in this chapter. The restrictions here imposed are all of moral tendency, and highly beneficial: as missionaries and others, who attempt to propagate Christianity among the heathen, know and feel more than other Christians; because others live among those, who are habitually restricted by them. I therefore must consider these laws as in equal force at this day among Christians, as they were formerly in Israel: those implied by parity of reason, as well as those more expressly mentioned.

19 ¶ Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.

20 Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.

21 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

22 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

23 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

24 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.

25 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

26 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my

judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you;

27 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

28 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.

29 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

30 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

CHAPTER XIX.

Miscellaneous laws, moral and ceremonial, being in general repetitions, or explanations, of precepts before given, 1-31.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto all the congregation of the

q 15:19-21, 20:18. Ex. 18:6, 22:10. v 20:10, Ex. 20:11, Deut. 5:18, 22:22-25. Rom. 11:34, 12:7. cov. 29-32, Mat. 3:5, Matt. 5:27, 28, Rom. 2:22. 1 Cor. 6:9-10. v 20:10, 21:1, 22:2, Deut. 12:1, 13:10, 2 Kings 16:3, 21:6, 23:10, Ps. 58:7-9, 104:1, 111:2, 112:2, 113:2, 114:2, 115:2, 116:2, 117:2, 118:2, 119:2, 120:2, 121:2, 122:2, 123:2, 124:2, 125:2, 126:2, 127:2, 128:2, 129:2, 130:2, 131:2, 132:2, 133:2, 134:2, 135:2, 136:2, 137:2, 138:2, 139:2, 140:2, 141:2, 142:2, 143:2, 144:2, 145:2, 146:2, 147:2, 148:2, 149:2, 150:2, 151:2, 152:2, 153:2, 154:2, 155:2, 156:2, 157:2, 158:2, 159:2, 160:2, 161:2, 162:2, 163:2, 164:2, 165:2, 166:2, 167:2, 168:2, 169:2, 170:2, 171:2, 172:2, 173:2, 174:2, 175:2, 176:2, 177:2, 178:2, 179:2, 180:2, 181:2, 182:2, 183:2, 184:2, 185:2, 186:2, 187:2, 188:2, 189:2, 190:2, 191:2, 192:2, 193:2, 194:2, 195:2, 196:2, 197:2, 198:2, 199:2, 200:2, 201:2, 202:2, 203:2, 204:2, 205:2, 206:2, 207:2, 208:2, 209:2, 210:2, 211:2, 212:2, 213:2, 214:2, 215:2, 216:2, 217:2, 218:2, 219:2, 220:2, 221:2, 222:2, 223:2, 224:2, 225:2, 226:2, 227:2, 228:2, 229:2, 230:2, 231:2, 232:2, 233:2, 234:2, 235:2, 236:2, 237:2, 238:2, 239:2, 240:2, 241:2, 242:2, 243:2, 244:2, 245:2, 246:2, 247:2, 248:2, 249:2, 250:2, 251:2, 252:2, 253:2, 254:2, 255:2, 256:2, 257:2, 258:2, 259:2, 260:2, 261:2, 262:2, 263:2, 264:2, 265:2, 266:2, 267:2, 268:2, 269:2, 270:2, 271:2, 272:2, 273:2, 274:2, 275:2, 276:2, 277:2, 278:2, 279:2, 280:2, 281:2, 282:2, 283:2, 284:2, 285:2, 286:2, 287:2, 288:2, 289:2, 290:2, 291:2, 292:2, 293:2, 294:2, 295:2, 296:2, 297:2, 298:2, 299:2, 300:2, 301:2, 302:2, 303:2, 304:2, 305:2, 306:2, 307:2, 308:2, 309:2, 310:2, 311:2, 312:2, 313:2, 314:2, 315:2, 316:2, 317:2, 318:2, 319:2, 320:2, 321:2, 322:2, 323:2, 324:2, 325:2, 326:2, 327:2, 328:2, 329:2, 330:2, 331:2, 332:2, 333:2, 334:2, 335:2, 336:2, 337:2, 338:2, 339:2, 340:2, 341:2, 342:2, 343:2, 344:2, 345:2, 346:2, 347:2, 348:2, 349:2, 350:2, 351:2, 352:2, 353:2, 354:2, 355:2, 356:2, 357:2, 358:2, 359:2, 360:2, 361:2, 362:2, 363:2, 364:2, 365:2, 366:2, 367:2, 368:2, 369:2, 370:2, 371:2, 372:2, 373:2, 374:2, 375:2, 376:2, 377:2, 378:2, 379:2, 380:2, 381:2, 382:2, 383:2, 384:2, 385:2, 386:2, 387:2, 388:2, 389:2, 390:2, 391:2, 392:2, 393:2, 394:2, 395:2, 396:2, 397:2, 398:2, 399:2, 400:2, 401:2, 402:2, 403:2, 404:2, 405:2, 406:2, 407:2, 408:2, 409:2, 410:2, 411:2, 412:2, 413:2, 414:2, 415:2, 416:2, 417:2, 418:2, 419:2, 420:2, 421:2, 422:2, 423:2, 424:2, 425:2, 426:2, 427:2, 428:2, 429:2, 430:2, 431:2, 432:2, 433:2, 434:2, 435:2, 436:2, 437:2, 438:2, 439:2, 440:2, 441:2, 442:2, 443:2, 444:2, 445:2, 446:2, 447:2, 448:2, 449:2, 450:2, 451:2, 452:2, 453:2, 454:2, 455:2, 456:2, 457:2, 458:2, 459:2, 460:2, 461:2, 462:2, 463:2, 464:2, 465:2, 466:2, 467:2, 468:2, 469:2, 470:2, 471:2, 472:2, 473:2, 474:2, 475:2, 476:2, 477:2, 478:2, 479:2, 480:2, 481:2, 482:2, 483:2, 484:2, 485:2, 486:2, 487:2, 488:2, 489:2, 490:2, 491:2, 492:2, 493:2, 494:2, 495:2, 496:2, 497:2, 498:2, 499:2, 500:2, 501:2, 502:2, 503:2, 504:2, 505:2, 506:2, 507:2, 508:2, 509:2, 510:2, 511:2, 512:2, 513:2, 514:2, 515:2, 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659:2, 660:2, 661:2, 662:2, 663:2, 664:2, 665:2, 666:2, 667:2, 668:2, 669:2, 670:2, 671:2, 672:2, 673:2, 674:2, 675:2, 676:2, 677:2, 678:2, 679:2, 680:2, 681:2, 682:2, 683:2, 684:2, 685:2, 686:2, 687:2, 688:2, 689:2, 690:2, 691:2, 692:2, 693:2, 694:2, 695:2, 696:2, 697:2, 698:2, 699:2, 700:2, 701:2, 702:2, 703:2, 704:2, 705:2, 706:2, 707:2, 708:2, 709:2, 710:2, 711:2, 712:2, 713:2, 714:2, 715:2, 716:2, 717:2, 718:2, 719:2, 720:2, 721:2, 722:2, 723:2, 724:2, 725:2, 726:2, 727:2, 728:2, 729:2, 730:2, 731:2, 732:2, 733:2, 734:2, 735:2, 736:2, 737:2, 738:2, 739:2, 740:2, 741:2, 742:2, 743:2, 744:2, 745:2, 746:2, 747:2, 748:2, 749:2, 750:2, 751:2, 752:2, 753:2, 754:2, 755:2, 756:2, 757:2, 758:2, 759:2, 760:2, 761:2, 762:2, 763:2, 764:2, 765:2, 766:2, 767:2, 768:2, 769:2, 770:2, 771:2, 772:2, 773:2, 774:2, 775:2, 776:2, 777:2, 778:2, 779:2, 780:2, 781:2, 782:2, 783:2, 784:2, 785:2, 786:2, 787:2, 788:2, 789:2, 790:2, 791:2, 792:2, 793:2, 794:2, 795:2, 796:2, 797:2, 798:2, 799:2, 800:2, 801:2, 802:2, 803:2, 804:2, 805:2, 806:2, 807:2, 808:2, 809:2, 810:2, 811:2, 812:2, 813:2, 814:2, 815:2, 816:2, 817:2, 818:2, 819:2, 820:2, 821:2, 822:2, 823:2, 824:2, 825:2, 826:2, 827:2, 828:2, 829:2, 830:2, 831:2, 832:2, 833:2, 834:2, 835:2, 836:2, 837:2, 838:2, 839:2, 840:2, 841:2, 842:2, 843:2, 844:2, 845:2, 846:2, 847:2, 848:2, 849:2, 850:2, 851:2, 852:2, 853:2, 854:2, 855:2, 856:2, 857:2, 858:2, 859:2, 860:2, 861:2, 862:2, 863:2, 864:2, 865:2, 866:2, 867:2, 868:2, 869:2, 870:2, 871:2, 872:2, 873:2, 874:2, 875:2, 876:2, 877:2, 878:2, 879:2, 880:2, 881:2, 882:2, 883:2, 884:2, 885:2, 886:2, 887:2, 888:2, 889:2, 890:2, 891:2, 892:2, 893:2, 894:2, 895:2, 896:2, 897:2, 898:2, 899:2, 900:2, 901:2, 902:2, 903:2, 904:2, 905:2, 906:2, 907:2, 908:2, 909:2, 910:2, 911:2, 912:2, 913:2, 914:2, 915:2, 916:2, 917:2, 918:2, 919:2, 920:2, 921:2, 922:2, 923:2, 924:2, 925:2, 926:2, 927:2, 928:2, 929:2, 930:2, 931:2, 932:2, 933:2, 934:2, 935:2, 936:2, 937:2, 938:2, 939:2, 940:2, 941:2, 942:2, 943:2, 944:2, 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according to the regulation of our ecclesiastical law; perhaps with the single exception of an uncle being prohibited to marry his niece. Yet even this exception may be doubtful, and is not to be insisted on.

V. 18. Some think, that this verse contains an express prohibition of polygamy; supposing the word *sister* merely to signify a wife, which the person spoken of had already married. But though the Mosaic law contains no explicit allowance of polygamy; yet there is no other passage which favours the interpretation of this text as a direct law against it, and many things in the whole subsequent history imply a connivance at it. The context also seems to suggest a more literal interpretation; namely, the marrying of two sisters together. This conduct in Jacob proved a source of vexation both to Leah and Rachel; who were more jealous of each other than of the handmaidens whom they willingly gave to their husband: and perhaps it would be found on trial, that those who before had lived together in the intimate equality of this near relationship, would be more apt to rival each other, if married to the same man, than strangers would be; at least their jealousies and bickerings would be more unseemly and distressing. As a woman might not in ordinary cases marry the brother of her deceased husband; it can hardly be supposed, that it was allowable for a man to marry the sister of his wife, even after her decease; though this verse seems not to contain a prohibition of it.—These are all the restrictions on marriage, which are contained in the divine law; and such as pride, covetousness, or human policy have superadded, do not seem to have proved beneficial to mankind.

V. 21. *Molech* is nearly the same as the word always rendered *king*, and is of similar meaning with *Baal*, which signifies *lord*, or *governor*. It is generally supposed, that the sun was worshipped under the name of Molech. Children on some occasions were consecrated to him, by passing through the fire; but at other times, one of the family was sacrificed to him, in a most cruel manner, in order to secure his favour and protection to the rest. (Note, 20:2-5.) The former practice is supposed to be here meant.—The several abominations, afterwards mentioned, certainly were practised by the heathens, even in their religious worship; as it might be proved by the remaining unexceptionable testimonies of pagan writers themselves.

V. 21-30. The word *abomination*, repeatedly used in these verses, seems especially to refer to the vile and unnatural practices above spoken of. Incestuous marriages indeed of the gross kind always were an abomination; but some of those above prohibited had in certain circumstances been necessarily allowed, nay, virtually enjoined, by the Creator himself; and though in other circumstances they are highly inexpedient and wisely prohibited, yet they must not be classed with the unnatural practices here reprobated with such decided abhorrence.—The observance of the divine laws respecting marriage, would be a strong barrier to Israel, to keep them at a great distance from the abominations of the heathen; the example of the Canaanites, on whom they were commissioned to execute the vengeance of God, would be a salutary but awful warning: and at length, when they nevertheless copied the example of the devoted nations, and were driven out of the promised land, the denunciation, here implied, was proved to be a prediction of what would take place in remote ages.—Nothing can exceed the energy of the strong figure here used, of a land *loathing and vomiting out* its inhabitants.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we would obey the divine commands, we must break off bad customs, and also renounce conformity to the world: for wherever we go, we shall find its maxims and observances, in many things, directly opposite to the law of God; yet enforced with an authority which rivals his, and which is disobeyed with great difficulty, and at the expense of much contempt and reproach. But the broad, smooth, frequented paths of the world lead to destruction; the ways of God to life eternal: every one of his commandments is also good in itself, and conducive to the peace, comfort, and true honour of the human species; and he is as kind in what he prohibits, as in what he allows. He formed mankind for social life, created them male and female, instituted marriage, and blessed it; he hath formed the regulations of it in wisdom and love, for the good of individuals, of families, and of society,—of the present and of succeeding generations. Where his laws are observed, the most important advantages follow: where they are disregarded, disgrace, disease, and numberless most destructive evils ensue.—But what a sink of iniquity is the human heart, that it should be necessary to prohibit such detestable, filthy, and cruel practices, as are here mentioned! That ever it should enter into the minds of rational creatures to serve the devil and their own lusts, with degradation far beneath the brutes themselves! From this polluted fountain the earth hath been filled with abominable crimes in all ages, and the very creation groans under the burden of man's iniquity: and though one land after another vomiteth out its inhabitants, as unable any longer to endure their wickedness; and though one generation is swept away after another into the grave; yet still the earth is filled with sin. Ere long it shall be burnt up with all its works: and "new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness," shall succeed. But unless we be previously cleansed in the fountain of the Redeemer's blood, and have a "new heart given us, and a new spirit put within us," we shall not find admission there. Let us then profit by the awful examples of vengeance recorded, and fear the threatenings denounced, in the sacred oracles: let us mortify the deeds of the body, and learn self-denial: and above all, aware of the deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart, let us walk watchfully, and humbly dependent upon the grace of God sought in earnest prayer. Then we shall escape the condemnation of the wicked, and the Lord himself will be our God and our Portion for ever.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 2. Holiness consists in separation from sin, devotedness to God, and conformity to his moral excellences, which are also transcribed in his holy law. Without holiness we cannot walk with God, or have fellowship with him; and though an *external*, or *ceremonial*, purity was called being "holy to the LORD," yet it was only as an emblem of that purity of heart which was especially intended. (Note, 1 Pet. 1:13-16.) This injunction is repeated on different occasions, to enforce the several prohibitions to which it is annexed. (Marg. Ref.) Should the worshippers of a holy God copy the vile practices of abominable idolaters?

V. 3. In order to understand most of these precepts, an attentive mind and an obedient heart, in the reader, are more requisite than the labour of the expositor.—"Every man," whatever his age, wisdom, or wealth may be, is commanded "to fear his mother," (here placed first), "and his father." That is, to treat them with respect and tenderness, fearing to grieve or offend them, and reverencing their authority an

thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woolen come upon thee.

20 And whoever lieth carnally with a woman that is a bondmaid betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged: they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

21 And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass-offering.

22 And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering before the LORD, for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

23 ¶ And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.

24 But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, to praise the LORD withal.

25 And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the LORD your God.

26 ¶ Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.

27 Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.

28 Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

29 Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.

30 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.

33 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

34 But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

35 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in mete-yard, in weight, or in measure.

36 Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

37 Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD.

g Deut. 22:9-11. Matt. 9:16, 17. Rom. 11:5. 2 Cor. 6:14-17. Gal. 3:11 * Or, abused by any. Heb. reproached by, or, for man. † Or, they. Heb. there shall be a scourging. h Ex. 21:20, 21. Deut. 22:24. i 5:61-7. j See on 4:20, 21. k See on 14:34. l 12:23. 22:27. Ex. 6:12, 30. 22:29, 30. Jer. 5:10. 9:25, 26. Acts 7:51. m Num. 18:12, 13. Deut. 12:17, 18. 14:23, 29. 18:4. † Heb. holiness of praise to the LORD. n 25:3, 4. Prov. 3:9, 10. Ec. 11:1, 2. Hag. 1:4-6, 9-11. 2:18, 19. Mal. 3:8-10. o See on 3:17. 7:26. 17:10-14. Deut. 12:23. p Ex. 7:11. 8:7. 1 Sam. 15:23. Jer. 10:2. Dan. 2:10. Mal. 3:5. q Deut. 18:10, 14. 2 Kings 21:6. 2 Chr. 33:6. r 21:5. Is. 19:2. Jer. 16:6. 48:37. Ez. 7:18. 44:20. s Deut. 14:1. 1 Kings 12:28. Mark 5:5. t Rev. 13:6, 17. 14:9, 11. 15:2. 16:2. 19:20. 20:4. s Heb. profane. u 21:7. Deut. 23:17. Hos. 4:12-14. 1 Cor. 6:15.

fully married, nor yet in any degree set at liberty; her case was made different from that of a free woman espoused to a husband; for then both parties would have been adjudged to death. (20:10. Note, Deut. 22:22-27.) Yet the crime was heinous, and must not be passed over, but "there must be a scourging," (a most severe scourging, as the word implies,) probably of the man as well as of the woman; and he must also offer a trespass-offering for his sin, as the ransom of his life; which the woman having no property was not expected to do.—The legal sacrifices could not atone for sin, as pertaining to the conscience, in such a manner that the impenitent should be actually forgiven in respect of the eternal judgment; and the penitent and believing, whether sin-offerings or trespass-offerings were required or not, were certainly pardoned and justified through the Saviour that was to come: there was therefore no real difference in the situation of the two parties; both were rescued from death; and their final salvation, or the contrary, depended on something widely different from the ceremonial institutions. The words rendered "betrothed to an husband," are translated in the margin, *reproached by, or for man*; as if they implied that the woman was previously of suspicious character; and this has been by some considered as the ground of the difference between this and other cases of a similar kind.

V. 23-25. Whatever was unfit for use was accounted *uncircumcised*, till that *unfitness* was removed, or ceased. The fruit of young trees was therefore to be thus deemed *unclean*, during three years; and either to be destroyed before it was ripe, or left to perish. On the fourth year it was consecrated as a thank-offering to praise the Lord: but in the fifth the owner might eat of it, and expect a blessing to render the increase abundant.—Some suppose that this law had reference to the idolatrous customs of the surrounding nations; but it also might be intended to teach the people to wait patiently the Lord's time for every desirable good, and not to yield to the eagerness of their natural appetites and inclinations.—Thus he also waits for the maturity of our fruits of righteousness; though our first attempts to glorify him may be *unmeet* for that purpose, even as the fruits of these young trees, whilst they were to be accounted *uncircumcised*.

V. 26. *Use enchantment, &c.* Astrological calculations, or other attempts at prediction or fortune-telling; the use of spells and charms for the cure of diseases; with many other practices, too frequent among professed Christians; are attempts to revive this worship of Satan, and should be abhorred as his very ordinances: being means used to get help and information elsewhere, instead of depending on God, submitting to him, and waiting for all needful good from him in the use of lawful means. (31)

V. 27-29. Some explain the words, "Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard," as forbidding the Israelites to

x See on 3. 26:2. y 10:3. 15:91. 16:2. Gen. 23:16, 17. 2 Chr. 33:7. 36:14. Ps. 59:7. Ec. 5:1. Ez. 9:6. Matt. 21:13. John 2:15, 16. 2 Cor. 6:16. 1 Pet. 4:17. z 26:2, 5. Ex. 22:18. Deut. 18:10-14. 1 Sam. 28:37-9. 2 Kings 17:17. 21:6. 2 Chr. 34:6. Is. 19:29, 4. 47:13. Acts 8:11. 13:6-8. 16:16-18. 19:19, 20. Gal. 5:20. Rom. 21:9. a 1 Kings 2:19. Prov. 16:31. 20:29. Is. 3:5. Lam. 5:12. Rom. 13:7. 1 Tim. 5:1. 1 Pe. 2:17. b Ex. 22:31. 32:9. Deut. 10:18, 19. 21:14. Mal. 3:5. c Or, oppress. Jer. 7:6. Ex. 22:27. d See on 18. Ex. 12:48, 49. Matt. 5:43. d See on 15. e Lev. 25:13, 15. Prov. 11:1. 16:11. 20:10. Ps. 22:12, 13. Am. 8:5. 5:6. Mic. 6:11. Matt. 7:2. f Heb. siones. f See on Ex. 20:2. g See on 18:4. 5:6. Deut. 4:12, 5:6. 6:1. 6:1, 2. 8:1. 1 John 3:22, 23.

shave their beards; but if this had been intended, it would have been more plainly expressed. (Marg. Ref. r, s.) The meaning of the several clauses is not very clear; but, no doubt they were all superstitious practices of the Heathens. And perhaps the prohibition of the twenty-ninth verse has also relation to the very common practices of idolaters in honour of their infamous deities: and indeed nothing could so promote lewdness as to make it a part of religion.—But alas, numbers even in Christian countries, are guilty of violating this prohibition, to a degree not in general known, or suspected.

V. 31. Notes, 26. 20:6. Ex. 22:18.

V. 32. Marg. Ref.

V. 33, 34. The Israelites were commanded to encourage strangers to reside among them, that they might learn the knowledge of God, and of his truth, law, and worship. Remembering the kind usage which their fathers at first met with in Egypt, and how reasonable it appeared to them, they were required to imitate it; and remembering how cruel and hard they deemed their subsequent oppression, they were cautioned to avoid copying so bad an example.—The Jews most unreasonably expound this precept, as relating only to such strangers as had been fully proselyted to their religion; whereas the reason assigned for it demonstrates, that all strangers who dwelt among them were intended. By such traditionary glosses, they have, ever since as well as before the coming of Christ, explained away the holy commands of God; so that their comments should be read with peculiar caution, and constant reference to the New Testament.

V. 35, 36. Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 20:17.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though "the LORD is rich in mercy and goodness," yet his perfect holiness renders it impossible that we should be happy in him, or that he should delight in us, unless we be made holy also; those therefore, whom he especially loves, he effectually sanctifies. To understand the nature of holiness, let us meditate on these moral precepts: for there we shall learn, that it consists in reverencing the majesty and authority of God, in loving his excellency, in gratefully remembering his mercies, in delighting in his worship and service, in keeping his sabbaths, and reverencing his sanctuary; in submitting to his will, and confiding in his power and love: and that it includes truth, integrity, equity, and universal benevolence, love to our brethren, compassion for the miserable, liberality to the poor, kindness to strangers and to enemies, with a suitable regard to all relative duties; and also purity, chastity, sobriety, and an habitual government of the appetites and passions, according to the commandments of God. Would we know in what manner this holiness is to be attained, we must consider the intention and meaning of the positive institutions of the Scripture; that by a believing attendance on those which the New Testament enjoins we may through them receive, from the Redeemer's fulness, the

CHAPTER XX.

The man who gave of his seed to Molech must be stoned; or the Lord would cut him off, with those who consorted with him, and those who consulted with wizards, 1-6. Holiness required, 7, 8. Capital punishments appointed for him who cursed his parents, or committed adultery, or some kinds of incest, or unnatural crimes; and vengeance denounced on such as violated the laws concerning marriage, 9-21. Exhortations to holy obedience, 22-26. Witches and wizards to be stoned, 27.

AND THE LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, "Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: 'the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

3 And 'I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people: because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to 'profane my holy name.

4 And if the people of the land do any ways 'hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, 'and kill him not;

5 Then I will set my face against that man, and 'against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.

6 And the soul that turneth after such as have 'familiar spirits, and after wizards, to 'go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will 'cut him off from among his people.

7 'Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

8 And 'ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which 'sanctify you.

9 For every one that 'curseth his father or his mother, shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother, 'his blood shall be upon him.

a 17:8, 13, 15. b 18:21. Deut. 12:31. 18:10. 2 Kings 17:17. 23:10. 2 Chr. 28:3. 33:6. Ps. 106:38. Is. 57:5, 6. Jer. 7:31. 32:35. Ex. 16:20, 21. 20:28, 31. 23:30. Act. 7:43. 'Molech. c 27. 24:14, 23. Num. 15:35, 36. Deut. 13:10, 11. 17:5-7, 21. 1. Act. 7:53, 59. d See on 17:10. 1 Pet. 3:12. e Num. 19:20. Ex. 5:01. 28:38. 39. f 18:12, 14. Ex. 20:33. 2 Cor. 6:16. g Acts 17:30. h Deut. 13:8. Josh. 7:12. 1 Sam. 3:13, 14. 1 Kings 20:42. Rev. 2:14. 1 Ex. 20:5. Jer. 32:28-35, 39. 117:2. Ps. 106:39. k 27. See on 19:20, 31. Deut. 18:10-14. Is. 8:19. 1 Ex. 34:15, 16. Num. 15:39. Ps. 73:27. Ex. 6:9. Hos. 4:12. m 1 Chr. 10:13, 14. n 11:44. 19:2. Eph. 1:4. Phil. 2:19, 15. Col. 3:12. 1 Thos. 4:3, 7. Heb. 12:14. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. See on 18:4, 5. 19:37. Matt. 5:19. 7:24. 12:50. John 13:17. Jam. 1:22. Rev. 22.

sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; remembering also, that the vanities of the world, and the superstitions of false religion, are as much the means of sin, as divine ordinances are means of grace; and therefore we must withdraw from them to the utmost distance, if we would be the holy people of a holy God.—As he is peculiarly attentive to the poor, if we are his people we shall be so too; and "while he gives us all things richly to enjoy," we must not think that our indigent brother is to be always put off with bare necessities, but should enable him to taste the comforts of life also; not deeming that wasted which he receives. All these duties must be performed from a regard to the Lord, who both avenges the injuries done, and recompenses the kindness shown to the, who cannot avenge themselves, or make return for the benefits they receive; and who especially blesses those who obey their parents, and give honour to whom honour is due.—And let it be well noticed, that the great Judge of the world not only observes and will certainly punish gross and scandalous instances of injustice, but also the petty dishonesty of false weights and measures: and our consciences ought to be no less exact and minute.—Alas! how prone to iniquity must man's heart be, when parents are capable of prostituting their own daughters; and when such shameful practices, instead of exciting abhorrence, are readily imitated till they overspread whole nations! But though some crimes are more enormous than others, none can be expiated save by the blood of Christ, or forgiven without repentance: nor should any precepts of the Lord be accounted small; but we must show our simplicity and godly sincerity, by giving every part of religion its due place and proportion, without neglecting or perverting any.—If sin is the greatest of all evils, what need have we to be thankful to those who tell us plainly of our faults, and will not suffer sin upon us! and how important is it that we learn to perform this duty in a proper manner! But all men should detest the conduct of those who backbite and slander others, and rob them of their characters, when they have no power to defend themselves.—Finally, the nearer our lives and tempers are to the precepts of God's law, the happier shall we be, and the happier shall we render all around us, and the better shall we adorn the gospel: let us then daily and earnestly pray, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee." (Ex. 20: P. O.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 2-5 (Note, 18:21.) Molech

10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, 'the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

11 And the man that 'lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; 'their blood shall be upon them.

12 And if a man 'lie with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought 'confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

13 If a man also 'lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

14 And if a man take 'a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be 'burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

15 And if a man 'lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

16 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman and 'the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

17 And if a man shall take his 'sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness, it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

18 And if a man shall lie with a woman 'having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness, he hath 'discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

14. p 21:8. Ex. 31:13. Ex. 20:12. 37:28. 1 Thes. 5:23. 2 Thes. 2:13. q Ex. 21:17. Lev. 27:16. Prov. 20:20. 30:11, 17. Matt. 15:4. Mark 7:10. r 11—13, 16, 27. Josh. 2:19. Judg. 9:24. 2 Sam. 1:16. 1 Kings 2:32. Matt. 27:25. s 1 Pet. 22:22—24. 2 Sam. 12:15. Ex. 33:45—47. John 8:4, 5. t 18:8. Deut. 27:20. u m. 2, 7. 1 Cor. 5:1. u See on r, 9. v 18:15. Gen. 38:16, 18. Deut. 27:23. x 18:23. y 18:22. Gen. 19:5. Judg. 19:22. Rom. 1:26, 27. 1 Cor. 6:9. 1 Tim. 1:10. Jude 7. z 18:17. Deut. 27:23. Am. 2:7. a 21:9. Josh. 7:15, 25. b 18:23. Ex. 22:19. Deut. 27:21. c Ex. 19:15. 21:28, 32. Heb. 12:20. d 18:9. Gen. 20:12. Lev. 27:22. 2 Sam. 13:12. Ex. 22:14. e 15:24. 18:19. Ex. 18:6. 22:10. * Heb. *nuda nuda*.

is supposed to have been an idol, worshipped by the Ammonites and neighbouring nations, to whom they sometimes offered their children as sacrifices; according to some authors in the following manner. An image of an enormous size, made of hollow iron, was heated with great fires beneath; and when it was sufficiently hot, they put the children into its arms, where they were burnt to death: mean time their cries were drowned in the noise of drums or trumpets, and of musical instruments played on for that purpose. At other times the children only passed through a fire, or between two fires, and were thus devoted to this demon. The former, however, is supposed to be here meant. Nothing can be conceived more horrible than such practices. Nothing can more demonstrate the madness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and the power of Satan, than that there should be any need to enact such laws as this, and to prohibit parents from such cruelty to their own offspring on pain of death; except it be that, notwithstanding numbers of Israelites were, from age to age, so infatuated as to persist in this barbarity! (Marg. Ref. b.) Committed by them, it was the highest imaginable contempt of the Name, sanctuary, and worship of God; and a shameful violation of their national covenant! So that the very strangers who were allowed to sojourn among them, must pay such respect to the sanctuary of JEHOVAH, who dwelt among his people, and to his holy name, as to stand aloof from these abominations, on the same penalty as native Israelites; and if the criminal escaped the sword of the magistrate, through a wicked connivance, God determined to execute vengeance on him, on his family, and on all who abetted this spiritual whoredom.—Ten thousands of sacrifices equally horrible are offered in India annually, and connived at by British Rulers!

V. 6. Go a whoring.] This expression still further proves, that consulting with men or women, who practise, or pretend to, witchcraft in any form, is a real act of idolatry, and of worshipping the devil. (27)

V. 9. His blood shall be upon him.] They who put the offender to death would contract no guilt: he deserved his doom, and had none to blame but himself. (Note, Eia. 21: 15-17.)

V. 10-19. The laws before given against these several enormities, (Notes, 18:6-23.) are here guarded by a sentence of death to be inflicted on the offenders by the magistrate. It is supposed that in many cases this punishment

19 And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.

20 And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.

21 And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness, they shall be childless.

22 ¶ Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them; that the land whither I bring you to dwell therein spue you not out.

23 And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.

24 But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people.

25 Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean: and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

26 And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar

spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones; their blood shall be upon them.

CHAPTER XXI.

Laws, for the mourning and marriages of the priests, 1—8: the punishment of a priest's daughter convicted of fornication, 9: the mourning and marriage of the high priest, 10—13; and the bodily blemishes which exclude from the work of the priesthood, 14—24.

AND the Lord said unto Moses, "Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people.

2 But for his kin that is near unto him, that is, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother.

3 And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.

4 But he shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself.

5 They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

6 They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God; for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy.

7 They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he is holy unto his God.

8 Thou shalt sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee; for I the Lord which sanctify you am holy.

f 18:12, 13. Ex. 6:20. g 18:6. h 18:14. i 10:18:19. Ps. 109:13. Jer. 22:30. Luke 1:7, 25. 23:29. k 18:16. Matt. 14:4. * Heb. a separation. 118:4, 5, 26. 19:37. Ps. 19:9—11. 105:45. 119:30, 145, 171. Ex. 36:27. m Ex. 21:1. Deut. 4:4. 5:1. Ps. 119:30, 106, 160, 164, 175. Is. 26:9, 9. n 19:25—23. 26:33. Deut. 25:25, 26. o 19:34, 40. Deut. 19:30, 31. Jer. 10:1, 2. p 19:27. Deut. 9:5. Ps. 78:39. Zech. 11:8. q See on Ex. 3:8, 17. 6:8. r Ex. 19:5, 6. 33:16. Num. 23:9. Deut. 7:6. 14:2. John 15:19. 2 Cor. 6:17. 1 Pet. 2:9. s 11. Deut. 14:3—21. Acts 10:11—15:28. Eph. 5:7—11. 11:43. t Or, moveth. u 7:19, 2. Ps. 99:5, 9. Is. 6:3. 30:11. 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. Rev. 3:7. 4:8. x Tit. 2:14. y 19:31. Ex. 22:18. Deut.

18:10—12. 1 Sam. 28:7, 8. z See on 9. a Hos. 6:1. Mal. 2:1, 4. b 11. 10:6, 7. Num. 19:14, 16. Ex. 44:16, 16. Ex. 44:16. 1 Thes. 4:13. * Or, being on his kin among his people, he shall not defile himself for his wife. &c. Ex. 21:16, 17. d 10:6. 18:27, 28. Deut. 14:1. Is. 15:2. 22:12. Jer. 16:6. 48:37. Ez. 44:20. Am. 8:10. Mic. 1:16. e 8. 10:3. Ex. 28:36, 29:44. Ezra 8:28. 1 Pet. 2:9. f 18:21. 19:12. Mal. 1:6, 11, 12. g 3:11. Ex. 41:7. Mal. 1:7. h 8. Ez. 44:22. 1 Tim. 3:11. i Deut. 21:12. Is. 50:1. k 6. Ez. 19:10, 14. 28:41. 29:1, 43, 44. 111:44, 45. 19:2. 20:7, 8. John 10:36. 17:19. Heb. 7:26. 10:23.

was infected by *strangling*; in others *stoning* is expressly appointed; and in one instance *burning with fire*, though the reason of this latter sanction is not obvious. It is not said, that the criminals should be *burnt alive*: and when Achan, by the express direction of the Lord, was burnt with fire, he was *first stoned*: and it does not appear, why this might not be the case in the present instance, and on similar occasions. (Note, Josh. 7:25, 26.)

V. 20, 21. *Childless.*] Marg. Ref. i.

V. 22—26. *Notes*, 18:24—30. 19:2.

V. 27. *Note*, Ex. 22:18.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When neither the fear and love of God, nor regard to a future and eternal recompense, nor any motives of reason, truth, decency, and the welfare of society, can deter men from enormous crimes; it is needful for the magistrate to use his sword, and by cutting off a mortified limb, to prevent further mischief to the body politic. Such examples of severity, when not needlessly multiplied, are wholesome lessons; and the lives of individuals, thus taken away, prevent the increase of wickedness, and the accumulation of national guilt. But if magistrates neglect their duty, and criminals evade human laws, God will set his face against them, and against those who suffer them to escape, and even against their families likewise. And so pleas of compassion, or of indulgence to relations, friends, or the female sex, will be noticed in excuse of this criminal lenity, which emboldens numbers to venture on crimes, till whole nations are corrupted, and desolating judgments prove the awful consequence.—Are we shocked at the unnatural cruelty of ancient idolaters, in sacrificing their children to the devil in the form of an idol? Alas! there are vast multitudes of parents, who, by their pernicious instructions and wicked examples, and by the mysteries of iniquity into which they early initiate their children, effectually devote them to Satan's service, and blindly forward their everlasting destruction, in a manner no less to be lamented. But what an account must they at last render to God! and what a meeting will they have with their children at the day of judgment! On the other hand let children remember, that "he who cursed father or mother was surely put to death," with "his blood upon his own head." Let adulterers hear the judgment of God respecting their crimes; and remember that the slackness of human justice, and the impunity which now emboldens us in sin, can give but an expiring joy, and will probably occasion their still deeper guilt and condemnation.—The secret and unnatural crimes, of which many are conscious who conceal them from men, will soon be brought to light, and into judgment, before a holy God: and criminals

indulgences will surely issue in dreadful lamentations hereafter, if not mourned for with godly sorrow and bitter remorse in this world.—Such crimes caused God to abhor the Canaanites, and he will much more abhor them in his professing people. By his word and ordinances he hath severed us from others, and is known by the name of "THE LORD that sanctifieth us." Let us then separate ourselves from the company and practices of the ungodly; and let us attend on his ordinances, plead his promises, and seek his salvation: that we may be holy in reality, as well as in profession; that we may learn and observe the difference between clean and unclean in every thing; and that the Lord may indeed be our God and Portion, and we his people in time and to eternity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1—5. The word rendered *the dead*, is far more commonly translated, *the soul*, or *the life*. When it signifies *the dead*, it means the body of some creature which lately had life. The paucity of words, in most languages, occasions phrases to prevail in a sense widely different from the primary meaning of the terms composing them; and consequently they must be understood according to the connexion.—The clause here implies, that the priests must not defile themselves for any person whatever, when dead, except the near relations particularly specified; and consequently that they must in no other case attend a funeral or enter the tent where a corpse lay. *The wife* is not here mentioned, and the marginal reading (4) seems to imply that she was excepted; yet this is not likely; and when Ezekiel, who was a priest, refrained by express command from signs of mourning for his wife, the people deemed it very strange. Being a distinguished person among his people, his example and ministrations were of great importance; and he must not "profane himself," or separate himself from his sacred employments on any ordinary occasion. (Notes, Ez. 24:16—24.)—By these restrictions, and the prohibition of expressing grief by any extravagant or superstitious tokens, the priests were taught to moderate their natural passions; and perhaps to avow their belief of a future state. (Note, 1 Thes. 4:13—18.)

V. 6. The office of the priests in offering sacrifices, (here called "the bread of their God," the provisions of God's house and altar, where he, as it were, came and feasted with his people,) would place them in a conspicuous light, and many would note their conduct: it behooved them, therefore, to be very circumspect, lest God and his worship should be disregarded, through their misconduct even in lighter matters.

V. 7. A priest must not marry a woman who had been a harlot, though penitent; or one of suspicious character, or ungodly; or one who had been divorced, as it might be pre-

9 And "the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be 'burnt with fire.

10 ¶ And he that is the high-priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is 'consecrated to put on the garments, shall not 'uncover his head, 'nor rend his clothes;

11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for 'his father, or for his mother:

12 Neither shall he 'go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; 'for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD.

13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity.

14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take 'a virgin of his own people to wife.

15 Neither shall he 'profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him.

16 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

17 Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations, that hath any 'blemish, 'let him not approach to offer the 'bread of his God:

18 For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: 'a blind man, or a

lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous,

19 Or a man that is broken-footed, or broken handed.

20 Or crook-backed, or 'a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or 'hath his stones broken:

21 No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish, he shall not come nigh 'to offer the bread of his God.

22 He shall eat the bread of his God both 'of the most holy, and 'of the holy;

23 Only he shall not 'go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he 'profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.

24 And Moses told it unto 'Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel

CHAPTER XXII.

The priests might not eat of the holy things when unclean, 1-8. Who might eat of them, 10-13. The restitution to be made by him who had unwittingly eaten of them, 14-16. The sacrifices must be without blemish, and above seven days old, 17-28. The law of eating the sacrifices of thanksgiving, 29, 30. Calls to obedience, 31-33.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, that

1 Sam. 2:17, 34; 3:13, 14. Ex. 9:6. Mal. 2:3. Matt. 11:29-34. 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, Tit. 1:6. n 20:14. Gen. 38:21. Job. 7:15, 25. Is. 33:14. Rev. 21:8. o 9:12. 10:7. 16:32. Ps. 25:1. 30. Num. 35:25. Ps. 133:2. p 8:7-9. Ex. 28:2-4. q 10:6. 13:45. 2 Sam. 13:5. Lev. 6:12. r Gen. 37:34. Job 1:20. Matt. 26:65. s 1:2. Num. 6:7. 19:14. Deut. 33:9. Matt. 8:21, 22. 12:46-50. Luke 9:59-60. 14:26. 2 Cor. 5:16. 11:7. u Ex. 28:35. Is. 61:1. Acts 10:38. v 7. Ex. 44:22. 2 Cor. 11:2. Rev. 14:4. x Ezra 2:62. 9:2. Neh. 13:23-29. Mal. 2:11, 15. Rom. 11:16.

sumed that it was for some misconduct. All the male children of the priests were priests by birth, 'and he that would seek a godly seed must first seek a godly wife.' Henry.

V. 8. This seems addressed to Moses, (and to all subsequent rulers in Israel,) as a command to exercise his authority and influence, that the priests might be preserved from unlawful marriages, and from every other thing inconsistent with their sacred character.

V. 9. Whoredom in a priest's daughter would be highly disgraceful to religion, and a reflection upon the parent's care of his family. The dreadful punishment denounced by God himself would not only be a restraint upon the children; (Note, 20:10-19,) but likewise a lesson to the parents to watch over them, to keep them out of the way of temptation, and to give them a proper education.

V. 10-15. The eldest son of the high-priest is supposed by many to have been anointed in his father's lifetime, if he came to a proper age, and to have acted as his deputy, in case of sickness or ceremonial uncleanness; and upon his death the office immediately devolved upon him; nor must he incapacitate himself for performing it, on any account whatever. It is therefore thought that he, or the apparent successor to the high-priesthood, was bound by these rules, as well as the high-priest actually in office.—The high-priest, however, as the immediate type of Christ, must show greater superiority over his natural affections, and be more circumspect in his whole conduct than the other priests. He must therefore marry none but a virgin; nor leave any stain on his posterity, either by his own improper marriage, or by allowing them to marry improperly. Many learned men indeed think, that all the priests were bound by the law of marrying none but virgins; but they can bring no proof of it from Scripture, except from Ezekiel's mystical vision, (Note, Ez. 44:22.) which certainly varies in many things from the law of Moses; and the context, in this chapter, evidently implies the contrary. It is more properly observed, that polygamy was virtually forbidden the high-priest; but not a second marriage, as some have imagined.

V. 17-24. These several blemishes in the body incapacitated the priests for some of their sacred work; yet did not exclude them from their maintenance, or from subordinate services, or even from instructing the people. They were external emblems of the scandals and reproaches of sin, resting on a man's character, which render even the penitent unfit for the ministry, until the impression, made by them on the minds of men, be done away by a continued course of good behaviour.—Learned men have copiously showed, that the pagans literally observed several of these rules respecting priests; probably they originally derived their usages from the law of Moses.—Some have argued from these laws that a deformed person, or one who wants a limb, or is otherwise materially blemished, should not be a minister of the gospel; but this is a groundless imagination, as these incapacitating blemishes were mere shadows of a wrong state of heart and mind.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As these priests were types of Christ, so all ministers especially must be followers of him; that their example may elucidate and corroborate their instructions, and teach the people in imitating them to imitate the Saviour. He was perfectly

1 Cor. 7:14. y 22:20-25. 1 Thes. 2:10. 1 Tim. 3:2. Heb. 7:26. x 21. 10:3. Num. 16:5. Ps. 65:4. * Or, food, 3:16. a Is. 56:10. Matt. 23:16, 17, 19. 1 Tim. 3:2, 3, 7. Tit. 1:7, 10. * Or, too slender. b Deut. 23:1. c 6:8, 17. d 2:3, 10. 6:16, 28. 7:1. 24:8, 9. Num. 18:9, 10. e 22:10-13. Num. 19:10. f Ex. 30:8-9. 40:26, 27. Ez. 44:3-14. g 12. See on 15:31. h Mal. 2:11-7. Col. 4:17. 1 Tim. 1:18. 2 Tim. 2, 2.

superior to all natural affections; and in the business of his heavenly Father, would not be interrupted or biassed, even by his regard to his earthly parent. Absolutely dead to the world, and filled with zeal for the glory of the Father and compassion to the souls of men, he was unwearied in his labours, and persevering in his sufferings till he could say, "It is finished." Without blemish, and separate from sinners, he executed his priestly office on earth; and being ascended into heaven, he is preparing his church of redeemed sinners, that "not having spot, or blemish, or any such thing," he may espouse it as a chaste virgin unto himself for ever; and he requires all his family to remember the relation in which they stand unto him, and to act consistently. What manner of persons then should his ministers be? Surely their characters should be free from scandal; and their hearts from the dominion of sin, and from the love of filthy lucre, worldly honour, and sensual indulgence! They should be unwearied and cheerful in their work, "giving themselves wholly to it," and letting nothing divert them from it. They should be patient in tribulations, superior to the power of their passions, circumspect in their walk, cautious in their connections, and exemplary in the government of their families. Nothing is of more importance to the interests of religion than the unblemished character, and the sober, decent, and respectable conduct and demeanour of the wives and children of ministers: for the people will always think themselves authorized to go further in conformity to the world, and its vain fashions and customs, and in pursuit of its interests and pleasures, than the minister and his family do; and will interpret his preaching by their practising; supposing him accountable for their misconduct, or as giving it the sanction of his approbation. (Notes, 1 Tim. 3:2-5.)—Our God is as holy now, as when he commanded the offending daughter of a priest to be burnt with fire; how then should the children of ministers tremble lest they disgrace the character of their parents, prevent the effects of their ministry, and expose themselves to the fierce wrath of God! Equally careful should this render ministers of their children; not aiming to give them a genteel education, in conformity with the customs and fashions of the world; but to train them up in useful knowledge, with sobriety, frugality, and industry, and in the fear of God; restraining and correcting every evil propensity, setting them a good example, and offering continual prayers for them: for the child's wickedness will be considered as the parent's reproach, as well as affliction; and frequently it is so, though not always.—But we are all, if Christians, spiritual priests: and the minister is called to set a good example, in order that the people may imitate it. They too must be dead to the world and separated from it: not sorrowing or rejoicing, desiring or pursuing, or possessing temporal things, in the same manner as others do; but taking the Lord for their Portion, rejoicing in him continually, delighting in his service, and using all to his glory. Our bodily infirmities, blessed be God, cannot exclude us from his heavenly glory. And they, who on many accounts may be disqualified for the work of the ministry, may serve God with comfort in other situations in his church. Finally, such as, without their own fault, are incapable of further service, must neither be despised, nor deprived of suitable maintenance.

they ^{separate} themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they ^{profane} not my holy name in *those things* which they ^{hallow} unto me: I am the LORD.

3 Say unto them, Whosoever *he be* of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, ^{having} his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off ^{from} my presence: I am the LORD.

4 What man soever of the seed of Aaron is ^a leper, or hath ^a running issue; he shall not eat of the ^{holy} things, ^{until} he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing *that is* ^{unclean by} the dead, or ^a man ^{whose} seed goeth from him;

5 Or ^{whosoever} toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, ^{or} a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath:

6 The ^{soul} which hath touched any such shall ^{be} unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.

7 And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; ^{because} it is his food.

8 That which ^{dieth} of itself, or is torn *with* ^{beasts}, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I am the LORD.

9 They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they ^{bear} sin for it, and die therefore, if they ^{profane} it: I the LORD do sanctify them.

10 There shall ^{no} stranger eat of the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing.

11 But if the priest buy *any* soul with ^{his} money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat.

12 If the priest's daughter also be *married* unto ^a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things.

13 But if the priest's daughter be a widow or divorced, and have no child, and is ^{returned} unto her father's house, ^{as} in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat; but there shall no stranger eat thereof.

14 And if a man ^{eat} of the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth *part* thereof unto it, and shall give *it* unto the priest, with the holy thing.

15 And they shall not ^{profane} the holy things of the children of Israel which they offer unto the LORD;

16 Or ^{suffer} them ^{to} bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things; ^{for} I the LORD do sanctify them.

17 [¶] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, ^{Whatsoever} *he be* of the house of Israel, or ^{of} the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his ^{vows}, and for all his ^{free-will} offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt-offering:

19 *Ye shall offer* at your own will ^a male without blemish of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.

20 *But* whatsoever ^{hath} a blemish, *that* shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.

21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice ^{of} peace-offerings unto the LORD, ^{to} accomplish ^{his} vow, or a free-will offering in beeves, or ^{of} sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

22 [¶] Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.

23 Either a bullock, or a [¶] lamb, that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer ^{for} a free-will-offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

24 Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or ^{broken}, or cut; neither shall ye make ^{any} offering *thereof* in your land.

25 Neither from ^a stranger's hand shall ye offer ^{the} bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption is in them, and blemishes *be* in them: they shall not be accepted for you.

26 [¶] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

27 When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be ^{seven} days under the dam: and from the eighth day, and thence-

3-6. 15:31. Num. 6:3-8. b 32. 18:21. 19:12. 20:3. 21:6. c Ex. 13:12. 28:39. Num. 18:32. Deut. 15:19. d 7:20. 21. e Ex. 33:14, 15. Ps. 16:11. 51:11. Matt. 25:41. 2 Thes. 1:10. f See on 13:2, 3, 4, 45. * Heb. *running of the reins*. 15:2. g 2:3. 6:25-29. 21:22. Num. 18:9, 19. h 14:2. &c. 15:13-15. i 21:1. Num. 19:11-16. k 15:16. l 11:47. 14. m 15:7. 19. n 13:23. 15:5. 16:21-28. Num. 19:7-10. o 6:11. Heb. 10:22. p 21:22. Num. 11:1-19. Deut. 18:3, 4. 1 Cor. 9:4. 13:14. p 17:15. Ex. 22:31. Deut. 14:21. Ex. 44:31. q 10:1-2. 16:2. Ex. 28:43. Num. 18:22-32. r 1 Sam. 21:6. Matt. 12:4. i Heb. *the purchase of his money*. Gen. 17:13. Num. 18:11-13. j Heb. *a man, a stranger*. s Gen. 28:11. i 10:14. Num. 31:11-19. u 3:15-19. 27:13. x 9. 19:3. Num. 15:15.

32. Ex. 22:26. § Or, *lade themselves with the iniquity of trespass*: in their eating. y 7:19. Ps. 39:4. Is. 53:11, 12. 1 Pet. 2:24. z 9. See on 20:8. a 17:10. 18. b Num. 15:14-16. c 7:16. 33:39. Num. 15:3. Deut. 12:6. Ps. 22:25. 56:12. 61:5. 65:1. 66:13. 116:14, 18. Ex. 5:4. Jon. 1:16. 2:3. Nah. 1:15. Acts 18:18. d Num. 15:3. Deut. 12:6, 17. 16:10. e 13:10. 4:32. Ex. 12:5. Matt. 27:4. 19:24, 54. Luke 23:14, 41, 47. John 19:4. 2 Cor. 5:21. Eph. 5:27. Heb. 9:14. 1 Pet. 1:19. 2:22-24. 3:18. f 25. Deut. 15:21. 17:1. Mal. 1:8, 13, 14. g 3:16. 7:11. &c. h Gen. 28:20. 35:1-3. Deut. 23:21-23. Ps. 50:14. Prov. 7:14. Ec. 5:4, 5. i 10. Or, *gave*. j 21:18-21. k 10. Or, *kid*. l 20. Deut. 23:1. 1 Num. 15:11-16. Ezra 6:8-10. m 21:6, 8, 21, 22. Mal. 1:7, 8, 12-14. n 12:2, 3. 19:23, 24. Ex. 22:30.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 2. "Holy things" were the parts of the sacrifices given to the priests, the show-bread, and whatever was more immediately presented to the Lord. Some were *most holy*, to be eaten only by the priests in the sanctuary; others were *holy*, to be eaten by them and their families in their own houses. But the proportion of the tithes which belonged to the priests, and many other perquisites, might be disposed of at their will.

V. 3-9. The females, as well as the males, were bound by these laws.—Yet, as the holy things constituted a considerable part of the stated maintenance of the priests and their families, the uncleanness contracted in some of the specified cases, was speedily and easily removed. But if any persons presumptuously neglected the prescribed rules, they would ^{bear} sin for it, and might expect to be cut off by divine justice, after the example of Nadab and Abihu.

Cut off ^{from} my presence. (3) Some interpret this of the offender being excluded from officiating as a priest; others, of his being cut off by some immediate stroke from God.

V. 10-13. Boarders, lodgers, and hired labourers or servants, not being a regular part of the priest's family, were not allowed to eat of the holy things; but slaves, whether bought or born in the house, as a part of his stated family, were.—If his daughter married a priest, she might eat of them in right of her husband, as well as of her father; but if she married any other man she forfeited that right; and if left a widow with children, she and they formed a family distinct and separate from the priesthood; but if left a widow without children, or if being divorced she returned to her father's house to live with him as in her youth, she became again a part of his family, and might partake of the holy things.

V. 14-16. The presumptuous transgressor was left to the judgment of God; but he, who inadvertently ate any part of what belonged to the priest, was required, when he found

out his mistake, to make restitution with a fifth part added to the value of it. This the priests must require, that the hallowed things might not be applied to common uses. For that would indeed be allowing the people to burden themselves with guilt, by violating the divine law in eating the holy things: while that very action typically implied a vain attempt to expiate their own guilt; instead of transferring it to the priests, who were in this respect the types of Christ' (Notes, 5:15, 16, 10:16-18.)

V. 18-24. The burnt-offerings typified Christ's unblemished sacrifice, and denoted the offerer's entire devotedness to God; and the peace-offering of a vow implied an *indispensable* duty: in these cases, therefore, no animal having any kind of blemish would be accepted.—But one that had a disproportion in its limbs, or something superfluous or wanting, might be accepted as a free-will-offering; when love for the courts and altar of God, and for his brethren, disposed a man, without any previous obligations, to offer a sacrifice, and make a sacred feast for his friends, for the priests, and for the poor. Yet even in this case such animals as were blemished, or diseased in other respects, must not be offered.—Without entering into the particulars of these defects and blemishes, it is obvious that the word translated *bullock* means a young bull; for the male, unless a bull, was blemished.—It is evident from the original of the twenty-third verse, that the words often translated *at your own will*, (29) should in most places be rendered *for your acceptance*. (Note, 1:3.)

V. 25. As an intimation of the Lord's purposes of mercy to the Gentiles, they were encouraged to offer sacrifices to him; but these were not allowed of, unless free from blemish.—Some are of opinion, that the Gentiles were not allowed to offer any sacrifices, except burnt-offerings: but the connexion of this verse seems unfavourable to that supposition.

V. 27. From the same time as the male children were

forth, t shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

28 And whether it be cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.

29 And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer it at your own will.

30 On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the LORD.

31 Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

32 Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you,

33 That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Laws concerning the weekly sabbath, 1-3; the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and the sheaf of first-fruits, 4-14; the feast of Pentecost; with a memento to leave the gleanings for the poor, 15-22; the feast of trumpets, 23-25; the day of atonement, 26-32; the feast of tabernacles, 33-44.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.

* Or, sheaves. c Ex. 23:19, 34:26. Deut. 14:21, 22:6, 7. p 7:12. 1s. 107:22. 116:17. Hos. 11:2. Amos 4:5. Heb. 13:15. 1 Pet. 2:5. q 7:15-18. 19:7. Ex. 16:19, 20. r See on 18:4, 5. Num. 15:40. Dent. 4:40. 1 Ths. 4:1, 2. a See on 2. 13:21. t 10:3. Is. 5:16. Matt. 6:9. Luke 11:2. u 16. 20:8. 21:8, 15. Ex. 19:5-6. John 17:17. 1 Cor. 1:2. x 11:45. 19:36. 23:38. Ex. 6:7. 20:2. Num. 15:41. a 4:37. Ex. 23:14-17. 1s. 1:13, 14. 33:20. Lam. 1:4. Hos. 2:11. Nah. 1:15. John 5:1. Gal. 2:16. b Ex. 32:5. Num. 10:2. 3:10. 2 Kings 10:2. 2 Chr. 30:5. Ps. 81:3. Joel 1:4. 2:15. Jon. 3:5-9. c 19:3. Ex. 16:23, 29. 20:8-11. 22:12. 31:

dedicated to the Lord by circumcision, the cattle were deemed meet for sacrifice: that is, say the Jewish writers, when one sabbath, which sanctifies all things, must have passed over them. (Note, 122-5.)

V. 28. The reason of this restriction is not very evident. The practice might seem cruel and unfeeling; yet it does not seem to have been forbidden thus to slay other cattle for food, besides these here mentioned. It might perhaps refer to some pagan superstition.

V. 29, 30. Note, 7:15-18.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst with gratitude we recollect, that our holy and glorious High-Priest is not liable to any incapacitating impediments to the discharge of his office, either habitual or incidental, but is perfectly such an one as became us; and that his unblemished sacrifice is of perpetual efficacy for "all who come to God through him;" let us also remember, that the Lord requires us likewise to reverence his Name, his truths, his ordinances, and his commandments. The man, who enters into the ministry, and who handles the word of God, or administers his sacraments, out of covetousness or ambition, whilst he indulges in known, habitual sin, either openly or in secret; and those professed Christians who make religion their pretence, but gain their object; or who approach the Lord's table as a step to preferment, or with a heart full of covetousness, malice, or lust;—such persons I say, presume to eat of the holy things with their uncleanness upon them, and must answer for it to God. Let us then beware of hypocrisy; and both examine ourselves, and seek to be purified from our sinful defilements, in the blood of Christ, and by his sanctifying Spirit: that we may not profane the Name of God in these hallowed things, but use them with acceptance, to his glory, and to our own benefit and comfort; and when, as his priests, we have feasted at his table, let us never more defile ourselves with the base pleasures of sin.—It is very proper, that we should carefully distinguish between those who ought, and those who ought not, to eat of these holy things; and we shall find, if we carefully consult the Scriptures, that the man who attempts to expiate his own sin, or to justify himself before God by his own supposed virtues, puts as great an affront on Christ, whose bleeding love to sinners he professes to commemorate, as he who comes to the Lord's table, from the indulgence of his passions by direct and gross immoralities. This is a sin which is often committed unwittingly; but must be repented of, if men would not bear their own iniquities, which "is a burden too heavy for them" to support. Nor can the minister, who loves the souls of the people, suffer them to continue in this dangerous delusion; but must call upon them, not only to repent and forsake their sins; but to put their whole trust in the atonement of Christ, for pardon and acceptance with God: for thus, and thus only, will the Lord sanctify them for his peculiar people.—We must serve the Lord with the best of all we have and are; yet if there be a willing mind, and an upright, humble, thankful heart, with a simple dependence on the unblemished sacrifice of Christ; our imperfect oblations will not be rejected of God, and will be useful to our fellow-creatures.—It is very desirable that strangers should be brought acquainted with the Saviour: but we should be careful, that our zeal for multiplying converts do not lead us to encourage hypocrites, "whose corruption is in them,"

3 Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation: ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

4 ¶ These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

5 ¶ In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover.

6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work therein.

8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest:

15. 24:21. 35:2, 3. Deut. 5:18. Is. 56:2, 6. 58:13. Luke 13:14. 23:56. Acts 15:21. Rev. 1:10. d Ex. 12:2-14. 13:3-10. 23:15. Num. 9:2-7. 28:16. Dent. 16:1-7. Josh. 24:10. 25:19. Matt. 26:17. Mark 14:12. Luke 22:7. 1 Cor. 5:7. s Ex. 12:15, 16. 13:6-7. 34:18. Num. 28:17, 18. 1 Pet. 1:8. Acts 12:3, 4. (Num. 28:1-25. q See on 14:34. h 2:12-16. Ex. 23:16, 19. 34:22, 26. Num. 15:2, 18-21. 28:26. Dent. 16:9. Josh. 3:15. * Or, handful. Heb. om. 1 Prov. 3:9, 10. Ex. 44:30. Rom. 11:16. 1 Cor. 15:20-23. Jam. 1:18. Rev. 14:4.

and who will be a scandal to the cause.—Even when the reason of the Lord's appointments doth not appear, or when we meet with many repetitions in his word; we may profitably be reminded to exercise humility, faith in his wisdom, and submission to his authority, who deserves from us the most unreserved obedience and confidence in every thing.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 2. The word (מקריים) rendered "feasts," properly means assemblies convened at an appointed time and place.—It is sometimes translated solemnities. (Is. 33:20.) The day of atonement was a great solemnity, but it was a fast.

V. 3. The weekly sabbath was the greatest of all these solemnities, as instituted in remembrance of the creation, to be observed through all generations.—It is called "a holy convocation;" and it may be supposed at least to have been the will of the Lawgiver, that assemblies for religious worship and instruction should be held in every place, as well as for sacrifices at the temple. This was done at length in the synagogues; but besides this, it was also to be observed as a sacred rest in all the dwellings of Israel.

V. 4. Ye shall proclaim, &c.] The priests were directed to give notice of the solemnities, and to call together the holy convocation by sound of trumpet. It would also devolve upon them to calculate the seasons of the annual feasts; and, in order that the computation by moons might coincide as nearly as could be with the revolutions of the sun, proper intercalations must be made from time to time. For twelve revolutions of the moon want about eleven days of one entire revolution of the sun; so that a month must have been intercalated sometimes in the third, and at others in the second year; in order that the fifteenth day of Nisan might never precede that season of the year, which the offering of the first-fruits required. (Note, 10-14.)—Many other observations would require the same. When the people were settled in Canaan, proclamation must, in some way, be made to all the tribes, that there might be no error or disunion among them.

V. 5-8. (Notes, and P. O. Ex. 12.) It is observable that in respect of all the solemnities, except the weekly sabbath and the day of atonement, the word servile is added, in the prohibition of the work to be done upon them. Hence it is reasonably concluded, that several things of a domestic nature might be performed on the other solemnities, which must not be done on the weekly sabbath, or the day of atonement. The Jewish writers are very particular on this distinction: but it is enough to state in general, that in one case any work, except such as respected commerce, manufactures, agriculture, or menial services, was allowable; but in the other none, unless strictly speaking necessary, or subservient to the exercise of piety, charity, and humanity, could accord to the strictness of the injunction.

V. 10-14. The word rendered sheaf in the text is in the original omer, as in the margin.—It is supposed, that some barley, (for that must be meant,) having been reaped, was dried by the fire, ground, and made into fine flour; enough of which to fill an omer, was annually presented in the name of the whole nation, when put in possession of Canaan, with a sacrifice, a meat-offering, and a drink-offering.—The sabbath here mentioned was the day of holy convocation, or the first day of unleavened bread, which might or might not be the weekly sabbath. According to the exact letter, (5-7, and

11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, and he shall accept for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

12 And ye shall offer that day, when ye wave the sheaf, ^aone lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

13 And ^bthe meat-offering thereof shall be two tenth-deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and ^cthe drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, ^dthe fourth part of an hin.

14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: ^eit shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

15 ¶ And ye shall count unto you ^ffrom the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering: seven sabbaths shall be complete.

16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath, shall ye number ^gfifty days, and ye shall offer a new meat-offering unto the LORD.

17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations ^htwo wave-loaves of two tenth-deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with ⁱleaven; ^jthey are ^kthe first-fruits unto the LORD.

18 And ye shall offer with the bread ^lseven lambs without blemish, of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt-offering unto the LORD, ^mwith their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, ⁿeven an offering made by fire of sweet savour unto the LORD.

19 Then ye shall sacrifice ^oone kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and ^ptwo lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings.

20 And the priest shall ^qwave them with the bread of the first-fruits for a wave-offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be ^rholiness unto the LORD for the priest.

21 And ye shall ^sproclaim on the self-same day ^tthat it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work ^utherein: ^vit shall be ^wa statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, ^xthou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: ^yI am the LORD your God. [Practical Observations.]

23 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, ^zOn the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

25 Ye shall do no servile work ^{aa}therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

26 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

27 Also on ^{ab}the tenth day of this seventh month ^{ac}there shall be a day of atonement, it shall be an holy convocation unto you: and ye shall afflict your souls, and ^{ad}offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is ^{ae}a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.

29 For whatsoever soul ^{af}it be ^{ag}that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.

30 And whatsoever soul ^{ah}it be that doeth any work in that same day, ^{ai}the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

31 Ye shall do no manner of work: ^{aj}it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

32 It shall be unto you ^{ak}a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye ^{al}celebrate your sabbath.

1:21, 10:14, Ex. 29:24, k. 1:10, Heb. 10:10—12, 1 Pet. 1:19, 12:14—16, 14:10, Num. 15:3—12, m. Ex. 29:40, 41, 30:9, Num. 28:10, Joel 1:9, 13, 2:14, n. Ex. 30:24, Ps. 41:1, 45:24, 46:14, o. 19:23—25, 35:2, 3, Gen. 4:4, 5, Josh. 5:11, 12, p. 3:17, 10:11, Deut. 16:12, Neh. 9:14, 1, 10:9, q. 10:11, 25:3, Ex. 34:22, 1 Pet. 16:9, 10, r. Acts 2:1, s. Num. 28:26, t. 7:13, Matt. 13:33, u. 10, Ex. 22:26, 23:16, 34:22, 26, Num. 15:19—21, Deut. 26:2, Prov. 3:9, 10, Rom. 8:23, 1 Cor. 15:20, Jam. 1:18, Rev. 14:4, x. 12:13, Num. 28:27—31, y. Num. 15:4—12, z. 24:23—28, 16:15, Num. 15:24, Rom. 8:3, 2 Cor. 5:21, a. 3:7, 11—18, b. 1:7, 7:29, 30, Ex. 20:24, Luke 2:14, Eph. 2:14, c. 7:31—34, 8:29, 10:14, 15, Num. 18:3—12, Deut. 18:4, d. 2:4, Ex. 12:16, Deut. 16:11, 1, 11:10, e. 14, Gen. 17:7, Ex. 12:17, Num. 18:23, f. 19:9, 10, Deut. 16:11—14, 24:19—21, Ruth 2:3—7, 16, Job.

31:16—21, Ps. 112:9, Prov. 11:24, 25, Is. 58:7, 8, 10, Luke 11:41, 2 Cor. 9:8—11, g. Num. 10:10, 29:1—6, 1 Chr. 15:28, 2 Chr. 5:13, Ezra 3:6, Ps. 81:1—4, 98:6, 1, 27:13, 1 Cor. 15:52, 1 Thes. 4:16, h. 16:29, 30, 25:9, Num. 29:7—11, 11:31, Num. 29:7, Ezra 8:21, Ps. 35:13, Is. 58:5, Dan. 10:2, 3, Zech. 12:10, Acts 2:37, 58, 2 Cor. 7:10, 11, Jam. 4:9, i. 16:14, 15, 34, 136:34, Is. 53:10, Dan. 8:24, Zech. 3:9, Rom. 5:10, 11, Heb. 9:12, 26, 10:14, 1 John 2:2, 4:10, 5:6, m. See on 27:32, n. 20:3, Gen. 17:14, Jer. 15:7, Ex. 14:9, Zeph. 2:5, 1 Cor. 3:17, o. See on 16:31, Matt. 11:28—30, Heb. 4:3, 11, p. See on 27, Ps. 35:13, 51:17, 68:10, 11, 126:5, 6, Is. 57:15, 18, 19, 58:3—7, 61:3, Matt. 5:4, 1 Cor. 11:31, * Heb. rest.

Marg. Ref. d.) Christ was crucified on this day of holy convocation: yet whether the Jews calculated the days in another manner, or not, it seems not to have been thus observed; but the next being the sabbath was a high day, and probably was kept as the day of holy convocation. Thus the first day of the week was the day of offering the first-fruits, on which day Christ arose the first-fruits from the dead. The first-fruits, presented to God with a sacrifice, implied that the title of the Israelites to the fruits of the earth rested on the gift of a reconciled God, through the sacrifice of the promised Saviour; and that the comfortable and holy use of them arose from their devoting themselves and their substance to his service and glory.—They also prefigured Christ, not only as the first-fruits from the dead, and the earnest of the great harvest of the resurrection, but as the first-fruits of all the race of Adam; and who, having sanctified himself to be obedient to the precept, and to endure the penalty of the law of God, presented himself unto the Father as the earnest of an innumerable multitude of his brethren, being consecrated to God through him. For Christians also themselves are a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures: and while they partake of the sanctifying influences of the Spirit as the first-fruits of glory, their feeble worship and adoration are the first-fruits of their eternal hallelujahs. (Jam. 1:18.)

V. 15—21. (Note, Ex. 23:14—18.) By the time of "the feast of weeks," or the Pentecost, the barley-harvest, which was eared and nearly ripe at the feast of the passover, would be gathered in; and the wheat-harvest ripe, and in part reaped. Of this latter, therefore, the people must make another acknowledgment "out of their habitations," as the first-fruits were from the field; in fine flour made into bread, and leavened as for food, not for sacrifice. This was to be accompanied with burnt-offerings, a sin-offering, and peace-offerings: all denoting their unworthiness in themselves, their acceptance through Christ, devotedness to God, consequent comfortable use of their substance, and communion with God and with their brethren. Two bullocks and but one ram are mentioned in Numbers; but the reason of this difference is not evident: perhaps it was left to the option of the priests or rulers. (Num. 28:27.)—The feast is supposed to have been

held in remembrance of the giving of the law, fifty days after the departure of the people out of Egypt; and to have looked forward to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ. (Notes, Ex. 19:1, Acts 2:1.) Having finished and presented his perfect obedience and acceptable sacrifice, as the first-fruits unto the Father; he, through the gift of the Holy Ghost to the apostles, and by the conversion of three thousand souls at once, presented the other first-fruits of the Christian church, as an earnest of that harvest of innumerable multitudes, which hath been gathering, and shall yet be gathered, in all ages and nations to the end of time.

V. 22. Marg. Ref. f. Note, 19:9, 10. V. 24, 25. (Note, Num. 10:2—10.) This feast seems to have been instituted on the first day of the seventh month, both because the civil new year began at that time; and because of the other solemnities observed in that month, which were thus announced.—The blowing of trumpets especially represented the preaching of the gospel; by which men are called to repent of sin, and accept the salvation of Christ, which was signified by the day of atonement; and to rejoice in God, and become strangers and pilgrims upon earth, which was denoted by the feast of tabernacles, both of which were observed in this month.—Some think, that the feast of trumpets was appointed as a memorial of the creation, which they suppose to have been completed at this season of the year.

V. 26—32. (Notes, and P. O. 16.) The day of atonement was only five days before the feast of tabernacles: and though the Israelites were not required to attend at the tabernacle or temple, as on the three great feasts; yet it might be expected that many of them would come in time to be present at this solemnity also. But whether they did, or did not, they were required strictly to observe the day, as a most holy sabbath, and a season of peculiar mortification and self-denial, on pain of death by the immediate judgment of God.—All these meetings tended to increase their acquaintance and affectionate intercourse with each other.

Afflict, &c. (27) Marg. Ref. i. p. V. 34—36. (Note, Ex. 23:14—18.) The feast of taber- (241)

33 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, ¶ The fifteenth day of this seventh month *shall be* the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.

35 On the first day *shall be* an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

36 ¶ Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly, and ye shall do no servile work therein.

37 These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering, a sacrifice, and rink-offerings, every thing upon his day:

38 Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your free-will-offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.

39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day *shall be* a sabbath, and on the eighth day *shall be* a sabbath.

40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD

a Ex. 23:15, 34:22. *Deut.* 16:13–15. *Ezra* 3:4. *Neh.* 8:14. *Zech.* 14:16–19. *John* 1:14, 7:2. *Heb.* 11:13. *7* 7:8, 24:25. *a* Num. 29:12–38. *1* 2 Chr. 7:8–11. *Neh.* 8:18. *John* 7:37. * *Heb.* day of restraint. *Deut.* 16:8. *Joel* 1:14. *margins.* *n* See on 2:4. *1* *Leut.* 16:16, 17. * *See* on 3:19:3. *Gen.* 2:2, 3. *Ex.* 20:8–11. *y* Num. 29:39. *Deut.* 12:6. *1* Chr. 29:3–8. *2* Chr. 35:7, 8. *Ezra* 2:68, 69. *a* *See* on 31. *Ex.* 23:18. *Deut.* 16:13. *a* *See* on 24:36. *b* *Neh.* 8:15. *Matt.* 21:8. *1* *Heb.* *fruit.* *c* Ex. 32:12. *John* 12:13. *Rev.* 7:9. *d* *Deut.* 16:14, 15. *Is.* 35:10. *66:10.* *John* 16:22. *Rom.* 5:11. *Phil.* 3:3, 4, 4. *1* *Pet.* 1:8. *e* *Gen.* 33:17. *Num.* 21:2–5. *Neh.* 8:16, 17. *Jer.* 35:10. *2* *Cor.* 5:1. *Heb.* 11:13–16. *f* *Deut.* 31:10–

nacles, strictly so called, is supposed to have continued only seven days, during which all the Israelites dwelt in booths, except sickness or some other hindrance prevented them. (*Notes*, 39–42. *1* *Kings* 8:63–65. *Neh.* 8:14–18.)—The eighth day is thought to have been an additional festival, observed in gratitude for the fruits of the earth which had just been gathered in; and which, it is said, they celebrated in their own houses. The sacrifices to be offered during this solemnity are elsewhere specified. (*Notes*, Num. 29:12–38.)

V. 37, 38. The weekly sabbaths, with the sacrifices, first-fruits, vows, and free-will-offerings, were strictly to be attended to; though these stated solemnities might sometimes appear to supersede them, or to interfere with them.

V. 39–43. This annual solemnity was especially a commemoration of Israel's dwelling in tents in the wilderness, as well as of their fathers having lived in tents in Canaan; to remind the nation both of the meanness of their origin, and also of the greatness of their deliverance. Christ, tabernacled in human nature, might also be prefigured: but especially the believer's life on earth, as a joyful stranger and pilgrim, whose home is in heaven, whither he is daily journeying, is very aptly represented. (*Marg. Ref.* d, e.)

V. 44. *The feasts.* All the solemnities, except that of the new moon, are here enumerated.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1–22. We should not overlook the admonition of observing "the sabbath of the LORD," not only in public, "but in all our dwellings;" both ourselves, and in our families: allowing our domestics to cease from labour, and teaching them, by precept and example, to improve their leisure; in order that their souls may now find rest in Christ, and at length enjoy "the rest reserved for the people of God."—We should also learn to consider the time employed in the service of God as profitably spent; and to esteem his ordinances as holy feasts, relished more by the heaven-born soul than all other pleasures, which it willingly renounces for the sake of them. A day, thus set apart for the business of religion, will have so much and so important work belonging to it, that all other employment must be postponed to make way for it.—Let us never forget "to honour the LORD with our substance, and with the first-fruits of all our increase; so shall our barns be filled with plenty, and our presses burst out with new wine." And "when we give alms of such things as we have, behold all things are clean unto us." Nor will the husbandman ever have cause to complain, that he has less profit or comfort from his crop; because, by leaving good gleanings, he hath made a little harvest for the poor widow, and the labouring man with a large family, who have no land or crop of their own.—In all these solemnities we should look unto Jesus, as the great Sacrifice for sin, the true Paschal Lamb, the First-fruits unto God, our Forerunner to glory,

seven days in the year: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days: all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths.

43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

44 And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Leaves concerning the oil for the lamps of the golden candlestick, and the ordering of them, 1–4; and concerning the shew-bread, 5–9. Shelomith's son stoned for blasphemy, with some laws repeated on that occasion, 10–23.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil-olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.

3 Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning, before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations.

4 He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually.

5 ¶ And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth-deals shall be in one cake.

6 And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD.

7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon

13. *Ps.* 78:56. *g* 1:2, 21:24. *Matt.* 28:20. *a* *Ex.* 27:20, 21. 29:37. 40:24, 25. *Num.* 8:2–4. *1* *Sam.* 3:3, 4. *b* 2 Chr. 13:11. *Ps.* 118:105, 130. *Prov.* 6:23. *Is.* 8:20. *11:2.* *Matt.* 4:16. 5:16. 25:1–8. *Luke* 1:79. *John* 1:4, 9. 5:35. 8:12. *Acts* 26:18. *2* *Cor.* 4:5. *Eph.* 1:17, 18. 5:8–14. *1* *hil.* 2:15, 16. * *Heb.* *ascend.* *c* *Ex.* 25:31–39. 31:8. 37:17–21. *Num.* 3:31. *4* *1* *Kings* 7:49. *1* *Chr.* 28:15. *Jer.* 52:19. *Zech.* 4:2, 3, 11–14. *Heb.* 9:2. *Rev.* 1:20. 2:15. 11:4. *d* *Ex.* 25:30. 40:23. *1* *Kings* 18:31. *Acts* 25:7. *John* 1:1. *e* *1* *Cor.* 14:40. *f* *Ex.* 25:23, 24. 37:10–16. 39:36. 40:22, 23. *1* *Kings* 7:48. *2* *Chr.* 4:19. 13:11. *Heb.* 9:2. *g* 2:2. *Eph.* 1:6. *Heb.* 7:25. *Rev.* 8:3, 4.

the provision for our souls, and the Fountain of grace; from whose fulness the Holy Spirit flows to all his people, as the Source of all joy, and heavenly hope, and victory over the world and every enemy.

V. 23–44. Viewing these solemnities together, we may consider them as an abstract of the life of faith, and the walk with God.—Being called from the service of Satan, and from a worldly, sensual life, the true penitent begins his course with the sprinkling of the Saviour's blood, by the exercise and upright profession of faith in him.—In godly sorrow, self-denial, and bearing the cross, he purges out the old leaven of malice and wickedness; feasts upon the Passover before God, with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth;" tastes the first-fruits of heavenly joy, and offers the first-fruits of heavenly adoration: yea, presents himself and all that he has, to be as the first-fruits unto God, and consecrated to his glory. That law, which was given from mount Sinai, written on tables of stone, and lodged in the ark of the covenant, (as an emblem of its being honoured in the Saviour's life and death,) he now desires to have written in his heart, by the Spirit which was given to the apostles and first Christians on the day of Pentecost; and he has his desire granted, and his prayer answered.—Still, however, the trumpet of the gospel, though a joyful sound, often reminds him to renew his repentance, to afflict his soul, and to apply to the atonement. And indeed they who do not thus "afflict their souls" for sin, "shall be cut off from among the people," notwithstanding the atonement and their professed belief of it. But mourning for sin makes way for heavenly joy; and from his depth of humiliation, the Christian soars nearer heaven, and leaves the world further and further beneath. A stranger and pilgrim here below, his home and heart are above; where his Saviour, who once tabernacled on earth, now in human nature dwells in glory: and as his assurance increases of having "a building not made with hands eternal in the heavens," he becomes desirous of "departing hence, and being with Christ, which is far better;" for though he has holy feasts from time to time on earth, yet they suffer many interruptions, and have much alloy; and he expects "the fulness of joy at God's right hand for evermore."—May the God of all grace preserve the heart of the writer and of every reader of these observations, for this self-same time, and give us the earnest of his Spirit, through Christ Jesus. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1–4. *Marg. Ref. Note*, *Ex.* 27:20, 21.

V. 5–9. These loaves of bread, one for each tribe, presented before the Lord every week, and afterwards eaten by the priests, might typify Christ, as the Bread of life and the continual Food of the souls of his people, having offered himself unto God for them. Or they may denote the services of believers presented before God through him, and accepted

each row, that it may be on ^{the} bread for ^a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

8 Every ^{sabbath} he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

9 And it shall be ^{Aaron's} and his sons', and they shall eat in the holy place; for it *is* most holy unto him, of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute. [*Practical Observations.*]

10 ¶ And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose *father was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;

11 And the Israelitish woman's son ^{blasphemed} the name of the LORD, and cursed: and they brought him unto Moses; (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

12 And they put him in ward, ^{that} the mind of the LORD might be showed them.

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

14 Bring forth him that hath cursed ^{without} the camp; and let ^{all} that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and ^{let} all the congregation stone him.

15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall ^{bear} his sin.

16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when

he ^{blasphemeth} the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.

17 And ^{he} that ^{killeth} any man shall surely be put to death.

18 And ^{he} that ^{killeth} a beast shall make it good; ^{beast} for beast.

19 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him

20 ^{Breach} for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*.

21 And he that ^{killeth} a beast, he shall restore it: and he that ^{killeth} a man, he shall be put to death.

22 Ye shall have ^{one} manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for *I am* the LORD your God.

23 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, ^{that} they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones: and the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

CHAPTER XXV.

The law of the sabbatical year, 1-7. That of the year of jubilee, 8-17. Various laws, relating to the due observance of the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee, 18-35.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses ⁱⁿ mount Sinai, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, ^{When} ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land ^{keep} a sabbath unto the LORD.

3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six

b John 6:35, 51. i Gen. 9:16. Ex. 12:14, 13:9, 17:14. Acts 10:4, 31. 1 Cor. 11:23-25. k Num. 4:7. 1 Chr. 9:32, 23:29. 2 Chr. 2:4. Neh. 10:33. Matt. 12:3-5, 12:31. 1 Sam. 21:6. Mal. 1:12. Matt. 12:4. Mark 2:26. Luke 6:4. m 6:16. 10:17, 21:32. Ex. 29:32. n Ex. 12:38. Num. 11:4. o 15:16. Ex. 20:7, 2 Sam. 12:14. 1 Kings 20:10, 13. 2 Kings 18:30, 35:37. 19:1-3, 16:10, 22. 2 Chr. 32:14-17. Ps. 74:18, 22. Matt. 3:5, 5. Acts 6:11-13. Rom. 2:24. 1 Tim. 1:17. Rev. 16:11, 31. p Job 1:5, 11:22, 25:9, 10. Is. 8:21. q Ex. 18:22, 26. Num. 15:33-35. * Heb. p to expound unto them according to the mouth of the LORD. r Ex. 18:15, 16:43. Num. 27:5, 36:5, 6. s 13:46. Num. 5:2-4, 15:35. t Deut. 13:9, 17:7.

u 20:27. Num. 15:35, 36. Deut. 13:10, 21:21. 22:21. Josh. 7:25. John 8:59. 10:31-33. Acts 7:58, 59. v 5:1. 20:16, 17. Num. 9:13. x Ps. 74:10, 18. Matt. 12:31. Mark 3:28, 29. John 8:58, 59. 10:33-35. Acts 26:11. 1 Tim. 1:13. Jam. 2:7. y Gen. 9:5, 8. Ex. 21:12-14. Num. 35:31. 1 Heb. smiteth the life of a man, 2 Ex. 21:34-36. 1 Heb. life for life, a Ex. 21:23-25. Deut. 19:21. Matt. 5:38. 7:2. b 17:10. 19:34. Ex. 12:49. Num. 9:14, 15:16, 29. c See on 14-16. Num. 15:35, 36. Heb. 2:2, 3. 10:28, 29. a Ex. 19:1. Num. 1:1. 10:11, 12. Gal. 4:24, 25. b See on 14:34. Deut. 32:49. 31:4. Ps. 24:1, 2. 115:16. Is. 8:8. Jer. 27:5. * Heb. rest, 25:32. marg.

for his sake. Or the whole may mean communion between our reconciled Father, and his adopted children in Christ Jesus; who, as it were, feast at the same table, whilst he delights in the fruits of his Spirit in their hearts, and they are ^{feasted} with his love. The frankincense placed upon each oaf for a memorial, and then burnt upon the altar, may denote either the advocacy of Christ, or the sweet influences of his Spirit, which are a memorial to the Lord, to ensure the acceptance of the believer's person and services. This would be a sweet savour unto God, whilst the bread would be serviceable to the priests; which applies both to the sacrifice of Christ, as honourable to God and beneficial to man, and also to the good works of his people. (Eph. 5:2—Phil. 4:18.)—The bread and the frankincense formed one offering; of which the frankincense, as the part required by the Lord, was burnt upon the altar, among the offerings made by fire unto him.

Tenth-deals. (עשרתים, *tenth parts*: generally supposed to mean of an ephah; being the same as the omer: about three quarts.—*Pure table.* (6) Note, Ex. 25:23-30.

V. 10-12. No doubt, this man was one of the mixed multitude who accompanied Israel out of Egypt; (Note, Ex. 12:37, 38.) but it is uncertain whether he had ever professed the religion of Israel. It is supposed that, by reason of the dispute between him and an Israelite, he was brought before the magistrates; and the cause being, according to the law of God, decided against him, he blasphemed, or cursed Him, before whose tremendous name all men adore, and all hell trembles! The words, ^{of} the LORD, are added in the translation; but with a sort of solemn reverence are omitted in the original, as if the sacred writer scrupled to mention whose name it was that the man blasphemed. (15, 16.) This blasphemer's name is not mentioned; for he, who thus treated the holy name of God, was not distinguished by having his name written in the sacred scriptures.

V. 13-16. By the express command of God himself, all who heard the blasphemy were required to lay their hands on the head of the blasphemer; as solemnly persevering in their testimony, and as devoting him to death, that the guilt of such a crime might not rest on Israel; and avowing that his blood was upon his own head, and that all the rest were clear. 'This was done after he had been brought without the camp, as in the case of the sin-offering, on which the guilt and merited curse of Israel was laid; and he was stoned to death, by the general act of the congregation. This event occasioned the giving of a law against speaking in a reviling and opprobrious manner of the God of Israel, or blaspheming his sacred name; in which all strangers dwelling in the land were included.—It is a vain imagination of the Jews, that the very mention of the word JEHOVAH was the crime intended;

for it certainly is implied that the criminal mentioned it with contempt and enmity, nay, malignant execration.

V. 17-22. This event occasioned a third interruption in giving the law: and these precepts also are here repeated, on occasion of the contest with this son of a stranger. (Notes, Ex. 21:12-36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. Jesus Christ is the Light of his church, yea, "the Light of the world;" in and through his word He shines; and his ministers, in opening and alleging, in reasoning and persuading from the Scriptures, tend and order the light, which, by the influences of his Spirit, illuminates the minds of men unto salvation. (Notes, Ps. 119:130.) But the people who enjoy and value this light, must defray the expenses of it; and contribute cheerfully towards its shining brighter and wider, and continuing to future generations; and they must be spoken to on this subject, if not ready of themselves.—By this light we shall discern the spiritual food prepared for our souls, first presented to the Father, and then distributed to us; and shall daily, but especially from sabbath to sabbath, ^{feed} on it in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving; and in consequence shall render worship well pleasing unto the Lord, and perform good works very profitable to his people, which will again ^{abound} in many thanksgivings unto God." Thus we shall have ^{fellowship} with the Father, with his Son Jesus Christ, and with the brethren by the communion of the Holy Ghost, and at last shall all ^{be} presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

V. 10-20. The marriages of professed believers with ungodly persons produce fatal effects even to posterity; and contentions between men often make way for blasphemies against God: yet profligate manners give rise to wholesome laws. But how wicked soever men are, nothing must be done against them unadvisedly, or without consulting the mind and will of God, as now completely made known to us in his holy word. And it is his will that strangers, or those of another religion, should neither be oppressed, nor allowed to commit wickedness with impunity; but in this respect be treated as other members of society.—Blasphemy against God, yea, contempt of him expressed in words or actions, is in its own nature not only more heinous than theft or robbery of any kind, but even than murder; and though it frequently escapes unpunished by man, yet it shall by no means escape the righteous vengeance of God.—The solemn and public execution of daring offenders, not only sets a salutary example, but purges away national guilt; and every member of society bound to concur in his place in bringing such criminals to justice; yet so that it be done with the utmost caution, and that none bear any testimony to which they cannot stand

years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

5 That which ^dgroweth of its own accord of thy harvest, thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for the stranger that sojourneth with thee,

7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

8 ¶ And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years, and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound, on the tenth day of the seventh month: in the day of atonement, shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you: and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which

groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in of thy vine undressed.

12 For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

13 In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.

14 ¶ And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbour or buyest aught of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another.

15 According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of the years he shall sell unto thee:

16 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another, but thou shalt fear thy God; for I am the Lord your God.

18 ¶ Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

19 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.

20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:

21 Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.

What enmity against God must be in the heart of man, when curses and blasphemies against him proceed out of his mouth! And if "he that despised Moses's law died without mercy," of "what punishment will they be thought worthy," who despise and abuse the gospel of the Son of God! Let us learn then to watch against anger; to do no evil, but only good to all men, especially to the household of faith; to avoid all improper connexions with wicked people; and to reverence and honour habitually that worthy name which sinners blaspheme or despise.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1—7. (Notes, Ex. 23: 10—12.) The appointment of the sabbatical year might be intended, among other reasons, to impress the minds of the people more forcibly with the obligation of the weekly sabbath, and to afford them more leisure for the study of the law and the business of religion; as well as to give the poor some relaxation from their labours, and an acquisition to their enjoyments.—The Israelites were thus taught to live by faith in the providence of God, to receive their supply from his hand, and to be generous in the use of it: and the observance was a profession that they were the worshippers of JEHOVAH, and held their estates immediately of him by a special tenure. They were likewise reminded of the life of paradise, before sin had laid men under the sentence of "eating bread by the sweat of their brow;" and the institution might typify the believer's rest of soul in Christ by faith on earth, and the rest of heaven.—The Israelites did not get possession of Canaan, till seven years after they entered the land; and probably the seventh year afterwards, or the fourteenth after their entrance, was observed as a sabbatical year. It is supposed to have begun in autumn, after the harvest and vintage.

V. 8—13. After seven returns of the sabbatical year had been completed, notice was ordered to be given throughout the land, on the evening of the great day of atonement, for the observance of the year of Jubilee; and while the people were seeking forgiveness of their own sins from God, it might be hoped, that they would be more disposed to kindness to each other. Thus the proclamation of liberty and salvation by the gospel results from the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer; and is intended to cheer the hearts of the humble and penitent.—This notice was given by a peculiarly sonorous and animated sound of trumpets; for this seems to be the meaning of the word rendered *jubilee*.—The language used by the sacred writer, absolutely decides that the year of jubilee was not the same as the seventh sabbatical year, but the year afterwards, that is, the *fiftieth*, and not the *forty-ninth* year; and similar language concerning the day of Pentecost is always thus explained. (23:15, 16. *Deut.* 16:9, 10.) The only objection of any weight, which can be urged against this opinion, namely, the difficulty of the nation subsisting

for two years without sowing their ground, is afterwards expressly obviated. (Note, 20—22.)—This institution would form a suitable trial of the people's faith, and served to illustrate the power and faithfulness of God whenever they observed it; but we read scarcely any thing of the year of jubilee after its institution.

V. 14—17. Thus it was provided that the lands of Israel should not be alienated from the families, to which they were assigned by lot; for they could only be disposed of by leases, at a proportionable price, till the year of jubilee, and must then return, either to the seller, if living, or to his next heir. This tended to preserve the tribes and families of Israel, and consequently their genealogies, distinct, till the coming of the Messiah: it would also prevent the exorbitant wealth of some, and the extreme poverty of others; promote a brotherly equality among them; and remind them not to oppress their brethren.

V. 20—22. The sabbatical year commenced in the autumn of the sixth year; at the close of the eighth year, (or the year of jubilee,) according to the civil computation of time, when two full years had passed without sowing or reaping, the people were directed to make preparation for the harvest in the ninth year, and it was expressly promised, that the fruits of the sixth year should suffice, not only for the sabbatical year, (which the supposed inquiry more directly mentions,) but also for the year of jubilee, and till the crop was ripe in the following year. As the sixth year brought forth fruits for three years, and not merely for two; it is evident that both the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee were distinctly provided for.—They would not sow, from the sixth to the eighth year, omitting two seed-times; nor reap from the sixth to the ninth year, omitting two harvests. Can any thing be more explicit? (Note, 8—13.)—No legislator, unless conscious of being divinely inspired, would have committed himself by enacting such a law as this: nor can any thing of the kind be found among the systems of jurisprudence of any other nations, ancient or modern.—It therefore stands as a proof that Moses acted, not according to the dictates of human policy, but by the express direction of the almighty God.—How incredible is it, that any legislator would have ventured to propose such a law as this: or any people have submitted to receive it, except in consequence of the fullest conviction on both sides, that a divine authority had dictated this law, and that a peculiar Providence would constantly facilitate its execution!... Nothing could have produced this conviction, but the experience or the belief of some such miraculous interposition as the history of the Pentateuch details. The very existence of this law is a standing monument, that when it was given the Mosaic miracles were fully believed. Now the law was coeval with the witnesses of the

22 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.

23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

24 And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a redemption for the land.

25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

26 And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it:

27 Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it, that he may return unto his possession.

28 But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.

29 And if a man sell a dwelling-house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold: within a full year may he redeem it.

30 And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house, that is in the walled city, shall be established for ever to him that bought it, throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubilee.

31 But the houses of the villages which have no walls round about them, shall be counted as the fields of the country; they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubilee.

32 Notwithstanding, the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.

33 And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession shall go out in the year of jubilee: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.

2 Kings 19:29. Is. 37:30. a Josh. 5:11, 12. b See on 10. 1 Kings 21:9. Ez. 48:1. * Or, to be quite cut off. Heb. for cutting off. c Deut. 32:43. 2 Chr. 7:20. Ps. 241. 35:1. Is. 38. Jer. 2:3. Joel 2:18. d Gen. 47:9. 1 Chr. 29:15. Ps. 39:12. 119:19. Neh. 11:9-13. 1 Pet. 2:11. e 27:31, 51-53. Rom. 8:23. 1 Cor. 1:30. Eph. 1:7, 14. 4:30. f Ruth 2:20. 3:2, 9, 12. 4:4-6. Jer. 32:7, 8. 2 Cor. 8:9. Heb. 2:13, 14. Rev. 5:9. 1 Heb. his hand hath attained, and found sufficiency. 6:7. marg. g 50-53. h See on Is. 35:9, 10. Jer. 32:15. 1 Cor. 15:52-54. 1 Thes. 4:13-18. 1 Pet. 1:4-5. i Heb. redemption belonged unto it. Ps. 49:7, 8. 1 Num. 35:2-8. Job 21:1. * Or, one of the Levites redeem them. k Num. 18:20-24. Deut. 18:1-2. 132. Acts 4:36, 37. m 25. Deut. 15:7, 8. Prov. 14:20, 21. 17:5. 19:17. Mark 14:7. John 12:8. 2 Cor. 8:9. Jam. 2:5, 6. 1 Heb. his hand felleth. n Ps. 37:26. 41:1. 112:5, 9. Prov. 14:31. Luke 6:35. Acts 11:29. Rom. 12:13, 20.

miracles themselves.' *Graves on the Pentateuch*, Vol. i. p. 230.

V. 25-28. The nearest relation had a claim to the first refusal of the lands, which were to be sold: but if another had bought them, the kinsman had a right to redeem them at the same price, deducting for the time during which the purchaser had enjoyed them; and he was in that case appointed to keep them for the proprietor till the year of jubilee. Or the seller, if he afterwards were able, might redeem his estate: otherwise it continued till the year of jubilee, when it returned to him or his family freely.—The kinsman here evidently typified Christ, our Brother and Redeemer, who ransoms our lost inheritance, and will keep it for us till the day of judgment, when he will restore it unto us: whereas that of the wicked must be forfeited for ever, as they can never redeem it, and have none to redeem it for them.

V. 29, 30. The houses in cities and walled towns did not mark the distinction of families; they were built with labour and expense, and were not the inheritance of fathers: they would also want continual repairs, and undergo great alterations in a little time; and therefore they were under another law than the rest of the land. These houses were especially useful for commerce: and this allowance of acquiring them as permanent property, would induce strangers to come and settle among the Israelites; and be an encouragement to proselytes who might possess houses in full right, though they could not thus obtain lands.

V. 32-34. (Note, Num. 35:2-8.) The houses possessed by the Levites, in the cities afterwards allotted to them, and the gardens and pastures in the suburbs, were in fact their only permanent estate in Israel: and they were therefore under the same law as the lands of the other tribes; except that, (as some think,) any Levite might redeem the house which another had sold; though he was no otherwise

34 But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession.

35 ¶ And if thy brother be waxen poor, and shall fall in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase; but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

38 I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

39 ¶ And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:

40 But as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of the jubilee.

41 And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

42 For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.

43 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God.

44 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen, that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

45 Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

46 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

2 Cor. 9:1, 12-15. Gal. 2:10. 1 John 3:17. ¶ Heb. strengthen. e 19:34. Ez. 22:9. Deut. 10:18, 19. Matt. 23:35. Heb. 13:2. p Ez. 22:26. Ps. 33:19, 20. Neh. 5:7-10. Ps. 15:5. Prov. 28:8. Ez. 18:13, 17. 22:12. q See on 17. Neh. 5:8, 15. r See on Ez. 3:2. s 11:15. 22:23, 33. Num. 15:41. Jer. 31:1, 23. 32:38. Heb. 11:16. 1 Pt. 2:22. 23. Deut. 15:12. 1 Kings 9:22. 2 Kings 4:1. Neh. 5:5. Jer. 34:14. ¶ Heb. serve thyself with him with the service of. 46. marg. Jer. 25:14. 27:7. 30:8. r Ez. 21:3. John 8:32. Rom. 8:14. Tit. 2:14. x See on 17:8. y 55. Rom. 6:22. 1 Cor. 7:21-23. z 1 Heb. with the sale of a bondman. z 46:53. 1:13, 14. 2:23. 3:7, 9. 5:14. Is. 47:5. 58:3. Eph. 6:5. Col. 4:1. a See on 17. b 1:17, 21. Deut. 23:18. Mal. 3:5. b Ez. 12:44. Ps. 2:8, 9. Is. 14:1, 2. Rev. 2:26, 27. c 15. 56:3-6. ¶ Heb. ye shall serve yourselves with them. See on 39.

related to him, than as one of the same tribe. For the clause, "And if a man purchase of the Levites," may be rendered, "And whoever of the Levites shall redeem, &c." (Marg.)

V. 35-37. (Note, Exod. 22:25-27.) When an Israelite was reduced to poverty, and lived among his brethren as a stranger and sojourner, without any possession or inheritance; they must remember to treat him as a brother, both giving to him liberally, and lending him what he wanted without usury. Indeed poor strangers also seem to be intended. (Marg. Ref. p.)

V. 39-43. When a man was sold for some debt, or fraud for which he could not make restitution, he was liberated at the end of seven years. (Notes, Exod. 21:1-6.) But if he voluntarily, through poverty, sold himself without limitation of time; or from love to his master, and his wife and children, had refused liberty at the end of seven years; and perhaps if he had been sold for some larger debt, or greater crime; he continued a servant for life, unless the year of jubilee intervened: but then he was set at liberty, and returned with his family to his inheritance. In the mean time, his master must not treat him with rigour as a slave, but with kindness as a hired servant.

V. 44-46. The Israelites were permitted to keep slaves of other nations; perhaps in order to typify, that none but the true Israel of God participate of that liberty with which Christ hath made his people free. But it was also allowed, in order that in this manner the Gentiles might become acquainted with true religion. (Gen. 17:10-13. 18:19.) and when the Israelites copied the example of their pious progenitors, there can be no reasonable doubt, that it was overruled to the eternal salvation of many souls. It does not, however, appear from the subsequent history, that the people availed themselves of this allowance to any great extent; for we read but little of slaves from among the Gentiles possessed by them.

47 ¶ And if 'a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother *that dwelleth* by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:

48 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; 'none of his brethren may redeem him:

49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or *any* that is nigh of kin unto him, of his family, may redeem him: or, 'if he be able, he may redeem himself.

50 And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him, unto the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years; 'according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.

51 If *there be* yet many years *behind*, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption, out of the money that he was bought for.

52 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubilee, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.

53 *And as a hired servant shall he be with him; 'hand the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.*

* Heb. *the hand of a stranger, &c. attain*, &c. 1 Sam. 2:7, 8. Jam. 2:5. d See on 25. Neh. 5:9. Gal. 4:4, 5. Heb. 2:11—13. e See on 26. f 27. g 40, 53. Deut. 15:18. Job 7:12. 14:6. Is. 16:14. 21:16. h See on 43. i Or, *by these means*. 140:41. Ex. 21:2-3. Is. 49:25. 52:3. k 42. Ex. 13:3. 20:2. Ps. 116:16. Is. 43:3. Luke 1:4, 75. Rom. 6:14, 17, 18, 22. 1 Cor. 7:22, 23. 9:19, 21. Gal. 5:13. 19:4. Ex. 20:4, 23. 22:24. 34:17. Deut. 4:16—19. 5:8, 9. 16:21, 22. 27:15. Ps. 97:7. 115:4—8. 2:20. 44:9—20. 45:5—8. Jer. 10:3—8. Acts 17:29. Rom. 2:22, 23. 4 Cor. 10:19, 20.

V. 47—55. In case any of the strangers, who were allowed to sojourn in the land, (Notes, Ex. 12:48, 49. 22:21—24.) growing rich, should purchase a poor Israelite as a slave, the relations of the slave were allowed the privilege of redeeming him at any time: or if property came into his possession, he might redeem himself; deducting from the purchase-money, according to the proportion of years which had passed since his sale, to those which remained till the year of jubilee. And if he were not redeemed before that time, he was then entitled to liberty.—It is not said that his relations were bound to redeem him, but it seems to have been left to their discretion.—The father is not mentioned; for it could hardly be conceived he would let his son sell himself, if he likewise had not been impoverished. The magistrates also were to take care, that strangers did not oppress such Israelites as they kept for servants.—This law exhibited a type of Christ, as our Brother, redeeming us from the bondage of sin and Satan, to be his servants.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a desirable privilege to have seasons of relaxation from worldly care and employments, that we may have more leisure for the study of the Scriptures, and the concerns of our souls. The poor labourer too should be allowed such intervals: and our hearts should rejoice to see him refreshed from his toil, and enjoying the fruits of our liberality. All these statutes teach us "to beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his possessions;" to exercise willing dependence on Providence for our support: to be contented with food and raiment for the present, and to be thankful for them; and without hesitation to leave the future to that God whose blessing suffices abundantly, in various ways which we cannot imagine, to make up every supposed loss, which might be feared in consequence of simply obeying his commandments.—We should also consider ourselves as the Lord's tenants and stewards, if we have land or property; and use it accordingly: and not only be moderate and temperate in our enjoyments, but kind and gentle to our inferiors, "ready to distribute and willing to communicate" to our poor brethren, after his example, who, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."—He is our Redeemer, and assumed our nature, that he might ransom our souls from Satan's bondage, into which we had been sold for the debts which we had contracted, and for the crimes that we had committed; nay, into which we had foolishly sold ourselves, through love of sinful pleasures: and that, together with our liberty, he might also redeem our forfeited and wasted inheritance, without which we must otherwise have been to all eternity in most miserable want. Having paid the ransom, and entered into possession of the inheritance in our behalf, and in virtue of his atonement; he, by the gospel's joyful sound, from age to age proclaims "liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound" (Notes, Is. 61:1—3. Luke 4:16—19.) and accompanying this proclamation by his powerful grace, he sets his people at liberty; which they enjoy with rest for their souls, and the earnest of heaven through faith in him and obedience to him. When they die, their souls ascend to heavenly rest; and ere long the last trumpet shall sound the jubilee of the resurrection, "the redemption of the body," and they shall be then put in final

54 And if he be not redeemed *in these years*, then he shall go out in the year of jubilee, *both he*, and his children with him.

55 For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are 'my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Idolatry again forbidden, and regard to the Lord's sabbaths and sanctuary required, 1, 2. Blessings ensured to the people while obedient, 3—13. Judgments threatened in case of disobedience, and still more and more severe as long as they persisted in it, 14—39. Encouragements, if at length they should repent, 40—46.

YE shall 'make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* 'image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God.

2 Ye shall 'keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

3 ¶ If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

4 Then I will give you rain in due season, and 'the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

5 And your 'threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-

Rev. 13:14, 15. 22:15. * Or, *pillar*. † Or, *figured stone*. Heb. *a cone of picture*. b See on 19:30. c 18:4, 5. 19:11, 13—15. 28:1—14. Josh. 24:14, 15. Judg. 2:1. 2. Ps. 81:12—16. Is. 1:19. 48:18, 19. Matt. 7:24, 25. Rom. 2:7—10. Rev. 22:14. d Deut. 28:12. 1 Kings 17:1. Job 5:10. 37:11—13. 38:25—28. Ps. 65:9—13. 68:9. 104:13. Is. 5:6. 30:23. Jer. 14:22. Ez. 34:25, 27. Joel 2:23. Amos 4:7—8. Matt. 5:45. Acts 14:17. Jam. 5:17, 18. Rev. 11:6. c 23:21. Ps. 67:6. 85:12. Ez. 36:30. Hag. 2:18, 19. Zach. 5:12. f Amos 9:13. Matt. 9:37, 38. John 4:35, 36.

and eternal "possession of the purchased inheritance to the praise of his glory;" whilst the wicked must sink into "the blackness of darkness for ever." We cannot ransom our own souls, or our forfeited inheritance; but let us not "neglect so great salvation," thus freely proposed, and the fruit of such love and of such sufferings. We cannot ransom our fellow-sinners: but we may recommend Christ to them; and by his grace our holy lives may adorn his gospel, express our love and gratitude, and glorify his holy name.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 20:4, 5, 8—10.

V. 3, 4. These promises to Israel, in case they were obedient, should be understood with a special reference to their national covenant. As long as they maintained a national regard to the worship, sabbaths, and sanctuary of God, and did not turn aside to idolatry, he engaged to continue to them various temporal mercies, and distinguishing religious advantages. Yet even among the Israelites, individuals were not uniformly prosperous or afflicted, according to their obedience or disobedience: nay, the contrary was so commonly the case, that the prophets and the Psalmist, in several places, speak of it as a peculiar temptation; (Marg. Ref. d. Notes, Ps. 73. Jer. 12:1—4.) and the royal preacher declares, "that all things come alike to all." (Note, Ec. 9:1—3.) But national prosperity was uniformly, and without one exception, the effect of national obedience, and national judgments the result of national wickedness. Israel indeed was under a peculiar covenant, and no other people is governed exactly according to the same rule: yet still God deals with nations as collective bodies; nothing but regard to religion and righteousness can ensure national prosperity; and wickedness will end in the ruin of any people, especially where the word of God and the light of the gospel are afforded. Individuals will exist, and be judged and recompensed in a future world; but bodies politic will have no future existence, and are therefore recompensed in this world.—Concerning individual Christians, it is enough to say, that the Lord will afford them as much temporal prosperity as his infinite wisdom sees good for them; that in one way or other, their comforts are proportioned to the simplicity and exactness of their obedience; and that they frequently experience the Lord's kindness to them in his providence, and in answer to their prayers, whether according to the letter of these temporal promises or not. Their obedience has a natural tendency to exempt them from a variety of miseries which others endure, and to secure them many comforts of body, mind, and circumstances, which others do not enjoy; all their trials and afflictions are needful and useful, sanctified to them, and counterbalanced by inward peace; and upon the whole, even in this world, including their heavenly hope, they have by far the largest proportion of true felicity, notwithstanding all the tribulation and persecution which they endure, the self-denial which they exercise, and the correction of their Father's love.—These promises may also be considered as typical of the spiritual prosperity, health, peace, and victory, with which the Lord favours his believing people when walking in his way, and of the blessings which his church enjoys. From the beginning of this chapter, and other passages of a similar nature, some learned men have undertaken to show, that the church, before

time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

8 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

10 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.

11 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.

12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

13 *I am the LORD your God* which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you free upright.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant;

16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the

burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursue you.

18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass.

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.

21 ¶ And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins.

22 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number, and your high-ways shall be desolate.

23 And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

25 And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall have the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

26 And when I have broken the staff of your

g 25:19. Ex. 16:8. Deut. 11:15. Joel 1:9-25. Acts 14:17. 1 Tim. 6:17. h 25:18. Is. 11:18, 19. Ps. 46:1-7. 90:1. 91:1-14. Prov. 1:33. 18:10. Jer. 23:6. Ez. 34:25-27. Matt. 23:37. 1 Pet. 1:5. 11 Chr. 22:9. Ps. 29:11. 147:14. Is. 9:7. 45:7. Jer. 30:10. Hos. 2:18. Mic. 4:4. Zech. 9:10. John 14:27. Rom. 5:1. Phil. 4:7-9. k Ps. 3:5. 4:8. 127:12. Prov. 3:24. 6:22. Jer. 31:25. Ez. 34:25. Zeph. 3:18. Acts 1:6. l Heb. cause to cease. Ex. 23:29. 2 Kings 2:24. 17:35-36. Job 5:23. Is. 35:9. Ez. 5:17. 14:15, 21. 1 Ez. 14:17. m Num. 14:19. Deut. 28:7. 32:30. Josh. 13:20. Judg. 7:19-21. 1 Sam. 14:6-16. 17:45-52. 1 Chr. 11:11, 20. Ps. 81:14. 15:1. n Ex. 2:25. 2 Kings 13:23. Neh. 2:20. Ps. 89:3. 138:6, 7. Jer. 33:8. Heb. 8:9. o Gen. 17:5, 7, 20. 26:4. 28:3, 14. Ex. 1:7. Deut. 28:4-11. Neh. 9:23. Ps. 107:35. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. Zech. 22:19. 1 Kings 13:27. Ps. 76:2. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. Ez. 37:26-28. Eph. 2:22. Rev. 21:3. s 20:23. Deut. 32:29. Jer. 14:21. Lam. 2:7. Zech. 11:4. 1 Gen. 8:8. 5:22, 24. 6:9. 1 Gen. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. u Gen. 17:7. Ez. 3:6. 6:7. 19:8. p Gen. 1:8. 1:7. Ez. 6:4. Is. 55:3. Ez. 16:62. Luke 1:72. q 25:26. Josh. 5:11. r 1 Kings 12:17. Luke 12:17. r Ex. 25:8. 29:45. 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bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver *you* your bread again by weight; and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

27 And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also *in fury: and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.

31 And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.

32 And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

34 Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land: even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

35 As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest;

a Is. 27:4, 59:14, 63:3, 66:15, Jer. 21:5, Ez. 5:13, 15, 8:18, Nah. 1:2, 6, b Deut. 28:53-57, 2 Kings 6:28, 29, Jer. 19:9, Lam. 2:20, 4:10, Ez. 5:10, Matt. 24:19, Luke 23:29, c 1 Kings 13:2, 2 Chr. 33:16, 20, 2 Chr. 14:3-5, 23:17, 31:1, 34:3-7, Is. 27:9, Jer. 6:1-3, Ez. 6:3-6, 13, d See on 11:5, 20:23, Ps. 78:59, 59, 80:8, Jer. 14:19, e 2 Kings 25:1-10, 2 Chr. 36:19, Neh. 2:3, 17, Is. 17, 24:10-12, Jer. 4:7, 9:11, Lam. 1:1, 2, Ez. 6:6, 21:15, Mic. 3:12, f Ps. 74:3-8, Jer. 23:5, 29:6, 52:13, Lam. 1:10, Ez. 8:6, 24:21, Matt. 24:12, Luke 21:5, 6, 24, Acts 1:4, g See on Gen. 3:21, Is. 1:11-14, 66:3, Am. 5:21-23, Heb. 10:23, h Deut. 28:23, Is. 1:7, 8, 5:8, 9, 6:11, 24:1, 32:14, 44, 64:10, Jer. 9:11, 25:38, 44:22, Lam. 5:18, Ez. 32:28, Dan. 9:2, 18, Hab. 3:17, Luke 21:20, 1 Deut. 32:37, 29:24-25, 1 Kings 9:8, Jer. 18:16, 19:8, Lam. 4:12, Ez. 5:15, k Deut. 4:27, 28:64-66, Ps. 44:11, Jer. 9:16, Lam. 1:3, 4:15, Ez. 12:14, 16:20, 22:15, Zech. 7:14, Luke 21:21, Jam. 1:1, 1:25-2, 4:10, 2 Chr. 36:21, m Is. 24:5, 6, Rom. 8:22, n Gen. 35:5, Deut. 28:65-67, Josh. 2:9-11, 5:1, 1 Sam. 17:24.

disobedient Israelites, they would flock into the defenced cities for security; but the Lord declared, that in this case, he would commission the pestilence to pursue them, till they should be compelled to surrender themselves into the hands of the besiegers; or he would visit them with the most dreadful and desolating famines.—The reader who consults the marginal references, will in them find the most instructive comment on this chapter; and be more and more convinced, as he proceeds, that it is a kind of prophetic history of that nation, even to this present time; which could never have been written, except by inspiration of God, who seeth the events of the most remote futurity as if actually present.—It is thought that the expression, *walk contrary to me*, implies that the people would remain careless, imputing their calamities to chance or second causes; till the constant increase of them, and their long continuance, should convince them, that the dreadful vengeance of God was poured out upon them.

Avenge, &c. (25) Note, Ez. 20:33-38.

By weight. (26) Note, Ez. 4:9-17.

V. 29. *Ent the flesh, &c.* This was literally fulfilled in the siege of Samaria by Benhadad; in the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; and in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as is recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus. (*Notes, Deut. 28:49-57. 2 Kings 6:28, 29. Lam. 4:10.*)

V. 30. The several words used in this threatening, relate to different kinds of idolatry afterwards prevalent in Israel. We shall hereafter have frequent occasions of considering the high places, both for idolatry, and for the irregular worship of JEHOUAH. The images here mentioned are supposed to have been statues dedicated to the sun; and the word rendered *idols* (עֲצָבוֹת) is similar to that which signifies *dung* (רֵק), and is an expression of extreme contempt for their worthless, filthy objects of worship. The connexion of this verse with the preceding has been thought to imply, that the Israelites would be more attached to their idols than even to their children. But the order is more remarkable, if considered as a prophecy. Though the pious kings of Judah, especially Hezekiah and Josiah, were employed by the Lord to execute, in a measure, this sentence, and the latter burned the bones of the priests on the altars of their idols; and though Sennacherib cast many of their idols into the fire, when he invaded the land; yet the grand fulfilment of the prophecy was subsequent to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, in which the people had actually been reduced to eat their own children. The desolations, connected with that event, effectually swept away all their idols, and idol altars, and temples, so that they were never afterwards restored. Thus the Lord, abhorring the people for their wickedness, (11) cast their dead carcasses on their broken or degraded idols, and destroyed the idolaters and idolatry at once. (*Marg. Ref. c.*)

V. 31-35. These verses also contain a prophecy, both of Israel's sin and punishment; which the subsequent history sufficiently explains.—By the sanctuaries, some understand

"because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

36 And upon them that are left *alive* of you, "I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and "the sound of a 'shaken leaf' shall chase them; and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

37 And they shall fall, one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

38 And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

39 And they that are left of you "shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

40 ¶ If "they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then, "their uncircumcised hearts be "humbled, and "they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

42 Then "will I remember my covenant with

2 Kings 7:6, 7, 2 Chr. 14:14, Job 15:21, 22, Is. 7:2, 4, Ez. 21:7, 12, o 7, 8, 17, Deut. 1:44, Prov. 28:1, Is. 30:17, * Heb. driven, p Judg. 7:22, 1 Sam. 14:15, 16, Is. 16:1, Jer. 37:14, q Num. 14:32, Josh. 7:2, 13, Judg. 2:14, r Deut. 4:27, 28, 48:8, Is. 27:13, 2 Chr. 34:17, 18, 22, 41:12-14, 27, 28, 2 Chr. 25:6, 26:1, Ps. 32:3, 4, Jer. 2:3, 5, Ez. 1:17, 21:23, 33:16, 34:3, 35, 37, Num. 14:18, Deut. 5:9, Jer. 31:29, Ez. 18:2, 3:19, Matt. 23:35, 38, Rom. 11:8-10, u Num. 6:1, Deut. 4:29-31, 30:1-3, Josh. 7:19, 1 Kings 8:33-36, 47, Neh. 9:2, Job 32:27, 28, Ps. 32:5, Prov. 28:13, Jer. 31:18-20, Is. 36:31, Dan. 9:3-20, Hos. 5:15, 6:1, 2, Luke 15:18, 19, 1 John 1:8-10, x 21:24, 27, 28, y Deut. 30:6, Jer. 4:4, 6:10, 9:25, 36, Ez. 44:7, Acts 7:51, Rom. 2:28, 29, Gal. 5:6, Phil. 3:3, Col. 2:11, z Ez. 10:3, 1 Kings 21:29, 2 Chr. 12:6, 7, 12, 32:26, 33:12, 13, 19, 23, Ez. 6:9, 30:43, Matt. 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14, Jam. 4:6-9, 11et, 5:5, 6, a Ezra 9:15, 15, Neh. 9:33, Dan. 9:7-14, 18, 19, b Gen. 9:16, Ez. 2:24, 6:5, Deut. 4:31, Ps. 106:45, Ez. 16:60, Luke 1:72.

the temple, as divided into the *holy place* and the *holy of holies*, with its several courts: but others include the high places, both in Judah and Israel, in which God was worshipped: and some think synagogues also were meant: but the next clause, "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours," seems to confine the expression to places where sacrifices and incense were offered.—After the Babylonish captivity, the temple-worship was restored, and doubtless the Lord accepted the oblations of his faithful people: but after the time of Christ, the whole degenerated into a mere form of godliness; and the destruction of the temple by the Romans finally abolished that kind of service, because a more simple and spiritual worship had been introduced.—Indeed the dispersed state of the Jews since that time, more fully answers the import of the subsequent predictions, than even the desolations of the Babylonish captivity: during that calamity, however, the land enjoyed its sabbaths; and the prophecy seems to intimate, that this part of the divine law was generally neglected during most of the intervening ages. (*Note, 2 Chr. 36:21.*)

V. 36, 37. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Deut. 28:65-67. Is. 30:15-17.*

V. 38, 39. The ten tribes never returned to their own land, as a collective body. The Jews, who rebelliously determined to go into Egypt, miserably perished there. (*Jer. 42:—44.*)—Great multitudes of the other Jews remained afterwards in the nations where they were dispersed; a large proportion of the whole multitude of Israelites have doubtless been lost, as it were, in the nations among whom they sojourned. The massacres made of them, in many countries and different ages, have been very great; and they have been more generally, durably, and cruelly oppressed, than perhaps any other people. For, continuing impenitent, formerly in idolatry and iniquity, and since the time of Christ, in obstinate unbelief; they lie under the load of national guilt, which has been accumulating for ages, and pine away in heartless, timid despondency, or stupid insensibility, without earnestly inquiring into the causes of their calamities, or using proper means of redress and deliverance. It is remarkable, how exactly this passage describes the general character of the Jews at this day.

Pine away. J. Marg. Ref. s. Notes, Ez. 24:19-24. 33:10.

V. 40. After all these threatenings to the nation of temporal calamities, most accumulated, aggravated, and long continued, which were a shadow of still more tremendous destruction to impenitent individuals in a future world; the prophet concluded with intimations of mercy in reserve for a remnant of the people, when at length brought to repentance. Thus, previously to the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, Daniel (with whom doubtless numbers concurred) confessed his sins, and those of his fathers and people, in deep humiliation. (*Notes, Dan. 9:—20.*)—And afterwards, before their further establishment in Judea, Ezra

Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember: and I will remember the land.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God.

45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the Lord.

46 These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai, by the hand of Moses.

c Ps. 85. 1. 12-23, the 30-41, 33-54, d Neem. 21. e See on 41. 1 Kings 8: 43-48. 2 Chr. 34: 32. Jer. 31: 31-32. Ps. 50: 15. 119: 67, 71, 75. 1c 26: 16. Job. 31: 9-14. Heb. 12: 5-11. f Neem. 15. 2 Kings 17: 21-17. 2 Chr. 36: 14-16. g 15: 30. Ps. 50: 17. Am. 5: 10. Zech. 11: 8. John 7: 15-23: 21. Rom. 8: 7. h Deut. 4: 29, 30. 2 Kings 13: 23. Neh. 9: 31. Ez. 14: 22, 23. Rom. 1: 25. i See on 11. k Jer. 14: 21. 33: 20, 21. Ez. 16: 60, 61. 1 Gen. 12: 2. 15: 18. 17:

and Nehemiah, and the people with them, did the same, and in language which seems evidently to refer to this chapter.—(Notes, Ezra 9: Neh. 9:)

V. 41, 42. Pride, impenitent love of sin, and enmity to JEHOWAH and his worship, proved the hearts of the people to be *uncircumcised*, that is, *unrenewed by divine grace*; for circumcision was the sacramental sign of regeneration: but when a change took place they would be humbled before God, acknowledge his hand, and submit to his justice in all their sufferings; they would seek forgiveness from his mercy, and return to their duty; and then would he remember and deal with them according to the covenant made with their fathers, respecting Canaan, the type of heaven. (Notes, Deut. 10: 16. 30: 1-10. Jer. 43: 4. 9: 25, 26. Rom. 2: 25-29.)

Covenant. (42) It is observable, that it is not said, the Lord would remember his covenant, ratified with Israel at mount Sinai; but the covenant made with their progenitors, the patriarchs, long before the Sinai covenant. The future restoration of Israel will be in fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant. (Notes, Rom. 11: 25-32. Gal. 3: 15-18. Heb. 6: 13-20.)

V. 43-45. Notwithstanding these promises, the land would certainly be desolated; and the preceding calamities would rest on the people, till they should "accept of the punishment of their iniquity," and acquiesce in it, as just.—The subsequent verses imply a prediction that the people would thus repent, as well as an assurance of reconciliation to the penitent. The word (נָחַם), rendered "for their sakes," may more literally and justly be translated *for them, or in their behalf*.—A glorious accomplishment of this part of the prophecy may hereafter be expected, by the conversion of the Jews to Christ, and probably by their restoration to their own land: and indeed, after the fulfilment of the previous threatenings, in their present dispersion of above seventeen hundred years' duration, they are still most marvellously preserved a distinct people, evidently in order to this most desirable event. (Notes, Num. 23: 9. Jer. 30: 10, 11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. Our true interest and happiness consists in worshipping the Lord, giving him our hearts, hallowing his sabbaths, reverencing his sanctuary, and doing every thing with a believing regard to that Saviour, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Our obedience indeed cannot justify us: but that obedience which takes its rise from "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and which consists in an humble attendance on his ordinances, and an unreserved respect to all his commandments; both evinces that we are justified, and will induce peace and spiritual consolations into our hearts, with the hope of glory, and the blessing of God upon our families and possessions; so that the most afflicted state of a consistent Christian is more comfortable than any ungodly prosperity, however great. This frame of mind is the health of the soul, and the antepast of heaven; while God sets up his tabernacle in us, and dwells and walks with us, as the sure pledge of eternal glory. But wilful sin, even in a believer, will grieve the Spirit, cloud this bright prospect, and bring darkness and distress into the soul, as well as chastisements from his heavenly Father's rod.—Righteousness also exalteth a nation, and among other blessings, especially ensures the continuance of the gospel with it. But it is truly wonderful, that the Lord hath not long since so *abhorred* this our sinful land, as to deprive us of our other manifold mercies, and especially of the work of his salvation, which has been so greatly neglected, despised and perverted.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Notes concerning singular vows to God, respecting persons, 1-8; and estates, 9-13; and houses and lands, 14-25. Fleeing must not be the case, 26, 27. Of things devoted to destruction, 28, 29. The law of tithes, 30-34.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the Lord by thy estimation.

3 And thy estimation shall be, of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old; even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

4 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.

5 And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old; then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

6 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old; then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.

7, 8. Ex. 2: 24. 19: 5, 6. Rom. 11: 12, 23-29, 28, 29. 2 Cor. 3: 15, 16. m 22: 33. 25: 34. See on Ex. 20: 2. n Ps. 98: 2, 3. Ez. 20: 9, 14, 22. o 27: 34. Deut. 6: 1. 12: 1. 13: 4. John 1: 17. p 25: 1. q 8: 35. Num. 4: 37. r 17: 30. s Gen. 28: 20-22. Num. 6: 2. 21: 2. Deut. 23: 21-23. Judg. 11: 30, 31. 1 Sam. 1: 11. b 14. 5: 15, 6: 5. Num. 18: 16. 2 Kings 12: 4. marg. c 55. Ez. 30: 13. d Zech. 11: 12, 13. Matt. 26: 15. 27: 19. e Num. 3: 40-43. 13: 14, 16.

V. 14-46. Sooner or later, sin will be the ruin, as well as reproach, of every people; and our national violation of the sabbath, contempt of the ordinances of God, opposition to his truth, and abhorrence of his commandments, after our manifold rebukes, dangers, and deliverances, which were intended to bring us to repentance and upright obedience, have a very gloomy aspect on this yet favoured land. If we continue still to "walk contrary to God," we may expect that he will punish us seven times more than he has done; and that he will avenge the quarrel of his gospel upon us; and if He, who has all creatures in his hand as ministers of his vengeance, should set his face against us, who can conjecture where the contest will end? Oh that, being deeply humbled before God, and ingenuously confessing our sins, we might, by a general revival of religion and reformation of manners, with the harmonious concurrence of all ranks and orders of men, avert the rising storm before it burst upon us!—But though national judgments, such as desolating war, pestilence, and famine, be dreadful; yet they are but temporal evils, and personal judgments alone are eternal: let every sinner then tremble for himself, take warning and flee from the wrath to come.—The career of iniquity commences in contempt of God's statutes, and hatred of his service; and ingratitude and abuse of his mercies soon make way for the hardening of the heart under afflictions, and against convictions. Such persons, "walking contrary to God," will find that he walks contrary to them: and as they turn their face from him, he will set his face against them, will abhor them, pursue them with one misery after another, and at length utterly destroy them, if they continue impenitent; and the stoutest of them will find their hearts wax faint and tremble, and in black despair perceive that they have no power to resist or escape, when he arises to execute vengeance.—But if at length any sinner be deeply humbled, and confess his guilt, and cry for mercy through faith in Jesus Christ, and according to the covenant made with all believers in him; God will remember that covenant, and pardon that sinner "according to the multitude of his mercies;" so that none need despair, and "pine away in their iniquities." Whilst we joyfully avail ourselves of such a precious privilege, and are confirmed in our faith even by the desolate and dispersed condition of the disobedient Israelites; let us not abhor and despise them, but compassionate them, and pray that they may at length be remembered according to the covenant made with their fathers.—And let us take warning not to imitate their infidelity, and not to trust in external distinctions.—God grant that we may in this our day effectually consider the things which belong to our eternal peace.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 2-8. The Israelites, from an extraordinary zeal and love to the worship of God, would sometimes, by a solemn vow, dedicate themselves, or their children, to the immediate service of the Lord in the sanctuary for life: but as the priests and Levites were set apart by God himself for that service, and none were allowed to interfere with their work, these persons could only be employed in the lowest and most laborious services; and if too great numbers thus devoted themselves, they would be an encumbrance, rather than an advantage, to the sanctuary.—The Gibeonites were afterwards employed "as hewers of wood and drawers of water;" and perhaps some others, who refused to redeem themselves, performed menial services to the priests and Levites. Probably these, as well as the Gibeonites, were called *Nethinim*, or dedicated persons, of whom we shall read hereafter. (Notes, Josh 9: 27. 1 Chr. 9: 2.) Samuel, who was a Levite, was thus dedicated by his

7 And if ^{it be} from sixty years old and above; if ^{it be} a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

8 But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him: according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.

9 ¶ And if ^{it be} a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD; all that *any man* giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

10 He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

11 And if ^{it be} an unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD; then he shall present the beast before the priest:

12 And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad; as thou valueth it, *who art* the priest, so shall it be.

13 But if he will at all redeem it, ^{when} he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.

14 ¶ And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD; then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: ^{as} the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

15 And if he that sanctified ^{it} will redeem his house, ^{when} he shall add the fifth *part* of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.

16 And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD *some part* of a field of his possession; then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: *an homer of barley-seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.*

17 If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand.

18 But if he sanctify his field ^{after} the jubilee; then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the

year of the jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.

19 And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it; ^{then} he shall add the fifth *part* of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.

20 And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.

21 But if the field, ^{when} it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field ^{devoted}: the possession thereof shall be the priest's.

22 And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of ^{his} possession;

23 Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of ^{thy} estimation, *even* unto the year of the jubilee, and he shall give ^{thine} estimation in that day, *as* a holy thing unto the LORD.

24 In the year of the jubilee the field shall ^{re}turn unto him of whom it was bought, *even* ^{to} him to whom the possession of the land *did* belong.

25 And ^{all} thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: ^{twenty} gerahs shall be the shekel.

26 Only the ^{firstling} of the beasts, ^{which} should be the LORD's ^{firstling}, no man shall sanctify it: whether it *be* ox or sheep, *it is* the LORD's.

27 And if ^{it be} of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem ^{it} according to ^{thine} estimation, and shall add a fifth *part* of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.

28 ¶ Notwithstanding, ^{no} devoted thing that a man shall devote unto the LORD, of all that he hath, *both* of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD.

29 None devoted, which shall be devoted of

[Ex. 30:10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000]

mother; and, not being redeemed, he was employed about the sanctuary from his childhood, long before the age when the Levites entered upon their office.—Perhaps some others, who dedicated themselves or their children, were thus employed: yet in general they were allowed, or even ordered, to be redeemed, at the valuation here prescribed; which was equitable and moderate, and was reduced still lower in cases of poverty. Children might not thus devote themselves; but their parents might devote them. The women, if not redeemed, would find employment in spinning, weaving, and making the garments for the priests, or washing for them, and in various other ways; as we may suppose the Gibeonitish women, and the wives of the Nethinim did.

V. 9—13. If any particular animal were thus vowed unto the LORD, it was to be accounted holy, and must not be exchanged; but must be sacrificed, provided it were fit for sacrifice: otherwise it was to be valued and sold; but at a dearer rate to him who vowed it than to another person, as a rebuke for his rashness and inconstancy. Some suppose that the money was put into the treasury of the sanctuary, to defray the expenses of the worship there performed; others, that the priests had it for their own use.—The difference between this *singular vow* and *ordinary vows*, seems to have been this:—the ordinary vow was made, when in quest of some blessing, or when some special mercy was received; the person who vowed engaged to offer certain sacrifices of burnt-offerings or peace-offerings unto the LORD; and it included nothing else. But a singular vow was the solemn dedication of a man's person or child, or some part of his property, to the immediate use of the sanctuary, or of the priests; *with special designation*, whether fit for sacrifice or not.

V. 16. A man was not allowed to alienate in this manner his whole patrimony, but only some part of a field: he might express his good-will for the house of God, but he must not impoverish his own family.

An homer, &c. That is, as much land as required a homer of barley to sow it. An *omer* was only the tenth part of an ephah; a *homer* contained ten ephahs, or above eight bushels Winchester measure.

V. 17—19. *Notes*, 25:14—30.

V. 20—24. If the person who dedicated his land refused to redeem it, it became the perpetual inheritance of the priests, and could only be *leased* out till the year of jubilee. If he had sold his right in it to another man, after having made his vow; he forfeited that right, but the purchaser did not succeed to it. A man could not thus alienate such land, as by

Num. 18:14, Ex. 44:29, x25:10,25, y12:18, x20:23,28, a3, b Ex. 30:13, Num. 3:47, 18:16, Ex. 45:12, d Heb. first-born, &c. e Ex. 13:2,12,13, 22:30, Num. 18:17, Deut. 15:19, d See on 21, Ex. 22:20, Num. 21:2,3, Deut. 7:1,2, 13:15,16, 20:16,17, 25:19, Josh. 6:17—19,26, 7:1,11—13,25, Jud. 11:30, 31, 21:5,11,18, 1 Sam. 14:24—29,35—45, 15:13,18,32,33, Matt. 25:41, Acts 23:12—14, Rom. 9:3, 1 Cor. 16:22, Gal. 3:10,13.

law returned at the year of jubilee to the family of which it had been bought; but if he had vowed it, he must redeem it at the estimation made of it. Houses and lands, if thus vowed, became the property of the priests at the year of jubilee; unless redeemed by him that vowed them. This was an additional reason, why the fifth part should in that case be added to the priest's estimation of them.

V. 26, 27. As these firstlings were the LORD's before, it would have been a solemn mockery to pretend to make them a matter of a singular vow; for they were already appointed, if clean, to be sacrificed. But if an unclean firstling were thus dedicated to God, the owner might redeem it, as another unclean firstling, though not with a lamb, but with its estimation in money, adding to it a fifth part; and if he refused to redeem it, it was killed, and sold for the benefit of the priests, or the support of the sanctuary.

V. 28, 29. The word (חֵטֵּא), here rendered *a devoted thing*, implies an *anathema*, or *curse*. Persons thus devoted, were by solemn vows consigned to utter destruction without redemption: but then this vow could not be valid, if contrary to any part of the divine law; and in that case the person making it needed repentance and forgiveness. In respect of *things devoted*, they were either utterly destroyed by fire, or wholly dedicated to religious uses. The LORD himself thus devoted the Amalekites, and the Canaanites in general, and the inhabitants of Jericho in particular; but he reserved the precious metals for the sacred treasury. And the Israelites thus devoted the cities of Arad. (*Note*, Num. 21:1—3.)—Probably Jephthah's vow, and his manner of performing it, arose from a misconception of this law; for whatever was thus devoted was surely to be put to death, if no divine law forbade; but the people rescued Jephthah, whom his father Saul had thus rashly and unwittingly devoted, and doubtless they acted properly. (*Notes*, Judg. 11:34—40, 1 Sam. 14:36—46.)

V. 30—34. The custom of dedicating the tenth part of any profit or increase to religious uses, was doubtless more ancient than the Mosaic law. (*Notes*, Gen. 14:18—20, 28:20—22.) and learned men have shown that (probably from tradition) it prevailed in many nations; though not so regularly as in Israel. From the law afterwards given concerning the division of these tithes, it is evident that they were intended to be a considerable part of the stated maintenance of the priests and Levites; (*Num.* 18:21—32.) and they must therefore be carefully distinguished from the *second tithes*, on which the people feasted before the LORD, with the Levites.

men, shall be redeemed: *but* shall surely be put to death.

30 ¶ And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: *it* is holy unto the LORD.

31 And if a man will at all redeem *aught* of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth *part* thereof.

32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of

e Gen. 14:21, 23-22. Num. 18:21-24. Deut. 12:5, 6. 14:22, 23. 2 Chr. 31:5, 6, 12. Neh. 13:37, 38. 12:44. 13:5, 12. Mal. 3:8-10. Matt. 23:23. Luke 11:42. 18:12.

(*Note, Deut. 14:22-29.*) The regulations here made would prevent the introduction of a *modus* in collecting the tithes, as well as *impropriations*, and various other methods, which have in many places reduced almost to beggary the clergy, for whose maintenance tithes were originally given. What-ever may be said in this case, where tithes are only a human institution; it would certainly have been wrong where they were an express divine appointment. Yet doubtless this law teaches, that they "who labour in the word and doctrine" have a right to a maintenance, and ought not to be defrauded of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is good to be zealously affected, and liberally disposed, to the service and sanctuary of the Lord; but consideration should precede, and prudence should direct, the application of our liberality; otherwise rash vows, and inconstancy in performing them, will dishonour God and embarrass our own minds.—We should dedicate ourselves and our families to his service, according to the situation of life in which the providence of God has placed us. But may we not aptly accommodate these "singular vows of persons" to the case of those; who, perhaps with *good intention*, but *great impropriety*, are determined to leave their proper employments, and to enter into the ministry; or to those, who resolve to bring up their children to that sacred office, before they can know whether they will be properly qualified or disposed for such a service? Too many seem to forget, that there are other ways of glorifying God and serving his church, besides preaching the gospel: and though no general rules can be prescribed in such cases; yet much caution, deliberation, prayer, patient waiting, and submission to Providence, should precede every person's leaving another calling to enter into the ministry. Nor should

the flock, *even* of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy: it shall not be redeemed.

34 These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses, for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.

Heb. 7:5-9. f 13. g Jer. 33:13. Ez. 20:37. Mic. 7:14. h 10. i 26:46. Deut. 4:45. John 1:17. k Num. 1:1. Gal. 4:21, 25. Heb. 12:18-25.

any resolutions or vows be considered binding, unless the Lord allows them, by giving proper qualifications and dispositions, and opening a regular door of admission in his providence. Otherwise such persons had better endeavour themselves, and bring up their children, to honour God by their example, influence, and substance in a private character: for to this day he will choose his own ministers, whom he employs in his sanctuary, without regarding our partial or selfish desires and intentions.—Our houses, lands, cattle, and substance should be possessed and used to his glory; and a portion dedicated immediately to the support of his worship, and to promote his cause, is acceptable to him, if done with a constant and willing mind, and in prudence and equity. But he neither approves of those who grudge his servants their support, nor of those who injure their families, and perhaps their creditors, by an imprudent or ostentatious profusion in these respects; nor yet of those who rashly engage, and inconstantly retract their engagements. But let us not forget that we sinners were devoted to utter destruction, as under the curse of a broken law; and that Jesus willingly devoted himself to be "made a curse for us," and tasted the bitterness of death, yea, the wrath of the Father, for our redemption. The doom of those who neglect this great salvation will be irreversible; and it will by the omnipotent Judge be said to them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Let us then flee to him as a Saviour for refuge; and, receiving the reconciliation, let us yield ourselves to him, without wishing or desiring a change, to be unto him a holy people, that "his name may be glorified in us," living and dying, and for ever; "and we glorified in him, according to the grace of our God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ." (*Note, 2 Thes. 1:11, 12.*)

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

NUMBERS.

This book takes its name from the repeated numberings of the people and of the Levites, which it records. It derives this name (as the preceding books do theirs) from the Septuagint; but the names of the others stand in the original Greek, while this is translated into English. It is called in the original, (בְּמִדְבָּר) *In the wilderness*, from the account which it contains of the Israelites in the wilderness. It opens with an account of the arrangement of the twelve tribes into regular encampments, in four divisions under their several leaders, around the tabernacle; the care of which, and of all its furniture, was committed to the Levites, in three divisions, according to their families. The history of Israel afterwards proceeds: and the sacred writer having recorded that instance of rebellion which provoked God "to swear in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest," gives an account of the continuance of the Israelites in the wilderness for above thirty-eight years: and the whole is intermixed with many laws, moral and ceremonial.—In confirmation of the united testimony of antiquity, that Moses wrote the books ascribed to him, which is uniformly sanctioned by all the sacred writers, and in an especial manner by our Lord and his apostles; it may be useful to the studious reader to notice, how constantly the laws and facts of this book are referred to in all the subsequent parts of Scripture, as things of established credit and notoriety; which never could have been the case, had not the book been well known among the Israelites. In general, the marginal references, if carefully consulted, will most fully establish this point: In particular, the ministrations severally allotted to the priests and Levites; the unbelief and rebellion which excluded this generation of Israel from the Canaan; their subsequent wanderings for almost forty years in the wilderness; the conquest of the countries possessed by Sihon and Og; and the settlement of two tribes and a half east of Jordan, are pre-supposed as notorious facts in every subsequent part of the sacred Volume. But the prophecies delivered by Balaam, which have already received a most signal accomplishment, not only prove the narrative to be genuine, and that Balaam spake by the Spirit of prophecy; but as introduced in close connexion with the history, long before any of the predictions were fulfilled, or in human probability likely to be so; they form a collateral argument, that the book itself was divinely inspired: for in this manner the Lord has seen good to set his seal to most, if not all, of the several books of holy writ.

B. C. 1490.

CHAPTER I.

The Lord commands Moses to number Israel, and appoints by name a prince from each tribe to assist him, 1-16. The number of each tribe, and the sum total, 17-46. The Levites are not numbered with the rest, being to serve at the tabernacle, 47-54.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second

a 10:12. Ex. 19:1. Lev. 27:34. b Ex. 25:22. Lev. 1:1. c 9:1. 10:11. Ex. 40:17. 1 Kings 6:1. d 26:2-4, 63, 64. Ex. 30:12. 38:26. 2 Sam. 24:2, 3. 1 Chr. 21:2.

NOTES.—**CHAP. I. V. 1-3.** Though the sum total in this chapter is exactly the same with that before mentioned, the numbering cannot be the same; for that preceded the

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month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

2 Take ye "the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, (after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of *their* names, every male by their polls:

3 From twenty years old and upward, all that

e Gen. 49:1-3. Ex. 1:1-6. f 18:22, 26, &c. Ex. 6:14-19. g 14:26. 82:11. Ex. 30:11.

construction of the tabernacle, which was set up on the first day of the first month, and the bases were formed of the silver collected upon that occasion; whereas *this* was ordered on

are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

4 ¶ And with you there shall be a man of every tribe, every one head of the house of his fathers.

5 And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: Of the tribe of Reuben; *Eliuz, the son of Shedeur.

6 Of Simeon; *Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai.

7 Of Judah; *Nahshon, the son of Amminadab.

8 Of Issachar; *Nethaneel, the son of Zuar.

9 Of Zebulun; *Eliab, the son of Helon.

10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; *Elishama, the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; *Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur.

11 Of Benjamin; *Abidan, the son of Gideoni.

12 Of Dan; *Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai.

13 Of Asher; *Pagiel, the son of Ocran.

14 Of Gad; *Eliasaph, the son of Deuel.

15 Of Naphtali; *Ahira, the son of Enan.

16 These were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel.

17 ¶ And Moses and Aaron took these men which are expressed by their names:

18 And they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month; and they declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their polls.

19 ¶ As the Lord commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai.

20 And the children of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

21 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Reuben, were forty and six thousand and five hundred.

22 ¶ Of the children of Simeon, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, those that were numbered of them, according to the number of the names, by their

polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

23 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Simeon, were fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.

24 ¶ Of the children of Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

25 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Gad, were forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.

26 ¶ Of the children of Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

27 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Judah, were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.

28 ¶ Of the children of Issachar, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

29 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Issachar, were fifty and four thousand and four hundred.

30 ¶ Of the children of Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

31 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Zebulun, were fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.

32 ¶ Of the children of Joseph, namely, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

33 Those that were numbered of them, even of the tribe of Ephraim, were forty thousand and five hundred.

34 Of the children of Manasseh, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their

h Deut. 3:18. 2 Chr. 17:13-18. 26:11-13. 1 Chr. 12:17. 1 Chr. 17:3. 1 Chr. 23:1. Ex. 18:11. Josh. 22:14. 12:10. 7:30. 10:18. m 2:12. 7:35. 10:19. n 2:3. 7:12. 10:11. Ruth 1:18-22. Matt. 1:2-3. Nansoon. o 2:5. 7:18. 10:15. p 2:7. 7:24. 10:16. q 2:18. 7:48. 10:22. 1 Chr. 7:28. 27. r 2:30. 7:54. 10:23. s 2:22. 7:60. 10:24. t 2:25. 7:65. 10:25. u 2:27. 7:72. 10:23. x 4:42. 10:21. Son of Ruell. 2:14. r 2:29. 7:79. 10:27. z 7:12. 26:9. Judg. 6:15. 1 Chr. 27:10-22. a 4. Ex. 18:21. 25. Deut. 1:15. 1 Sam. 12:7. 23:23. Mic. 5:2. b Ezra

the first day of the second month. (Ex. 38:25-23. 40:2.)

—The Levites were exempted both from the tribute and from war, and consequently were not included in either account. None seem to have been numbered who were unserviceable, whether through age or infirmities; but as "there was not one feeble person among their tribes" when they left Egypt, we may suppose there were very few at this time. (Note, Ex. 13:17, 18, latter part.) Yet all the women, the minors, and probably the old men, were omitted; as well as the mixed multitude which came up with them out of Egypt. Each tribe was reckoned in even numbers; no less sum than fifty being mentioned, and that but in one instance; (25) as they were ranked under rulers of thousands, of hundreds, and of fifties, yet according to their tribes, families, and households; it is probable they were registered accordingly, with the omission of the odd numbers; and the alterations had been so few since the former account was taken, that it made no difference in the round sum. Some indeed infer from this circumstance, that not one had died in the intervening space; but if this were allowed, it must also be supposed, that no individual had attained the age of twenty years in that time; which is totally improbable! They were numbered in order to illustrate the divine faithfulness in thus increasing the seed of Jacob; to prepare the way for their regular march and encampments, as now about to depart from Sinai; and in order to their being trained up for the wars and conquests of Canaan; as well as to ascertain their genealogies, in order to the division of the land by lot.—The Israelites had now continued almost a year at mount Sinai. (Note, Ex. 19:1.)

V. 5-16. (Marg. Ref.) The heads of the tribes are here arranged, according to the mothers of Jacob's sons. Those of Leah are first placed in the order of their birth, and then those of Rachel; but Ephraim, the younger son of

2:59. Neh. 7:61. Heb. 7:3.6. margines. c See on 2. d 26:12. 2 Sam. 24:1-10. e Gen. 49:32. 49:34. 1 Chr. 5:1. 7:10. 11. 26:7. f Gen. 29:33. 34:25-30. 12:24. 49:5.6. h 2:13. 25:3.9.14. 26:14. i Gen. 30:10.11. 49:19. k 2:15. 26:18. l Gen. 29:35. 49:8-12. 1 Chr. 5:2. m 2:34. 26:22. 2 Sam. 24:9. 2 Chr. 17:14. n 16. n Gen. 30:18. 49:14.15. o 1.6. 26:25. p Gen. 29:24. 49:13. q 2:8. 26:37. r Gen. 30:21. 37:39-48. 49:22-26. s Gen. 48:5. Deut. 33:17. t 2:19. 26:37.

Joseph, is placed first. Afterwards the sons of the handmaids are mentioned; but it is observable, that Bilhah's eldest son is first named, and the two sons of Zilpah next, yet the youngest first; and at last Naphtali, the other son of Bilhah. This arrangement is not easily accounted for: nor is it adhered to in the subsequent part of the chapter.—Elishama, the son of Ammihud, (10) was Joshua's grandfather. (1 Chr. 7:26, 27.)

V. 17-21. Marg. Ref. Comp. 26:7.

V. 22, 23. Marg. Ref. Note, 26:14.

V. 24. The tribe of Gad marched along with that of Simeon, under the standard of Reuben; and it seems on that account to have been introduced in this order. The other tribes also are classed together according to their encampments, and the order of their subsequent march; and not according to the arrangement before given of their princes.

V. 25. Comp. 26:18.

V. 26, 27. Jacob had given Judah the pre-eminence in his prophetic blessing; and that tribe was to have the precedence in the encampments of Israel: accordingly God had increased them more than any of their brethren; indeed, to more than double the number of some of the tribes.—Ephraim and Manasseh, according to the same prophecy, were numbered as distinct tribes, Ephraim having the superiority as it had been foretold; and Joseph indeed appears "a fruitful bough;" yet the tribe of Judah was more numerous, by one thousand nine hundred men, than these two tribes united.—(32-35, 26:22. Notes, Gen. 49:8. 10:22-26.)

V. 28-46. Marg. Ref. Comp. 26:23-51.

V. 47-50. The Levites were by this regulation exempted from war, because they were appointed to another special service. It is evident that they had not been included, when the half shekel each was collected from those who were numbered; for intimations had all along been given, that the Lord's

fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

35 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Manasseh, were thirty and two thousand and two hundred.

36 ¶ Of the children of Benjamin, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

37 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Benjamin, were thirty and five thousand and four hundred.

38 ¶ Of the children of Dan, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

39 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Dan, were threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.

40 ¶ Of the children of Asher, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

41 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Asher, were forty and one thousand and five hundred.

42 ¶ Of the children of Naphtali, throughout their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

43 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Naphtali, were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

44 ¶ These are those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.

45 So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel;

46 Even all they that were numbered were

u 2:21, 26:34. Gen. 49:19, 20. x Gen. 35:16-18, 41:20, 49:27. y 2:23, 26:11. z 2:21, 26:11-12, 2 Chr. 17:17, 18. x Gen. 30:5, 6, 49:16, 17. y 2:26, 26:43. b Gen. 30:12, 13, 49:20. c 2:28, 26:47. d Gen. 30:7, 8, 49:21. e 2:30, 26:50. f 2-19, 26:61. g 2:32, 23:10, 26:51. Gen. 13:16. Ex. 12:37, 38:26. Deut. 10:22. 1 Kings 4:20. 2 Chr. 13:3. Heb. 11:11, 12. Rev. 7:4-8. h 2:33, 3:4, 26:57-59. 1 Chr. 6:21-6, 13:5-10, 41:25-33. Ex. 32:26-29, 38:21. 1 Chron. 23:25, 26. Ezra 8:25-30, 33, 34. Neh. 12:22, 47. 13:5, 10-13, 22. k 53, 20:11. Ex. 31:13, 38:21. Ps. 122:4. 12:17. 3:23-38. 10:21. m 4:5-33. 10:17, 21.

intentions respecting them, which were on this occasion more explicitly declared. (Note, Ex. 30:11-16.)

V. 51. Notes, 4:5-18.

V. 53. The wrath of God would have come on the whole congregation, if the service of the sanctuary had been neglected; or if the people had indiscriminately entered into the tabernacle, or attempted to remove it when they marched.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

From noting the faithfulness of God to his promises, however large, and however improbable the performance might appear in the case of Israel; we may take courage in expecting, and praying for, the accomplishment of those which yet remain to be fulfilled, to ourselves, and to the church of God. And again, by considering the astonishing manner in which this immense multitude of men, besides women, children, and strangers, were fed, watered, and provided for in the wilderness; we may learn to trust the Lord for such things as are needful for us and our families. Yet when we recollect how soon, and in what manner, their carcases fell in the wilderness; we may also be reminded to revere the awful justice of God, to prepare for death, which is continually making such ravages; and to repent and depart from sin which produces such fatal effects.—We here also see, as in a glass, the true Israel of God; “a number which no man can number,” yet all known by name, and written in the book of life, by the Captain of our salvation. They are his willing subjects, and do not “despise dominion,” whether of magistrates or ministers, as acting by commission from him; they are indeed men of peace, yet marshalled, armed, and prepared for battle; and they are daily assaulted, whilst on earth, by many enemies: but under the command and protection of their Captain, they shall all finally, one after another, be crowned conquerors.—Nor are ministers discharged from this war; but must be careful “not to entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may please him, who hath chosen them

to six hundred thousand, and three thousand, and five hundred and fifty.

47 ¶ But the Levites, after the tribe of their fathers, were not numbered among them.

48 For the Lord had spoken unto Moses, saying,

49 Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel;

50 But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof, and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.

51 And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

52 And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.

53 But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.

54 And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.

CHAPTER II.

A command that the people should encamp according to their tribes, 1, 2. Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, on the east; the first division, 3-9. Reuben, Simeon, Gad, on the south; the second division, 10-16. The Levites about the tabernacle in the midst, 17. Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, on the west; the third division, 18-21. Dan, Asher, Naphtali, on the north, and in the rear 22-31. A general recital, 32-40.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

2 Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.

3 ¶ And on the east side, toward the rising of the sun, shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch, throughout their armies: and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah.

n 3:10, 38, 16:40, 18:22. Lev. 22:10-13. 1 Sam. 6:19. 2 Sam. 6:7. o 2:34, p 50. q 8:19, 16:46, 13:5. Lev. 10:6. Jer. 5:31, 23:15. Acts 20:23-31. r 3:7, 8:24, 25, 18:3-5, 31:30, 47. 1 Chr. 23:32. 2 Chr. 13:10. e 2:34. Ex. 40:16, 32. Matt. 28:30. s 3:10. 1:52. 10:14, 18:22, 25. b 11:10-12, 18:9. Zech. 9:16. * Heb. over against. Josh. 3:4. c 1:51, 53. Ps. 76:11. In 12:6. Ex. 43:7. 1 Th. 1:27. Col. 2:19. Rev. 4:2-5. d Gen. 49:8-10. Judg. 1:13. 1 Chr. 5:2. e 17:12, 17, 10:14, 26:19-22. Ruth 4:20. 1 Chr. 2:10. Matt. 1:4. Luke 3:32, 33. Naasson.

to be soldiers,” yea, officers in his army; and they must learn “to endure hardship as good soldiers.” (Note, 2 Tim. 2:3-7.) If exempted from secular concerns, it is in order that they may be the more given up to the study and preaching of the word of God, and to prayer, which are the chief weapons of their warfare; for by these means they may endeavour to avert the wrath of God from the people. As Christians are separated from the world, so ministers should be still more detached from its pursuits and employments, and examples to the flock; “not,” says Mr. Henry, “affecting to seem greater, but aiming to be really better, every way better, than others.”

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 2. The Israelites encamped in four grand divisions, with the tabernacle in the centre; yet at some distance from it, as a token of awe and reverence.—The sanctuary and the ark, as pledges of JEHOVAH's special favour, were in reality the glory and defence of the people; yet the people were stationed, as if they had been the guardians of the sanctuary, and no enemy could approach it without forcing the way through their hosts. Religion is indeed our protection; yet it is our duty to support its cause and interest with our whole power and ability.—This encampment is computed to have formed a moveable city of twelve miles square; and many think that the door of every tent faced the tabernacle, that thence the people might worship towards this token of God's presence upon a mercy-seat. We know nothing certain concerning the standards of the several tribes: but it is highly improbable that they should have been the figures of any animals, as the Jewish writers assert; for this might have proved an occasion to idolatry, and indeed it was deemed unlawful in after ages.

V. 3. The tribe of Judah, from which Christ sprang, was appointed to the highest station, and under it were ranked the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun, Judah's younger brethren by the same mother.—The tribe of Reuben, Jacob's eldest

4 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.

5 And those that do pitch next unto him *shall be* the tribe of Issachar: *and* Nathaneel the son of Zuar *shall be* captain of the children of Issachar.

6 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, *were* fifty and four thousand and four hundred.

7 Then the tribe of Zebulun; and Eliab the son of Helon *shall be* captain of the children of Zebulun.

8 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, *were* fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.

9 All that were numbered in the camp of Judah *were* an hundred thousand and fourscore thousand and six thousand and four hundred, throughout their armies: *these shall first set forth.*

10 ¶ On the south side *shall be* the standard of the camp of Reuben, according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben *shall be* Elizur, the son of Shedeur.

11 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, *were* forty and six thousand and five hundred.

12 And those which pitch by him *shall be* the tribe of Simeon: and the captain of the children of Simeon *shall be* Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

13 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.

14 Then the tribe of Gad: and the captain of the sons of Gad *shall be* Eliasaph the son of Reuel.

15 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* forty and five thousand and six hundred and fifty.

16 All that were numbered in the camp of Reuben, *were* an hundred thousand and fifty and one thousand and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies: and *they shall set forth* in the second rank.

17 ¶ Then **the* tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward, with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp: as they encamp so shall they set forward, every man in his place, by their standards.

18 ¶ On the west side *shall be* the standard of the camp of Ephraim, according to their armies: and the captain of the sons of Ephraim *shall be* Elishama the son of Ammihud.

19 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* forty thousand and five hundred.

11:27, 36, 37, 11:31, 32, 33, 11:34, 35, 36, 11:37, 38, 39, 11:40, 41, 42, 11:43, 44, 45, 11:46, 47, 48, 11:49, 50, 11:51, 52, 11:53, 54, 11:55, 56, 11:57, 58, 11:59, 60, 11:61, 62, 11:63, 64, 11:65, 66, 11:67, 68, 11:69, 70, 11:71, 72, 11:73, 74, 11:75, 76, 11:77, 78, 11:79, 80, 11:81, 82, 11:83, 84, 11:85, 86, 11:87, 88, 11:89, 90, 11:91, 92, 11:93, 94, 11:95, 96, 11:97, 98, 11:99, 100, 11:101, 102, 11:103, 104, 11:105, 106, 11:107, 108, 11:109, 110, 11:111, 112, 11:113, 114, 11:115, 116, 11:117, 118, 11:119, 120, 11:121, 122, 11:123, 124, 11:125, 126, 11:127, 128, 11:129, 130, 11:131, 132, 11:133, 134, 11:135, 136, 11:137, 138, 11:139, 140, 11:141, 142, 11:143, 144, 11:145, 146, 11:147, 148, 11:149, 150, 11:151, 152, 11:153, 154, 11:155, 156, 11:157, 158, 11:159, 160, 11:161, 162, 11:163, 164, 11:165, 166, 11:167, 168, 11:169, 170, 11:171, 172, 11:173, 174, 11:175, 176, 11:177, 178, 11:179, 180, 11:181, 182, 11:183, 184, 11:185, 186, 11:187, 188, 11:189, 190, 11:191, 192, 11:193, 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30 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites, *shall be* Elizaphan the son of Uzziel.

31 And their charge *shall be* "the ark, and the table, and the candlestick, and "the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and "the hanging, and all the service thereof.

32 And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest *shall be* chief over the chief of the Levites, and have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary.

33 ¶ Of Merari *was* "the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites: these *are* the families of Merari.

34 And those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* "six thousand and two hundred.

35 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari *was* Zuriel, the son of Abihail: "these shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.

36 And "under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari, *shall be* "the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto,

37 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.

38 ¶ But those that encamp before the tabernacle "toward the east, *even* before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, *shall be* Moses and Aaron, and his sons, "keeping the charge of the sanctuary, "for the charge of the children of Israel: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

39 All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward *were* "twenty and two thousand.

h 4:4-16. Ex. 25:10-40, 37:1-24. n Ex. 27:1-8, 30:1-10, 37:25-29, 38:1-7. o Ex. 26:31-33, 36:35, 38. p 4:16, 27, 20, 25-28, 2 Kings 25:18. 1 Chr. 9:14-20, 26:20-24. q See on 20. 1 Chr. 6:19, 23:21. r 5:43, 44. s 23:29. * Heb. *the office of the charge.* t 4:29-33, 7:8. Ex. 26:15-29, 32, 37, 27:9-19, 36:20-34, 36, 37-40. u 23:29, 35, 1:53, 2:3. x 18:1-5, 1 Chr. 6:46, 49.

V. 32. Eleazar, who was next in succession to the high-priesthood, was appointed to rule those who were placed over all the Levites, in respect of their different services, and to allot those of each family their own work. The special charge, in the constituent parts of the sanctuary, allotted to each division, may be clearly seen by examining the marginal references.

V. 36. *Marg. Ref.* 4:29-33. 7:8.

V. 38. The three divisions of the Levites being stationed on the west, the south, and the north, of the sanctuary; the east, or fore-front, which was the most important station, was guarded by Moses and the priests, who thus were at hand to exclude all improper persons.

V. 39. The sum total of the Levites was 22,300; "of Gershon 7,500; (22) "of Kohath 8,600; (28) "of Merari 6,200." (34) But the 300 of the Levites are supposed to be the first-born of their several families, after the departure out of Egypt, who were already devoted to the Lord: and we must acknowledge a peculiar interposition of Providence in this near coincidence in the number of the Levites, and that of the first-born. (43)

V. 41-43. The first-born, in any company, must in general at least amount to one in eight or ten; whereas the number here mentioned, was scarcely one in fifty of all the males young and old: for there were above 600,000 adults, and perhaps almost as many under age. It is therefore evident, that none were numbered, but those who had been born after the destruction of the first-born of Egypt. This indeed seems the meaning of the law, which referred to the future, and not to the past; (Ex. 13:2.) and it is evident that the firstlings of the cattle were thus reckoned. Indeed 45,000 of both sexes, which is rather more than double the first-born males, seems a vast number of first-born children within the space of one year: but upon reflection, we shall find it by no means improbable, that among 1,200,000 persons of both sexes, who were above twenty years of age, (and many might marry much younger than that age,) there should be within that time 50,000 marriages: that is, about the twelfth part of the company of marriageable persons of each sex. Especially if we consider that multitudes might be inclined to marry, when they found they were about to enjoy liberty: and when

40 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, "Number all the first-born of the males of the children of Israel, from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.

41 And thou shalt take the Levites for me, (I *am* the LORD,) instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel; and the cattle of the Levites, instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.

42 And Moses numbered, as the LORD commanded him, all the first-born among the children of Israel.

43 And all the first-born males, by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numbered of them, *were* twenty and two thousand two hundred and threescore and thirteen.

44 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

45 Take "the Levites instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle, and the Levites shall be mine: I *am* the LORD.

46 And for those that are to be "redeemed, of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the first-born of the children of Israel, "which are more than the Levites;

47 Thou shalt even take "five shekels apiece by the poll; after "the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs:)

48 And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.

49 And Moses took the redemption money of them, that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites.

50 Of the first-born of the children of Israel took he the money; "a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

51 And Moses "gave the money of them that were redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

h See on 7:8, 10. i 4:47, 49, 26:62. Matt. 7:14. a See on 12:15, 45. Ex. 26:26-29. b 39. c 40. d 18:15. Ex. 13:13. e 30:45. f 13:16. Lev. 27:6. g 50. Ex. 30:13. Lev. 27:25. Ex. 45:12. h 46:47. i 48. 16:15. 1 Sam. 12:34. Acts 20:33. 1 Cor. 9:12.

they recollected, that the promises made to Israel peculiarly respected a very rapid increase, and that there would doubtless be a very great blessing upon them in this respect.—The first-born Israelites were therefore all unfit for service on this emergency: and as they were the heirs of their several families, they probably would not have been very willing when of age to become servants to the priests; and consequently the change would be as acceptable to the relations of those who were set aside, as to those who were substituted in their stead.—It seems, however, that the Levites and their posterity were thus dedicated to God, only in lieu of the first-born at that time; for the law concerning the presentation and redemption of the first-born was in force through all succeeding generations, until the days of Christ. (Luke, 2:22, 23.)

V. 44-51. Either it was determined by lot, who should pay the redemption money, and for whom the Levites should be accepted; or it was paid by a common tax: or, as some think, they began with the eldest; and so the youngest, not being changed, were redeemed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

• Whilst we consider Jesus, our great High-Priest, appointed of the Father, and intrusted with the charge of the sanctuary and of the whole congregation, and keeping that charge with unremitting attention, and entire faithfulness, love, and power; we should recollect, that his ministers, as presented unto him and ministering before him, have a solemn charge committed to them also. They are called upon to wait in their office; to serve the Lord with reverence; to offer no strange fire; to do nothing of their own mind, or in their own spirit; and with all diligence and fidelity to follow the instructions and copy the example of their Lord. But it is of the utmost importance that each should know his own post and duty; that no part of the work may be neglected; and that there may be no interference, and no occasion given for envy, ambition, or discontent. No service required by such a Master can be either mean or hard; for he will put honour upon the faithful in the lowest situation, and will provide assistance where the work is too laborious. Christians also, though not engaged in the ministry, have a work to do, and a charge to keep; and must remember, that as all men are the Lord's by creation, believers are his by redemption; and that, as the ministry

CHAPTER IV.

A commandment to the sons of Kohath from thirty to fifty years old, 1-7. The number of the Kohathites, 8-11. The covering of the tabernacle, 12-20. The service and burden of the sons of Gershon, from thirty to fifty, 21-28; and of the Merarites, 29-33. The number of the Kohathites, 34-37; of the Gershonites, 38-41; and of the Merarites, 42-44. The sum total, 45-48.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,
2 Take the sum of the sons of ^aKohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers,

3 From ^bthirty years old and upward, even until fifty years old, all that ^center into the host, to ^ddo the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

4 This shall be ^ethe service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation ^fabout the most holy things.

5 And ^gwhen the camp setteth forward, ^hAaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil, and cover the ark of testimony with it;

6 And shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it ⁱa cloth wholly of blue, and shall put in ^jthe staves thereof.

7 And upon ^kthe table of show-bread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to ^lcover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon.

8 And they shall spread upon them ^ma cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof.

9 And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover ⁿthe candlestick of the light, and his lamps, and his tongs, and his snuff-dishes, and all the oil-vessels thereof, wherewith they minister unto it.

10 And they shall put it, and all the vessels thereof, ^owithin a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put it upon a bar.

11 And upon ^pthe golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof.

12 And they shall take all ^qthe instruments of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, and put ^rthem in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put ^sthem on a bar.

13 And they shall take away ^tthe ashes from the altar, and spread ^ua purple cloth thereon:

14 And they shall put upon it ^vall the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it, ^weven the censers, the flesh-hooks, and the shovels, and the basins, all the vessels of the altar; and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it.

15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; ^xafter that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but ^ythey shall not touch ^zany holy thing, lest they die. ^{aa}These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

16 ^{ab}And to ^{ac}the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest ^{ad}pertaineth ^{ae}the oil for the light, and ^{af}the sweet incense, and ^{ag}the daily meat-offering, and ^{ah}the anointing oil, ^{ai}and the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein is, in the sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof.

17 ^{aj}And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

18 ^{ak}But ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites:

19 But thus do unto them, that they may live and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things; Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service, and to his burden.

20 But ^{al}they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.

21 ^{am}And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

22 Take also ^{an}the sum of the sons of Gershon, throughout the houses of their fathers, by their families:

a. ^aSee on 3:19-27. b. 8:24-26. Gen. 41:46. 1 Chr. 23:34-27, 29, 12:13. Luke 8:23. 1 Tim. 3:6. c. 2 Kings 11:4-12. 2 Chr. 23:1-11. 2 Cor. 10:3, 4. Eph. 6:10-11. 1 Tim. 1:18. d. 2:7, 8. 16:9. 1 Chr. 6:48, 23:4, 5, 28-32. 1 Tim. 3:1. e. 24, 30, 33:30. f. Mark 13:34. g. 2:16, 17. 10:14. h. 5:3, 27-32. i. Ex. 26:31-33. 35:35, 40:3. Matt. 27:51. Heb. 9:3, 10:20. j. Ex. 25:10-22, 37:1-9. 2 Sam. 6:2-9. k. 7:8, 11-13. l. Ex. 35:19, 39:1, 41. m. Ex. 25:19, 39:1, 41. n. Ex. 25:23-26, 37:17-24. Ps. 119:105. Rev. 1:20, 2:1. o. 6:7, 7:11-15. p. Ex. 25:31-39, 37:17-24. Ps. 119:105. Rev. 1:20, 2:1. q. 6:12, r. Ex. 30:1-5.

10. 37:25-28. a. 3:8. Ex. 25:9. 1 Chr. 9:29. 2 Chr. 4:11, 16, 19, 22. t. Ex. 27:9-5. Lev. 6:12, 13. u. 6-9, 11, 12. Ex. 39:1, 41. x. Ex. 38:1-7. y. Or, bowls. y. 8:9. 10:21. Deut. 31:9. 2 Sam. 6:3. 1 Chr. 15:2, 16. z. 3:38. 1 Sam. 6:19. 2 Sam. 6:6, 7. 1 Chr. 13:9, 10. Heb. 12:18-29. i. 3:30, 31. j. 3:32. c. Ex. 25:8, 27:30, 21. Lev. 24:9. d. Ex. 30:34-38. 37:29. e. Ex. 29:39-41. f. Ex. 30:23-33. g. Acts 20:28. 1 Pet. 5:2. h. 16:32. 17:10, 18:5. Lev. 10:2. Jer. 38:23. i. 15, 19. Ex. 19:21. 1 Sam. 6:19. Heb. 10:19, 20. Rev. 11:9. k. See on 3:18, 21, 24.

was appointed for their benefit, they are required to strengthen the hands and to encourage the hearts of those, who minister before the Lord in their behalf.—Blessed be God, we may all at present enter even into the holiest, without danger of death, nay, with assurance of acceptance and life eternal, if we come by faith in Jesus Christ. Still however we must regret, that the Lord's people form a very small proportion of the whole multitude of mankind; and we should be reminded to pray for the sending forth of more faithful ministers: for when they are increased, it is a hopeful sign that the Lord is about to accomplish great things in increasing his church. Nor let us forget, that children, though unfit for service, were numbered as part of this holy tribe; "for of such is the kingdom of God." But whilst we desire that our offspring should be numbered among the Lord's peculiar people, and that they should excel in holiness; let us, after the example of Moses, be indifferent about every other distinction and interest, either for them or for ourselves.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 3. The people were numbered for war from twenty years of age; but the Levites were not numbered for the service of the sanctuary till thirty. This, however, had special reference to the charge and burden of removing the tabernacle: for they entered as probationers at twenty-five; (Notes, 8:24-26.) and in David's time, when the work was more extensive, but not so heavy, they were admitted at twenty years old. (Note, 1 Chr. 23:24-28.)—Jesus Christ deferred entering on his public work till he was thirty years of age: John the Baptist seems to have begun his ministry rather earlier in life.—The Levites also had an honourable discharge from the most laborious parts of their employment, after twenty years service, though they were still to be occupied in one way or other.—These laws are not binding in the letter of them upon the ministers of the gospel; but they may afford them much useful practical instruction.

V. 5. The law prohibiting any person except the high-priest on one day in the year, to enter into the most holy place, must have admitted of an exception, while the Israelites were continually removing in the wilderness: that exception was expressly made; and the directions given

relating to it must be religiously observed, or the service could not be safely performed.—While the cloud rested on the tabernacle, the general rule was in force; but when it was removed, then the priests might enter to prepare the sacred vessels for removal.

V. 6. These coverings were intended not so much for security and decent respect, as for concealment; and they marked not only the reverence due to holy things, but the mysteriousness of the things signified by those types, and the darkness of that dispensation.—Some suppose that the cloth of blue represented the azure firmament, which interposes between us and the majesty of heaven.—The covering of badgers' skins, made for the tabernacle, was carried by the Gershonites; (24:25.) but this was one made to conceal and shelter the ark, when it was to be carried.

V. 7. *Continual bread.*] The Israelites might be able to procure corn enough from the adjacent countries, even when in the wilderness, to make the show-bread, and to present the daily meat-offerings.

V. 13, 14. The embers of the sacred fire seem to have been removed in the grate, which was carried apart from the brazen altar; (Note, Ex. 27:1-8.) both being covered from view by purple cloths.

V. 15. *Marg. Ref. z.*

V. 16. Eleazar himself, perhaps with the other priests, was required to carry the oil for the light, the incense, and the flour for the daily meat-offering, and the holy ointment; besides superintending the Levites.—It may be supposed, that he himself carried no more of the oil than for present use. (Note, Ex. 30:22-33.)

V. 18. Eleazar and the priests would be chargeable with the death of the Kohathites, if they failed to give them proper cautions and directions; or permitted them to gaze irreverently or curiously upon the holy things, which they might carry, but must not see. (20)

V. 22-26. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 27, 28. The Levites were under the command of the priests. Eleazar exercised this authority in general, as next in succession to Aaron; and he in particular was placed over

23 From thirty years old and upward until fifty years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

24 This is the service of the families of the Gershonites, to serve, and for burdens.

25 And they shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering, and the covering of the badgers' skins that is above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

26 And the hangings of the court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the court, which is by the tabernacle and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, and all that is made for them; so shall they serve.

27 At the appointment of Aaron and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, in all their burdens, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens.

28 This is the service of the families of the sons of Gershon, in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge shall be under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

29 ¶ As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers:

30 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.

31 And this is the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof,

32 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.

33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

34 ¶ And Moses and Aaron, and the chief of the congregation, numbered the sons of the Kohathites, after their families, and after the house of their fathers;

35 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

36 And those that were numbered of them, by their families, were two thousand seven hundred and fifty.

37 These were they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

38 And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, and by the house of their fathers;

39 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation;

40 Even those that were numbered of them throughout their families, by the house of their fathers, were two thousand and six hundred and thirty.

41 These are they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, whom Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD.

42 And those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers,

43 From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation;

44 Even those that were numbered of them, after their families, were three thousand and two hundred.

45 These be those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the chief of Israel numbered, after their families, and after the house of their fathers;

47 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that came to do the service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation;

48 Even those that were numbered of them, were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore.

49 According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses.

1 See on 2. * Heb. 'a war the warfare. 2. 2 Cor. 6:7, 10:34. 1 Tim. 1:18. 2 Tim. 2:34, 4:17. 1 Or, carriage. m See on 3:35, 36, 7:5-7. 1 Heb. mouth. Luke 1:70. 1 Cor. 11:2. n 33. 1 Cor. 12:5, 6. o See on 3:33-35. s Heb. wear.

fare. See on 3:23. 1 Tim. 6:12. p See on 3:36, 37, 7:8, 9. q 3:8. 7:1. Ex. 28. 9. 38:17. 1 Chr. 9:29. r 28. In 9:8. s 3:23, 30. 5:24, 26. 1 Chr. 23:37. t 3:28. u 3:22. x 3:34. y 15:34, 37. Rom. 12:6-8. 1 Cor. 12:4-31. x 3:39.

the Kohathites; while Ithamar, his younger brother, commanded the Gershonites and Merarites. (33)

V. 32. *Reckon the instruments.*] An inventory seems to have been taken of every particular, even to the pins belonging to each part; that nothing might be wanting, when the tabernacle was to be set up.

V. 44. *Three thousand and two hundred.*] The family of Merari was smaller than either of the other families of Levi; yet there was in it a greater number of able men; and they were charged with the heaviest part of the sanctuary: and though wagons were afterwards provided for them, yet the loading and unloading of the sockets, and other things of great weight, would require much strength. (Comp. 36:40, with 32:28, 34.) The sum total of effective Levites was very small, compared with that of the other tribes: (48) yet there would be more by far than could at once be employed in this service. But they might carry by turns and ease one another, and thus do the whole expeditiously and cheerfully. They would also have their own tents to remove, and their own families to take care of.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-3. The minister of Christ ought not on any account to strive or war with carnal weapons, yet he must "enter into the host of the LORD;" and both in his personal conflict against sin and Satan, and in the duties of his important calling, he must boldly "fight the good fight of faith," with the appointed weapons of his warfare, sound doctrine, fervent prayer, and a holy example. Peculiar gravity, prudence, humility, ripeness of judgment, experience, meekness, and

patience, are necessary, in order to a due performance of the work of the ministry, to the glory of God, the edification of the church, and the silencing of gainsayers; and ministers are exposed to many temptations from the smiles and frowns of men, from popularity and opposition. It is therefore far more advisable for those, who are intended for this sacred service, to spend much previous time in retirement, study, meditation, and communion with God, that they may come forth well prepared and furnished for usefulness, when a proper occasion is afforded; than that they should, by an indiscreet and hurtful zeal, be allowed or encouraged to violate the apostle's rule, by prematurely entering on public services. (Note, 1 Tim. 3:6.) From the neglect of this caution, many mischiefs have arisen, both to individuals and to the cause of God. When, however, men are engaged, and have health and strength, and work assigned them, they should lose no time, and miss no opportunities of usefulness; for these may be regretted, but cannot be recalled.—As the faithful servants of God grow in years, and their natural vigour abates, they must not be censured, if they in some respects moderate their labours, especially in those services which require great exertion. And if it please God to lay them quite aside by sickness and infirmity, they may still serve the church of God by their prayers, and an example of faith, patience, and obedience; and they are still entitled to respect and maintenance. They ought not indeed, and will not desire, to cease from labour whilst capable of it: but they must not murmur, if they are thus discharged, or if they see others "increase whilst they decrease." For the Lord will

CHAPTER V.

The lepers and unclean to be excluded from the camp, 1-4. The law of restitution enforced, 5-10. The trial to be made of a woman suspected by her husband of adultery, 11-31.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:

3 Both male and female shall ye put out, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.

4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.

5 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 6 Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD, and that person be guilty:

7 Then they shall confess their sin which they have done; and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

8 But if the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the LORD, even to the priest, beside

1-12, 14. Lev. 13:46. Deut. 21:8, 9. 2 Kings 7:3. b Lev. 15:2-27. c 9:6-10, 19:11-15, 31:19. Lev. 21:1. d 1 Cor. 5:7-13. 2 Cor. 6:17. 2 Thes. 3:6. Tit. 3:10. Heb. 12:15, 16. 2 John 10:11. Rev. 21:27. e 19:22. Hag. 2:13, 14. f Lev. 25:11, 12. Deut. 23:14. Ps. 68:18. Is. 12:6. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 21:3. g Lev. 5:1-4, 17. 6:2, 3. h Lev. 5:5. 23:40. Josh. 7:19. Job 23:27, 28. Ps. 32:5. Prov. 23:13. 1 John 1:8-10. i Lev. 5:15. 6:4, 5. Luke 19:8. j Lev. 25:25, 26. k Lev. 6:6, 7. * Or,

do his work by a succession of servants: and he will let them all see, that he can do without them; that the work is in his hand; that when he employs them, he does not need them; and that he can easily send out others in their stead, when they are no longer serviceable.

V. 4-49. Though we are not under the comparative obscurity and severity of the Mosaic dispensation; yet we should remember that heavenly things must be treated with reverence, and not curiously, contemptuously, or presumptuously inquired into. It is very dangerous to attempt being "wise above what is written," in respect of those great mysteries which relate to the infinite God, and his works and ways; or to intrude into those things over which he hath purposely thrown a veil. And the ministers of God, and those who have attained to a superior degree of influence or authority, should caution and deter their juniors, and the people, from such intrusion. Indeed, the rule holds good in all things: we ought to prevent others from committing sin to the utmost of our ability, as far as consists with other relative duties; and we are accessory to the guilt and the ruin of those, who perish through our neglect. (Note, 1 Tim. 5:21, 22.)—But though the Lord is great and holy, and vengeance belongeth unto him; and we are mean, polluted, and guilty creatures; we may yet approach him with safety, comfort, and confidence, in the way which he hath opened, provided we use the appointed means, and observe the directions which he has given.—In this moveable world changes await us: but, to whatever place we remove, we must be sure to take our religion with us, to prefer the house and worship of God to our temporal interests, and to serve him with the prime of our health and strength. Ere long this earthly house of our tabernacle will be taken down; but if it hath been "a habitation of God through the Spirit," this great and solemn removal will be all under the hand of Jesus, our merciful High Priest: he will give his angels a charge to convey our souls invisibly to glory; and all the constituent parts of the tabernacle shall, by his power, be brought together to heaven, and there raised up again incorruptible, immortal, and glorious; "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Let us therefore quicken and comfort ourselves and each other with these words. (Notes, Rom. 8:10, 11. 1 Thes. 5:13-18.)

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1-4. The camps of Israel being now formed, with the sanctuary of God in the centre; orders were given, that, in honour of him who thus condescended to dwell among them, the lepers and unclean persons should be excluded from the camp, according to laws at different times given on these subjects. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 12:14, 15. Lev. 13:45, 46, 15:5.)

V. 6. *That men commit.* These words seem to intimate, that Adam's children are very prone to acts of fraud and dishonesty; though each of them is "a trespass against the Lord."—The expression, "and that person be guilty," does not merely refer to his actual criminality, but to his consciousness of guilt respecting it: for this case must be distinguished from that of a person detected in dishonesty, which is attempted to conceal.

V. 7, 8. If the person injured were dead, restitution would of course be made to his heir; but if he had no

the ram of the atonement whereby an atonement shall be made for him.

9 And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the priest, shall be his.

10 And every man's hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 12 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,

13 And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner;

14 And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled; or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled;

15 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley-meal: he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon: for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD.

Lease of ring. 18:8, 9, 19. Ex. 29:28. 1 Lev. 6:17, 18, 26. 7:6-14. 10:13. 22:2, 3. Deut. 18:34. Ez. 44:39, 40. 1 Cor. 9:7-13. m 19:20. Prov. 2:16, 17. n Lev. 18:20. 20:10. Prov. 7:13, 19. 30:20. o 30. Prov. 6:34. Cant. 8:6. 1 Cor. 10:22. p Lev. 5:11. Hos. 3:2. q 1 Kings 17:18. Ex. 29:16. Heb. 10:3. r Lev. 1:3. Jer. 17:10. Heb. 13:4. Rev. 2:22, 23.

near relation, to whom the restitution might properly be made, the priest was appointed to receive it, when the criminal offered the trespass-offering.—Doubtless real poverty would excuse a man: yet this exception is not made; for men are ready enough to find out excuses for themselves, where their own interest is concerned. They therefore, who establish general scriptural rules of duty, should not be censured, though they do not mention every particular exception.—This law conclusively shows the absolute necessity of restitution, in one form or other, where actual poverty does not hinder, either to the injured person, to his relations, to the poor, or to pious uses; for, as Mr. Henry observes, "it is certain, while that which is got by injustice, is knowingly retained in the hands, the guilt of the injustice remains upon the conscience, and is not purged by sacrifice or offering, prayers or tears: for it is one and the same continued act of sin persisted in." Some say, that this doctrine tends to embarrass tender consciences; but it is the doctrine of right reason, and of the word of God; and it is rather calculated to detect hypocrites, and to direct such as have tender consciences to a proper conduct, which, springing from faith in Christ, will make way for inward peace.

V. 9, 10. This law tended to encourage the priests in constant attendance on their work: for what any priest received of the people, in private sacrifices or oblations, belonged to him, and was not divided with his brethren.

V. 12. The remarkable law which follows, was no doubt intended to fortify the minds of the Israelitish women in the hour of temptation, when opportunity, importunity, and secrecy were combined; and to render them watchful against all occasions of exciting suspicion in the breasts of their husbands. On the other hand, it was calculated to prevent the cruel treatment from husbands, which such suspicions might produce, "through the hardness of their hearts," when the crime could not be proved, or the rage of jealousy allayed; and it would also lessen the number of hasty divorces. If properly regarded, the guilty could hardly escape, or the innocent remain under injurious suspicions; and in many ways it would subserve the interests of purity and of domestic peace, both by constantly holding out a salutary warning, and by the alarm which would be raised whenever it was carried into execution.

V. 13, 14. God had commanded that the adulterer and adulteress should be put to death, if detected and the fact proved: (Lev. 20:10.) but when the husband entertained suspicions on some probable grounds, and could not bring proof; he was allowed to make this solemn appeal to a heart-searching God, and to put his wife on the awful trial. If grossly criminal, it must be supposed she had been too regardless of appearances. (2 Cor. 8:21. 1 Thes. 5:22.)

V. 15. This coarse offering, without oil or frankincense implied the baseness of the crime of which the woman was suspected, and the mournful state of the family. It was not an atoning sacrifice, but an oblation for a memorial, as solemnly referring the decision to the Lord, and calling upon him to bring the iniquity to remembrance, and to punish it in case the accused was guilty. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 16, 17. As this process could not be carried on, except at the sanctuary; the trouble and expense attending it would

17 And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water.

18 And the priest shall set the woman before the Lord, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy-offering: and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse.

19 And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse:

20 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man hath lain with thee beside thine husband;

21 Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing: and the priest shall say unto the woman, The Lord make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell:

22 And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot. And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.

23 And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water;

19:2-9. Ex. 30:18. 1 Job. 2:12. Jer. 17:13. Lam. 3:29. John 8:6,8. v Lev. 14:35. 1. or 11:15. Heb. 12:12. v 15:25,26. x 17:22,24. 1 Pet. 29:18. 1 Sam. 15:32. 1 Prov. 5:4. 1. 7:56. Is. 47:17. Jer. 2:19. Rev. 10:9,10. y Matt. 26:63. * Or, being in the power of thy husband. Heb. under thy husband's. Rom. 7:2. Gr. x John 8:26. 1 Sam. 14:24. Neh. 10:32. Mat. 29:74. a Is. 65:15. Jer. 29:22. 1 Heb. fall. 2 Chr. 21:15. Prov. 10:7. b 27. Ps. 109:18. Prov. 1:31. Ez. 3:3. c Dent. 27:15-26. Job 31:21,22,30,40. Ps. 74:5. d Ps. 41:13. 72:19. 89:52. John 3:3,11. 5:24,25. 6:53. Gr. e Ex. 17:14. Dent. 31:19. 2 Chr. 34:21.

render men cautious how they instituted it without some urgent reason. It is generally supposed, that the water of the laver in the court of the tabernacle is meant; being called *holy* because of its separation from ordinary uses. This was put into a mean and brittle vessel, and dust from the floor of the tabernacle was cast into it for the women to drink: all this implied the disgrace which she lay under, the shame to which she would be exposed if guilty, and the punishment that she would justly endure; in which every thing relating to the worship of a holy God, would, as it were, combine together for her destruction.—This water was called the *bitter water*, from the bitter effects which would follow, when drunk by a guilty person. (18,19. *Note*, 27.)

V. 19. *Instead of thy husband.* Or, “being under the power of thy husband;” that is, a married woman, which was marked as the grand aggravation of the crime charged on her. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. *Amen, Amen.* This two-fold solemn consent of the woman to the awful appeal to God, referring to both parts of it, implied a hearty desire to be dealt with according to her innocence or guilt; and an acknowledgment of the justice of God, in inflicting his dreadful vengeance upon such as were guilty. This appeal could not be made by a person who was consciously guilty, without the most entire hardness of heart and presumptuous defiance of God, and even atheistical unbelief: and every circumstance was suited to warn and alarm the woman, that, if guilty, she might rather confess her crime, than venture the terrible consequences. The Jewish writers say, that if she refused this oath, and confessed her guilt, she was not put to death, but only divorced without a dowry.

V. 23. The words of the oath or curse were written on a piece of parchment, which was called a *book* at that time; and the writing was washed off into the water, as if the curse had been infused in it, that the woman might drink it.

V. 27. The water, by its natural efficacy, could not harm an innocent person. But if any woman added to the crime of adultery, the awful guilt of such a deliberate perjury, God would supernaturally thus punish her.—The Jews have a tradition that the adulterer also would die of a similar disease at the same time; which probably was not altogether unlike that loathsome distemper, with which God has in these latter ages shown his abhorrence of lewdness; yet it was far more immediate in its effects.

V. 31. Even when the husband's jealousy was groundless, he would not be accounted guilty, if he took this method of clearing up the matter: but otherwise it would lead him to do those things which would bring guilt upon him. This law is a singular proof of the divine legation of Moses. No mere politician would have thought of such a law, which at first sight generally appears harsh and strange: yet the effect, when carried into execution, must have been in all respects most salutary, and worthy of the divine wisdom. Again, it could not be carried into execution, without a miracle: and

24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.

25 Then the priest shall take the jealousy-offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the Lord, and offer it upon the altar.

26 And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar; and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

27 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

28 And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

29 This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled;

30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the Lord, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law:

31 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity.

Job 31:35. Jer. 51:60-64. 1 Cor. 16:21,22. Rev. 20:12. f Ps. 51:1,9. Is. 43:25. 44:22. Acts 9:19. g Zech. 5:8,4. Mal. 3:5. h 15:19. i Ex. 29:24. k Lev. 2:2. 5:12. 6:15. 120. Prov. 5:4,11. Ec. 7:26. Rom. 6:21. 2 Cor. 2:16. Heb. 10:29 -31. 2 Pet. 2:10. m Dent. 28:37. Ps. 83:9-11. Is. 65:15. Jer. 24:9. 29:18,22. 42:18. Zech. 8:13. n 18. Mic. 7:7-10. 2 Cor. 4:17. 1 Pet. 1:7. o Lev. 7:11. 11:46. 13:59. 14:54-57. 15:32,33. p 12-15. q Ps. 37:6. r 9:13. Lev. 20:10. 17-20. Ez. 18:4. Rom. 2:8,9.

no legislator, pretending to be sent by God, would have committed himself by an institution which might at any time disprove his claim.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The people of God should separate from such as are unclean by impenitent iniquity, and exclude them as far as they are able from their fellowship: and then if, under the mask of hypocrisy, they affront the Lord and profane his holy ordinances by an unallowed intrusion, they do it at their peril. But assuredly such shall never . . . “that holy city, where the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them;” but will be left without, “where is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.” In this miserable company, will most certainly be found those *unrighteous* persons who have *unjustly* obtained, and as *unjustly* keep possession of, their neighbour's property: and he who pretends to piety, and thus encourages himself in dishonesty by a professed dependance on the atonement of Christ, as grossly affronts him, as that man does, who substitutes his own honesty or morality in the stead of His merits and sacrifice, at the price of his acceptance with God! Indeed the confession, the restitution, and the trespass-offering must always go together.—It is the will of God, not only that his ministers should be provided for, but that the most diligent and zealous should receive the greatest encouragement; though alas! this is seldom attended to, as far as these concerns fall under the management of men.

V. 11-31. The Lord's abhorrence of adultery, and his vengeance against it, appear conspicuous in this chapter: and though we have neither a law of jealousy, offering to detect adulterers, and adulteresses, nor any method of bringing them to condign punishment; so that they may either conceal or glory in their shame, and the impunity with which they transgress; yet assuredly their sin will at last find them out; for God himself will detect the most secret offenders, and confound the most daring. Indeed, his providence often stamps infamy upon sinners of this description, by those dreadful diseases with which he visits them, and with which they infect, plague, and curse one another in this world; and his word denounces the severest vengeance against them in the world to come. But all approaches to this horrid crime must be studiously avoided; and married persons especially should act in such a manner as to inspire mutual confidence in each other; and each of them should avoid every intimacy, and every word and look, which may excite uneasiness in the other's breast. For conjugal affection is prone to jealousy, and Satan delights in exciting “a spirit of jealousy” in the hearts of husbands and wives; knowing that it is all tormenting to suspect and to be suspected. He knows also that such suspicions subvert domestic peace, set aside family religion and the pious education of children, and expose both parties to manifold temptations: so that what began with heedless imprudence and groundless jealousy often terminates in

CHAPTER VI.

The Nazarite's vow, 1-8. His rule, in case he unavoidably contracted uncleanness, 9-12. His sacrifices and observances at the expiration of his vow, 13-21. The blessing which the priests were to pronounce on the people, 22-27.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, "When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD;

3 He shall separate himself from wine, and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink: neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.

4 All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine-tree, from the kernels even to the husk.

5 All the days of the vow of his separation, there shall no razor come upon his head; until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.

6 All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall come at no dead body.

7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because the consecration of his God is upon his head.

a 5:6. Ex. 33:15. Lev. 20:26. Prov. 18:1. Rom. 1:1. 2 Cor. 6:17. Gal. 1:15. Heb. 7:26. b Lev. 27:2. 1 Sam. 1:28. Am. 2:11, 12. Luke 1:15. Acts 21:24. * Or, to make themselves Nazarites. c Lev. 10:9. Judg. 13:14. Prov. 31:4, 5. Jer. 35:6-8. Luke 7:33, 34. 21:34. Eph. 5:18. 1 Thes. 5:22. 1 Tim. 5:23. † Or, Nazarites. p. † Heb. vine of the wine. d Judg. 13:5. 16:17. 1 Sam. 1:11. Lam. 4:7, 8. 1 Cor. 11:10-15. e 19:11-16. Lev. 19:28. Jer. 16:5, 6. Ez. 24:16-18.

deep criminality and the most fatal consequences. We should "abstain from all appearance of evil," and watch and pray continually, that we may neither excite nor indulge such dangerous suspicions. If, however, we have a clear conscience and a true faith, we may be calm under the most injurious aspersions; and God in due time will clear up our characters, and convert our affliction into a blessing.—But how should men tremble at the thoughts of appealing to God, when their own hearts condemn them! "for God is greater than their hearts, and knoweth all things," and he will be sure at length tremendously to revenge such a daring affront.—Sensual lusts will certainly end in bitterness; and they who delight in cursing shall be filled with it.—Finally, such as allow iniquity in their hearts, under a profession of faith, will find that all the doctrines of God's word, (by which the true believer becomes joyful and fruitful in the works of righteousness;) all the ordinances of his house, and all the dispensations of his providence, concur to increase their guilt, obduracy, and condemnation.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 2. The word "Nazarite" signifies one who is separated. The Lord himself set apart Samson and John the Baptist before their birth, to be Nazarites all their days: Samuel was devoted by his mother to be a perpetual Nazarite, when he was "asked of the Lord;" and the family of the Rachabites were a sort of Nazarites from one generation to another, by the injunction of Jonadab their progenitor. (Notes, Jer. 35:) But in general the Nazarites became such by a voluntary vow, which any person might make, of peculiar separation from the world and devotedness to the exercises of religion, for a limited time, and under certain regulations. (Notes, 30:)—Among the distinguishing favours which God conferred on Israel, it is stated that "he raised up of their young men for Nazarites;" whence we may infer, that their prayers, examples, and instructions, were considered as a public blessing. (Am. 2:11, 12.) The Jews say, that this vow could not be made for less than thirty days, but St. Paul seems to have taken it for no more than seven days. (Acts 21:24-27.)

To separate themselves. נָזַר, *niph.* from נָזַר, to be separate: whence נָזִיר, a Nazarite. Hence the word is rendered in the margin, "to make themselves Nazarites." The word (נָזַר) rendered "separate themselves," in the first clause, is the same as is used concerning the making of a singular vow; (Lev. 27:2.) and seems to convey the idea of a person's acting from an extraordinary zeal for God and religion.—This use of the two distinct words seems to imply, that the singular vow, and the vow of the Nazarite, were in some things of a similar nature. (Note, Lev. 27:2-8.)

V. 3, 4. "Drinking wine," or strong drink of any sort, is an emblem, both in its nature and effects, of the intoxicating pleasures of sin and sense; and from this, in every form, and from all approaches to it, the Nazarites were commanded most scrupulously to abstain.—There is nothing in Scripture which bears the most remote affinity to the religious orders of the church of Rome, except these Nazarites: but mark the difference, or rather the opposition! The religious in that church are forbidden to marry; but no such restriction was laid upon the Nazarites. They are commanded to abstain from meats; but the Nazarites might eat any food

8 All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord.

9 And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration, then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it.

10 And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

11 And the priest shall offer the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day.

12 And he shall consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass-offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.

13 ¶ And this is the law of the Nazarite: when the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;

14 And he shall offer his offering unto the Lord, one he-lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt-offering, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin-offering, and one ram without blemish for peace-offerings.

Matt. 8:21, 22. Luke 9:59, 60. 2 Cor. 5:16. f 9:6. Lev. 21:1-2, 10-12. Ez. 44:25. g Heb. separation. g 19:14-19. h 18. Acts 18:18. 21:23, 24. i Lev. 5:7-10. 14:22, 23. 15:14, 29. j Lev. 6:8-10. 14:30, 31. k 5. 1 Lev. 5:6. 14:21. m Ex. 18:24. Matt. 3:15. 24:13. John 8:29-31. Jam. 2:10. 2 John 8. n Acts 21:26. o Lev. 1:10-13. 1 Chr. 15:26. p Lev. 4:32. q Lev. 3:6.

allowed to other Israelites. They are not generally prohibited wine, even on fasting days; but the Nazarites might not drink it at any time. Their vow is perpetual to the end of their lives; but the Nazarite's vow was only for a limited time, at his own discretion; and in certain cases not unless allowed by husbands or parents. A similar contrast may often be discerned, between the rules of men's invention, for fasting and for extraordinary sanctity, and the precepts of Scripture.

V. 5. This inattention to the hair, by which it was left to grow and to hang neglected, would give the Nazarites a singular appearance of mortification to the world, and disregard to the body. It might also denote their peculiar subjection to the Lord; (Note, 1 Cor. 11:2-16.) and it served to distinguish them from other men, as they passed through the streets.

V. 6, 7. The Nazarites were not allowed to attend the funerals of their nearest relations; by which they were represented as more "holy to the Lord" than the ordinary priests, and in this particular ranked with the high priests. (Notes, Lev. 21:1-5, 10-15.)

V. 9-12. No penalty was appointed for those who willfully violated their vow of being Nazarites, nor any sacrifice required of them; they must answer for such profane trifling with the Lord another day. But if, by the very sudden death of any person near them, they contracted uncleanness they would not only be unclean seven days, and require purifying as other Israelites did; but they must offer sacrifices of atonement at the tabernacle or temple, lose all the past time, and begin over again to consecrate their appointed season of separation to the Lord. And how often soever this might take place, in every renewed instance, the whole time which had been vowed, must be entered upon again.—Though the pollution contracted was involuntary, yet it was a transgression of the ceremonial law, and as such required expiation; and in some instances, due care might not be taken. In one way or another, however, a degree of sin would doubtless be committed; and therefore the Nazarite must appear before God as a sinner, with the offerings required of a man who had been unclean by a running issue and was healed, and with a trespass-offering. (Lev. 15:13-15.) This was suited to render the Nazarites very circumspect in their whole conduct. No ceremonial uncleanness caused this interruption, except the touch of the dead body of man; for death came in by sin, and was thus accounted unclean, till the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as it were, sanctified death and the grave to his people. But the soul dead in sin, and in the dead works attending that state, are still as polluted and polluting as ever.

V. 13-20. By these sacrifices and ceremonies, at the expiration of his term, the Nazarite was taught to confess, that his performance of the vow needed atonement and forgiveness, being mixed with sin; to acknowledge that the honour of all which was done well belonged to the Lord; and that, though he was no longer a Nazarite, he was still by duty and choice the devoted servant of the Lord, and considered communion with a reconciled God as the delight of his soul. The hair was shaven off, as a token that the vow was accomplished; and was burnt, not on the altar, as if it could

CHAPTER VII.

The princes of Israel present, at the dedication of the sanctuary, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, which the Lord directs to be given to the Levites, 1-9. Each of the twelve princes, on twelve succeeding days, brings oblations and sacrifices, 10-88. The Lord speaks to Moses from the mercy-seat, 89.

AND it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar, and all the vessels thereof; and had anointed them, and sanctified them;

2 That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers (who were the princes of the tribes, and were over them that were numbered,) offered:

3 And they brought their offering before the Lord, six covered wagons, and twelve oxen; a wagon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox: and they brought them before the tabernacle.

4 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

5 Take it of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service.

6 And Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites.

7 Two wagons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service.

8 And four wagons and eight oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari, according unto their service, under the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest.

9 But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none; because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders.

10 And the princes offered for dedicating of the altar, in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their offering before the altar.

11 And the Lord said unto Moses, They shall offer their offering each prince on his day, for the dedicating of the altar.

12 And he that offered his offering the first day, was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah.

13 And his offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after

the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them were full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

14 One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense:

15 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

16 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

17 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This was the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

18 On the second day Nathaneel the son of Zuar, prince of Issachar, did offer.

19 He offered for his offering one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

20 One spoon of gold of ten shekels, full of incense:

21 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

22 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

23 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This was the offering of Nathaneel the son of Zuar.

24 On the third day Eliab the son of Helon, prince of the children of Zebulun, did offer.

25 His offering was one silver charger, the weight whereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

26 One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

27 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

28 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

29 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This was the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.

30 On the fourth day Elizur the son of She-deur, prince of the children of Reuben, did offer.

31 His offering was one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the

a Ex. 40:17-19. b Ex. 30:23-30. Lev. 8:10, 11. c Gen. 2:3. Ex. 13:2. 1 Kings 8:64. Matt. 23:19. d See on 1:4-16. * Heb. who stood. e Ex. 35:27. 1 Chr. 29:6-8. 2 Chr. 35:9. Ezra 2:68, 69. Neh. 7:70-72. f Ex. 25:2. 35:5. Ps. 16:2. 3. Th. 3:8. g 25:35. h 21-25. h 3:36, 37. 4:31-33. 13:31. 4:5-16. 2 Sam. 6:5, 13. 1 Chr. 15:3, 13. 23:36. k Deut. 20:5. 1 Kings 8:63. 2 Chr. 7:5, 9. Ezra 6:16. Neh. 12:27. Ps. 30: title. John 10:22. 11 Cor. 14:33, 40. m 2:3. 10:14. Gen. 4:8. Matt. 1:4. Luke 3:32. N. A. 25:29. Ezra 1:9, 10. 8:25. Jer. 52:

19. Dan. 5:2. Zech. 14:20. Matt. 14:8, 11. o Ex. 30:13. Lev. 27:3, 25. p Lev. 2:1. q 4:7. Ex. 37:16. 1 Kings 7:50. 2 Kings 25:14, 15. 2 Chr. 4:22. 24:14. r Ex. 30:7, 8, 34-38. 35:8. s Lev. 1: t Lev. 4:23. u Lev. 3: 2 Cor. 5:19-21. x 1:8. 2:5. y See on 12-17. z Gen. 8:20. Rom. 12:1. Eph. 5:2. a Lev. 7:11-13. 1 Kings 8:63. Prov. 7:14. Col. 1:20. b 1:9. 2:7. c Ps. 50:8-14. 51:16. Is. 1:11. Jer. 7:22. Amos 5:22. d 1:5. 2:10.

this supposes that more time had elapsed. Moses had begun to set up the tabernacle, than was employed in anointing and dedicating it, and in consecrating the priests: but perhaps the language used was intended to take in likewise the arrangements made concerning the encampment of the tribes around the sanctuary, and the charge of it assigned to the priests and Levites. As, however, the princes are the same as presided over the numbering of the people; and as they afterwards offered in the order of their encampments, not in that of the seniority; (which is shown by comparing this chapter with the second;) we must conclude that these regulations had previously been made.—The wagons are supposed to have been neat carriages, such as were then used to ride in; yet made very strong; and some think they were richly decorated, as well as covered to keep out the wet or dust.

V. 4-9. It seems that Moses hesitated on the propriety of receiving this oblation, and about the disposal of it, till he had consulted the Lord. The sockets of silver and brass alone are computed to have weighed more than eight tons, which would be fully sufficient to load four strong wagons: so that the sons of Merari would still have much to carry upon their shoulders; as probably the sons of Gershon also had. The Kohathites had in all only a moderate weight; and in reverence to the sacred things, they were expressly ordered to carry them at all times upon their shoulders. As the priests were of this family, they often assisted in this service. The neglect of this rule was David's first and chief mistake, when Uzzah was smitten. (Notes, 2 Sam. 6:3, 12, 13.)

V. 10. It is probable that there was some difference of rank and possessions among the Israelites even in Egypt: and consequently at their departure, the chief men would obtain a larger portion of the spoil; by which means they

were enabled to present these oblations. Yet some persons conjecture, that the princes offered not only in the behalf, but at the expense, of their several tribes.

V. 11. As the princes were preparing to bring their oblations all at once, the Lord ordered, that they should present them separately; both to prevent confusion, to increase the solemnity, that the priests might not be overburdened with work, and that they might have leisure to grow more expert by daily practice. And, as a large proportion of the sacrifices was feasted upon, both by the priests and people, it would also prevent excess or waste, and promote hospitality, to have only one oblation at a time. Though one tribe was more numerous and wealthy than another, they all presented exactly the same oblations and sacrifices; for they were all equally interested in the sanctuary and worship of God, and were all willing to express an equal affection for them. Every one's offering is nevertheless particularly mentioned; for the Lord takes pleasure in recording the willing services of his people.

V. 12. Nahshon is the only one, who is not called a prince, in the history of this transaction. Some suppose that this was a humiliating circumstance, intended to counterbalance his pre-eminence; others conjecture, that this title was omitted, because it was reserved for Christ, who was to descend from this tribe: but perhaps it was considered as needless, seeing he was the principal person in the whole company.

V. 13, 14. The silver chargers, or dishes, might be useful for the meat-offerings, and to contain the flesh of the sacrifices when the priests feasted upon it. The silver bowls would be useful for the drink-offerings, and to receive the blood for sprinkling; and the golden spoons were suited to the service of the altar of incense. (Note, Ex. 25:23-30,

sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

32 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense*.

33 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

34 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

35 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.*

36 ¶ On the fifth day *Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai*, prince of the children of Simeon, *did offer.*

37 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

38 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

39 One young bullock, one ram, ^aone lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

40 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

41 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.*

42 ¶ On the sixth day *Elisaph the son of Deuel*, prince of the children of Gad, *offered.*

43 His offering *was* one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *shekels*, a silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

44 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

45 One ^ayoung bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

46 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

47 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.*

48 ¶ On the seventh day *Elishama the son of Ammihud*, prince of the children of Ephraim, *offered.*

49 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

50 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

51 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

52 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering.

53 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.*

54 ¶ On the eighth day *offered* ^a*Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur*, prince of the children of Manasseh.

55 His offering *was* one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

56 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

57 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

58 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

59 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two

oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.*

60 On the ninth day *Abidan the son of Gideon*, prince of the children of Benjamin *offered.*

61 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, a silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering.

62 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

63 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

64 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

65 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideon.*

66 ¶ On the tenth day *Abiezer the son of Ammishaddai*, prince of the children of Dan, *offered.*

67 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

68 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

69 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

70 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

71 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Abiezer the son of Ammishaddai.*

72 ¶ On the eleventh day *Pagiel the son of Ocran*, prince of the children of Asher, *offered.*

73 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

74 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

75 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

76 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

77 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran.*

78 ¶ On the twelfth day *Ahira the son of Enan*, prince of the children of Naphtali, *offered.*

79 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

80 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of *incense* :

81 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

82 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

83 And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. *This was the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.*

84 ¶ *This was* the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed by the 'princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold ;

85 Each charger of silver *weighing* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, each bowl seventy : all the silver vessels *weighed* two thousand and four hundred *shekels*, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

e Pa. 66:15. Mal. 1:11. Luke 1:10. Rev. 8:3. f 1:6. 2:12. g Ex. 12:5. Joha 1:29. Acta 8:32. 1 Pet. 1:19. Rev. 5:6. h 1:14. 2:14. Son of Reuel. i Lev. 2:5. 14:10. Heb. 1:9. j 1 John 2:27. k Pa. 40:6. Is. 53:4. 2 Cor. 5:21. 11:10. 2:19. m 1:10. 2:20. n 1:11. 2:22. o Pa. 141:2. Is. 66:20. Dan. 9:27. Rom. 15:16.

Probably, the princes had noticed, that the furniture for the tabernacle was not, in these particulars, suited to the rest, or was not sufficient for the purpose.

V. 83. *Offering.*] *Korban*, here and in all the other places, where it thus occurs in this chapter. (Mark 7:11.)

Phil. 4:18. Heb. 13:15. p 1:12. 2:25. q 1:13. 2:27. r 1:15. 2:29. s S'e on 10. 1 Chr. 29:6-8. Ezra 2:68,69. Neh. 7:70-72. Is. 60:6-10. Heb. 13:10. Rev. 21:14. t Judg. 5:9. Neh. 3:9. u 1 Chr. 22:14. 29:4,7. Ezra 8:25,26. v See on 13.

V. 84. Probably, the term *dedication* was used for this solemn public oblation of the princes, as representatives of their tribes, to the service of the altar; and not for its first consecration by Moses.

V. 89. The Lord spake to M^{oses} in an audible voice on

86 The golden spoons *were* twelve, full of incense, *weighing* ten *shekels* apiece, after the shekel of the sanctuary: all the gold of the spoons *was* an hundred and twenty *shekels*.

87 All the oxen for the burnt-offering *were* twelve bullocks, the rams twelve, the lambs of the first year twelve, with their meat-offering: and the kids of the goats, for sin-offering, twelve.

88 And all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace-offerings *were* twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he-goats sixty, the lambs of the first year sixty. This *was* the dedication of the altar after *that* it was anointed.

89 ¶ And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation *to* speak with *him*, then *he* heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that *was* upon the ark of testimony, from between the *two* cherubims: and he spake unto him.

CHAPTER VIII.

The lamps of the candlestick lighted, 1-4. The Levites consecrated, 5-22. Their age and time of service, 23-26.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou *lightest* the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.

3 And Aaron did so: he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick; as the LORD commanded Moses.

4 And *this* work of the candlestick *was* of beaten gold; unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, *was* beaten work: according unto *the* pattern which the LORD had showed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

5 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them.

7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse

them: 'Sprinkle *water* of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them *wash* their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

8 Then let them take a young bullock with *this* meat-offering, *even* fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering.

9 And *thou* shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou *shalt* gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together.

10 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD, and *the* children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites:

11 And Aaron shall *offer* the Levites before the LORD, *for* an offering of the children of Israel, that *they* may *execute* the service of the LORD.

12 And the *Levites* shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer *the* one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites.

13 And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them *for* an offering unto the LORD.

14 Thus shalt thou *separate* the Levites from among the children of Israel; *and* the Levites shall be mine.

15 And after that shall the Levites *go* in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them *for* an offering.

16 For they *are* wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; *'instead* of such as open every womb, *even* instead of the first-born of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.

11, 10, 84. x 14. Ex. 33:9-11. * That is, God. y 11. Ex. 25:22. Lev. 1:1. Heb. 4:16. x 15. 18-21. 1 Sam. 4:4. 1 Kings 6:23. Ps. 80:1. 1 Pet. 1:12. a 21. 23-25. 7:1. 23. 40:23. Lev. 24:1, 2. Ps. 119:105, 130. Is. 8:20. Matt. 5:14. John 1:9. 2 Pet. 1:19. Rev. 1:12, 20. 2:1. 4:5. b Ex. 25:31-39. 37:17-24. c Ex. 25:8. 37:17, 22. d Ex. 25:9, 40. 1 Chr. 23:11-19. Heb. 8:5, 9:23. e Ex. 19:15. 2 Cor. 7:1. Jam. 4:3. f Lev. 8:6. 14:7. Is. 52:15. Ex. 38:35. Heb. 9:10. g 19:9, 10, 13, 18, 19. Ps. 51:7. Heb. 9:13. * Heb. let them cause a razor to pass over, &c. Lev. 14:8, 9. 19:7, 8, 10, 19, 31, 20. Gen. 35:2. Ex. 19:10. Lev. 15:6, 10, 11, 27. 16:29. Ps. 51:2. Jer. 4:14. Matt. 23:25, 26. Jam. 4:8. 1 Pet. 3:21.

this occasion, as he had often before done; and as he probably spake to the high-priests afterwards, when they inquired of him by Urim and Thummim. (Notes, Ex. 28:30.)—This audible articulate voice from God, which was perceived by human ears, represented God as if he were incorporate, and may well be looked upon as an earnest of that great Mystery, "God manifest in the flesh," who in the fulness of time became a man, and spake to the Jews familiarly in their own language. Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They whom Providence distinguishes as princes, nobles, or wealthy persons, should take the lead and set the example in every good work, with liberal hearts devising "liberal things;" for this is the proper improvement of their talents. But a liberal mind should be under the direction of prudence and discretion: and the circumstances of the times, the state of the church and its ministers, and the necessities of those around them should be considered; that nothing may be wasted in useless expense, but all wisely directed to the substantial benefit of those who need it.—The servants of God have no occasion to be discouraged in the prospect either of heavy services, or of fiery trials: for he can send them seasonable and unexpected relief whenever he pleases; and will be sure to proportion his assistance to their necessities.—Every thing in the worship of God should be "done decently and in order," and as may best promote edification. On some occasions it may be proper to employ a great deal of time, and to expend much money in his immediate worship: and the growing Christian will not be weary or complain of this; but will account it his gain, his pleasure, and his honour. All our works of piety and charity must be accompanied with an humble acknowledgment of our sinfulness, and a believing dependence on the sacrifice of Christ: they must spring from love to God, gratitude to him for the blessings of redemption, an unreserved surrender of ourselves to his service, and a disposition to delight in doing his will, and in rendering him all the praise. Such good works are "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." The Lord delights to honour those who thus honour him. He remembers and records their expressions of faith and love. In this world he communicates with his disciples from his mercy-seat, by answering their prayers, and counselling and comforting their hearts: and he will at the day of judgment, publish to the assembled universe, distinctly and particularly, the fruits of holiness,

Rev. 7:14. x Ex. 29:13. Lev. 1:3 & 2. k 15:9. Lev. 2:1. l Lev. 4:13, 14. 16:3. Is. 53:10. Rom. x 3. 2 Cor. 5:31. m Ex. 23:4, 40:12. n Lev. 8:3. o 3:15. Acts 6:6. 13:3. 1 Tim. 4:14. p 22. † Heb. wave. ‡ Heb. wave-offering. 6:20. Ex. 29:24. Lev. 7:30. 8:27, 29. § Heb. they may be to execute, &c. p 14:9—33. 35:43—43. q Ex. 39:10. Lev. 1:4. 8:14, 16:21. r 8:6, 14, 16. Lev. 5:2, 9, 10. 8:14, 15. 9:7, 14, 19, 20, 22. Heb. 10:4—7. s Lev. 1:4. 4:20, 35:34. 16:8, 11, 16—19. Heb. 9:22. t 21. See on 11:18:6. Rom. 12:1. 15:16. u 6:2. v Pent. 10:8. Rom. 1:1. Gal. 1:15. Heb. 7:26. x 17. 3:45. 16:9, 10. 18:6. Mal. 3:17. y 11. 3:23—37. 4:3—32. 1 Chr. 23:25. 26: z See on 11, 13. 3:12. s 3:12, 45.

which by his grace they produced on earth: as *evincing* them to be the heirs of the "kingdom prepared for his people, from before the foundation of the world." (Notes, and P. O. Matt. 25:31—46.)

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 2—4. The shaft of the candlestick was all in one piece: but the seven lamps were formed separate, and might be taken off, or fixed upon it, as occasion required. (Note, Ex. 25:31—39.)—It is a tradition of the Jews, that the middle lamp was lighted from the altar of burnt-offering, and the other lamps from it, which being done, each lamp gave light to the part of the sanctuary "over against it."—Pattern. (4) Notes, Ex. 25:9, 40.

V. 6—8. The Levites were not distinguished from the other Israelites, by any prescribed garments; nor were they washed or anointed, after the manner in which the priests had been; but though they were set apart with less solemnity, to mark the inferiority of their office, and because they were not so expressly typical of Christ as the priests were; (Notes, Lev. 8:9;) yet there was equally a remembrance of sin, both in its guilt and defilement, and of the need of atonement and sanctification, in the separation of them to their office. Their clothes were washed; they were sprinkled with the water of purifying; (Notes, 19:) a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were sacrificed in their behalf; and they shaved all their flesh, according to the ceremony of the leper's purification. (Note, Lev. 14:8, 9.) This might denote "the laying apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness;" the mortification of natural depravity, and the renouncing of unnecessary worldly avocations and employments, that they might more entirely devote their time and attention to the services assigned them.

V. 9—11. The words translated "the whole assembly," often signify, the elders or principal persons in the several tribes; who, as the representatives of the whole congregation, laid their hands on the heads of the Levites; thus expressing their ready consent to the substitution of them in the stead of the first-born, and their surrender of them to the Lord for the purpose of serving at the sanctuary: and then Aaron, by some significant action, offered them as a *wave-offering* to the Lord. (11. marg.)

V. 12. (Notes, Ex. 29:10, 11. Lev. 1:4. 16:20—22. V. 14—18. Marg. Ref. Notes, 3:41—43. Ex. 13:2, 11—16.

V. 19. When Aaron had offered the Levites as an offer

17 For *ball* the first-born of the children of Israel are mine, *both* man and beast: *on* the day that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt, *and* sanctified them for myself.

18 And I have taken the Levites for all the first-born of the children of Israel.

19 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron, and to his sons, from among the children of Israel; to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.

20 And Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel, did to the Levites according unto all that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did the children of Israel unto them.

21 And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them as an offering before the Lord; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.

22 And after that went the Levites in, to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron, and before his sons: as the Lord had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.

23 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

24 This is it that *belongeth* unto the Levites; from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:

b Ex. 13:2, 12, 13. Luke 2:23. c Ex. 12:29. Ps. 78:51, 105:36, 135:8. Heb. 11:28. d Ex. 13:14, 15, 29:44. Lev. 27:14, 15, 28. Ex. 20:12. John 10:36, 17:19. Heb. 10:29. Jam. 1:18. e 3:6—9, 18:2—6, 1 Chr. 23:28—32. Ex. 44:11—14. * Heb. given. f 1:13, 16:46, 19:5, 1 Sam. 6:19, 2 Chr. 26:15—20. g See on 7:19, 12:19. h See on 11:13, 15, 3:12. i 12. k 15. 2 Chr. 30:15—17, 27:31, 35:9—15. l 4:3, 23. 1 Chr. 23:24—27, 33:12, 13. † Heb. war the warfare of, &c. 1 Cor. 9:7, 2 Cor. 10:4. 1 Tim. 1:18, 6:12, 2 Tim. 2:3—5. ‡ Heb. return from the warfare of, &c. 4:23. 2 Tim. 4:7. m 1:53, 3:32, 18:4, 31:30.

ing unto the Lord, the Lord gave them back to Aaron, who might now with comfort make use of their assistance, "in, or at, the tabernacle;" that is, in the court; or "about the tabernacle," when it was removed. They likewise assisted in offering those sacrifices, by which atonement was made. This and the other services allotted them being duly performed, without any unallowed intrusion of the other tribes, would preserve the people from those terrible effects of the divine displeasure which they might otherwise apprehend.

V. 24. At the age of twenty-five the Levites began to attend upon the ordinary services of the tabernacle: but they were neither required, nor allowed, to assist in its removal, till they were thirty years old. Probably, at the age of twenty-five the Levites were, in after ages, solemnly admitted to their office, according to the prescribed order of this chapter.

V. 25, 26. The Levites, above fifty years of age, might superintend and assist their junior brethren in the ordinary offices; and give them and the people counsel and instruction; but they were exempted from carrying the tabernacle, and from other laborious services. (Note, 4:3.)—It is remarkable, that no law was made concerning the age at which the priests should begin to officiate; and though various blemishes disqualified them for the service of the sanctuary, yet they continued their ministrations till death, if capable. On the other hand, nothing is said concerning any bodily defects or blemishes disqualifying the Levites; but the time of their service is expressly settled. Their work was far more laborious than that of the priests; it is probable that, without necessity, the priests would not begin very early to officiate; and the wisdom and experience of age would increase, rather than diminish, their fitness for the sacred duties of their office.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Jesus Christ is the only Light of this dark world; in virtue of his atonement he diffuses, by his holy word and Holy Spirit, divine light around; and all that is called illumination, but is not derived from that source, is but the greater and more dangerous darkness. (Notes, Is. 8:20. Matt. 6:22, 23.)—Faithful and able ministers in searching the Scriptures, comparing one part with another, and with what they observe and experience; and imparting knowledge by preaching the gospel, and by various other methods, are, in their several places, "burning and shining lights," communicating the light received from Christ to those over against them, in their congregations and neighbourhoods; and private Christians do the same in their several connexions, when their knowledge and profession of the truth are accompanied with the ornament of a holy and exemplary conversation. In this way, one is enlightened from another, and truth and righteousness will be diffused ere long through all the nations of the earth.—But so polluted is every one born of Adam's fallen race, that

25 And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more;

26 But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

CHAPTER IX.

The observance of the passover enforced, 1—5. The case of some who were unclean, 6—8. The passover to be observed in the second month by such as could not keep it in its season, 9—14. The cloud directs the removals and encampments of Israel, 15—23.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at this appointed season.

3 In the fourteenth day of this month at even ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.

5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even, in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day; and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day?

7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man; wherefore are we

1 Chr. 23:32, 26:20—29. Ex. 44:8, 11. a See on 1:1. Ex. 40:2. b Ex. 12:23, &c. c 28:16. Ex. 12:6, 14. Lev. 23:5. Deut. 16:1, 2. Josh. 5:10. 2 Chr. 35:1. Ezra 6:19, Mark 14:12, Luke 22:7, 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. * Heb. between the two evenings. Ex. 12:6, marg. Heb. 9:26, d 11:12. See on Ex. 12:7—11. e 8:20, 29:40. Gen. 6:22, 7:5. Ex. 39:32, 42. Deut. 1:3, 4:5. Matt. 23:20. John 15:14. Acts 26:19. Heb. 8:5, 11:8. f 5:2, 6:6, 7:19, 11:18, John 13:23. g 15:33, 27:2. Ex. 18:15, 19:26. Lev. 24:11.

none can approach or serve God, except as an humble penitent he plead guilty, depend upon the Saviour's atoning blood, and be sanctified by his Holy Spirit. And if the heart be cleansed by divine grace, the outward conduct and conversation will be clean likewise.—The Lord himself hath provided and appointed the method and means of our cleansing, and giving us "exceeding great and precious promises" for our encouragement: but, "having these promises," we are exhorted to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;" (Note, 2 Cor. 7:1.) and to lay aside and put off our sinful pursuits and indulgences, that we may glorify God "with our bodies and our spirits, which are his," as "bought with a price." Every real Christian is thus cleansed from sin, separated from the world, and presented to the Lord, "as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to him;" but the ministers of Christ especially. When these are regularly appointed to the sacred office, with the approbation of their brethren and of the church of God; and when faithful and diligent in their work; so far from being considered as a useless part of the community, (as they are often profanely represented,) they may fairly be shown to be the most useful members of society, by their examples, labours, and prayers, in repressing sin which ruineth, and in promoting righteousness which exalteth any people; and in making known that great atonement by which the wrath of God is averted from our guilty souls, and from guilty nations. Let persons of another stamp, called ministers, plead for themselves as they can: but those who act up to this character should never be deserted by men, and will never be forsaken by the Lord, in their old age; they may still be useful by their counsel and influence; and "when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away." (Notes, 1 Pet. 5:1—4.)

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1—5. This passage is dated before any other of the events recorded in this book; namely, in the first month of the second year, or the next year after Israel left Egypt. (1:1. Note, Ex. 40:2.)—It is generally thought, that the Passover was no more celebrated after this time, till the people arrived in Canaan. (Notes, Josh. 5:2—10.) The difficulty of procuring flour, during their frequent removals, might be one reason, that the observance was no more required in the desert; and this renewed command would make way for the more regular celebration of it in Canaan. This interruption however intimated, that these ordinances were only a shadow of good things to come, and not intended for perpetuity in the church. (Notes, and P. O. Ex. 12.)

V. 6—8. The laws respecting ceremonial defilement had not at this time been explicitly given; yet several intimations had been made, which created scruples in the consciences of these persons, who probably had been under the necessity of

kept back, *th*a "we may not offer an offering of the Lord in his appointed season among the children of Israel?"

8 And Moses said unto them, "Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you."

9 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you, or of your posterity, shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or *be* in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the Lord.

11 The "fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs."

12 They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people; because he brought not the offering of the Lord in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the Lord; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

15 ¶ And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire until the morning.

h 2. 2 Chr. 30:17-19, i Ex. 11:13, 2 Chr. 30:17, k 27:5, John 7:17, 17:8, 14:15, 11:3, Heb. 3:5,6, 1:5,7, m Matt. 5:21, 1 Cor. 11:28, n 2 Chr. 30:2-15, o 1 Chr. 12:1, p Ex. 12:19, q Ex. 12:48, John 19:38, r 3, Ex. 12:43, s 13:15, 19:15, t 17:3, Ex. 12:15, Lev. 17:1, 10:14-16, Heb. 6:6, 10:20-22, 12:18, 13:10, 14:7, u 3:24, Lev. 30:30, 22:9, 25, 27:10, Heb. 9:38, x Ex. 12:19, Lev. 22:2, 21:22, 15:36, 7, Psh. 2:10-22, y Ex. 40:2-18,

attending the funeral of some relation. They counted it their duty and privilege to eat the passover, but feared to eat it with their uncleanness upon them; they therefore desired to know what they ought to do, and very properly referred the case to the decision of Moses, who applied for direction to the Lord. This seems to have occurred at the time, when the rest of the congregation were about to celebrate the passover.—The passover is here called "the offering of the Lord," being a solemn sacrifice, though no part of it was burnt on the altar.

V. 10-14. The appointment of a passover in the second month, for those who were defiled at the regular season, implied a prohibition of its being eaten by any person ceremonially unclean. It must be supposed, that they who were at a great distance on a journey, had a good reason for being from home at that season, and could not reach the place of the tabernacle in due time. The feast of unleavened bread might be observed at a distance from the sanctuary, and even by the ceremonially unclean: it is therefore thought by many, that it was not kept after the passover in the second month: yet Hezekiah, when he celebrated the passover in the second month, observed the feast of unleavened bread, and that during fourteen days. (Notes, 2 Chr. 30:2-4, 21-25.) Women and children, and such as were not required to go up to the sanctuary at the three great feasts, were not particularly concerned in the law; at least not in the annexed denunciation against such as wilfully neglected the passover, and who might expect to be visited by some divine judgment.—They, who were unclean or at a distance in the second month, were not allowed to keep the passover in any subsequent month.—Strangers, renouncing idolatry, might live among the Israelites: but if they desire to keep the passover, they and the males of their households must be circumcised; and in all things they must conform to the law concerning it; and then they would be, in that respect, partakers of the privileges enjoyed by those who were Israelites by birth. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 12:48, 49.)

V. 15. "The tent of the testimony" was the west end of the tabernacle over the most holy place, where the ark of the covenant with the tables of the law was placed, which testified Israel to be the Lord's people, and him to be their God. (Notes, Ex. 25:10-22.)

V. 16-23. (Notes, Ex. 13:21, 22, 40:36-38.) The moving or abiding of the cloud, as the signal of Israel's marching, or continuing in their encampments, would doubtless often try the patience of the people, and be very inconvenient to them: yet we do not find, amidst all their rebellions, that they ventured to act in direct opposition to these intimations of the divine will, except in one instance. (14:40-45.)—Onkelos, an old Jewish commentator, in many places para-

16 So it was "always: the cloud covered it *by* day, and the appearance of fire by night."

17 And "when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents."

18 At the commandment of the Lord the children of Israel journeyed: and at the commandment of the Lord they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the Lord, and journeyed not.

20 And so it was when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle: according to the commandment of the Lord they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the Lord they journeyed.

21 And so it was when the cloud tabode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up they journeyed.

23 At the commandment of the Lord they rested in their tents, and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed: they kept the charge of the Lord, at the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

z 14:14, Ex. 14:19, 20:24, 33:9, 10, 40:34, 1a, 78:14, 105:39, 1s, 4:5, Ez. 10:3, 4, 1 Cor. 10:31, a Ex. 13:21, 22, 40:38, Deut. 1:33, Neh. 9:12, 19, b 10:11, 33:34, Ex. 40:35, 37, Ps. 80:1, 2, c Ex. 33:14, 15, Ps. 32:8, 73:24, John 10:3, 4, 9, d 20, 10:13, Ex. 17:1, 2 John 6, e Heb. prolonged, f See on 15:2, 53, 3, 5, g Heb. woe, i See on 17, Ex. 40:36, 37, Deut. 1:6, 7, 2, 3, 4, Ps. 77:20, Prov. 3:5, 6, Acts 1:4, g 19, Gen. 28:5, Josh. 2:3, Ex. 44:8, Zech. 3:7,

phrases the words rendered, "at the commandment of the Lord," at the mouth of the Word of the Lord. This shows that the ancient Jews had some knowledge of the doctrine with which the apostle John sublimely opens his gospel.—The case of two or three millions of people, shut up in a dreary wilderness, for almost forty years, without ever seeing house, or garden, or corn-field; and that as completely as if the highest walls, garrisoned by the most valiant troops, had surrounded them; when compared with their rebellions in other things, and their submission in this respect, most strikingly shows, that they were convinced beyond the possibility of doubt, that resistance must be unavailing; yet nothing short of having witnessed the miracles recorded in these books, could have induced this strong conviction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are so immersed in the things of time and sense, that the most pure minds have need to be repeatedly "stirred up, by way of remembrance," to such duties as they have before been instructed in. (Notes, 2 Pet. 1:12-15, 3:1-4.)—Alas! in what a sad dilemma are multitudes of professed Christians! They are *habitually unclean*, through indulged lusts and unrepented sins, and cannot approach the Lord's table without a presumptuous profanation: yet in staying away they neglect "their bounden duty and service;" and virtually confess that they have no part in Christ, but are liable to bear the heavy load of their own iniquity, and to be cut off by the righteous judgment of God; not so much for disregarding this outward sign, as for neglecting the great salvation itself. When, however, this becomes their burden, and they sincerely inquire what they must do, considering the ordinances of God as their duty and privilege, and every impediment as their affliction; their case then becomes hopeful. For they are directed to the "Fountain open for sin and for uncleanness;" and having been "washed and sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," they may approach with comfort to partake of that sacred feast. But men should reflect, that if they are not prepared for the Lord's table, they are not fit for death and judgment; and that it is very ungrateful for Christians to neglect the command of him who loved us, and gave himself for our sins, and as with his dying lips, said to his disciples, "Do this in remembrance of me." Under difficulties and distress of conscience it is proper to consult pious and faithful ministers, and plainly to state the case unto them. And it becomes them to be accessible to such inquirers; and not only to offer them the best counsel they can, but in doubtful cases to take time for deliberation, and consulting the word of God, and prayer, in order to give them a satisfactory solution: and as the Lord makes a difference between occasional defilements and presumptuous disobedience, they should do the same. (Note, 2 Chr. 30:16)

CHAPTER X.

Directions for making and using the silver trumpets, 1-10. The Israelites journey from Sinai to Paran, 11-13; and he or her in which they marched, 14-28. Moses enters Holab to continue with them, 29-32. His prayer at the resting, and the resting of the ark, 33-36.

AND THE LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

3 And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

4 And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.

5 When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.

6 When ye blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys.

7 But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm.

8 And the sons of Aaron the priests shall blow with the trumpets: and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.

9 And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets: and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

10 Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And it came to pass, on the twentieth day

a 2 Kings 12:13. 2 Chr. 5:12. b Ex. 25:18, 31. Eph. 4:5. c 7. Ps. 81:3. 89:15. Is. 1:18. Hos. 8:1. Joel 1:14. d Jer. 4:5. Joel 2:15, 16. e See on 14-16. 7:2. Ex. 18:21. Deut. 1:15. f 6:7. Is. 58:1. Joel 2:1. g 2:3-9. h 2:10-16. 1:3, 4. k 3:16. Josh. 6:4-16. l 1 Chr. 15:24. 16:6. m 2 Chr. 13:12-15. 1 Judg. 2:13. 3:27. 4:2. 6:3, 34. 7:16-21. 10:3, 12. 1 Sam. 10:18. Ps. 106:42. n Isa. 18:3. 58:1. Jer. 4:5, 19, 21. 6:14. 7:14. 33:3-6. Hos. 5:8. Am. 3:6. Zeph. 1:16. 1 Cor. 14:8. o 1 Chr. 15:1. 16:1. 16:6. Luke 1:72-74. p 29:1. Lev. 23:24. 25:9, 10. 1 Chr. 15:28. 16:12. 2 Chr. 5:12, 13. 7:6. 29:26, 28. Ezra 3:10. Neh. 12:35. Ps. 51:3. 59:15. 68:26. 79:3. Is. 27:13. 55:4. Matt. 11:28. 1 Cor. 15:52. 1 Thes. 4:16, 18. 25:17. p Ex. 28:29. 30:16. Josh. 4:7. 1 Cor. 11:24-26. q 1:1. 9:2.

—20.)—We may often, without our own fault, be deprived of the opportunity of attending on divine ordinances; but in that case we shall not lose the blessing: and when thus kept away at one time, we should be doubly careful to improve the next opportunity.—Blessed be God, that we strangers of the Gentiles are admitted to participate in the blessings of "Christ our Passover, who was sacrificed for us;" but let us be careful to celebrate the sacred feast after the prescribed manner; as true penitents and spiritual pilgrims, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (Note, 1 Cor. 5:6-8.)—Though we are not under the miraculous direction of the cloud; yet the providence of God appoints the bounds of our habitation, and his word is the perfect and sufficient rule of our conduct. Wherever our lot is cast, let us study contentment. Whenever called upon to remove, let us be careful that we act according to the commandment of our God, and in dependence on his promises, in the patience of hope, and quietly waiting for his salvation: and when we pass through temptation and tribulation, or the gloomy vale of death, if his presence go with us, we must be safe and shall be happy. Let us beg of him, therefore, to choose for us our places of abode in this world, our time of removal out of it, and our everlasting inheritance; for he never chose to the final disadvantage of those, who were enabled to refer all their concerns to his direction.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 2-10. These silver trumpets were evidently intended to typify the preaching of the gospel. (Notes, Lev. 23:24, 25. Ps. 89:15-18. Is. 27:12, 13.) The priests alone were allowed to blow them; and as there were at that time but two priests, the sons of Aaron the high-priest, only two trumpets were made: but we read afterwards "of one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets." (2 Chr. 5:12.) In allusion to the uses assigned to them, in this place, and in others referred to in the margin, and which do not seem to require explanation; (Marg. Ref. e-p:) we may observe that the gospel sounds the alarm to sinners; calls them to repentance; proclaims liberty to captives and slaves; collects the spiritual worshippers of God, in all ages and nations, to keep their solemn feasts of godly sorrow, and feasts of holy joy; summons them to become

of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.

12 And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.

13 And they first took their journey, according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

14 ¶ In the first place went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah, according to their armies: and over his hosts was Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

15 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Issachar, was Nethaneel the son of Zuar.

16 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, was Eliab the son of Helon.

17 And the tabernacle was taken down: and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle.

18 ¶ And the standard of the camp of Reuben set forward, according to their armies: and over his hosts was Elizur the son of Shedeur.

19 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Simeon, was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

20 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad, was Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

21 And the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary; and the other did set up the tabernacle against they came.

22 ¶ And the standard of the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward, according to their armies: and over his host was Elishama the son of Ammihud.

23 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh, was Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

24 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, was Abidan the son of Gideon.

25 ¶ And the standard of the camp of the children of Dan set forward, which was the rearward of all the camps throughout their hosts: and

1:5, 11. Ex. 40:2. r See on 9:17-23. s 33:16. Ex. 13:20. 40:36. Deut. 1:19. t 1:1. 9:1. 33:15. Ex. 19:1, 2. u 12:16. 13:26. Gen. 21:21. Deut. 1:1. 33:2. 1 Sam. 2:11. Hab. 3:3. x 9:23. y 2:3-9. 26:18-27. Gen. 48:8. z See on 1:7. 7:12. a 1:8. 7:14. b 1:9. 7:24. c 1:51. Heb. 9:11. 12:28. 2 Pet. 1:14. d 3:5. 25:35. 35:37. 4:34-35. 7:6-8. e 2:10-16. 26:5-18. f 1:5. 7:35. g 1:5. 7:36. h 1:14. 2:14. Son of Reuel. 7:42. i 2:17. 3:27-32. 4:4-16. 7:9. 1 Chr. 16:2. 12-15. * That is, the Gershonites and the Merarites. 17:151. k 2:18-24. 26:22-41. Gen. 48:19. Ps. 80:1, 2. 11:10. 7:48. m 1:10. 7:54. n 1:11. 7:60. o 2:28-31. 26:42-51. Gen. 49:16, 17. p Deut. 25:17, 18. Josh. 6:9. Is. 52:12. 58:3.

strangers and pilgrims upon earth; directs and encourages their heavenly journey; excites them to combat against Satan, the world, and sin; animates them with the assurance of victory; calls their attention to the sacrifice of Christ; explains it, and tends suitably to affect them with it; and is a constant memorial of the Lord's gracious presence with them, for their encouragement and protection, and for a terror and dismay to all their enemies. (2 Chr. 13:12.)—The distinct ways of sounding the trumpets were doubtless well understood both by priests and people: and this might imply, that the word of God should be rendered as plain as possible to every description of those who hear it. (Note, 1 Cor. 14:8-12.)

V. 11-13. After the Israelites had continued nearly a year at mount Sinai, (Ex. 19:1.) to settle every thing respecting their future worship, they began their march to Canaan; whither they might speedily have arrived, had they not renewed their rebellions. This may typically teach us, that though true religion begins with the knowledge of the holy law, and humiliation for sin; yet we should also press forward, and "go on towards perfection," in an acquaintance with Christ and his gospel, and those effectual encouragements, motives, and assistances to holiness, which it proposes.—Previously to the removal of the cloud, the people seem to have had an express command to set out on their journey. (Note, Deut. 1:6-8.) In consequence of this we may suppose, that they had got all ready for their march, when the removing of the cloud gave the signal for their actually setting off; and that, in general, they had time allowed for these purposes.

V. 21. The Gershonites and Merarites, who marched before the Kohathites for that purpose, (1 Chr. 15:20) set up the tabernacle, to receive the sacred things when the Kohathites arrived with them.

V. 25. This division not only brought up the rear of Israel, but also gathered under it such as were left behind through weariness, and the mixed multitude which followed them, and those who, being unclean, were excluded from the camp.

V. 29. It is most probable, that Jethro was the same person as Reuel, or Raguel; and that Hobab was his son, and Moses's brother-in-law, who had remained with Moses and

over his host was ^aAhiezzer the son of Ammishadai.

26 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher, was ^aPagiel the son of Ocran.

27 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, was ^aAhira the son of Enan.

28 ^aThus were the journeyings of the children of Israel, according to their armies, when they set forward.

29 ¶ And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of ^aRaguel the Midianite, Moses's father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which ^athe Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.

30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee: forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.

32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that ^awhat goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33 ¶ And they departed from ^athe mount of the

Lord three days' journey: and ^athe ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out ^aa resting-place for them.

34 And ^bthe cloud of the Lord was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

36 And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.

CHAPTER XI.

The people complain, and the fire of the Lord burns among them, but is quenched through Moses's prayer, 1-3; the place is called Taberah, 3. They grow weary of manna, and lust for flesh, 4-9. Moses complains, 10-15. God promises to give him seventy assistants; and pleads to the people for a month, 16-29. Moses's faith is staggered, 21-23. God gives of his Spirit to seventy elders, 24, 25. Two prophecies in the camp: Joshua would forbid them; but Moses reproves him, 26-30. The quails are sent in vast abundance, but in wrath, 31-35.

AND ^awhen the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled: and ^bthe fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.

2 And the people ^dcried unto Moses; and when

q 1:12. 7:66. r 1:13. 7:72. s 1:15. 7:78. * Heb. these. t 35:36. 2:34. 24:4. 3 Cant. 6:10. 1 Cor. 14:33, 40. Col. 2:5. u Ex. 2:18. Reuel. 3:1. 18:1, 27. x Gen. 12:7. 13:15. 15:18. Acta 7:5. y Judg. 1:16. 4:11. 1 Sam. 15:6. Ps. 34:8. Is. 2: 5. Jer. 50:5. Zech. 8:21-23. Rev. 22:17. z 23:19. Gen. 32:12. Ex. 3:8. 6:7-8. Tit. 1:12. Heb. 5:16. a Gen. 12:1. 31:30. Ruth 1:15-17. Ps. 45:10. Luke 14:25. 2 Cor. 6:16. Heb. 11:13. b Job 29:15. Ps. 32:8. 1 Cor. 12:14-21. Gal. 6:2. c Judg. 1:16. 1 John 1:5. d Ex. 3:1. 19:3. 24:17, 18. e Deut. 9:9. 31:26. Josh. 4:7. Judg. 20:27. 1 Sam. 4:3. Jer. 3:16. Heb. 13:20. f Ex. 33:14, 15. Deut. 1:33. Josh. 3:2-6, 11-17. Jer. 31:8, 9. Ps. 95:11. Is. 28:12. 66:1. Jer. 6:16. Matt.

Israel when his father departed from them; or had come to them afterwards.

V. 31, 32. Though the people were under the immediate direction of God in their march; yet, in respect of the conveniences or inconveniences of the places through which they passed, they might receive profitable cautions and instructions from a person acquainted with the desert.—Some however translate the words rendered "thou mayest be unto us instead of eyes," in the past tense, and interpret it as a thankful acknowledgment of the advantages which Israel had derived from Hobab's counsel and direction; for which they could make him no amends, except he would go with them, and share the kindness which the Lord had in reserve for them in the promised land, whither they reasonably expected soon to arrive. But others interpret the words to signify, that (like his father Jethro) he might be very useful to Moses by his advice, and should be admitted among his select counsellors, if he would continue in the camp. We may suppose, that Hobab was withdrawn from his first purpose, and accompanied them. We shall hereafter read of his posterity: and it is probable, that an inheritance was assigned them in Canaan. The whole passage implies that Hobab, like his father, was a wise and pious man, a devoted worshipper of the God of Israel; and that, on the supposition that he "returned to his kindred," (30) he did not return to idolatry. (Notes, Ruth 1:11-17.)

V. 33, 34. It is doubtful, whether on this occasion the ark was carried separately before the camp, or with the other sacred things in the midst of it. The cloud, however, (which above was diffused as a canopy over the heads of the people in the day, and afforded light to them by night,) rested beneath upon the ark in such a manner, that in directing their march, the ark on which it rested might very properly be said to go before them, to single out the particular spot on which they were to halt for refreshment; and after three days, the spot on which they were to encamp.

V. 35, 36. Moses, as the leader, though Aaron was the high-priest, solemnly addressed the Lord in this emphatical prayer, the former part of which David used, probably on a similar occasion. (Note, Ps. 68:1-3.) The expression, "the many thousands of Israel," is in the original, the *ten thousand thousands of Israel*, among whom Moses thus besought the Lord again to manifest his presence, and to take up his residence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The trumpet of the gospel, being God's appointed ordinance, demands the serious attention of all to whom it is sent. Let our character, situation, trials, or duty, be what they may, this trumpet, when skillfully used by the ministers of Christ, will give such a distinct sound, as at one time or another exactly to suit our case; and to afford us that warning, direction, encouragement, or exhortation, of which we stand in need: and in this manner we should expect to be counselled and comforted by the Lord. But they who sound this trumpet ought to be very skilful, faithful, and affectionate, and observant both of the word of God, of their own hearts, and of the situations of the people; lest they give false alarms, or neglect to give the alarm when necessary; lest by an uncertain sound they encourage such as need reproof, or discourage the hearts of such as should be comforted; or in

any other way defeat those ends for which the preaching of the word is intended.—"Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound," and clearly understand its meaning, whether it call them to watch and pray, to weep or rejoice, to attack their enemies or to resist their assaults, to march forward with alacrity, or to endure the labours of the way with patient perseverance; and who so understand its sound, as to pay it that prompt obedience, which the disciplined soldier pays to the sound of the trumpet. Such persons will never be left destitute of encouragement, instruction, or counsel, through the whole of their journey. Though they "have here no continuing city," but are always removing from one wilderness to another: yet, by hearkening to the word of God, they will follow the ark in all their removals, and be taught habitually to depend on the promises and perfections of God and the mediation of his Son, to obey his commands, and imitate his example, in their proper place and station; and ever to abide under the care of his providence, enjoy the comforts of his Spirit, and have fellowship with him in his ordinances.

V. 11-36. The Lord himself goes before his believing people, to find them out resting-places from time to time by the way: he will give them rest to their souls on earth, until he bring them to his heavenly felicity; he will arise to scatter his and their enemies, and "all that hate him shall flee before him;" and he will abide with every individual, and with all the thousands and millions of Israel, "always even unto the end of the world;" for he has promised, that he will "never leave them nor forsake them," and this is the substance of all their prayers and desires.—While we are thus journeying to the place of which the Lord hath spoken to us, and hath engaged to give us; we should endeavour, by our general good behaviour and tranquil cheerfulness, by special acts of kindness, and by pressing exhortations and persuasions, to induce our relatives, friends, and neighbours to attend us: aiming to convince them, that the Lord is with us, that he hath spoken good concerning us; that he hath good in reserve for us, and that it is for their true advantage to accompany us; frankly proposing to them a participation in all our privileges and comforts, and assuring them of all the kindness which God shall enable us to do unto them. (Note, 1 John 1:3, 4.) By persevering attempts of this kind, and by fervent prayers, we may frequently overcome the reluctance of those, who at first were disposed to renounce the pleasures of sin, or the interests of the world, or who were loth to encounter the hardships of the journey, or who valued not the promised inheritance.—Though in every thing our dependence must be ultimately placed upon the Lord, yet we may use the services of men as instruments of good to us, and should in our turn aim to do them good; and thus we may be as eyes and ears and hands to each other, for our mutual comfort, and to the glory of our common Lord. We should also be careful, that we begin every undertaking, especially those in which the church of God is concerned, with earnest prayer for direction, assistance, and success: and not only ministers, but magistrates and princes also, should be men of prayer, as well as of activity, integrity, and ability; for whatever talents and instruments are employed, the Lord alone sends prosperity. Finally, in all our supplications at the throne of grace, the many thousands of Israel should without fail be remembered by us.

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1-3. "The people were as

Moses ^{prayed} unto the LORD, ^{the} fire ^{was} quenched.

3 And he called the name of the place ^{'Taberah}; because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

4 ¶ And ^{the} mixed multitude that ^{was} among them ^{tell} a lusting; and ^{the} children of Israel also ^{swept} again, and said, ^{'Who} shall give us flesh to eat?

5 We remember ^{the} fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic:

6 But now ^{our} soul is dried away: ^{there} is nothing at all, besides this manna, ^{before} our eyes.

7 And ^{the} manna ^{was} as coriander-seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of ^{'bellium}.

8 And ^{the} people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and ^{baked} it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.

9 And when ^{the} dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

10 ¶ Then Moses heard the people ^{'weep} throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; ^{'Moses} also was displeased.

f. 14:13-20. Gen. 18:23-33. Ex. 32:10-14, 32, 34, 9. Deut. 9:19, 30. Ps. 106:24, 37, 4. Jer. 15:1. Am. 7:2-6. Jam. 5:16. 1 John 5:16. f. 16:45-48. Heb. 9:26. 1 John 2:1, 2. * Heb. sunk. † That is, A burning. Deut. 9:22. g. Ex. 12:38. Num. 14:10, 11. Neh. 13:3. † Heb. just a lust. h. 1 Cor. 15:33. i. The ^{mixed} multitude. j. Ps. 78:19-21, 106:14. Rom. 13:14. k. 1 Cor. 10:6. l. Ex. 16:3. Is. 17:4. Phil. 3:19. 1 Tim. 3:4. m. Ex. 16:14, 15. n. 1 Cor. 12:34. Rev. 2:17. o. Heb. eye of it as the eye of a man. p. 1 Cor. 12:16-18. John 6:27, 33-38. q. Ex. 16:23. r. Ex. 16:31. s. Ex. 16:11. t. Ex. 16:2. u. Ex. 7:23-25, 105:40. v. 14:12, 16:27, 21:5. Ps. 106:25. 1 Cor. 12:32. Ps. 78:21, 59. Is. 5:25. Jer. 17:4. u. 12:2, 30:10-13. Ps. 116:32. Matt. 5:10, 14. v. 15. Ex. 17:4. Deut. 1:12. Jer. 15:10, 18:20.

it were complainers;” (*margin*.) that is, they murmured against Moses, and against the Lord.—When we consider the wonderful works wrought for Israel before their eyes; the excellent laws which they had received; the mild government under which they lived; the manner in which their camp was victualled, watered, guarded, and guided; and the tokens which they enjoyed of the Lord’s special presence and favour; we are apt to inquire, what grounds of complaint they could have. But some would be dissatisfied, that they and their friends were excluded from the government, and from the priesthood; some would murmur at being kept so long in the wilderness; others would be weary with marching three days together without resting, except merely to take present refreshment; and various occasions of discontent would be found among so large a multitude. Since the sin committed in respect of the golden calf, the people had appeared obedient and tractable, and the rulers liberal and cheerful in affording assistance; but their evil dispositions, though overawed, were not slain: they therefore speedily revived, and produced more fatal effects than ever. The Lord being thus provoked, made them sensible of the power of his fiery indignation. Probably, some of them were destroyed, as Nadab and Abihu had been, by fire from the Lord, or by flashes of lightning, perhaps from the fiery pillar. Though they had several times before murmured, they had not been thus punished; for, not having known so much of the Lord’s will, nor seen so much of his glory, nor experienced so much of his kindness, they were before more excusable than at this time.—Yet even now the fire seems only to have consumed some of those, who resorted to the uttermost parts of the camp, to associate with the mixed multitude: (4) and when Moses, at the request of the people, prayed, it was at once quenched.—The place, however, acquired a new name from this fire that consumed the criminals.—*Taberah.*] *A burning.* (*margin*.)

V. 4-9. This lusting for other food than manna began among the mixed multitude; but it seems to have rapidly spread among the Israelites, and to have anew excited their impatient lamentations and murmurings. They were not, on this occasion, merely guilty of discontent, and an inordinate desire of flesh to eat; but they limited the power of God, as if it were impossible for him to give them it in their present circumstances. The subsequent particulars are mentioned concerning the manna, in order to illustrate the goodness of the Lord to Israel, in giving them, without trouble or expense, so suitable, nourishing, and palatable a food; and which afforded them variety also, by the different ways in which it might be prepared. (*Notes, Ex. 16:22-27, 31.*) Thus the ingratitude and unreasonableness of the people in their lusting were strongly marked.—It is nowhere intimated that they were sickly or feeble, in consequence of feeding continually upon manna; though the greediness of their appetite for other food drank up their spirits, and caused “their soul to dry away.”—It would not indeed have been proper for them to have slain all their numerous flocks and herds, nor would the whole have satisfied their lustings; yet, had they not been too covetous, or too desirous of dainty meats, they might

11 And Moses said unto the LORD, ^{'Wherefore} hast thou afflicted thy servant? and ^{'wherefore} have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?

12 Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, ^{'Carry} them in thy bosom (as a nursing-father beareth the sucking child) unto ^{the} land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

13 ^{'Whence} should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.

14 I am ^{not} able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.

15 And if thou deal thus with me, ^{'kill} me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and ^{'let} me not see my wretchedness.

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me ^{seventy} men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and ^{officers} over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.

17 And ^{'I} will come down, and ^{'talk} with thee there; and ^{'I} will take of the Spirit which is upon

7-9, 14-18. Mal. 3:14. 2 Cor. 11:28. x. Job 10:2. Ps. 130:3, 143:2. 1 Sam. 3:22, 39, 40. y. Is. 40:11. z. Ex. 34:23. John 10:11. z. Is. 49:15, 23. Gal. 4:19. 1 Thes. 2:7. a. Gen. 24:16, 17, 35:3, 50:24. Ex. 15:5. b. Matt. 15:33. Mark 8:4, 9:23. c. Ex. 18:18. Deut. 1:9-12. Ps. 89:19. Is. 9:6. Zech. 6:13. 2 Cor. 2:16. d. 1 Kings 19:4. Job 3:20-22, 6:8-10, 7:15. Gen. 4:3, 8:9. Phil. 1:20-24. Jam. 1:4. e. Jer. 15:18. 20:18. Zeph. 3:15. f. Gen. 46:27. Ex. 4:29, 24:1, 9. Ex. 8:11. Luke 10:17. g. Deut. 1:15, 16:18, 31:28. h. 25, 12:5. Gen. 11:5, 18:21. Ex. 19:11, 20, 34:5. John 3:13. 1 Thes. 4. Gen. 17:32, 18:20-22, 33. 1 Pet. 18. 1 Sam. 10:8. 2 Kings 2:9, 15. Neh. 9:20. Is. 44:3, 59:20, 21. Joel 2:28. John 7:39. Rom. 8:9. 1 Cor. 2:12, 12:4-11. 1 Thes. 4:8. 1 Pet. 1:22. Jude 19.

from time to time have feasted upon flesh, by presenting peace-offerings to the Lord. But to their dissatisfied mind every thing appeared worthless, in comparison of the Egyptian diet, which they speak of particularly, and with great regret; though probably it was nothing better than the most ordinary food of the very poorest of the people! (*Note, Ex. 16:1-3.*)

V. 10. The former complaining seems to have been only a secret discontent; but this broke out into an open and general dissatisfaction, and portended a revolt. It was therefore extremely provoking to God; “it was evil also in the eyes of Moses.” (*Heb.*)

V. 11-15. Moses had indeed a very difficult and burdensome service; and the expressive similitude which he used would be better understood by the Israelites, than it is by us; being taken from the circumstance of the fathers carrying the young children, during their long marches in the wilderness, for which the mothers were generally unable. (*Margin. Ref. y, z.*) He cannot however be excused in imitating the people, by murmuring against the Lord; in complaining of the honours and favours bestowed upon him; in expostulating with God as if he dealt unkindly and unjustly with him; in magnifying his own services, and speaking as if he were required to supply the people with flesh; and above all, in begging for immediate death, as his only possible relief, and as the greatest instance of favour which the Lord could show him. (*Margin. Ref. d. Note, Jer. 20:14-18.*)

V. 16. *Whom thou knowest, &c.*] Moses had said, that “he was not able to bear all the people alone.” (11) the Lord therefore graciously condescended to assign him helpers, whom he might choose for himself, out of such persons as he knew to be elders, not only in respect of years, but in wisdom and ability; and in the influence and authority, which they possessed in their several tribes and divisions. It is most probable, that in consequence of Jethro’s advice, (*Notes, Ex. 18:17-26.*) Moses before this had assistants in the administration of justice, and in the affairs of civil government; but it had been reserved to him “to be for the people to Godward.” In this department the Lord, on this occasion, appointed him coadjutors, endued with special wisdom and grace for that service; whose assistance, counsel, and authority he might use, in allaying the tumults, quieting the minds, or opposing the violence of the people. The Sanhedrim, or council of seventy persons, in the after-ages of the Jewish nation, seems to have been a continuance, or imitation, of this council assigned to Moses. The number is supposed to have been taken from the number of persons who went down into Egypt. (*Margin. Ref. f.*)

V. 17. Moses would not on this account have less of the influences of the Spirit of truth, wisdom, boldness, power, and holiness; but the elders would be endued with a measure of the same Spirit, that they might be enabled and disposed cordially to concur with him in salutary measures, for the people’s good: as lamps are lighted one from another without any diminution of the light of the lamps from which they are lighted. (*Notes, 25. 2 Kings 2:9, 10. Is. 59, 40, 21.*)

V. 18. The people were about to witness an extra-ordinary

thee, and will put it upon them: and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. [Practical Observations.]

18 And say thou unto the people, "Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the Lord, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the Lord will give you flesh, and ye shall eat."

19 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days;

20 But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the Lord which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?

21 And Moses said, the people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month.

22 Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to suffice them?

23 And the Lord said unto Moses, "Is the Lord's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee, or not."

24 ¶ And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the Lord, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.

25 And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass that, when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.

26 But there remained two of the men in the

camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the Spirit rested upon them, (and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle,) and they prophesied in the camp.

27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.

28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered, and said, "My lord Moses, forbid them."

29 And Moses said unto him, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them."

30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

31 ¶ And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.

32 And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers; and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.

33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people; and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague.

34 And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted,

35 And the people journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth.

1 Ex. 18:22, Acts 6:3-4, m Gen. 55:2, Ex. 19:10, 15, Josh. 7:13, n 1:4-6, Ex. 16:2-7, Judg. 21:2, o See on 5, 14:23, Acts 7:39, * Heb. month of days, Ex. 15:8-13, p 12:5, Ps. 78:27-30, Prov. 27:7, q 1 Sam. 2:30, 2 Sam. 12:10, Mai. 1:6, Acts 13:41, 1 Thes. 4:8, r 1:46, 2:32, Gen. 12:2, Ex. 12:37, 38:25, 2 Kings 7:2, Matt. 15:33, Mark 6:37, 8:4, Luke 1:18, 34, John 6:6, 7, t Gen. 18:14, Ps. 78:41, Is. 50:2, 59:1, Mic. 2:7, Matt. 19:25, Luke 1:37, u 23:19, 5 Kings 7:2, 17-19, Jer. 14:22, 22, Ez. 12:25, 24:14, Matt. 21:35, x See on 16, 26, y 17, 12:5, Ex. 34:5, 40:38, Ps. 99:7, Luke 9:34, 35, z See on k, 17, 2 Kings 2:15, Jam. 1:17, a 1 Sam. 10:5, 16:10, 19:20-24, Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17,

18, 11:28, 21:9-11, 1 Cor. 11:4, 5, 14:1-3, 32, 2 Pet. 1:21, b Ex. 3:11, 4:13, 14, 1 Sam. 10:22, 20:26, Jer. 1:6, 36:5, c See on Ex. 17:9, d Mark 9:38, 39, Luke 9:49, 50, John 3:26, e Cor. 3:3, 21, 13:4, Phil. 2:3, Jam. 3:14, 15, 4:5, 5:9, 1 Pet. 2:1, Acts 26:29, 1 Cor. 14:5, Phil. 1:15-18, f Matt. 9:37, 38, Luke 10:2, h Ex. 10:13, 19, 15:10, Ps. 135:7, i Ex. 16:13, Ps. 78:26-28, 105:40, * Heb. the way of a day, k Ex. 16:36, Ex. 45:11, 1 Ps. 78:30, 31, 106:14, 15, m 16:49, 25:9, Dent. 28:27, l That is, The graves of lust, 33:16, Deut. 9:22, 1 Cor. 10:6, n 38:17, o 12:16, Deut. 1:1, § Heb. they were in, &c.

nary manifestation of the divine power, in sending them flesh to eat; but as they had greatly displeased the Lord, by lusting for it, with bitter complaints against him and contempt of him, they might expect likewise a display of his righteous indignation; except they humbled themselves, sought forgiveness, and were found in a better frame of spirit; and thus unlaboured to avert the impending storm.

V. 19, 20. About a year before this, the people had for one day been thus feasted: (Ex. 16:13.) but now such plenty was about to be afforded them, for a whole month, and they would use it so greedily, that at last they would entirely loathe the food, which they had so inordinately craved.

V. 21-23. Some suppose that Moses only expressed his admiration; or inquired into the method how this wonderful provision was to be furnished. (Note, Luke 1:34-38.) But the Lord's answer implies that there was also a measure of unbelief; which was the more criminal, after he had seen such effects of the divine power in Egypt and at the Red Sea: nor could he suppose that the Lord's hand was shortened. Moses seems however to have been fully satisfied with the further assurance given him, without any other information.

V. 25. The persons selected on this occasion, being endued with the Holy Spirit, either praised God with such fervency and in such exalted strains; or they spake in so fluent and edifying a manner, in exhorting the people, and were so raised above themselves in wisdom and utterance, that all around them were sensible they spake by a divine influence: perhaps they likewise foretold future events. (Marg. Ref. a.) These gifts were a divine sanction to their appointment, as assistants to Moses in governing the nation.—The words (עָבְדוּ) rendered "did not cease," may be translated *aided no further*. They prophesied on that occasion, but not afterwards; for they were designed to be magistrates, not prophets; or they prophesied only when "the Spirit rested upon them." It is evident that the Lord continued to them the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, to fit them for the office, to which he thus sealed their commission by the gift of prophecy. (Note, 17.)

V. 26. Some suppose, that these two persons were ceremonially unclean; but others think that they humbly declined so arduous an office, or were reluctant to engage in it, and therefore did not go forth to Moses at the tabernacle. The Spirit of God however, singled them out in the camp, and there they prophesied.

V. 28, 29. Joshua would have had Eldad and Medad silenced, lest they should occasion a schism, or rival Moses; but Moses was not in the least afraid of such effects from that Spirit which God had put upon him and them; and he did not in the least seek his own glory, but the glory of God, and the advantage of his people. (Note, Mark 9:38-40, John 3:25, 26.)—The gift of prophecy was a distinct thing from the gift of government; for he did not wish they might all be made rulers; than which nothing could have been more absurd. Bp. Patrick.

V. 31, 32. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 16:13.) By a most astonishing miracle, an immense multitude of quails (some kind of wild fowl) was collected, and driven on with a vehement wind, till wearied out with their flight, they settled round the camp of Israel; and for about twenty miles on every side they lay above a yard deep on the ground, incapable of flying away; so that the Israelites in general spent thirty-six hours in taking them, without much intermission. And afterwards what they did not eat at this time, they dried, by spreading them round the camp, so that they were able to keep them during the remainder of the month.—A homer was an ass's load, or almost eight bushels. Ten homers was an immense quantity for every individual, or even for every head of a family; but the whole was evidently intended to illustrate the power of God, and the eagerness with which the people seized upon this provision.

V. 33, 34. The sin of the people did not consist in desiring suitable food, or in eating such as the Lord sent them; but in eagerly craving unnecessary indulgence, and intemperately gratifying their appetites. The Lord therefore, having shown his power by sending this immense supply, punished their discontent, ingratitude, and lusting, and by a pestilence executed immediate vengeance on the ringleaders of the rebellion. (Ps. 78:26-31.)—What multitudes are there in all places, who shorten their lives by excess of one kind or other; and whose sepulchres might justly be called, "Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people that lusted!"

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. Fallen man is a discontented creature; for having forsaken his proper rest, he feels himself uneasy and wretched how much soever he is prospered or distinguished. Ambition, sensuality, covetousness, and malice, are diseases of the soul, which are not abated, but increased by indulgence.

CHAPTER XII.

Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses, 1, 2. His singular meekness, 3. God vindicates Moses, and punishes Miriam with a leprosy, 4-10. Aaron submits, and Moses intercedes for Miriam, 11-13. The Lord directs that she should be shut out of the camp seven days; and afterwards the people march to the wilderness of Paran, 14-16.

AND ^aMiriam and Aaron spake against Moses, because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: ^bfor he had married an Ethiopian woman.

^a Matt. 10:36. 12:49. John 7:5. 15:20. Gal. 4:16. * Or, Cushite. Ex. 2:16, 21. 1 Heb. taken. b Gen. 24:37. 26:34, 35. 27:46. 28:6-9. 34:14, 15. 41:45. Ex. 34:16. Lev. 21:14. c 16:3. Ex. 4:30. 5:1. 7:10. 15:20, 21. Mic. 6:4. d 11:29. Prov. 13:10. Rom. 12:3, 10. Phil. 2:3, 14. 1 Pet. 5:5. e 1:1. Gen. 28:33. 2 Sam.

and they who are under the power of them, like persons in a fever, are continually desirous of changing their place or posture; as if that were the cause of the disquietude, which indeed springs merely from distemper! While this is the case, every appointment of God must excite secret or open complaint: and though discontent has its abatements and paroxysms; yet there is no cure till the soul return to its rest, in the knowledge, love, and favour of God, and in a cordial reliance on his wisdom, truth, and power, and in acquiescence in his will. But the Lord sees and hears, and is displeased at our murmurs, though concealed from men: the greater kindness we have received from him, the severer correction we may expect when we thus offend: and they who escape his chastening rod, will at length experience the dreadful effects of his fiery indignation.—It should be well considered, that sinners are far more indebted to their pious friends than they are aware of; and many will cry to them to advise them and pray for them in their distresses and dangers, who despised and hated them before: nor should they ever on any account refuse such requests. But it is especially happy for us, that Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us; when in our troubles we cry unto him to help us, and to quench the fire of divine wrath which our sins have kindled. Yet alas! how soon do we forget the smart and terror of our chastisements, and relapse into our former offences with still deeper aggravation! nay, when we are surrounded with mercies, we are capable of overlooking them all, and of deeming one slight inconvenience an intolerable grievance! On the other hand, forgetting the anguish under which we have groaned in some former situation, from which we are now delivered, (*Ex. 1:14. 2:23, 24. 3:7-9.*) we can murmur and fret at the absence of one imaginary or worthless advantage, which we then possessed: and scarcely any of our repinings arise from the want of what is really needful and proper for us; but relate to such things, as are in one way or other, fuel to our lusts. Nay, the choicest blessing which God can bestow, even the very gospel of salvation, is slighted and despised by us, if we have not every thing exactly to our mind, when we are under the influence of this evil disease! We can readily blame and express our astonishment at the perverseness of the Israelites: but their conduct is only a picture of our hearts, a fair specimen of human nature; and we have every one of us murmured and complained before now, with as little reason, and with as much folly and ingratitude, as they did. Let us then watch our own hearts: let us repress the first emotions of discontent and inordinate desire; let us consider frequently how many unmerited mercies we worthless sinners enjoy: let us pray earnestly for grace, “to be satisfied with such things as we have”; and to refer to the wisdom, love and faithfulness of God, the choice of what kind our temporal supplies shall be, with the measure of them, and the time and manner of receiving them. This is the more requisite, because we are constantly reminded, that the most eminent saints were sometimes evidently defective, in the very graces by which they were most distinguished: so that Moses himself expressed a distrust, an impatience, and a peevishness, which cannot be excused, and must not be imitated. We have therefore nothing to trust in but the mercy of God and the merits of Christ; and we are taught to watch and pray continually lest we enter into temptation.—It is also worth noting, that we seldom wish for death, but when we are fretful and impatient, and consequently unfit to meet it comfortably and properly.—As eminent stations are confessedly attended with weighty cares and burdens, to all those especially who study to fill them in such a manner as to be nursing-fathers to the people; (and they who do not must have an awful account to render of their abused talents;) we may learn to be contented with a more obscure situation, and cheerfully to bear our lighter afflictions.—But the Lord is very gracious to his servants; he considers their trials and weakness; and both forgives their sins, sends them help in difficulties, affords them comfort in communion with him, and exceeds their largest expectations. He can also easily multiply either good magistrates or ministers, or improve the qualifications of those already raised up, by “the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” and this should excite us to pray earnestly to him for these important blessings.

V. 18-35. In general, the Lord sees it best for those whom he loves, to be poor, to fare hardly, and to receive their supply from day to day. And whatever the world may think, an inheritance in heaven, and a provision by the way, though mean and scanty, if sought by daily prayer, and received with gratitude from our heavenly Father's love, is “better than the riches of many wicked,” and has in it more sweetness,

2 And they said, ‘Hath the LORD in deed spoken only by Moses? ‘hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.

3 (Now the man Moses was ^avery meek, ^babove all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

4 And ^athe LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, ‘Come out, ye

11:27. Ps. 94:7-9. Is. 37:4. Ex. 35:12, 13. f Ps. 147:6. 149:4. Matt. 5:5. 11:29. 24:5. 2 Cor. 10:1. 1 Thes. 2:7. Jam. 3:13. 1 Pet. 3:4. g 11:10-15. 20:10-12. Ps. 106:32, 33. 2 Cor. 11:5. 12:11. Jam. 3:2, 3. h Ps. 76:9. 116:16-21.

and less vexation and temptation. (*Note, Ps. 37:16, 17.*) But if he sometimes surrounds his people with plenty, it is not for an occasion of excess, but for a trial of their temperance and moderation, and that they may have a sufficiency for every good work: and to abuse abundance shows a sensual mind, and will expose a man to the heavy wrath of God. (*Notes, Luke 16:19-26.*) Against such luxury and excess every true Christian should, by his example at least, enter a protest: but alas! too many are more apt to catch the infection of lustful and self-indulgence from the world, or from the more worthless kind of professed believers, than to manifest a decided disapprobation of it: and numbers who would be thought Christians, though surrounded with far greater variety than the Israelites were, are ready to complain, that they are outdone in wealth, splendour, and the pride of life, by their neighbours: and perhaps at some times are ready even to grow weary of their religion; to think that it was well with them in Egypt; to allow a hankering after forsaken pleasures, almost to covet their former bondage, and to inquire why they came forth thence. If we are conscious that this hath been the secret thought of our heart, let us repent without delay, and entreat God that it may be forgiven; lest he send us the things which we have inordinately desired, and by his heavy indignation render them a curse to us. For it is not from want of power or love, that he doth not at all times indulge the desires of his people; but because his wisdom sees that those things, which they desire as a blessing, would be injurious to them; and if they do not acquiesce in his appointments, he will perhaps be induced to convince them by bitter experience.—Even while the Lord is evidently giving helpers to his faithful servants, by answering our prayers for the pouring out of his Spirit from on high; “the spirit, which naturally” “is in us, lusteth to envy,” in behalf of our friends and our party, or ourselves; and disposes us to wish to silence those who follow not with us. Yet the Lord gives more grace, and they who are wisely zealous for his glory, and truly love the souls of men, will rejoice in the increase of useful instruments, though they should rival and eclipse them, or their beloved and revered pastors. Indeed, if all the present number of the Lord's people were rendered real, able, authorized ministers of Christ, the world is wide enough; and there might be work enough for them, in calling sinners to “repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus,” and in feeding and edifying his church.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. Moses had at this time been so long married to Zipporah, that there is some difficulty in understanding, how his conduct in that respect should at length give occasion to Miriam and Aaron to oppose him: yet there is no intimation that Zipporah was dead or divorced, or that he had married another woman; and it is utterly incredible, that after the giving of so great a part of the law, he should himself take to wife a stranger, or one of another nation; or that the Lord should unreservedly sanction what he had done. (*Ex. 34:16.*) No intimation is any where given, that Moses ever had any other wife than Zipporah; or that he acted at all improperly in this respect. The word rendered “an Ethiopian woman,” signifies a *Cushite*, which properly means a descendant of *Cush*; (*Gen. 10:6-8.*) but it is used with some latitude; and it is generally supposed to include other tribes, besides the posterity of *Cush*, either in Asia, or Africa. It is probable, that Zipporah was a descendant of Abraham by *Keturah*; (*Note, Ex. 2:16.*) now the different tribes, which sprang from Abraham by her, inhabited some parts of Arabia, and were greatly blended with the Ishmaelites, and perhaps also with some of the race of *Cush*. (*Note, Gen. 25:1-4.*) In this large sense, Zipporah might be called a *Cushite*: and though this was said of her at first contemptuously; yet not being altogether erroneous, according to the common way of speaking, Moses did not contradict it.—Miriam seems to be mentioned first, as the leader in this opposition. It appears that the Lord had on some occasions spoken, not only by Aaron, but also by her: and probably it was thought that Zipporah and her relations had too much influence with Moses. The name of Aaron had not been mentioned in the appointment of the seventy elders; and this might give umbrage to him and Miriam. Perhaps there had been some private jar between Miriam and Zipporah; though no blame at all is laid on the latter in the narrative. But probably it was a general opinion, that Moses's wife, being a foreigner, was a disgrace to him and the people; and that he ought to put her away, and marry an Israelitish woman.

V. 3. Moses, writing as moved by the Holy Spirit, impartially records his own faults, and unreservedly speaks of the grace of God bestowed upon him. *Meekness* is here

three, unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

5 And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

9 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed.

10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold, she was leprous.

11 And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas! my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

11-25. Ex. 34:5, 40:38. Ps. 99:7. 1 Gen. 20:7. Ex. 7:1. Ps. 105:15. Matt. 23:31, 34, 37. Luke 20:16. Eph. 4:11. Rev. 11:3, 10. m Gen. 15:1, 46:2. Job 4:13. 33:15. 31:10. 11. 1 Kings 3:5. Jer. 23:25. Dan. 7:1. Matt. 1:20. 2:12, 13, 19. n Deut. 18:18. Matt. 11:9, 11. Acts 3:22, 23. 7:31. p 1 Cor. 4:2. 1 Tim. 3:15. Heb. 3:2-6. q 14:14. Ex. 33:11. Deut. 34:10. 1 Tim. 6:16. r Ps. 49:4. Ez. 17:2, 20:49. Matt. 13:35. John 15:15. 1 Cor. 13:12. s Ex. 24:10, 11. 33:23, 34:5-7. Deut. 4:15. E. 40:18, 46:10. John 1:18. 14:7-10. 15:24. 21:6. 3:13, 4:4-6. Col. 1:15. Heb. 13. s. Ex. 34:30. Luke 10:16. 1 Thes. 4:8. 2 Pet. 2:10. Jude 1:11. H. Hos. 5:15. x Ex. 33:7-10. Ex. 10:4, 5, 13, 19. Hos. 9:12. Matt. 25:

contrasted with pride, wrath, and resentment. Moses, notwithstanding the extraordinary honours put upon him, was exceedingly humble, modest, unassuming, patient of contradiction, forbearing, and ready to forgive: and the whole history, especially that in this chapter, proves this testimony to be true.—Several of the sacred writers have spoken of themselves, as enabled by divine grace to act with great integrity and holiness in most trying circumstances, yet without any vainglory or ostentation; and our Lord says of himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart." It is therefore a senseless cavil to adduce this declaration, as a proof that Moses was not the author of this book, in opposition to the unanimous tradition of antiquity, and the testimony of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament.—As Moses was so meek, he took no notice of the affair, to resent it, or to punish any persons for their misconduct; and it was therefore the more necessary that the Lord himself should plead his cause.

V. 4-8. Aaron and Miriam, with Moses, were summoned to the tabernacle, probably by an audible voice from the cloud; where the Lord expostulated with them. He made himself known in dreams and visions to other prophets, when their bodily senses were locked up, (*Marg. Ref. m, n.*) or by dark signs and obscure parables, which they often did not well understand. But to his faithful servant Moses he spoke openly: when he was fully awake; in the clearest and most intelligible language imaginable; and constantly, almost from day to day, as a man converses with his friend. He also was admitted to "behold the similitude of the LORD;" the "express image of his person," even his eternal Son appearing in visible glory. This, Aaron and Miriam knew, and could not deny; and seeing Moses had been honoured and favoured so far above them, they should have been afraid of opposing him; as Aaron had feared to approach him, when his face shone, on his descending from Sinai. (*Ex. 34:30.*)

V. 9, 10. The removal of the cloud, which seems to have entirely disappeared till after Miriam was readmitted into the camp, expressed the Lord's displeasure; and Miriam, as the ringleader, directly became leprous. Aaron was spared in honour of the priesthood: yet he was severely rebuked in the punishment of Miriam, and in being the priest appointed to examine her, and pronounce her unclean; which is implied when it is said, "Aaron looked upon Miriam." (*Lev. 13:2, 12.*)

V. 11-13. Aaron submitted to God and to Moses: yet his confession was by no means so ingenuous and unreserved, as might have been expected. The doleful condition of Miriam, and the disgusting appearance which she made, are very strongly marked in the similitudes here used; which also may help us to conceive something of the loathsomeness of that disease, which is the special emblem of our sinfulness.

V. 14, 15. If Miriam had provoked her father to disgrace her by some marked expression of anger, she would have shown her sorrow and shame by a temporary solitude, and not at once come again before him. A similar conduct under the divine rebuke was therefore prescribed her. When she honoured God in leading the praises of Israel, (*Note, Ex. 15:20, 21.*) she was honoured as one of the chief ornaments of the nation: but now for her contempt of God,

12 Let her not be 'as one dead,' of whom the flesh is half consumed, when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

13 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

14 And the LORD said unto Moses, If he father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

15 And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not, till Miriam was brought in again.

16 And afterward the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.

CHAPTER XIII.

Moses sends twelve men to search the land, 1-16. He instructs them, 17-20. They return after forty days; and ten of them bring a discouraging report, from which Caleb and Joshua dissent, 21-33.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 "Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

3 And Moses, by the commandment of the

41. y 1 Sam. 24:9. z Lev. 13:2, 3. c. 2 Kings 5:27, 15:5. 2 Chr. 26:19, 20. a Ex. 12:32. 1 Sam. 2:30. 12:19. 17:21, 25. 1 Kings 1:36. Job 4:2. Acts 24: Rev. 3: 9. b 2 Sam. 19:24, 10. 2 Chr. 16:9. Ps. 135:1-5. Deuteronomy, c Ps. 84:5. Eph. 2:1-5. Gal. 2:13. 1 Tim. 5:6. d Job 3:16. Ps. 68:8. 1 Cor. 15:8. e 14:2, 15:20. 16:41, 46-50. Ex. 32:10-14. 1 Sam. 12:23. 15:31. Matt. 5:44, 45. Luke 6:28. 23:34. Acts 7:50. Rom. 12:21. f Deut. 25:9. Job 30:10. 1. 50:6. Matt. 26: 67. Heb. 12:9. g 5:2, 3. Lev. 13:45, 46. 14:8. 2 Chr. 26:20, 21. h Deut. 24:8, 9. 1 Gen. 9:21. 2 Chr. 29:12. k 1 Sam. 3:32. 1 Mc. 6:4. 7:9, 9. Hab. 3:2. 1:1, 35. 33:19. m 12:12. 13:3, 35. Gen. 21:21. 3. 1 Sam. 25:1. Hab. 3:3. n Deut. 1:22-25. Job. 2. 1. 4. 34:19. c. 11:16. Ex. 18:25. Pent. 1:15.

she was highly esteemed, and expelled the camp as if she were a disgrace to it!—Her leprosy seems to have been cleansed directly, in answer to the prayer of Moses: and after seven days' purification, we may suppose the legal sacrifices were offered. In the mean time the people waited for her; both as a rebuke to them, who were disposed to join in opposition to Moses and to the Lord; and as a decent respect to her.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who are especially honoured of God must expect the severest and most repeated trials from men; and even from those whom they most love, and to whom they have been most useful.—The contentions among brethren, and among believers, are not only the effects of remaining pride, ambition, envy, and selfishness; but should be traced back to the malicious policy of Satan, who thus devises to disgrace the gospel, and weaken the hands and discourage the hearts of its best friends: and when the mind is disposed for contests, the most frivolous and groundless pretences will suffice to excite or to vindicate them. They who are exposed to such provocations need much meekness, and, waiting simply upon the Lord, will from him receive it: while the less anxious we are to justify or revenge ourselves, the more certainly will he plead our cause, and clear our character from every unjust aspersion.—If it was so criminal and dangerous to oppose the faithful and honoured servant of the Lord; how dreadful will be their doom, who dishonour, despise, or oppose "his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased!" (*Note, Heb. 3:1-4.*)—They who exalt themselves will be abased, and fall into disgrace, if not into destruction; and they who speak against the Lord's servants may soon be constrained to make the most humiliating submission and supplications to them, and to confer on them the most honourable titles and commendations. (*Note, Rev. 3:8, 9.*) But it is well when rebukes produce penitent confessions: for those offenders with whom this is the case, though corrected and disgraced, shall be pardoned; their brethren, even though they have been deeply affronted or injured by their misconduct, will earnestly pray for them; Jesus himself will intercede for them; and they shall in due time be restored to comfortable fellowship with God and his church, and with renewed strength pursue their heavenly pilgrimage. But it was happy for Aaron, and it is well for us, that the church of God has "such a High Priest as became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (*Notes, Heb. 7:26-28. 8:1, 2.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 2. The Israelites had now by several stages arrived at the southern border of Canaan; and they might have gone up and taken immediate possession, had no breach intervened. We find elsewhere, that the people first proposed to Moses this design of searching the land; who, not suspecting the distrust and unbelief which had suggested it, approved the proposal, and asked counsel of the Lord. He, having been provoked by their former rebellions, permitted it, and gave directions accordingly; in order to a further discovery of their wickedness, the display of his own glory, and for the instruction of his church in all ages. (*Note, Deut. 1:22-28.*) There was indeed no urgent need

LORD, sent them ^dfrom the wilderness of Paran: all those men *were* heads of the children of Israel.

4 And *these were* their names; Of the tribe of Reuben; Shammua, the son of Zaccur.

5 Of the tribe of Simeon; Shaphat, the son of Hori.

6 Of the tribe of Judah; ^aCaleb, the son of Jephunnah.

7 Of the tribe of Issachar; Igal, the son of Joseph.

8 Of the tribe of Ephraim; ^aOshea, the son of Nun.

9 Of the tribe of Benjamin; Palti, the son of Raphu.

10 Of the tribe of Zebulun; Gaddiel, the son of Sodi.

11 Of the tribe of Joseph, *namely*, of the tribe of Manassah; Gaddi, the son of Susi.

12 Of the tribe of Dan; Ammiel, the son of Gemalli.

13 Of the tribe of Asher; Sethur, the son of Michael.

14 Of the tribe of Naphtali; Nahbi, the son of Vophsi.

15 Of the tribe of Gad; Geuel, the son of Machi.

16 These *are* the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called ^aOshea the son of Nun, ^bJehoshua.

17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into ^athe mountain;

18 And see ^athe land what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* strong or weak, few or many;

19 And what the land *is* that they dwell in, whether it *be* good or bad; and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong-holds;

20 And what the land *is*, whether it *be* fat or lean, whether there *be* wood therein or not; and *be ye of* ^agood courage, and bring of the fruit of

the land. (Now the time *was* the time of ^athe first ripe grapes.)

21 ^a¶ So they went up, and searched the land ^afrom the wilderness of Zin unto ^aRehob, as men come to Hamath.

22 And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron, where ^aAhiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, *were*. (Now ^aHebron was built seven years before ^aZoan in Egypt.)

23 And they came unto the ^abrook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff: and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

24 The place was called the ^abrook ^aEshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

25 And they returned from searching of the land after ^aforty days.

26 ^a¶ And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to ^aKadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely ^ait floweth with milk and honey: and this *is* the fruit of it.

28 Nevertheless, the people *be* ^astrong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* walled, and very great: and moreover we ^asaw the children of Anak there.

29 The ^aAmalekites dwell in the land of the south; and ^athe Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

30 And ^aCaleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we *are* well able to overcome it.

31 But the men that went up with him said, ^aWe

^aSee on 12:16, 22:8. Deut. 1:19, 9:23. ^ac 30, 14:6, 24:30, 38:26, 31:19. Josh. 14:6-13, 15:13-19. Deut. 1:19-45. 1 Chr. 4:15. ^a16. ^aJehoshua: 11:28, 27:18; 22, Ex. 17:9-13, 24:13, 32:17. Deut. 31:7, 8, 14, 23, 34:9. Josh. 1:1-9, 16. ^aJoshua, g Hiv 1:1. Rom. 9:25. ^ah See on 8. Matt. 1:21-23. Acts 7:45. Heb. 4:8. ^aJesus: 21. Gen. 12:9, 13:1. Josh. 15:3. Judg. 1:15. ^a14:40. Gen. 14:10. Deut. 1:44. ^aJosh. 1:14. ^a4:6, 2:3. ^a2:34:14. 1 Neh. 9:25, 5. ^am 30:31. Deut. 31:6-8, 23. Josh. 1:6, 9, 2:3, 22:3. 1 Chr. 22:11. Heb. 13:6. ^a23:29. Mic. 7:1. ^ac 20:1, 27:14, 33:36, 34:3, 4. Deut. 32:51. Josh. 15:1. ^ap Josh. 19:25. ^a2 Sam. 6:9. Am. 6:2. ^ar Josh. 11:21, 22. 15:13, 14. Judg. 1:10. ^ag Gen. 13:18, 23:2. Josh. 14:13-15, 21:13, 2 Sam. 2:1, 11. ^at Ps. 78:12, 43. ^aIs. 19:11, 30:4. ^a* Or,

valley. 24, 32:9. Deut. 1:24. ^a† Or, valley. 23. ^a† That is, a cluster of grapes. ^au 14:33, 34. Ex. 24:18, 34:28. ^ax 20:1, 16, 32:8, 33:36. Deut. 1:19. Josh. 14:6. ^ay 14:8. Ex. 3:8, 17, 13:6, 33:3. ^aLev. 20:24. Deut. 1:25, 5:3, 11:15, 26:9, 11, 15, 27:3, 31:20. Josh. 5:6. Jer. 11:5, 32:22. ^aEx. 20:6, 15. ^az Deut. 1:28, 2:10, 11, 31, 3:5, 9:1, 2. ^a22:23. Josh. 11:22, 15:14, 16:1, 20. ^ab 14:13, 24:20. ^aGen. 14:7. ^aEx. 17:8-16. ^aJudg. 6:3, 1 Sam. 14:48, 15:3, &c. 30:1. ^aPs. 83:7. ^ac See on Gen. 15:19-21. ^aEx. 3:8, 17. ^ad 14:6-9, 24. Josh. 14:6, 7. ^aPs. 27:1, 2. 60:12, 118:10, 11, 15:41-16. ^aRom. 8:31. ^aPhil. 4:13. ^aHeb. 11:33. ^ae 32:9. Deut. 1:28. Josh. 14:14 ^ah Heb. 5:19.

sity to search a land which the Lord had chosen for them, and into which he had undertaken to lead them; but there was no evil in the thing itself: and had it not been for the unbelief and rebellion of most of the persons concerned, the consequent report might have served greatly to encourage their faith and hope. The number and rank of the spies, had they all been like Caleb and Joshua, might have had very good effect on the people.

V. 16. *Oshea* may signify *Save thou*, being a prayer for salvation; *Jehoshua* may signify, *He will save*, being an assurance of salvation in answer to prayer. But very able critics seem conclusively to support the opinion, that the former name denotes *salvation*: the latter, (with the addition of part of the name **JEHOVAH**), signifies *the LORD Salvation*. The change of Joshua's name on this occasion, (for the mention of him before by this name, may be considered as an anticipation of the historian, for the sake of perspicuity,) seems to have been intended as an encouragement to him and his associates, confidently to expect protection and safety from the Lord. It is well known that Jesus is the same name, formed to a Greek termination; and he is the **LORD** our Salvation, of whom Joshua was an eminent type. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Matt. 1:20, 21.*)

V. 20. *Good courage.*] The service in which the spies were employed, required great courage; for they could expect no favour from the Canaanites, in case they were detected and apprehended, and they must therefore go forth at the hazard of their lives. It would likewise be necessary for them, in order that by their example and report they might encourage the people. This courage, in their circumstances, could only spring from strong faith, which Caleb and Joshua possessed, but the rest did not.

V. 21, 22. Entering at the southern border, the spies surveyed the whole land, even to the northern extremities; and returned back by Hebron, which was then called Kirjath-arba, and was possessed by a family of gigantic stature.—The decided and explicit manner in which Moses declares exactly how long Hebron was built before Zoan, (though probably no other author gives the least account when either

of them was founded,) shows a consciousness of authentic information, and a freedom from all fear of being contradicted, even by the Egyptians, who were proud of their antiquity, and may well be considered as an internal evidence that the history is genuine.

V. 23, 24. In some spot near the borders of the land, the spies met with an extraordinary bunch of grapes, which they cut off, with the branch on which it grew, and carried to their brethren; this was an apt emblem of the earnestness of the Holy Spirit. (*Notes, 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. Eph. 1:13, 14.*) Some suppose that Caleb and Joshua alone brought this cluster; the others not being so favourably disposed towards Canaan, or willing to labour in order to recommend it. From this event, the place was afterwards called "The Brook," or the valley, "of Eshcol;" Eshcol signifying a cluster.

V. 26-29. The spies could not deny that the land was rich and fruitful; but it is evident they meant to insinuate, that this was of no consequence, as the inhabitants were exceedingly powerful. The Amalekites would assault them, if they attempted to pass them in entering the country; and the situation, wealth, or gigantic stature of the other nations, rendered them invincible.

V. 30. Caleb may signify *all heart*: and he was evidently a man of true courage, steadfastly facing danger in the path of duty, in the exercise of vigorous faith, and entire dependence on God. When the report of the other spies, by a misrepresentation of the truth, had excited a tumult among the people against Moses, Caleb stood forth to still them, doubtless with the concurrence of Joshua. He did not say, "Let us go and attack the Canaanites;" but, "Let us go up at once, and possess the land;" as if he thought the forty days spent in searching the land had been too long a delay, and was impatient to take possession of the country which God had given them. (*Note, Josh. 14:6-15.*)

V. 31. These persons were deficient in *courage*, in thus fearing the Canaanites, when such a multitude were all engaged to fight for themselves and their families: but when we

be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched, unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

CHAPTER XIV.

The people murmur, and propose returning to Egypt; and threaten to stone Caleb and Joshua, while they in vain attempt to pacify them, 1-10. God threatens to destroy them at once, but Moses intercedes, and prevails for their rescue; yet that generation is doomed to fall in the wilderness, Caleb and Joshua excepted, 11-35. The men who raised the evil report, die by the plague, 36-38. The people attempt to march to Canaan; but are warned by Moses, and smitten by their enemies, 39-45.

AND all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we

f 14:36,37. Matt. 23:13. g See on 28. Ex. 36:13. Am. 2:9. * Heb. men of stature. 2 Sam. 21:20. Heb. 1 Chr. 20:6. marg. h Deut. 1:28. 2:10. 3:11. 9:2. 1 Sam. 17:4-7. 2 Sam. 21:20-22. 1 Chr. 11:23. 1 Sam. 17:42. Is. 40:22. a 11:1-4. Deut. 1:45. 18:4. Ex. 15:24. 16:2,3. 17:3. Deut. 1:27. Ps. 106:25. 1 Cor. 10:10. Phil. 2:14,15. Jude 16. c 28:21. 11:15. 1 Kings 19:4. Job 3:11. 7:15,16. Jon. 4:3,8. d Ps. 78:40. Jer. 9:3. e 31:32. f Deut. 17:16. 28:68. Neh. 9:16,17. Luke 17:32. Acts 7:39. Heb. 10:34,39. 11:15. 2 Pet. 2:21. g 16:4. 22:45. Gen. 17:3. Lev. 9:21. Josh. 5:14. 7:10. 1 Kings 18:39. 1 Chr. 21:16. Ex. 9:3. Dan. 10:9. Matt. 26:39. Rev. 4:10. 5:14. 7:11. h 24:30,38. 13:6,8.

consider the mighty works of the Lord, which they had witnessed in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, even to that present day, their unbelief appears the more surprising. Had the Canaanites been a thousand times stronger than Israel, they could not be stronger than Israel's God, as Pharaoh had found to his cost.

V. 32. Some suppose that there was a great mortality in the land just at the time, by which the Lord was weakening his enemies, and fighting for Israel; but which the spies perversely ascribed to an unwholesome climate. At the same time that they represented the country fruitful and populous, and all the people of great stature, and powerful and prosperous; they inconsistently speak of the land as eating up its inhabitants!

V. 33. [As grasshoppers.] That is, 'They despised us as puny creatures; and we, conscious of our insignificance and feebleness, trembled before them.'—It seems they passed as travellers, and were not suspected by the inhabitants.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The righteous Lord frequently gives up to their own devices, such persons as confide in their own wisdom and policy in preference, or in opposition, to his express word of promise; and even obedience to his commandments, if formal and hypocritical, may prove an occasion of men's falling into delusion, sin, and misery. (Notes, 2 Chr. 25:10,13.) We should, therefore, take heed both what we do, and in what manner and with what spirit we do it; as the same action may spring from contrary motives, and will certainly be productive of contrary effects to ourselves, according to the intention and disposition of our hearts.—Of the numbers whose names crowd the page of history, nay, even of those whose names are written in the Scriptures, the greater part are recorded to their perpetual disgrace! Happy they, and they only, whose names are written in the book of life, in the registers of eternity, as the people of the "LORD OUR SALVATION."—In the exercise of faith and hope, and by careful investigation of the sacred word, we may profitably search out the heavenly country, and hear a good report concerning it; and take encouragement to go up in the strength of the Lord and possess it at once. But carnal sense, and carnal preachers and professors, are not to be trusted in this business; and unbelief overlooks the promises and power of God, magnifies every danger and difficulty, and fills the heart with overwhelming discouragement.—May God help us to believe, and we shall then find all things possible! Faith will still the tumult of our passions, and inform us far beyond the report of either sense or reason: whilst earnestness of heavenly joys will form a "witness within ourselves," that will confute the false testimony of those who deny the reality or the excellence of spiritual blessings; and will animate us in "seeking those things which are above," nay, render us willing to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better than all things here below.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1. The people in general vented their discontent and despondency, as children are apt to do, in clamorous lamentations and wailings.

V. 2-4. Nothing can be conceived more absurd, as well as rebellious, than the whole conduct of Israel on this occasion. Surely it would have been at least as eligible to fall soldierlike, sword in hand, in attempting to conquer Canaan,

had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!

3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes.

7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.

8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land: for they were bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us; fear them not.

10 But all the congregation bade stone them

30. 1 Gen. 37:29,34. 44:13. Josh. 7:6. Judg. 11:5. 2 Sam. 3:31. 2 Kings 18:37. Job 1:20. Joel 2:12,13. Matt. 26:65. j 13:27. Deut. 1:25. 6:10. 11:8-9. k 1:27. 10:15. 2 Sam. 15:25,26. 22:20. 1 Kings 10:9. Ps. 22:8. 147:10,11. Is. 62:4. Jer. 32:41. Zeph. 3:17. Rom. 8:31. l Deut. 9:7,23,24. Is. 1:2. 63:10. Dan. 9:5,9. Phil. 1:27. m 24:38. Deut. 32:42. Ps. 14:4. 74:14. * Heb. shadow. Ps. 91:1. 121:5. Is. 30:2,3. 32:2. n Gen. 48:21. Ex. 33:16. 1:27. 7:21. 20:1-4. 31:58. Josh. 1:5. 2 Chr. 15:2. 32:8. Ps. 46:1,2,7. Is. 6:5,10. 41:10. Matt. 1:23. Rom. 8:31. o Ex. 17:4. 1 Sam. 30:6. Matt. 23:37. Acts 7:52,59.

as to die slaves in Egypt, or by famine or pestilence in the wilderness! Had it been possible for them to reach Egypt, they might have expected much more severe treatment, than that which had formerly extorted their doleful groans. But that must have been absolutely impracticable; for could they expect to be miraculously guided, victualled, and watered in their rebellious retrograde march? Yet without this, such a company could never have traversed that waste howling wilderness; but, without any immediate judgment from God, must inevitably have perished. The whole was a strong indication of the most horrible ingratitude, blasphemy, and rebellion. The Lord was directly charged with an intention of bringing them out of Egypt, by alluring them with the most encouraging promises, on purpose to destroy them and their families; and the whole present government of his express appointment, was to be set aside, and a new leader chosen, in opposition to him, and in defiance of him; nay, it seems one was actually appointed. (Neh. 9:17.) Such is human nature! and such counsellors are discontent and passion!

V. 5. Moses and Aaron being shocked at the blasphemy and rebellion of the people, expecting some terrible judgment upon them, perhaps entreating them to desist from their fatal purposes, fell down before them on their faces, to deprecate the divine displeasure by their prayers.

V. 6. [Rent their clothes.] This was a common expression of intense grief or deep abhorrence. (Marg. Ref. i.)

V. 7-9. Caleb and Joshua, with great intrepidity, and in the most energetic language, contradicted the evil report of the other spies. The land was exceedingly good! and if the Lord delighted in Israel, as they had every reason to expect he would, unless they forfeited his favour by their sin; he would bring them into this most desirable land, by the same power which had rescued them from Egypt. They had indeed great reason to fear rebelling against the LORD; otherwise they had nothing to dread from their enemies; who, having filled up the measure of their iniquity, were deprived of the providential defence of God, and exposed to his holy indignation.—The expression, "they are bread for us," denoted that the wealth and prosperity of the Canaanites would afford Israel the more abundant present support and future accommodation.

V. 10. Perhaps the other spies, counting this language a reproach of their conduct and a charge of direct falsehood, or else the rulers of the tribes and families first gave the word; and it soon became the general outcry through the whole multitude, that they who were nearest should immediately stone them; that is not only Caleb and Joshua, but Moses and Aaron also, as it seems probable from the narration. And now dreadful deeds would have been done, had not the Lord interposed to calm this tumult of the people by a visible display of his glory, probably like the fire on the top of Sinai, which intimidated them for the moment.

V. 11, 12. This is the abrupt language of astonishment and indignation. The Israelites had been tried and spared so long to no purpose, and still proceeded in their unbelief, and provocations, to such a degree, that it was in vain to bear with them any longer. (Matt. 17:17. Mark 9:19.) The Lord therefore declared their deservings, in his threatening to destroy them at once; and his faithfulness, in renewing his

28 Say unto them, *As truly as I live*, saith the Lord, *as ye have spoken in mine ears*, so will I do to you:

29 Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.

30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, *save Caleb the son of Jephunneh*, and Joshua the son of Nun.

31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know *the land which ye have despised*.

32 But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.

33 And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.

34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, (each day for a year,) shall ye bear your iniquities, *even forty years*; and *mye shall know my breach of promise*.

35 I the Lord have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.

36 And the men which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congr-

gation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land;

37 Even those men, that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord.

38 But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

39 And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people mourned greatly.

40 And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned.

41 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper.

42 Go not up, for the Lord is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the Lord; therefore the Lord will not be with you.

44 But they presumed to go up unto the hill-top: nevertheless, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.

45 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

a. See in 21, 28, 96-64, 65, 32-11. Deut. 1:35. Ps. 50:9, 9. x. 2. y 32, 33. 1 Cor. 10:5. Heb. 3:17. Jude 5. x 145. * Heb. *lifted up my hand*. Gen. 14:22. a 38. 25:63. 32, 12. Deut. 1:36-38. b 25:64. Deut. 1:39. c 3. d Gen. 25:34. 1a. 105:24. Prov. 1:25, 30. Matt. 22:5. Acta 13:41. Heb. 12:16, 17. e See in 29. f 32, 13. Josh. 14:10. Ps. 107:40. g Or, *feed*. e 32:38. Deut. 1:3. 2:14. h 5. 21. 1a. 23, 33, 45-49. i 13:25. 2 Chr. 36:21. k Ps. 95:10. 1a. 46. Dan. 9:24. Rev. 11:3. l 18:23. Lev. 20:19. Ps. 38:4. Ez. 14:10. m 1 Kings 8:56. 1a. 77. e 105:42. Heb. 4:1. ‡ Or, *altering of my purpose*. Deut. 31:16, 17. 1 Sam.

2, 30. Zech. 11:10. n 23:19. o 28:29, 29:65. 1 Cor. 10:5, 11. Heb. 3:19. p 13:30-33. q 12. 16:49, 25:9. Jer. 23:16, 17, 29:32. 1 Cor. 10:40. Heb. 3:17. r 26:65. Josh. 14:6-10. a Ex. 33:4. Prov. 19:3. Matt. 8:12. Heb. 12:17. t Deut. 1:41. Ec. 9:3. Matt. 7:21-23. 25:11, 12. Luke 13:25. x 25. y Chr. 24:20. y Job 4:9. Jer. 2:37. 32:5. z Deut. 1:42. Josh. 7:8, 12. Ps. 44:1-2-11. a 25. 13:29. 1 Lev. 26:17. Deut. 32:45. b Jude. 16:20. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 15:2. 1a. 63:10. 11a. 9:12. c 15:30. Deut. 1:43. d 10:33. 1 Sam. 4:3-11. e See in 43. Ez. 17:16. Deut. 1:44. 32:30. Josh. 7:5, 11, 12. f 21:3. Judg. 1:17.

"the LORD sware in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest," and irrevocably condemned them to wander in the wilderness for forty years, and never to see city, or town, or cultivated field, till that generation was dead, and their children grown up to inherit the land, according to his promise to their fathers. (Note, Ps. 95:9-11.) Having sworn by himself, and pledged the honour of all his perfections, the sentence was made absolute and irreversible; and his almighty power shut them up in the desert, as effectually as if it had been surrounded with the highest and strongest walls imaginable.—The Levites, who were numbered from a month old, were not included; for it is evident that Eleazar, the son of Aaron, assisted Joshua in dividing the land of Canaan after the conquest of it; (Josh. 14:1.) though he was old enough to officiate in the priest's office before this time, and was chief over the Levites. The women and minors, with Caleb and Joshua, were also excepted.—The promises were made to the descendants of the patriarchs, and not to the individuals of this generation.

V. 31. *Know the land.*] The children of these Israelites, by possessing Canaan, knew what a good land their fathers had despised.

V. 35. (Notes, 1 Cor. 10:1-5. Jude 5-8.) Forty years elapsed, from the departure of Israel out of Egypt to their entrance into Canaan; and the whole term is evidently included.—The word rendered *wander*, signifies *feed*: and thus implies, that the Israelites should move from place to place in the deserts, as shepherds in many countries do, who have no certain dwelling, but go from one district to another seeking pasture for their flocks.—The word "whoredoms" is generally used for *idolatry*; and it is thought that this doom was denounced on the people for their sin in worshipping the golden calf, and for their other idolatries; as well as for the transgression which they had just committed. (Note, Ex. 32:34, 35.)

V. 34. Neither the text, nor the marginal reading, seems to convey the precise meaning of the word (מַחֲלָה) rendered, "My breach of promise." Some translate it, "Ye shall know the fury of my anger," or "my vengeance." But perhaps it may signify *my annulling*. The words may either mean, that the people should know whether the Lord, having pronounced sentence against them, would *annul* it, or not; that is, they should experience the truth of it: or that they should know, that whilst his promises stood firm to the believing and obedient, hypocrites and apostates had no benefit from them. They perhaps would consider this exclusion as a "breach of promise," but he would show that it was only a delay made for wise, righteous, and gracious purposes; and that they would fulfil the promises to their descendants.

V. 39-45. The Israelites lamented very much that the sentence of exclusion had been pronounced; and, like Esau in similar circumstances, they sought with tears to have it reversed: (Notes, Gen. 27:38. Heb. 12:15-17.) but their subsequent conduct proved that they had not sorrowed to repentance. They were not truly humbled for their most

heinous sin: a having repeatedly escaped, they concluded that the Lord would not proceed to extremities; and being convinced by the death of the spies that they had sinned, they vainly hoped that an alteration of conduct would produce at least a mitigation of the sentence. But the irreversible oath was sworn, and they only added one rebellion to another. The Lord had expressly commanded them to return into the wilderness towards the Red Sea; (25) and Moses, with the priests who used to carry the ark, protested against their presumption. The Lord, their Defence, had been provoked to leave them; the Amalekites and Canaanites waited for them; the honour of the divine justice was concerned to punish them; and accordingly it is probable, that a great slaughter of them was made by their victorious enemies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-25. We shall not derive the full benefit from Scripture, unless we consider it as the history of human nature; written with an infallible and perfectly impartial pen; and are aware that we ourselves are disposed to act, in similar circumstances, exactly after the same manner as the Israelites did. If we are conscious of this, we shall see, in the chapter before us, a very humiliating picture of our own hearts, which may be of great advantage to us. For we must perceive, that it is natural to sinful man to believe a lie in preference to the faithful word of God; and this gives Satan and his instruments their grand advantage, in opposing religion and deceiving souls. In this spirit of unbelief, we are prone to harbour hard thoughts of God, to rebel against him, to torment ourselves, and to rush headlong upon our own destruction; and we should be completely ruined, if our wishes were granted us, when discontent and unbelief influence our hearts: for we are capable of quarrelling even with our choicest mercies, nay, of impatiently desiring those very evils, which at other times are most dreaded! But we should watch and pray against the first beginnings of this ungrateful and rebellious frame of mind; and keep a guard at the door of our lips, when such thoughts arise in our hearts: for the Lord frequently takes rebels at their word, and sends them the judgment, or the death, for which they rashly wish.—But the madness of a discontented heart is as manifest in its *resolves*, as in its *desires*, or *wishes*. Nor is there any thing so impracticable, or so desperate, that man dares not attempt it, when raging in feeble rebellion against the will of God: as if he could overpower Omnipotence, and annul the appointments of his Maker! Entreaties, counsels, encouragements, and warnings, at such a time, are vain, or only enrage the more: and thus Solomon's words are illustrated, "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly." (Notes, Prov. 17:12.) But the grace of the Holy Spirit, possessing the soul, produces a contrary disposition: the servants of the Lord under this influence are inclined to stoop, and to venture or suffer any thing, in order to rescue infatuated sinners from impending ruin: and while they abhor their crimes, they compassionate their persons, and both plead with them and fight for them,

14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or who-soever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.

15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.

16 One law, and one manner, shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *When ye come into the land whither I bring you,

19 Then it shall be, that when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave-offering unto the LORD.

20 Ye shall offer up *a cake of the first of your dough, for an heave-offering: as ye do *the heave-offering of the thrashing-floor, so shall ye heave it.

21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD, *an heave-offering in your generations.

22 ¶ And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses,

23 Even all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations;

24 Then it shall be, if aught be committed by ignorance, *without the knowledge of the congregation; that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt-offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat-offering, and his drink-offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.

25 And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by

fire unto the LORD, and their sin-offering before the LORD, for their ignorance.

26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.

27 ¶ And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she-goat of the first year for a sin-offering.

28 And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.

29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

30 But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, (whether he be born in the land, or a stranger,) the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

31 Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off: his iniquity shall be upon him.

32 ¶ And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath-day.

33 And they that found him gathering sticks, brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

35 And the LORD said unto Moses, *The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.

36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

37 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid

q 29. 9:14. Ex. 12:19. Lev. 24:22. Gal. 3:28. Fph. 2:11—22. Col. 3:11. r 10:5. 18:8. Ex. 12:14/24:43. 1 Sam. 30:25. a See on 2. Dent. 26:1. i Josh. 5:11, 12. u 18:12. Ex. 23:19. Deut. 26:2—10. Neh. 10:37. Prov. 3:9, 10. Ez. 44:30. Matt. 6:33. Rom. 11:16. 1 Cor. 15:20. Jam. 1:18. Rev. 14:4. v Lev. 2:14. 22:10. 16:17. v 18:26. Ex. 26:28. x Lev. 4:23, 14:23, 27. 5:13—17. Ps. 19:12. Luke 12:48. y See on Lev. 4:13. * Heb. from the eyes. z See on Lev. 4:14—21. † Or, ordinance. a 28:15. Lev. 4:23. 2 Chr. 29:21—24. Ezra 6:17. 8:35. b See on Lev. 4:20, 25. Rom. 3:25. 1 Tim. 2:2. c Luke 23:34. Acts 13:39. d See on Lev. 4:27, 28. Acts 3:17. 17:30. 1 Thim. 1:13. e Lev. 4:35. f See on Lev. 5:14. 9:14.

same as an omer, or about five pints; a hin is computed by some to have been twice as much. (Tables at the end.)

V. 14—16. (Marg. Ref.) The intention of this law might be, to induce strangers to attend the worship and ordinances of God; to intimate to the Israelites, that if they became profligate and ungodly, they would be treated as strangers; and to signify that in due time the Gentiles would be fully admitted into the church. Though uncircumcised persons might not eat the passover, they might offer other sacrifices in the appointed way, if they were so disposed. These regulations referred to sacrifices and ordinances only; not to public offices, nor to marriages.

V. 17—21. (Notes, Lev. 23:15—21.) The obligation before prescribed, seems to have been a general acknowledgment from the people at large; but this was an oblation from every one that reaped a harvest: who was required, previously to tasting it himself, to offer a portion of dough as a leave-offering to the Lord. This is supposed to have been given to the priests in their several cities, and not carried to the tabernacle.

V. 22—29. This law concerning sins of ignorance, being entirely diverse from one before considered, occasions considerable difficulty. (Notes, Lev. 4:) Some explain that law as relating to sins of commission, this to sins of omission; others explain the one of inadvertent violations of the moral law, and the other of the transgressions of the ceremonial law; and some think that related to the whole nation, this to any one tribe; or that to the bulk of the nation, this to the rulers and elders.—The Jews say, that the former law referred to such national transgressions through heedlessness, as consisted with the maintenance of the prescribed worship in the main, but that this especially respected the case of the nation, when through inattention, and the example and authority of wicked rulers, they had turned aside and committed idolatry, or conducted their worship directly contrary to law; yet through a culpable ignorance, and not in presumption. This was evidently the case under several of their kings, and the explanation seems well grounded.—The law concerning individuals, who sinned through ignorance, does not so materially differ from that before given. The marginal references may assist the student in forming his judgment on the several

interpretations before stated: but the difference of sentiment, on such a subject, does not at all interfere with the practical instructions of the passage.

V. 30, 31. To do aught presumptuously, implies that it is done wilfully, deliberately, in contempt of the authority of God's word, in defiance of his justice, "with a high hand," (marg.) and in direct rebellion. Such a conduct "reproacheth the LORD," as if his commands were needless, unreasonable, and inimical to man's happiness; as if his authority were only fit to be trampled under foot; his favour were not desirable, or his wrath not to be feared; in short, as if it were more advantageous to rebel against him than to serve him. (Marg. Ref. g, h, i. Notes, 2 Sam. 12:9, 10.) Many crimes will be found to be sins of presumption, which did not appear such to the offender, at the time when he committed them. Whenever we set our own inclinations in opposition to the known command of God: and when God saith, *Thou shalt not*, our conduct replies, *But I will*; we are guilty of sins of presumption; and though the matter be in itself trivial, yet the daring rebellion is exceedingly atrocious. (Notes, 1 Sam. 15:22, 23.) For an offender of this kind no sacrifice was appointed: he was condemned to bear his own iniquity, and to be utterly cut off; in most cases by a public execution, in others by the immediate judgment of God. (Note, 2 Sam. 12:13.)

V. 32—36. This example was evidently introduced to illustrate the foregoing law. A certain person was observed gathering sticks on the sabbath-day, in contempt of the commandment: and he was condemned as a presumptuous offender to be stoned, for a warning to the rest; which sentence was executed the next day. (Note, Heb. 2:1—4.)

V. 38—40. The word rendered "fringes," denotes an ornament resembling a flower, which being added to the bottom of the skirts of the outward garment, and tied together on each division of it, by a riband or lace of a blue colour, placed upon the fringes, would render the wearer conspicuous among strangers. But it was especially intended as a mark of distinction, which the Israelites themselves might frequently look upon, and so be put in mind of their character and obligations as the worshippers and servants of JEHOVAH; that they might remember and keep his commandments, and act consistently in all places, companies, and transactions; not

them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a riband of blue.

39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring;

40 That ye may remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.

41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

CHAPTER XVI.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, openly rebel; and Moses felled down before God. 1-4. Moses remonstrates with Korah for seeking the priesthood; and sends for Dathan and Abiram, who refuse to come. 5-15. Korah and his company turn incense, and drive together the congregation. The glory of the LORD appears. 16-19. He threatens to consume them; but is stayed by the prayer of Moses and Aaron. 20-22. By divine command, Moses calls the people away from the tents of the rebels, and denounces their doom; the earth opens and swallows up some, while fire consumes those who burn incense. 23-35. Their censers are used to pave the altar for a memorial to posterity. 35-40. The rebellion is renewed; a plague breaks out, but is stopped by Aaron burning incense. 41-48. The number that died. 49-50.

NOW Korah, the son of Izhar, the son Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men;

q Deut. 32:12. Ma. 9:20. 23:5. Luke 8:44. r Ex. 13:9. Deut. 6:8-9. 11:18-21. 15:22. Prov. 3:1. s Deut. 29:19. Job 31:7. Prov. 29:25. Ec. 11:9. Jer. 9:1. 12:1. 13:1. 14:1. 15:1. 16:1. 17:1. 18:1. 19:1. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 164:1. 165:1. 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9 *Seemeth it but* ^a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath ^aseparated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?

10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: ^aand seek ye the priesthood also?

11 For which cause, *both* thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and ^awhat is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?

12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; ^awhich said, We will not come up.

13 *Is it* ^a small thing that thou hast brought us up ^aout of a land that floweth with milk and honey, ^ato kill us in the wilderness, except ^athou make thyself altogether a prince over us?

14 Moreover, ^athou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou ^aput out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

15 And Moses was ^avery wroth, and said unto the LORD, ^aRespect not thou their offering: ^aI have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.

16 And Moses said unto Korah, ^aBe thou and all thy company ^abefore the LORD, thou and they, and Aaron to-morrow:

17 And take every man his censur, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censur, two hundred and fifty censurs; thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censur.

18 And they took every man his censur, and put

fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

19 And ^aKorah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and ^athe glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.

[Practical Observations.]

20 ^aAnd the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

21 ^aSeparate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

22 And ^athey fell upon their faces, and said, O God, ^athe God of the spirits of all flesh, shall ^aone man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 Speak unto the congregation, saying, ^aGet you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

25 And Moses rose up, and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and ^athe elders of Israel followed him.

26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, ^aDepart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and ^astood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

28 And Moses said, ^aHereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for ^aI have not done ^athem of mine own mind.

29 If these men die ^athe common death of all

p. 13. Gen. 20:15. 1 Sam. 18:23. 2 Sam. 7:19. Is. 7:13. Ex. 34:18. 1 Cor. 4:3. q. 1. 3. 3:41-45. 8:14-16. 18:2-6. Deut. 10:8. 2 Chr. 35:3. Neh. 12:44. Ex. 44:10. 11. Acta 13:2. r. Prov. 13:10. Matt. 20:21, 22. Luke 22:24. Rom. 12:10. Phil. 2:3. John 9. s. 1 Sam. 8:7. Luke 10:16. John 13:20. Rom. 13:2. 1 Ex. 17:8. 17:2. 1 Cor. 3:5. s. Prov. 29:9. Is. 3:5. 1 Pet. 2:13, 14. Jude 9. z. See on 9. y. 11:5. Ex. 1:11, 22. 2:23. z. 20:34. Ex. 16:3. 17:3. a. Ex. 2:14. Ps. 2:23. Luke 19:14. Acts 2:27-35. b. 45:8-10. See on Ex. 3:8, 17. Lev. 20:24. * Heb. bore out. c. 12:3. Ex. 32:19. Matt. 5:22. Mark 9:5. Eph. 4:26. d. 6:7. Gen. 4:4, 5. e. 1 Sam. 12:3, 4. Acta 20:33, 34. 1 Cor. 9:15. 2 Cor. 1:12. 7:2. 12:14. 17. 1 Thes. 2:10. f. See on 6:7. g. 1 Sam. 12:7. 2 Tim. 2:14. h. 17:2. 14:2.

priests, ventured on this highest part of the sacerdotal office. (Note, 2 Chr. 26:16-23.)

V. 8-11. In these verses Moses particularly addressed Korah, and the other sons of Levi, and charged them with despising the special honour which God had vouchsafed them, in appointing them to the service of the sanctuary; and with seeking the priesthood also. By this it appears, that while Korah charged Aaron and his sons with exercising a usurped authority; he really meant, by the assistance of the Levites and people, to exclude them and to seize upon the honour and emolument of their sacred office for himself and his family! and that whilst they all pretended to rise up against Aaron, they were in fact gathering together in rebellion against the Lord.

V. 12-14. Moses, as the ruler whom God had placed over Israel, summoned Dathan and Abiram to appear before him, to inform him of the cause of this insurrection: but they, doubtless aspiring to the government, would not own his authority, and insolently refused to appear before him. They likewise absurdly and basely spake of Egypt, where they had groaned in abject servitude, in the very language which the Lord had used concerning the land of promise! and sarcastically accused Moses of deceiving them with vain expectations of a valuable inheritance, which they were never likely to see; and of usurping dominion over the nation. They charged him likewise with attempting to impose on the people, with pretences of acting by divine authority, and for their advantage while he was sacrificing all their interests to the establishment of a usurped authority; as if he had attempted to put out their eyes, that he might lead them when blind wherever he chose.—The cloak of religion did not so well serve the purposes of those, who aspired to the civil government; and therefore they never mentioned the Lord at all; but ascribed all to Moses, as if they had never witnessed any miracles, or divine interpositions!

V. 15. *Respect not, &c.* That is, the offering of incense by Korah ^aand his company, who were confederates with Dathan and Abiram. Much more seems to have been meant than was expressed. ^aMoses prayed, that some evident effect of divine wrath might vindicate his injured character, and confirm his authority in Israel. He was indeed their ruler, under God; but, so far from oppressing them, he had not imposed the smallest tax on them, nor taken even as a present, so much as an ass from one of them. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Sam. 12:2-7.)

V. 16-18. The former challenge was now again repeated:

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12:5. 14:10. Ex. 16:7, 10. Lev. 9:6, 23. k. Gen. 19:15-22. Jer. 51:8. Acta 2:46. 2 Cor. 6:17. Eph. 6:6, 7. Rev. 18:4. 14:5. 14:12, 15. Ex. 32:10. 33:3. Ps. 73:19. Is. 37:36. m. 4:45. 14:5. n. 27:16. Job 12:10. Ec. 12:7. Is. 57:16. Zech. 12:11. Heb. 12:9. o. Gen. 18:23-25. 2 Sam. 24:1, 17. 1 Cor. 13:7. p. See on 21. q. 11:16, 17, 35, 36. r. See on 21-24. Gen. 19:12-14. Deut. 13:17. Is. 52:11. Matt. 10:14. Acta 5:20. 13:51. s. 2 Kings 9:30, 31. Job 9:4. 40:10, 11. Prov. 16:18. 18:12. Is. 28:14. t. Ex. 4:1-3. 7:9. Deut. 13:22. John 5:35. 11:42. 14:11. u. 24:13. 1 Kings 18:36. Jer. 23:16. Ex. 13:17. John 5:30. 6:38. † Heb. as every man dieth.

but Aaron and Korah were directed to appear together on this occasion, as the competitors for the priesthood, between whom the Lord was about to decide. It is certain that the company met in the court of the tabernacle, and not in the sanctuary; and that Aaron in this critical emergency was required to burn incense in the court, though it was not exactly regular: (46) for the sanctuary could not have contained so large a company without great inconvenience; and the people would not, in that case, have witnessed the event, as they evidently did.

V. 19. While the Levites, and others of their party, presumptuously burnt incense: Korah, instead of directly joining the company according to the requirement of Moses, seems to have been employed with vast success, in stirring up the whole congregation to rebellion. By these means he gathered them together to witness the event of the contest: and probably he intended to seize the disputed prize, perhaps with the slaughter of all who attempted opposition, had not the terrific appearance of the divine glory overawed and intimidated him and his party.

V. 22. *The God of the spirits of all flesh.* Man is a spirit embodied in flesh, the creature and subject of God. This relation of God to the spirits of mortal men seems to be here pleaded, as a reason why he should not indiscriminately punish the whole congregation: for he was acquainted with the inmost spirits of men, and could not be imposed upon; but could distinguish both the innocent from the guilty, and the tempters from the tempted: and Moses and Aaron seem charitably to have hoped, that Korah alone had sinned presumptuously; and that the rest had been misled, and had sinned ignorantly.

V. 24. By this command the Lord admitted the plea of Moses and Aaron; and they who testified their repentance, by separating from the ringleaders of the rebellion, were exempted from their punishment. Thus the congregation escaped, though many rebels perished in their presumption.

V. 26. The rebels, with all that belonged to them, were, as an accursed thing, devoted to utter destruction. (Notes, Lev. 27:28, 29. Josh. 7:13-15, 23-26.) The people therefore were forbidden to touch any thing belonging to them; that they might enter a solemn protest against their wickedness, acknowledge the justice of their punishment, and express their fear of being involved in it.

V. 27. Though the insurgents were of different tribes, they had quitted their proper situations in the camp, and pitched their tents close together; or they had formed one

and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.

48 And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

49 Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

50 And Aaron returned unto Moses, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. and the plague was stayed.

e See on a. 46. Dent. 33:10, 11. Is. 53:10-12. f 18:35, 25:8-11. 2 Sam. 24:16, 17:25. 1 Chr. 21:23. 1 Thes. 1:10. 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. Jam. 5:16. 1 John 5:14. g 32 -35. 25:9. 1 Chr. 31:14. Heb. 2:1-3. 10:28, 29. 12:25. h 43. 1 Chr. 21:26-30.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-19. On reading this chapter we may well inquire, for what purpose these events were thus particularly recorded. In order to derive instruction from them, we should remember that the house of Israel was "planted a noble vine, wholly a right seed;" nor can we reasonably suppose that they were of a more perverse and wicked disposition than other people. But we have in their history an unflattering picture of human nature, a thorough dissection of the human heart. Were any other number of men circumstanced, proved, and left to themselves as they were: and were their history written with as complete information and as impartial a pen, they would appear at least as black as Israel. The secret history of every individual, who lives and dies in sin, especially from under the means of grace, when made known at the day of judgment, will be found a similar compound of infidelity, ingratitude, rebellion, and absurdity; yea, the true believer sees in his former conduct, and feels in his daily experience, that his heart is of the same kind as that of Israel. This trial was therefore made of human nature, in order to expose the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart; that we might, as in a glass, see the reflection of our own character; be led to examine and watch our own thoughts, desires, and motives; to judge and condemn ourselves; to become sensible of our need of pardoning mercy, and sanctifying grace; and so learn to seek them heartily and earnestly. Instead therefore of expressing our surprise and indignation at these ancient rebels, let us look to ourselves; and we shall soon become sensible that "the spirit that is in us lusteth to envy," pride, ambition, and covetousness.—These restless passions are continually called forth into exercise: and whatever advantages men enjoy, by their rank in life, or station in the church of God; though wealthy, "famous in the congregation, and men of renown;" so long as God withhold any imagined blessing, or advances any one above them, they experience those insatiable cravings, which are only increased by indulgence.—Except these lusts are subdued by the grace of God, suitable occasions and temptations would induce any man on earth to despise the dominion which God hath placed over him; to treat every exercise of authority as usurpation and oppression; to aspire to a lawless independence, or to seize upon the authority for himself and his party; and to account all inferior favours and mercies but a small thing. Nor can any wisdom, equity, or excellence in superiors or competitors, abate envy and enmity; or stop the mouths of those from slanderous accusations, who are under the power of these hateful passions. This ungrateful and injurious conduct towards man, is often accompanied with infidel daring rebellion against God; which no evidences, no judgments, no warnings, no mercies can repress: or if they give it its malignity a temporary check, it afterwards breaks out the more desperately. And if it should appear better to suit the purpose, he is capable of cloaking his ambition and selfishness under a pretence to godliness, and a hypocritical profession of being the Lord's holy people.—Such is human nature! Such are our hearts! yea, worse than this, even "desperately wicked; who can know them?" Such they would appear to be, if fully proved: such they have in a measure appeared already, when put to the trial. And, comparing the Lord's kindness to us with our conduct towards him, during our past lives, we may each of us exclaim, "It is of his mercies that we are not consumed," as Korah and his company were!—One dreadful effect of this depravity is the daring presumption, with which numbers intrude into the sacred ministry, from the base motives of covetousness and ambition, and love of ease or indulgence, without any suitable dispositions, without any delight in the work or love for it, any zeal for the honour of God, or any deep compassion for the souls of perishing sinners. Yet will such men dare to say, in the most solemn manner, before God and his congregation, 'that they judge themselves moved by the Holy Ghost to take this office upon them;' though they are not only conscious of hypocrisy in this declaration, but deride the very inquiry as enthusiasm! Of such conduct the Author himself was guilty, and to the end of his days would be abased before God on account of it; and admire and adore the patience and loving-kindness of the Lord, that, instead of being visited after the manner of Korah, it hath pleased God to give him repentance and forgiveness; and to employ him in the work of the ministry, with some small degree of usefulness. "For where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded." And he men-

CHAPTER XVII.

The Lord commands twelve rods, one from each tribe, with the name written on it, to be laid up before the ark, 1-3. Aaron's rod alone buds, blossoms, and bears almonds, 4-9. It is laid up for a memorial, 10, 11. The people are afflicted, and despond, 12, 13.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes, according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

a 1:5-16, 2:3-30. 10:14-27. b Gen. 49:10. Ex. 4:2, 17. Ps. 110:2. 123:3. Ez. 19:14. 21:9, 13. 37:16-20. Mic. 7:14.

tions this humiliating subject, not only that the pious reader may bless God in his behalf; but that he may hope and pray earnestly and constantly for others, who lie under the same guilt, that they may experience the same grace. For our God "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy."

V. 20-50. The Lord will, first or last, manifest "who are his;" "whom he hath chosen," and "who are holy;" for it is not enough that we have his word in our hand, or his name in our mouth, unless we really believe his truth, and keep his commandments: "nor will doing the service of the sanctuary," and "standing before his congregation," though with acceptance from man, and usefulness also, prevent the doom of the hypocritical and rebellious; nay, rather they will aggravate it. And wo be to them, who refuse to judge or condemn themselves, till the Judge detects and condemns their iniquity!—He is "the God of the spirits of all flesh;" all creatures obey him; and frequently in this world he makes examples of the wicked, to deter others from sin. But if in his long-suffering he spare them here, and they still persist in rebellion, relapsing again and again, after solemn warning, and with still greater aggravations, as numbers do; their doom will be the more dreadful at last; and they will indeed be cast alive into the bottomless pit, and the fire of hell will continually torment, but never consume them. (Note, Heb. 2:1-4.)—Let sinners then take warning from such awful judgments, lest they too be swallowed up: let them separate from the wicked, and have no fellowship with their unfruitful works, but rather reprove and protest against them, if they would not be associated with them in punishment. But the Lord knows how to distinguish between the deluded and the presumptuous, the penitent and the impenitent; and to glorify his mercy towards the one, while he magnifies his justice upon the other, and records their doom for a useful lesson to succeeding generations.—Let us, however, turn from such awful objects to contemplate, admire, and imitate the effects of divine grace in the conduct of Moses and Aaron, in their patience, fortitude, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and unwearied labours and prayers for the welfare of their ungrateful enemies. May we have the same testimony of our conscience to our integrity and benevolence, whenever we are falsely accused: may we be thus angry without sinning, and thus able to "bless them that curse us;" "not being overcome with evil, but overcoming evil with good." Then will the Lord protect, vindicate, and honour us in due time, in the presence of our opposers, and we shall be blessed ourselves and blessings to others.—But we may in all this look unto Jesus, dying for us, when enemies; praying for his crucifiers; hastening between the dead and the living, with the incense of his meritorious intercession, to stay the plague which sin had occasioned, and by which multitudes have perished, and by which we all must otherwise have been eternally ruined. Through him we are spared and live: may "his love constrain us to live no longer to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again."

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 2-5. The rebellious spirit excited by Korah and his company was so violent, and had spread so widely through all the tribes, that even the awful judgments recorded in the foregoing chapter did not effectually repress it. It therefore pleased the Lord to bring the point in contest to decision, by a miracle, significant in itself, and harmless in its effects. He had before expressly named the princes of the several tribes, without exact regard to primogeniture: (Note, 1:5-16.) and he had appointed Aaron to the priesthood, and also to be prince or representative of the tribe of Levi. (Note, 3:5-10.) To confirm his authority, to establish the priesthood in his family, and finally to silence all other claims, and all murmurs on this account, were the express ends proposed on this occasion. (Notes, 16:1-7.)—The rods seem to have been sceptres, or badges of authority used by the princes; but some think they were all cut out of the same almond-tree on this occasion.—The writing was doubtless formed in such a manner, as to render them certainly distinguishable: and the Lord expressly foretold, that one of them, and but one, should blossom, to determine the tribe and priesthood which he had chosen.

V. 6-11. Moses, who had access at all times into the most holy place, left the rods before the ark all night; and in the morning that of Aaron was covered with buds, and blossoms, and ripe almonds; but those of the other princes, (though probably they were all made of the wood of the almond-tree,) were unchanged. Thus, beyond all dispute, the Lord showed his choice of the tribe of Levi, and of Aaron

3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation, before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

6 ¶ And Moses spake unto the children of Israel; and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

7 And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord, in the tabernacle of witness.

8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness: and, behold, the rod of Aaron, for the house of Levi, was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.

10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels: and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.

11 And Moses did so: as the Lord commanded him, so did he.

12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish.

e 3:2, 3, 18:17. Ex. 6:16, 20. d Ex. 25:16—22, 29:42, 43. 30:6, 36. e See on 16:5. f 8. 5:24, 11:1, 27:6, 33:1, 2. Hos. 14:5. g 10. Is. 13:11. Ex. 16:41, 23:27. h See on 16:11. i Heb. *And I will give one prince, a rod for one prince.* See on 2. 1:18, 2. 1:21, 3:21. j See on 5. k Gen. 40:10. Ps. 110:2, 182:17, 18. Cant. 2:3, 13. 12:1, 13:3, John 15:1—6. k Heb. 9:4. 116:38, 40. Ex. 16:32. Deut. 31:19—26. l Heb. *children of rebellion.* 1 Sam. 2:12, 30:22. Ps. 57:4. Is. 1:2. Hos. 10:9. 1:16, 2:2, 3:6, 6. m 26:11. Prov. 19:3. Heb. 12:5. n 1:51—53. 19:4—7. o Gen. 3:1. Ps. 119:21, 2 Sam. 6:5—12. 1 Chr. 13:14—13. 15:13. Ps. 130: 8:1. Acts 5:41. 4:14. p 16:26, 32:13. Deut. 2:16. Job 34:14, 15. Ps. 90:7. Is. 22.

as his priest.—Accordingly, the rod of Aaron was laid up “for a token against the rebels,” and probably continued in that very state to future ages; (*Heb. 9:4*), and no mention is made in the whole history of Israel of any further murmurs on this account. “This was a fit emblem of the Messiah’s resurrection, as declarative . . . of his priesthood’s being acceptable to God; nothing being more fit to represent one raised from the dead, than a dead branch . . . restored to vegetable life, and made to bud, and blossom, and bring forth fruit.” *Mac-laurin*.

V. 12, 13. The language of these verses is exceedingly descriptive of a forced submission, attended with terror and despondency, and an inward revolting against an appointment which they dared no longer oppose. And it significantly expresses the state of mind and heart of the people, and the greatness of the ferment which prevailed among them. In the preceding events, they “despised the chastening of the Lord;” and now “they fainted when rebuked by him.” (*Note, Heb. 12:4—8*.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though “the Lord hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked;” yet such is his holiness and justice, that continuance in sin is inseparable from ruin: he therefore graciously removes the occasions of offending, that men may be preserved from condemnation. He gives all proper satisfaction to those who are disposed to be convinced, and manifest the equity of his determinations to every impartial and humble inquirer: but, as we have no claim to his favours, “he does what he willeth with his own,” and deigns not to assign his reasons for making one man to differ from another.—Our Lord Jesus was unanswerably demonstrated to be the “great High-Priest over the house of God,” by his resurrection from the dead, and when “the rod of his strength went forth out of Zion, and multitudes were made willing in the day of his power, in the beauties of holiness;” and when through him, “Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit,” it will appear still more illustriously divine. (*Notes, Ps. 110:3. Is. 26:19. 27:2—6*.) Nor shall those ministers, whom he chooses, remain as dry rods before him and his church: but, more or less, sooner or later, they shall “bud, and blossom, and bear fruit,” both that of holiness in their lives, and that of usefulness in their ministry. And when they are opposed and persecuted, they may hope with increasing confidence for more signal success; in order that their adversaries may be silenced, the faith of the Lord’s people established, and their own hearts encouraged in their work of faith and labour of love.—And whether this usefulness be more immediate, or be longer waited and prayed for, it will

13 “Whoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?”

CHAPTER XVIII.

The charge of the priests and Levites, 1—7. The portion of the priests, 8—20. The *ti* he assigned to the Levites, and the *ti* he of that *ti* he to the priests, 21—32.

AND the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons, and thy father’s house with thee, shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.

2 And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness.

3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also die.

4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you.

5 And ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar; that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel.

6 And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

7 Therefore thou and thy sons with thee, shall keep your priest’s office for every thing of the altar, and within the veil; and ye shall serve: I

a 17:3, 7, 13. Heb. 4:15. b 22. 14:34. Ex. 29:38. Lev. 22:9. Ex. 3:15, 19. Acts 20: 26, 27. Heb. 13:17. c 4. Gen. 29:34. d See on 3:6—9. e 8:19, 22. e 4:15. 16:40. 17:1. 1 Chr. 16:39, 40. 2 Chr. 30:16. Ex. 44:15. f See on 3:25, 31, 36. 4:19, 20. g 4:15. h 1:51. 3:10. 1 Sam. 6:19. 2 Sam. 6:6, 7. 18:2. Ex. 27:21. 30:7. Lev. 24:3. 1 Chr. 9:19, 23, 33. 24:5. 1 Tim. 1:18. 3:15. 5:21. 6:20. k 8:19. 16:46. Jer. 23:15. Zech. 10:3. l Gen. 6:17. 9:9. Ex. 14:17. 31:6. Is. 48:15. 51:12. Ex. 34: 11, 20. m See on 3:12, 45. n See on 3:9. 8:16—19. o Lev. 16:2, 12—14. Heb. 9: 3—6.

be “fruit which shall remain” before the Lord, to his everlasting glory, and their eternal recompense; and in the church for the good of many, after they have finished their course. (*Notes, John 15:12—16. v. 16*.)—But alas! when man’s presumption is checked, and his self-sufficiency is abated, he naturally verges to the opposite extreme: and, in unbelieving despondency arising from hard and injurious thoughts of God, neglects divine ordinances, lest he should be guilty of profaning them: buries his talent in the earth, lest he should be condemned for wasting it; and often justifies himself in both, because he cannot merit heaven by his good works!—The Lord give us grace to avoid all the extremes, into which an evil heart and a subtle enemy combine to betray us!

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. Aaron and his family were now confirmed in the priesthood against all competitors; and the people were exceedingly terrified lest the tabernacle should occasion their destruction: but, to counterbalance the honour conferred on the former, and to allay the terrors and abate the envy of the latter, it was declared that the priests must bear the blame of every thing, which was not properly conducted in respect of the tabernacle and its service; and that the people had in this respect nothing to fear, except a presumptuous intrusion into the places and services, from which they were by the law excluded. But the priests must be very circumspect, active, and exemplary, both in their ministrations and conversation, else they would soon be laden with guilt, which their sacrifices could not expiate.

V. 2—6. *Levi signifies joined*, (*Gen. 29:34*), and the name seems alluded to in this appointment. The Levites, though brethren to the priests, were given to them as servants; and the menial and most laborious parts of the service, in the court of the tabernacle, were allotted them: but the priests alone might minister within the sanctuary, and sprinkle the blood, and order the sacrifices at the altar of burnt-offering. Nay, the Levites must not look upon the sacred vessels which they carried, till they were covered. (*Notes, 4:5—18*.) The ordinary priests performed the other services; and the high-priest once every year entered within the veil.

V. 7. *A service of gift*.] The priests were thus taught to account their work and charge to be a special gift and favour from God, and not to consider them as a disagreeable appendage to the distinction and emolument of their office. (*Marg. Ref. p.*)

V. 10. “The most holy place” here signifies the precincts of the tabernacle, which were *most holy*, compared with the houses or tents of the priests.—It was very proper on this occasion, to renew the grants before made to the priests; and

have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

8 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave-offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel: unto thee have I given them, by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever.

9 This shall be thine of the most holy things reserved from the fire: every oblation of theirs, every meat-offering of theirs, and every sin-offering of theirs, and every trespass-offering of theirs, which they shall render unto me shall be most holy for thee, and for thy sons.

10 In the most holy place shalt thou eat it: every male shall eat it: it shall be holy unto thee.

11 And this is thine; the heave-offering of their gift, with all the wave-offerings of the children of Israel: I have given them unto thee, and to thy sons, and to thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.

12 All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat; the first-fruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, thou have I given thee.

13 And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the Lord, shall be thine: every one that is clean in thine house shall eat of it.

14 Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.

15 Every thing that openeth the matrix, in all flesh which they bring unto the Lord, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless, the first-born of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.

16 And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.

17 But the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem, they are holy: thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the Lord.

p 16:5-7. 1 Sam. 2:28. John 3:27. Rom. 15:13, 16. Eph. 3:8. Heb. 7:4 q 4. 3:38. 16:40. s 5:9. Lev. 6:16, 18, 20. 7:6, 32-34. 10:14, 15. Deut. 12:6, 11. 6:13. a Ex. 29:21, 29. 40:13, 15. Lev. 7:33. 8:30. 21:10. Is. 10:27. Heb. 1:9. 1 John 2:20, 27. c Lev. 2:23. 10:12, 13. u Lev. 4:22, 27. 6:25, 26. 10:17. e Lev. 5:6. 7:1. 14:13. y Ex. 29:31, 32. Lev. 6:14, 28. 7:6. 16:13, 15. 11:13. g Ex. 18:18, 29. 7:6. 21:22. a Ex. 29:27, 28. Lev. 7:14, 30-34. b Lev. 10:14. Deut. 18:3. c Lev. 22:23, 11-13. d Heb. fat. d 15:19-21. Ex. 22:29. 24:19. 41:26. Lev. 21:1. 23:17, 20. Deut. 18:4. 26:2. Neh. 10:35-37. f Ex. 22:29. Jer. 24:2. Hos. 9:10. Mic. 6:11. f Lev. 27:38. Ps. 44:23. marg. e 3:13. Ex. 13:12. 24:20. Lev. 27:23. h Ex. 13:13. 34:20. Lev. 27:27. i 3:47. Lev. 27:2-7. k Ex.

which have already been considered. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 6:14-18. 7:1-10.)

V. 11-14. Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 2:1-14. 7:29-34. 23:15-21.

V. 15-18. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 13:11-16. Lev. 27:

V. 19. A covenant of salt.] Note, Lev. 2:13.—The Lord established it, as a perpetual and stable covenant, with the family of Aaron, and an unalterable statute to Israel, all the time they possessed Canaan, that the priests should have these perquisites for themselves and their families; by reason of their anointing to the sacred office.

V. 20. No inheritance, &c.] The priests and Levites possessed houses and lands for gardens and pasturage in the suburbs of their cities; and they might purchase estates to the year of jubilee: but they had no portion allotted them in the division of the land of Canaan; for it was the will of God, that they should be maintained by that portion, which he reserved to himself as a rent out of the estates of the other Israelites. Thus they were exempted from many avocations and snares, which the cultivation and improvement of lands would have occasioned; and were plentifully supplied with every thing needful and comfortable. At the same time, their interests were placed in an inseparable connexion with the maintenance of the worship of God: for if the people became generally irreligious or idolatrous, they would neither bring sacrifices nor pay tithes. And indeed the nature of man, and the entail of the priesthood and sacred ministry upon one family and tribe, would render it proper to employ every tie and motive, to engage them to support the worship of God to the utmost of their ability.

V. 21. The Lord, by this statute, gave the Levites a clear tenth of the whole increase of the land; that is, of the labour

18 And the flesh of them shall be thine, as the wave-breast and as the right shoulder are thine.

19 All the heave-offerings of the holy things which the children of Israel offer unto the Lord have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughter with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto thee, and to thy seed with thee.

20 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 And behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel, for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

22 Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.

23 But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.

24 But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave-offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit; therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.

25 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave-offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithes.

27 And this your heave-offering shall be reckoned unto you as though it were the corn of the thrashing-floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press.

28 Thus ye also shall offer an heave-offering unto the Lord, of all your tithes which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave-offering to Aaron the priest.

29 Our of your gifts ye shall offer every

30:13. Lev. 27:25. Ex. 45:12. 1 Deut. 15:19-22. m See on Lev. 3:2-5. n Ex. 29:26-28. Lev. 7:31-34. o 8. 15:19-21. 31:29, 41. Lev. 7:14. 1 Deut. 12:6. 2 Chr. 31:4-10. p Lev. 2:13. 2 Chr. 13:5. q 23:24. 26:62. 1 Cor. 10:8. 12:12. 14:27, 29. Josh. 14:3. r Deut. 18:12, Josh. 13:14, 33. 15:7. Ps. 16:5. 73:26. 142:5. Lam. 3:24. Ex. 44:28. 1 Cor. 3:21-23. Lev. 21:3. s 24:26. Lev. 27:30-32. t Lev. 12:17-19. 14:22-29. 2 Chr. 31:5, 6, 12. Neh. 10:37-39. 12:44. 13:12. Heb. 7:5-9. t 6. 3:7, 8. 1 Cor. 9:13, 14. Gal. 6:6. u 7. 1:51. 3:10, 39. s See on Lev. 20:20. 22:9. f Heb. to die. y See on 3:7. z See on 20. a Mal. 3:8-10. h See on 19. c Heb. 10:38. d 1 Lev. 6:19-23. e 30. 15:20. Deut. 15:14. 2 Kings 6:27. Hos. 9:1, 2. f Gen. 14:8. Heb. 6:20. 7:1-10.

and improvements, as well as of the estates of all the other tribes. This was a large proportion for by far the smallest tribe; and, when joined to all the rest assigned them, was an abundant provision. But the other tribes would have also the advantages accruing from trade and manufactures, in which the Levites were not allowed to be occupied.—This tenth seems to have been the common stock of the tribe, and divided among them accordingly: and this would obviate that common bad effect of tithes; namely, the contentions which arise about them, between ministers and the people of their peculiar charge: as the tithes were not paid to an individual, but to a collective body; or rather they were presented as an oblation to God, who was pleased to give them to the Levites. (24.)

V. 25-32. The foregoing regulations were delivered to Aaron, and by him to the people: but this law, immediately relating to the interests of him and his family, was given by Moses.—The Levites, receiving tithes of the people, gave a tithe of them to the priests; and some have conjectured that the tenth of this tithe was allotted for the high-priest's support, according to the pre-eminence to which he was advanced. This tithe of the tithes was the oblation of the Levites to the Lord, and as acceptable as that which was paid out of the estates of the other Israelites; and when it had been offered of the best, they might use the rest with comfort and a good conscience, as if it had been the produce of their own lands. But they would pollute the holy things, if they used the tithes without separating the portion assigned to the priests.

The hallowed part. (29) That part which was most proper to be selected as hallowed, or devoted to God, who requires the best of all things to be employed in his immediate service.

her eye offering of the Lord, of all the 'best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof, out of it.

30 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, When ye have heaved the best thereof from it, then it shall be counted unto the Levites as the increase of the thrashing floor, and as the increase of the wine-press.

31 And ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your households: for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.

32 And ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the best of it: neither shall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die.

CHAPTER XIX.

The water of separation directed to be made with the ashes of a red heifer; and all who prepared these must be cleansed from pollution, 1-10. The cases in which the water was to be used, and how: the soul that neglected it to be cut off; and the person that sprinkled it to be cleansed, 11-22.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

2 This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke.

3 And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face.

Heb. fat. 23, Gen. 43:11. Dent. 6:5. Prov. 3:9, 10. Mal. 1:8. Matt. 6:1. 1 Cor. 13:3. Phil. 3:9. h. Dent. 14:22, 23. 1 Matt. 10:10. Luke 10:7. 1 Cor. 9:10-14. Gal. 6:6. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. 22. Lev. 19:3. 22:15. 1 Lev. 22:15. 31:21. Lev. 22:10. h. Lev. 14:5. Is. 1:18. Rev. 1:5. c. See on Lev. 12:5. Lev. 22:20-21. Luke 1:35. Heb. 7:26. 1 Pet. 1:19. 2:22. d. Dent. 21:3. 1 Sam. 6:7. Lam. 1:13. John 10:17, 18. Phil. 2:6-8. e. 5:2. 15:36. Lev. 4:12, 21. 13:45, 46. 16:27. 24:14. Heb. 13:11-13. f. Lev. 4:6, 17. 16:14, 19. Heb. 9:13, 14. 12:24.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The office of a minister is a good work, and an important charge; and to be employed and trusted in it, to be approved faithful and made useful, is the greatest honour and favour which God ever confers upon mortal man. But it is weighty and perilous: "the iniquity of the priesthood," and "of the sanctuary," forms the most aggravated guilt, and will sink the mercenary, the careless, and the profligate minister into the deepest condemnation: besides occasioning wrath upon the people, and dragging them down with him into destruction. All therefore, who are thus employed, should "rejoice with trembling;" and "take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine," not "entangling themselves in the affairs of this life," (Note, 2 Tim. 2:3-7.) but considering the Lord as their Portion, the interests of godliness as their interests, and the glory of God in the salvation of souls, as their grand, their sole object. They who desire this good work should look to it, that their motives, dispositions, and qualifications are such, as may give them a reasonable ground to hope, that they will "be approved of God, as workmen that need not be ashamed;" and that the maintenance which they receive, may be indeed "for their service in the sanctuary."—On the other hand it is the Lord's pleasure, "that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," and be preserved from the anxieties and temptations of pinching poverty; that they may have no occasion to engage in secular business, or inducement to flatter the rich, or to be silent out of pecuniary considerations. Nay, it is his will, that they should not only have enough to maintain their families, and punctually to discharge their debts; but that they should have a surplus for pious and charitable uses, and that they should thus employ it: not luxuriously spending, or covetously hoarding it, but living themselves, and leaving their families to live, in dependence on Providence. It is therefore criminal not only to defraud, but to be niggardly to, the ministers of God, and their maintenance must not be considered as an alms or an imposition, but their just due, as the Lord's portion out of men's estates, which being withheld will pollute the enjoyment of all the rest.—Whatever is offered to the Lord must be of the best; and they who have him for their inheritance, will be well provided for in this world and in the next, without the embarrassments and cares which perplex others.—Let us then endeavour to know and do our own work diligently; to be contented with our daily bread, and thankful for it; to seek our inheritance and our treasure in heaven; to "set our affections on things above;" to have our conversation heavenly; to consider ourselves as "strangers and pilgrims upon earth;" and to leave the eager pursuit of earthly things to those who know no better treasures to be desired or enjoyed.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 2. Intimations had before been given, concerning the method of purification from ceremonial defilement, which is prescribed in this chapter. (8:7).—The red colour of the heifer being expressly insisted on, must be supposed to have had some meaning. Atrocious guilt is spoken of as *crimson* and *scarlet*; *blood* is the atonement for sin; and the vengeance executed by the Lord on his enemies, is represented by his garments being red with their blood. (Is.

4 And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and 'sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times.

5 And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn.

6 And the priest shall take cedar-wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer.

7 Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even.

8 And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even.

9 And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place; and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel, for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.

10 And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever.

11 ¶ He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.

1 Pet. 1:2. g. Ex. 29:14. Lev. 4:11, 12, 21. Ps. 22:14. Is. 53:10. h. Lev. 14:46, 49. Ps. 51:7. Is. 1:18. Heb. 9:19-23. 18, 19. Lev. 11:25, 40. 14:5, 9. 15:5, 16:36-38. 1, 18. 9:13. 2 Cor. 5:21. Heb. 7:26. k. 17. 113, 20, 21. 6, 6, 12. Ex. 12:24. Lev. 15:20. Zech. 13:1. 2 Cor. 7:1. m. See on 7, 8, 19. n. 15:15, 16. Ex. 12:49. Rom. 3:29, 30. Col. 3:11. o. 16. 5:2. 9:6, 10. 31:19. Lev. 11:31. 21:1, 11. Hag. 2:13. Rom. 5:12. 2 Cor. 6:17. Eph. 5:21. Heb. 9:14. p. Heb. soul of man.

63:2.) Perhaps these things might be alluded to.—Christ never bare the yoke of sin; nor would he have been subject to the yoke of the law, except for our sakes and as our Surety. (Note, Gal. 4:4-7.)

V. 3. The high-priest must not on any account knowingly contract defilement; and therefore the next priest to him officiated in this ceremony, not only at this time, but probably on all future occasions of the same kind.

V. 4. *Before the tabernacle.* Either towards the tabernacle when without the camp, as it is generally thought; or in the court of the tabernacle, when the solemnity without the camp was finished.

V. 5-10. This oblation differed from all other sacrifices, in that the heifer was slain, not in the court of the tabernacle, but without the camp; the greater part of the blood, and all the fat were burned with the skin and carcass; and the same things were cast into the burning, which had been appointed in the case of a leper when cleansed. (Note, Lev. 14:4-7.) Yet it is evident, that it was for substance an atoning sacrifice; and the typical purifying efficacy of the ashes was derived from the typical expiation, made by the spotless animal thus slaughtered.—Every circumstance was ordered, so as to impress the mind with an idea that the heifer was *extremely polluted and polluting*; and that by thus carrying the pollution out of the camp, it made way for the purification of the people. Even Eleazar, by superintending the transaction and sprinkling the blood, was rendered unclean, as well as he who burned the heifer: and when a clean person had collected the ashes, he also in some degree partook of the pollution.—Thus Christ, our unblemished Sacrifice and Sanctification, bearing our sins, suffered without Jerusalem by the hands of the Romans, yet by the decree and under the inspection of the chief priests: and though his death was "according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" yet every one concerned in it contracted guilt and pollution of the most aggravated kind.—The ashes of the heifer thus prepared, and carefully kept apart from those of the wood with which it was burned, were laid up in some clean place without the camp, that the water of separation (or the water for purifying those who were separated for ceremonial pollution) might be made, by putting a small quantity of them into spring-water. This water must be frequently wanted by the whole multitude of Israelites: yet, as a little would suffice, the ashes of one heifer might last for some considerable time; and the nature of ashes, which do not easily corrupt, might also typify the *abiding efficacy* of the atonement of Christ. But that man must be endued with an uncommon measure of credulity, who can believe the assertions of the Rabbies, that the ashes of this one heifer lasted the whole nation, and the strangers sojourning among them, till the days of Solomon.—It is reasonable to suppose, that after the people were settled in Canaan, ashes for this purpose were placed in every neighbourhood, for the convenience of all who needed them.

V. 11. It does not appear that the touch of an unclean person, or of any other thing, required, as burdensome purification, except that of a *dead human body*, or *grave*. (Le. 11.

ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

9 And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly: and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

13 This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath fallen us;

15 How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us and our fathers.

16 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an Angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt; and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border.

17 Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells; we will go by the king's highway, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

o Neh. 9:15. Ps. 75:15, 16. 103:41, 114:8. Is. 41:17, 18. 43:20, 48:21. p 17:10. q Deut. 9:24. r 103:32, 33. Matt. 5:22. Luke 9:54, 55. Acts 23:3-5. Eph. 4:26. Jam. 3:2. r 11:22, 23. Gen. 49:5, 11:16. Dan. 3:28-30. Acts 3:12-16. 14:9-15. Rom. 14:17. 1 Cor. 13:7. a 8. Lev. 10:1. 1 Sam. 15:13, 14, 19, 24. 1 Kings 19:21-22. 1 Cor. 10:9, 10:14. 15:14. 16:10. 28:20. Job 1:20. 17:18. 18:17. 19:24. 20:15. 21:15. 22:15. 23:15. 24:15. 25:15. 26:15. 27:15. 28:15. 29:15. 30:15. 31:15. 32:15. 33:15. 34:15. 35:15. 36:15. 37:15. 38:15. 39:15. 40:15. 41:15. 42:15. 43:15. 44:15. 45:15. 46:15. 47:15. 48:15. 49:15. 50:15. 51:15. 52:15. 53:15. 54:15. 55:15. 56:15. 57:15. 58:15. 59:15. 60:15. 61:15. 62:15. 63:15. 64:15. 65:15. 66:15. 67:15. 68:15. 69:15. 70:15. 71:15. 72:15. 73:15. 74:15. 75:15. 76:15. 77:15. 78:15. 79:15. 80:15. 81:15. 82:15. 83:15. 84:15. 85:15. 86:15. 87:15. 88:15. 89:15. 90:15. 91:15. 92:15. 93:15. 94:15. 95:15. 96:15. 97:15. 98:15. 99:15. 100:15. 101:15. 102:15. 103:15. 104:15. 105:15. 106:15. 107:15. 108:15. 109:15. 110:15. 111:15. 112:15. 113:15. 114:15. 115:15. 116:15. 117:15. 118:15. 119:15. 120:15. 121:15. 122:15. 123:15. 124:15. 125:15. 126:15. 127:15. 128:15. 129:15. 130:15. 131:15. 132:15. 133:15. 134:15. 135:15. 136:15. 137:15. 138:15. 139:15. 140:15. 141:15. 142:15. 143:15. 144:15. 145:15. 146:15. 147:15. 148:15. 149:15. 150:15. 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V. 8. It has been shown, that the waters from the rock in Horeb typified the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, communicated to us through the atonement of Christ, when smitten for our sins. (Notes and P. O. Ex. 17:1-7.) The smiting of the rock needed not to be repeated: for though it was not the same rock, it was the outward sign of the same spiritual benefit. (Note, 1 Cor. 10:1-5.) It was, therefore, only requisite to speak to it. And thus, Christ having been once smitten, "and wounded for our transgressions," needs not to be smitten any more; but only to be spoken to by the prayer of faith accompanying the preaching of the gospel; and the waters will flow forth.—The pretended sacrifice of the mass seems to be an imitation of Moses's error, in repeatedly smiting the rock, when he ought only to have spoken to it.

V. 9. As Moses "took the rod from before the LORD," many suppose that "the rod of Aaron which blossomed" was meant; but it is not improbable, that the rod, with which Moses wrought so many miracles, was also generally laid up in the sanctuary. Whatever rod was meant, it was only intended to be a token of the divine power to be exerted, and ought not to have been used in smiting the rock.

V. 10-13. Though the people were rebels, and Moses called them so at other times without offence, yet he evidently spake at this time in an angry spirit. He also assumed honour to himself and to Aaron, instead of giving glory to God, when he inquired, "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" He seems not firmly to have believed that the water would be given, and he did not think it sufficient to "speak to the rock," and therefore he hastily smote it, and repeated the stroke immediately; though the sign of speaking was probably intended as a rebuke to the people, who were not so obedient to the Lord's command as the very rocks were. In this view of his conduct we perceive that he was very culpable; the Lord considered it as exceedingly dishonourable to his name; and he knew Aaron likewise to be highly criminal: though the water therefore was not withheld, yet the relief to Israel was followed by a severe rebuke to Moses and Aaron, and a sentence of exclusion from Canaan.—They were eminent characters: the eyes of all Israel were upon them; and their improper conduct, and want of confidence in the power and faithfulness of God, rendered it expedient that

18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.

19 And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high-way; and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet.

20 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.

21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

22 ¶ And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor.

23 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying,

24 Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah.

25 Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor;

26 And strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there.

27 And Moses did as the LORD commanded; and they went up into mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.

28 And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.

29 And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.

Acts 7:15. e Gen. 15:13. Ex. 12:40. f 11:15. 16:13. Ex. 1:11-14, 16:22. 5:11. Acts 7:19. g Ex. 2:23, 24. 3:7-9. 6:5. 14:10. h Ex. 3:2-6. 14:19. 23:20. 33:2. 21:1, 22-24. Deut. 2:1-4, 37:29. k Deut. 2:6, 28. 18 Gen. 27:41. 32:6. Jude. 11:17, 20. Ps. 120:7. Ex. 35:5, 11. Am. 1:11. m 1 Cor. 2:4-8. 22:7. Judg. 11:35, 24. n 14:16. 13:26. 33:36, 37. Ex. 47:19. 48:28. o 21:4. 33:37, 38. 34:1. p 27:13. 31:2. Gen. 15:15. 25:8, 17. 35:29. 49:29, 33. Deut. 32:50. Judg. 2:10. 2:14. r 1:28. q See on 11:12. t Heb. 4:27. marg. r 38:38, 39. s Ex. 29:29, 30. 16. 22:21. Deut. 7:11, 23. 47:16-23. Deut. 31:7, 8. 34:9. 1 Chr. 22:11, 12, 27. 28:5-9. Acts 20:25-29. 2 Pet. 1:15. n 33:38, 39. Deut. 10:6. 32:41. 50. 54:5. Heb. 7:24, 25. x Gen. 50:10. 1 Cor. 34:8. 2 Chr. 35:24, 25. Acts 6:32.

he should be sanctified in their punishment. (Note. Ps. 106. 32, 33.)—The other place, where water had been brought out of the rock was called Meribah; but it was called also Masah: this was Meribah-Kadesh, (Marg. Ref. z.)

V. 14-21. The descendants of Esau, now grown into a flourishing kingdom, were not acquainted with the relation in which the Israelites stood to them, nor with their bondage in Egypt and deliverance from it, their continuance in the wilderness, and their pretensions to Canaan. With them Moses pleaded the brotherly relation, to move natural affection; the past distresses of the people, to excite compassion; and the favour of the Lord to them; who by the Angel of his presence guided and protected them, to influence their hopes and fears. He engaged also that the people should pass through with all convenient speed, on the king's highway doing no harm, and paying even for the water which they drank: this being the direct road into the land promised to their fathers.—But the Edomites suspected their intentions, retained their old enmity, denied their request, and threatened them with war. Yet the Israelites were not allowed to molest them; but were required to set an example of forbearance, by taking a long circuit round their country. Hence it is evident, that so long as they were under the conduct of Moses and Joshua, they did not wage war from resentment or rapacity, but according to the commandment of God; and that he pointed out to them the people on whom they were required to execute his righteous vengeance, and whose countries they should receive for an inheritance; nor would they have been successful, if they had assailed any others. (Notes, 142-4, 439-45. 21:21-25. 31:2.)—The Edomites seem to have been governed by dukes or military leaders, when Israel came out of Egypt; but now a king ruled over them. (Ex. 15:15. Notes, Gen. 36:31-43.)

V. 22-28. At the command of God, delivered by Moses, Aaron seems to have put on the rich pontifical garments, and in them to have ascended the mountain; where they were taken off from him by Moses, and put on his son Eleazar, who was now invested with the high priesthood. This being done, Aaron immediately expired: and though he left the world under a divine rebuke, yet he died as a pardoned sinner with the hope and earnest of glory, and probably without terror or reluctance. Doubtless the command given to

CHAPTER XXI.

Israel is assaulted by a Canaanitish king, and utterly destroys him, his people, and his cities, 1-3. The people murmur, and are punished with fiery serpents; but, confessing their sin; they are healed by means of a brazen serpent, 4-9. They go forward several stages; and compose a song on finding water, 10-20. They conquer Sihon, and Og, kings of the Amorites, 21-35.

AND when ¹king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by ²the way of the spies; ³then he fought against Israel, and took ⁴some of them prisoners.

2 And Israel ⁵vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then ⁶I will utterly destroy their cities.

3 And the LORD ⁷hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities; and he called ⁸the name of the place ⁹Hormah.

4 ¶ And they journeyed from ¹⁰mount Hor, by

n 33-40. Josh. 12:14. Judg. 1:15. b 13:21-22. 14:45. c Deut. 2:32. Josh. 7:5. 11:19-20. Ps. 113:3-4. 1 Gen. 28:20. Judg. 11:30. 1 Sam. 1:11. 2 Sam. 15:7-8. Ps. 55:12. 116:13. 132:2. e Lev. 27:28-29. 1 Job. 13:15. Josh. 6:17-25. 1 Cor. 16:22. f s. 10:17. 91:15. 102:17. g 14:43. Deut. 1:41. 1 Sam. 30:30. * That is, *after destruction*. h 20:22-23, 27. 33:41. 14:25. Deut. 1:40. k 20:18-21. 1 Gen. 2:5-8. Judg. 11:18. 132:7-9. Ex. 6:9. Acts 14:22. 1 Thes. 3:3-4. † Or, *grace*. Heb. *shortened*. m 11:1-5. 14:1-4. 16:13, 14, 41. 17:12. Ex. 14:11.

Moses, and the service assigned him must have awakened in him many painful feelings, when he considered his own perhaps deeper guilt.—*Not enter, &c.* (24) "A manifest token that the earthly Canaan was not the utmost felicity, at which God's promises aimed; because the best men among them were shut out of it." *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. Well might Moses say, "All our days are passed in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told;" when during so long a period he witnessed nothing worth recording, but the death of many hundreds of thousands of his brethren! (*Notes, Ps. 90: title. 7-10.*)—Even to this day man's life passes away almost in the same manner: for what is it but a tedious repetition of the same dull occurrences, with evident proofs of our folly and guilt, and of the Lord's anger tempered with mercy, "till it be cut off, and we fly away?" Thus the longest life soon comes to a close; and the only advantage that the most eminent possess above the more obscure is, that they do not die quite so unnoticed. O Lord, "so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"—The propensity to sin is evidently not the fault of any one man or people, but of human nature; and therefore one generation after another manifests the same disposition to unbelief, impatience, and rebellious murmurs.—We can easily exclaim against the Israelites in this respect, after all which they had witnessed and experienced: but had we been in their place, cooped up in the wilderness; confined mainly to one kind of food; at a distance from all the delicacies and varieties with which even the poorest in a fertile land are comparatively feasted during the revolutions of the seasons and their several productions; should not we too have been fretful and impatient? Not that we should have had either right or reason to complain; but because we are proud and sensual, and consequently hard to please.—But why question whether we should have rebelled? when Moses and Aaron stand condemned with Israel, though not of the same, yet of similar unbelief, rebellion, and anger. Even Moses, the meekest man on earth "spoke unadvisedly with his lips;" and we are constrained repeatedly to notice the most eminent saints defective in their most distinguishing excellencies. (*Note, Gen. 12:11-16.*)—Under long continued trials, the best of men prove that "sin dwelleth in them;" nay, old age gives advantage to some evils, and to none more than a peevish spirit.—But in proportion to the eminence of a man's character, and the notoriety of his offence, it will dishonour and displease God: (*Note, Ec. 10:1.*) and by putting us to shame for our sins, he will obtain that honour which we have neglected to render him. Whilst impotent sinners escape punishment in this world, being "reserved unto the day of judgment;" the Lord marks the offences of his people with alarming severity, yet still in mercy; and notwithstanding our unworthiness, he provides for our wants, and answers our prayers, when we call upon him for a supply of the waters of life, which flow from the Rock of salvation.

V. 14-29. Here again, let us learn to imitate the impartiality of the historian; the silent submission of him and of Aaron; and the example of Israel to insolent and injurious Edom. Thus upright and inoffensive, candid in our declarations, and open in our profession of religion;—thus fair in our proposals, slow to anger, and ready to forgive;—thus willing to give up our convenience, and even recede from our right rather than contend about it, should we be; and when we cannot "overcome evil with good," we should leave the Lord to plead our cause in his own time and manner.—The word of God will surely, perhaps speedily, be fulfilled in his providence. Shortly death will strip the richest, wisest, and most honourable of all their distinctions, except true grace have made them to differ; but, in that case, when they leave all the rest to others, this will be their own for ever. Having served their generation, they need not wish to

the way of the Red Sea, to ¹compass the and o, Edom: and ²the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

5 And the people ³spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; ⁴and our soul loatheth this light bread.

[Practical Observations.]

6 And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, ¹We have sinned; for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee: ²pray unto the LORD that he take away the serpents from us. ³And Moses prayed for the people.

15:24. 16:2, 3, 7, 8. 17:2, 3. Ps. 78:19. n 11:7-9. Ex. 16:15, 31. Ps. 78:24, 25. Prov. 27:7. o Gen. 3:14, 15. Deut. 8:15. Is. 14:29. 30:6. Jer. 8:17. Am. 9:3-4. 1 Cor. 10:9. p Ex. 9:27, 28. 1 Sam. 12:19. 15:24, 30. 1 s. 78:34. Matt. 27:4. q Ex. 8:8, 28. 1 Kings 13:6. Jer. 37:3. Acts 8:24. r 11:2. 14:17-20. Gen. 20:7. Ex. 32:11, 30. Deut. 9:20, 25-29. 1 Sam. 12:20-23. Job 42:10. 1 s. 106:23. Jer. 15:1. Rom. 10:1.

survive their usefulness; nor can that correction be reasonably complained of, which hastens a man's entrance into heaven.—When eminently good men die, rivalry, envy, resentment, and prejudice, which often render them uneasy while they live, die also; and survivors very commonly honour and mourn for those, whom when living they opposed and reviled! This respect for their memory is indeed a tribute due to them; but it is of little consequence what others think and say of them, when dead, except they then receive their testimony and follow their example.—Blessed be God, our High-Priest at death relinquished not his priesthood to another, but rose again to complete his design, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. (*Note, Heb. 7:23-25.*) Having the fulness of the Spirit, he raises up a succession of ministers and Christians to preach and profess his truth from age to age; and he hath consigned the robe of his righteousness to all his spiritual posterity, for their accepted appearance before God.—If we be his indeed, though we be separated from our dearest friends, and must shortly be absent from the body; yet we shall never be separated from him: "for he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1-3. Before the people set out to march round the country of Edom, the king of those Canaanites who inhabited the southern part of the country, knowing their intentions of invading the land, remembering that they had formerly searched it, and now learning that they approached his borders, attacked them in the wilderness, and took some prisoners, which elated him and discouraged them. But this disadvantage induced the Israelites to place their whole dependence on the Lord; and to devote the cities and property of the assailants to utter destruction, if he should render them victorious; their persons being already thus devoted by God himself. In this confidence they waged war with them, and pushed forward to their cities, which they took and utterly destroyed, and called the name *Hormah*; that is, *utter destruction*, (*marg.*) that none might ever after build cities on the same ground. The clause rendered "king Arad the Canaanite," may very properly be translated, "the Canaanite, the king of Arad;" and he is elsewhere called "the king of Arad." (*Josh. 12:14.*)—Some argue that the Israelites did not at this time destroy the cities, but only devoted them; and that Joshua afterwards destroyed them: supposing that the cities of Arad lay beyond the country of Edom. But our knowledge of the ancient geography of those parts is very imperfect; and the account of the transaction seems given by Moses, and not inserted afterwards by another person.

V. 4, 5. The Israelites were not permitted to force their way through the land of Edom, but were led back into the wilderness, as if about to return to the Red Sea. The road perhaps proved heavy or rough; water was scarce; and they grew weary of living so long on manna, which probably they fancied was not hearty enough to support them under such fatigues. They had expected directly to enter Canaan, and their retrograde journey was a grievous disappointment. Few of them had ever lived upon bread; and even that circumstance might concur in enhancing to their imaginations the satisfaction of having that kind of food. It seems also that water failed them, and they endured some hardship; but their spirits were embittered, as well as discouraged; and they relapsed into their old sin of distrustful murmuring against Moses and against God. (*Marg. Ref. m. n.*)

V. 6-9. Serpents of various kinds abounded in the wilderness; but they had been restrained from hurting the people, till they provoked God to send them to assail the camps, in which they soon did dreadful execution, and caused still greater consternation. They were called *fiery serpents*, as some think, from their colour, which resembled polished brass; others deduce the epithet from the inflammation, like the burning of fire, which immediately followed their bite. The people were at length, by this judgment, made sensible of

8 And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. [Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in Oboth.

11 And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at Ije-abarim, in the wilderness which is before Moab, toward the sunrising.

12 From thence they removed, and pitched in the valley of Zared.

13 From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

14 Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon;

15 And at the stream of the brooks that goeth

a Ps. 106:43-45, 145:8. 12 Kings 18:4. John 3:14,15, 12:32. Rom. 8:3. 2 Cor. 5:21. uIs. 45:22. Zech. 12:10. John 1:29. Heb. 12:2. 1 John 2:8. x John 6:40. Rom. 1:17. 5:20,21. y 33:43-45. * Or, *seeps of Abarim*. z Deut. 3:13, 14, the brook Zared. a 14, 22, 39. Deut. 2:24. Judg. 11:18. Is. 16:2. Jer. 48:20. b Josh. 1:13. 2 Sam. 1:18. 10 Or, *Vaheb in Suphah*. c 28. Deut. 2:27, 18, 14, 15:1. 1 Heb. *leaneth*. d Judg. 9:21. e 20:9. Ex. 17:6. Is. 12:3. 41:17.

their fault, and entreated Moses to pray for the removal of the serpents, which he readily did. Yet they were not removed; but Moses was commanded to form an image of a serpent of brass exactly like them, to affix it to a long pole, or standard, and to place it in a conspicuous part of the camp; and to this, they who had been bitten were directed to look. Nothing could in itself be less suited to give relief than this expedient: but it was the Lord's appointment: and by this token the sufferers must express their entire dependence on him, and submissively expect a cure from him alone. Accordingly, whoever looked, however desperate his case, or feeble his sight, or distant his situation, was infallibly and perfectly cured; and manifested his recovery, by becoming capable of the services to which he was called, or marching in his place when the camp was removed; but if any one would shut his eyes, or turn his back on the brazen serpent, and depend for help on any thing else; he must inevitably die. This forms a very significant type of our salvation by Jesus Christ. The Lord, provoked by man's first apostasy, hath permitted that old Serpent, the tempter, the devil, to communicate his hateful venom to the whole human race, which operates to their destruction: and numbers in consequence have perished, are perishing, and will perish. But "God so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Saviour was indeed perfectly free from sin, but he assumed "the likeness of sinful flesh." (Note, Rom. 8:3,4.) he was numbered with malefactors, and crucified with them; and it is observable that the supposed crime for which he suffered, namely, "making himself equal with God," was considered by his enemies as the essence of diabolical ambition, usurpation, and blasphemy. Having thus been "made Sin for us," he is now held forth in the gospel to all nations; (Note, 2 Cor. 5:18-21.) and when any poor sinner is made sensible of his guilt and danger, and humbly prays for mercy and deliverance, he is commanded to look unto Jesus, as dying upon the cross for the transgressions of "the law given by Moses;" and renouncing all other confidences, and looking in faith, with a desire of salvation, and in obedience to God; and persevering from day to day in the use of the appointed means; he obtains effectual relief, and at length a perfect deliverance, even though weak in faith, and though Satan's temptations as yet harass his soul. For faith in a crucified Saviour is the appointment of God, and rendered effectual by his grace: and though man's reasoning pride considers it as foolishness, all believers experience it to be "the power of God to salvation." (Note, John 3:14,15.)—The command given to Moses, to make an image of a serpent, shows that forming images is no violation of the moral law; unless intended as representations of God; or worshipped when made, as the Israelites afterwards worshipped the brazen serpent. (Notes, Ex. 20:4. 2 Kings 18:4.)—It is thought that the sight of a serpent, or the image of one, tends to increase the malady of him who has been bitten: and some naturalists have said the same of the sight of brass; yet that of the brazen serpent healed the people. The sight of Christ crucified, naturally filled his crucifiers only with anguish, when they beheld him whom they had pierced, and were convinced he was their Messiah; but by the grace of God, became their only salvation through faith in him. Bp. Patrick.—The Jews in general allow, that there was some mystery in this appointment; but they will not understand the mystery till they become Christians.

down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab.

16 And from thence they went to Beer; that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.

17 Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, well; sing ye unto it:

18 The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the law-giver, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah:

19 And from Mattanah to Nahaliel: and from Nahaliel to Bamoth:

20 And from Bamoth in the valley that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah, which looketh toward Jeshimon.

21 ¶ And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying,

22 Let me pass through thy land: we will not enter into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well; but we will go along by the king's high-way, until we be past thy borders.

18, 43:20, 49:10. John. 4:10,14. 7:37-39. Rev. 21:6, 22:1,17. f Ex. 15:1,2. Ps. 105:2. 106:12. Is. 12:1,2,5. Jam. 5:13. g Heb. ascend. h Or, answer. i 2 Chr. 17:9. Neh. 3:1,5. 1 Tim. 16:17,18. j Deut. 5:31. 33:4. Is. 33:23. John 1:17. Jam. 4:12. 1:3,45-47. k Heb. field. 22:1. 26:53. 33:49,50. Deut. 1:5. k 23:14. Deut. 3:27. 4:49. 34:1. ** Or, the hill. † Or, the wilderness. 23:28. i 20:14-19. Deut. 2:26,28. Judg. 11:19-21.

V. 10. "Oboth," signifies bottles; (Job 32:19, Heb.) and probably the place was so called, from the people's carrying water thence in bottles for their use in the desert.

אין (plur. אֵינִים or אֵינִים) generally signifies one who has a familiar spirit, 'because,' says Buxtorf, 'he brings forth oracles out of a swelling belly, as out of a bottle.'—See Lev. 19:31. 20:6. 1 Sam. 28:3, &c. Is. 8:19, et al.—The only place in which this word signifies a bottle is Job 32:19, yet this is probably the original meaning.

V. 11-15. After some more journeys, the Israelites encamped in the borders of Moab, to the east of Canaan: and as the sacred historian was about to relate the conquest of Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and the devices of Balak king of Moab; he briefly mentioned the boundaries which separated their kingdoms.—Arnon (a small rivulet, arising in the adjacent mountains, and falling into the Dead Sea,) ran through the wilderness to which the Amorites had extended their dominion, and thus formed one of these boundaries: and as Israel had passed this brook without molesting the Moabites, (though they seem to have gone through, or close by, some part of their country,) and were encamped in the land of the Amorites; it appeared that they had given no provocation to the Moabites or Ammonites. On this ground Jephthah long afterwards vindicated the right of his people to that part of the country of Sihon and Og, which the Ammonites claimed as their due; and which had once belonged to them; but the Amorites had conquered it before the Israelites came thither. (Notes, Judg. 11:12-27.) In stating this subject, Moses referred to a book called "The wars of JEHOVAH," which some suppose to have been extant before this time, and others to have been written on this occasion, perhaps by an Israelite: for it can hardly be thought, that an Amorite, or any idolater, would have used the name of JEHOVAH in recording the successes of Sihon. If, however, this was an ancient record, Moses quoted it (as Paul did the writings of the heathen poets,) in order to determine the question by the authority of their own writers. But if a pious Israelite wrote a history of the transactions which he had witnessed, or of which he had received an authentic account, he might naturally call it "the wars of JEHOVAH;" and the previous conquest of this region by the Amorites might be considered by him as an interposition of Israel's God for his people.—(Notes, 26-30. Deut. 32:8.) And if the history were known to be authentic, it would suit Moses's purpose to refer the reader to it, for fuller information on the subject which he had briefly mentioned.—As, however, the point in question, though of importance at that time, had no direct connexion with the grand concerns of religion, this "book of the wars of the LORD" has long since been lost.

What he did in the Red Sea, &c. (14) It does not appear how the passage, as it stands in our translation, could suit the purpose of the sacred historian. He himself fully recorded the works of JEHOVAH, both at the Red Sea, and in giving Israel the victory over Sihon and Og, at the brooks of Arnon. But the words rendered "He did in the Red Sea," are very obscure. In the margin it stands *Vaheb in Suphah*, in the Hebrew אֶחָד בְּרִיבְהָרָה. There is here no pronoun answering to he, and רִיבָה is preceded by אֶחָד. The clause seems therefore to mean, 'What the Amorite, or Sihon, had done to Vaheb, a prince, or place, in a region called Suphah.' (Note, Deut. 1:1.)

V. 16-18. The people wanting water, the Lord prevented their murmurs by promising them a supply: and by his direc-

23 And ^aSihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border; but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to ^bJahaz, and fought against Israel:

24 And ^aIsrael smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from ^bArnon unto ^cJabok; even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong.

25 And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof.

26 For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon.

27 Wherefore ^athey that speak in proverbs say, Come into Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared;

28 For there is ^aa fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed ^aAr of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

m Deut. 2:30—32, 29:7, 8. n Judg. 11:20. Is. 15:4. Jer. 48:34. o 32:1—4, 33—42. Deut. 2:31—37. Josh. 9:10, 12:1—3, 13:8—10, 24:8. Judg. 11:21—23. Neh. 9:22. Ps. 135:10—12, 136:19. Amos 2:9. p See on 13. Gen. 32:21. Deut. 3:16. q 31:1, 32:33—42. Deut. 2:12. r Cant. 7. Is. 15:4, 16:8, 9. Jer. 48:2, 34, 45. Heb. 49:53. a 14. Is. 16:4. Heb. 2:6. 1 Judg. 9:20. Is. 10:16. Jer. 48:45, 46. Am. 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14. 2, 2, 5. n See on 15. Deut. 2:9, 18. Is. 15:1. v Judg. 11:24. 1 Kings 11:7, 33. 2 Kings 2:13. Jer. 48:7, 13, 46. 1 Cor. 8:4, 5. x Gen. 49:23. 2 Sam. 11:24. Ps. 18:14. y 32:34. Josh. 13:17. Is.

tion given by Moses "the lawgiver," when the people had been gathered together to witness the event, the princes, with their staves only, opened the dry and sandy surface of the earth, and the water flowed in such abundance, that the place was called "Beer," or the well; and the people expressed their joyful admiration and gratitude in a song of praise.

V. 21—25. The kingdoms, at this time governed by Sihon and Og, and lying between the country of Moab on the south or south-west, and that of Ammon on the north-east, and bounded by the river Jordan on the west, were included in the grant made to Abraham; and so indeed was the whole region as far as the Euphrates; yet the Israelites did not expect at this time to possess it; but to pass through, that they might directly invade the country situated between Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. We find however, that the Lord, while he forbade them to assault the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, assured them that he would give them the country of Sihon and Og. (Deut. 2:24. 32.) And the obedience of Israel, under the conduct of Moses, shows that neither revenge, ambition, avarice, nor carnal policy, but the command of God, directed them with whom to wage war.—(Note, 20:14—21.) Nay, after this assurance the people, no doubt by the direction of Moses, sent ambassadors to Sihon, requesting a peaceable passage through his country, on the same friendly terms as had been proposed to the Edomites. He however not only refused them, but went out to attack them; they were therefore directed to meet him in battle, and, being victorious, they slew him, and took possession of all his cities and all his dominions, as the first-fruits of their conquests. (Notes, Deut. 2:24—37.)—The morites were descended from Ham by Canaan; but the Moabites and Ammonites were the posterity of Lot, Abraham's nephew. (Gen. 10:15—17. 19:37, 38.)—The strength of the border of Ammon was the reason why the Amorites had not seized on that country also.

V. 26—30. Here again Moses particularly takes notice, that Heshbon, which had belonged to the Moabites, was at this time the city of Sihon, who had vanquished the king of Moab, and taken it from him, with the rest of the country even to the river Arnon. And on this occasion he quotes some poem, or song, composed on account of these victories, in proverbs, or parables, (short, emphatical, figurative, sublime, or elegant sentences,) which was sung among the Amorites, though perhaps not committed to writing. In this poem the Amorites invite one another, in exulting language, to come and inhabit Heshbon, now become the city of Sihon; and, in a kind of insolent triumph, speak of the destruction of Ar and other cities of Moab, the slaughter of the princes, with the captivity and abject misery of the people. This seems to have been merely a vain-glorious poetical boast: for though the Amorites took from the Moabites Heshbon and the adjacent region; yet it does not appear that they made any further conquests.—It is supposed that Sihon was the common name of the kings of this district, as Pharaoh of the Egyptian monarchs; and that some preceding king obtained these victories, and took these countries from a former king of Moab.—Chemosh was the principal idol of the Moabites. (Marg. Ref. v.)

V. 34. Og was a giant, and very formidable; the people therefore feared to attack him, till the Lord thus encouraged them. (Marg. Ref. d. h. Note, Deut. 3:11.)

29 Wo to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh: he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

30 We ^ahave shot at them: Heshbon is perished, even unto ^bDibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which ^creacheth unto Medeba.

31 Thus ^aIsrael dwelt in the land of the Amorites.

32 And Moses sent to spy out ^aJaazer, and they took the villages thereof; and drove out the Amorites that were there.

33 ¶ And ^athey turned, and went up by the way of ^bBashan: and ^cOg the king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to the battle at Edrei.

34 And the Lord said unto Moses, ^aFear him not: ^bfor I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him ^cas thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

35 So they ^asmote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.

15:2, 9. Jer. 48:18, 22. 42. Deut. 3:15, 17. Josh. 12:1—6, 13:8—32. a 32:1, 35. Is. 16:8, 9. Jer. 48:32, Jaazer. b Deut. 3:1—5. 29:7. Josh. 13:12. c Deut. 32:14. Ps. 22:12, 68:15. Is. 33:9. Ez. 27:8, 39:18. Am. 4:1. d 32:33. Deut. 1:4, 3:1. 4:47, 29:7. Josh. 9:10, 12:4, 13:30. e 14:9. Deut. 3:2, 11. 20:3, 31:6. Josh. 10:8, 25. Is. 41:13. f Deut. 3:3, 7:24. Josh. 8:7. Judg. 11:30. 1 Sam. 23:4, 2 Sam. 5:19. 1 Kings 20:13, 28. 2 Kings 3:19. g 24:25. h Deut. 3:3—17, 29:8. Josh. 12:4—6. Ps. 135:11, 12, 136:17—21. Rom. 8:37.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5. The enemies of God are always the enemies of his people; and they often at first prosper in their attempts against them, but at last they will be utterly destroyed. For losses sustained by true Christians, in their spiritual conflicts, by taking them off from self-dependence, and exciting them to call upon God for help, subserve their final victory: and being enabled to say, "When I am weak, then am I strong, for the power of Christ rests upon me," they become invincible.—But alas! how soon are the judgments and mercies of our God forgotten by us! and how prone are we to relapse into former sins, though we have suffered for them, and even repented of them! how apt to magnify every difficulty, to despise our choicest mercies, to be impatient of delays, to distrust, to murmur, and to rebel! Nay, where the dominion of sin is broken, it dwells within, and often breaks out; sometimes even openly to the dishonour of God, and the grief of his faithful servants; and under sharp trials, even the true believer may be so discouraged and tempted, and so yielded to temptation, as to undervalue the "Bread of life," and the benefit of divine ordinances, as if they were "light food," and almost to wish that he had never set out in the ways of God! (Ps. 73:14.) But he will soon be ashamed of these thoughts, if ever harboured in his mind. We have need however to "watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation;" and it is profitable for us to be aware of the enemy within, as well as of the enemies around us; especially in times of grievous disappointment and tedious discouragement.—But "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth;" and thus, as well as by his judgments upon hypocrites, he excites a salutary terror in their minds, and brings them back to his ways with weeping and supplication: and when they repent and acknowledge their offence, he removes the dreaded destruction, though perhaps the smart of the rod may continue for a time.

V. 6—9. The Lord knows how to over rule, not only the bite of poisonous serpents, but the persecutions of wicked men, and the temptations of the devil, for the good of those whom he loves: and our prayers are often most desirably answered, when the letter of the request is not granted. (Note, 2 Cor. 12:7—10.)—The Lord can relieve us from our dangers and distresses, by the means which we should deem most unpromising; of which he hath given proof in redeeming so many souls from hell, from Satan, and sin, and bringing them to holiness and eternal life, by the manifestation of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, by his agonizing and accursed death upon the tree, and by the preaching of the despised doctrine of a crucified Saviour.—Oh! that the venom of the old serpent inflaming men's passions, and causing them to commit those sins, which must otherwise terminate in their eternal destruction, were but as sensibly felt, and the danger as plainly apprehended, as the Israelites felt the pain, and feared the death, which followed from the bite of the fiery serpents! Then none would turn away from Christ and his gospel: then would a crucified Saviour be so valued, that all things else would "be accounted loss for him;" then, without delay, and with all earnestness and simplicity of dependence, they would apply to him, crying "Lord, save us, we perish;" then from day to day would they look to him for pardon and healing, and show their faith by their works: nor would any abuse the freeness of his salvation to them, when they estimated the price which it cost him; and their love to the Saviour would increase their dread and abhorrence of sin, and watch-

CHAPTER XXII.

Israel encamp in the plains of Moab, 1. Balak king of Moab sends for Balaam to curse the people, 2-11. He, forbidden by the Lord, refuses to go, 12-14. On second message he accepts permission, and goes, 15-21. An angel opposes him, and he is rebuked by his ass, whose mouth God opens; he beholds the Angel, and obtains leave to proceed, 22-35. Balak meets him, and sacrifices, 36-41.

AND the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab, on this side Jordan by Jericho.

2 And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

3 And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.

4 And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Whom shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.

5 He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the river

of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me.

6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them; and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou bleesest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.

7 And the elders of Moab, and the elders of Midian, departed with the rewards of divination in their hand: and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.

[Practical Observations.]

8 And he said unto them, Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me. And the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

9 And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee?

21. 20. 33. 48-36. 38. 12. Deut. 31. 1-3. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

fulness against temptation.—But alas! few feel their need of Christ to preserve them from perishing; and though he still proclaims, "Look unto me, and be saved," most men die in their sins, even where they have the Bible in their hands, and Christ in the gospel "evidently set forth as crucified among them!" But how will they escape, who, through pride and love of sin, reject this simple method of cure, or prefer their own inventions to this suitable and divine salvation? or who, perverting the doctrine, presume that their iniquities are pardoned, while their covetousness, pride, anger, ambition, lust, or evil tempers betray the venom of the old serpent to be in full force within?

V. 10-35. Our God has engaged to provide for his people in all emergencies, and wells of salvation are opened for them through their whole pilgrimage: so that they need only use the appointed means with simplicity and diligence, and he will send supplies of heavenly consolations, and they shall rejoice in celebrating his praises. Nor ought they to be unthankful to the instruments of their mercies, temporal or spiritual, whether they be princes, nobles, lawgivers, magistrates, ministers, or private persons.—Still, however, we must prepare for fresh conflicts and enemies. With sin and the powers of darkness we must make no peace, nor truce; we must not even treat with them; and it is vain to expect any long cessation of hostilities. Even our neighbours, with whom we would, if possible, live peaceably, will often make themselves ready to battle. But, trusting in the Lord's protection and obeying his commands, we shall be more than conquerors over every assailant, and profit by all their attempts to hurt us. For our inheritance is sure; and, in the Lord's time and manner, every thing will concur in putting us in possession of it.—But worldly inheritances are continually changing their masters: ill-gotten gain never spends well; idolatrous dependences fail in the crisis of need; and the destruction of the wicked, being appointed of God, will be certainly and speedily effected.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. At length the Israelites terminated their wanderings, by encamping on the banks of Jordan over against Jericho, where they abode, until they passed over into Canaan. The plains, in which they encamped, had belonged to the Moabites, from whom they derived their name; but Sihon had taken them from the Moabites, and Israel had now got possession of them. (2)

V. 4. The Moabites were descended from Lot; the Midianites from Abraham by Keturah. (Gen. 19:37. 25:2.) They lived near together, and were united in interest; as were also the Ishmaelites, and Edomites, and Ammonites; but they were all enemies to Israel, except that part of the Midianites, which was connected with Jethro, Moses's father-in-law.—The persons here called "elders," seem to be elsewhere called *princes*, and even *kings*, according to the language of those times. (Marg. Ref. c.) The message to them appears to have been sent with the concurrence of the principal persons in Moab, and by the general sense of the nation; as well as by Balak their king.—They all thought, that nothing but united and vigorous resistance could preserve them: for either they had not heard, that JEHOVAH had forbidden Israel to molest them; or they disregarded any report which they had heard to this effect.—The simile which they employed is extremely expressive, as referring to the complete destruction which Israel had made of Arad, Sihon, and Og, with the nations over whom they reigned.

V. 5. It is the general opinion of expositors, that Balaam was first a prophet, (and as some think a good man), and that afterwards he degenerated and became a soothsayer; yet this is exceedingly improbable, and unparalleled in Scripture. Had he been first a prophet, and then turned aside to

use magical arts for the sake of gain, he would scarcely have "sought for enchantments," when he went for the express purpose of meeting the Lord, whatever he did at other times. It is not intimated, that any prophecies were spoken by him, except those contained in this history, which certainly are sufficient to entitle him to the name of "Balaam the prophet." His boasting likewise concerning "his eyes being opened, and his seeing the visions of the Almighty," seems especially to relate to the events here recorded. It appears therefore more probable, that he was originally a diviner, or magician of great renown: but having acquired some knowledge of the true God, perhaps by hearing of the wonderful works performed by Moses in his name, he endeavoured to render this knowledge subservient to his interested and ambitious purposes, by professing himself a prophet of JEHOVAH, and uttering divinations as revelations from him. Thus the exorcists, observing how efficacious the name of Jesus proved in the mouth of the apostle, attempted to cast out devils, "adjoining them by Jesus whom Paul preached" (Note, Acts 19:13-20.) and thus Simon Magus, finding the miracles of Philip so much superior to the effects of his magic, embraced Christianity; and afterwards offered Peter money to confer on him the same power which he exercised, doubtless intending to enrich or aggrandize himself by it. (Notes, Acts 8:9-24.) On this supposition Balaam's use of incantations, even in seeking JEHOVAH, was the natural effect of the association of his old practices with his new pretensions. It is not certain, whether the Lord had ever spoken to him or by him before this event, though probably he had; but he certainly did afterwards: yet there is abundant proof that he lived and died a wicked man, and an enemy to God and his people. (Notes, 31:8. Deut. 23:3-5. Mic. 6:3-5. 2 Pet. 2:15, 16. Jude 11-13. Rev. 2:14-16.) This, however, as is evident from the Scriptures, has by no means been a singular case. (Notes, Matt. 7:21-23. 1 Cor. 13:1-3.)—Balaam dwelt in or near Mesopotamia, by the Euphrates, the renowned river of the inhabitants of those countries. But his reputation had reached so far, and he was so celebrated, that he was sent for, as it appears, in consequence of the counsel given to Moab by the elders of Midian; being the only person who was able to contend with Moses, the prophet of Israel. For we may suppose, that they ascribed to the superior skill of Moses in some unknown arts, all that power by which, notwithstanding Pharaoh's determined opposition, Israel had been brought out of Egypt, had subsisted for so many years in the wilderness, and had obtained their late victories over the Amorites.—Pethor.] Deut. 23:4.

V. 6. Balak had some general notion of the overruling influence of an invisible Power, and at the same time such an opinion of Balaam's interest with that invisible Power, that he supposed he could do nothing so effectual to conciliate his favour, as to pay court to his prophet: nay, he either actually thought, or he was willing to compliment Balaam, and to comfort himself, with the supposition, that his blessings or curses were infallibly ratified! If he could therefore prevail with Balaam solemnly to curse Israel and to bless Moab, he would then defy Israel and declare war against them, notwithstanding all the wonders of which he had heard!—It has been shown by learned men, that many of the heathen nations thus solemnly cursed their enemies in the name of their gods, and devoted them to destruction, before they declared war against them. (1 Sam. 17:43.) And it is not impossible, that the sentence denounced by the Lord against the nations of Canaan, whom he devoted to destruction, and employed Israel to extirpate, and Israel's vow concerning the cities of Arad, might suggest to the Moabites and Midianites the idea of engaging Balaam in a similar manner to devote them

10 And Balaam said unto God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying,

11 Behold, *there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out.*

12 And God said unto Balaam, "Thou shalt not go with them: 'thou shalt not curse the people: 'for they are blessed.

13 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for 'the LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you.

14 And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, "Balaam refuseth to come with us.

15 ¶ And Balak sent yet again 'princes, more, and more honourable than they.

16 And they came to Balaam, and said to him, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, 'Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me;

17 For 'I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I 'will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.

18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, 'If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, 'I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.

*e See on 4-6. * Heb. prevail in fighting against him. r 20. Job 33:15-17. Matt. 27:19. 19. 23:13-15, 23. Mic. 6:5. t 23:20. Gen. 12:2. Deut. 32:20. Ps. 144:15. 145:3-5. Rom. 4:6, 7. 11:20. Eph. 1:12. u 14. Dent. 23:5. x 13:37. y 7:8. Acts 10:7-9. 1 Heb. be not thou letted from, &c. z 24:11. Dent. 16:19. Eccl. 5:11. 7:9. Matt. 4:8, 9. 16:26. a 23:23, 23, 30. Matt. 14:7. b 24:13. Tit. 1:16. c 1 Kings 22:14. 2 Chr. 18:13. Dan. 5:17. Acts 8:20.*

Israelites; and that the customs of other nations in this respect, were derived from the traditionary report of these events.

V. 8. Balaam seems to have been fully convinced, that JEHOVAH was the true God, and the Protector of Israel: if therefore "his heart had not been exercised with covetous practices," and hankering after the "rewards of divination," he would peremptorily have declared that he durst not, and would not, undertake any thing against the people of God. He could not but know, that it was vain to attempt any opposition to Omnipotence: yet he had such unworthy notions of God, as to think that, by one means or other, he would be 'induced to renounce the cause of Israel, and espouse that of Moab! This appears to have been the project which he formed, and which he prosecuted for a long time, till he was still further given up to infatuation! He therefore desired a night's time, in hopes to obtain the Lord's consent to his journey; and he evidently expected some immediate revelation.

V. 9-14. The Lord, for wise reasons, saw good to answer the expectations of Balaam, and to make known his will in a manner, which should at once have determined him on no account to attempt any thing in the business. But though he declined going at the present; he did not preclude all further applications. He yielded obedience to the divine injunction, but as it seems very reluctantly. He did not "bring the messengers word again as the LORD spake to him:" for he mentioned merely the refusal, but neither the peremptory manner, nor the reason of it, 'That the people were blessed, and Balaam should not curse them.' Had he faithfully reported these, they would have conveyed an important warning to Balak not to "meddle to his hurt;" but he spake as one inclinable to the proposal, and not without hope of obtaining leave; and as his words appear to have been reported in the same imperfect manner, Balak naturally concluded that the prophet only wanted more respect and larger promises.—The constant mention of the name of Balak, shows that he was the principal person concerned; though the elders or princes had much authority and influence.

V. 15-17. As Balak concluded that Balaam might yet be induced to come, he sent a greater number of superior persons, offering him any terms which he chose to demand: and in return he expected an unreserved compliance; so that nothing, not even his conscience, nor the command of God, should prevent his coming and cursing Israel!—His liberality to this wicked man proved him sincere in his confidence; as the penuriousness of some professed Christians, in the cause of their religion, proves their hypocrisy.

V. 18. Balaam does not declare, that he is determined not to come; nor does he express any abhorrence of the crime or the temptation; but he "cannot go" without the Lord's permission, and he seems to regret that he may not avail himself of so liberal an offer. These touches must be carefully noted, if we would understand this instructive history.—He speaks also of "the LORD his God" with great

19 Now therefore, I pray you, 'tarry ye also here this night, 'hat I may know what the LORD will say unto me more.

20 And 'God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, 'If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but 'yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.

21 And Balaam 'rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

[Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ And 'God's anger was kindled because he went: and 'the Angel of the LORD 'stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.

23 And 'the ass saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and 'the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

24 But the Angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side.

25 And when the ass saw the Angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and 'crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again.

26 And the Angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, 'where was no way to turn, either to the right hand or to the left.

27 And when the ass saw the Angel of the LORD,

d See on 7:8. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. 2 Pet. 2:3, 15. Jude 11. e See on 9. f 1 Sam. 8:5-9. 12:12. -g, Pa. 81:12. Ez. 14:2. 2 Thes. 2:9-12. g 35. 23:12, 26. 24:13. Ps. 33:10, 11. 78:30, 31. Is. 37:26. Hos. 13:11. 1 Prov. 1:15, 16. 1 Kings 10:30. Hos. 1:4. k 35. See on Gen. 48:15, 16. Ez. 3:2-6. Hos. 12:4, 5. 13:2. Ex. 4:24. Lam. 2:4. m 2 Kings 6:17. 1 Chr. 21:16. Dan. 10:7. Acts 22:9. 1 Cor. 1:24, 29. n Jer. 8:7. o Job 5:13-15. Is. 47:12. p Is. 26:11. Hos. 2:6

confidence; but this might be done merely to keep up his high reputation: or he might deceive himself; for it is probable, that he outwardly worshipped JEHOVAH.

V. 19-21. After the peremptory answer which God had given Balaam, he should have spoken to this effect; "Say no more to me on this subject, but return home, and make the best terms you can with Israel. They are the people of the true God, whom he is determined to bless; and you can do nothing against them, by stratagem or by power, human or divine: for my part I cannot, I dare not, and I would not for the world, presume to oppose them; so tempt me no more."—The state of Balaam's mind was this: He wanted to do what he knew to be very wicked, and contrary to the express command of God; he had inward checks and restraints which he could not entirely get over; he therefore cast about for ways to reconcile this wickedness to his duty. How great a paradox soever this may appear, as it is indeed a contradiction in terms, it is the very account which the Scripture gives of him! *Bp. Butler*.—But he was the slave of covetousness, and entertained dishonourable thoughts of God, and supposed that he could be induced to change his determination: therefore the Lord in anger gave him the permission, which he so wickedly and eagerly desired. It seems he was in such haste, that he did not wait the call of Balak's princes, but arose early and prepared for his journey. The clause, "yet the words which I shall say unto thee, that thou shalt do," may be understood either as an *injunction*, or as a *prediction of the event*, namely, that he should be constrained to speak the words of God, and not be able to express his own desires.

V. 22. The Lord permits almost an infinity of actions which he does not approve: (*Notes*, 1 Kings 22:19-23. Job 1:12.) and he is very angry with those, who avail themselves of his permission to gratify their lusts. "They think evil, but God means it unto good." Nay, the motive even of obedience may be so corrupt, that while the action is approved, God may abhor the principle from which it sprang.—Balaam was instigated by covetousness and ambition: (*Note*, 2 Pet. 2:15, 16.) and he wickedly, with perseverance, sought to curse a people whom the Lord had blessed: yet he seems to have had no attachment to Moab, or ill-will to Israel, except for filthy lucre's sake. The Lord therefore, with evident disapprobation, gave him leave to go with the princes of Moab; of which he eagerly availed himself; and both the motive and conduct displeased the Lord, who therefore met him "as an adversary" in the way.—His avarice was the more inexcusable, as he could already afford to travel with two attendants. Probably, the princes of Moab having been informed of his determination, had gone before to prepare matters for his reception.

V. 23-27. Balaam's eyes being holden that he could not see the angel, who was visible to the ass, was an emblem of the blindness of his mind to that eminent and evident peril into which he was rushing by this presumptuous undertaking. Surely the singular circumstances of this occurrence should

she fell down back of Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.

28 And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?"

29 And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.

30 And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine, unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay.

31 Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.

32 And the Angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me.

33 And the ass saw me and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.

34 And Balaam said unto the Angel of the Lord, I have sinned; for I knew not that thou

stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.

35 And the Angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

36 And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto a city of Moab, which is in the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost coast.

37 And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?

38 And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.

39 And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kirjath-huzoth.

40 And Balak offered oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that were with him.

41 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people.

q Prov. 14:16. 27:34. r Ex. 4:11. Luke 1:37. 1 Cor. 1:19. 2 Pet. 2:16. s Rom. 8:22. t Prov. 10:16. 16:9. 23:5. u Heb. who hast fallen upon me. v Or, ever since thou wast, unto, &c. 1 Cor. 1:27. 28. u 24:4. marg. 16. Gen. 21:19. 2 Kings 6:17-20. 1 Chr. 21:16. Luke 24:16. 31. Acts 26:18. x Ex. 34:8. Ps. 9:20. John 18:6. y Or, bowed himself. y 28. Deut. 25:4. Prov. 147:9. Jon. 4:11. z Heb. be an adversary unto thee. 22. s Deut. 33:4. Prov. 28:6. Mic. 6:5. Acts 13:10. 2 Pet. 2:14, 15. a See on 20:22, 25. Ex. 3:2-5. b 14:37. 16:33-35. 1 Kings 13:24-28. c Ex. 9:27. 10:16, 17. 1 Sam. 15:24. 24:17. 26:1. Job 34:31.

32. Ps. 75:74. Matt. 27:45. d See on 12. e Heb. be still in thine eyes. 11:1. 1 Chr. 21:17. Prov. 24:18. marg. 18. See on 20. Ps. 81:12. Is. 37:28-29. 2 Thes. 2:9-12. f See on 20:21. g Gen. 14:17. 18:2. 46:29. Ex. 18:7. 1 Sam. 13:10. Acts 28:15. h 21:13, 14. Deut. 2:24. 3:8. Judg. 11:18. Is. 16:2. Jer. 48:20. 116. 17. 24:11. Matt. 4:8, 9. Luke 4:6. k 18. Ps. 33:10. 76:10. Prov. 19:21. Is. 44:25. 46:10. 47:12. 133:16, 26. 24:13. 1 Kings 22:14. 2 Chr. 18:15. l Or, a city of streets. m 23:2, 14, 30. Gen. 31:54. Prov. 1:16. n 25:2, 3. Deut. 12:2. 2 Chr. 11:15. Jer. 48:35. o 23:13.

have induced him to consider whether he were in the right way or not!—*The Angel, &c.* Note, 32.

V. 28. The faculty of speech in man is the gift of God, and we cannot comprehend how we ourselves articulate; we need not therefore be surprised that the Lord made use of the mouth of the "ass to rebuke the madness of the prophet," and to shame him by the reproof and by the example of the brute. Satan spake to Eve by a subtle serpent, but the Lord chose to speak to Balaam by a dull ass: for he does not use "enticing words of man's wisdom," but works by instruments and means which men despise.—Some expositors, unable to conceive how an ass could speak, have thought, (in direct opposition to the words of the sacred historian,) that the whole was only a vision: but can they indeed conceive or explain, how God represented these things to Balaam's mind in a vision? If not, the difficulty remains, and Omnipotence must be allowed to have done what man cannot comprehend.

V. 29, 30. The miracle of the ass speaking might astonish Balaam, though that is not recorded; or, having been a magician, he had witnessed or heard of strange, portentous events, and perhaps ascribed it to magic; or the fury of his passion resembled madness, and the prodigy served to increase it.—Balaam was supposed capable of destroying Israel, or at least making way for their destruction, by a curse; yet he could not kill his ass for want of a sword! But the Lord reasoned with him by the mouth of the ass; and, by reminding him of his property in the animal and his benefit from her, and that she had not been accustomed so to behave, he taught him that his conduct was very absurd, and prepared the way for a more full discovery of his wickedness.—The words used on this occasion, seem to imply that Balaam had ridden on this ass from his youth: (*marg.*) and consequently that she had been a valuable and faithful servant to him.—It must have been peculiarly humiliating to this proud man, who boasted "of his eyes being open, and of seeing the visions of the Almighty," to be reproved and silenced from the mouth of a brute. As the Lord both appeared to the ass and spake by her, before Balaam was enabled to see the vision, he had little reason to boast when the Lord appeared to him and spake by him.

V. 32. *Thy way is perverse before me.* [From this expression, and from the language of the thirty-fifth verse, "The word that I shall speak unto thee," we may be satisfied that this was the angel of the covenant, the second person of the Trinity, visibly appearing on this occasion.

V. 33. Balaam was thus shown that he owed his life to that supposed ungovernableness of the ass, which he so madly resented.

V. 34, 35. Though Balaam acknowledged that he had sinned; yet he excused himself as being ignorant that any opposition was made to him. He does not appear to have been convinced of the wickedness of his undertaking; and it was with hesitation that he proposed to return, only if he might not proceed except at the hazard of his life. (*Is. 57:17.*) So reluctant was he to give up "the wages of unrighteousness!" He was therefore again permitted to follow his own foolish devices.

V. 36-38. Balak, hearing that Balaam was at length coming, to show his joy, and to honour him, went to the borders

of his land to meet him. Yet he could not but express his surprise, that he had not come at first when such a prospect of honour and emolument opened before him: and Balaam's answer plainly indicated his readiness to concur in Balak's projects, and his strong desire of succeeding, though he feared he should not be able. Nay, he seems to have made a merit of coming through the midst of so much opposition.

V. 40, 41. These sacrifices seem to have been offered to the gods of Moab, by whose aid Balak hoped to prevail over Israel, through Balaam's incantations; for he was not yet aware of Balaam's project of drawing over the God of Israel to the side of Moab; and he therefore propitiated his idols, and invited Balaam, with the princes, to feast upon the sacrifice. After which, without loss of time, the idolatrous king took his covetous prophet to the high places of Baal, that he might both take a view of the Israelites, and curse them by his gods.—"Baal" signifies *lord* or *governor*, and was a name common to many idols. Probably this Baal was the same as Chemosh, the god of Moab. (*Jer. 48:13, 46.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. Our life is a succession of wanderings which will shortly close upon the brink of the grave: happy they who have an inheritance in the Canaan beyond! with comfort may they sit down on the banks of that Jordan which rolls between, and with composure wait the Lord's call to pass over and possess the promised land. But the ungodly "are consumed with terrors;" though more generally "afraid of them who can only kill the body," than of "Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."—The prosperity of the church, instead of inducing sinners to seek a share in its felicity, generally excites their envy, hatred, and terror, and stirs up the spirit of persecution; but the crafty methods, which ungodly politicians take to secure themselves, generally involve them in more speedy ruin.—That propensity to religion, which results from reason and conscience, and the corrupted remains of tradition, is, through the depravity of our nature, generally productive of absurd superstitions and abominable idolatries; by means of which Satan, that ambitious spirit, is consulted and depended on for information and assistance; his ministers are caressed and honoured; and his rites attended on with immense degradation, trouble, and expense. (*Notes, Is. 57:9, 10. Mic. 6:6-8. Col. 2:20-23.*)—Great knowledge of doctrinal truth may fill the minds of very wicked men; many convictions may disquiet their consciences; and excellent words may proceed from their lips; but the smallest degree of sanctifying grace is infinitely preferable to the most shining talents, or the most splendid gifts of knowledge, utterance, and eloquence; yea, to those of prophecy and miracles, by which hypocrites have sometimes become more extensively mischievous, illustriously infamous, heinously criminal, and exquisitely miserable.—Let us then covet earnestly and diligently that best gift of divine love, which springs from faith and hope, and never faileth, but shall endure for ever.—If we had learned to lay up our treasure in heaven, and to seek that honour which cometh from God only, and to be content with food and raiment; and if covetousness, ambition, and sensuality were greatly mortified within us, we should have little to hope or fear from man and be removed

CHAPTER XXIII.

Balak builds seven altars, and offers sacrifices on them, 1, 2. Balaam goes to meet the Lord, and returning blesses Israel: Balak remonstrates, and Balaam excuses it, 3-12. Balak sacrifices in another place, Balaam blesses Israel still more; Balak cannot hinder him, 13-26. Balak sacrifices on the top of Peor, 27-30.

AND Balaam said unto Balak, "Build me here ^aseven altars, and prepare me here ^bseven oxen and seven rams.

2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam ^coffered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

3 And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy burnt-offering, and I will go; ^dperadventure thou

^a 21. Ex. 33:31, Jude 11. ^b Ex. 20:24, 27:1, &c. 1 Sam. 15:22, 2 Kings 18:22. Ps. 50:8, 9. Prov. 15:8. ^c 1:11-15. Matt. 23:14. ^d 29:32. 1 Chr. 15:26. 2 Chr. 29:21. Job 42:8. Ex. 45:23. ^e 14, 30. e Gen. 8:20, 22:2, 7, 13. Ex. 18:12. Lev. 1:15. 22:8, 9, 31-35. 24:1. ^f Or, *temi solitary*. g 16. 22:9, 20. h See on 1.

far out of the way of temptation: but, as there is so much of these evils still remaining in the heart, we all have cause to dread and shun those connexions, which almost every one covets; I mean connexions with ungodly men, who are able to promote us to honour and affluence. These are especially dangerous to such as are called to speak in the name of the Lord: for by their influence, by fair promises exciting large expectations, and by showing great kindness and flattering respect, they prevail with many to sacrifice conscience, judgment, character, and the fear of God, to the humour and inclination of their patrons, and to flatter and countenance their sinful practices.—The attraction is almost irresistible, the heart is deceitful: and who, that values his soul and knows himself, would venture into such a perilous situation?—Therefore "avoid them, pass not near them, turn from them, and pass away."

V. 8-21. There have always been many "who loved the wages of unrighteousness," and paid their court to those who could bid highest and reward best. Some of this character act the hypocrite, and ostentatiously avow their knowledge of God, and intimacy with him, to cloak their wicked intentions; nay, they in this manner deceive themselves, calling "the Lord their God," while they neither keep his commandments nor seek his salvation.—These men do not hate sin, and they love its wages; and thus they mistake gain for godliness, and covetousness for wisdom. (Note, 1 Tim. 6:6-10.) Fear restrains them for a time from those outward crimes, which they are inwardly desirous of committing; and this restraint they mistake for conscientiousness. Convictions struggle against temptations, though overcome by them; and this they mistake for the conflict between flesh and spirit. (Note, Rom. 7:18-21. conclusion.) But they parley with the enemy, and nibble at the bait; they seek excuses, and watch for opportunities; they wrest the Scriptures, explain away the prohibitions or threatening, or seek diligently for some erasion; and even seem to crave leave to commit their darling sin.—Thus they provoke God to "give them up to their own hearts' lusts;" Satan is permitted to increase the force of the temptation; providential dispensations are misinterpreted into a favourable indication; and, by the ingenuity of a wicked heart, aided and prompted by the enemy, they at length find some method of expecting impunity, in following their own wicked inclinations. (Note, 2 Thes. 2:8-12.)—When persons are once judiciously "given over to a strong delusion to believe a lie," all their boasted knowledge and wisdom fail them; and they are left to form such dishonourable notions of God, such erroneous opinions in religion, and such absurd projects in practice, as evidence their folly and ignorance, and expose their desperate wickedness. Nor does this appear more surprising in any thing, than in their strong confidence that the Lord favours them, and their presumptuous hope that he will side with them, notwithstanding the manifest iniquity of their conduct.

V. 22-41. The Lord knows how to restrain the most desperate rebels, and over rule their efforts against him and his cause, to his own glory and the good of his church. By the way, as well as at the end of their course, he will manifest himself to be their adversary: and though they be not convinced, but rush through every hindrance to the gratification of their lusts, these obstructions will one day rise up in judgment against them to their confusion; and every check, which stopped the sinner's career for a time, but did not hinder his continuance in sin, will increase his final condemnation.—Such is man's folly and madness, that, with all his boasted powers, he may be sent to school to the most stupid of the animals: for though God hath "formed us wiser than the beasts of the field," sin hath made us more foolish: (Job 35:11. Prov. 6:6. Is. 13.) and the conduct of the ox and the ass towards their possessors, yea, their inhuman abusers, forms a continued, though silent reproach of our forgetfulness of God, of our ingratitude and rebellion; and may lead us to conceive in what language they might address us, and how they might plead the cause of their Creator, and their own cause, against us, to our shame and confusion, if the Lord should open their mouths. How might they reproach multitudes with their abuse of God's gift, in the cruel tyranny exercised upon them! with their senseless anger vented in oaths and cursings, revilings and unmerciful blows furiously bestowed upon a brute beast, even to their own loss. How

LORD will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he 'went to an high place.

4 And God met Balaam: and he said unto him, ^aI have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram.

5 And the LORD 'put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.

6 And he returned unto him; and, lo, ^bhe stood by his burnt-sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

7 And he ^ctook up his parable, and said, Balak

^a Is. 58:3, 4. Matt. 20:12. Luke 18:12. John 16:2. Rom. 3:27. Eph. 2:9. 1:16. 22:35. Dent. 18:18. Prov. 16:1, 9. Is. 51:16. 59:21. Jer. 1:9. Luke 12:12. John 11:61. ^b 3. k 18. 24:3, 15:23. Job 27:1. 29:1. Ps. 78:2. Ez. 17:2. 20:49. Mic. 2:4. Hab. 2:6. Matt. 13:35. Mark 12:12.

might they expose man's cruelty to his own species, yea, to his own soul and body; and his excessive animal indulgence; as if his understanding only served him to invent methods of being more exquisitely a brute, by refining in sensual gratification!—Little cause then have we to be proud of our reason, which fails to preserve us from such absurd and destructive excesses; or of the faculty of speech which is so shamefully abused; and it may serve to abate our self-adoration, to reflect that, if God pleases, he can make a dull ass see further, and speak better, than any of us. Let us then watch and pray against corrupt and unreasonable passions; and listen to the voice of God, as speaking to us by all the creatures with which we are surrounded.—How little are the people of God in general aware of the machinations, which are forming against them; whilst all the policy and power on earth and in hell are combined for their destruction! (Notes, Job 1:9-12. P. O. 6-12. Note, Ps. 37:12-15.) Yet they need not fear, with distressing anxiety; for "he that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth." The Lord sees through every plot, and "no weapon formed against his church shall prosper." (Notes, Is. 54:15-17. Rom. 8:35-39.) He restrains, intimidates, and infatuates, as he pleases. He hath blessed true believers, and of him alone it can be said, "He whom thou bledest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." Let us therefore cast our lot among them, and when we shall be safe and happy; "for if God be for us, who can be against us?" "O LORD God of hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee!" Oh, give us true faith, and increase it more and more!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. Balaam had heard, that the Israelites had an altar, on which they offered bulls and rams, and in doing this were accepted by JEHOVAH; and he seems to have foolishly fancied, that by going beyond them in the number of altars and sacrifices, the Moabites might draw the Lord over to their side, and obtain leave to curse and destroy Israel. It does not appear from the history, that he either dissuaded Balak from his purpose of warring against Israel, or exhorted him and his people to repentance: but in the language of authority or consequence, he directed Balak to build "seven altars, &c." and Balak, with great obsequiousness, complied with his expensive demands. It is evident that Balaam intended these sacrifices to be offered to the God of Israel; and probably he influenced Balak to join him in this respect likewise. (4)

V. 3. The Lord had before met Balaam in anger, and greatly terrified him: but, having offered such costly sacrifices, he now hoped that he would countenance his design; yet conscious guilt induced him to add "peradventure."—Probably Balaam used incantations in his retirement, to obtain a favourable meeting from the Lord, such as he had formerly employed in his soothsayings. (23. Note, 24:2.)—Formal converts very frequently intermingle their superstitious, philosophical, or carnal notions, with the truths, ordinances, and precepts of God; and from this source, almost all the corruptions of the Christian religion have been deduced.

V. 4-6. The Lord had important designs in meeting and speaking to this wicked man, notwithstanding the unwarranted method in which he sought him. He thus encouraged and admonished Israel, and his church in all ages; he warned their enemies; and he discovered the depths of wickedness which are in man's heart.—Balaam, instead of being ashamed of his atrocious wickedness, seems to have boasted of his service, in prevailing on Balak to offer so many and costly sacrifices to JEHOVAH. But he was blind indeed, to suppose that the God of Heaven would be pleased with sacrifices, offered in hypocrisy, without repentance, faith, love, and obedience; merely out of covetousness and malice, and with an intention of cursing and destroying his people! The Lord however, gave him his message which he could not but deliver; (Note, 22:19-21.) and he soon returned to Balak and his princes, who doubtless had joined with Balaam, in praying for leave to curse and destroy Israel. (Mark 5:7, 12.)

V. 7. 8. Balaam began his speech in the solemn style of prophecy, which approached that of poetry: and the Lord, probably by filling him with the dread of his power and wrath, constrained him reluctantly to pronounce blessings on his people. He guided the mouth of this wicked man, to speak words as contrary to the desires of his heart, as those of the

the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, "Come, curse me Jacob; and come, *defy Israel.

8 "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?

9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

10 Who 'can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of *the fourth part of Israel? Let *me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

11 And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether!

12 And he answered and said, *Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?

[Practical Observations.]

1:25. Gen. 10:22, 23, 27. Deut. 23:4. m 22:6, 11, 17. n 1 Sam. 17:10, 25, 26, 36, 45. 2 Sam. 21:21, 23-9. o 20:23. Is. 44:25, 47, 12, 13. p Ex. 19:5, 6, 33:16. Deut. 33:28. Ezech. 3:8. 2 Cor. 6:17. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 2:9. q Deut. 32:8. Ezra 9:2. Jer. 46:23. Am. 9:3. Rom. 15:8-10. Eph. 2:12-14. r Gen. 13:16. 22:17, 28. 14. s 2:9, 15, 34, 31. t Heb. my soul, or, my life. u Pet. 3:7, 11:15. Is. 57:1. 2. Luke 2:23, 30. 1 Cor. 3:21, 22. 15:53-57. Phil. 1:21-23. 2 Tim. 4:6-8. 2 Pet.

13 ¶ And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all; and *curse me them from thence.

14 And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and *built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.

15 And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering, while I meet the LORD yonder.

16 And the LORD met Balaam, and *put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

17 And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, *What hath the LORD spoken?

18 And he took up his parable, and said, (Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor.

1:13-15. Rev. 14:13. u See on 7:8, 24:10. Ps. 109:17-20. x 20:26, 22:38, 24:13. Prov. 25:2, 10m. 16:18. Tit. 1:16. y 1 Kings 20:23, 28. Mic. 6:5. z 23:41. a Josh. 24:9. Ps. 109:17, 129. 3:9, 10. 1 Or, the Hill. 21:20. Deut. 3:27. marg. 4:49. 34:1. marg. b 1:29. Is. 1:10, 11. 46:6. Hos. 12:11. c See on 3. 22:8. d See on 5. 22:35. 24:1. e 26. 1 Sam. 3:17. f Judg. 3:20.

ass were superior to the powers of the brute: and if we duly advert to the temper of the speaker, we shall perceive that the Lord spake by Balaam as entirely as by the ass; that the divine power was as really and effectually put forth in this case as in the other; and that Balaam had no more to glory in than the animal, but much indeed to be ashamed of. (Note, 22:28).—Balaam was sent for from Aram, or Mesopotamia, to curse Israel, and thus disdainfully to set them at defiance; and he confessed that he came with that intent, in order that Balak might war against them. But, as the Lord had not "cursed and defied them," (that is, had not rejected them, or determined to treat them as enemies,) he would not allow Balaam to curse them; though "the curse causeless" could have done them no hurt, and might have deceived and hardened Balak.—Defy. (7) Notes, 1 Sam. 17:8-10, 25, 26, 42-44.

V. 9. Beholding the regular encampment of the Israelites, separate from other people, Balaam was led to speak language suited, not only to that situation, but to the peculiar favour shown them, and to their separation from other nations, by laws, religion, and character, as a holy people; in all which they were a type of true Christians.—The words, however, are a most extraordinary prophecy, which has now been accomplishing for above three thousand years. The distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, may in some sense be traced back to the calling of Abraham; it was recognised and established by the giving of the law and the Sinai-covenant; and after the final captivity of the ten tribes, the Jews, (as the nation was thenceforth generally called,) were kept a distinct people through the Babylonian captivity, and in subsequent ages, by their peculiar way of living, even when among other nations, which was always noted, and made a reproach to them, as the effect of bigotry. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, they have been scattered as aliens through many countries: yet they still "dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations;" for they have been preserved from being confounded with their conquerors and oppressors in foreign lands, in a manner absolutely unprecedented in the history of the world. (Note, Jer. 30:10, 11.) This prediction is the more wonderful, as the Israelites had at this time no settlement; and their peculiar laws and constitution could be very little known to Balaam. How then, except by divine revelation, could he possibly have foreseen this striking peculiarity of that people?—The distinction itself between Jews and Gentiles, which subsisted in every age, is a fulfilment of it.

V. 10. The multitudes of Israel were innumerable as the particles of the dust, according to the promises made to their fathers. (Marg. Ref. r.) Even "the fourth part" of them, or one of their four grand encampments, could not be numbered.—As Balaam spoke the words of God, with some understanding of their meaning, and some conviction of their truth, we may consider the concluding part of this verse, as an important ancient testimony to the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of retribution. He not only bore testimony to the temporal felicity of Israel, and to their character as a righteous people; but he also acknowledged, that the righteous are happy in death, and beyond it.—That calmness with which the true believer expects and submits to the stroke of death; that hope full of immortality which supports him at the solemn season; and that prospect of eternal felicity in another world, in which he rejoices, and which he recommends to others; render his latter end desirable, even in the judgment of those wicked people, whose convictions respecting a future judgment check them in their sinful pursuits with fears of eternal misery; and who would be glad of deliverance from the horror of dying in sin, and sinking into hell, if it could be obtained without repentance and self-

denial. They wish, they hope, and in some sense they intend, to "die the death of the righteous;" but the love of wealth, honour or pleasure, in one form or other, keeps them from living the life of the righteous. They therefore procrastinate, and quiet their consciences with the hope of future amendment; or they rest in some false confidence, some superficial reformation, or external change; or they despise that only salvation, by which a sinner can be righteous before God. (Note and P. O. Luke 13:22-30.) Thus many, who wish to "die the death of the righteous," live impenitent and perish in sin, as Balaam did.—The object now before us is the most astonishing in the world. A very wicked man, under a deep sense of God and religion, persisting still in his wickedness, and preferring the wages of unrighteousness, even when he had before him a lively view of death, and that approaching period of his days, which should deprive him of all the advantages, for which he was prostituting himself; and likewise a prospect, whether certain or uncertain, of a future state of retribution! All this joined with an explicit wish, that when he was to leave this world he might be in the condition of a righteous man! Good God, what inconsistency, what perplexity is here! With what different views of things, with what contradictory principles of action, must such a mind be torn and distracted! It was not an unthinking carelessness by which he ran headlong into vice and folly, without making a stand to ask himself what he was doing; no, he acted upon the cool motives of interest.... Neither was he totally callous to impressions of religion, what we call abandoned; for he absolutely denied to curse Israel. When reason resumes her place, ... he owns and feels, and is actually under the influence of the divine authority, whilst he is carrying on his views to the grave, the end of all temporal greatness; under this sense of things, with the better character and more desirable state present, ... full before him, ... in his thoughts, in his wishes, voluntarily to choose the worse! What fatality is here! Or, how otherwise can such a character be explained? And yet, strange as it may appear, it is not altogether an uncommon one. Nay, with some small alterations and put a little lower, it is applicable to a considerable part of the world... For if the reasonable choice be seen and acknowledged, and yet men make the unreasonable one; is not this the same inconsistency which appeared unaccountable?... Men's strong attachments to this present world; their hopes, fears, and pursuits, are beyond all proportion to the known value of the things they respect.... They try to make a composition with the Almighty.... Those of his commands they will obey; but as to the others, they will make all atonements in their power.... Indulgences before, or atonements afterwards, are all the same: and they add faint hopes and half-resolves of making a change at one time or other." *Bp. Butler.*

V. 12. Balaam attempted to make a merit of necessity; and when he was constrained to bless Israel, he would be thought very obedient to the Lord in so doing. Yet after he had declared that God had not cursed them, and he could not, he persisted in his endeavour. Indeed, he seems to have hoped, that he should at length obtain permission in this respect; for he had been allowed to come at the second time, though this had been refused him at the first. (Notes, 22:9-14, 19-21.)

V. 13. Balak seems to have thought that Balaam's mind was indisposed for cursing Israel, by seeing their numerous and orderly encampments all at once; he therefore hoped to prevail, in cursing one division first, against which he probably intended to commence hostilities. Or he superstitiously thought one place more suited to the purpose than another. (Note, 1 Kings, 20:23-25.)

V. 14-18. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1-8.

19 God *is* no man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless; and *he* hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.

21 He *hath* not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: *the* Lord his God *is* with him, and *the* shout of a King *is* among them.

22 "God brought them out of Egypt: he hath as it were *the* strength of an unicorn.

23 Surely *there is* no enchantment *'against* Jacob, neither *is there* any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, *'What hath God wrought!'*

24 Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: *'he* shall

not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

25 And Balak said unto Balaam, *'Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.'*

26 But Balaam answered and said unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying, *'All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do?'*

27 "And Balak said unto Balaam, *'Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee into another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.'*

28 And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward *'Jeshimon.'*

29 And Balaam said unto Balak, *'Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.'*

30 And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar.

a 1 Sam. 16:29. Ps. 9:33. Hab. 2:3. Mal. 3:6. Luke 21:33. Rom. 11:29. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:18. Jam. 1:17. h 22:12. Gen. 12:2. 22:17. 12:18-33. John 10:1-29. Rom. 3:38-39. 1 Pet. 1:5. Jer. 50:20. Hos. 14:2-4. Mic. 7:18-20. Gen. 4:7-8. 6:14. 8:1. 2 Cor. 5:19. k Ex. 13:21. 29:45-46. 33:14-16. 34:9. Judg. 6:13. 2 Chr. 13:12. Ps. 23:4. 45:7-11. Is. 8:10. 12:6. 41:10. Ez. 48:35. Mat. 1:23. 2 Cor. 6:16. 1 Ps. 47:5-7. 53:18. 97:1. Is. 33:22. Luke 19:37, 38. 2 Cor. 5:14. m 22:5. Ex. 9:18. 14:18. 20:2. Ps. 88:35. n Job 39:10-11. Ps. 22:21. o 22:6. 24:1. Gen. 3:15. Matt. 16:18. Luke 10:18, 19. Rom. 16:20. Rev.

12:9. * Or, in. p Ps. 41:1-3. 136:13-20. Is. 63:9-12. Dan. 9:15. Mic. 6:1-5. 7:15. q Ps. 31:19. 64:9. 126:3. Is. 41:4. John 11:47. Acts 4:13. 5:12. 10:38. 15:12. Gal. 1:23, 24. 1 Thes. 1:8, 9. r 24:3, 9. Gen. 49:9. Deut. 33:20. Ps. 17:12. Prov. 30:30. Is. 31:4. Amos 3:8. Rev. 5:5. s 24:17. Gen. 49:27. Dan. 2:44. Mic. 5:8, 9. Zech. 10:4-5. 12:6. Rev. 19:11-21. t Ps. 2:1-3. u 12. 22:18, 38. 24:12. 13. 1 Kings 22:14. 2 Chr. 18:13. Acts 4:19, 20. 5:29. x 13. y Rom. 19:20. Job 23:13. Prov. 19:21. 21:30. Is. 14:27. 46:10, 11. Mal. 3:6. Rom. 11:29. s 21:20. a See on 1:2.

V. 19, 20. Men are deceitful, changeable, easily induced to revoke their engagements, or unable to fulfil them. On the contrary, God is perfectly sincere, faithful, unchangeable, almighty: and though, after the manner of man, he is said to repent of the kindness that he has shown, when his creatures by ingratitude provoke him to withdraw his bounty; and of his judgments denounced, when sinners repent, or when, in answer to prayer, he delays the execution of them; (*Notes, Gen. 6:6, 7. Jer. 18:7-10.*) yet in the event it will be found, that every promise and engagement made to believers was exactly accomplished, and all his threatenings against unbelievers completely and finally executed.—This declaration, by the mouth of Balaam, had a peculiar reference to the state of Israel: God had absolutely determined to bless them; he had plainly revealed this purpose, and Balaam had reluctantly shown it to Balak. Yet they were vainly attempting, by importunity, to induce the Lord to alter his mind and revoke his word! Balaam, however, was constrained to own that "he had received to bless;" (*commandment* is not in the original:) blessings on Israel were put into his mouth, and he could by no means reverse them.

V. 21. The national sins of Israel, in former years, had been pardoned, and the people were not at that time generally guilty of idolatry or rebellion, but were in an obedient disposition, had much true religion among them, and were comparatively righteous, and favoured by the Lord. The nation was also a type of believers, in whom God beholds not iniquity or perverseness; none allowed, none unrepented or unsubdued, and none unpardoned. (*Notes, Jer. 50:20. Mic. 7:18-20.*) While this was the case, God, as reigning over them, protecting them, and leading them forth to victory, was among them; of whose power they had so much experience, that they were inspired with triumphant confidence; and at his word were ready to shout, or blow the trumpet for the battle, and attack their enemies with assurance of success.

V. 22. The word rendered *unicorn*, is variously interpreted; but the rhinoceros is most generally supposed to be meant.—Israel, strengthened by the Lord, who brought him out of Egypt, was as invincible among the nations, as the rhinoceros among quadrupeds, and was as terrible to them. (*Marg. Ref. 24:8.*)

V. 23. It seems here to be taken for granted, that Satan exercised some power in answer to the expectations of those who used enchantments. But Israel was so immediately under the divine protection, that nothing of this kind could injure him.—Some, however, render the words as meaning, *'hat* no enchantment or divination was used in Israel; and consequently the miracles of Moses were wrought by the power of God. (*Marg.*)—The favour at that time shown to Israel was a specimen of the protection always afforded the people of God; the remembrance of which would encourage the faith, and inspire the praises, of future ages; while with admiration they would consider what God had wrought. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Thes. 1:5-10, latter part.*)

V. 24. At length Balaam not only blessed Israel, but likewise denounced the doom of all their enemies; which might have been a warning to Balak, and to himself also, to desist from the vain and perilous attempt. (*Note, Gen. 49:8, 9.*)

Drink the blood, &c. The wild beasts gorge the blood, as well as devour the flesh, of the slaughtered prey: and it is undisputable, that many tribes of barbarians have actually, in the triumph of insulting, revengeful victory, drunk the blood of their enemies. But as far as Israel is concerned, it can only signify the completeness of their victories.

V. 25. Balak seems still to have thought Balaam's blessings as efficacious as his curses, and therefore wished to silence him; for he yet hoped to prevail against Israel. (*Note, 22:6.*)

V. 27. *It will please God.* At length Balak spoke as one, who had entered into Balaam's original plan; and who hoped, by change of place, (and perhaps times or days also,) and by repeating his expensive sacrifices, to render God propitious to him, and so to obtain leave to curse Israel; though Balaam himself seems almost to have despaired of prevailing.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. Proud and wicked men spare no pains, and grudge no expense, when they imagine that they can purchase the favour of God, or induce him to connive at their mischievous designs. And such is man's ignorance of the divine perfections and of true religion, that multitudes find teachers to encourage them in these vain hopes; while they neither mortify their lusts, nor humble themselves before God: and these in return have their covetousness gratified, by such pupils, and for such instructions!—Mere Pharisees have frequently exceeded the true people of God in the measure of external services, and of partial mortification: and not knowing of any thing more excellent, they are thus confirmed in self-confidence and self-preference; they "trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others;" and even boast of their services, at the very time when their hearts are full of malice and wickedness! But the Lord abhors pompous externals and superstitions, nay, even the most zealous attendance on his own ordinances, while the heart remains destitute of repentance, faith, and love to him and to his servants; and still more, when this devotion is the cloak of hypocrisy, and covers injustice and oppression.—(*Notes, Prov. 15:8, 9. Is. 1:10-15. Jer. 7:8-11. Am. 5:21-24.*)—The spiritual worship of his people is of another kind: a broken and contrite, a believing and thankful, a pure and upright heart, are more suitable to his nature, and more precious in his sight, than "thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil."—As true Christians are peculiarly favoured, so are they peculiarly characterized: they "dwell alone;" they are despised by the surrounding multitudes, whom they pity while separated from their company, and with whom they desire no fellowship: their maxims, customs, laws, and conduct, are dissimilar from those of all other men: their inheritance, their home, their citizenship are in heaven: their affections, conversation, pursuits, and pleasures, are heavenly: and, while they are deemed "the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things," and not fit to live; the Lord accounts them "the excellent of the earth," "of whom the world is not worthy." (*Note, Phil. 3:20, 21. Col. 3:1-4. Heb. 11:35-38.*) Though few, hitherto in every place, when compared with the ungodly, they are very numerous in all: may the Lord multiply them a hundred fold, how many soever they be! Though despised by those who know them not, they often attract the reverence even of such wicked men as are acquainted with them; but it is frequently accompanied with hatred and resentment. Yet many of the wicked, while through domineering lusts and prevailing temptations, they espouse an opposite interest, and lead a contrary life, secretly account the righteous happy; and wish to have their lot with them at death, and in the eternal world: but in vain; for can they who, in defiance of conviction, choose to serve Satan and their sins in this world, reasonably expect to be numbered with the saints in glory everlasting? There are indeed many whom the devil and his servants do not honour with their hatred: but despise, and only despise, as suspecting no harm to the cause from their example, influence, or endeavours. But let not such mere professors of religion deem themselves interested in those precious privileges which belong to the true Israel of God.

V. 13-30. Notwithstanding disappointments and alarms, the lusts of wicked men revive and reign: for, while some are pushed forward by implacable malice and envy, others are

CHAPTER XXIV.

Balaam feels from enchantments, and predicts the happiness of Israel and the destruction of his enemies, 1-9. Balak, being greatly enraged, dismisses Balaam, 10-18. Balaam prophesies of the Star of Jacob, the ruin of several nations, and a very remote event, 14-25.

AN when Balaam ^{saw} that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not, as ^{at} other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and ^{the} Spirit of God came upon him.

3 And ^{he} took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man ^{whose} eyes are open hath said;

4 He hath said, which heard the words of God, which ^{saw} the vision of the Almighty, ^{falling} into a trance, but having his eyes open:

5 How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel!

6 As the valleys are they spread forth, ^{as} gardens by the river's side, ^{as} the trees of lign-

*22:13, 23:20, 31:16, 1 Sam. 24:20, 25:25, Rev. 2:14, b 23:3, 15. * Heb. to the meeting of, 23:23. c 5, 2:2, &c. 23:9, 10. Cant. 6:4, 10. d 11:25-29, 1 Sam. 10:10, 19:20, 23:2 Chr. 15:1. Matt. 7:22, 10:48. Luke 10:30, John 11:48-51. e See on 23:7. f Heb. who had his eyes shut, but now opened. 4:16, 22:31. f See on 12:6, Gen. 15:12, 19:39, 22:19, Dan. 8:26, 27. Acts 10:10, 19, 22:17, 2 Cor. 12:1-4. g 22:31, Ex. 1:28, Dan. 8:17, 18, 10:15, 16, Rev. 1:10, 17, h Gen. 2:8-10, 13:10. Cant. 4:12-15, 6:11, 11:58, 11, Jer. 31:12, Joel 3:18, 1 Ps. 1:3, Jer. 17:8, j Ps. 104:16, 18, 41:19, 61:3, k Ps. 92:12, 13, Ez. 31:3, 4, 47:12, 1 Ps. 66:26, Prov. 6:16-18, 18, 49:1, m Ps. 93:3, 4, Jer. 51:13, Rev. 17:1, 15, n Ezra 4:20.*

induced to concur in persecution by insatiable avarice and restless ambition. But the Lord "is of one mind, who can turn him?" He will infallibly perform his kindest, largest promises to his people; and execute his most terrible denunciations on his enemies: and, while earth and hell combine their power and policy to prevent it, the Lord "sitteth in the heavens," "hath them in derision," and will soon "speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." (Note, Ps. 24-6.) Let believers then rejoice in his unchangeableness, his truth, and power; but let the wicked tremble at the alarming thought, and make haste to "flee from the wrath to come." If the Lord sees that we trust in his mercy, and accept of his salvation; that we do not indulge in any secret sin, or continue in presumptuous rebellion, but uprightly endeavour to serve and glorify him; we may be sure that our past offences are pardoned, and "buried in the depths of the sea," no more to hurt us, than if they had never been committed. Then indeed the Lord hath blessed us, and "given commandment to bless us," and he will never suffer it to be reversed: and if Satan cannot deceive or defile us, he cannot hurt us by machinations or temptations, by enchantments or divinations. The Lord, having all hearts and all tongues in his hand, can not only restrain the malice of our enemies, but constrain them to speak well of us, and do well to us; to confess their impotency, to condemn themselves, and to foretell their own misery with their own mouth, even while they madly persist in their destructive opposition; and to acknowledge, with reluctant admiration, the work of God for us and in us.—Well then may the believer triumph in his King, the Lord of Hosts, and re-echo with grateful exultation, "What hath God wrought!" Oh, the wonders of his providence and grace! (Note, Ps. 126:1-3.) The wonders of his redeeming love, of his pardoning mercy, of his new-creating Spirit! What a change in our state, our character, and our prospects! Every former mercy now becomes an earnest of still further blessings; and from past deliverances we infer the certainty of final victory and eternal triumphs. Thus shall every true believer, thus shall the whole church of God, be "unto him for a name, and for a praise," whilst with their eyes they shall behold the destruction of the wicked. But is this the reader's character and felicity? Let us seriously examine ourselves, and earnestly entreat the Lord to decide this infinitely important question. To this let us aspire; let us pursue with unremitting diligence and undiverted attention: let us watch and pray always, for our enemies are vigilant, indefatigable, and malicious; and surely we ought to be as unwearied in glorifying God, and doing good, as his enemies are in doing mischief. Even Balaam's retirement to meet the Lord, and Balak's assiduous attention to his burnt-sacrifices, and rising up to hear the message from God, may furnish us with profitable hints; if we apply them to ourselves, in pursuing nobler objects, from higher motives, and for other purposes.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. It is evident that Balaam had used enchantments, or incantations of some kind, even when he went to meet the Lord; but he had been constrained to return with answers the very reverse of his wishes and intentions; and therefore he deemed it to no purpose to repeat them. (Note, 23:3.) It is not agreed among expositors, nor is it easy to decide, whether he desperately determined to curse Israel without permission, and thus to satisfy Balak and earn his reward, yet was constrained on the contrary to pronounce further blessings; or whether, under a pang of conviction, he desisted from his purpose for the present, and freely yielded himself to the powerful impulse

aloes! which the Lord hath planted, and ^{as} cedar-trees beside the waters.

7 He shall ^{pour} the water out of his buckets, and his seed ^{shall be} in ^{many} waters, and ^{his} king shall be higher than ^{Agag}, and ^{his} kingdom shall be exalted.

8 ^{God} brought him forth out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he ^{shall eat} up the nations his enemies, and shall ^{break} their bones, and ^{pierce} them through with his arrows.

9 He ^{couched}, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion; ^{who} shall stir him up? ^{blessed is} he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

10 And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he ^{smote} his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, ^I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed ^{them} these three times.

11 Therefore now flee thou to thy place: ^I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, ^{the} Lord hath kept thee back from honour.

Ps. 2:6-10, 18:43, John 1:49, Phil. 2:10, 11, Rev. 19:16. o 1 Sam. 15:8, 32:33, p 2 Sam. 5:12, 1 Kings 4:21, 1 Chr. 14:2, 18:2, 9:7, Dan. 2:44, Rev. 11:16, q 2:15. See on 23:22, r 14:9, 23:24, 1-eut. 7:1, a Ps. 2:9, 18:13, Jer. 50:17, Dan. 6:24, 2 Deut. 32:23, 42, Ps. 21:12, u Gen. 49:9, Job 38:39, 40, v See on 23:24, Job 41:10, 1a, 2:12, x Gen. 12:3, 27:29, Ps. 122:6, Matt. 23:40, 45, Acts 9:5, y Job 27:23, Ez. 21:14, 17, 22:13, z 22:6, 11, 17, 32:11, 1-eut. 23:4, 3, Josh. 24:10, Neh. 13:2, a 22:17, 37, b Matt. 19:28-30, Acts 8:20, Phil. 3:8, Heb. 11:24-26, 1 Pet. 5:2, 3, 2 John 8.

of the Spirit of God coming upon him, though he afterwards returned to his wicked projects.

V. 3, 4. These verses may more literally be rendered, "He took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man *whose eye was shut* hath said; he hath said who heard the words of God, who saw the vision of the Almighty; falling, and his eyes were opened." The word, rendered "are open," is generally agreed to signify *shut*, (*margin*), and the clause "into a trance" is not in the original. Balaam is supposed to refer to the time when his ass, seeing the Angel, (whom he himself could not see,) fell down with him; and then his eyes were *opened*, and he lay prostrate on the earth. But perhaps he also meant that his eyes had been *shut*, when he thought of cursing Israel, but were now *opened* to perceive that the Israelites were blessed; or that his bodily eyes were shut in his visions, while those of his understanding were opened.

V. 5, 6. As valleys verdant, fruitful, and widely extended; as luxuriant gardens on the banks of a fertilizing river; as aromatic trees diffusing a fragrant smell, or as cedars most stately to behold, planted as it were by God himself in a well-watered, fertile soil, and wanting no human culture;—such did the camps of Israel appear, and such would be the prosperity of that favoured people!

Lign-aeol. (6) Or, *the wood of aloes*; "an aromatic tree, . . . which widely diffuses a very agreeable smell."—Robertson. The word is rendered *aloes*, Prov. 7:17, as the feminine plural is, Ps. 45:8. (Heb. 9.) Cant. 4:14.

V. 7-9. Israel would be abundantly replenished with heavenly blessings; and, as seed sown in a well-watered place, so his multitudes would increase still more and more. At length his king would be higher than Agag; which seems to have been the name of the several kings of Amalek in succession; though some think that Agag, whom Saul conquered and Samuel slew, was foretold by name long before his birth, as Josiah and Cyrus afterwards were. (Note, 1 Sam. 15:32, 33.) The Amalekites were at this time very powerful, and their king renowned and prosperous: but it was here predicted, that Israel should in due time be governed by more prosperous princes, who would be far greater and more celebrated than those of the Amalekites. Saul, the first king of Israel, who seems to have been especially intended, subjugated the Amalekites and their king: but afterwards the kings of Israel were far more highly exalted.—(Note, 20.) The kingdom of Christ, however, is generally allowed to be predicted; as exalted far above the highest of all earthly kingdoms.—Perhaps Balaam hoped at last to share the blessedness of Israel by thus blessing them; but he did it reluctantly, and not from love, and therefore he was not included. He however predicted Israel's successes under their most prosperous kings, and the spiritual prosperity and felicity of the church of Christ, and of all its cordial friends: and warned all its enemies, from Balak to his latest successors, to desist from the ruinous contest, involving himself also in the general sentence. (*Margin. Ref. Notes*, 23:23, 24, Gen. 12:1-3, 49:8, 9.)

V. 10, 11. Balak was at length enraged to the greatest degree, and expressed his indignation in the most furious manner: and, not without a mixture of scorn and disdain to Balaam, for having missed so fair a prospect of advancing himself from regard to the God of Israel, he sternly commanded him to depart immediately.

V. 12, 13. Balaam had repeatedly confessed his inability to go beyond the word of the Lord; but here he appears disposed, not only to vindicate his conduct to Balak, but also

12 And Balaam said unto Balak, "Spake I not also to thy messengers, which thou sentest unto me, saying,

13 If Balaam would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the LORD saith, that will I speak?"

[Practical Observations.]

14 And now, behold, I go unto my people: come, therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.

15 ¶ And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said;

16 He hath said, "which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open;

17 "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of

Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

18 And Edom shall be a possession: Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly.

19 Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

20 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but this latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

21 And he looked on the Kenites; and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock:

22 Nevertheless, the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

23 And he took up his parable, and said, Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?

24 And ships shall come from the coast of Chit-

Gen. 49:1-28. 1 Sam. 17:31-7. 18. Mic. 6:5. Rev. 2:10, 14. 1 Cor. 4:1. 1 Tim. 3:1. 2 Tim. 3:1. 1 Pet. 3:22. Rev. 19:16. p Ps. 21:7-10. 14:2. Job 19:25-27. Zech. 12:10. Jude 1, 14, 15. Rev. 1:7. 1 Matt. 2:2-9. Luke 1:73. 2 Pet. 1:19. Rev. 22:16. 1 John 4:10. 1s. 45:6. 78:70-72. 110:2. 1s. 9:7. Luke 1:34, 35. Heb. 1:8. * Or, smite through the princes of Moab. 1 Sam. 14:38. marg. Zech. 10:4. 12 sam. 8:2. 2 Kings 3:5, 27. 1 Chr. 18: 2. Jer. 48:45. m. Gen. 4:23-26. 5:3-29. Seth. Ps. 73:1-11. Rev. 11:15. 1 Gen. 21:2, 40. 2 Sam. 3:14. Ps. 60: title. 8-12. 1s. 34:5. 63:1. Amos 9:12. o Gen.

49:10. Ps. 2:1-12. 72:10, 11. 1s. 11:10. Mic. 5:2, 4. Matt. 23:18. 1 Cor. 15:25. Eph. 1:20-22. Phil. 2:10, 11. Heb. 1:8. 1 Pet. 3:22. Rev. 19:16. p Ps. 21:7-10. Matt. 25:46. Luke 19:12, 27. † Or, the first of the nations that warred against Israel. Ex. 17:8. q Judg. 6:3. 1 Sam. 14:48. 15:3-8. 27:8, 9. 30:1, 17. 1 Chr. 4:43. Zech. 13:1. 7:9, 10. 9:14. † Or, shall be even to destruction. r Gen. 15: 19. ‡ Heb. Kain. ¶ Or, how long shall it be ere Asshur carry thee away captive? s Gen. 10:11. Ezra 4:2. Ps. 83:8. Hos. 14:3. 123:2, 2 Kings 5:1, u Gen. 10:4. 1s. 23:1. Dan. 7:19, 20. 8:5-8, 21. 10:20. 11:30.

to intimate, that from the first he had only waited to know the will of the Lord, that he might obey it. (Marg. Ref. Note, 22:18.)

V. 14. Balaam, probably in a measure calmed by Balaam's exposition, permitted him to proceed.—As the word rendered *advertise*, generally signifies *counsel*, many think it refers to the diabolical advice which Balaam gave Balak, either at this time or afterwards: but this is not probable; because what follows relates to those things which Israel would do to Moab, not what Moab should do to Israel; and the expression "the latter days" always denotes a very distant period. (Marg. Ref. e.)

V. 16. (Note, 1, 2.) Balaam here spake with increasing confidence of the revelations made to him; and though similar words were used by true prophets, yet from so wicked a man they have an air of ostentation. He indeed seems to have courted applause and admiration, when ready to despair of accumulating riches. "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him;" (Note, Ps. 25:14.) but Balaam had little reason to boast of his knowledge of God and heavenly things.

V. 17. Balaam's introduction to the subsequent prediction is very remarkable; and implies that it related to events which could only be known by the Spirit of prophecy, enabling him to penetrate into the remotest futurity.—Balaam would see Him, the grand Object to be made known, but not at present; he would contemplate his glory, but at a great distance. (Notes, Job 19:23-27.) Some think that he also forebode his own doom, as sentenced to "depart accursed," by the Judge at his second coming. (Notes, Matt. 25:41-46. Luke 16:22, 23.)—The STAR coming out of Jacob, and the SCEPTRE, or regal authority, rising in Israel, may refer in a subordinate sense to David, as reigning over Israel with great reputation, and gaining considerable victories over the Moabites and others; and to the kings of his race as ruling over Judah, and still further subjugating the Moabites and the neighbouring nations. But the prophecy had its full accomplishment in the exalted Kingdom and spiritual victories of Jesus Christ. (Note, Gen. 49:10.)—Some suppose, that by Sheth, an ancestor or head of some Moabitish tribe is meant: but others think that Seth the son of Adam and the progenitor of the whole post-diluvian world, is intended; and this seems the best-grounded interpretation.—The word rendered "destroy," is only used in this place and one more in Scripture; (Is. 22:5.) and some think it here means *build up*, for it is derived from a word which signifies a wall; yet, as it seems to be there properly rendered "breaking down," its use in that passage does not favour this interpretation.—The LXX have *ῥωπονεύει*, will lead captive, or spoil. If then it means *destroy*, or *spoil*, it may refer to Christ's subverting the strong foundations of the several great monarchies, which have successively prevailed on earth, with that of Satan, the god and prince of this world; and subverting the corrupt state of things among all the posterity of Adam, by setting up his heavenly kingdom, and filling the earth with his glory. (Notes, Dan. 2:14, 45. Rev. 20:1-6.) The Jewish writers in general interpret this prophecy principally of the Messiah.—Onkelos, one of their most renowned paraphrasts, has these words:

"When a prince shall arise of the house of Jacob, and Christ shall be anointed of the house of Israel; he shall slay the princes of Moab, and rule over all the sons of men." The rest agree with him.—Had the house of David in general been meant, a single star would hardly have been mentioned. A Star was the known emblem of the Messiah; and one of the impostors, who pretended to be the Messiah in the primitive times, called himself *Barchochebas*, or the son of a star.

Our Lord calls himself, "The bright and morning Star." (Note, Rev. 22:16, 17.) and the Christian fathers were generally of opinion, that this prophecy being known in the East, prepared the way for the wise men following the star which appeared at the birth of Christ. (Note, Matt. 2:1, 2.) In this grand and spiritual sense of the prophecy, Israel represents the true church of God, and Moab and Edom her enemies. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 18, 19. The marginal references show the fulfilment of this prophecy in the victories of David and Israel under him and his descendants, which were typical of the triumphs of David's Son, who shall destroy all "that will not have him to reign over them," however they may attempt to secure themselves. David and Solomon had indeed extensive dominions in those regions; yet not answerable to the words, "He that shall have dominion," which emphatically describe Christ, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." (Note, Rev. 19:11-16.)

V. 20. The Amalekites constituted one of the most ancient and prosperous of the nations, and they were the first who attacked the Israelites; (marg.) but Balaam predicted their final destruction; and thus, without knowing it, confirmed the sentence which the Lord by Moses had denounced against them. (Notes, Ex. 17:14-16.) This prophecy was accomplished by Saul and David, after whose days but few vestiges of that once flourishing people can be traced; and no history now remains of them.

V. 21, 22. Jethro, a Midianite, is called a Kenite, (Judg. 1:16.) and it is most probable the Midianites in general are here meant; who, dwelling in a rocky country, deemed themselves safe from the assaults of their enemies. But, notwithstanding this, they were wasted by the Israelites; till at length they were carried captive by the Assyrians, as it is supposed, about the time of the captivity of the ten tribes. The Kenites indeed are mentioned among the nations whose land the Lord engaged to give to the posterity of Abraham; (Gen. 15:19.) but they seem to have been extinct before Israel conquered Canaan, as they are not once mentioned in the history; and they could not be the people intended by Balaam, who perhaps saw at a distance the rocks and fastnesses of the Midianites.

V. 23, 24. Having paused awhile, Balaam seems to have sighed, and made this exclamation; either meaning that the predicted desolations would be so dreadful, that it would be miserable to live during such calamities; or that the time was so distant, that all who then heard him would have been dead a long time before it arrived. He might refer to the desolations by the Assyrians which he had predicted; or rather to those by the Greeks and Romans, as the next clause may properly be rendered "For ships shall come," &c.—The coasts or isles of Chittim always, in Scripture, mean the regions of Europe, bordering on the Mediterranean; especially the Greeks or Romans. The passage is therefore an evident prediction of the victories of the Greeks, or Macedonians, under Alexander and his successors; and of those of the Romans after them. The latter especially, coming from far in ships, overturned the several kingdoms in the western part of Asia, and possessed them; causing dreadful afflictions to the people, who inhabited the ancient Assyria; but still greater to the Hebrews, especially in the last destruction of Jerusalem. And they have ever since been tyrannizing, in one form or other, over the world and the church; but shall at length be destroyed as entirely as the Amalekites were. This part of the prediction is not yet fulfilled. (Notes, Rev. 18:18.)—It is well worthy our notice, that the final destruction of Amalek and Rome is foretold; but only the afflictions of

tim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.

25 And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Israelites commit whoredom and idolatry, being tempted by the women of Moab and Midian, 1-3. God commands the criminals to be slain, 4, 5. Phinehas kills Zimri and Cozbi, and the plague which wasted Israel is stayed, 6-9. God app over his zeal, and gives him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood; and commands Moses to make war against the Midianites, 10-18.

AND Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

1. Cor. 10:21-22, 11:14, 12:13, 13:27, 14:2, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1.

Asshur and Eber. The regions intended by *Asshur* remained but a short time under the dominion of the Romans, and were afterwards again governed by their own princes; and the Hebrews continue a distinct and numerous, though oppressed and scattered people to this day, evidently in order to the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting their conversion to Christ, and their subsequent prosperity; and this is one good proof that the Hebrews were meant, and not any other obscure tribe, as some think.—What a surprising series of prophecy have we here in few words, which in former accomplishments hath already evidenced to successive generations the divine authority of the Scriptures; and shall to future ages demonstrate the same truth with undeniable evidence! “Thus,” says Dr. Lightfoot, “Balaam, instead of cursing the church, curseth Amalek the first, and Rome the last, enemy of the church.”—His bearing witness to Moses and Israel, is somewhat like Judas’s attesting the innocence of Christ.” *Bp. Newton.*

V. 25. Though Balaam for the present desisted from his purpose of cursing Israel; yet he was not rendered more friendly to them, or cured of his avarice, which at length suggested to him a still more diabolical plan.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. The enemies of the church may renew their attacks, or vary them as they please; yet they can gain no real advantage: for it pleases the Lord to bless his people, and he will make all their opposers see, and feel, and acknowledge it; which will fill them with rage and desperation. Nay, in some cases, they are constrained to allow the excellence of the righteous, as well as to forebode their prosperity. Under the protection of Judah’s Lion, believers securely rest; and whoever disturbs them, will stir him up as an enemy: for he only suffers the malice of the wicked to proceed, till it hath accomplished his purposes for the good of his people, and he then arises to execute vengeance on their oppressors. (*Notes, Ps. 76:10. Is. 10:5-7, 12-19.*) But while he renders those, who would curse or injure his servants, most miserable under his awful displeasure, he abundantly blesses all who heartily pray for them and seek their peace.—They, who are kept from worldly honour and affluence by an upright heart and a good conscience, will be great gainers: and the minister of Christ especially, who faithful to his trust, with meekness and firmness, reproves the wickedness of those, who had thought to promote him to honour, will have “a hundredfold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.” But such persons as have light enough in their minds, and restraint enough upon their consciences, to induce their hesitation at going the whole length which a wicked patron may require; and thus lose his favour, and hinder their own preferment, continuing still the slaves of sin, and the enemies of God; are very miserable in this world, and likely to be so in the world to come. Let us not then attempt to serve God and Mammon, or halt between *JEHOVAH* and *Baal*: but let us follow the Lord fully, and he will make up every loss to us; while the consent of wicked men in sin, will at length issue in bitter hatred and severe recriminations.

V. 14-25. Many force the miseries coming upon others, who do not suspect far greater and nearer miseries which await themselves. (*Note, 31:8.*) But what benefit would accrue to us, what cause should we have to glory or rejoice, if we “understood all mysteries and all knowledge;” if we could penetrate the secrets of the most remote futurity, and develop the book of the divine decrees; “if we saw the visions of the Almighty, and knew the knowledge of the Most High,” and had our eyes open to see things hidden from all others, “since the foundation of the world;” while distant nations and successive ages were destined to celebrate our fame; if at the same time we remained the slaves of covetousness, ambition, lust, or malice; impenitent and unpardoned, under the wrath of God, doomed “to the fire that never shall be quenched, and the worm that never dieth?”—All these endowments would but aggravate our guilt, and enhance our condemnation. Nor is there any indissoluble bond between extensive and exact knowledge, even in theological subjects, and “that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” Let us then “take heed lest the light which is in us be darkness; for if it should prove so, alas! how great will that darkness be!”

2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

3 And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.

5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.

[*Practical Observations.*]

10. f Josh. 22:17, Judg. 2:14, 20, Ps. 69:11, Jer. 17:4, g 14:15, 18, Ex. 19:25, Josh. 23:2, h Deut. 13:8-9, 13:15, 21:23, 28:20, 21:6, 2, Ezech. 7:10, 11:1, Josh. 7:23, 28, Ps. 83:3, 4, Jon. 3:8, k Ex. 18:21, 25, 26, 1 Ex. 22:30, 32:27, 28, Leut. 17:3-5, 1 Kings 18:40.

(*Note, Matt. 6:22, 23.*) Let us seriously examine whether, or in what respects, our knowledge, attainments, experience, or profession, excel those of Balaam. “No fluency nor excellency of speech, even in preaching or in prayer; no gifts of knowledge or prophecy; no “visions and revelations of the Lord;” are intrinsically and decidedly superior to the boasted endowments of this wretched man, who “loved the wages of unrighteousness,” and died the enemy of God and his people. But a broken and contrite heart; a simple dependence on the Redeemer’s atoning blood and sanctifying grace; a cheerful subjection to the divine command, and submission to his will; an habitual aim to glorify God and benefit his people; are less splendid, but far more excellent attainments, and invariably “accompany salvation.” (*Note, Heb. 6:9, 10.*) No vainglorious hypocrite ever possessed these; yet the feeblest true believer is in some measure conscious of them, and is daily longing and praying for more of them: while perhaps, through an error in judgment, and through Satan’s subtlety, he overlooks all these *infallible* evidences of *saving* grace; and indulges desponding fears, because he cannot emulate some boasting Balaam’s gifts.—But let such persons bless the Lord, and rejoice in what he hath done for them. Here by faith they behold the Saviour *nigh* unto them; shortly shall they see him nigh, as come to complete their redemption, and consummate their felicity: whilst the wicked shall be “punished with an everlasting destruction from his presence.”—Yet the Lord will glorify himself and benefit his church by the gifts, and in the doom, even of hypocrites; and in these prophecies we may discern both the misery of the *ungodly*; the vanity of all worldly dependences and pre-eminence; the approaching destruction of every enemy who hath done evil in the sanctuary; the consequent triumphs of the church; and the universal spread of the gospel, notwithstanding afflictions, persecutions, and damnable heresies; while they assure our faith in all the promises which respect our own salvation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1-3. It is expressly said, in several places, that the temptation by which the Israelites were seduced, was the effect of Balaam’s counsel to Balak; (31:15, 16. *Rev.* 2:14.) yet we read in the conclusion of the preceding chapter, that “Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place.” He was, however, afterwards slain among the princes of Midian; (*Note, 31:8.*) and it may therefore be supposed that he directly went home in sullen despondency, where after a time Satan suggested this infernal counsel to him; that he then returned to propose it to Balak; and that, waiting to observe its success and to enjoy his reward, he was slain by the Israelites. Many commentators however suppose, that he gave Balak this counsel before he went home; and consequently they must conclude, that he returned to claim his recompense when his project had succeeded, or to give further advice. (*Marg. Ref.*)—This wicked man could not obtain leave to curse Israel: but he instructed Balak how to seduce Israel to bring a curse upon themselves; or at least to deprive themselves of the Lord’s immediate protection, and to provoke such judgments as would diminish their numbers and discourage their hearts.—“Not daring, as a prophet, to assist the king of Moab, he considers whether some other means might not be found. . . . One would not think it possible that the weakness even of religious self-deceit, in its utmost excess, could have so poor a distinction, so fond an evasion, to serve itself of! But so it was; and he could think of no other method, than to betray the children of Israel to provoke his wrath, who was their only Defence.—He could not forego the rewards of unrighteousness; he therefore first seeks for *indulgences*; and when these could not be obtained, he sins against the whole meaning, end, and design of the prohibition! And surely the impious counsel he gave to Balak . . . was a greater piece of wickedness than if he had cursed Israel in words. . . . He seeks indulgences for plain wickedness; which not being able to obtain, he glosses over that same wickedness, dresses it up in a new form, in order to make it pass off more easily with himself! That is, he deliberately contrives to deceive and impose upon himself, in a matter which he knew to be of the utmost importance! . . . This was the man who desired to “die the death of the righteous, and that his last end might be like his.” *Bp.*

6 ¶ And, behold, one of the children of Israel came, and brought unto his brethren "a Midianitish woman," in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand;

8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. "So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel."

9 And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

10 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.

m 14.15. 21.2. 29.—16. n 15.30.31. Deut. 29.19—21. Jer. 3.3. 8.12. 35.23. 42.15—18. 43.4—7. 44.15.17. 2 Pet. 2.13—15. Jude 13. o Judg. 24. Erra 9.1—10. 10.6—9. 1s. 22.12. Ez. 9.4—6. Joel 2.17. p Ex. 6.25. Josh. 22.30.31. Judg. 20.29. q 1 Sam. 18.10.11. 19.9. r 5.11. Ps. 106.29—31. s 16.46—48. 2 Sam. 24.25. t 1 Chr. 21.22. t.4.5. 16.49.50. Deut. 4.34. 1 Cor. 10.8. u Josh. 7.25. 25. 2 Sam. 21.14. v Heb. with my zeal. 2 Cor. 11.2. x Ex. 20.5. 34.14. Deut. 4.24. 29.20. 32.16.21. Joshi. 24.19. 1 Kings 14.22. Ps. 78.58. Ez. 16.38. Nah. 1.

Butler.—Under the mask of friendship, an intercourse with Israel was opened, and some of the women of Moab and Midian, (who were, it seems, by no means backward to such an infamous undertaking,) were employed to allure the people to a criminal intercourse. This made way for an invitation to those idolatrous feasts, where every species of licentiousness was practised; and this being readily complied with, the Israelites flocked in great numbers, and greedily joined in this abominable worship: (*Note and P. O. 1 Kings 11:1—8.*) for 'the ordinary charms unto idolatry, were good victuals and bad women.' *Bp. Patrick.*—These Israelites had hitherto been preserved from connexions with heathen women, amidst all their rebellions; and therefore it is said, "the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab."—The women of Moab perhaps were the first tempters; but those of Midian at length became more generally and deeply criminal. (*Note, 17, 18.*)—"Baal-peor," or the lord of Peor, might be the same as Chemosh, the god of Moab. (*Note, 22:40, 41.*)

V. 4, 5. Many principal persons, in the several tribes and families, seem to have been ringleaders in this complicated provocation: and it is probable, that the Lord had already sent a plague which was making dreadful ravages.—If, therefore, the people at large would not have this idolatry interpreted into a national forfeiture of the covenant, and be destroyed by the pestilence as one man, immediate vengeance must be executed on the chief transgressors, by putting them to death, and hanging them up ignominiously, as a sacrifice to the justice of God. (*Note, Ex. 32:27—29.*) The words "joined unto Baal-peor" seem to imply an exception for such as had sinned, but had speedily repented. The notorious criminals of every rank were slain by the magistrates directly; but perhaps none except the more eminent persons were ignominiously hung up for a warning to all the survivors. From comparing the sum total of those who died by the plague (9) with that mentioned by Paul, (1 Cor. 10:8.) it is thought that no less than one thousand persons were thus executed in a summary manner.

V. 6—8. This action of Zimri and Cosbi was done in direct defiance of God himself; as well as of Moses, and of the congregation, who in great multitudes were penitently confessing their sins, and deprecating the divine displeasure. That a man should thus triumph in his wickedness, and dare the sword of justice, while numbers were dying by the sword of the magistrate, and much greater multitudes by the hand of God, was the greatest insult and outrage imaginable upon all authority, divine and human;—upon all order, and even upon common decency. Phinehas was the second priest, and successor to the high-priesthood, and doubtless as high in authority as in rank. As a magistrate, he was commissioned by Moses and by God to slay "those who were joined to Baal-peor." Zimri was notoriously and avowedly guilty; but while others trembled to come near him, Phinehas boldly executed vengeance upon him and his infamous paramour at once. No conduct could in every view be more unexceptionable; nor can it ever be drawn into a precedent to countenance acts of private revenge, of religious persecution, or even of irregular public vengeance. The objections therefore of some inbels, to this part of Holy Scripture, expose their ignorance, or disingenuity, as much as their hatred of this sacred book. For there is not one of them, (religion out of the question,) but in such a crisis, when a daring rebel set the regular magistracy at defiance, and evidently meant to instigate the people to revolt, would have allowed, that the welfare of the community was the chief law, and that so extra-

12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace.

13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.

14 Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites.

15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain, was Cosbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.

16 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them:

18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cosbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

2. Zeph. 1:18. 3:8. 1 Cor. 10:22. y Neh. 13:29. Mal. 2:4.5. z 1 Sam. 2:30. 1 Kings 2:27. 1 Chr. 6:4—15, 50—53. a Ex. 40:15. Is. 61:6. Jer. 33:17, 22. Heb. 7:11, 17, 18. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9. Rev. 1:6. b 1 Kings 19:10, 14. Pa. 106:31. 118:139. John 2:17. Acts 22:3—5. Rom. 10:2—4. c Ex. 32:30. Josh. 7:22. 2 Sam. 21:3. Heb. 2:17. 1 John 2:2. d 4.5. t 1 Chr. 19:7. f Heb. house of a father. g 1:23. 26:14. f 31:8. Josh. 13:21. h 31:2. Rev. 18:6. h 31:15, 16. Gen. 26:10. Ex. 32:21, 35. Rev. 2:11. i Gen. 3:13. 2 Cor. 11:3. 2 Pet. 2:14, 15, 18.

ordinary a case required an extraordinary remedy; and would have applauded a decisive measure, though irregular: yet, after all, this does not appear in the least to have been so.

V. 11—13. The congregation had wept before the Lord, and doubtless many had joined with Moses in prayer and supplication; yet this act of Phinehas, by which, being zealous for the glory of God, he had inflicted condign punishment on two arrogant offenders, and thus offered an atoning sacrifice to the divine justice, is exclusively mentioned as having "turned away the wrath of God from Israel," and prevented their destruction. It was therefore "imputed to him for righteousness." (*Note, Ps. 106:28—31.*) Let who would censure it in succeeding ages, the heart-searching God declared his approbation of it as a righteous action; and he rewarded it by giving to Phinehas "his covenant of peace," ensuring to him personally, no doubt, all the blessings of his favour and friendship, in this world and in the next; but, in particular, engaging that the high-priesthood, the office of a typical mediator and peace-maker, should be continued in his family by "an everlasting, or perpetual covenant."—Phinehas was the eldest son of Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron; but there was no express law limiting the high-priesthood to the eldest son; he might die before his father; his children might die, or be incapacitated: so that there was no certainty of his and of their succession till this promise was made.—The high-priesthood continued in the family of Phinehas till about the days of Eli, who was descended from Ithamar; and it is not known on what account that branch was substituted. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 2:30—35, 36. 1 Kings 2:26, 27.*) It soon, however, returned into that of Phinehas, in which it is probably supposed to have continued till the time of Herod the great, if not till that dispensation came to an end.

V. 14, 15. The names and rank of these offenders are thus declared, in order to illustrate the heretical impartiality of Phinehas.—Zur is numbered among the kings of Midian, who were slain by Israel. (31:8.)

V. 17, 18. Balaam's counsel seems to have been first given to Balak, king of Moab; yet probably the Midianitish women, especially of the higher ranks, as Cosbi was, were the principal tempters; and the nation of Midian seems, more generally and heartily, to have come into the execrable measure than that of Moab: they were therefore first selected to be made examples of, for a warning to the Moabites, who were spared at this time. (*Notes, 31. Deut. 23:3—5. 2 Sam. 8:2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5. The friendship of the wicked is more dangerous than their enmity: for none can prevail against the servants of God, except by tempting them to sin; no enchantment can injure them, except the fascination of worldly interests and pleasures; nor would the enemy of souls be so much gratified by casting them into a fiery furnace, as by alluring them to criminal indulgences. When once the fence of the divine command is broken, the progress from one kind and degree of sin to another is almost unavoidable; and when the barrier of female modesty is removed, the transition to the most impudent licentiousness is frequently very sudden; nor are any persons more pestilential to the human species, than beautiful abandoned women. Numbers in every age are brought to an ignominious execution, and immensely greater multitudes are hurried to the grave by dreadful diseases, in consequence of listening to their allurements: in short, "their feet lead down to death, and their steps take hold of hell." Yet mul-

CHAPTER XXVI.

The people are numbered by divine command: the number of each tribe, and the sum total, 1-51. The law for the division of the promised land, 52-53. The Levites are numbered, 57-62. None left of those before numbered, but Caleb and Joshua, 63-65.

AND it came to pass ^aafter the plague, that the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saying,

^bTake the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go war in Israel.

^cAnd Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

^dTake the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as the LORD ^ecommanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.

^fReuben, the eldest son of Israel: the children of Reuben; Hanoch, of whom cometh the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the family of the Palluites:

^gOf Heson, the family of the Hesonites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites.

^hThese are the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were ⁱforty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

^jAnd the sons of Pallu; Eliab.

^kAnd the sons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This is that Dathan and Abiram which were ^lfamous in the congregation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against the LORD:

^mAnd the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign.

ⁿNotwithstanding, the children of Korah died not.

^oThe sons of Simeon, after their families: of Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of Jachin, the family of the Jachinites:

^pOf Zerah, the family of the Zarahites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.

^qThese are the families of the Simeonites, twenty and two thousand and two hundred.

^rGen. 1:2,3. ^sSe on 1:2,3. ^tEx. 30:12. 38:25,26. ^uc 63. 22:1. 31:12. 33:49. 35:1. ^vDeut. 4:49-49. 34:1,6,8. ^wd 11. ^x1 Chr. 21:1. ^yEx. 28:32. 49:2,3. ^z1 Chr. 5:1. ^{aa}Gen. 46:9. ^{ab}1 Chr. 6:14. ^{ac}1 Chr. 5:3. ^{ad}Decreased 370. 1:21. 2:11. ^{ae}16. ^{af}2 Ps. 105:17. ^{ag}1 Chr. 11:3. ^{ah}1 Cor. 10:6. ^{ai}2 Pet. 2:6. ^{aj}Jude 7. ^{ak}Ex. 6:24. ^{al}1 Chr. 6:22-28. ^{am}Ps. 42. ^{an}44. 45: &c. ^{ao}titles. ^{ap}1 Gen. 46:10. ^{aq}Ex. 6:15. ^{ar}Jemuel. ^{as}1 Chr. 4:21. ^{at}Jurib. ^{au}Gen. 45:10. ^{av}Zohar. ^{aw}Decreased 37,100. ^{ax}1:22,23. ^{ay}2:12,13. ^{az}p Gen. 46:15. ^{ba}Ziphion, Haggai, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arod, Areli. ^{bb}decreased

titudes, increasing multitudes, through the fatal path, regardless of the law of God, in defiance of his vengeance, and in neglect of the dictates of common sense, universal observation, and their own painful experience of the fatal effects! (*P. O. Prov.* 2:10-22. *Note*, 5:14. *P. O.* 1-14.) But let him who would have health, credit, and comfort in this world, or escape the wrath to come, "flee youthful lusts," and shun such fascinating tempers, as he would persons infected with a baleful pestilence.—In collective bodies there is generally a diversity of characters: we should not therefore indiscriminately condemn all for the crimes of some, which perhaps the others detest and lament; and our gracious Lord always distinguishes between the penitent and the obstinate transgressor.

V. 6-18. The more highly advanced in rank or authority offenders are, the deeper aggravation attends their crimes, and the more extensive is the influence of their pernicious example; it is therefore of vast importance, that judgment should be administered without respect of persons. Yet there have always been those, who would attempt to elude, out-brave, or bribe human justice. When this is the case, zeal for the honour of God, and the welfare of society, should excite all invested with authority, to disregard every personal consideration, in stepping forward, and bringing an overgrown offender to condign punishment. And they who, by any warrantable means, boldly attempt to check the progress of daring wickedness shall be honoured and recompensed by God, though they be censured and hated by men for so doing. None will be more surely and severely punished than they, who, after Satan's example, as his agents, and with his subtlety, tempt others to wickedness.—The Lord will chastise his offending people; but their tempters he will utterly destroy; and how dreadful the change to those, who sink together from the indulgence of sinful pleasure into the

¹⁵ ¶ The children of Gad, after their families of Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; o Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites.

¹⁶ Of Ozni, the family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites:

¹⁷ Of Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites.

¹⁸ These are the families of the children of Gad, according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

¹⁹ ¶ The sons of Judah were Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

²⁰ And the sons of Judah, after their families, were: of Shelah the family of the Shelanites; of Pharez, the family of the Pharezites; of Zerah, the family of the Zarahites.

²¹ And the sons of Pharez were: of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

²² These are the families of Judah, according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.

²³ ¶ Of the sons of Issachar, after their families: of Tola, the family of the Tolaites: of Pua, the family of the Punites:

²⁴ Of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.

²⁵ These are the families of Issachar, according to those that were numbered of them, threescore and four thousand and three hundred.

²⁶ ¶ Of the sons of Zebulun, after their families: of Sered, the family of the Sardites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites: of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.

²⁷ These are the families of the Zebulunites, according to those that were numbered of them, threescore thousand and five hundred.

²⁸ ¶ The sons of Joseph, after their families, were Manasseh and Ephraim.

²⁹ Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead; of Gilead come the family of the Gileadites.

³⁰ These are the sons of Gilead: of Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites:

³¹ And of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites:

^{ed} 5:10. 1:24, 25. 2:14, 15. ^r Gen. 38:1-10. 46:12. ¹ Chr. 2:3. ^s Gen. 38:5. 11, 14, 26. ^t 1 Chr. 4:21. ^u Gen. 38:27-29. 46:12. Ruth 4:18-22. ^v 1 Chr. 2:3, &c. ^w Neh. 11:4, 6. ^x Gen. 38:23. ^y Pharez. ^z u Gen. 38:30. 46:12. ^{aa} Zarah. ^{ab} 1 Chr. 2:4. ^{ac} Neh. 11:24. ^{ad} x Increased 1900. ^{ae} 1:26, 27. 2:3, 4. ^{af} y Gen. 46:15. ^{ag} Tola. ^{ah} Phunah. ^{ai} Job. ^{aj} x Increased 9900. ^{ak} 1:28, 29. 2:5, 6. ^{al} y Gen. 46:14. ^{am} x Increased 3100. ^{an} 1:30, 31. 2:7, 8. ^{ao} c Gen. 41:51, 52. 46:20. 48:5, 13-20. ^{ap} d 32, 39, 40. ^{aq} 36:1. ^{ar} Pent. 3:15. ^{as} Josh. 17:1. ^{at} Judg. 5:14. ^{au} 1 Chr. 7:14-19. ^{av} * Called Abieser. ^{aw} Josh. 17:2. ^{ax} Judg. 6:11, 24, 34. ^{ay} 8:2.

torments of hell-fire!—How infatuated are men, who wantonly provoke the vengeance of that God who can so easily destroy them!—But let us not close our reflections without looking to Jesus, who, in zeal for the Lord of hosts, and love to his people, made an atonement, not with the blood of others, but with his own blood, that we might not be consumed; and who is in consequence established in an everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, a High Priest upon the royal throne of universal and everlasting dominion.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, 1:2).—The plague, above recorded, had swept away the last of that devoted generation, which provoked the Lord to "swear in his wrath that they should not enter" Canaan: and he commanded that the people should again be numbered, (this being the third time,) both to illustrate his faithfulness to his promises, and to prepare for the division of the promised land. Not only the tribes, but the families of Israel are here registered; that is, the names of those sons, or grandsons, of the patriarchs, who were the progenitors of the grand subdivisions in the several tribes.

V. 10. *Together with Korah.*] This verse seems to determine, that Korah was swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram. (*Note*, 16:28-34.)

V. 11. The sons of Korah, not consenting to their father's crime, or speedily repenting, were preserved when he was cut off, and afterwards became eminent in the service of the sanctuary. (*Marg. Ref.* k.)

V. 14. The immense decrease of this tribe renders it probable, that, influenced by the example of Zimri, the Simeonites had been peculiarly criminal in the late wickedness; and that multitudes of them had died by the plague. (*Marg.*)

32 And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and of Hephher, the family of the Hephherites.

33 And Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

34 These are the families of Manasseh, and those that were numbered of them, fifty and two thousand and seven hundred.

35 These are the sons of Ephraim, after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalites: of Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

36 And these are the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.

37 These are the families of the sons of Ephraim, according to those that were numbered of them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These are the sons of Joseph after their families.

38 ¶ The sons of Benjamin, after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites.

39 Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

40 And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the family of the Ardites: and of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

41 These are the sons of Benjamin, after their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and six hundred.

42 ¶ These are the sons of Dan, after their families: of Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These are the families of Dan, after their families.

43 All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, were three-score and four thousand and four hundred.

44 ¶ Of the children of Asher, after their families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.

45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.

46 And the name of the daughter of Asher was Sarah.

47 These are the families of the sons of Asher, according to those that were numbered of them, who were fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

48 ¶ Of the sons of Naphtali, after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:

49 Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.

50 These are the families of Naphtali, according to their families: and they that were numbered of them were forty and five thousand and four hundred.

51 These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.

52 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 53 Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance, according to the number of names.

54 To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given, according to those that were numbered of him.

55 Notwithstanding, the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit.

56 According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few.

57 ¶ And these are they that were numbered of the Levites, after their families: of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites: of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites.

58 These are the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begat Amram.

59 And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram, Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister.

60 And unto Aaron was born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

61 And Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the Lord.

62 And those that were numbered of them, were twenty and three thousand, all males from a month old and upward: for they were not numbered among the children of Israel, because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.

63 These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho.

64 But among these, there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.

65 For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

e 27:1. 35:10-12. f Increased 20,500. 1:34,35. 2:20,21. g 1 Chr. 7:20,21. Bered, Tuhath, Eladath, Tuhath. h Decreased 8000. 1:32,33. 2:18,19. i 1 Chr. 7:6-12. k 1 Chr. 8:21. Ahazrah. 1 Gen. 46:21. Zili, Mupim and Hupim. m 1 Chr. 8:3. Adinar. n Increased 10,200. 1:36,37. 2:22,23. o Gen. 46:23. Hushim. p Increased 1700. 1:38,29. 2:25,26. q Gen. 46:17. Jimnah, Jehuah. Jewi. 1 Chr. 7:80. Innah. Ievah. Jehuai. r Gen. 46:17. Sarah. s Increased 11,900. 1:40,41. 2:27,28. t Gen. 46:24. u 1 Chr. 7:13. Shalum. x Decreased 9000. 1:42,43. 2:29,30. y Sum total decreased 1820. 1:46. 2:32. Job 12:20-23.

V. 51. The increase or decrease of each tribe, and of the whole multitude, having been noticed in the margin, further annotation is rendered needless.

V. 53-56. The division of Canaan was to be made according to the register now formed; and the quantity of land was to be proportioned to the numbers of each tribe: but the situation was to be determined by lot, both to the tribes and to individuals. Thus the decreasing of any tribe in the wilderness, proved the decrease of their future political importance and affluence, in all succeeding ages. (Notes, Josh. 14:3-5. 18:19.)

V. 57-61. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 6:14-20. Lev. 10:1,2.

V. 62-65. As the Levites were not numbered from twenty years of age, they were not here included.—Upon exact inquiry, it was found that not one man remained of those, concerning whom the Lord had "sworn in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." Thus his word was magnified, and an intimation was given that a speedy entrance into Canaan might be expected. We may entertain a pleasing hope, that the temporal punishment was sanctified to multitudes, to bring them to repentance before they died;

z Josh. 11:23. 14:1. Ps. 105:44. a 33:54. b Heb. multiply his inheritance. c Heb. diminish his inheritance. d 56. 33:54. 34:13. Josh. 14:2. 17:14. 18:6. 10:11. 19:1. 10:17. 24:32,40. Prov. 16:33. 18:18. Acts 1:26. e Gen. 46:11. Ex. 6:16-19. 1 Chr. 6:1. k. d. See Gen 34. e Ex. 2:12. 6:30. f 9:2. g 3:4. Lev. 10:1,2. 1 Chr. 24:1,2. h Increased 1000. 3:39. 4:47,48. i See on 1:49. k 18:20-24. 35:2-8. Deut. 10:9. 14:27-29. 18:1,2. Josh. 13:14,33. 14:3. l See on 3. m 1:2. Deut. 2:14,15. n 14:28,29. Deut. 32:49,50. Ps. 90:3-7. 1 Cor. 10:16. 5:6. Heb. 8:17,18. Jude 5. o See on 14:39.

and so became the means of their eternal salvation, as a blessed effect of the respite granted them. Of all this multitude there was not one man aged sixty, except Moses, Caleb, Joshua, and some of the Levites.—It is not expressly said whether the women were, or were not, involved in the sentence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Death is continually making awful havoc of the human species, and causing surprising revolutions in families and nations; yet all is appointed in perfect wisdom, justice, and truth. This should excite us to meditate upon the odious nature and destructive tendency of sin, the deserving cause of all these devastations; and to take occasion to renew repentance, to seek forgiveness, to value the salvation of Christ; to remember how frail we are, to prepare for the approaching summons, and to fill up our remaining days in "serving our generation according to the will of God." Then death will be disarmed of his sting, become our friend, and convey us to heaven, when our appointed period on earth is finished.—But unrepented sin arms death with unutterable horrors: and lasting infamy perhaps in this world, and everlasting shame, contempt, and misery in another, will be the

CHAPTER XXVII.

The daughters of Zelophehad ask for their father's inheritance, 1-5. The law of inheritance, 6-11. Moses is warned of his approaching death; and, in answer to his prayer, Joshua is appointed to succeed him, 12-25.

THEN came the daughters of ^aZelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these *are* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, and Hogiah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.

2 And ^bthey stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

3 Our father ^cdied in the wilderness, and he was not ^din the company of them that gathered themselves together against the Lord in the company of Korah; but ^edied in his own sin, and had no sons.

4 Why ^fshould the name of our father be ^gdone away from among his family, because he hath no son? ^hGive unto us *therefore* a possession among the brethren of our father.

5 And ⁱMoses brought their cause before the Lord.

6 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: ^jthou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren: and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.

8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.

9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.

^a24:33, 36-42. Josh. 17:3-6. 1 Chr. 7:15. ^b15:33, 34. Ex. 18:13, 14, 19-26. Deut. 17:8-10. 1 Chr. 2:61, 63. d 16:1-3, 19, 32-33, 49. 28:9, 10. e Ez. 18:4. Num. 21:21, 24, 25. 1 Chr. 10:13 Prov. 13:9. ^f Heb. *diminished*. g Josh. 17:4. h Ez. 18:15-19, 25-27. Lev. 24:10, 13. Prov. 8:5, 6. 136:32. i Ez. 63:5. Jer. 42:11. Jer. 42:8. h Ez. 18:2, 19. Ruth 4:3-6. Jer. 32:8. 135:29. 1 Sam. 30:21. m 20:47-48. Deut. 3:27. 32:49. 34:1-4. n 31:2. See on Gen. 25:8, 17. o 20:24-28. 33:8. Deut. 16:6. 32:50. p 20:8-13. Deut. 1:37. 32:51, 52. Ps. 102:32, 33. q 20:11, 13, 21. Ex. 17:7. r 16:22. Heb. 12:9. s Deut. 31:14. 1 Sam. 12:13. 1 Kings 5:5. Jer. 23:4, 5. Ez. 34:11-16, 23. 37:24. Matt. 9:38. John 10:11.

doom of those who are "driven away in their wickedness," however famous and renowned they were among their ill-judging fellow-sinners. While the Lord punishes the iniquity of the fathers upon their unbelieving posterity, he preserves those, who do not imitate their parents in sin, from sharing their punishment; and the infamy of the father only makes the piety and usefulness of the son more noticed. (*Notes, Ez. 18:2-20*.) The word of God will be surely performed; and the eye of the Lord can discern, and his arm can reach, every sinner in the midst of surrounding multitudes: yet respites give space and opportunity for repentance. The promises likewise are irrevocable, and they who follow the Lord fully, shall certainly at length have the comfort of it. In all our different situations in life, let us submit to the sovereignty of the Lord, admire his equity and wisdom, and be thankful for his goodness; and desire above all things an inheritance in the heavenly Canaan.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1-4. In the orders for the division of the land just given, no provision had been made for females in case of the failure of male issue. (26:52-56.) The five daughters of Zelophehad, therefore, considered themselves as left destitute, having neither father nor brother, and being themselves entirely overlooked: and they agreed to refer the case to Moses and the rulers, whether it were not equitable that they should inherit their father's portion, especially as he had not incurred a forfeiture, any more than the other Israelites, who were all involved in one common sentence. There was therefore no sufficient reason, that his memory should be disgraced, as if his line were extinct, when he had left so many children. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5-11. As no law had been given concerning females inheriting in defect of male issue, Moses consulted the Lord about it: and he not only allowed the justice of the claim made by the daughters of Zelophehad, but also gave "a statute of judgment," by which the magistrates might determine such cases, both in the division of Canaan, and in after ages.—It is generally supposed, that brothers and relations in the line of the father are exclusively meant; as one great object was to preserve the genealogies distinct.

V. 12-14. Either this order was repeated, or the performance of it was postponed till some time after, as a variety of events took place in the interval. (*Notes, 20:10-13, 22-28. Deut. 32:45-52.*)

V. 15-17. We find from another place, that Moses, on this occasion, earnestly requested to enter Canaan; but this prayer was not granted. (*Note, Deut. 3:23-28.*) His chief

10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren.

11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his ^kkinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel ^la statute of judgment; as the Lord commanded Moses.

12 ^mAnd the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this ⁿmount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

13 And when thou hast seen it, ^othou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, ^pas Aaron thy brother was gathered.

14 For ^qye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of ^rMeribah in Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin.

15 And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying,

16 Let the Lord, ^sthe God of the spirits of all flesh, ^tset a man over the congregation,

17 Which may ^ugo out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not ^vas sheep which have no shepherd.

18 And the Lord said unto Moses, ^wTake thee Joshua the son of Nun, ^xa man in whom is the Spirit, and ^ylay thine hand upon him;

19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: and ^zgive him a charge in their sight.

20 And thou shalt ^{aa}put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel ^{ab}may be obedient.

21 And ^{ac}he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, and thou shalt ask ^{ad}counsel for him, after the judgment

Acts 20:23. 1 Pet. 5:9-4. t Deut. 31:2. 1 Sam. 8:20. 18:13. 2 Sam. 5:2. 1 Kings 3:7. 2 Chr. 1:10. John 10:34. u 1 Kings 22:17. 2 Chr. 18:16. Ez. 34:16. Zech. 10:2. 13:7. Matt. 9:36. 10:6. 15:24. Mark 6:34. x See on 11:28. 13:8, 15. Ez. 17:3. Deut. 3:28. 31:7, 23. 34:9. y 11:17. Gen. 41:38. Judg. 3:10. 11:29. 18:9. 16:13, 14, 18. John 3:34. Acts 6:3. 1 Cor. 12:4-11. z 23. Deut. 34:9. Acts 6:6. 8:15-19. 13:3. 19:6. 1 Tim. 4:14. 5:22. Heb. 6:2. a Deut. 31:7. Luke 9:1-5. 10:2-11. Acts 20:23-31. Col. 4:17. 1 Tim. 5:21. 6:13-17. 2 Tim. 4:1-6. b 11. 17:29. 1 Sam. 10:6, 9. 2 Kings 2:9, 10, 15. 1 Chr. 29:23, 25. c Josh. 1:16-18. d Josh. 9:14. Judg. 1:1. 20:18, 23, 26-28. 1 Sam. 23:9. 28:6. 30:7.

concern however was about the congregation, that they might not be left without a magistrate to rule and judge them, or a commander to lead them against their enemies, lest they should be "as sheep without a shepherd." (*Marg. Ref. t u. Note, Matt. 9:36-38.*) And, as the Lord "knew what was in man" (*John 2:25*) he alone could appoint them such an able, faithful, and affectionate ruler. (*Note, 16:22*)

V. 18. Joshua had long attended on Moses; and, being endowed with the Spirit of wisdom and courage, was eminent for faith and piety: but he had not hitherto been publicly recognised as his successor. (*Notes, 11:16. Ez. 17:8-13, 24:12-14. 32:17.*) At this time, however, he was solemnly set apart for that important and arduous station, by imposition of Moses's hands; a ceremony frequently mentioned in Scripture, in designating men to a peculiar office, or giving authority to perform it. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is very remarkable, that Moses never intimated a desire that one of his sons should succeed him, as Eleazar had succeeded Aaron; nor do we find that they had this expectation: on the contrary, they seem to have acquiesced in the Lord's determination, and without envy or murmuring, to have obeyed and honoured Joshua. (*Note, 1 Chr. 23:14.*)

V. 19. *Give him a charge.* That is, "Seriously instruct him in the important duties of his place, warn him to be upon his guard against its temptations, and, in the most earnest manner, charge it upon his conscience to be diligent and faithful in it." Such should *episcopal charges* be! (*Marg. Ref.*)—This was done before the high-priest and all the congregation.

V. 20. Joshua was admitted to a present share in the authority, that the people might be accustomed to obey and honour him. (*Note, Josh. 1:16-18.*)—Moses lived, and was very busily employed, some time after this warning; and Joshua would be very useful to him, in easing him of the burden of the civil government, whilst he gave himself wholly to attend on the interests of religion.

V. 21. Moses asked counsel of the Lord himself immediately; but all the future rulers of Israel were directed to consult the Lord by the high-priest. (*Note, Ez. 28:30.*) No doubt Joshua obeyed this direction, though it is not particularly recorded. One instance, however, in which he was negligent, is mentioned as an exception to his general conduct. (*Note, Josh. 9:14, 15.*)—As none of the subsequent rulers of Israel descended from Moses, they had the less temptation unduly to magnify him; and their testimony concerning him becomes, on that account, the more unexceptionable.

of ^{Urim} before the LORD: ^{at his word shall ye go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.}

22 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation.

23 And he laid his hands upon him, and ^{gave him a charge; as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.}

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Lamb for the daily burnt offering, and those of the sabbath, 1-10: those of the new moons, 11-15: Oases of the Passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, 16-43: and those for the feast of Pentecost, 44-31.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and ^{my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.}

3 And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD: ^{two lambs of the first year without spot, 1 day by day, for a continual burnt-offering.}

4 The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer ^{at even.}

5 And ^{a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil.}

6 It is ^{a continual burnt-offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.}

7 And the drink-offering thereof ^{shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the}

holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink-offering.

8 And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat-offering of the morning, and as the drink-offering thereof, thou shalt offer ^{it a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.}

9 And on the ^{sabbath-day}, two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and the drink-offering thereof.

10 This is the burnt-offering of every sabbath, beside ^{the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.}

11 And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD: ^{two young bullocks and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot.}

12 And ^{three tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering mingled with oil, for one ram;}

13 And a several tenth-deal of flour, mingled with oil for a meat-offering, unto one lamb; ^{for a burnt-offering of a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.}

14 And their drink-offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth part of an hin unto a lamb: this is the burnt-offering of every month, throughout the months of the year.

15 And ^{one kid of the goats for a sin-offering unto the LORD shall be offered, besides the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.}

e. Ex. 29:30. Lev. 8:8. Deut. 33:8. 1 Sam. 2:6. Eze. 4:6. Neh. 7:65. f. See on 17. 1 Sam. 22:10-15. g. See on 19. Deut. 3:28. 31:7, 8. a. Lev. 3:11. 21:6, 8. Mal. 1:7, 12. b. 15:3, 7, 24. Ex. 29:13. Lev. 1:9, 13, 17. 2 Cor. 2:15. Eze. 5:2. Phil. 4:18. c. Heb. savour of my rest. Gen. 8:21. Ex. 16:19. 30:41. marg. c. 9:2, 3, 7, 13. Ex. 23:15. P. 8:13. d. Ex. 29:38, 39. Lev. 6:9. Ex. 46:13-15. John 1:29. 13: Ex. 19:20. Rev. 13:8. f. Heb. in a day. Dan. 9:13. 11:32. 12:11. e. 1 Kings 15:29, 35. Ezra 9:5, 6. Ps. 141:2. Dan. 9:21. f. Heb. between the two evenings. 9:3. Ex. 12:6. marg. f. 15:4, 5. Ex. 29:38-42. Lev. 2:1. g. Ex. 29:42. Lev. 6:

9. 2 Chr. 24. 31:3. Ezra 3:4. Ps. 50:9. Ex. 46:14. Am. 5:25. h. Ex. 24:18. 29:38-42. 31:18. i. 14:31. See on 15:7, 10. Ex. 29:40. 30:9. Lev. 22:13. 1a. 57:6. Joel 1:9, 13. 2:14. Phil. 2:17. Gr. k. Ex. 20:8-11. Ps. 1:21-4. 1a. 58:13. Ex. 20:12. Rev. 1:10. 1 Ex. 46:4, 5. m. 23. 29:6, 11, 16, 19, 22, 23, 31, 34, 38, 39. n. 10:13. 1 Sam. 20:5. 2 Kings 4:23. 1 Chr. 23:31. 2 Chr. 2:4. Ezra 3:5. Neh. 10:30. Ps. 40:5-8. 51:3. Is. 1:13. 14. 66:23. Ex. 46:17, 18. 46:16. Hos. 2:11. Amos 8:5. Gal. 4:10. Col. 2:6, 16. o. 19. Heb. 10:10-14. p. 15:4-12. 29:10. Ex. 46:5-7. q. See on 2. r. 22. 15:24. Lev. 4:23. 16:15. Rom. 8:3. 2 Cor. 5:21. s. See on 3, 10.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The assured faith that the word of the Lord would be performed in due season, and the desire of an interest in the promised inheritance, which these young women manifested; together with the modest, open manner in which they preferred their petition, are well worthy of imitation. The readiness also of Moses to attend to their application, and to seek counsel from the Lord about it, should be copied by magistrates, ministers, and all intrusted with authority.—The earnestness likewise with which Moses, under the divine rebuke and on the verge of death, pleaded for the congregation; his anxiety for their welfare after his decease; and his disinterestedness, with the peaceful submission of his sons to the undistinguished lot of ordinary Levites, are excellent models for our spirit and conduct.—Even when we do not by impenitent wickedness exclude ourselves from the inheritance of heaven: all our sufferings in this world, and our final dissolution, must be considered as the effect of our sins. (3)—The word of God is the only standard of faith and practice; yet sobriety and impartiality are requisite, to enable us to apply general rules to particular circumstances: but when difficulties, relative to practice, are fairly proposed and solidly resolved, they become adjudged cases, extensively and durably useful. Jesus alone ever liveth to rule and protect his church; and all others have their subordinate and temporary services, which having finished, they must be “gathered to their fathers:” and though their dismissal may be with a rebuke for some miscarriages, the prospect of heaven, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, will induce a peaceful and submissive acquiescence. Progressive sanctification always evidences itself by a proportionate regard to the interests of true religion, which will be enhanced by the evident approach of death; and the more any one hath experienced the burden of important stations, the more sensible will he be, that none but the Lord can furnish a man for such services, or support him in them. We should therefore with all earnestness apply to him who hath the fulness of the Spirit, to set suitable persons over his congregations: even such men, as by their example and instructions, and by the proper exercise of authority, may be before the people and take care of them, that they be not “as sheep which have no shepherd.” But no one can be fully qualified for any service in the church, who is destitute of the grace of the Holy Spirit, however learned, eloquent, ingenious, or sagacious he may otherwise be. (18)—They who are appointed to public stations, as magistrates or ministers, should be solemnly charged to attend to their duties; and the people should honour and obey them, and pray for them: and, thus supported, they need not fear the most difficult services; for the grace of the Lord shall be sufficient for them.—In Joshua's succession we are

likewise reminded, “that the law was given by Moses,” which by reason of our transgression could not bring any of us to heaven: “but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,” to accomplish the salvation of every believer. (*Note, John 1:17.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. The ceremonial worship had been greatly interrupted, during the continuance of the Israelites in the wilderness: and as a new generation had arisen, who were children or minors when the law was given; and as they were about to enter on the wars of Canaan, and to take possession of the promised land; it was proper to remind them not to neglect the ordinances of God, either in the hurry and peril of the one, or in the satisfactions of the other. Some things circumstantially new are contained in these chapters, intermingled with the repetition of former appointments; and they are regularly arranged, as they respected daily, weekly, monthly, and annual institutions. *My bread.* (2) *Marg. Ref. a. Note, Lev. 3:11.*

V. 3-8. The daily sacrifices no doubt were constantly offered in the wilderness in the same manner as they were ordained or offered at mount Sinai: but it was proper here again to renew the appointment of them, with that of the other sacrifices, which might have been in part intermitted. (*Note, Ex. 28:38-41.*) The wine to be poured on the sacrifice must be the best of the kind; and wine is still the memorial of the blood of Christ, shed for the ransom of many for the remission of sins.—*In the holy place.* (7) At the altar, in the inner court of the tabernacle.

V. 9, 10. This was a new injunction, apply significant of the extraordinary devotions which should distinguish the sabbath. Probably, two lambs were on that day offered in the morning, and two in the evening.

V. 11-15. (*Marg. Ref. n.*) The Lord having “appointed the moon for certain seasons,” required his worshippers to observe the new moons, by offering several burnt-offerings, with the accustomed meal-offerings, and drink-offerings, and a sin-offering, in addition to the daily sacrifice. Thus they were taught to acknowledge the living and true God, at a season when idolaters in general were worshipping the moon itself, or some other abominable idol; (*Notes, Deut. 4:19. Job 31:24-28. Ps. 104:19. 148:3.*) and to renew their dedication of themselves to his service, at the beginning of each month. St. Paul mentions the new moons among those institutions, that were a shadow of which Christ was the substance; yet nothing typical appears in them, except the numerous sacrifices then offered. (*Note, Col. 2:16, 17.*)

V. 16-25. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 12: Lev. 23:4-8.*)—The several offerings for the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, had not before been appointed; among which the “goat for sin-offering to make an atonement for you,”

16 ¶ And on the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.

17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein.

19 But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire, for a burnt-offering unto the LORD: two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: they shall be unto you without blemish.

20 And their meat-offering shall be of flour mingled with oil: three tenth-deals shall he offer for a bullock, and two tenth-deals for a ram;

21 A several tenth-deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

22 And one goat for a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you.

23 Ye shall offer these, beside the burnt-offering in the morning, which is for a continual burnt-offering.

24 After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.

25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

26 ¶ Also in the day of the first-fruits, when ye bring a new meat-offering unto the LORD, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

27 But ye shall offer the burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD: two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year;

28 And their meat-offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto one bullock, two tenth-deals unto one ram.

29 A several tenth-deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs;

30 And one kid of the goats, to make an atonement for you.

31 Ye shall offer them beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, (they shall be unto you without blemish,) and their drink-offerings.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The sacrifices to be offered at the feast of trumpets, 1-6: on the day of atonement, 7-11: at the feast of tabernacles, 12-40.

AND in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation;

9:3-5. Ex. 12:2-11, 49. Lev. 23:5-8. Deut. 16:1-8. Ex. 45:21-24. Matt. 26:17. Luke 22:7, 8. Acts 12:34. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. u Ex. 12:15-17, 13:6. Lev. 23:6. e Ex. 12:16. Lev. 23:7, 8. y Ex. 45:21-25. z 29:8. Lev. 23:20. Deut. 16:1. 1 Pet. 1:19. a See on 15. b See on 3:10. c Ex. 12:16, 13:6. Lev. 23:8. d 18:26. 29:12, 23. Lev. 23:8, 21, 25, 35, 36. e Ex. 23:16, 34:22. Lev. 23:10, 15. f 18:26. 19:9-11. Acts 2:1, &c. 1 Cor. 15:20. Jam. 1:18. (11, 19. Lev. 23:18, 19. g 15:22. 15:24. 2 Cor. 5:21. Gal. 3:13. 1 Pet. 2:24. 3:18. h Mal. 1:13, 14. i Lev. 23:24, 25. Rom. 3:6. Neh. 7:73. b 10:1-10. 1 Chr. 15:28. Ps. 81:3, 89:15. 15:27, 13. Zech. 9:14. Mark 16:15, 16. Rom. 10:14-18, 15:16-19. e 8:36.

should not be overlooked. (22, 30, 29:5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38.) The daily burnt-offering must not be omitted, though so many other sacrifices were required. (24, 31.)

V. 26-31. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 23:14-18. Lev. 23:15-21.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are again reminded of the perpetual efficacy of the one sacrifice of Christ, and of our continual need of it: and also of the constancy with which the Christian should wait upon God in his ordinances, both as means of deriving grace from the fullness of Christ, and of rendering to the Lord the glory due unto him, as our Creator, our providential Benefactor, and the God of our salvation. These subjects indeed are not new to us, yet they may stir up our minds by a salutary repetition.—No hurrying employments, or perilous situations, or prosperous circumstances, should induce slackness in religious exercises; nay, they should excite greater diligence in seeking help from the Lord, or in giving thanks to him. And when young persons are about to settle in life, and remove to habitations of their own, it is peculiarly the duty of ministers, parents, and pious friends, to admonish them from the first to establish the worship of God in their families; which will prevent much subsequent trouble, and bring a blessing on them, and on all that they uprightly engage in. Every day should at least begin and end with prayer and praise: sabbaths call for a double measure of personal and family religion; and seasons of peculiar humiliation for sin, of seeking any special

ye shall do no servile work. it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you.

2 And ye shall offer a burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD: one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish:

3 And their meat-offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals for a bullock, and two tenth-deals for a ram,

4 And one tenth-deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

5 And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you:

6 Beside the burnt-offering of the month, and his meat-offering, and the daily burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, according unto their manner, for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.

7 ¶ And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein.

8 But ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD for a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish:

9 And their meat-offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals to a bullock, and two tenth-deals to one ram,

10 A several tenth-deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

11 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering, beside the sin-offering of atonement, and the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering of it, and their drink-offerings.

12 ¶ And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days.

13 And ye shall offer a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish:

14 And their meat-offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth-deals to each ram of the two rams,

15 And a several tenth-deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs;

16 And one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

28:19, 27. Heb. 10:10-14. d See on 28:15, 22, 30. e See on 28:11-15. f See on 28:3-8. Ex. 29:38-42. Lev. 6:9. g 18:21, 9:14, 15:24. h Lev. 16:28-31, 23:27. i Lev. 16:39. Ezra 9:21. Ps. 35:13, 126:5, 6. Is. 22:12, 33:2-5. Zech. 7:3, 12:10. Matt. 5:4. Luke 13:3, 5. cts 27:9. Rom. 6:6. 1 Cor. 9:27. 2 Cor. 7:9-11. Jam. 4:8-10. 12:13. 28:19. k See on 15:3-12. l Lev. 16:3, 5, 9. Is. 63:10. Dan. 9:24-26. Heb. 7:27. 9:25-28. m See on 6, 28:3-8. n Ex. 23:16, 34:22. Lev. 23:34-43. Deut. 16:13, 14. Neh. 8:14, 18. Ps. 45:25. Zech. 14:16-18. John 1:14. Heb. 11:9-13. o 2, 8, 28:11, 19, 27. Ezra 3:4. Heb. 10:12-14. p See on 11.

blessing, of solemn self-examination previous to approaching the Lord's table, or of remembering signal mercies received, require time still more entirely set apart for such purposes. But we must take care that one duty does not preclude another; and that all be accompanied with the exercise of repentance, faith, and love to the Lord Jesus; and with righteousness and true holiness in our whole conduct; otherwise God will abhor our most solemn services and abundant devotions. (Note, 23:4-6.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 1-6. There were more solemnities in the seventh month than in any of the other months. It formed a kind of vacation between the harvest and the ensuing seed-time; and these solemnities during that season might intimate, that the ordinances of God are the rational refreshment from the fatigue of business; and that religion does not at all interfere with our true interest even in this world.—They had all been before appointed, but the sacrifices to be severally offered on them were at this time very particularly prescribed. (Note, Lev. 23:24, 25.)

V. 7-11. (Notes, Lev. 16: 23:26-32.) Even on the day of atonement, "the kid of the goats for" an additional "sin-offering," and the morning and evening burnt-offering, must not be omitted.

V. 12-37. (Notes, Lev. 23:34-36, 39-43.) The decrease of the number of bullocks, which were sacrificed on the several days of this feast, until on the last and great day only one was offered, is the most observable circumstance in this law.

17 And on the second day *ye shall offer* twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

18 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

19 And one kid of the goats *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering thereof, and their drink-offerings.

20 And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

21 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

22 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

23 And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

24 Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

25 And one kid of the goats *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

26 And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

27 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

28 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

29 And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

30 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

31 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the

continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

32 And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

33 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

34 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

35 On the eighth day *ye shall have* a solemn assembly, *ye shall do* no servile work therein.

36 But *ye shall offer* a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord; one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish:

37 Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

38 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

39 ¶ These things *ye shall do* unto the Lord in your set feasts, besides your vows, and your free-will-offerings, for your burnt-offerings, and for your meat-offerings, and for your drink-offerings, and for your peace-offerings.

40 And Moses told the children of Israel, according to all that the Lord commanded Moses.

CHAPTER XXX.

Vows not to be broken, 1, 2. Those of a minor daughter might be disallowed by her father, 3-5. Those of a wife by her husband, 6-8. The vows of a widow, and of a divorced woman, 9-16.

AND Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes, concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.

2 If a man *vow* unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

3 ¶ If a woman also *vow* unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth;

q 13.20, &c. Ps. 40:6, 50:8, 51:16, 17, 69:31, Is. 1:11, Jer. 7:22, 23, Hos. 6:6; Rom. 12:1, Heb. 5:13, 9:2-14, r 6, 15:4-12, 28:7, 14, a 11, 22:25, Am. 8:14, t Ps. 16:4, Joel 1:9, 13, 2:14, u See on 11, John 8:31, Acts 13:43, Rom. 2:7, Gal. 2:5, 6:9, 2 Tim. 3:13, Heb. 3:14, 10:39, 13:15, x Lev. 23:36, John 7:37-39, Rev. 7:9-17, Or, offer, y Lev. 23:2, 1 Chr. 23:31, 2 Chr. 31:8, Ezra 3:5, Neh. 10:33, Is. 1:14, z 9:21, Lev. 7:11, &c. 22:21-23, 23:38, Dent. 12:6, 1 Cor. 10:31, a Ex. 40:16, Deut. 4:5, Matt. 28:20, Acts 20:27, 1 Cor. 15:3.

And the reason of this regulation is not evident; unless it be intimated that the Mosaic institution would gradually wax old, and at length vanish away, when the promised Messiah came.

(Note, Heb. 8:7-13.)
V. 38. The sin-offering was offered along with the other sacrifices, at all these solemn feasts; 'being a shadow of the passion of Christ, for whose sake all our sacrifices are acceptable unto God the Father.' Ep. Patrick.

V. 39. The peace-offerings were always the voluntary oblations of individuals; and therefore none were required as public sacrifices of the congregation, on any of the festivals; though pious princes and others frequently brought them. (1 Kings 8:63-65, 2 Chr. 30:21-25, Ezra 3:5, 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we would well understand the Scriptures, we must bestow pains in comparing one part with another; for the Lord seems to have arranged them purposely to exercise our diligence, and to distinguish those who value the knowledge of the truth from such as do not. (Prov. 21-9.)—We are here again reminded that the trumpet of the gospel, even the glad tidings of salvation, calls us to mourn for sin, and to receive the atonement, before we can truly rejoice in the Lord; and to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth, constantly bringing our "spiritual sacrifices, which are through Christ Jesus to the praise and glory of God." The more consolation we receive, the more abundant and unwearied should we be in serving him; and a spiritual mind will be refreshed and recreated by the ordinances of God, after the fatigue of worldly care and labour, more than any carnal person can be with festivity and dissipation. The spiritually minded therefore will value leisure and opportunity of attending at the courts of God as a privilege, while the worldly seek for excuses; they will not suppose that public ordinances render secret devotion unnecessary, or that the prayers of the ministers supersede the necessity of their own; much less will they imagine that

Heb. 3:2, 5, a 1-4-16, 7:2, 34:17-28, Ex. 19:25, Dent. 1:12-17, b 21-2, Gen. 28:20-22, Lev. 27:2, &c. t Dent. 23:21, 22, Judg. 11:31, 30, 31, 35, 39, Ps. 56:12, 78:1, 119:106, Prov. 20:25, c Ex. 20:7, Lev. 5:4, Matt. 5:33, 34, 14:7, Acts 23:12, 2 Cor. 1:23, 11:9-11, d 3, 10, Matt. 23:16, 18, Gr. Acts 23:12, 14, 21, * Heb. profane, Ps. 55:20, marg. e Job 22:27, Ps. 22:25, 50:14, 66:13, 14, 116:14, 18, Ec. 5:4, 5, Nah. 1:15.

the merits of Christ, and his sacrifice for them, render their personal obedience and good works unnecessary.—Every thing reminds us of our sinfulness: our very repentance and faith in Christ, being imperfect, need forgiveness through him; and whether we mourn for sin, or rejoice in the Lord and praise him for his mercies, "the life that we live in the flesh" must be "by the faith of the Son of God," and attended with a constant reliance on his atoning sacrifice; until at the close we go to be with him, behold his glory, and extol his mercy, "who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" "to whom be honour, and glory for ever. Amen."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1. *Heads.*] Marg. Ref. a. The elders or magistrates were required to make these laws known through their respective tribes.

V. 2. (Notes, Lev. 27:1-29.) If a man *vow* to do any thing sinful in itself, he ought deeply to repent of the sin which he has committed; for no vow or oath can bind him to break the command of God. (Notes, Judg. 11:30, 31, Ec. 5:4-7, Acts 23:12-22.)—Some vows relate to the performance of what was previously our indispensable duty; and such a vow is implied in our attendance on the Lord's table. But there are things of a discretionary nature; as Jacob's vow concerning the proportion of his substance which he would set apart for religious purposes; (Note, Gen. 28:20-22.) Paul's solemn determination to take nothing of the Corinthians; the Nazarites' vow; the vows concerning undemanding sacrifices; and vows of abstinence in respect of things lawful, for a limited season. Vows in such things may on some occasions be properly made; but they are a kind of promissory oaths, and should be formed with solemnity, and religiously observed; seeing the *life* or *soul* is bound as a surety for the performance of them.

V. 3-5. An unmarried woman in her father's house was required to notify her vows to her father: and if he did not refuse his consent, she was bound by them; but if he did,

4 And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

5 But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds, wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.

6 And if she had at all an husband when she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul;

7 And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard it: then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.

8 But if her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard it; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the Lord shall forgive her.

9 ¶ But every vow of a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her.

10 And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath;

11 And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her, and disallowed her not: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.

f See on 2. g Hos. 6:6. Matt. 15:4-6. Mark 7:10-13. Eph. 6:1. * Heb. her vows were upon her. Ps. 55:12. h Gen. 3:16. i Cor. 7:4. Eph. 5:22-24. i Luke 2:37. Rom. 7:2. j 1 Cor. 11:3,9. 1 Pet. 3:1-6. k See on 29:7. Lev. 16:29. 23:27. Ezra 8:21. Ps. 35:13. Is. 58:5. i Cor. 7:5. 15,12. Lev. 5:1.

they were disannulled, and the obligation ceased. If she had vowed discreetly and properly, "she had done well that it was in her heart," and her willing mind would be accepted; if otherwise, her fault would be forgiven.—In many instances such vows might not only be disagreeable to a parent, but prejudicial to the whole family.—It is supposed by many expositors, that, by parity of reason, minor sons were under the same restriction in respect of their vows: but if they were intended also, it is extraordinary that daughters exclusively should be mentioned. The males were certainly allowed more liberty in various cases than the females: the vows of the latter might be adjudged more prejudicial to families; or the sons, being more immediately under the father's tuition, might be thought less liable to be inveigled into rash engagements of this kind.

V. 6-8. Married women were under the same law, as unmarried young women, for reasons at least equally cogent.

V. 9-16. The vows made by a widow, or a divorced woman, even if she had returned to live in her father's house, could not be disannulled by him.—The vows made by a married woman were obligatory on her when she became a widow, or was divorced, if her husband had allowed of them; but not if he had disannulled them.—The words to *afflict her soul*, (*Marg. Ref. k*), imply that such vows had often respect to seasons of fasting and abstinence.—If a husband at first seemed to allow his wife's vow, and afterwards hindered her from performing it, the guilt became his, and he might expect to be punished for the violation of his wife's vow.—With this chapter before our eyes, we may form a judgment of the impiety, injustice, and absurdity of the vows of celibacy and chastity, which children, and even wives, are encouraged to take, and required to observe, in the Romish church, *without*, and even *against*, the consent of parents and husbands!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We cannot too strictly engage ourselves to be the Lord's, and in all things to live to his glory: but we may inconsiderately vow things impracticable, inexpedient, not within our own choice, or not consistent with relative duties.—The peace, comfort, and true interest of families, and the exercise of the parental and conjugal authority, are of such consequence to communities and to religion, that the Lord will sooner disannul a solemn vow, than authorize any thing that is inconsistent with them. What regard therefore should all persons, especially those in inferior relations, pay to these important obligations! and how willing should they be to give up every personal inclination in observing them! Blind guides indeed, in all ages, have attempted "to make the commandments of God of none effect through their traditions;" and, that they might finger the *corban*, (the money given to God, and to them as his receivers,) have authorized disobedience to parents, to husbands, and to magistrates.—(*Notes, Matt. 15:3-6. Mark 7:1-12.*) But the whole Scripture teaches us, and divine grace induces every individual, from the highest motives, and with the greatest encouragements, to act properly in the several relations of life for the Lord's sake. We should then attend carefully to those

12 But if her husband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard them; then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: her husband hath made them void; and the Lord shall forgive her.

13 Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void.

14 But if her husband altogether hold his peace at her from day to day; then he establisheth all her vows, or all her bonds, which are upon her; he confirmeth them, because he held his peace at her, in the day that he heard them.

15 But if he shall any ways make them void, after that he hath heard them; then he shall bear her iniquity.

16 These *were* the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter, *being yet* in her youth in her father's house.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Israelites, by divine command, war against the Midianites, slay the men, with their kings, and balaam; and take the women and children with much spoil.—12. Moses is wrath with the officers for sparing the women; and orders them with the male children to be slain, 13-18. The warriors, captives, and spoil are purified, 19-24. The partition of the cattle and the captives, 25-47. The oblation of the officers and soldiers, 48-54.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, **A** 2 *Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites; afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.

3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying,

m 5:29,30. Lev. 48:47, 13:59. 14:54-57. 15:32,33. n 3. 25:17,18. Deut. 32:35. Judg. 16:21,28-30. Ps. 94:1-3. Is. 1:24. Nah. 1:2. Luke 21:22. Rom. 12:19. 13:4. 1 Thes. 4:6. Heb. 10:30. Rev. 6:10. 18:20. 19:2. b 23:6-14-18. Gen. 25:1-4. Ex. 2:16. c 27:13. Gen. 15:15. 25:8-17. Judg. 2:10. Acts 13:36.

duties, to which we are solemnly engaged by our very profession of Christianity: and from the performance of these vows no authority of husbands, parents, or magistrates can release any one: for "we must obey God rather than man." And in respect of the rest, we should be cautious and circumspect, and seek counsel of the Lord in prayer: "for it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay." But if we have engaged ourselves, let us never think of going back, because we have altered our mind, or become averse from the thing engaged in: for our souls are bound for the performance, and the Lord abhors our trifling in such holy and sacred concerns. (*Notes, Gen. 35:1. Ps. 56:12. 66:13,14.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXI. V. 2. Vengeance belongeth only to God, and to those whom he deputed to be his ministers of vengeance, as magistrates in ordinary cases; and they who, without commission from him, execute private revenge, or out of ambition, avarice, or resentment, wage war and desolate kingdoms, must one day answer for it.—(*Notes, Deut. 32:34,35. Rom. 12:17-21. 13:3-5.*) If, however, the Lord, instead of punishing sinners by earthquakes, pestilences, or famines, is pleased expressly to command any person or people to avenge his cause, (3) this commission justifies, nay sanctifies, war, massacre, or devastation. None can at present show such commission; but the Israelites could: for the public miracles wrought among them, and for their benefit, were as the broad seal of heaven ratifying this commission, and vindicating all which they did by virtue of it. It is therefore absurd to censure Moses, Joshua, and Israel, for the dreadful slaughter made by them. God himself passed sentence of condemnation, and employed them merely as executioners: and unless it could be proved that the criminals did not deserve their doom, or that the Lord had no right to punish his rebellious creatures, and dispose of them and their property as he pleased; such objectors only show their enmity to God, by becoming the unsolicited advocates of his enemies. The knowledge of the inexpressible evil of sin, of which men make light, but which God infinitely abhors, produces proportionable acquiescence in all the terrible judgments executed on the nations, which had filled up the measure of their iniquities.—The conduct of the leaders in these wars was regulated by the express command of God; and the executioners were more than once reproved for being too lenient, but never for being too severe: (*Notes, 14-18. 1 Sam. 15:8-19,32,33.*) and yet man's natural compassion recoils from the consideration of the slaughter which they made: as indeed the execution of justice is never intended to gratify the finer feelings of benevolence, but to excite dread and honor. Hence we may draw a very forcible argument, that the consequence of "the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," will by no means accord to those rules which men, ignorant of the evil of sin and proud of their own benevolence, have devised for him; and which they would wrest the Scriptures to countenance, though evidently contrary to the constant tenor of them. If they cannot reconcile with their own ideas of justice and goodness, the severities inflicted upon the Midianites,

Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and ¹avenge the Lord of Midian.

4 ¹Of every tribe ^aa thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.

5 So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of *every* tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of *every* tribe, them and ^bPhinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with ^cthe holy instruments, and the trumpets ^dto blow in his hand.

7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they ^eslew all the males.

8 And they slew ^fthe kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; *namely*, Evi, and Rekem, and ^gZur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: ^hBalaam also, the son of Beor, they slew with the sword.

9 And the children of Israel took ⁱall the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

10 And they ^jburnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.

11 And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, *both* of men and of beasts.

12 And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at ^kthe plains of Moab, which *are* by Jordan, near Jericho.

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¹And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, ²went forth to meet them ³without the camp.

14 And Moses was ⁴wroth with the officers of the host, *with* the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.

15 And Moses said unto them, ⁵"Have ye saved all the women alive?"

16 Behold, ⁶these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord ⁷in the matter of Peor, ⁸and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.

17 Now therefore, ⁹kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.

18 But all the women-children that have not known a man by lying with him, ¹⁰keep alive for yourselves.

19 And do ye ¹¹abide without the camp seven days: ¹²whosoever hath killed any person, and

d Ex. 17:9-13. e 25:11, 13. Ex. 17:16. Lev. 26:25. Judg. 5:2, 23. 2 Kings 9:7, 10, 30. Jer. 40:10, 50:28. ^a Heb. *a thousand of a tribe, a thousand of a tribe.* f Lev. 26:8. Judg. 7:2. 1 Sam. 14:6. g 25:7-13. h 14:44. 2 Sam. 20-22. Ex. 25:3. Josh. 6:4-6, 13-15. 1 Sam. 4:4, 5, 17, 14:18. 20:9. 2 Sam. 11:11. 10:8, 9. 2 Chr. 13:12-15. 1 Pet. 20:13, 14. Judg. 21:11. 1 Sam. 27:9. 1 Kings 11:15, 16. k 22:4. Josh. 13:21. 12:5, 15:18. n 22:10, 24:25. Josh. 13:22. Ps. 9:16. 2 Tim. 6:10. 2 Et. 2:15. Jude 11. Rev. 2:14, 19:20. n 15, 16. Deut. 20:14. 2 Chr. 28:5-8, 10. o Josh. 6:24. 1 Sam. 30:1. 1 Kings 9:16. Is.

1:7. Rev. 18:8. p Josh. 8:2. q See on 22:1. r Gen. 14:17. 1 Sam. 15:12. 30:21. s 12:22-24. 5:2. 19:11. t 12:3. Ex. 32:19, 22. Lev. 10:16. 1 Sam. 15:13, 14. 1 Kings 20:42. 2 Kings 13:19. Eph. 4:26. u Heb. *host of war.* v Deut. 2:34. 20:16-18. Josh. 6:21. 8:25. 10:40. 11:14. 1 Sam. 15:3. Ps. 137:8, 9. Jer. 48:10. Ez. 9:6. x 25:1-3. Prov. 23:27. Ec. 7:26. 9 Pet. 2:15. Rev. 2:14. y 25:18. Deut. 4:3. Josh. 22:17. z 35:9. a Judg. 21:11, 12. u Heb. *a male.* b Lev. 25:11. Deut. 20:14. 21:10-14. 2 Chr. 28:8-10. Is. 14:2. c 5:2. 19:11, &c. 1 Chr. 22:8.

ites, Canaanites, and Amalekites, by the express command of a just and good God; let them allow that they are incompetent to determine what conduct becomes the Judge of the world; and that it is more safe, wise, and humble, simply to believe his testimony, and "to flee from the wrath to come," leaving the government of the universe to him, than rashly to dispute about things which are evidently out of their province, and of which they know nothing further than the Lord is pleased to inform them. (Note, Deut. 29:29.) Death in every case is the wages of sin, and all diseases fulfil the counsels of God: why then may he not employ the sword of a warrior, as well as a fever, in depriving sinners of their forfeited life? Or why should it be unjust or cruel in Moses or Joshua to obey the command of God in this respect, and yet righteous and holy in an angel to obey a similar command; as when the angel slew 185,000 men of Sennacherib's vast army? (Note, 2 Kings 19:35.) Moses had beheld with grief and indignation the temptation, the sin, and the punishment of Israel; and in witnessing the success of this war, just before his death, he saw a specimen of the Lord's vengeance on the enemies of Israel, and of his kindness to his people.—The Midianites had been most criminal, and therefore at the present the vengeance was restricted to them.—(Note, 25:17, 18.)

V. 3. The Israelites were reminded by this language not to indulge private resentment, but to be influenced by zeal for the glory of God; and to act as his servants in inflicting punishment on his enemies. (Note, Judg. 16:28.)

V. 4-6. Twelve thousand was a small number, in proportion either to all Israel, or to the forces with which they were to encounter; for the Lord would teach them not to trust in an arm of flesh, but in his almighty power and faithful promise. As they were under the conduct of the captains of thousands, and of hundreds, they probably had no general, and therefore Joshua is not mentioned. Phinehas, the zealous avenger of the insulted honour of God, (Notes, 25:6-13.) was ordered to accompany them with "the holy instruments," by which some understand the silver trumpets; but others suppose that the second priest, the high priest's deputy and successor, consulted the Lord on such occasions with the breastplate of judgment; or that the ark was carried with them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 7. They slew all the males.] The victorious Israelites did not extirpate the nation of Midian, which subsisted and was powerful long after; but they slew all the males, without giving quarter, as far as they proceeded, which probably was as far as those tribes reached from which the tempters chiefly came.

V. 8. (Marg. Ref. k, l.)—Balaam, blinded by covetousness, and "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," perished among the enemies of Israel; which some think he forebode, when he wished "to die the death of the righteous." Thus "he went to his own place," as Judas afterwards did; and their characters have a great resemblance to each other. (Notes, 22:5. 25:1-3. Acts 1:16-18, 25.)—Whatever information Moses might receive concerning Balaam and Balak, he doubtless received it more exactly by inspiration from

God; and it was very proper that it should be thus circumstantially recorded, for the information, encouragement, and caution of God's people in all ages, concerning the secret machinations of their enemies; and for the warning of those who unite in wicked counsels against them.

V. 10. The Israelites were not allowed at present to inherit any part of that country; and therefore they in this manner disabled the Midianites from rallying their forces and renewing the war, as well as executed the vengeance of the Lord upon them.

V. 14-18. The sword of war should spare women and children, as incapable of resisting; but the sword of justice knows no distinction, except that of guilty or not guilty, and more or less guilty.—This war was the execution of a righteous sentence upon a guilty nation, in which the women were the principal criminals; and perhaps particular instructions had been given on this head: therefore Moses was angry, when he found that the women had been spared. If those concerned in the detestable project of Balaam, had been preserved as captives, they would have been a constant temptation to the people; and they could not be known from the rest except by miracle. Orders were therefore given to put all the women to death, and the male children; and only to spare the female children, who could not be supposed to have been culpable; and who, being brought up among the Israelites, would not tempt them to idolatry.—It has been groundlessly asserted that Moses authorized the Israelites to make concubines of the whole number of female children, or even promiscuously to debauch them; and a formidable objection against his writings has been grounded on this strange supposition. But the whole tenor of the law, and especially a statute hereafter to be considered, proves the contrary. (Note, Deut. 21:10-14.) They were merely permitted to possess them as female slaves; while all the laws concerning marriage and concubinage, and against fornication and whoredom, were in full force, in this as well as in other cases.—But what shall we say of the execution of all the male infants, who could not be personally guilty in this matter? The Lord commanded it, in this and many other instances: and "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Had they lived, they might have conspired to avenge the death of their parents on Israel: and the example was thus rendered more tremendous, warning parents not to imitate the guilt of the Midianites, lest they should involve their beloved offspring in destruction. (Notes, Ex. 20:5. 2 Kings 2:23, 24.) The Scripture addresses men's natural affection by promises and threatenings, in which their children also are included; and in a future state the Lord may, for what we know, turn the temporal sufferings of children into an infinite mercy to them.—It should also be remembered that children are constantly involved in the desolations occasioned by famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. (Notes, 16:27-34. Jon. 4:9-11.)

V. 19-24. The Israelites had acted by the Lord's commission; yet they had contracted pollution by touching the dead; and the spoil, having been used by idolaters, must be purified also in the prescribed manner; which would form a pattern for succeeding wars. Thus the law was reduced to

whosoever hath touched any slain, purify *both* yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.

20 And purify all *your* raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wood.

21 And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, *This* is the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses;

22 Only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead,

23 Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean; nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water.

24 And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp.

25 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

26 Take the sum of the prey that was taken, *both* of man and of beast, thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief fathers of the congregation:

27 And divide the prey into two parts, between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation;

28 And levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war which went out to battle: one soul of five hundred, *both* of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep.

29 Take it of their half, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for an heave-offering of the LORD.

30 And the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one portion of fifty, of the persons, of the beeves, of the asses, and of the flocks, of all manner of beasts, and give them unto the Levites, which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.

31 And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

32 And the booty, *being* the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep,

33 And threescore and twelve thousand beeves,

34 And threescore and one thousand asses,

35 And thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him.

36 And the half, *which* was the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred

thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep:

37 And the LORD's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.

38 And the beeves *were* thirty and six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threescore and twelve.

39 And the asses *were* thirty thousand and five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threescore and one.

40 And the persons *were* sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* thirty and two persons.

41 And Moses gave the tribute *which* was the LORD's heave-offering unto Eleazar the priest; as the LORD commanded Moses.

42 And of the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided from the men that warred,

43 (Now the half that pertained unto the congregation, was three hundred thousand and thirty thousand and seven thousand and five hundred sheep,

44 And thirty and six thousand beeves,

45 And thirty thousand asses and five hundred,

46 And sixteen thousand persons,)

47 Even of the children of Israel's half, Moses took one portion of fifty, *both* of man and of beast, and gave them unto the Levites which kept the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

48 ¶ And the officers which *were* over thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses:

49 And they said unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which *are* under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us:

50 We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

51 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, *even* all wrought jewels.

52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thousands, and of the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.

53 (For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.)

54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

d 19:14-16, 22. Gen. 35:2. Ex. 19:10. * Heb. instrument, or, vessel of skin. e See on 30:16. f 1s. 43:2. Zech. 13:9. Mal. 3:2, 3. Matt. 3:11. 1 Cor. 13:1. 1 Pet. 1:7. 4:12. Rev. 9:18. g 8:7. 19:9, 17. h Lev. 11:32. 15:17. Eph. 5:26. Tit. 3:5, 6. 1 Pet. 3:21. 119:19. Lev. 11:25. 14:9. 15:13. i Heb. of the captivity. k Josh. 22:8. 1 Sam. 30:24, 25. Ps. 68:12. 1 Gen. 14:20. Josh. 6:19. 24. 2 Sam. 8:11. 1 Chr. 18:11. 25:26, 27. Prov. 3:9, 10. Is. 18:7. 23:18. 60:9. Matt. 22:21. m 30:17. n 18:25. Ex. 29:27. Deut. 12:19, 19. * Or, goats. o 28. 18:24-28. p 3:7, 8, 25, &c. 18:1-5, 23. 1 Chr. 9:27-29. 23:32. 26:20-27. Acts

practice under the inspection of the lawgiver. (Marg. Ref. 19:11-19.)—All the metals known, till these modern times, are here mentioned together.

V. 25-31. To prevent dispute, and for a rule to after times, the Lord ordered the distribution of the cattle and the female captives, between the soldiers and the congregation; and that a portion from each should be reserved for the priests and Levites. The Levites received ten times as much as the priests, being vastly more numerous; and the twelve thousand soldiers had more than all the rest of Israel. The arrangement seems to have given universal satisfaction.—No horses or camels are mentioned. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 35. The number of the female children, when considered as bearing proportion to the men, women, and male children who were slain, suggests an awful idea of the terrible vengeance which God took upon the enemies of him, and of his people! Amalek, who first warred with Israel, was long spared; but Midian, who first tempted them to idolatry, was speedily and most tremendously punished.

V. 47. It does not appear, that a single ox, or sheep, or ass, was required by Moses, as his portion; or given to him by the people: yet he had a family, as well as others, for which no provision had been made, above the common lot of Levites! (Notes, 16:15.)

V. 48-54 The success of this detachment had been

extraordinary; so small a company overcoming and cutting off such immense multitudes, and taking so large a spoil: but their preservation was still more remarkable; not one individual having been slain, or even wounded that we find! In acknowledgment of this, the officers presented the wrought gold, (all of it probably,) which they had found among the spoil, as an oblation to the Lord, "to make an atonement for their souls;" or to be employed in that service of God by which atonement was typically made. (Note, Ex. 30:11-16.) Thus they confessed, that, instead of claiming a reward, they needed forgiveness of what had been sinful; and desired thus to express their gratitude for the preservation of their lives, which might justly have been taken away.—Some think the private soldiers had taken a booty of this kind which they reserved to themselves; and others, that the officers presented the offering in the name of the soldiers also.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. "The triumphing of the wicked is short." The pleasures and advantages of sin are bought at an enormous price; and the vengeance of the Lord is always sure, and sometimes speedy and sudden.—"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" (Note, Heb. 10:28-31.) and if his temporal judgments are so dreadful, what will be the case of sinners "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that

CHAPTER XXXII.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad request an inheritance eastward of Jordan, 1—5. Moses sharply rebukes *rae* as with them, 6—15. They explain; Moses *se* *entis*; and a conditional grant is made to them and half the tribe of Manasseh, 16—33. They rebuild the cities, &c. 34—42.

NOW the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of ^bJazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle;

2 The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,

3 ^aAtaroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and ^aNimrah, and ^cHeshbon, and Elealeh, and ^aShebam, and Nebo, and ^bBeon;

4 Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle.

5 Wherefore, said they, ^kif we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and ^lbring us not over Jordan.

6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and ^mshall ye sit here?

7 And ⁿwherefore ^odiscourage ye the heart of the children of Israel, from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?

8 Thus did your fathers, ^pwhen I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.

9 For when they went up into ^qthe valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should

2:10—15. 26:5—7, 15—18. Gen. 29:32. 30:10, 11. b. 3. 21:32. *Janzer*. Josh. 13: 25. 9 Sam. 24:5. 1s. 16:8, 9. c. 26. Gen. 13:10, 11. Jer. 50:19. Mic. 7:14. 1 John 2:15. d. 1, 34—38. Josh. 13:17. 1s. 15:2—4. Jer. 48:22, 23. e. 36. *Belh-nimrah*. 1s. 15:6. *Nimrah*. (21:25, 26, 28. Judg. 11:26. Neh. 9:22. 1s. 15:4. 16:8, 9. Jer. 43:2, 34, 45. g. 38. *Silmoth*. Josh. 13:19. 1s. 16:8. Jer. 18:32. *Silmoth*. h. 36. *Ashtimon*. 1 Deut. 2:21—35. k. Gen. 19:19. Ruth 2:10. 1 Sam. 20:3. 2 Sam. 11:22. *Esh*. 5:2. Jer. 31:2. 1 Deut. 1:37. 3:25, 26. Josh. 7:7. m. 2 Sam. 11:11. 1 Cor. 13:25. Phil. 2:4. n. 9. 21:4. Deut. 1:28. o. *Heb. break*. Act. 21:13. o. *See* on 13:20—14:2. Deut. 1:22, 23. Job. 14:6, 7. p. 13:23—33. 14:1—10. Deut. 1:

know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Note, 2 Thes. 1:5—10.) Let us then take warning, and flee from the wrath to come," to that Saviour, who alone is able to deliver us: and, depending on his assistance, let us declare war against every corrupt passion, by which we have been induced to dishonour God, and bring guilt and misery upon ourselves. This is indeed a *holy war*, in which we must utterly destroy every one of the enemies of our souls, or they will certainly ruin us: to this the trumpet of the gospel calls and encourages us; and in it we may depend upon the Lord for counsel and assistance. Here we ought to indulge the deepest resentment; and, without thinking of peace or truce, should prosecute the quarrel to the utter extermination of our enemies, root and branch, with unrelenting severity; not sparing our strongest, nor overlooking our feeblest lusts, which, if not crucified, will soon become formidable and produce fatal effects.—In all our undertakings, we must not only make the Lord our confidence, but adhere to his orders and instructions; and thus we may expect all desirable success, notwithstanding interposing difficulties.—While we forgive and pray for all our enemies, we should entertain the deepest abhorrence of the conduct, and most carefully shun the company, of those who have once attempted to draw us into sin. Nor will any be more severely punished by the Lord than tempters, especially of his people; except it be those who, against the convictions of their own conscience, have counselled and encouraged them so to do.

V. 13—54. There is no *natural* disposition of the heart which does not require to be moderated and regulated; for even our humanity and compassion, as well as our resentment, must be subjected to the command of God; or we shall spare and encourage those whom the Lord would have reproved, corrected, or treated with severity, and so bring anger from him upon ourselves: and surely, it must be highly criminal in the sight of God, for us to imagine ourselves more merciful and compassionate than he is. This is especially the case with magistrates, ministers, heads of families, and all intrusted with authority. They who have been faithful in inferior stations may expect to be employed in more important services: but even when we have attended to our bounden duty, we need purifying in the blood of Christ, and by his grace, from the guilt and pollution a inhering to our best performances. God so abhors murder, and would have us to abhor it, that he hath represented even that bloodshed which he commanded, as in some degree contaminating those concerned in it. He likewise approves and requires exact equity in all our transactions: nor should we dare to appropriate any gain, of which we cannot conscientiously devote a portion to that God who

not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

10 And the LORD's anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying,

11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me;

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

13 And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was consumed.

14 And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.

15 For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness, and ye shall destroy all this people.

16 ¶ And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones;

17 But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities, because of the inhabitants of the land.

18 We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.

19 For we will not inherit with them on yonder

34—28. q. 14:11, 23. Deut. 1:34—40. Ps. 95:11. Ez. 20:15. Heb. 3:8—19. r. 14:23. 2s. 26:6, 65. Deut. 2:14, 15. s. 14:23—35. *Heb. fulfilled after me*. s. 14:24, 30. 26:65. 1 Pet. 1:36. Josh. 14:9. s. 14:33—35. Deut. 2:14. Ps. 78:33. q. 26:64. Deut. 2:15. x. Gen. 5:3. 8:21. Neh. 9:24—26. Job. 14:4. 1s. 1:4. 57:4. Ez. 3:21. Matt. 23:31—33. Luke 11:48. Act. 7:51, 52. y. Deut. 1:34, 35. Ezra 9:13, 14. 10:10. z. Lev. 26:14—18. Deut. 28:15, &c. 30:17—19. Josh. 22:16—18. 2 Chr. 7:19—22. 15:2. a. Num. 14:30—35. b. Jer. 33:21. Matt. 15:7. Rom. 14:15, 20, 21. 1 Cor. 8:11, 12. c. 34—42. Gen. 33:17. d. 29—32. Deut. 3:18—20. Josh. 4:12, 13. e. Josh. 22:4, 5. f. Gen. 13:10—12. 14:12. 2 Kings 10:32, 33. 15:29. 1 Chr. 5:25, 26. Prov. 20:21.

"hates robbery for burnt-offering," and for which we cannot thank him as the Giver.—This rule, if well observed, would render us incapable of fraud, extortion, oppression, or any kind of iniquity or sinful compliances. But besides the exact rules of honesty, we should liberally give to the Lord, and dispose of in pious and charitable uses, a proportion of all our acquisitions; particularly when commemorating special deliverances: and though the blood of Christ has made the effectual atonement for our souls, such oblations are proper evidences of our faith, and of the sincerity of our love; they are acknowledgments that we are unworthy of all our mercies; and expressions of our gratitude to God and zeal for his glory, and of our love to our fellow-Christians.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXII. V. 1—5. (*Marg. Ref.*) This proposal of the Reubenites and Gadites seemed to imply a disregard to the land of Canaan, a distrust of the Lord's promise, and a reluctance to encounter the difficulties and dangers of conquering and expelling the inhabitants. And indeed when we compare their petition "not to be brought over Jordan," with the earnestness with which Moses entreated to pass over; we cannot but conclude, that they did not behold in the rest of Israel in Canaan, that type of heaven which he and other believers doubtless did. (*Note, Deut. 3:23—28.*)

V. 6—15. (*Notes, 13: 14.*) It was very natural for Moses to suspect, that sloth and cowardice, the effects of unbelief, suggested the petition of the descendants of Gad and Reuben; and he therefore remonstrated with them very plainly on their conduct. He feared that they "were risen up, an increase of sinful men," like those who provoked the Lord to "swear in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." (*Note, Ps. 95:9—11. Heb. 3:7—19. 4:1, 2.*) Indeed he was apprehensive that their example would induce their brethren to renew the old provocation, and so to destroy the whole nation. But, though they were in some degree faulty, they were not so deeply criminal as he supposed.—It is not known on what account Caleb, or rather Jephunneh, is called the Kenazite: probably from some ancestor of the family, of whom nothing remains on record. (*Josh. 14:14.*)

V. 16—19. This proposal was very equitable, and it was honestly made and faithfully executed. It did not imply that all the men capable of bearing arms should go, and so leave their families and possessions defenceless; but a sufficient detachment: accordingly forty thousand went out of about a hundred thousand. (*Notes, Josh. 1:12—15. 22:1—5.*)

V. 20. From the expression, "before the LORD," it has been concluded, that the Israelites carried the ark with them in all the wars of Canaan.—It was very encouraging to repre-

side Jordan, or forward; [†] because our inheritance is fallen to us [†] on this side Jordan eastward.

20 And [†]Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war,

21 And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him,

22 And the land be subdued before the LORD; then afterward ye shall return, and [†]be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and [†]this land shall be your possession before the LORD.

23 But [†]if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD; and [†]be sure your sin will find you out.

24 Build ye cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.

25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.

26 Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead.

27 But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, [†]as my lord saith.

28 So concerning them Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel:

29 And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession:

30 But if they will not pass over with you

g Josh. 12:1—6. 13:8. h 32. 34:15. Josh. 1:14, 15. i Deut. 3:18—20. Josh. 1:13. —15. 4:12 13. 22:2—4. k Josh. 10:30, 42. 11:23. 18:1. Ps. 44:—4. 78:55. 1 Josh. 19:9. 2 Sam. 3:38. m Deut. 3:12—17. Josh. 13:3, 29—32. 22:9. n Lev. 26:14, &c. Deut. 28:15. Ar. o Gen. 4:7. 44:16. Ps. 140:11. Prov. 13:21. Is. 3:11. 59:1. 2. 12. Rom. 2:29. 1 Cor. 1:5. p 17. 2 Cor. 10:1, 5. Eph. 6:10—18. 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. 11:28. 12:11. 35:2. r See on 20—23. s Josh. 22:19. t See on 1. Deut. 3:12—17. 29:8. Josh. 12:6. 13:8. &c. 22:4. u 34:14. 1 Chr. 5:18. 12:31. 26:32. v 21:

sent the forces which they were about to attack, as the enemies of God, and God himself as leading Israel on to victory.—It does not appear, that the tabernacle and ark were permanently stationary, till after the land had been subdued. (*Note, Josh. 18:1.*)

V. 23. If the persons concerned prevaricated, and so imposed on men; or, if they afterwards refused to fulfil their engagement; God would most certainly detect and expose their wickedness, and inflict condign punishment on them for it.—Sin pursues the criminal, as the hound does the hunted animal; and will at length overtake him, seize on him, and destroy him. (*Note, Prov. 13:21.*)

V. 29. It was proper that this country, (which seems hitherto to have been possessed in common by the people,) should be allotted to some of the tribes; and Reuben and Gad having, perhaps too hastily, petitioned for it, it was granted them: but it was a situation very distant from the sanctuary; it greatly interrupted their intercourse with their brethren; it was very much exposed to their enemies, and uneasy to themselves; and they seem to have been dispossessed sooner than the other Israelites. (*Notes, 2 Kings 15: 29. 1 Chr. 5:25, 26.*)

V. 33. The country eastward of Jordan was, it seems, too large for the two tribes of Reuben and Gad alone; and therefore in consequence of the conquest of Gilead by the descendants of Machir, a division of the tribe of Manasse likewise had their inheritance there, probably by their own consent. (39—42.—*Notes, Josh. 13:7—33.*)

V. 38. *Their names being changed.*] When the people rebuilt the cities for their own habitations, they changed the names of such of them, as were called after the idols of the former inhabitants. Yet several of them seem afterwards to have recovered their old names, and indeed to have been seized on by the Moabites and others.

V. 41. Jair was the descendant of Machir and Manasseh in the female line; but from Judah in the male line. (*Notes, 1 Chr. 2:21—23.*) Yet joining himself to the Manassites on this occasion, his posterity was ever after reckoned among them. (*Note, Deut. 3:14.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Covetousness, ambition, impatience, or other carnal inducements, influence most men in choosing their worldly settlements: whereas they ought to consider in the first place, whether they are likely to be convenient for attending on the ordinances of God, and favourable to communion with his people. If, however, Christians are betrayed into such an improper conduct, their iniquity will correct them, and they

armed, [†]they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.

31 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the LORD hath said unto thy servants, so will we do.

32 We will pass over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan may be ours.

33 And [†]Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto [†]half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, [†]the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof, in the coasts, [†]even the cities of the country round about.

34 And the children of Gad built [†]Dibon, and Ataroth, and [†]Aroer,

35 And Atroth, Shophan, and [†]Jaazer, and Jogbehah,

36 And [†]Beth-nimrah, and Beth-aran, [†]fenced cities; and folds for sheep.

37 And the children of Reuben built [†]Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim.

38 And Nebo, and Baal-meon, (their names being changed,) and Shibmah: and [†]gave [†]other names to the cities which they builded.

39 And the children of [†]Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it.

40 And Moses [†]gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein.

41 And [†]Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them [†]Havoth-jair.

42 And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.

23—35. Deut. 2:20—33. 3:1—8. Ps. 135:10, 11. 136:19—21. x See on 3. 21:30. 33:45, 46. y Deut. 2:36. Is. 17:2. z 1, 3. Jaazer. a See on 3. Nimrah. b 24. c See on 3. 21:27. Is. 15:4. * Heb. they called by names the names of the cities. d Gen. 26:15. Ex. 23:13. Josh. 23:7. Ps. 16:4. Is. 46:1. e 26:29. Gen. 50:22. Josh. 17:1. f Deut. 3:13—15. Josh. 13:29—31. g 1 Chr. 2:21—23. h Judg. 10:4. 1 Kings 4:13.

will surely suffer for their folly. (*Notes and P. O. Gen 13: 14.*) But men in general, even when called Christians, have not that faith which explores the unseen world, or that spiritual mind which supremely values heavenly blessings. Earthly things suit their carnal minds, and are apprehended by their senses; these they prefer as their portion: but it proves unsatisfactory and vexatious, they are speedily driven out of it; and having no inheritance beyond the grave, they will eternally bewail their wretched choice, while believers eternally rejoice in theirs.—We are utterly inexcusable, if we do not profit by the examples of those, whose sins and punishments are recorded for our warning. Yet so depraved is human nature, that one generation rises up after another, “an increase of sinful men” walking in the steps of those who perished before them, and thus still more and more augmenting the fierce anger of the LORD. Nor does the wickedness of men merely destroy their own souls; for it murders those of others also, while their examples, influence, and persuasions, encourage numbers in sin, or discourage them from serving the LORD; and while the crimes of professed Christians increase the prejudices or harden the hearts of Jews, Mohammedans, and Gentiles against the gospel. (*Note, Matt. 18:7—9.*) They, however, who are deeply acquainted with the human heart, and have been long conversant with perverse and rebellious people, are sometimes too suspicious. But such suspicions frequently arise from zeal for the honour of God, and love to the souls of men: (2 Cor. 11:2.) and it is generally best to disclose them, and to remonstrate with the suspected persons; for this may either withdraw them from their purpose, or give them an opportunity of explaining themselves. And even when they are faulty in some degree, we should be ready to accept of reasonable excuses, and to accede to equitable proposals; yet with such express conditions and limitations as may supersede occasions of future contention.—All men ought to consider the interests of others as well as their own; and the law of love requires them reciprocally to labour, venture, and suffer for each other, as occasion requires. But especially it is becoming in the people of God to be disinterested and public-spirited; and they cannot consistently account any thing too great to forego, to endure, or to attempt, in opposing the common enemies of the cause, in promoting the salvation of souls, and in securing the heavenly inheritance. If God hath formed us to this disposition, we shall avoid all appearance of evil, act with equity and love, have a sanctified and comfortable use of our worldly possessions, and so pass through things temporal as not finally to lose the good things which are eternal.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A record of forty-two journeys of Israel, 1-49. A charge to destroy the Canaanites and their idols, 50-56.

THESE are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt, with their armies, under the hand of Moses and Aaron.

2 And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys, by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out.

^{B. C. 1491.} 3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month: on the morrow after the passover, the children of Israel went out with an high hand, in the sight of all the Egyptians.

4 For the Egyptians buried all their first-born, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.

5 And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.

6 And they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which is in the edge of the wilderness.

7 And they removed from Etham, and turned again into Pi-hahiroth, which is before Baalzephon: and they pitched before Migdol.

8 And they departed from before Pi-hahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, and went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah.

9 And they removed from Marah and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they pitched there.

10 And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea.

11 And they removed from the Red Sea, and encamped in the wilderness of Sin.

12 And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah.

13 And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Alush.

14 And they removed from Alush, and encamped at Rephidim, where was no water for the people to drink.

^{B. C. 1490.} 15 And they departed from Rephidim, and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai.

16 And they removed from the desert of Sinai, and pitched at Kibroth-hattaavah.

17 And they departed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth.

18 And they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in Rithmah.

19 And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched at Rimmon-parez.

20 And they departed from Rimmon-parez, and pitched in Libnah.

^a Ex. 12:37, 51. ^b Josh. 24:5. ^c 1 Sam. 12:8. ^d Ps. 77:20. ^e Mic. 6:4. ^f c. 9:17-23. ^g 10:6, 13. ^h Deut. 1:2. ⁱ 10:11. ^j d. Gen. 47:11. ^k Ex. 1:11. ^l 12:37. ^m Ex. 19:2. ⁿ 13:4. ^o Ex. 14:9. ^p Ps. 105:38. ^q Is. 52:12. ^r Mic. 2:13. ^s g. Ex. 12:23, 30. ^t Ps. 105:36. ^u h. Ex. 12:12. ^v 18:11. ^w Is. 19:1. ^x Zeph. 2:11. ^y Rev. 12:7, 8. ^z Ex. 12:37. ^{aa} Ex. 13:20. ^{ab} Ex. 14:2, 9. ^{ac} Ex. 32:2. ^{ad} Is. 52:22-25. ^{ae} Ex. 15:27. ^{af} Ex. 16:1. ^{ag} 17:1. ^{ah} Ex. 17:1-8. ^{ai} p. Ex. 19:12. ^{aj} q. 10:11-13, 33. ^{ak} Deut. 1:6. ^{al} * That is, the

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1, 2. In this chapter the sacred historian has brought into one view the journeys and encampments of Israel, from Egypt to the banks of Jordan.—The clause, "by the commandment of the LORD," may refer either to the journeys which were all taken at his word, or to the register of them which was written by his express direction. The Jews in general explain it of the latter, and suppose that it was intended to encourage them in their present dispersions and wanderings; which they persuade themselves will likewise terminate in their settlement in Canaan, under the rule of their expected Messiah: and this, though not exactly as they suppose, will eventually be the case. But one of their Rabbies has truly said, that "their Redeemer was born before him who reduced them to this last captivity:" an opinion which is well worthy of their serious consideration!

V. 3-7. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 12:29-42. 13:20. 14:2-9.*

Buried, &c. (4) This mournful employment took off the thoughts of the Egyptians, from the pursuit of Israel, for a time.

V. 8. The wilderness of Etham seems to have extended considerably on each side of the Red Sea, and round the bay, in which that sea terminates. (*Note, Ex. 14:24, 25.*)

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21 And they removed from Libnah, and pitched at Rissah.

22 And they journeyed from Rissah, and pitched in Kehelathah.

23 And they went from Kehelathah, and pitched in mount Shapher.

24 And they removed from mount Shapher, and encamped in Haradah.

25 And they removed from Haradah, and pitched in Makheloth.

26 And they removed from Makheloth, and encamped at Tahath.

27 And they departed from Tahath, and pitched at Tarah.

28 And they removed from Tarah, and pitched in Mithcah.

29 And they went from Mithcah, and pitched in Hashmonah.

30 And they departed from Hashmonah, and encamped at Moseroth.

31 And they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene-jaakan.

32 And they removed from Bene-jaakan, and encamped at Hor-hagidgad.

33 And they went from Hor-hagidgad, and pitched in Jotbathah.

34 And they removed from Jotbathah, and encamped at Ebronah.

35 And they departed from Ebronah, and encamped at Ezion-gaber.

36 And they removed from Ezion-gaber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh. ^[B. C. 1453]

37 And they removed from Kadesh, and pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom.

38 And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor, at the commandment of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month. ^[B. C. 1452]

39 And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor.

40 And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

41 And they departed from mount Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah.

42 And they departed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon.

43 And they departed from Punon, and pitched in Oboth.

44 And they departed from Oboth, and pitched in Ije-abarim, in the border of Moab.

45 And they departed from Iim, and pitched in Dibon-gad.

46 And they removed from Dibon-gad, and encamped in Almon-diblathaim.

graves of lust. 11:4, 34. 11:35. 12:16. 13:4. Deut. 1:1. Liban. a. Deut. 10: 6. Mosera. x. 1 Kings 1:32. y. Deut. 10:7. Gudgoah. z. 1. ent. 10:7. Jotbathah a. 14:25. Deut. 2:8. 1 Chr. 9:26. 22:48. Ezion-gaber. 2 Chr. 20:36. b. 13:21. 20:1. 27:14. Deut. 32:51. c. 20:22, 23. 21:4. d. 20:24-28. Deut. 10:6. 32:50. e. See on 21:1-3. f. 21:4. g. 21:10. h. Or, hear of Abarim. 21:11. h. 32:34. Is. 15:2. Jer. 48:18. 1 Jer. 48:22. Beth-diblathaim. Ex. 6:14. Diblath.

V. 9-14. (*Notes, Ex. 15:22-24, 27. 16:1. 17:1, 2.*) Dophkah and Alush are not mentioned elsewhere; probably nothing remarkable occurred at these places.

V. 15. (*Note, Ex. 19:1, 2.*) The subsequent continuance of Israel, in the wilderness of Sinai, comprises all the remaining part of Exodus, all the Leviticus, and to the tenth chapter of this book. (*Note, 10:11-13.*)

V. 16-18. (11:33-35. 12:16.)—Rithmah seems to have been in the wilderness of Paran, near Kadesh-barnea.

V. 19-29. We read nothing elsewhere of the encampments mentioned in these verses.

V. 30, 31. It is said elsewhere, (*Note, Deut. 10:6.*) "They took their journey from Beeroh of the children of Jaakan to Mosera;" yet here this seems reversed, "they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene-jaakan," or, the sons of Jaakan.—Either different places are meant, or the people journeyed back again nearly to the same place. Probably no mention is made of any but their principal stations.

V. 32-34. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 35, 36. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 13:21, 22. 20:1.*

V. 37-39. 21:4. *Ex. 7:7. Notes, 20:22-28.*

V. 40. *Note, 21:1-3.*

V. 43, 44. *Note, 21:10.*

V. 45-49. (*Marg. Ref.*) The word "Abel," signifies

47 And they removed from Almon-diblathaim, and pitched in the mountains of Abarim before Nebo.

48 And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho.

49 And they pitched by Jordan, from Beth-jesimoth even unto Abel-shittim, in the plains of Moab.

50 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

51 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan;

52 Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places.

53 And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.

54 And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families, and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth: according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit.

55 But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your

sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.

56 Moreover, it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you as I thought to do unto them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The boundaries of Canaan, 1-15. The names of the men who were chosen to divide the land, 16-28.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan; (this is the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof:)

3 Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin, along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward.

4 And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akkrabbim, and pass on to Zin: and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to Kadesh-barnea, and shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass on to Azmon.

5 And the border shall fetch a compass from Azmon unto the river of Egypt, and the goings out of it shall be at the sea.

6 And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border.

7 And this shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor.

8 From mount Hor ye shall point out your

1-21-20. Deut. 32:49, 34:1. 1 See on 22:1. m Josh. 13:20. Ex. 25:9. * Or, the plains of Shittim, 25:1-9. Ex. 23:5, 10, 23. Josh. 2:1. n 48:49. o Deut. 7:1, 9:1. Josh. 3:17. p Ex. 23:21, 31-33, 34:12-17. Deut. 7:2-5, 35:26, 12:9, 30:1. Josh. 20:16-18. Josh. 11:12, 23:7. Judg. 2:2. q Deut. 32:8. Pa. 24:1, 2. 13:15. Jer. 27:5-6. Dan. 4:17, 25:32. Matt. 20:15. r See on 26:53-56. 1 Heb. multiply his inheritance. 25:54. 1 Heb. diminish his inheritance. Josh. 15:1-12. 16:1, Ec. 17:1, Ec. 18:11, Ec. 19:1-48. 1 Dent. 7:4-16. Josh. 23:13. Judg. 1:21-33, 2:3. Pa. 109:34-38. Ex. 23:24. u Lev. 19:23, 20:23. Deut.

28:63, 29:28. Josh. 23:15, 16. 2 Chr. 36:17-20. Ex. 33:24-29. Luke 21:23, 24. a 33:51, 53. Gen. 12:6, 7. 13:15-17. 15:16-21. 17:8. Deut. 1:7, 8. Pa. 78:55. 105:11. Ex. 47:4. Act. 12:36. b Pa. 19:5, 16:5. Jer. 3:19. Act. 25:18. Eph. 1:14, 18. 1 Pet. 1:3, 4. c Ex. 23:31. Josh. 15:1-12. Ex. 47:19. d Gen. 14:3. Josh. 3:16, 15:2. Ex. 47:8, 18. e Josh. 15:3. Judg. 1:36. f 3. 13:21. 20:1. 33:36, 37. g 13:26, 32:8. h Josh. 15:34. 1 Gen. 15:18. Josh. 15:4, 7. 1 Kings 8:65. Is. 27:12. k 6:7. 1 Josh. 1:4. 9:1. 15:12, 47. 23:4. Ex. 47:10, 15, 20. m 3, 6, 9, 10.

also mourning; and perhaps it was added to the name *Shittim*, where Israel grievously sinned and suffered in the matter of Baal-peor, to express the lamentation made on that account. —Probably the Israelites first gave names to many of the places in the desert, by which they were afterwards known.

V. 51-53. (*Marg. Ref. p, q. Note, Ex. 34:11-17*.) This repeated command rendered it the indispensable duty of the Israelites to extirpate the Canaanites by every means in their power, and as fast as they could subdue them; neither yielding to cowardice, sloth, or self-indulgence; nor setting up their own notions of clemency in opposition to the sentence of the righteous Judge, which they were commissioned to execute. —But they must also destroy all monuments of their abominable idolatries, however precious the materials, or curious the workmanship. —Groves, altars, and images, on hills and mountains, were called "high places."

V. 55, 56. The general duty of Israel became the particular duty of each tribe, after the division of the land, in that portion allotted to them: and the subsequent history proves that these denunciations were real prophecies, which have been wonderfully accomplished even to this day. —During many ages, the remnant of the devoted nations were exceedingly troublesome to the Israelites, even "as pricks in the eyes and thorns in the side," which would be a constant and almost intolerable torture: (*Marg. Ref. t. Note, Josh. 23:13*.) and at length, as they persisted in imitating their idolatries and atrocious crimes, they were punished as the Lord proposed to punish the Canaanites; being expelled from their country with tremendous slaughter, first by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, and at length more completely by the Romans.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very useful to record the principal events of our own lives, and of the Lord's dealings with his church: and frequent meditation on these subjects tends to awaken gratitude, to excite repentance and humiliation, and to encourage our faith and hope in God. —Few of the periods of our lives can be reflected on, without reminding us of the Lord's goodness, and of our own ingratitude and disobedience: these, like a twofold thread, run entwined together through the whole of our experience, and our unworthiness renders the kindness of God more admirable, while his kindness shows our sins more execrable. —We could not reasonably wish to pass over again any stages of our pilgrimage, except we could hope, by the grace of God, to shun the sins which we committed, or to embrace those opportunities of glorifying God which before we slipped. But if we are upright in these desires, they will be graciously accepted: and we may be thankful that we have travelled thus far towards a better country; we may set up our Ebenezer, and praise him who hath helped us hitherto; and we may trust in him to bring us safe to our journey's end.

—But, whatever be our character and state, every day, week, month, and year, whether prosperous or adverse, carries us forward to our "long home," and conveys the unbeliever nearer to the gates of hell, the believer nearer to the joys of heaven; and not only those days which are marked for some important transaction or event, but those which glide away unnoticed and are speedily forgotten. —Soon will our wanderings end, and our eternal state be irrevocably fixed: how important then is the present moment! —Happy are they, whom the Lord now "guides with his counsel, and will" at length "receive to his glory!" To this felicity the gospel calls us: "Behold, now is the accepted time! behold, now is the day of salvation!" —Let sinners seize the precious opportunity, and flee for refuge to the hope set before them. Let us all behold with trembling, and keep at a distance from "the graves of the lusts;" let us fear the doom of the unbelievers, concerning whom the "Lord sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest;" let us shun the *Meribah* and *Massahs*, at which so many have perished in their murmurings and rebellions. Let us rather prefer the bitter waters of *Marah*, sweetened with the consolations of the gospel. —Let us not loiter in our journey, nor think of returning to Egypt, nor fear interposing enemies, difficulties, or death itself. Let us but redeem our time to glorify God, and serve our generation, and he will carry us safe through all to his eternal kingdom. —But except we separate from sinners, avoid occasions of evil, and crucify our lusts, we must perish: and if we show any quarter to our sinful propensities, they will gather strength by indulgence, mar the comfort of our lives, and perhaps "be pricks in our eyes and thorns in our sides" when we lie upon a death-bed.

NOTES—CHAP. XXXIV: V. 3-5. It was absolutely necessary that the boundaries of the land, of which the Israelites were commissioned to dispossess and extirpate the inhabitants, should be exactly ascertained: because they were not commissioned to push their conquests any further at that time, or at any time in the same manner; though it was the divine purpose at length to put them in possession of much more extensive territories. (*Notes, Gen. 15:18-21. Ex. 23:31*.) —The boundary of the land towards the south was here fixed, as beginning from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, extending to the west in a winding direction, past the desert of Zin and the borders of Idumea to Kadesh-barnea, and thence to the place where the river of Egypt ran into the Mediterranean sea.

V. 6. The Mediterranean sea was the western boundary. V. 7-9. Mount Hor, here mentioned, was at the opposite extremity of the land, from that mount Hor on which Aaron died. It seems to have been a ridge of mount Libanus, which was the northern boundary, extending from the Mediterranean sea, southward of Zidon to the springs of Jordan.

border unto the entrance of Hamath: and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad.

9 And the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-enan: this shall be your north border.

10 And ye shall point out your east border from Hazar-enan to Shepham.

11 And the coast shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain: and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward.

12 And the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at the salt sea: this shall be your land, with the coasts thereof round about.

13 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot, which the LORD commanded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe.

14 For the tribe of the children of Reuben, according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad, according to the house of their fathers, have received their inheritance, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance.

15 The two tribes and the half tribe have received their inheritance on this side Jordan near Jericho, eastward, toward the sunrising.

16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

17 These are the names of the men which shall divide the land unto you: Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.

18 And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

19 And the names of the men are these: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

20 And of the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud.

21 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chishon.

22 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli.

23 The prince of the children of Joseph, for the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod.

24 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan.

25 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach.

26 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan.

27 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Asher, Abihud the son of Shelomi.

28 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud.

29 These are they whom the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance unto the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Forty-eight cities with their suburbs to be given to the Levites, 1-8. Six to be cities of refuge, 9-15. Laws respecting murder and manslaughter, 16-51.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

2 Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites, of the inheritance of their possession, cities to dwell in: and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.

3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in, and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts.

4 And the suburbs of the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward, a thousand cubits round about.

5 And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits, and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities.

6 And among the cities which ye shall give unto

p 13:21. 13:56. 2 Sam. 9:9. 2 Kings 14:25. Jer. 30:5. Ez. 47:15-20. o Ez. 47:17. p 2 Kings 23:25. Jer. 30:5, 6. 2 Kings 14:25. q Lev. 25:34. r 13:27. Josh. 11:2. Chinnereth. 19:35. Luke 5:1. Gennesaret. John 6:1. Sea of Tiberias. r 3. Gen. 13:10. 14:3. 19:24-26. s Josh. 14:1, 2. t 23:33. Deut.

3:12-17. Josh. 13:8-12. 14:2, 3. u 22:32. x Josh. 14:1. 19:51. y See on 13: 5, 16. z See on 14:6. a 13:30. 14:6, 24, 30, 38. 26:65. b Josh. 19:51. a 22: 1. 26:53. 31:12. 33:30, 35:13. Deut. 34:1, 5. b Lev. 25:23, 33. Josh. 14:3, 4. 21:2. Ez. 45:1-8. 48:8, 22. 1 Cor. 9:10-14. c Josh. 21:11. 2 Chr. 11:14. Ez. 45:2.

V. 10-12. Jordan was only a small stream, till it united with other rivulets, and formed the sea, or lake, of Chinnereth, or Gennesaret, or Tiberias; but afterwards, emerging on the opposite end of the lake, it became a considerable river, then more generally known by the name Jordan. It seems, however, in its whole course, including the sea of Chinnereth and the Dead Sea, to have been the eastern boundary of Canaan, properly so called, which formed a country not more than one hundred and sixty miles long, and about sixty broad.—Moses was born in Egypt, and never had an opportunity of making a survey of the countries beyond Jordan. (Deut. 32:5.) Yet he has given an exact geographical description of them, which accords with the whole subsequent history, and with ancient history in general. Whatever opportunity he might have had, in those early times, of gaining information, it cannot reasonably be doubted, but that he was guided by the Holy Spirit, in thus specifying the grant which God made to Israel.—The Dead Sea, once a still more fertile country than Canaan, might be a useful lesson to Israel, to shun those sins which brought destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah; and the wilderness might call to remembrance their wanderings, rebellions, and mercies there; and the border of Egypt might remind them, that they had been bondmen, but that the LORD their God had redeemed them."

V. 13-15. The countries already conquered, and conditionally assigned to the two tribes and a half, lay without these boundaries: but the Israelites might make alliances with other nations, not included in this grant; and they were not allowed to dispossess or extirpate them, as they did the devoted Canaanites.—During the reigns of David and Solomon they possessed a much larger country: yet, through their own sloth and wickedness, they seldom actually enjoyed the whole even of the land here granted to them.

V. 16-29. This appointment of the persons who should divide the land, gave assurance of conquest to Israel; and to the persons themselves of preservation from the sword, and from natural death, during the wars with the Canaanites.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The people of God, though generally poor, are said "to inherit the earth;" because "a little that the righteous hath, is better than the riches of many wicked."—For the bounds of their habitation, and the measure of their provision, are assigned them by the only wise God, their heavenly Father, in subsergency to their salvation, and the increase of grace

and peace in their souls. Their numbers have likewise hitherto been few: and they have commonly been despised and neglected, by the multitude of the turbulent and wicked of the world. But "the eye of the LORD is upon them;" "his Name is their strong Tower;" he "knoweth what things they have need of," and hath reserved for them a more enduring inheritance in heaven; and "they are kept by his power through faith unto salvation." May we cast our lot among them, and not covet riches, nor seek, in any improper way, to increase our temporal provision; may we be careful not to live beneath our privileges, through sloth or indulgence; may we enjoy the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, as an assurance of victory and eternal life; and when our warfare is ended, may we be welcomed to the heavenly Canaan by Jesus, the Prince of all the tribes of the redeemed, to our everlasting and complete satisfaction.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXV. V. 2-8. These cities, reserved for the priests and Levites, were designed, not only for their accommodation, but likewise that they might reside as religious instructors in the several parts of the land, and conveniently go to the adjacent towns and villages, or receive those who thence resorted to them. They might also dwell elsewhere on some occasions, and those of other tribes might live in these cities as their tenants.—Though the typical temple service was limited to one place; yet reading, expounding, and enforcing the law of God, with prayer and praise, were not thus confined, but might be attended to any where, with reference to the appointed sacrifices and priesthood, and to the ark of the covenant.—Thus the curse pronounced on Levi (Gen. 49:7.) was turned into a blessing, both to them, and to Israel in general.—Many of the cities spoken of seem to have been like our market-towns; and they were very numerous in that populous and fruitful country. The suburbs of a thousand cubits nearest the city would serve for gardens and out-houses; and the larger suburb of another thousand, at a greater distance, would yield pasture for the flocks. The whole seems to have extended nearly three quarters of a mile on every side of each city; and, though forty-eight such cities with the suburbs, in addition to the tithes and other perquisites, would be a very plentiful provision for this small tribe, it does not appear that the people complained of it as exorbitant.

Cities for refuge. (6) Marg. Ref d. Note, 11:15.

V. 11-15. In order to express the greater abhorrence of

the Levites, *there shall be* six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities.

7 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs.

8 And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.

[Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan,

11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.

12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.

13 And of these cities which ye shall give, six cities shall ye have for refuge.

14 Ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge.

15 These six cities shall be a refuge, both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them; that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither.

16 And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

17 And if he smite him with a throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

18 Or if he smite him with an hand-weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

a 13,14. Deut. 4:41-43. Josh. 20:2,7,8. 21:3,13,21,27,32,38. Pa. 9:9. 62:7,8. 142:4,5. Is. 4:6. Matt. 11:28. Heb. 6:18. * Heb. above them ye shall give. e Josh. 21:3-42. 1. Ir. 6:54-31. f Gen. 49:7. Ex. 32:28,29. Deut. 33:8-11. Josh. 21:3. g 21:54. 33:51. Ex. 15:18. 2 Cor. 8:13,14. h Heb. they inherit. h 34:2. Lev. 14:34. 25:2. Deut. 12:9. 19:1,2. i See m. Josh. 20:2. j Heb. by error. 22:23. Ex. 21:13. Deut. 4:42. 19:4,5. k 19:25-27. Deut. 19:6. Josh. 20:3-6. g, 2 Sam. 14:7. 124. l 1. Ir. 11:12. Josh. 20:4-6. m Deut. 4:41-43. 19:3-10. Josh. 20:7-9. n 15:15. Ex. 12:9. Rom. 3:22. Gal. 3:26. o 22-24. Deut. 19:11-13. p 30-33. Gen. 9:5,6. Ex. 21:12-14. Lev. 24:17. q Ex. 21:13. s Heb. a stone of the hand. r 12:21,27. Deut. 19:6,12. Josh. 20:3,5.

murder, and to provide the more effectually for the punishment of the murderer, the prosecution and execution, by ancient custom, devolved upon the nearest relation, or next heir, or "the redeemer" (so the word rendered *avenger* signifies); the very person to whom the right of redemption belonged; who in notorious cases might pursue the criminal any whither, and execute vengeance without the formalities of a trial. This custom, under certain restrictions, was sanctioned by the divine law: for it must be supposed, that the avenger was not authorized to put any one to death on mere suspicion; as the magistrates and congregation might not inflict this punishment, except the fact was proved by the testimony of two witnesses. (Note, 24-30.) But, even if the person was certainly known, an equitable and merciful provision was also made, for the security of those who had unintentionally shed blood. Six cities were appointed in different parts of the land, to which they might flee for refuge and be safe, until they had a fair trial before the proper magistrates. One or other of these cities would lie within half a day's journey of every part of the land. It would rarely occur that the avenger of blood would be on the spot, and none else had a right to assault or detain the manslayer; at least if no malicious intention was manifest. These unhappy men would therefore generally get the start of their adversaries, and very few of them be overtaken before they gained the place of refuge. But then they must leave their families, employments, and most important interests, and dearest comforts; and they must neither loiter, nor yield to weariness, nor regard difficulties, nor slacken their pace, till they had got safe within the walls of the city; which secured them, in virtue of the divine institution, and not by its own natural strength.—The Jewish writers inform us, that, to afford every facility to those who thus fled for their life, the road to these cities was always preserved in good repair; and way-posts, inscribed REFUGE, were placed wherever needful, that they might not so much as hesitate for a moment. All strangers, i. e. sojourners, whether proselytes or not, were allowed the

19 The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him he shall slay him.

20 But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait that he die;

21 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death: for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer when he meeteth him.

22 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait;

23 Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him that he die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm:

24 Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood, according to these judgments;

25 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high-priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.

26 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the borders of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled;

27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood:

28 Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high-priest: but after the death of the high-priest, the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.

29 So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you, throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.

a Gen. 4:5,8. 2 Sam. 3:27. 13:22,25,29. 20:10. 1 Kings 2:5,6,32,33. Prov. 26:24, 28:17. Luke 4:29. 1 Sam. 18:10,11,25. 19:9-12. 20:1. 23:7-9. 24:11. Ps. 10:7-10. 11:2. 35:7,8. 57:4-6. Prov. 1:18,19. Mark 6:19,24-28. Acta 20:3. 23:21. u 11. Ex. 21:13. 1. Ir. 19:5. Josh. 20:3,5. x See on 12. y 28. Josh. 20:6. Rom. 3:24-26. Eph. 2:16-18. Heb. 4:14-16. 7:25-26. 9:12-15. 10:19-22. z Ex. 28:7. Lev. 8:12. 21:10. h Heb. no blood shall be to him. Ex. 22:2. Deut. 19:10. i John 15:4-6. Acta 11:23. 27:31. Heb. 3:14. 6:4-8. 10:26-30. 39. j Heb. 9:11,12,15-17. k See on 27:1. l Deut. 17:6,7. 19:15. Matt. 18:16. John 8:17, 18. 2 Cor. 13:1. 1 Tim. 5:19. Heb. 10:28. Rev. 11:3.

benefit of this provision: for the tradition of the Jews, that none but proselytes were intended, most evidently contradicts the text. The region eastward of Jordan was nearly as long as that to the west of the river, and therefore three cities were appointed in each division.

V. 16-23. The several instances here adduced on each side, in order to illustrate the grand principle of the law, and the difference between the unfortunate manslayer and the murderer, are not intended to mark the distinction between sudden anger and malice premeditated; (which latter is indeed an aggravation, but not essential to murder:) but between intentionally striking a man with any weapon likely to cause death, or in wrath from hatred, or with a design of doing him injury; and an unintentional blow, at unawares, and without seeking his harm, which alone is here considered as manslaughter.—(Note, Deut. 19:2-10.)

V. 24-30. After the manslayer had been received into the city of refuge, the avenger of blood could only act as prosecutor; and the magistrates, in the presence of the people, were appointed to decide the cause according to the rules here laid down. Probably the accused person was tried at or near the place, where the deceased had been slain, and where evidence could most easily be brought: and in case he was acquitted by the decision of the judges, and with the approbation of the people, he was conveyed back to the city of refuge, where he was protected, as a kind of prisoner at large, till the death of the high-priest; when the public loss, and the grief occasioned by it, might be supposed to swallow up all personal regrets and resentments: and then he was permitted to return to his house and estate. But if, in the meanwhile, he ventured to leave the city, and the avenger met him and slew him, he was supposed to merit his doom, by thus neglecting the appointment of God for his preservation, and the avenger must not be punished. This shows that in other cases, if the avenger slew an innocent man, on surmise, he was liable to the punishment of a murderer.—But if, by the testimony of two credible witnesses, the man

31 Moreover, ^{ye} shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is ^{his} guilt of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

32 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are; for blood, it defileth the land: the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

34 ^{Defile} not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD ^{do} dwell among the children of Israel.

^{Gen 9:5,6. Ex 21:14. Deut. 19:11-13. 2 Sam. 12:13. 1 Kings 2:28-34. Ps. 51:14,16. * Heb. faultily to die. f Acts 4:12. Gal. 2:21. 3:10-13,22. Rev. 5:9. g Lev. 18:25. i eut. 21:1-8,23. 2 Kings 3:25. 24:4. Ps. 106:38. Is. 26:21. Ez. 22:24-27. Hos. 4:2,3. Mic. 4:11. Matt. 23:35. Luke 11:50,51. 1 Heb. there can be no expiation for the land. h 5:3. Lev. 20:24-26. i Ps. 135:21.}

who had fled to the city of refuge (or any other person tried for murder), was adjudged guilty, he must, without fail, be put to death: yet if only one witness supported the charge, though he appeared guilty, he must not be thus punished.

V. 31-34. In case murder was proved against a man, no *atonement* or ransom might be accepted for his life; but, however otherwise distinguished, he must be put to death: nay, further, no atonement or compensation might purchase the manslayer the liberty of leaving the city of refuge, before the death of the high-priest! Because murder was to be considered, not so much as the private injury of an individual, as the crime of the nation, which could only be expiated by the death of the offender; and as defiling the land, till thus expiated. (*Note, Deut. 21:1-9.*) Does not this fully prove, that the connivance of our government, in the burning of widows and in human sacrifices, and in other species of murder committed in our East Indian dominions, under the pretext of an idolatrous religion, is wholly unjustifiable, and burthens our land and all connected with those distant regions, with the guilt of blood, not expiated by that of those who shed it?—The vengeance of God might be expected on the nation of Israel, if the magistrates and people neglected their duty in this respect; and especially, as to the land in which the Lord himself condescended to dwell by his temple and ordinances.

This remarkable law, expressive of the deepest detestation of murder, yet providing most effectually against the innocent being punished with the guilty, is likewise an instructive typical representation of the salvation of the gospel. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death is the judgment," with its eternal consequences. In the mean while, a REFUGE is provided and revealed in Christ Jesus. His ministers warn sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," and instruct and exhort them to "flee for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before them." All things are prepared for the reception of those who obey this call. By faith they discern both their danger and Refuge. Then fear urges and hope animates. Should death, like the avenger of blood, find them *without*, destruction is inevitable. All is at stake: this is their "one thing needful." Now no longer will they be amused, or bribed, or persuaded to loiter. Even their choicest earthly comforts, and most important temporal interests, appear comparatively worthless. They "count all but loss... that they may win Christ, and be found in him." They apply earnestly to him, and follow his instructions. They are welcomed into the Refuge which he hath provided. "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus:" but a trial must take place before the assembled world, by which those who have a right, as true believers, to this Refuge, will be distinguished from all who have only a dead faith. At present true believers abide in him, and cleave to him in the obedience of faith and love; and at length in virtue of the death of their great and gracious High-Priest; they will be restored to their forfeited inheritance.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. The provision which God hath appointed for his ministers, was not intended to pamper them in pride, sloth, or self-indulgence; and thus to disqualify them for their work, and teach them to dislike and despise it: but to free them from distracting care, and to leave them at leisure wholly to employ themselves in their important duties; and to seize every opportunity of conciliating the people, and gaining attention to their instructions. So that the grant, and the effect of it when properly used, were intended *ultimately* and *mainly* for the advantage of those who gave, not of those who received it. But the sinfulness of man's heart perverts the wisest constitutions, human and divine; and the abuse made, alas! by too many affords others a plausible pretext for neglecting their duty. Thus both are criminal, but they who furnish the excuse have the deeper guilt.—It is very profitable for the ministers of the gospel frequently to confer together. This tends to increase mutual love, and gives younger ministers especially the opportunity of profiting by the knowledge, experience, and observations of their seniors:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A difficulty shown by the Manassites respecting daughters inheriting. —5. Such must marry in their own tribe, 6-8. Zelophehad's daughters are married to the sons of their father's brother, 10-13.

AND the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel;

2 And they said, ^{The} LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD ^{to} give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters,

^{Is. 57:15. Hos. 9:3. 2 Cor. 6:15,17. Rev. 21:3,27. f 5:3. Ex. 25:8. 29:45,46. 1 Kings 6:13. Ps. 132:14. Is. 58:18. a 20:22-33. 27:1. Josh. 17:23. 1 Chr. 7:14-16. b 26:55,56. 27:1-7. 33:64. Josh. 13:6. 14:1,2. c 27:7. Josh. 17:3-6. Job 42:15.}

but *above all* they should pray much together, for each other *personally*, for a blessing on each other's labours, for a blessing on the word, and for the success of the gospel and the enlargement of the church, in every place. And when, with this advantage, access to a number of willing hearers can be obtained, a minister of Christ has abundant reason for content and thankfulness.—In the maintenance of the ministry, in the support of divine worship, in the provision for the poor, or in any other good work, equality and proportion should be considered, both by those who contribute, and those who receive; for that donation is *liberality* from the poorer, which is shamefully scanty in those of superior affluence.

V. 9-34. It is very important in the administration of justice, that the guilty should not escape, and that the innocent should not suffer: and though the prosecution and execution of criminals be a painful, and in many cases an odious employment; yet it is necessary, and therefore it is a duty which should be performed by those concerned, from regard to public justice, and the welfare of society. This is especially the case with murder in all its forms, and under all disguises, which so pollutes the land, that nothing but the blood of the murderer, whatever be his rank or quality can cleanse it. Alas! that unscriptural and absurd distinctions, and concessions to the maxims of proud ungodly men, should cause so many atrocious murders to pass unpunished, the guilt of which, with accumulating weight will, it is seriously to be apprehended, help to sink this nation into destruction!—this nation which hath so long been favoured in a peculiar manner in God's providence, and where he hath so long dwelt by his word and ordinances; but which, infidelity, profaneness, and licentiousness, threatening to deluge all before them, mark to be ripening apace for ruin; except, in answer to the prayers of the remnant of his people, "the Spirit of the LORD lift up a standard against them!" Let us all then with one consent present our supplications in behalf of our beloved country, that reformation and a general revival of pure religion may avert the judgments of God.—The restrictions, dangers, and inconveniences, which *unintentional* bloodshed occasioned, should impress us with horror at the thought of even heedlessly occasioning death; and should increase our caution and circumspection, as well as watchfulness over our passions, and also our earnestness in praying to be preserved from such a calamity.—But, above all, let sinners take warning without delay to flee for refuge to Jesus Christ, whatever they renounce, venture, and suffer: let them not stop short, turn back, or loiter: let them not fear a repulse; for the Refuge is appointed for the purpose of receiving all such, as are sensible of their danger, and flee to lay hold on the hope set before them, how vile soever they have been. Let them abide in Christ, and show their faith by a thankful obedience to him, who died for sinners, and rose again: let them be careful not to pervert this refuge by encouraging themselves in unrepented sin; and let them wait the appointed time, and they shall certainly at length be restored to liberty, and reinstated in their forfeited inheritance. The Lord grant that neither the writer, nor any of the readers, may be "of those who draw back unto perdition;" but that we all may be "of those who believe to the saving of the soul!"

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1-12. It does not appear that Manasseh left any son but Machir, or Machir any son but Gilead; from whose posterity, in different families, this whole numerous tribe had sprung. To one division of it a portion had been assigned eastward of Jordan: but Zelophehad was of that division, to which an inheritance was afterwards allotted west of Jordan; yet, expecting the promised land, the elders of the Manassites proposed a difficulty, upon the adjudged case of Zelophehad's daughters. (*Notes, 27:1-11.*)—If the females should inherit, in defect of male issue, and should intermarry with other tribes, they would diminish the interest and weaken the influence of their own tribes, and give occasion to future confusion, and perhaps contention. The Manassites therefore referred the case to Moses; and he, by the authority of God, annexed a clause, which would effectually keep the tribes and inheritances distinct, as long as it was observed. Heirs were not allowed to marry

3 And if they be married to any of the sons of the *other* tribes of the children of Israel; then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.

4 And when ^{the} jubilee of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.

5 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, according to the word of the Lord, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph ^{hath} said well.

6 This is the thing which the Lord doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them ^{marry} to whom they think best; ^{only} to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.

7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of

the children of Israel shall ^{keep} himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

8 And ^{every} daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.

9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from *one* tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.

10 ¶ Even ^{has} the Lord commanded Moses, ^{to} did the daughters of Zelophehad:

11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brother's sons.

12 And they were married ^{into} the families of the sons of Manasseh, the son of Joseph; and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

13 These ^{are} the commandments and the judgments, which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel, ⁱⁿ the plains of Moab by Jordan *near* Jericho.

* Heb. unto whom they shall be. d Lev. 25:10—18, 23. Is. 61:2. Luke 4:18, 19. e 27:7. Deut. 5:23. f Heb. be wives. g 12. Gen. 24:57, 58. h Heb. cleave to. i 9. 1 Kings 21:3. j 1 Chr. 23:32. k Ex. 39:42, 43. Lev. 24:23. 2 Chr. 30:12.

Matt. 28:20. 127:1. § Heb. to some that were of the families. k Lev. 7:37, 38. 11:46. 13:59. 14:54—57. 15:32, 33. 27:34. 126:3. 33:50. 35:1.

out of their own tribe, though within those bounds they might consult their own inclinations. Probably there had been some prospect of Zelophehad's daughters marrying into another tribe; as both their character and expected inheritance would induce overtures from different quarters: but when the will of God was declared, all parties acquiesced, and they were married to their *own cousins*; not out of necessity, for there were many thousands within the assigned limits; but by choice, and perhaps because these were the next heirs of the family; and we may hence learn that there is nothing improper in such marriages, as it has often been groundlessly supposed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No laws, however excellent, express, or multiplied, can reach every particular case which may arise; and still room will be left for the exercise of sound judgment and common sense. But when these are regulated according to the true meaning of the word of God, and in dependence on divine teaching, they will guide us through all perplexities, as far as our immediate duty is concerned. Yet the Lord frequently eaves us to feel our difficulties, that we may be habituated

to reflect, to search the Scriptures, and to trust him more simply.—All our inclinations ought to be subjected to the will of God; and in contracting marriage, future consequences to posterity, as well as to ourselves and our connexions, should be taken into consideration.—The Scriptures indeed suppose that esteem, affection, and preference, are requisite in this important relation; but they know nothing of that irrational, ungovernable, and idolatrous passion, which regardless of all consequences, and in defiance of all authority, rushes headlong upon gratification; which is neither moderated by discretion, nor subordinated to the will of God; which is not rational esteem, nor tender friendship, nor congenial affection, but something vastly more rapturous, unintelligible, and undefinable; and which, with all its refinements, is inconsistent with common sense, the interests of society, the happiness of domestic life, and the Christian religion.—Finally, though it is prudent to foresee and prevent disputes about temporal property, it would be better if we were equally quicksighted and attentive in respect of our spiritual and eternal interests. But “the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.”

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

DEUTERONOMY.

THIS BOOK is named by the Jews, as in some former instances, from one of the first words (דברים). Some however, call it, *The Book of Reprehensions*, from the reproofs contained in it: others style it *Torah* (תורה), or *the Law*; and *Misna* (משנה), 17:18. Heb.) which is nearly the same as *Deuteronomy*, the name taken from the Septuagint in our version; which signifies a *second law*, or a *repetition of the law*. Indeed several of the laws before given are repeated: sometimes with further explanations, and enforced by the most animated and pathetic exhortations and expostulations; and therefore Moses generally speaks in the first person, and directly addresses the people. In the former books he spoke as a lawgiver, merely declaring the statutes, which God had delivered to him. But here he is more generally a preacher, enforcing on a new generation, the laws before given, with illustrations, warnings, exhortations, and persuasions, frequently in the highest style of simple pathetic eloquence. The most remarkable events of the preceding history are likewise recapitulated, and applied to practical purposes. These repetitions were peculiarly proper, in his circumstances; and the way in which Moses applied them, was exceedingly adapted to leave a deep and durable impression on the hearts and consciences of the people.—But several new laws are likewise added, and various other things not before mentioned.—The last two months of Moses's life, which he knew to be his concluding scene, were employed in delivering and committing to writing the several parts of this book; so that it contains his dying exhortations to Israel: and his active zeal for the glory of God, and fervent love to his people, with the various methods which he employed for their benefit in his concluding days, are very remarkable.—Having reminded them of the Lord's dealings with their fathers and with them, and of their past rebellions, he enforced obedience to all his commandments with unequalled pathos and energy, and almost from every imaginable motive. He set before them, in prophetic blessings and curses, the consequences of their conduct; and gave directions for writing the law on pillars of stone, and ratifying its principal parts in a most extraordinary manner, from mount Ebal and mount Gerizim. (27:)—He then formed the substance of his instructions, exhortations, and warnings, into a prophetic song (31:32);—and finally pronounced blessings, evidently prophetic, on their several tribes. (33:)—Thus far the book was no doubt written by him, and has every mark of being genuine; but at the close some other person informs us, that Moses having ascended mount Nebo, viewed the promised land, and died, and was buried by the Lord himself, and lamented by Israel thirty days. (34:)—It is an honourable circumstance to this portion of Scripture, that our Lord took all the texts from it, with which he baffled Satan's temptations: and it is in both testaments quoted as the work of Moses, and the word of God. (1 Kings 2:3. 2 Chr. 2:4. Dan. 9:13. Matt. 4:4, 7, 10. John 1:45. Acts 3:22. 7:37. Rom. 10:6, 8. 1 Cor. 9:9. Gal. 3:10—13.—The prophecies also contained in it are most explicit and numerous, and unanswerably demonstrate its divine origin. They have been evidently fulfilling during a course of above three thousand years; and yet some of them remain unaccomplished. Of this the reader will judge for himself on carefully considering the Notes on the chapters here referred to. (4:18; 29:29; 31:29; 33:)

CHAPTER I.

Moses, toward the end of the fortieth year of Israel's continuance in the wilderness, addresses the people, 1-5. He relates how the Lord directed them to leave Horeb, 6-8; and appointed him assistants in the government, 9-13; how they passed the desert to Kadesh-barnea, and sent spies to search the land; and through their report, brought on themselves the sentence of exclusion from the promised land, by their unbelief, 13-46.

THESE be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel, on this side Jordan, in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

2 (There are eleven days' journey from Horeb, by the way of mount Seir, unto Kadesh-barnea.)

3 And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them;

4 After he had said Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei:

5 On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,

6 The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:

7 Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea-side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

8 Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them, and to their seed after them.

[Practical Observations.]

■ Num. 32:5, 19, 32; 34:15, 35:14, Josh. 9:1, 10, 22:4, 7. * Or, Zuph, b 33:2, Gen. 21:21, Num. 10:12, 12:16, 13:3, 26, 1 Sam. 25:1, Hab. 3:3, c Num. 11:35, 33:17, 18, d 44, 2:4, 8, Num. 20:17-21, e 2:14, 9:23, Num. 13:26, 22:8, Josh. 14:6, f Num. 20:1, 33:38, g 2:28-37, 31-41, Num. 21:21-35, Josh. 12:2-6, 13:10-12, Neh. 9:22, Ps. 135:11, 136:19, 20, h 4:8, 17:18, 19, 31:9, 32:16, 1:9, 2, Ex. 31, 17:6, k Ex. 19:12, Num. 10:11-13, l Gen. 15:16-21, Ex. 23:31, Num. 34:3-12, Josh. 24:15, Am. 2:9, l Heb. all his neighbours, m 11:1, Josh. 10:40, 11:16, 17, n 11:24, Josh. 1:4, 2 Sam. 8:3, l Chr. 5:9, 18:3, * Heb. given, o Gen. 12:7, 13:14, 15:16, 17:7, 8, 26:3, 4, 28:13, p Ex. 18:18, Num. 11:1-14, 17, q 10:12, 29:92, Ex. 16:5, 22:17, 28:14, Ex. 12:37, 32:13, Num. 1:46, l Chr. 2:7, Neh. 9:23, r 2 Sam. 24:3, l Chr. 21:3, Ps. 115:14, s Gen. 49:25, Num. 6:27, 22:12, t 9, Ex. 18:13-16, Num. 11:1-15, l Kings

9 ¶ And I spake unto you at that time, saying, ¶ I am not able to bear you myself alone:

10 The Lord your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

11 (The Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

12 How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

13 Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.

17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

19 ¶ And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.

20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto

3:8, 9, Pa. 89:19, 2 Cor. 2:16, 3:5, 5 Heb. give, u Ex. 18:21, Num. 11:15, 17, Acts 1:21-23, 6:2-6, x 16:18, Ex. 18:35, 26, ¶ Heb. gave, Eph. 4:11, y Num. 31:14, 1 Sam. 8:12, 17:16, 22:7, z 27:11, 31:14, Num. 27:19, l Thes. 2:11, l Tim. 5:21, 6:17, l 18:19, Ex. 23:3, 37:8, Lev. 19:15, 2 Sam. 23:3, 2 Chr. 19:6-10, Pa. 38:1, John 7:24, h 10:18, 19, 24:14, Ex. 22:21, 23:9, Lev. 23:32, c 10:17, l 1 Sam. 16:7, 2 Sam. 14:14, Prov. 21:23, Luke 22:31, Acts 10:34, 35, Rom. 2:11, Eph. 9, Col. 3:25, Jam. 2:3, 9, 1 Pet. 1:17, ¶ Heb. acknowledge faces, d Ex. 23:3, 6:7, l Sam. 12:3, 4, Job 22:6-9, 29:11-17, 31:13-16, Pa. 82:3, 4, 1 rov. 22:22, 23, Jer. 5:23, 29, Am. 5:11, 12, Mic. 2:1-3, 3:1-4, 7:3, 4, Jam. 2:2-4, 6, e l Kings 2:8-14, Job 31:34, 1 rov. 29:25, Matt. 22:16, Mark 12:14, l Thes. 2, 4, f 2 Chr. 19:6, g 17:8-10, Ex. 18:18, 26, h 4:14, 12:23, 32, Matt. 23:20, Acts 20:20, 27, 18:15, 32:10, Num. 10:12, Jer. 2:6, k See on 2, Num. 13:26,

consequences of obedience, and from the experience of former years.

V. 6-8. Moses, being about to recapitulate some remarkable particulars of the preceding narrative, as introductory to his exhortations, began with Israel's departure from Horeb. They had continued there almost a year: and as the law had then been given, and the worship at the tabernacle fully instituted; they needed to stay there no longer, but go directly, (as on a journey rather than a warfare,) and possess the promised land; both that which was more properly called Canaan, and also the other countries even to the Euphrates. (Notes, Num. 10:11-13, 31.)

V. 11. In rather more than two hundred years, the people had multiplied to much more than ten thousand times the number of which they had consisted! The promises of God did not limit their future increase, nor did the faith and prayer of Moses; for a large definite is taken for an indefinite number.—Under Pharaoh the increase of Israel excited jealousy and cruelty: (Note, Ex. 1:9, 10.) but Moses delighted in it, and prayed that it might be still far greater. This was a tacit proof of their murmurings and wishes to return into Egypt; and he evidently meant to remind them, that he sought not his own grandeur or advantage, but their good; and that in the most laborious, patient, and disinterested manner. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 12-18. The counsel, here referred to, seems to have been suggested by Jethro before the giving of the law. (Notes, Ex. 18:13-26.) Moses in consequence proposed it to the Lord, who approved it; and then, with the concurrence of the people, it at length took place about the time when they departed from Horeb, and at no great distance from that of the appointment of the seventy elders. (Notes, Num. 11:16-30.) The captains, however, must have been distinct from the elders, and much more numerous: being according to the number of the thousands and hundreds, over whom they probably presided in a civil and military capacity, yet with subordination; and therefore the superiors of them might be called judges. Or these judges might be the seventy elders appointed soon afterwards.

V. 22-28. (Notes, and P. O. Num. 13:14.) The people proposed this measure from unbelief; Moses mistaking their intention, approved of it; and the Lord, being justly displeased,

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1. "The words," as here mentioned, seem to mean the subsequent exhortations which Moses delivered to the principal persons in Israel, that they might make them known in their several tribes and families. Perhaps he spake some of the principal passages many times over to the people in general, assembled in large companies for that purpose: but there is no ground to suppose that his voice was miraculously rendered audible to the whole nation at once, as some have asserted.—The names of places, here mentioned, seem intended to mark out the spot, where Israel was encamped, as contiguous to all of them: but it is not easy to make this out. The marginal reading, Zuph, instead of "the Red Sea," seems preferable, as there is nothing in the original for sea. Probably Zuph was a place in the country of Moab. (Note, Num. 21:11-15.) There might also be other places called Paran and Hazeroth, besides those before read of, which were remote from the present encampment of Israel.—The word rendered "on this side," may mean at the passage of Jordan. No doubt the eastern side was intended.

Red Sea.] כספיר, Num. 21:14.—Zuph (marg.) would more properly be Suph; as it is spelt with Samech, not Zain. This confirms the opinion above stated, that the clause, rendered "the Red Sea," means the same place in Moab which is mentioned in Num. 21:14.

V. 2. This seems to have been introduced to remind the Israelites, that their own misconduct alone had occasioned their tedious wanderings: otherwise they might long before have been settled in peaceable possession of Canaan; as in eleven days they might have marched from Horeb to the borders of the land.—It does not appear, that the march of Israel from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, at the first, took up much time. (6-8, 19, 20. Num. 10:12, 13. 13:3, 26. 14:25, 32:5.)

V. 5. This law.] The word law is at some times used with considerable latitude, and at others with more exact precision, which is generally perceivable from the context. This book does not contain another law, distinct from that of the foregoing books: and it is evident it comprises much more than a repetition of the law before given. "This law" must therefore mean the commands of God, enforced by arguments deduced from their reasonableness and authority, from the

the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us.

21 Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee: ^a“fear not, neither be discouraged.

22 And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, ^a“We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe.

24 And ^athey turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, ^aIt is a good land which the LORD our God doth give us.

26 Notwithstanding ^aye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God.

27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because ^athe LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have ^adiscouraged our heart, saying, ^a“The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and, moreover, ^awe have seen the sons of the Anakims there.

29 Then I said unto you, ^a“Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

30 The LORD your God which goeth before you, ^ahe shall fight for you, ^aaccording to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes:

31 And ^ain the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God ^abare thee as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

32 Yet in this thing ^aye did not believe the LORD your God,

33 Who went ^ain the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents ^ain, in fire by

night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

34 And the LORD heard the voice of your words and was wroth, ^aand sware, saying,

35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers;

36 Save ^aCaleb the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath ^awholly followed the LORD.

37 Also ^athe LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, ^aThou also shalt not go in thither.

38 But ^aJoshua the son of Nun, ^awhich standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: ^a“encourage him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

39 Moreover, ^ayour little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, ^awhich in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

40 But ^aas for you, ^aturn ye, and take your journey into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea.

41 Then ye answered and said unto me, ^a“We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.

42 And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, ^aGo not up, neither fight: ^a“for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.

43 So I spake unto you, and ye would not hear, ^abut rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and ^awent presumptuously up into the hill.

44 And the Amorites which dwell in that mountain, came out against you, and ^achased you as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, ^aeven ^aunto Hormah.

45 And ^aye returned, and wept before the LORD: but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.

46 So ye abode ^ain Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode there.

¹ See on 7.8. m 20:1. Num. 13:30. 14:8,9. Josh. 1:9. Ps. 27:1—3. 45:1,7,11. Is. 41:10. 43:1,2. Luke 12:32. Heb. 13:6. ^a See on Num. 13:1—20. ^a See on Num. 14:2—37. Josh. 2:1,2. p Num. 14:1—4. Ps. 105:24,25. Is. 63:10. Acts 7:31. q 9:25. E. 16:35. Num. 11:3. 21:5. Mat. 23:24. Luke 20:21. ^a Heb. 10:22. 2.8. ^a See on 1.1. ^a See on 10:11,24. marg. 14:8. Is. 13:7. Ez. 21:7. r 9:1. Num. 11:25—34. s 2. Ism. 11:2. 15:14. Jude. 1:10,20. 2 Sam. 21:16—22. 1 Chr. 9:21. ^a See on 1.1. Is. 11:11,25. Josh. 10:2. 1 Sam. 17:45,46. 2 Chr. 11:11,12. 22:5. Neh. 1:2. Ps. 45:11. Is. 8:9,10. Rom. 8:1. E. 7:15. Ps. 78:11—13,43—51. 105:27—32. y Ez. 16:17. Neh. 9:12—23. Ps. 78:11—25. 105:31—41. s 21:12. Ez. 19:4. Num. 11:11,12,15. Is. 40:31. 63:9. Hos 11:3,4. Acts 13:16. marg. a 2 Chr. 20:20. Ps. 78:22. 105:24. Is. 7:9. Jer. 1:14,15,19. Jude 5. B. Ex. 13:21. Num. 10:33. Ps. 77:20. Ez. 20:6. c Ex. 13:21,22. 14:19.

permitted them to follow their own counsel, which proved injurious to them only through their sin and folly. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 29—31. Moses, in bitterness of spirit, when greatly tried, had hastily spoken, as if he had been required to bear Israel as a man does his son; (*Note, Num. 11:11—15.*) but he here tacitly retracted it, and allowed that the Lord himself had thus borne or carried them.—The arguments, which he at that time used with them, taken from their past experience of God's powerful protection and tender care, are here adduced, though not related in the account of these transactions.

V. 32—36. Moses here addressed another generation, and not that which had been sentenced, for unbelief and disobedience, to fall in the wilderness: but many of them might be concerned, though not at that time of age; the rest in general showed a disposition to imitate the sin of their fathers; and they formed the same nation, the same body corporate, though not the same individuals. (*Notes, Ex. 13:21,22. 40:36—38. Num. 14:22—24.*)

V. 37. It was natural for Moses here to introduce this subject, though the event took place many years after that, of which he was discoursing: for it would occur to his mind that he also was excluded, and thus involved in the general sentence, in consequence of a temptation which the unbelief of the people had laid in his way. This he mentioned, not to excuse himself but to humble them; and remind them, that they heard the words of a dying man, and of one to whose death they had been accessory. (*Note, Num. 20:10—13.*)

V. 39—44. (*Note Num. 14:31—45.*) Bees with their fierce stings attack such as offend them, and are not easily induced to desist; so that they assault, and have been known to kill, both men and cattle that approached their hives.

V. 45. *Note, Heb. 12:15—17.*

V. 46. It is nowhere said how long Israel continued at Kadesh-barnea: but they had encamped there during many

20:24. 40:34—36. Num. 9:15—22. 10:11,12. 14:14. Neh. 9:12. Ps. 78:14. 105:39. Is. 45:6. Zech. 2:5. d 2:14,15. Num. 14:22—30. 32:8—13. Ps. 95:11. Ez. 20:15. Heb. 3:8—11. e Num. 13:6,30. 26:65. 32:12. 34:19. Josh. 14:6—14. Judg. 1:12. 2:15. 1. Heb. fulfilled to go after. Num. 14:24. 13:28. 4:21. 24:4. Num. 20:12. 27:14. 105:33. g s 2 on Num. 13:8,16. 14:30,38. 26:65. e Ex. 17:9—14. 24:13. 33:11. 1 Sam. 16:22. Prov. 22:29. 13:28. 31:7,8,14,23. Num. 27:18—23. Josh. 1:1,6—9. k Num. 14:31. 11:7,15,16. Jer. 4:11. Rom. 9:11. Eph. 2:3. m See on Num. 14:25. n See on Num. 14:39,40. 22:34. Prov. 19:3. o Num. 14:41,42. p Lev. 25:17. Josh. 7:24—13. 1 Sam. 4:2,10. Is. 30:17. 59:1,2. Hos. 9:12. q Is. 63:10. Acts 7:51. Rom. 8:7,8. 1. Heb. ye were presumptuous, and went up. Num. 14:43. r 28:25. 32:30. Ps. 118:12. Is. 7:18. a Num. 14:35. 21:3. 1. Ps. 78:34. Heb. 12:17. u Num. 14:25,34. 20:1,22. Judg. 11:16,17.

days, before they were sentenced to return by the way of the Red Sea; and they remained there many days afterwards.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. The faithful servants of the Lord, with advancing years and experience, frequently acquire increasing reputation for wisdom, integrity, and disinterested philanthropy, as well as pious zeal for the glory of God. This adds to their influence, and gives weight to their instructions; and when favoured with health, they may, with vast advantage, redouble their diligence in enforcing the truths, which they before had taught, upon the consciences of the people, that they may have them in remembrance after their decease. (*Note, 2 Pet. 1:12—15.*) While they draw nearer to the heavenly world, they often seem to breathe a purer air, and all their words have a heavenly savour; their motion accelerates, as they approach their rest; their earnestness increases, when they can be influenced by no earthly motive; and their confidence and comfort acquire strength, in defiance of the approaching king of terrors. Under such circumstances their instructions are doubly impressive, and frequently have a durable effect upon the survivors. They should then seize every occasion of reminding the people of the wisdom, power, truth, and love of God, as manifested in his dealings with them; and there are times when they may also, consistently with deep humility, speak of their own conduct, their love to souls, their faithful labours, their self-denial, and patient sufferings in the arduous work about which they are engaged; in order to obviate prejudice, and to obtain a more favourable attention to further exhortations. But it is likewise necessary to show the people their transgressions, that they may be duly humbled; to warn them against the fatal effects of unbelief and sin; to point out the advantages of confidence in God and obedience to him; and to unite confessions of their own imperfection and sinfulness, (37) both to avoid giving needless

CHAPTER II.

Moses reminds the people of the command given them not to meddle with Edom, Moab, or Ammon: he introduces some fragments of very ancient history; and touches on the continuance of Israel during forty years in the wilderness, till the rebellious generation was dead, 1-23. The grant and conquest of the kingdom of Sihon, 24-31.

THEN we turned and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed mount Seir many days.

2 And the LORD spake unto me, saying,

3 Ye have compassed this mountain ^{along} enough: turn you northward.

4 And command thou the people, saying, ^{Ye are} to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore.

5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, ^{no} not so much as a foot-breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.

6 Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.

7 For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.

8 And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned, and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

9 And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of their land for a posses-

sion, because I have given ^{Ar} unto the children of Lot for a possession.

10 The Emims dwell therein in times past, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakims;

11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.

12 The Horims also dwell in Seir before-time: but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead, as Israel did unto the land of his possession which the LORD gave unto them.

13 Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered.

14 And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD swore unto them.

15 For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.

16 ¶ So it came to pass when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,

17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying,

18 Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day.

19 And when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon any possession, because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.

20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwell therein in old time, and the Ammonites call them Zamzummims;

a 1:40. Num. 14:25. b 1:2. Num. 21:4. Judg. 11:18. c 7:14. 1:6. d 23:7. Num. 20:14-21. Oh. 10-13. e Ex. 16:15. Num. 22:34. 24:14-18. f Matt. 5:16. Luke 12:15. Eph. 5:13. Thil. 2:15. Col. 4:5. * Heb. even to the treading of the sole of the foot. Acts 7:5. g 32:8. Gen. 36:8. Josh. 24:4. 2 Chr. 20:10-12. Jer. 7:5. Dan. 4:25, 32. Acts 17:26. h 23:29. Num. 20:19. Matt. 7:12. Rom. 12:17. 2 Ths. 3:7, 8. i Gen. 12:2. 24:35. 26:12. 30:27. 39:5. k Job 23:10. Ps. 1:6. 31:7. John 10:17. 18:24. 29:5. Neh. 9:21. Luke 24:35. m Num. 20:20, 21. Judg. 11:18. 1 Kings 9:25. 2 Kings 14:22. 16:6. ¶ Or, use no hostility against Moab. Num. 22:4. Judg. 11:17. 2 Chr. 20:10. o See on 5. Num. 21:15.

23. p 19. Gen. 19:36, 37. Ps. 83:8. q 11. Gen. 14:5. r See on 1:28, 9:2. Num. 13:22, 28. s 22. Gen. 14:6. 36:20-30. 1 Chr. 1:38-42. t Heb. inherited them. Gen. 36:31-43. 1 Chr. 1:43-54. § Heb. room. t 32-37. 3:1-11. Num. 21:21, &c. ¶ Or, valley. Num. 19:33. marg. u Num. 21:12. Zered. x 12:19, 46. Num. 13:26. y 1:34, 35. Num. 14:25-25. 26:54. 65. 32:11. Ps. 78:33. 90:3. 106:26. Ex. 20:15. 1 Chr. 10:5. Heb. 3:8-19. Jude 5. z Judg. 2:15. 1 Sam. 5:6, 9, 11. 7:13. Ps. 32:4. 90:7-9. Is. 66:14. a See on Num. 21:15, 23. Is. 15:1. b See on 5:9. Gen. 19:38. Judg. 11:13-27. 2 Chr. 20:10. c Gen. 14:5. Zuzims.

offence, to suggest encouragement, and to excite personal humiliation.

V. 9-16. It is exceedingly profitable for us frequently to meditate on the history of our past lives, and to set apart time for that purpose; to divide our years into distinct periods; to review them separately; to give thanks for the mercies of each successive period; and to confess and seek forgiveness of all our sins, as far as we remember them: and thus endeavouring to revive suitable affections, with earnest prayers and simple dependence on the Lord, to renew our acceptance of his salvation, and the surrender of ourselves to his service.—Without repeating the observations before made on the history here recapitulated, we may take notice in general that nothing but total unbelief, and the disobedience connected with it, can exclude any sinner from the promised rest; that unbelief, partially operating in disobedience, occasions manifold abatements and delays in our comforts; that our own expedients seldom avail to much good purpose, that courage, in the exercise of faith and the path of duty, enables the possessor to follow the LORD wholly, to disregard all obstructions, to triumph over all opposition, and to seize the promised blessings; that all the mercies which we receive render our distrust more inexcusable; that the sins of some are the temptations of others, and tend to involve them in guilt and punishment; that worldly sorrow is seldom better than impatience and rebellion and unbelief, and thus worketh death; and that they who do not exercise godly sorrow in due time, and obey the call of mercy, must weep with bitter unavailing sorrow, when the sentence of condemnation is irrevocably past. Finally, we may observe, that every public and honourable trust implies a very heavy and laborious duty, and that frequently the duty is particularly described in Scripture.—Happy is it for themselves, and for those around them, when men diligently search out such passages as describe their duties, and show what manner of persons they ought to be, in that station of life in which the providence of God has placed them: while they seriously meditate on them, and pray over them; and then in the fear of God, as under his eye, and with reference to the day of judgment, endeavour to regulate their public and private conduct according to them.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 3. Here again an almost total silence is observed, concerning more than thirty-seven years of the time which the Israelites passed in the wilderness. (Note, Num. 20:1.) We may however suppose, that Moses, Aaron, and the priests and Levites, were diligently employed in instructing the people; and that many even “of them

whose carcasses fell in the wilderness,” were thus prepared for heaven; while the survivors were humbled and proved, in order to their entrance into the promised land. In the mean time the Canaanites, elated with their first success, and perceiving their dreaded invaders entangled in the wilderness, grew more insolent and daring in wickedness, and ripened apace for destruction.

V. 4-7. On comparing this passage with the texts referred to in the margin, it appears that the Edomites refused the Israelites a passage into the heart of their country, but allowed them to march through some parts of the confines; and that they generally sold them provisions, though perhaps in some instances they refused to do it. (Note, Num. 20:14-21.)—The manna was still continued; yet the people would naturally desire change of diet when they came near cultivated regions. This they might purchase of the Edomites, but they were not permitted to plunder, because God himself had given mount Seir to the descendants of Esau for their inheritance. Nor had Israel any need to covet the possessions of Edom, seeing the Lord had noticed, guided, and guarded them during all their wanderings in the wilderness; and for forty years had blessed them with an abundant supply of every needful good.—Moses called the Edomites brethren, though they would not acknowledge or act according to that relation. Thus the Israelites were taught to forgive their enemies, before they were employed to execute vengeance on the enemies of the Lord; and to obey his command in leaving nations unmolested, before they fulfilled his word in dispossessing and destroying the Amorites and Canaanites. (Note, Num. 21:21-25.) It is also observable that the opposition of Edom is not here mentioned; for the Spirit, which spake by Moses, would not needlessly repeat grievances, but bury them in oblivion.

V. 10, 11. All the nations here mentioned appear to have been the posterity of Ham, who lay under the prophetic curse of Noah, which was thus executed upon this part of them by the Moabites and Edomites.

V. 12. Israel had at the time when Moses spake this, conquered Sihon and Og, and taken possession of their countries, as Edom had done to the Horims. (22. Note, Gen. 36:20.)

V. 15. Num. 16:45, 49. 21:6. 25:9.

V. 20-23. These fragments of ancient history were introduced to encourage the Israelites. If the Lord destroyed these gigantic people before the posterity of Lot, and of Esau; what cause had the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and

29 (As *the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir, and the Moabites which dwelt in Ar, did

37 Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not, *nor* unto any place of the river ^bJabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto whatsoever the LORD our God forbade us.

11–12. *u* See on Ex. 4:21. Num. 21:23. Josh. 11:19,20. Judg. 11:20. Rom. 9:17–18. *u* See, e.g., 1st. 48:18. 2nd. 24:18. 3rd. Num. 21:23, 30. Josh. 11:20, 23. Neh. 9:22. Jer. 120:7. 135:11. 136:19. 1st. 48:18. 2nd. 24:18. 3rd. Josh. 21:44. Judg. 1:4. 7:2. 9:29. 7:8. Josh. 10:30–42. c. 7:2,26. 20:16–18. Lev. 27:29. Num. 21:4. 2:3. Josh. 7:11. 8:25. 26:9,24. 11:4. 1 Sam. 15:3,8,9. *u* Heb. *every city of men, and women, and little ones*. d. 20:14. Num. 31:9–11. *u* Josh. 8:27. e. 3:12. 4:4. 38. Josh. 13:9. 15. 17:2. Jer. 48:19. *u* Josh. 15:1. Ps. 44:3. 14. 41:15,16. Rom. 8:31. g. 5:9,19. 3:16. Judg. 11:15. *u* Josh. 32:22. Num. 21:24. Josh. 12:2.

The servants of God, while they despise worldly riches in comparison of a treasure in heaven, and often live and die poor, bequeath to their posterity the most durable possessions, in the blessings which God had promised to bestow upon them, for the sake of their parents.—“The earth is the Lord’s, and

the fulness thereof;" and with perfect justice, absolute sovereignty, and irresistible power, he assigns to every people the countries which they inhabit, and dispossesses them to make way for others, as he sees good: (*Notes*, 32:8.) but none can plead his grant to excuse the violence which ambition, rapacity, or revenge induce them to commit; though undesignedly they fulfil his secret purposes.—When nations or individuals are ripe for destruction, the Lord in awful judgment gives them up to final and total obduracy; and their deperate wickedness both occasions their ruin, and manifests his righteousness. Then the wic est are infuriated, and the boldest are intimidated; they tremble, and are in anguish, and perish, as instructive examples to the survivors.—But, calling off our attention from the enemies of God, to reflect upon his dealings with Israel, we are led to meditate upon years spent in vanity through our transgressions and his indignation. A succession of uninteresting events and changes, of trifling employments and pursuits, of disappointed expectations and unsatisfying enjoyments, wear out the life of man, and bring one generation after another to the grave. Indeed ever since the sentence was passed upon offending man, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," "the hand of the Lord hath been against us to destroy us until we are consumed;" nor can wisdom, learning, authority, wealth, courage, vigour of constitution, or eminence of reputation, procure any exemption or respite, in this universal execution: nay, even faith and piety plead in vain for another passage to the heavenly felicity. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* 5:1—4.)—What the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, his hand is engaged to perform. Wretched then are they who abide, and die, under the incumbent weight of that "wrath of God which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." (*Notes*, *Rom.* 1:17—20.) But happy those whom "Jesus hath delivered from the wrath to come," and to whom he hath "given the earnest of his Spirit in their hearts." "All things are theirs;" all the promises of God belong to them, and are ratified by covenant and by oath. His arm is engaged on their behalf to perform all his word: "He knows," guides, guards, and approves their path, while "walking through this great wilderness;" for the twenty, thirty, fifty, sixty, or even eighty years of their past lives, they have lacked nothing, but have had all with a peculiar blessing. (*Notes*, *Gen.* 48:15, 16. 49:18.) The Lord is their Portion, nor need they envy the prosperity, or covet the possession, of any worldling. He who hath prepared for them an incorruptible inheritance, and taught them in the first place to seek it, will provide for them all that is needful and profitable by the way. They have only to submit to his disposal; to depend on him; to abstain from what he forbids, and deny themselves when he requires it, in his providence or by his precept: to receive what he gives with thankfulness, and to use it with moderation, and to glorify him and adorn their profession, by an upright, generous, disinter-

CHAPTER III.

Israel's victory over Og king of Bashan, 1-11. His kingdom and that of them are given to the two tribes and a half, 12-17. The command given to Sihon and Joshua, 18-22. Moses prays to enter the promised land, but is refused; yet is permitted to see it, 23-29.

THEN we turned, and went up the way to Bashan; and ¹Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.

² And the LORD said unto me, ³Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, unto thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him ⁴as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

³ So ⁴the LORD our God delivered into our hands Og also the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining.

⁴ And we took ⁵all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, ⁶all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

⁵ All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns a great many.

⁶ And ⁷we utterly destroyed them, ⁸as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city.

⁷ But ⁸all the cattle and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

⁸ And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites, ⁹the land that was on this side Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon;

⁹ (*Which* Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it ¹⁰Shenir;)

¹⁰ All ¹¹the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salchah and ¹²Edrei, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

¹¹ For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants: behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; ¹²is it not in ¹³Rabbath of the children of Ammon? ¹⁴nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

¹² ¹⁵And this land *which* we possessed at that time, from Arero, which *is* by the river Arnon, and half mount Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites.

¹³ And ¹⁶the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, *being* the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe of Manasseh: ¹⁷all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants.

¹⁴ ¹⁸Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of ¹⁹Argob, unto the coasts of ²⁰Geshuri, and Maachathi, and called them after his own name, ²¹Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.

¹⁵ And I gave Gilead unto ¹⁶Maachir.

¹⁶ And unto ¹⁷the Reubenites, and unto the Gadites, I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon, half the valley, and the border, even unto the ¹⁸river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon;

¹⁷ The plain also, and Jordan and the coast thereof, from ¹⁹Chinnereth even unto ²⁰the sea of the plain *even* the salt sea, under ²¹Ashdod-pisgah eastward.

¹⁸ And ²²I commanded you at that time, saying, The LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all *that are* ²³meet for the war.

¹⁹ But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (*for* I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you;

²⁰ Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until* they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and *then* shall ye ²¹return every man unto his possession which I have given you.

²¹ And ²²I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings: ²³so shall the LORD do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest.

²² Ye shall not fear them; ²⁴for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

²³ And ²⁵I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

²⁴ O LORD God, thou hast begun to show thy servant ²⁶thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for ²⁷what god *is there* in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

²⁵ I pray thee let me go over and see ²⁸the good land that *is beyond* Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon.

²⁶ But ²⁹the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, ³⁰Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

²⁷ Get thee ³¹up into the top of ³²Pisgah, and lift up ³³thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold ³⁴it with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

²⁸ But ³⁵charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; ³⁶for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

²⁹ So we abode in the ³⁷valley over against Beth-peor.

a 1:4. 4:47. 29:7. 31:4. Num. 21:33-35. Josh. 9:10. 12:4. 13:30. 1 Kings 4:19. Neh. 9:2. Ps. 135:10. 111. 136:20. b 11. 20:3. Num. 14:9. 2 Chr. 20:17. Is. 41:10. 43:5. Acts 18:9. 27:24. Rev. 2:2. c 2:24-37. Num. 21:23-25. d See on 2:23, 24. Num. 21:35. Josh. 13:12, 30. e Num. 32:33-42. Josh. 12:4. 13:30, 31. f 1 Kings 4:13. g 1:28. Num. 13:28. Heb. 11:30. h See on 2:24. 20:16-18. Lev. 27:23, 29. Num. 21:2. Josh. 11:14. i See on 2:24. 12:25. Josh. 6:27. 11:11-14. k Num. 32:33-42. Josh. 12:2-6. 13:9-12. 14:48. Ps. 29:6. 89:12. 133:3. Cant. 4:8. m 1 Chr. 5:23. N. 27:5. ¹Senir. n 4:48. o Num. 21:33. Josh. 12:4. 13:12, 31. p 2 Sam. 12:26. Jer. 49:2. Ps. 21:20. Amos 1:14. ²Rehobah. q 1 Sam. 17:4. Am. 2:9. r 2:36. 4:48. Num. 32:33-38. Josh. 12:2-6. 13:9-12, 14-23. 2 Kings 10:33. s Num. 32:39-42. Josh. 13:29-32. 1 Chr. 5:23-26. t 1 Chr. 2:21-23. u See on 4. x Josh. 13:13. 2 Sam. 3:3. 10:6. 13:37. y Num. 32:41. z Gen. 50:23. Num. 25:29. Josh. 17:13. 22:7. a Num. 32:33-38. 2 Sam. 9:15. b 2:37. Gen. 32:22. Num. 21:24. Josh. 12:4. c See on Num. 34:11. Josh.

12:3. d 4:49. Gen. 13:10. 14:3. 19:28, 29. Num. 34:12. Josh. 3:16. 12:3. 15:2, 5. 18:19. e Or, the springs of Pisgah, or, the hill. Num. 23:14. f Num. 22:4-24. Josh. 1:12-15. 4:12, 13. 22:1-9. g 1 Heb. sons of power. h Josh. 22:4, 8. i Num. 27:18-23. h Josh. 10:25. j 1 Sam. 17:36, 37. Ps. 9:10. 2 Cor. 1:10. 12:10. Eph. 3:20. 2 Tim. 4:17, 18. 1 Th. 3:20. 20:4. Ex. 14:14. Num. 21:34. Josh. 10:42. 2 Chr. 13:12. 20:17, 29. Ps. 44:3. k 2 Cor. 12:8. 111:2. Neh. 9:32. Ps. 106:2. 145:3, 6. Jer. 32:18-21. m Ex. 15:11. 2 Sam. 7:22. Ps. 35:10. 71:19. 86:8. 89:6, 8. Is. 40:18, 25. Jer. 10:6. Dan. 3:29. n 4:21, 22. 11:11, 12. Ex. 3:8. Num. 32:5. Ex. 20:6. o 1:37. 31:2. 32:51. 32:34. Num. 30:7-12. 27:12-14. Ps. 106:32, 33. Is. 55:5. Matt. 26:39. p 1 Chr. 17:14, 12, 13. 22:7-9. 29:2-4. Matt. 20:22. 2 Cor. 12:6, 9. q 24:1-4. Num. 27:12. r Or, the hill. 17. s Gen. 13:14. 15. t 1 Chr. 31:7, 23. Num. 27:18-23. 1 Chr. 22:6, 11-16. 26:9, 10, 20. 1 Tim. 6:13, 14. 2 Tim. 2:1. 2:3. 4:1-6. j 1 Josh. 12:3. 3:7-17. John 1:17. Acts 7:45. Heb. 4:8. Jesus. u 4:3, 46. 34:6. Num. 25:3. 33:48, 49.

ested, forgiving, and blameless deportment, not injurious to their enemies, nor needlessly burdensome to their friends; and "by doing to all men, as they would they should do unto them." In this case, the vanity of the world cannot prevent their comfort, nor can its opposition interrupt the serenity of their minds: their inheritance cannot be affected by the revolutions of kingdoms, or the mutability of earthly possessions; death cannot hurt and need not alarm them; all will combine in preparing them for heaven, and giving them the anticipation, and introducing them to the enjoyment, of those pleasures which never satiate and will never end.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1-10. *Marg. Ref. Note, Num.* 21:34.

V. 11. It is probable that Og was descended from a race of giants, of larger stature than even the Anakim.—If his bedstead of iron was intended for use, and not for ostentation, his bulk must have been enormous; as it was at least five yards long, and above two broad. Either the Ammonites seized on it, or they bought it of the Israelites; and carrying it to Rabbath, it was there preserved as a monument

of his stature, or of Israel's victory: for neither his vast strength, nor his numerous fortified cities, could secure him against God, who fought for his people.—This race of giants was soon extinct; but others remained within the land of Canaan, of whom we read in the history of David. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 17:4-7, 45-49. 2 Sam. 21:15-22.*)

V. 12-22. "Bashan-havoth-jair" (14) signifies *Bashan the villages of Jair*.—The words, "unto this day," were perhaps added by Ezra, to show how long these places retained their names. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Num. 32: Josh. 13:22.*)

V. 23-28. This prayer of Moses arose from a high valuation of the promised land, and an earnest desire of witnessing the power and faithfulness of the Lord, in putting the Israelites in possession of it, by destroying their enemies. He had prevailed in behalf of Israel more than once, in apparently similar circumstances: and his request did not displease the Lord though for an example to Israel, he did not see good to grant it.—Thus Moses prevailed for others, but for himself he could not prevail; which made him the more exact type of Christ, who "saved others, himself he could not save," that is, con-

CHAPTER IV.

Earnest exhortations to obedience, and dissuaves from idolatry, 1-24. Prophetic warnings of the consequences of disobedience, and promises of mercy to the penitent, 25-31. The Lord's special care of Israel, and his wonderful works for them, 32-40. Three cities of refuge appointed eastward of Jordan, 41-43. An introduction to the following exhortations, 44-49.

NOW therefore hearken, O Israel, "unto the statutes, and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them," that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

2 Ye shall not "add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *aught* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you.

3 Your eyes have seen "what the LORD did because of Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you.

4 But ye that did "cleave unto the LORD your God are *alive* every one of you this day.

5 Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded

me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6 Keep therefore, and do them; for "this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

7 For "what nation is there so great, "who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

8 And what nation is there so great, that hath "statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?

9 Only take heed to thyself, and "keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and "lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but "teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

10 Specially "the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may

a 8:45, 5:1, 6:12, 8:1, 11:1, 32, Lev. 19:37, 20:8, 22:31, Ps. 105:45, Ez. 11:20, 36:27, 37:24, Matt. 23:20, Luke 1:6, John 15:14, b Lev. 18:5, Ez. 20:11, 21, Rom. 10:5, c 12:32, Josh. 1:7, Prov. 30:6, Matt. 5:18, 45:15-29, Mark 7:1-13, Gal. 3:12, Rev. 21:19, d Num. 25:1-9, 31:16, Josh. 22:17, Ps. 106:28, 23, Heb. 9:10, e 10:20, 13:4, John 22:5, 28:3, Ruth 1:14-17, Ps. 65:9, 133:6, 11, f 16:25-20, Ez. 9:4, John 6:67-69, Acts 11:23, Rom. 12:9, Rev. 14:4, 20:4, f1, Matt. 23:20, Acts 20:27, 1 Cor. 11:23, 15:3, 1 Thes. 4:1, 2, Heb. 3:5, g Job 36:28, Ps. 19:7, 111:10, 119:98-100, Prov. 1:7, 14:8, Jer. 8:9, 2 Tim. 3:15.

sistently with the purpose of saving others. (Mark 15:31. *Notes*, Num. 20:10-13, 27:15-20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing more raises the destruction of sinners than overlooking the examples of divine justice set before them for their warning, and rushing forward in the same steps, which have brought others to a miserable end.—All those advantages, with which men are naturally pleased, eventually conduce to their more speedy ruin and deeper condemnation, whenever they increase their pride, security, and boldness in transgression: so far are riches, power, worldly wisdom, and courage, from profiting their ungodly possessors!—No arm can be strong when the contest is against the Almighty; and he that assaults the church wages war against God. In this case especially "the battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift;" his most insolent and presumptuous enemies will soon lie down in despair; and his feeblest and most timid friends have no cause to fear. His promise secures success in every undertaking, in which they are required to engage; and not only victory, but abundant advantage from every foe that assaults them, "for the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." Every experience of the Lord's faithfulness is a sure pledge of further mercies, and ere long all his people shall be more than conquerors, and enter upon the full possession of their everlasting rest.—"This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD." (*Notes*, Is. 54:15-17, Rom. 8:35-39.) Are we then of that number? Do we seek reconciliation unto God through Jesus Christ, as "the one thing needful?" Do we trust his grace, plead his promises, listen to his voice, and keep his commandments? Then assuredly "all things will work together for our good."—But unbelief excludes men from heaven: a dead inactive faith deceives and ruins thousands; and even the sins of believers are chastened with sharp trials, the withholding of wonted comforts, and the refusal of their prayers for such mercies, as are not immediately connected with salvation. If this should be the case with us, let us kiss the rod, and seek to profit by our chastening. And if we have the earnestness and prospects of heaven; let this suffice us, let us acquiesce in the Lord's will, and speak no more to him of those things which he sees good to refuse us.—When we are about to leave the world, the same principle which before induced us to contribute, as we were able, to promote the cause of God and the good of his church, will dispose us to rejoice in the prospect of the good work being carried on by other, and more honoured instruments; and will make us wish to close our eyes, encouraging our survivors to be valiant for the truth, assured that the Lord will fight for them and make them successful.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. The power of God and his love to Israel, as delineated in the foregoing recapitulation of their history, are in this chapter improved by a variety of practical admonitions and exhortations. The abstract of the argument may be thus stated: "As the Lord hath manifested himself so able and willing to deliver, protect, and bless you, take heed that you do not forfeit his favour by disobedience; but from gratitude for past mercies, and in order to secure the continuance of his favour, make it your constant study to worship him alone, to depend on his promises, perfections, and providence, and to submit to his authority; as a nation governed by his judgments, and as individuals "walking in all his ordinances and commandments." This is your true wisdom; this will certainly advance you to greatness, prosperity, and reputation, and secure your felicity; whereas the contrary conduct will surely involve you in misery and

ruin." The subsequent practical instructions seem to be thus inferred from the preceding history; and they are enforced by every argument and every motive imaginable.—The national covenant made with Israel is indeed constantly referred to: yet the whole may be accommodated to the case of true Christians; whilst it more directly suits the case of nations favoured with the light of revelation.—The Israelites had witnessed many instances, in which disobedience was punished with immediate death. Their fathers had been doomed to die in the wilderness: nor could they expect to possess Canaan if not obedient. Obedience cannot merit salvation: but it is the only evidence that we partake of "the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ;" and disobedience both deserves eternal destruction, and when persisted in, renders it inevitable. (*Note*, Ez. 18:30-32.)

V. 2. To add any thing to the commands of God, as obligatory upon the conscience, or an essential part of religion, seems to charge him with an oversight; and is as affronting to his wisdom, as to diminish any thing from it is to his authority and goodness. And human traditions or appointments, when not explicitly distinguished from the law of God, as comparatively of no authority, and kept entirely subordinate have always been the competitors of the sacred word, and tended to render it of none effect. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, Matt. 15:3-6.)—Some explain the word *add* to be merely a caution against sins of commission; and *diminish*, against sins of omission: but this comes far short of the true meaning.—This prohibition is supposed to have been extremely useful, in preserving entire the text of these ancient books; by deterring even those who most openly broke the law, or explained away its meaning, or contended virulently with each other about religious opinions and practices, from adding to, or taking from, the words of the Scriptures themselves. (*12:32. Notes*, Prov. 30:5-6, Rev. 22:18-21.)

V. 3, 4. (*Notes*, Num. 25:) It appears from this appeal, that the pestilence, as well as the sword of the magistrates, singled out the guilty persons and spared the rest. (*Ps.* 91:6-8.) "The legislator, in order to deter the Jews from idolatry, alludes to this fact, but he notices no circumstance but one, which, though in the original narrative not stated, was infinitely the most important to advert to on this occasion; but which no persons, but spectators of the fact, and perfectly acquainted with every individual concerned in it, could possibly feel the truth of: 'Graves on the Pentateuch,' Vol. 1, pp. 137, 138."

V. 5. The people had been often ready to conclude, that Moses taught them by his own authority; but at the close of his life he solemnly assured them, that he had instructed them exactly as the Lord had commanded him, neither more, nor less, nor otherwise.—This is a most express declaration, that he was divinely inspired; and utterly incompatible with integrity of character, if he was not.

V. 6, 8.—Israel was a "great nation," highly honoured by having the tabernacle, ark, and ordinances of God in the midst of them, and by his powerful interposition in their behalf, whenever they earnestly called upon him for help. Even the surrounding nations could not help observing this, while Israel adhered to the worship of God, which was their true wisdom: and indeed, taking in the whole time from Moses to this day, what nation has been so greatly distinguished as they have been?—Their laws also, whether moral or judicial, in proportion as they are examined, and compared with the laws of other nations, will appear to every impartial judge most equitable and excellent.

V. 9. *Keep thy soul*—(*Note*, Prov. 4:23.)

learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

11 And ye came near, and stood unto the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude: only ye heard a voice.

13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

14 And the LORD commanded me that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,)

16 Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female;

17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air;

18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:

19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

20 But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of

Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

[Practical Observations.]

21 Furthermore, the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

22 But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan; but ye shall go over, and possess that good land.

23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee.

24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

25 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger;

26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it, ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

28 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things shall come upon thee, even in the latter

r 5:29. Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Luke 1:50. Rev. 19:5. q 5:23. Ex. 19:16-18. 2:18,19. i Heb. heart. r 5:22,23. s 15. Num. 12:8. Is. 40:18. Col. 1:15. i Heb. eagle vulture. t 23:35. Ex. 20:22. 1 Kings 19:13. Is. 40:36. Matt. 3:3,17. 12:3. John 12:34-36. 2 Pet. 1:17,18. u 31-21. Ex. 19:5. 24:17,18. Heb. 9:19. 20. x 10:4. Ex. 34:28. y 9:9-11. 10:1-5. Ex. 24:12. 31:18. 34:28. 2 Cor. 3:7. Heb. 9:4. z Ex. 21:22-23. Ps. 105:44,45. a See on 9:23. Josh. 23:11. 1 Chr. 28:9,10. Prov. 4:23,27. Jer. 17:21. Mat. 2:15. b See on 12:2. Cor. 4:4-6. Heb. 13. c 5:9. Ex. 20:4,5. Ps. 105:19,20. Rom. 1:22-24. d 23. Is. 40:18. John 4:24. Acts 17:23. 1 Tim. 1:7. e 17:3. 2 Kings 23:4,5,11. Job 31:26,27. Jer. 8:2. Ex. 8:16. Am. 5:23,24. f Gen. 21. 2 Kings 17:16. 21:3. Jer. 19:13. Zeph. 1:5. Acts 7:42. Rom. 1:6,7. g Gen. 1. Deut. 1. Josh. 1:12. Num. 9:6. Ps. 146:17. 148:7. h Psalms. Jer. 1:10. 33:23. Matt. 5:45. i O. corrupted. j 1 Kings 6:51. Jer. 11:4. 1:23,24. 29:2. Ex. 19:5,6. Ps. 29:4. 33:12. 133:4. Is. 63:17,18. Jer. 1:18. 7:14. 1 Pet. 2:9. k See on 1:37. 3:26. 31:2. Num. 20:12. Ps. 106:32-38. 1 Kings 13:21,22. Am. 3:2. Heb. 12:6-10. 2 Pet. 1:13-15. m See on 9:27,9. Josh. 23:11. Matt. 24:4. Luke 12:15. 21:8. Heb. 3:12. n 6:12. 29:

25. 31:20. Josh. 23:16. 1 Chr. 16:15. Is. 24:5. Jer. 31:32. Ex. 16:59. o See on 16. Ex. 20:4,5. p 9:3. 32:22. Ex. 24:17. Ps. 21:9. Is. 30:33. 33:14. Jer. 21:12-14. Nah. 1:5. Zeph. 1:18. Heb. 12:29. q 6:15. 29:20. 32:16,21. Ex. 20:5. 34:14. Ps. 75:58. Is. 42:8. Nah. 1:2. r Cor. 10:22. s 31:16-18. Jude. 23-15. t See on 16. 31:29. Ex. 32:7. Hos. 9:9. 2 Kings 17:17-19. 21:24-16. 2 Chr. 36:12-16. u 30:18,19. 31:28. 32:1. Is. 1:2. Jer. 2:12. 6:19. 22:29. Ex. 36:4. Mic. 1:2. 6:2. z 29:28. Lev. 18:28. 26:31-35. Josh. 23:16. Is. 6:11. 24:1-3. Jer. 4:22. Ez. 33:25. Luke 24:41. y 6:2. 6:21. Neh. 1:3. Ex. 12:15. 32:26. z 29:36,64. 1 Sam. 36:19. Jer. 16:13. Ps. 20:32,39. Acts 7:42. a Ps. 115:4-7. 1:5,17. 1:4. 41:9. 43:20. 48:7. Jer. 10:3,9. 1:30. 10. Law. 26:30-42. 2 Chr. 15:1. 15. Neh. 1:9. Is. 55:6,7. Jer. 29:12-14. z 30:2. 1 Kings 8:47,48. 2 Kings 10:31. 23:3. 2 Chr. 1:19. 31:21. Ps. 119:2,10,58,145. Jer. 3:10. d 1 Kings 8:46-53. 2 Chr. 6:36-39. Dan. 9:11-19. e Heb. have found. Dan. 10:14. Ez. 16:8. marg. e 31:29. Gen. 49:1. Num. 24:20. Jer. 23:20. Dan. 11:31. Hos. 3:5. Heb. 1:2.

or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; as all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (Note, 1 Cor. 3:18-23.)

V. 21-24. The consideration, that Moses was excluded from Canaan for one offence, was both suited to impress the people with the sense of the Lord's mercy in sparing them, notwithstanding their many and heinous transgressions; and to warn them of the consequence of renewing their rebellions, and of running into idolatry: for their merciful God was also "a jealous God, and a consuming fire."—It seems that when Moses pleaded earnestly for a reversal of the sentence, the LORD, to silence him, confirmed it with an oath. (Note, 3:23-28.)

V. 25-28. Many expressions in this prophecy evidently refer to times much later, than even the Babylonian captivity. The Jews could not then, with any propriety, be said to have "utterly perished" out of the promised land, as they returned to it at the end of seventy years: but their present state, in which they have been "scattered among the nations" for almost eighteen hundred years, without any access to their own land; and their condition, as dispersed individuals, not as a nation under a regular government, answer the language of the prediction with great exactness. They do not indeed at present worship images; except as in popish countries they sometimes conceal their religion, and conform to the idolatrous worship there performed, in order to escape persecution; but they are grossly ignorant of the true God: "for he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him." (Notes, John 5:20-23. 8:54-59.) Numbers of Israelites also have doubtless been incorporated with idolaters.

V. 29-31. "A jealous God" hath fulfilled the threatenings before denounced on the rebellious Israelites: but he is also a merciful God, and waits to receive them, either as a nation or individually, whenever they repent, and turn to him with all their hearts, in the obedience of faith. After all that hath come on the nation, especially in their present long-continued dispersion, they are still preserved a distinct people, by a most astonishing interposition of Providence; evidently in

V. 11. *The midst of heaven.*] The fire and smoke filled the atmosphere to a great height; as the fowls are, in the original, said "to fly in the open firmament of heaven."—(17. Notes, Gen. 1:6-8. Ex. 19:16-20.)

V. 13. (Notes, Ex. 20:24.) The ten commandments were the foundation of the national covenant made with Israel, as well as of the covenant of works, though not exactly in the same manner: and, when written in the heart, they form the evidence, that the covenant of grace by faith in Jesus Christ is ratified with us. (Notes, Jer. 31:33,34. Heb. 8:7-13.)

V. 15-18. Let any one carefully examine the multiplied and varied expressions of these verses; and then let him form his judgment, and bring in his verdict, respecting the use of images, in religious worship, in the church of Rome, and elsewhere. (Note, Ex. 20:4.)

V. 19. The propensity of mankind to idolatry, and the artifice of Satan, would concur to drive the people into this species of it. It is indeed extremely irrational to make the creatures of God his rivals; and to allow the instruments of his bounty to rob him of his glory: but the worship of the splendid and useful luminaries of heaven is far more plausible than any other idolatry, and therefore more carefully to be guarded against. The declaration that the God of Israel had formed the sun, moon, and stars, and given all nations the benefit of them, was well suited to this purpose, and to mark to every reader the infinite distance between the glorious Creator and the noblest of his creatures. (Marg. Ref. g. Note, Job 31:24-28.)

V. 20. *The iron furnace.*] This strong expression forcibly marks the misery which the Israelites endured, and the danger to which they were exposed, in the Egyptian bondage.—Thence they were brought forth to be "unto the LORD a people of inheritance." All the revenue of worship, obedience, and praise, which the Lord receives from this lower world, is paid him by his redeemed people, by whom alone he is loved, in whom he delights, and for whose sake the frame of nature is preserved. As the apostle says: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world,

days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and halt be obedient unto his voice;

31 (For ^hthe Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them.

32 ¶ For ^hask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ^hask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?

33 Did ever people ^hhear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

34 Or hath God assayed to go and ^htake him a nation from the midst of *another* nation, by ^htemptations, ^hby signs, and by wonders, and by war, and ^hby a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35 Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; *there is none else beside him.*

36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee; and upon earth he showed thee his great fire, and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And ^hbecause he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

38 To ^hdrive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, ^has it is this day.

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven

30:11, 1 Sam. 3:40, Hos. 14:2,3, Joel 2:12,13, Acts 3:19, 26:20, g. Is. 1:19, Jer. 7:23, Zech. 6:15, Heb. 5:9, h. Ex. 34:6,7, Num. 14:18, 2 Chr. 30:9, Neh. 1:5, 9:31, Ps. 5:5,15, 116:5, 145:8,9, Jon. 4:2, Mic. 7:18, i. Lev. 26:42, 45, Ps. 108:11,15, Jer. 14:21, Luke 1:72, k. Job 8:5, Ps. 44:1, Joel 1:2, 13:4, Mal. 2:14, Mark 13:27, m. 5:24—25, 9:10, Ex. 30:18,19, 34:11, 33:20, 2 Jdg. 6:42, n. Ex. 1:9, 13:17—20, o. 7:19, 29:3, Ex. 9:30, 21:10,7, p. Ex. 7:3, Ps. 78:15—33, q. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8,9, Ex. 6:6, 13:3, 1 Pet. 5:6, p. 28:8, 34:12, Ex. 12:36—38, s. 1 Sam. 17:45—47, 1 Kings 18:36,37, 2 Kings 19:19, Ps. 58:11, 83:18, i. 32:39, Ex. 15:11, 1 Sam. 2:2, Is. 44:8, 45:15,32, Mark 12:29, 32, 1 John 5:20,21, o. 33, Ex. 19:15, 20:15—22, 24:16, Neh. 9:13, Heb. 12:15, 25, x. 7:7—9, 9:5, 10:15, Ps. 105:16—10, Is. 41:8,9, Jer. 31:1, Mal. 1:2, Luke 1:72, 73, Rom. 9:5, y. 2 Chr. 16:9, Ps. 32:8, 34:15, z. See on 34, Ps. 114: 136:10

remembrance of the covenant confirmed with their fathers; and in order to the fulfilment, as prophecies, of these conditional promises, when the "Spirit of grace and supplications" shall be poured out on them, and they shall look in penitence faith to their crucified Messiah. (Notes, Lev. 26:40—42, Num. 23:9, 1 Kings 8:46—53, Jer. 30:10,11, Hos. 3:4,5, Zech. 12:9—14.)

V. 32, 33. During above two thousand five hundred years, from the creation, no record, nor even report, existed of such events as the Israelites had witnessed, nor of any at all similar to them.

Fire. (33) Impostors have sometimes deceived men by voices, supposed to be uttered by some deity, but never as spoken out of the midst of a most tremendous fire, in the sight and hearing of numbers, to whose senses the appeal was made.

V. 34. *Temptations.*] The commands, judgments, and respites, by which Pharaoh was required to let Israel go, made trial of his temper, and discovered his unwillingness to obey, and his inability to resist. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 35—40. Nothing had occurred in the history of the world at that time, and nothing has taken place during much more than three thousand years since, that at all resembled the interposition of God, to deliver one nation out of the midst of another more powerful nation, which had long enslaved it, by two unarmed men, entirely through miracles, and contrary to all human probability; or that was any thing like his dealings with them at Sinai and in the wilderness. The very singularity of the transactions, though attested beyond all reasonable doubt, gives a plausible pretence for skepticism. But miracles must be extraordinary events, or they would cease to deserve the name; and an adequate reason is assigned for this extraordinary interposition of JEHOVAH, at a time when all nations were ready to sink into idolatry: for he intended thus effectually to show men in general, and his chosen people in particular, that he alone was the true God in heaven and earth; and that all the deities of the nations were mere names, or lying vanities, who could not at all protect or help their worshippers, or resist his power. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 9:13—16.)

V. 41—43. The first exhortation, or sermon, (so to speak)

above, and upon the earth beneath; *there is none else.*

40 Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever.

41 ¶ Then Moses severed three cities on this side Jordan toward the sunrising;

42 That ^hthe slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past; and that, fleeing unto one of these cities, he might live:

43 *Namely*, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan of the Manassites.

44 ¶ And this ^his the law which Moses set before the children of Israel:

45 These ^hare the testimonies, and ^hthe statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt;

46 On ^hthis side Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt:

47 And they possessed his land, and ^hthe land of Og king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, which were on this side Jordan, toward the sunrising:

48 From Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto mount ^hSion, which is Hermon.

49 And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, ^hunder the springs of Pisgah.

—15, Is. 51:9—11, 63:11,12, a. 7:1, 9:1—5, 11:23, Ex. 23:27,28, Josh. 3:10, Ps. 44:2,3, b. 3:21,37, 3:1—16, 8:18, c. 32:29, 1 Chr. 28:9, Is. 1:3, 5:12, Hos. 7:2, d. See on 35, 2:11, 1 Chr. 29:11, 2 Chr. 20:6, Ps. 115:3, 135:6, Dan. 4:35, e. See on 1:5, 28:1—14, Lev. 22:31, 26:1—13, Jer. 11:4, John 14:15,21—24, f. 15:16, 6:3,18, 12:25—28, 22:7, Ezb. 6:3, 1 Tim. 4:8, g. Num. 35:14,15, Josh. 20:2—38, h. 19:1—10, Num. 35:6,11,12,15—28, Heb. 6:18, i. Josh. 30:8, k. Josh. 21:38, 1 Kings 4:13, 22:34, 1 Chr. 6:50, 1 Josh. 21:27, 1 Chr. 6:71, m. 1:5, 17:13,19, 27:3,3,26, 23:4, Lev. 27:34, Num. 36:13, Mal. 4:4, John 1:17, n. 6:17,20, 1 Kings 2:8, Ps. 119:2,14,22,31,111, o. See on 1, p. 47, See on 1:5, Num. 32:15, q. 3:29, r. 1:4, 2:30—36, 3:8, 3:9, Num. 21:21—22, s. See on 3:1—14, 29:7,8, Num. 21:33—35, t. 2:36, 3:12, Josh. 13:24, &c. u. 8:9, Ps. 133:3, x. 3:17, 34:1, Josh. 13:20.

of this book ends with the preceding verse: and the appointment of the cities of refuge has no visible connexion with what goes before, or with what follows: but probably Moses performed that service, before he delivered his next discourse, that he might show how this important concern was to be regulated. (Note, Josh. 20:7—9.) Thus he lost no part of his short remaining time, but filled up the whole with speaking or acting for the good of the people.

V. 44. (Note, 1:5.) This is evidently an introduction to the discourse of the subsequent chapters. Moses having practically improved some particulars in the history of Israel, proceeded to repeat and enforce the laws which he had before delivered, with additions and explanations, beginning with the ten commandments.

V. 46. *Beth-peor.*] Or, "The house of Peor." Probably a temple of Baal-peor was full in the view of the people, while Moses was pressing upon them the worship of JEHOVAH alone; and perhaps that very temple, where so many had sinned to their own destruction.

V. 48. *Mount Sion, &c.*] (Marg. Ref.) Not mount Zion, but Sion, which was on the east of Jordan, and northwards towards Lebanon.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20. Every instance of the Lord's kindness to us is a conclusive argument to enforce our obedience to his commandments; and will either influence us to obey him, or testify against us, and enhance our condemnation. Indeed, all his commandments are so reasonable, equitable, and salutary, that if we were not blinded and infatuated by Satan, a wise regard to our own interest would induce us to observe them: for they are only righteous and kind rules, which the all-wise Creator has affectionately prescribed to his rational creatures; by attending to which they may secure their own felicity, and conduce to that of each other, while they render him the glory due unto his name. None of them can be broken without injuring ourselves and others, as well as dishonouring God: and a peaceful conscience, well-regulated passions and appetites, a sweet sense of his favour, an unspeakable pleasure in his ways, and complete harmony and love with each other, together with health of body and vigour of mind, must be the consequences of perfect obedience to them. Even now, in

CHAPTER V.

Moses shows that God made a covenant with Israel at Horeb, 1-5. He sets the ten commandments before them, 6-21. He relates how, at the people's request, he had received the law from God for them, 22-31. He exhorts them to obedience, 32, 33.

AND Moses called "all Israel, and said unto them, ^bHear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and ^ckeep, and do them.

[B. C. 1491.] 2 The LORD ^dour God made a covenant ^ewith us in Horeb.

3 The LORD ^fmade not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day.

4 The LORD ^gtalked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire,

5 (I ^hstood between the LORD and you at that time, to show you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount,) saying,

6 *I am* the LORD thy God, which ⁱbrought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of ^jbondage.

a 1:1, 29:2-10. b See on 4:1. * Heb. *keep to do them*. Matt. 23:3, c 4:23. Ex. 19:15, 24:8. Heb. 8:6-13. 9:19-23. d 29:10-15. Gen. 17:7, 21. Ps. 105:8-10. Jer. 32:38-40. Gal. 3:17-21. Heb. 8:8. e 24:—26. 4:33, 36. 34:10. Ex. 19:9, 19. 29:22, 33:11. Num. 12:8. f 27. Gen. 18:22. Ex. 19:16, 20:18-21. Num. 16:49. Ps. 105:23. Jer. 30:21. Zech. 3:1-5. Gal. 3:19. Heb. 9:24, 12:18-24. g 6:1. See on Ex. 20:2. Lev. 26:12. h Ps. 81:5-10. i Heb. *servants*. i See on Ex.

proportion as we are enabled to obey them, these blessed effects follow: and the case is the same with nations as with individuals. They therefore will one day appear to be the only "wise and understanding people," (however now derided as fools,) who make the law of God the rule of their whole conduct, without "adding to it or diminishing from it;" and that very light which discovers *their* wisdom, will detect the folly and madness of those pretenders to superior understanding, who reject the divine testimony, and disregard the divine authority: so that at length it will be undeniably evident, that true religion is but another name for wisdom, honour, and felicity. Even in this world experience decides, that they who forsake the Lord plunge themselves into many miseries, and often into sudden destruction: and, notwithstanding self-denial and persecutions, the temporal advantages of piety are vastly more satisfactory, than the most splendid acquisitions of prosperous wickedness; even apart from the comforts of the Holy Spirit and the hope of glory on the one hand, or the remorse and terrors, which are more sensibly felt than honestly acknowledged, on the other: for "godliness hath both the promise of this life and of that which is to come." (Notes, 1 Tim. 4:6-10. 6:6-10.)—But if we would secure these advantages, with hearts like ours, in such a world as this, in the midst of temptations and enemies, we must apply our minds seriously both "to know and to consider" the works and the word of God: we must "take great heed unto ourselves, and keep our souls diligently," lest the good impressions which are excited depart out of our hearts, without producing any abiding effects: for while our duty and happiness, as well as God himself and his service, are always the same; our sense of them is alas! exceedingly variable, and even apt to wear out of our minds. (Note, Heb. 2:1-4.) We should therefore "watch and pray always," that we may not be entangled by those snares which are laid in every ^{acc}: we should keep a strict and constant guard upon our imaginations, affections, senses, and appetites: our minds must be armed with every imaginable motive which can encourage hope, excite fear, and influence our love or hatred; that in patience, courage, and self-denial, we may be prepared for labour, trials, and for the cross, in whatever form it is laid in our way. All this, and much more must be attended to, if we would walk safely and comfortably with God, through this world to glory.—But trusting in Christ by faith in his blood; and drawing from his fullness wisdom, strength, and grace, it will become practicable and pleasant.—Nothing is more essential in this important concern, than just apprehensions of the perfections of God: since universal history reminds us of man's astonishing propensity to idolatry. We must not therefore trust to our vain reasonings, or indulge our gross imaginations; but, by faith, derive our knowledge of God from revelation alone; particularly attending to the displays which he hath made of his power, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth, in the various dispensations there recorded.

V. 21-49. We ought carefully to study our obligations to God, and his character, with the relations in which we stand to him; his law and worship; our own situation as sinners under a dispensation of mercy; and the nature of that gracious covenant to which we are invited to accede: since far more interesting discoveries are made to us, than ever Israel saw from mount Sinai; and far greater mercies are conferred on us, than they experienced in Egypt, in the wilderness, or in Canaan. One speaks to us of infinitely superior dignity to Moses, who, on our account, was not, like him, ^{deprived} merely of a greatly desired and much regretted ^mmoral satisfaction, but who even bare upon the ⁿcross the wrath and curse of God for our sins, and ^olit the

7 Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

8 Thou shalt not make thee *any* ^pgraven image or any likeness of *any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth.

9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth ^qgeneration of them that hate me,

10 And ^rshowing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments

11 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

12 ^sKeep the sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

13 ^tSix days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:

14 But the seventh day is ^uthe sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work,

20:3. Matt. 4:10. John 5:23. 1 John 5:21. j See on 4:16. k See on Ex. 20:4-6. 1 See on Ex. 34:7, 14. m Is. 1:16-19. Jer. 32:18. Dan. 9:4. Matt. 7:21-27. Gal. 5:6. 1 John 1:7. n 6:5, 6. 10:12, 13. John 14:15, 21-23. 16:14. Rom. 8:23. Jam. 1:25. 1 John 5:2, 3. o 6:12. See on Ex. 20:7. Lev. 19:12. Jer. 4:2. Matt. 5:33, 34. Jam. 5:12. p See on Ex. 20:8-11. q Is. 56:6. 58:13. r Ex. 32:12, 35:2, 3. Ex. 20:12. Luke 13:14-16. 23:56. g Gen. 2:2. Ex. 16:28, 30. Heb. 4:4.

unspeakable agony in all its bitterness. And now, instead of the language and displays of fiery indignation, he pleads with us by his dying love, and in mild accents of mercy, not to neglect so great salvation.—Nay, our God, while awfully jealous for the glory of his name, and "a consuming Fire" to all impenitent sinners, is yet most merciful, ready to forgive, and willing to be gracious to all who turn to him in true repentance. If then, after all our rebellions, we at last seek him with all our heart and with all our soul, and become obedient to his voice, (seeking for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us,) he will yet pardon us, and ratify to us all the blessings of the everlasting covenant.—But apostles, prophets, and ministers, yea, heaven and earth also, will testify against us, if we "refuse him that speaketh." (Note, Heb. 12:22-25.) Even our natural affection to our children may suggest additional motives to obedience; for when the Lord loves the parents, he often chooses and blesses the children after them, especially when they diligently instruct them in the same good way. (Note, Gen. 18:18, 19.) Thus may we seek an entail of heavenly blessings upon our latest posterity: and both parents and ministers may learn profitably from Moses, to instruct their children and people, with fervour and faithfulness, even to the close of their lives, in all that the Lord had taught them, with a mixture of firmness, affection, and gravity, suited to such important occasions. (Notes, 2 Tim. 4:1-5. 2 Pet. 1:12-15.)—Finally, as the present dispersion of the Jews shows this chapter to have been a prophecy, as well as a sermon; let us not forget to pray for them, that in their tribulation, even now in *these latter days*, they may seek the Lord, and be reinstated in the privileges of the covenant made with their fathers.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 3. The Sinai covenant was different from that made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for that was personal, and related mainly to spiritual blessings; this was national, and especially stated the terms, on which the possession of the promised land, and other privileges, would be continued to Israel. (Notes, Gen. 17:1-8. Ex. 19:5. Gal. 3:15-18.) But this language may also mean, that the covenant made at Horeb, was as obligatory on the generation whom Moses then addressed, as on those who were immediately present, when the law was delivered, and the covenant ratified. For they were a collective body, incorporated by charter, the obligations and advantages of which descended to the successors of those to whom it was first conceded. Some indeed whom Moses addressed had been present at the giving of the law, though under age; but most of them were then unborn, or children: yet the covenant made with their fathers included them likewise.—Thus all, favoured with revelation, are bound to submit to it, equally with those to whom it was first given; though they do not behold the miracles by which it was authenticated: for there are other evidences of its divine authority, which gather force by revolving ages; and they who submit to it have equal benefits, with those to whom it was first communicated.

V. 4-11. Marg. Ref. Notes, 26, 29. Ex. 19:16-20. 20:1-7, 18-25.

V. 12-15. (Notes, Ex. 20:8-11.)—The words "As the Lord thy God hath commanded," here introduced in recording the giving of the law from mount Sinai, seem to imply an appointment of the sabbath, previous to that transaction.—The original reason for hallowing the sabbath, taken from the creation, is not here mentioned. This indeed must ever remain valid, and it was well known to the people. But they were also required to remember their oppressed state in Egypt, and their wonderful deliverance: and while they worshipped and gave thanks to their great and gracious Deliverer

thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor *thy stranger that is within thy gates: that 'thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.

15 And "remember that thou wast a servant in 'ne land of Egypt, and *that* 'the LORD thy God brought thee out thence, *that* 'through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day.

16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee: that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

17 Thou ^ashalt not kill.

16 Neither ^bshalt thou commit adultery.

19 Neither 'shalt thou steal.

20 Neither^d shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

21 Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that is thy neighbour's.

22 ¶ These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly, in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more: and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

23 And it came to pass, ^hwhen ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders :

24 And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath showed us his glory, and his greatness, and 'we

have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire :
we have seen this day that God doth talk with
man, and he liveth.

25 Now therefore why should we die? for ¹this great fire will consume us. If we ²hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.

26 For *who is there* of *man's* flesh, that hath heard the voice of the *living* God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?

27 God thou near, and hear all that the LORD
our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all
that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee, and
we will hear *it* and do *it*.

28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me, and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

29 "Oh, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and ⁷keep all my commandments always, ⁸that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

30 Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to possess it.

32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: *ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

33 Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you: that ye may live, and *that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.*

Neh. 13:15–21, *ev* 25:44–46, Neh. 5:5, *lv* 15:15, 16:12, 21:18–22, *It* 61:12, *Eph* 2:11,12, *see* *Gen* 6:16, *Is* 63:9, *Luk* 1:74,75, *Tit* 2:14, *x* *See* *Gen* 4:34–37, *y* *See* *Ex* 20:12, *Lev* 19:3, *Matt* 15:4–6, *Col* 3:24, *x* 4:40, 27:16, *Eph* 6:2,3, *y* *See* *Ex* 20:13, *Matt* 5:21,22, *b* *See* *Ex* 20:14, *Luk* 18:20, *Jam* 2:10,11, *c* *See* *Ex* 20:15, *Rom* 13:9, *Eph* 4:28, *d* 19:16–21, *See* *Ex* 21:16, 23:1, *1 Kings* 21:13, *Prov* 6:13, *15:9*, *5:9*, *8:1* *See* *Ex* 20:17, *1 Kings* 21:1–4, *Mt* 22, *11:5*, *3:9*, *Luk* 12:45, *Rm* 7:5, *10:1*, *11:1*, *12:1*, *13:1*, *14:1*, *15:1*, *16:1*, *17:1*, *18:1*, *19:1*, *20:1*, *21:1*, *22:1*, *23:1*, *24:1*, *25:1*, *26:1*, *27:1*, *28:1*, *29:1*, *30:1*, *31:1*, *32:1*, *33:1*, *34:1*, *35:1*, *36:1*, *37:1*, *38:1*, *39:1*, *40:1*, *41:1*, *42:1*, *43:1*, *44:1*, *45:1*, *46:1*, *47:1*, *48:1*, *49:1*, *50:1*, *51:1*, *52:1*, *53:1*, *54:1*, *55:1*, *56:1*, *57:1*, *58:1*, *59:1*, *60:1*, *61:1*, *62:1*, *63:1*, *64:1*, *65:1*, *66:1*, *67:1*, *68:1*, *69:1*, *70:1*, *71:1*, *72:1*, *73:1*, *74:1*, *75:1*, *76:1*, *77:1*, *78:1*, *79:1*, *80:1*, *81:1*, *82:1*, *83:1*, *84:1*, *85:1*, *86:1*, *87:1*, *88:1*, *89:1*, *90:1*, *91:1*, *92:1*, *93:1*, *94:1*, *95:1*, *96:1*, *97:1*, *98:1*, *99:1*, *100:1*, *101:1*, *102:1*, *103:1*, *104:1*, *105:1*, *106:1*, *107:1*, *108:1*, *109:1*, *110:1*, *111:1*, *112:1*, *113:1*, *114:1*, *115:1*, *116:1*, *117:1*, *118:1*, *119:1*, *120:1*, *121:1*, *122:1*, *123:1*, *124:1*, *125:1*, *126:1*, *127:1*, *128:1*, *129:1*, *130:1*, *131:1*, *132:1*, *133:1*, *134:1*, *135:1*, *136:1*, *137:1*, *138:1*, *139:1*, *140:1*, *141:1*, *142:1*, *143:1*, *144:1*, *145:1*, *146:1*, *147:1*, *148:1*, *149:1*, *150:1*.

humanely to allow respite from labour to their servants, and even heathen slaves, and piously to afford the man opportunity of becoming acquainted with JEHOVAH, and worshipping him from which advantages, they themselves had been cruelly and impiously restricted by their Egyptian oppressors. Thus, while the *judicial* law supposed the *existence of slavery* among the Jews; this, and similar regulations, when duly complied with, were calculated to convert the slavery of the *heathen* in Israel into a blessing to their souls, by bringing them under the means of grace, and putting them in the way of obtaining the privileges of God's peculiar people. (*Note, Ec. 21:2.*) And amidst the enormities of modern slavery, if it could truly be said, that all the slaves rested from a labour on the Lord's day, being allowed and required to keep it holy; and were so instructed on it in the nature of *genuine Christianity*, as to afford them an adequate opportunity of being made partakers of its blessings; it would plead more powerfully for its being suffered to exist, than all other reasons which have been urged in its favour.

V. 16-21. There are several unimportant variations from the law as delivered from Sinai; but the substance is entirely the same. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 20:12-17.*)

V. 22-27. Several particulars are here added which were not mentioned in the narrative; and all well calculated to illustrate the greatness of the consternation excited among the people, by the giving of the law from mount Sinai.—(*Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 20:18-20.*)

V. 28, 29. When the people were impressed with the terror of immediate destruction from the voice of God speaking from mount Sinai; and were conscious that they could not *thus* approach him, but desired a mediator by whom he might speak to them; and when they promised to hear and obey that mediator; they spake well: and had they properly understood their own request, and been permanently disposed according to it, all would have proceeded and terminated happily. But the Lord, in very affecting and emphatical language, suggests that it was not so: for he saw that, though they were alarmed, they were neither duly humbled, nor prepared to receive in faith the promised mediator whom Moses typified, nor disposed to walk in the ways of holy obedience. This language shows us what God *approves, delights in, and accepts*, as honourable to his name, right in itself, and profit-

able to his rational creatures, and is highly encouraging to those who are humbly desirous of salvation, and consciously willing to obey the commands of God; and who earnestly pray for grace to enable them so to do. For it evinces the Lord's readiness to assist and accept them; and shows that he does not delight in punishment for its own sake, but only when the righteous purposes of his government render it necessary; as the merciful prince does not delight in, yea, indeed, weeps over, the death-warrant, which a variety of important considerations render it indispensably necessary he should sign. But we should not attempt to infer any thing from such passages, respecting the conduct of God towards *impenitent* sinners, or the method of his dispensing his unmerited favours; for it is the evident intention of them to give us a practical, useful view of the subject, unencumbered with the niceties of speculation; and we should be very careful to admit nothing which tends to counteract that important design. (Notes, 32:29. Ps. 81:13—15. Is. 48:17—19. Ez. 18:23. *Luke* 19:41—44.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The word of God is spoken to us, that we may learn, retain, and practise it; for in this all religion is ultimately centred, and without it the whole is but a dead carcass, not only worthless but abominable. Of this practice the divine law is the universal, immutable, and everlasting rule: but we transgressors have no disposition, ability, or encouragement, to obey that law, but what is derived from the new covenant of mercy and grace, made with us through the mediation of Christ. He continually stands between the holy God and the sinner who comes by faith in his name, both to ensure his acceptance, and assist his obedience. The words he once spake on earth are written in the Scriptures; and from age to age sinners are invited to accede to his covenant, and share the promised blessings; which invitation cannot be finally refused, without ensuring eternal destruction; and nothing except such refusal can ruin us. But we must remember that good words may be spoken, good resolutions formed, and transient convictions experienced, yet excellent words used in prayer, even by those who persist in unbelief through prevailing pride and love of sin. (I such we may say, "Oh, that there were such a heart in them.") But we should also add a prayer for ourse lves, and for each other:

CHAPTER VI.

Earnest exhortations to obedience, united with various instructions and cautions, 1—19. In what manner the children were to be instructed, 20—25.

NOW these are ^athe commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the **LORD** your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it :

2 That thou mightest ^bhear the **LORD** thy God, to keep all his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee ; thou, ^cand thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life, and that ^dthy days may be prolonged.

3 Hear, therefore, O Israel, ^eand observe to do ^fit ; that it may be well with thee, and ^gthat ye may increase mightily, as the **LORD** God of thy fathers hath promised thee, ^hin the land that floweth with milk and honey.

4 Hear, O Israel ; ⁱThe **LORD** our God is one **LORD**.

5 And ^jthou shalt love the **LORD** thy God ^kwith

a See on 4:1, 5:14, 45:19, 12:1. Lev. 27:34. Num. 36:13. ^b Heb. pass over. b See on 4:10, 10:1, 13:4. Gen. 22:12. Ex. 20:20. Job 24:28. ^c Is. 11:1, 10. 128:1. Prov. 16:1. ^d 12:13. Luke 12:5. 1 Pet. 1:17. ^e 7. Gen. 18:19. Ps. 78:4—8. d 4:4. 5:16, 33. 22:7. Prov. 3:1, 2, 16. 1 Pet. 3:10, 11. ^f See on 4:6, 5:32. ^g Gen. 12:2, 13:16, 15:5, 22:17, 26:4. 22:16. ^h Act. 1:7. ⁱ Ex. 3:5. ^j 4:35, 36. 5:6. 1 Kings 18:21. 1 Chr. 29:10. Is. 42:8. 44:5, 45:5, 46:1. 10:10, 11. Mark 12:29, 33. John 17:3. 1 Cor. 8:4—6. 1 Tim. 2:5. 110:12, 11:13. 30:6. Matt. 22:37. Mark 12:30, 33. Luke 10:27. 1 John 5:3. ^k 4:29. 2 Kings 23:25. Matt. 10:37. John 14:20, 21. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. 11:18. 32:46. Ps. 37:31. 40:8. 119:

and beg of the Lord that he would give us such a heart "that we may fear him, and keep all his commandments, always." And we may present such a petition in faith, for the Lord delights in bestowing his blessings on those who have been taught to value them, and to seek them in the name of Jesus Christ.—Let sinners then tremble at this fiery law, and flee for refuge to the Saviour ; let professed Christians examine carefully, whether their faith be accompanied with a desire of having that law written in their hearts, and reduced to practice in their whole conduct : and let believers make it more and more their study and delight, that they may do as the Lord God hath commanded them, without "turning aside to the right hand or to the left." Thus, by universal godliness, righteousness, temperance, patience, purity, and love, and an exact regard to every relative duty, they will best evince their faith, adorn the gospel, glorify the Lord, be useful to their fellow-creatures, entail a blessing on their children, and ripea for glory. In attending to these important concerns, we need repeated instructions and admonitions : let us then not deem it tedious frequently to hear, read, and meditate on the same truths and precepts. Let us learn to hallow the Lord's sabbaths, and set an example of attending on his ordinances : and, remembering that our servants are of the same nature with ourselves, and equally in need and capable of the same inestimable salvation, let us allow them also suitable relaxation from labour, and opportunity for hallowing the sabbath, and learning the way of peace and holiness.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. Here and in similar passages, "the commandments" seem to denote the *moral law* ; "the statutes," the *ceremonial law* ; and "the judgments," the *judicial law*.

V. 4. The threefold mention of the divine names, and the plural number of the original word translated God, are supposed by many commentators, ancient and modern, to be a plain intimation of a Trinity of Persons, even in this express declaration of the unity of the Godhead, to the exclusion of the many lords and gods of the heathens, and in opposition to them. (*Note, Gen. 1:1.*) "Some of the Jews themselves have thought there was something extraordinary in it, that the name of God should be thrice mentioned : . . . which signifies three *Midoth*, or properties, they confess, which they sometimes call *three Faces*, or *Emanations*, or *Sanctifications*, or *Numerations* ; though they will not call them three *Persons*." Bp. Patrick.

V. 5. The foregoing verse contains the first article of our creed ; and this is "the first and great commandment," which briefly comprehends the whole of the first table of the law.—The love of God perfectly consists with the fear of him before-mentioned : (2) yea, the more we love him, the more we shall regard his authority, reverence his majesty, fear to offend or dishonour him, and be careful to render unto him that worship which he requires.—Human laws can only take cognizance of the outward conduct : but the law of the heart-searching God requires *Love*, the seat of which is in the inmost soul. That love comprises a supreme valuation of his infinite excellence and amiableness ; an entire desire of the knowledge and enjoyment of him, as our felicity ; cordial delight in contemplating his manifested glories, and in worshipping and obeying him ; lively gratitude for all his innumerable and invaluable mercies ; zeal for his glory ; and an ardent desire that all our fellow-creatures, in conjunction with us, may thus know, love, worship, obey, and serve him. These dispositions and affections are required to be as large as the powers of the soul itself, and to engross and fill the whole, to the entire exclusion of all *contrary* affections, and

all thine heart, and with all thy sou^l and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, ^ashall be in thine heart.

7 And thou ^bshalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and ^cshalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt ^dwrite them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10 And it shall be, when the **LORD** thy God shall have brought thee into ^ethe land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee ^fgreat and goodly cities which thou buildest not,

11 And houses full of all ^ggood things which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou

11:99. Prov. 2:10. 3:1—3. 7:3. Is. 51:7. Jer. 31:32. Luke 2:51. C. o. 2 Cor. 3:3. Col. 3:16. 2 John 2. m 2 See on 4:9, 10, 11:19. Gen. 18:19. Ex. 12:26, 27. 13:1. 1:15. ^a 2:1, 7:5, 6, 5:6. Eph. 6:4. ^b Heb. *shetel, or shapen*. n Ruth 2:4, 12. 4:11. ^c 1:37. 30. 40:9, 10. 11:8, 14:6. 129:8. Prov. 6:22. 10:21. 15:2, 7. Mal. 3:16. Matt. 12:3. Luke 6:45. Eph. 4:29. Col. 4:6. 1 Pet. 3:15. n 11:18. Ex. 13:16. Num. 13:34, 39. Prov. 6:21. 7:3. Matt. 23:5. Heb. 2:1. p 11:20. Ex. 12:7. Job 19:23—25. Is. 30:8. 57:8. Hab. 2:2. q Gen. 13:15—17. 15:18. 26:3. 28:13. r Josh. 24:13. Neh. 9:25. Ps. 78:55. 105:44.

the regulation and moderation of all *other* affections, in entire subordination and subservency to this governing principle : so that nothing should, in any sense, or in any degree, be loved by us, but for the Lord's sake, and according to his commandment. Thus are we *reasonably* required to "love the **LORD** our God," both for what he is in himself, what he hath done for us, and what he is and will be to us ; and that uniformly, constantly, perfectly, and progressively.—Whatever our natural capacities may be, or to whatever improvements we may, in this or in a future world, attain, the Lord commands us to give him *the whole* : and were our love thus perfect, our worship, obedience, and submission also would be perfect ; nor could it ever possibly vary, or fall short of our whole strength and power, without a variation or diminution of this inward principle. Yet even this would admit o. degrees and increase, from the first dawning of reason in the infant, (such as was the holy child Jesus,) in progressive enlargement to the highest possible exaltation of the angelic nature. For no creature, to all eternity, can ever love God in measure equal to his excellence, which is infinite as his incomprehensible being ; but each might and ought to love the Lord, to the utmost extent of all the powers which the Creator has bestowed on him. This would at once secure to God the glory due to his name ; and to his creatures, that felicity of which he hath formed them capable. Thus it is with angels in heaven ; thus it was with man before his apostasy. But alas ! the "carnal mind" of fallen man, "is enmity against God ;" and as we all are by nature destitute of this love of God ; we all love ourselves, the world, and our favourite sinful indulgences and pursuits, with all our *heart, our mind, our soul, and strength*, and therefore sacrifice every thing to these idols. But in regeneration an internal revolution takes place ; the usurpers are dethroned, the Lord himself takes possession of the heart, and becomes the *supreme* object of our love ; yet so long as sin dwelleth in us, we never love God according to the full perfection of this precept ; but our love in all the exercises and effects of it, is often interrupted, and at best comparatively languid. All, however, that comes short of this perfect love, is *sin*, and needs forgiveness ; and therefore our best obedience can do nothing towards our justification. Yet this law is our standard ; by progressive sanctification we are renewed in conformity to it ; and "the spirits of just men made perfect" are, in this respect, already made equal to the angels in heaven. (*Notes, Ex. 20:3. Matt. 22:37. Mark 12:28—34.*)

V. 6. *In thine heart.* That is, "Let these words be treasured up in thy memory, rooted in thy judgment, and reigning in thy affections ; that they may become habitually the subjects of converse and meditation, to the exclusion of all such as are of a contrary or inferior nature."

V. 7—9. The Israelites were commanded to take every method of making the knowledge of the divine law familiar to them and to their families ; that every object which they beheld might serve as a memorial of it. Some think, that the subsequent directions should be considered only as figurative language, strongly enforcing the grand principle : but several of them at least seem to have been intended *literally*, according to the circumstances of those times ; though the Jews in latter ages have run into a most frivolous superstition, by resting in the outward observance. Such external methods, however, may be less necessary at present, where copies of the Bible are cheap and numerous : but the duty of diligently teaching children from the word of God, and frequently and openly conversing together concerning it, remains the same. (11:18—21. *Note, Matt. 23:5—7.*)

diggedst not, vineyards and olive-trees which thou plantedst not; *when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

13 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

15 (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you;) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

16 Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

18 And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers;

19 To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken.

20 ¶ And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you?

7:12-18. 32:15. Judg. 3:7. Prov. 30:8,9. Jer. 2:31,32. Ex. 16:10-20. Matt. 19:23,24. * Heb. *bounden, or servants*. † See on 2:22, 10:12, 20:13, 4. Matt. 4:10. Luke 4:8. ‡ Lev. 19:12. Josh. 1:2. Ps. 15:4. Is. 45:23. 5:16. Jer. 4:2. 5:7. 12:16. x 18. 11:28. Ex. 24:14-16. Jer. 25:8. 1 John 2:1. y 13. 7. z See on 4:24. Ex. 20:5. 1 Cor. 10:22. a 7. 11:17. Num. 32:10-15. Ps. 90:7. 1 Gen. 7:1. Ex. 32:12. 1 Kings 13:24. Am. 9:8. c Matt. 4:7. Luke 1:2. d Ex. 17:27. Num. 30:3,4,13. 21:4,5. Is. 95:9,8. 1 Cor. 10:9. Hab. 3:9. e 12. 11:22. Ex. 15:26. Ps. 119:1. 1 Cor. 15:58. Tit. 3:8. Heb. 6:11. 2 Pt. 1:5-10. 3:14. f 8:11. 12:25,28. 13:18. Ps. 19:11. Is. 3:10. Ex. 18:13,19,21,27. 13:14,16,19. Hos. 14:9. John 8:28. Rom. 12:2. g See on 4:40. 5:29,33. h Ex. 23:24-30. Num. 33:52,53. Josh. 2:1-8. 3:1-4. 1 See on 7. Ex. 12:25. 13:14.

V. 12. Then beware, &c.] Notes, Ps. 62:8-10. Prov. 30:7-9. Jer. 9:23,24. Dan. 4:28-33. Matt. 19:23-26. 1 Tim. 6:17-19. Jam. 1:9-11. 'In all time ... of our wealth; ... Good Lord deliver us.' Litany.

V. 13. As an act of religious worship, on important occasions, the Israelites were commanded to appeal to JEHOVAH by a solemn oath; and not to any of the imaginary deities of the nations around them. This command fully proves the lawfulness of oaths: for the unchangeable God could not expressly enjoin any thing, in itself contrary to his own moral law. (Notes, Matt. 5:33-37.)

V. 14, 15. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 20:4,5. 34:11-17.

V. 16-19. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 17:1-7.

V. 20-24. Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 13:8-10. Josh. 4:20-24. Ps. 78:3-8.

V. 25. If the Israelites attended on the typical ceremonies and sacrifices in a penitent and believing manner, and showed that they were "without guile" in this respect, by a conscientious regard to all the other parts of the divine law; they would be accepted through the promised Redeemer, as if their obedience had been complete, though in itself it would be imperfect. On the other hand, by habitually neglecting any part of the law, their obedience in other respects would be rendered useless, and their partiality would evince their hypocrisy. (Notes, Matt. 7:21-27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The knowledge of the spirituality and excellence of the holy law is suited to show sinful man his need of a Saviour, and to prepare his heart to welcome a gratuitous salvation; and the gospel is calculated to magnify and honour the law, not only in the perfect obedience of the Son of God to its holy precept, and in his willing subjection to its awful curse; but in bringing back apostate rebels and enemies, by repentance, faith, forgiveness, and renewing grace, to love God supremely in this world, and perfectly, even as angels love him, in the world above. In proportion as we possess that "faith which thus worketh by love." (Note, Gal. 5:1-6.) we shall delight in his commandments, ordinances, and people, we shall savour heavenly converse and heavenly exercises; and "our meditation of him will be sweet."—But alas! that very conduct, which this chapter prescribes to Israel, could scarcely be reduced to practice among men called Christians, without exciting almost universal contempt and disgust! To be continually speaking of the truths and commands of God, upon our journeys, in our families, and in company; to make religion our first subject in the morning, and our last at night; and to quote Scripture on every suitable occasion, without reserve or apology, as those who glory and delight in it, would certainly bring upon us the charge of affectation, of enthusiasm, or of hypocrisy. This lamentably discovers to how low an ebb religion has fallen among professed Christians! but unless the truths and precepts of the

21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, *We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

22 And the LORD showed signs and wonders great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes;

23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers.

24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.

25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

CHAPTER VII.

The nations of Canaan must be utterly destroyed, and no leagues or marriages made with them; in order to avoid idolatry, and because Israel was the chosen people of God, 1-8. Obedience enforced by the Lord's justice and mercy, and by promises of victory and prosperity, 9-24. Injures to be entirely destroyed, 25, 26.

WHEN the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and

Josh. 4:6,7,21-24. Prov. 22:6. † Heb. *to-morrow*. k 5:6,15. 15:15. 26:5-9. See on Ex. 20:2—Neh. 9:9,10. Ps. 136:10-12. Is. 51:1. Jer. 32:20,21. Rom. 6:17,18. Eph. 2:11,12. 1 See on 4:34. Ex. 7:3. 8:10,11. 12:14. Ps. 135:3. ‡ Heb. *evil*. m 1:30. 3:21. 4:3. 7:19. Ps. 52:10,11. 91:8. n 10:18. 18:35. See on Ex. 13:5. o 10:13. Job 35:7,8. Prov. 9:12. Is. 3:10. Jer. 32:39. Matt. 6:33. Rom. 6:21,22. p 4:1,4. 8:3. Ps. 41:2. 66:9. Rom. 10:5. q 24:14. Lev. 18:5. Is. 4:6. 34:1. 19:6. Prov. 12:28. Ex. 20:11. Luke 10:28,29. Rom. 10:3,5,6. r 3:1. 3:12. Jam. 2:10. s See on 4:38. 6:11,10,19,23. 9:4. 11:29. 31:2. Ex. 6:8. 15:17. Num. 14:31. Is. 44:2,3. 78:55. b Gen. 15:18-21. Ex. 23:23,28. 32:2. c See on 4:38. 4:1-3. 20:1. d 23:24. 3:3. 23:14. Gen. 14:20. Josh. 10:24,25. 30:32,42. 21:44. Judg. 1:4.

sacred volume are indeed written in our hearts, and practised in our lives, all our profession or conversation will be but lip-labour, and justly condemned as hypocritical.—Though every condition in life exposes us to peculiar snares; yet none is so dangerous, and so commonly ruinous, as prosperity and affluence; for pride, love of the world, forgetfulness of God, and disregard to eternal things, like poisonous weeds, naturally grow from our wicked hearts, when fattened (so to speak) with the manure of wealth. So that the greater favours we receive from a bountiful Providence, the more ungratefully we generally behave! Let none of us then be desirous or in haste to be rich. (Note, 1 Tim. 6:6-10.)—Let those who are rich, or growing rich, tremble, "and beware lest they forget the LORD." Their danger is great, but "with God all things are possible;" let them seek to him for grace sufficient. If poor, let us learn to be content, and thankful for our safer lot; and instead of being anxious to get wealth for our children, (which is like building a wall to keep them out of heaven,) let us be careful to explain the scriptural truths, precepts, ordinances, and history to them, and to all committed to our care; to make edifying observations to them on the occurrences of Providence; and to encourage their inquiries, by giving them plain, familiar, and full answers; endeavouring by every means to show them the nature, reasonableness, and advantage of true religion; confirming the whole with the example of serious godliness, in every part and in every occurrence of life; united with an affectionate exercise of our authority, and fervent prayers for and with them. Thus will it be well with us and them; and we may hope for an incorruptible inheritance for them, and for ourselves, when all the wealth of this world shall be no more.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-4. The number and names of these nations, here vary from those which had been before mentioned. (Note, Gen. 15:18-21.) In a long course of years many revolutions would take place; some tribes would be extinct, or incorporated with others, and some would have changed their names. But they were the posterity of the same people, inhabiting the same land; and they had now filled up the measure of their iniquities. Israel was therefore commissioned to execute divine vengeance; and they were not only justified in all they did; but they actually offended, and were themselves punished for not more entirely extirpating them. Yet they would by no means have been justified, if they had, from love of conquest and thirst of dominion, carried on such bloody wars against any nation not expressly included in their commission; their conduct therefore can form no precedent to others, nor in the least excuse the murder and rapine, which mad ambition has in all ages been committing. (Notes, Num. 21:21-25. 31:2.)—The Lord was pleased in this solemn transaction, not only to show his abhorrence of sin; but, by thus executing vengeance upon guilty nations, to teach all, who regard the Scriptures

utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them:

3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

5 But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

6 For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

7 The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; (for ye were the fewest of all people;)

8 But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations;

10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day to do them.

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the statutes which he swore unto thy fathers.

13 And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy

wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee.

14 Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

15 And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee: but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.

16 And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee: thine eyes shall have no pity upon them; neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.

17 If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I, how can I dispossess them?

18 Thou shalt not be afraid of them; but shalt well remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;

19 The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched-out arm, whereby the Lord thy God brought thee out; so shall the Lord thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.

20 Moreover, the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.

21 Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.

22 And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

23 But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed.

24 And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven; there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.

25 The graven images of their gods shall ye

e 20:16,17. Lev. 27:23,29. Num. 33:52. Josh. 6:17-25. 8:24. 9:24. 10:23,40. 11:11,12. 12:10,11. 13:20,32,33. 34:12-16. Josh. 2:14. 9:18-21. Judg. 1:21. 2:25. 3 Sam. 2:12. 4 Gen. 6:23. Ex. 34:15,16. Josh. 23:12. 24:2. Jer. 2:2. 1 Kings 11:2. Ezra 9:12. Neh. 13:27-27. 2 Cor. 6:14-17. h 6:15. 12:16,17. Ex. 20:5. Judg. 2:10. 3:7,8. 10:6,7. 11:23,3. Ex. 23:24. 34:13. 2 Kings 23:6-14. h Heb. statues, or pillars. 16:22. Lev. 25:1. k Judg. 6:25,26. 125. 9:1. 21. Ex. 32:20. m 26:19. 29:9. Ex. 19:5,6. Ps. 50:5. Jer. 2:8. Am. 3:2. 1 Cor. 6:19,20. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 2:5,9. n Mal. 3:17. marg. Tit. 2:14. o Is. 15:1. 21:1. 15:13,21. 11:6. 1 John 3:1. 4:10. p 10:22. Is. 51:2. Matt. 7:14. Luke 12:32. Rom. 9:27-28. q 4:37. 9:4,5. 10:15. 1 Sam. 12:22. 2 Sam. 22:20. Ps. 44:3. Is. 43:4. Jer. 31:3. Zeph. 3:17. Matt. 23:15. Eph. 2:15. 2 The. 2:13,14. Tit. 3:3-7. 1 John 4:19. r Gen. 22:16-18. Ex. 32:13. Ps. 105:8-10,42. Luke 1:55. 22:73. Heb. 6:13-18. s See on 4:20,24. Ex. 13:14. 1 Ex. 34:5,7. Ps. 119:145,6. Is. 49:7. Lam. 3:23. 1 Cor. 1:9,10,13. 2 Cor. 1:18. 1 The. 5:21. 2 The. 3:2. 2 Tim. 2:13. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:18-23. 11:11. 1 John 1:9. o 5:10. Gen. 17:7. Ex. 20:6. Neh. 1:5. Dan. 9:4. Rom. 8:28. 1 Cor. 13:4. Jam. 1:12. x 1 Cor. 16:13. y 9:32,41. Ps. 21. 8:9. Prov. 11:31. Is. 59:15. Nah. 1:2. Rom. 2:1. 2 Pet. 3:10. a Ps. 20:5. John 15:23,24. b See on 4:1. 9:22. John 14:15. c Heb. because. c 28:1. Lev. 26:3. d See on 9: Ps. 105:8-10. Mic. 7:

20. Luke 1:73,73. e See on 7: 28:4. Ex. 23:25. Ps. 1:3. 11:7. 144:12-15. John 14:21. 15:10. 16:27. f 23:3-5,11,15-18. Job 42:12. Prov. 10:22. Mal. 2:10,11. Matt. 6:33. g 32:29. Ps. 115:15. 147:19,20. h 28:4,11. Lev. 25:9. Ps. 127:3. i 27:60. Ex. 9:14. 15:26. Ps. 105:36,37. k See on 2. 11:35. 15:13,21. 25:12. Jer. 21:7. m 12:30,31. Ex. 23:33. Ps. 23:33. 142-16. Num. 33:55. Josh. 23:12-16. Judg. 2:12. 3:6. y 27. Ps. 106:36. 1 Cor. 15:33. n 5:17. 15:9. 18:21. Is. 14:13. 47:8. 49:21. Jer. 13:22. Luke 9:47. o Num. 13:32. Josh. 17:16-18. p See on 1:29. 3:6. 31:6. Ps. 27:1. 2. 46:1-2. Is. 41:10-14. q Ex. 7:14. Judg. 6:13. Ps. 77:11. 78:11,42-51. 105:26-38. 136:6-10. 136:10-15. Is. 51:9,10. 63:11. 15. r See on 4:24. 11:2-4. Neh. 9:10,11. Jer. 32:20,21. Ex. 20:6-9. s Ex. 23:25-30. Josh. 24:12. t Num. 11:20. 14:9,14,42. 16:8. 25:21. Josh. 3:10. 2 Chr. 32:8. Ps. 46:5,11. Is. 8:9,10. Zech. 2:10,11. 1 Cor. 11:25. u 10:17. 26:8. 1 Sam. 4:8. Neh. 1:5. 4:14. 9:32. Zech. 12:9-5. v Heb. pluck off. x Ex. 23:23,30. Josh. 15:63. y See on 2. z Heb. before thy face. 5:8. z 1:5. 3:20. Is. 13:6. Jer. 17:18. Joel 1:15. 2 The. 1:9. a Josh. 10:24,25,42. 12:1. &c. b 9:15. 25:19. 29:20. Ex. 17:14. Ps. 9:5. Prov. 10:7. Jer. 10:11. Zeph. 1:4. 11:23. Josh. 1:5. 10:8. 23:9. Rom. 8:37. 1 Cor. 15:57. d See on 5. 12:13. Ex. 32:20. 1 Chr. 14:12. Is. 30:22.

the real cause of the heavy calamities with which, in the ordinary course of his providence, he punishes one kingdom after another.

V. 6-8. (Notes, Ex. 19:5,6.) The Lord chose Israel in the single person of Abraham: from him they were multiplied to seventy persons, when they went down into Egypt; and though they were very numerous in proportion when he brought them from thence, yet they were far less so than many other ancient nations; and probably than the Egyptians from whom they were delivered, or the Canaanites whose land they inherited. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 9-14. Marg. Ref. Notes, 28:1-14. Ex. 34:5-7. Lev. 26:3-12.—A thousand generations. (9) 1 Chr. 16:15. Note, Ex. 20:6.

V. 15. The Israelites, if obedient, would have been subject to no maladies but those common to fallen men, and generally very healthy and long-lived; being graciously exempted from pestilential diseases, which often most tremendously scourge guilty nations; and from such maladies in particular, as they had witnessed in Egypt, by which God afflicted their cruel oppressors, but of which we know nothing with certainty. (Ex. 15:26.) This must be referred to the national covenant: for though godliness commonly secures the most solid temporal advantages; yet temporal blessings were not even among them, uniformly dispensed to individuals according to their obedience: but they were to the nation, with an exactness, which is not observed towards any other people. (Note, Lev. 26:3,4.)

V. 16-21. Marg. Ref. Hornet. (20) Notes, Ex. 8:24. 23:28.

V. 22. (Note, Ex. 23:29,30.) The Israelites had been repeatedly commanded to attempt the immediate and entire extirpation of the devoted nations: as far as sloth, cowardice, or unbelief induced them to spare them, they sinned; and to punish this and their other sins, as well as to prove them, the Lord was pleased to permit a considerable remnant of these nations to remain among them. (Notes, Judg. 2:1-5. 3:1-4.) His conduct was the result of a settled plan, not duty, nor motive.—Thus he commands the entire mortification of every sin, which is our rule of duty; and yet many intimations are given in Scripture, that sin is never totally destroyed in this world, even in the best of saints: but it actually prevails much more, perhaps in all Christians, than it would, if they were more watchful and diligent.

V. 24. Their kings, &c.] Notes, Josh. 8:29. 10:24,28. 12:7-24.

V. 25, 26. In detestation of idolatry, as utterly polluting the most precious things which had been abused in it, and in order to stop its hateful progress, the Lord gave his worshippers this self-denying command, totally to destroy even the valuable metals of the graven images, and all the rich ornaments devoted to them; yea, to detest and abhor them, on penalty of being themselves abhorred and accursed by the Lord. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Josh. 6:17-19. 7:1,10-26. P O. 10-26.)

burn with fire: 'thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be 'snared therein; for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God.

26 Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

CHAPTER VIII.

Exhortations and cautions, enforced by arguments drawn from the Lord's former dealings with Israel, and the good land intended for them; and the dangers to which they would be exposed; and from the effects of disobedience, 1—20.

ALL the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in, and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers.

2 And thou shalt remember all the way

e Josh. 1:1, 21. f Judg. 8:21—27. Zeph. 1:3. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. g 17:1. 23:18. Jer. 17:5. h 13:17. i Lev. 27:23, 29. Josh. 6:17—24. 7:1. Ec. 11—26. Hab. 2: 8—11. Zech. 5:4. 1:2, 20. 3:12, 3. 11:18. Hos. 14:3. Rom. 9:22. a See on 4:1. 5:32, 33. 6:1—3. Ps. 119:4—6. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2. b See on 7:18. Ps. 77: 11. 105:7. Eph. 2:11, 12. 2 Pet. 1:12, 3. 3:1, 2. c 1:33. 2:7. 29:5. Ps. 136:16. Amos 2:10. d 2 Chr. 32:25, 26. 33:12, 19, 23. Job 42:5, 6. Is. 2:17. Luke 18:14.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All the commandments of God are equally the result of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness; but not all alike level to our comprehension, and suited to our ideas. Assured, therefore, that the righteous Lord will not do unrighteously, but exercise his sovereignty with perfect equity, whether we can perceive it or not; when he commands, it is our duty unreservedly to obey; and this is the never-failing effect of true and strong faith. (Notes and P. O. Gen. 22:)—As the rebellion, ingratitude, and wickedness of man are so atrocious; it is more admirable that so many are spared, than that others are punished: and a proper understanding of the evil of sin, and of the mystery of a crucified Saviour, will enable us to perceive, in some measure, the justice of God in all the punishments, temporal and eternal, which he inflicts. We should, however, be thankful to be employed, not as executioners of his vengeance, but as the messengers of his love and compassion. We are called to exercise our severity against our own lusts; and with these enemies we must wage unremitting war, and give them no quarter. Indeed this chapter strongly inculcates two most important lessons: namely, that being obedient we have no occasion to fear any enemies or events whatever; for our Redeemer from the dominion of sin and Satan will, "as a mighty and terrible One," fight for us till all our foes be destroyed, and our victory and felicity be completed: but, on the other hand, we are most emphatically warned of the danger resulting from disobedience. This we must ever keep in mind amidst our greatest success, and even progress in grace; for we still continue frail and depraved, and liable to be baffled by temptation, and have therefore always need for vigilance and circumspection. Indeed, we shall not be able, after all, to extirpate our sins, except by little and little; nor must we expect that the conflict will cease, till we drop our bodies in the grave. But the more we live by faith, and watch and pray diligently, the less will they prevail and interrupt our enjoyments.—Not our merit or loveliness, but the Lord's free love, (of which he has assigned no reason, but because he would love us and choose us for Christ's sake,) forms the source of our salvation, and of all our consequent blessings; and therefore "he will never leave us, nor forsake us." (Notes, Rom. 5:6—10. 8:28—31. Eph. 2:4—10. Tit. 3:5—7. 1 John 4:9—12.) But if we belong to this chosen remnant, (which hitherto hath been "the fewest of all people," we shall by this very consideration be induced to render him the more unreserved, disinterested, and self-denying obedience, to the contempt of gold, and every earthly good, when they come in competition with his precept, or his glory. And should we ever be tempted, through covetousness, (that common idolatry which God abhors,) to do otherwise, we shall find that we have "brought an accursed thing and an abomination into our house," which must be cast out with detestation, if we would not be an accursed thing like unto it. (Note, Zech. 5:1—4.) For we are continually reminded that the Lord is no more "slack in repaying them that hate him," than willing to "show mercy to those who love him and keep his commandments;" nor will he be more severe with any, than with avaricious, fraudulent, hypocritical professors of our holy faith.—We cannot be too compassionate to sinners, but we may easily be too complaisant to them: nor can we stand too much aloof from intimacies, alliances, or intermarriages with them; for that has ever been, and ever must be, a snare to the people of God. (Notes, 2 Kings 8:26. 11:1, 2. 2 Chr. 18:1. 19:2.) Indeed all occasions of sin must be shunned; for our hearts are so inflammable, that we should fear every spark which may light upon them: nor can we be losers by renouncing such sources of gain, as expose us to those temptations, which experience shows to be too strong for us. For we shall enjoy the present felicity of the Lord's holy people, above all other people of the earth, in proportion to the number and value of those things, which we renounce for his sake: as Christ has promised his suffering disciples "a hundredfold

which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that he might make thee know, that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

4 Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments

Jam. 4:6, 10. 1 Pet. 5:5, 6. e 16. 13:3. Gen. 22:1. Ex. 15:25. 16:4. 2 Chr. 32:31. Ps. 81:7. Prov. 17:3. Mal. 3:2, 3. Jam. 1:3. 1 Pet. 1:7. Jer. 17:9, 10. John 2: 25. Rev. 2:25. g Ex. 16:9, 12—35. Ps. 78:23—25. 105:40. 1 Cor. 10:3. h Ps. 37:3. 104:35. Matt. 4:4. Luke 4:4. 12:29, 30. Heb. 13:5, 6. 129:5. Neh. 9:21. Matt. 6:25—30. j See on 4:9, 23. Is. 1:3. Ez. 12:3. 18:28. k 2 Sam. 7:14. Job 5: 17, 18. Ps. 89:32. 94:12. Prov. 3:12. 1 Cor. 11:32. Heb. 12:5—11. Rev. 3:19.

more in this present world, and in the world to come everlasting life." (Note, Matt. 19:29, 30.)

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1. All the commandments.] Note, Matt. 19:16—22.

V. 2. The Israelites were afflicted and proved, in order that they might be humbled. They were not previously aware of the wickedness of their own hearts, and never suspected that they were capable of such crimes as they actually committed; but the Lord well knew all their latent evil propensities: and for their good, and that of multitudes in every age to the end of the world, he was pleased to put them to the proof; that upon full and fair trial their real character might be ascertained. (Notes, Prov. 17:3. Jer. 17:9, 10.) They were therefore led through a variety of difficult circumstances; and were favoured by manifold miraculous evidences of the Lord's special presence with them, and regard to them. They were sometimes thwarted, at other times indulged: they were brought into dangers and straits, and miraculously delivered: they were disappointed in many expectations, and favoured in many things beyond expectation: they were sometimes severely punished for their sins, that they might take warning; and at other times mercifully pardoned, that they might take courage. But the result of the trial undeniably was, that they were always prone to distrust, to murmur, and to be ungrateful: they were invariably disposed to depreciate their mercies, and to magnify their trials and difficulties as intolerable and insuperable; to limit the power and suspect the loving-kindness of the Lord, after all their experience of both; to lust, envy, and rebel; to mutiny, apostatize, and fall into idolatry. In short, it appeared that they were so stiff-necked and hard-hearted, that no patience, but the infinite patience of God, could have borne with them: nor could they be restrained from the most desperate rebellions, but by the terrible examples of thousands struck dead by the avenging hand of divine justice. All this had a direct tendency, when reflected on, to convert their self-admiration into self-abhorrence; to render them sensible of their guilt, folly, and weakness; and to bring them to a suitable conviction of their entire dependence upon the mercy of God for every thing, and their manifold obligations to him for his goodness to them in times past: and finally to produce and preserve that poverty of spirit, which is radically necessary to the life of faith and the walk with God. (Note, Matt. 5:3).—They should likewise be considered as a fair specimen of human nature: any other people, any individual proved as they were, would appear as rebellious as they do, were the result as impartially recorded. And every one's own experience will have the same effect upon him, except he view himself through a false medium, or be lulled asleep by carelessness, or intoxicated by pride: for none of us live one week, without renewed evidences of our own weakness, folly, and depravity.

V. 3. When all ordinary means of sustenance failed, and the people must have perished with hunger; at the word of the Lord the manna descended, and afforded them a suitable, sufficient, and constant supply. Their frequent murmurs and ingratitude, and their inability to help themselves, were calculated to humble them; and the unexpected method in which they were provided for, served to teach them, that the Lord was not confined to ordinary means, and that they needed not to use sinful methods of obtaining the necessities of life: for when he speaks the word, a supply will be sent in one way or another; and that word alone can entirely be depended on. (Note, Matt. 4:3, 4.)

V. 4. The Israelites, doubtless, brought out of Egypt more raiment than what they had upon them; they might manufacture the fleeces of their flocks in the wilderness; and they might be favoured in Providence with other supplies: yet when we consider their immense numbers, their situation, and long continuance in the wilderness, and the strong expressions here made use of; that seems no reason to question the constant and most extraordinary miraculous

of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

7 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills;

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive and honey;

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee.

11 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

12 Lest, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein;

13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

15 Who led thee through that great and terrible

wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint.

16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

17 And thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me this wealth.

18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant, which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish.

20 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

CHAPTER IX.

Israel assured of victory, not for their righteousness, but through the wickedness of their enemies, 1-8: reminded of their rebellions, and of the Lord's mercies, 9-29.

HEAR, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great, and fenced up to heaven,

15:33. Ex. 18:20. 2 Chr. 6:31. Ps. 128:1. Luke 1:6. m. 6:10, 11. 11:10-12. Ex. 3:3. Neh. 9:24, 25. Ps. 65:9-13. Ez. 20:6. n. 32:14. 2 Sam. 4:6. 1 Kings 5:11. Ps. 81:15. 147:14. Ez. 27:17. 2 Chr. 2:10-15. John 6:9, 13. o. p. 7:23. Jer. 5:17. Hos. 2:8, 32. Mic. 4:4. Hab. 3:17. q. Heb. olive-tree of oil. q. 33:25. Josh. 22:3. 1 Chr. 22:14. Job 28:2. r. 6:11, 12. Ps. 103:2. Matt. 14:19. John 6:23. Rom. 14:6. 1 Thes. 5:18. 1 Tim. 4:4, 5. a. Ps. 106:21. Prov. 1:32. 30:9. Ez. 16:10-15. Hos. 2:8, 9. 28:47. 31:20. 32:15. Hos. 13:5, 6. u. Ec. 2:4. Jer. 24:14, 15. Ez. 11:3. Am. 5:11. Hag. 1:4. Luke 17:28. v. Gen. 13:1-5. Job 1:3. Ps. 39:6. Luke 12:13-21. y. 17:20. 2 Chr. 26:16. 32:25. Jer. 2:31. 1 Cor. 4:7, 8. z. See on 11.

interposition of God in this respect, as well as in others.—We may, however, safely reject the Jewish tradition, that the garments grew along with the bodies of the young people; not because it is too difficult to be credited, but because it wants the warrant of scriptural testimony, and does not appear to have been in the least necessary: for the grown persons might wear the clothes of those who died, and the young might take theirs.

V. 5. The punishments inflicted upon the Israelites, though destructive to individuals, were national blessings, salutary to the survivors, and suited to warn them, and conducive to their preservation and prosperity: even as a father chastises his son, not for his hurt, but that he may escape ruin, and be wise and happy. (Note, Ps. 94:12-14. Prov. 3:11, 12. Heb. 13:4-13.)

V. 6-20. Marg. Ref. Notes. Ex. 16: 17: Num. 21:6-9.—Stones, &c. (9) There were no mines in Egypt: this would therefore be a new thing to the Israelites. (Job 28:2.)—Beware, &c. (11) Note, 6:12.—My power, &c. (17) Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-19. Dan. 4:28-33.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our obedience cannot be sincere, unless we "observe to do all the commandments of the LORD" so that whilst any one is broken, with allowance and habitually, that is a conclusive proof of hypocrisy.—In order to sinful man's rendering to God acceptable obedience, he must be humbled, and proved, and made sensible of his weakness, sinfulness, and misery. And when the severest chastenings and the most painful experiences, effect this conviction, they are evidences of the Lord's special love, and of his merciful intention "of doing us good at the latter end," which should make us thankful for them. Indeed, it is impossible that we can be truly penitent, or believe in Christ and love him, or become meek, patient, and forgiving, or attain to any part of the Christian temper and character, without humiliation. Nothing indeed can render even the most suitable outward dispensations, and inward conflicts, effectual for these ends, without the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God: but it is our duty to be often employed in "remembering all the way in which the LORD hath led us;" in recollecting the many evidences we have even of our own ingratitude and perverseness, and of the deceitfulness and wickedness of our hearts; and in considering the proofs which we have had of his power and love, in supplying our wants, extricating us out of difficulties, preventing the bad effects of our misconduct, and overruling for our good, events which appeared fraught with ruin and destruction. Hence we may learn to cease from self-confidence, and to trust in the Lord for every thing; hence we may draw arguments against sin, and motives to obedience; and learn to watch against pride, unbelief, and forgetfulness of God.—The food out of the earth, the water from the clouds, and the raiment new from year to year, which our God provides, calls for no less gratitude from us, than the miraculous provision did from Israel: and perhaps he does

not suffer us previously to hunger, nor confine us to the same provision; but indulges us in a vast variety, which he was pleased to deny them.—The word of the Lord first gave to the earth its fertility, and still continues it; his blessing renders our food nutritional: and did he command the air to sustain us, it would be equally obedient. He appoints the measure of our support, however sent; and his promise, that they who "fear him shall not want any good," is our only security for a future sufficient supply, till we arrive at our journey's end.—But in this respect, the believing poor have the advantage: as they more easily perceive their provision coming from the Lord, in answer to prayer, and find less difficulty in simply trusting him for daily bread: so that they taste a sweetness in it, generally unknown to the affluent, while they are exempt from many of their temptations. For when men possess large estates, or are engaged in extensive and productive commerce; when their herds and flocks, and gold and silver, are multiplied; they find it very difficult to expect and receive their daily bread in simple dependence, prayer, and thankfulness; and to remember that the Lord alone gives them the power to get wealth, so as to give him all the praise, and to use it all to his glory. When "they have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and dwelt therein," they find the temptation to pride, to forgetfulness of God, and to love of the world, very strong: they are apt to fail in reducing to practice the humbling lessons which they had before learned; and are prone to grow careless, to spend their riches on themselves, and to neglect the one thing needful. (Notes, Jer. 2:31, 32. Hos. 13:8-11.)—This is a "slippery place," whence many are "cast down into destruction." (Ps. 73:18.) let those who are placed on it "rejoice with trembling;" and let them "watch and pray always," that they may escape the fate of those multitudes, who have "utterly perished through their prosperity." Let us all be sober and vigilant, and persevere in prayer; for we tread a dangerous path: let us beg of God that we may rather be chastened with his children, than be left to grow secure in sin with his enemies; and may we be taught to hunger after, and feast upon the hidden Manna, and drink of the waters of life from the wells of salvation; encouraged to active, self-denying obedience by the prospect of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeeth not away, reserved in heaven for" all, "who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." (Note, 1 Pt. 1: 3-5.)

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1. It is generally supposed that Moses here began a new discourse; which he introduced, as he had done the first, with referring to some parts of the history of Israel: and afterwards, in the following chapters, he practically applied it to their consciences. But in the former discourse he mainly expatiated on the wonderful works of God; in this he dwells chiefly upon the wicked works of Israel.—By this day is meant, that the long-expected time was just at hand.

2 A people ^{of} great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, 'Who can stand before the children of Anak?'

3 Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as ^a consuming fire, he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.

4 'Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, 'For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land; but ⁴for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and ⁶that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it, for thy righteousness; but for ⁷thy art ^a stiff-necked people.

7 'Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: ⁸from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.

8 Also ⁹in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.

9 When ¹⁰I was gone up into the mount, to receive the tables of stone, ¹¹even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, ¹²then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; ¹³I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

10 And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone, ¹¹written with the finger of God; and on them was ¹²written according to all the words which the LORD spake with you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly.

11 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, ¹²even the tables of the covenant.

12 And the LORD said unto me, 'Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have ¹³corrupted themselves: they ¹⁴are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

13 Furthermore, the LORD spake unto me,

d See on 2:11, 12, 21. e 7:24. Ex. 9:11. Job 11:10. Dan. 8:4. 11:16. Nah. 1:6. 6:16. Matt. 15:14. Mark 7:14. 11:14. 17:1. g 1:30. 20:4. 31:3. Josh. 3:14. Mic. 2:13. Rev. 19:11-13. h 2:24. 10:27. 30:27-30. 33:14. Nah. 1:5, 6. 2 Thes. 1:8. Heb. 12:29. i 7:12, 16, 23, 24. Ex. 23:29-31. Is. 41:10-16. Rom. 8:31. Ps. 7:7, 8, 17. 18:33. 22:32. Rom. 11:6, 20. 1 Cor. 4:7. Eph. 2:4, 5. 2 Tim. 1:9. Tit. 3:3-5. 1 Tim. 3:12. Gen. 15:16. Lev. 15:24, 25. m Gen. 12:7. 13:15. 15:7. 17:8. 26:4. 28:14. Ex. 32:13. Ez. 20:14. Mic. 6:20. Luke 1:54, 55. Acts 3:15. 13:32, 33. Rom. 11:29. 15:8. n See on 3:4. Ex. 20:44. o 13:10, 16. 31:27. Ex. 32:9. 33:3. 34:9. 2 Chr. 30:8. 31:13. Is. 48:3. Ez. 2:4. Zech. 7:11, 12. Acts 7:51. Num. 5:20, 31. p 8:2. Ex. 16:51-63. 20:43. 38:31. 1 Cor. 15:9. Eph. 2:11. 1 Tim. 1:13-15. q 2:25, 5. Ex. 14:11. 16:2. 17:2. Num. 11:4. 14:1. Ec. 16:1. Ec. 20:2-5. 21:5. 25:2. Neh. 9:16-18. Ps. 78:8, &c. 95:8-11. r Ex. 32:1-6. Ps. 105:19-22. s Ex. 24:12, 13. t 15: Ex. 31:18. 34:28. Jer. 31:31, 32. Gal. 4:21. u Ex. 24:18. 34:28. 1 Kings 19:8. Matt. 4:2. x 18. 1 Kings 19:8, 9. 2 Kings 6:22. y Gen. 12:28. Luke 11:20. 2 Cor. 3:3. Heb. 8:10. 4:10-13. 5:24-27. 15:18. Ex. 19:18. 24:1-8. a See on 1:9—Num. 10:33. Heb. 9:4. b See on Ex. 32:7, 8. c 4:16. 31:29. 32:5. Gen. 6:11, 12. Jude 10.

V. 2. *Anakims.*] 2:28. Notes, Num. 13:33. Josh. 11:21—23. 15:14.

V. 4—6. *Marg. Ref. For thy righteousness.* (6) 'He repeats it a third time, that if it were possible, he might root out of the Israelites the opinion of their own deserts, before he' (God,) 'rooted out the Canaanites out of their country.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 7—17. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 32:*

V. 15. The transgressions of the people rendered this second forty days' fasting necessary to Moses. Their pardon was indeed in some sense obtained, before he ascended the mount; yet probably much of the time which he spent there was employed in supplication: and when he descended the second time with the tables of the law in his hands, the pardon was, as it were, ratified and sealed. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 34:1—10, 27—35.*)

saying, 'I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people.'

14 'Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: ¹⁵and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.

15 So ¹⁶I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.

16 And ¹⁷I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you.

17 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.

18 And ¹⁹I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

19 For ²⁰I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. ²¹But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also.

20 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time.

21 And ²²I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, ²³even until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

22 And at ²⁴Taberah, and at ²⁵Massah, and at ²⁶Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.

23 Likewise, ²⁴when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ²⁵ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ²⁶ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.

24 Ye have been ²⁵rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

25 Thus ²⁶I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first: because the LORD had said he would destroy you.

26 I ²⁷prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O LORD God, destroy not thy people, and thine inheritance, ²⁸which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, ²⁹which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

27 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: ²⁸look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin;

28 Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, ²⁹Because the LORD was not able to bring

d 16. Jude. 2:17. Gal. 1:6. e Gen. 11:5. 18:21. Ex. 32:9. Ps. 50:7. Jer. 7:11. 13:27. Hos. 6:10. Mal. 3:5. f See on 6. 2 Kings. 17:14. g Ex. 32:10—13. Is. 62:6, 7. Jer. 14:11. 15:1. Luke 11:7—10. 18:1—8. h 29:20. Ex. 32:32, 33. Ps. 9:5. 109:13. Prov. 10:7. Rev. 3:5. i Num. 14:11, 12. k Ex. 32:14, 15. 14:11. 5:23. Ex. 9:33. 19:18. Heb. 12:18. m Ex. 32:19. Acts 7:40, 41. n See on 9. Ex. 34:28. 2 Sam. 12:16. o 5. Ex. 32:10. 11. Nah. 1:2—7. p 10:10. Ex. 32:14, 33. 17. Ps. 99:6. 105:23. Jam. 7:23, 5, 6. Jam. 5:16, 17. q Ex. 32:2—5, 21, 35. Heb. 7:26—28. r See on Ex. 32:20. Is. 21:21—23. 30:22. 31:7. Hos. 8:11. s Num. 11:1—5. t Ex. 17—7. u Num. 11:4, 34. x 1:19. &c. Num. 13:1—3. y See on Num. 14:1—4, 10—41. Is. 63:10. 13:33. Ps. 78:22. 105:24, 25. Heb. 3:16, 19. z 12. e 7. 1:27. Acts 7:51. h See on 16. c Ex. 32:11—13. 34:9. Num. 14:13—19. Ps. 99:6. 105:23. Jer. 14:21. d 29. 32:9. Ps. 74:1, 2. Is. 63:19. e 7:8. 13: 5. 15:15. 21:8. 26:2, 8. Ex. 17:13. 2 Sam. 7:23. Neh. 1:10. Ps. 77:15. 107:2. Is. 44:23. Jer. 44:4. Tit. 2:11. 1 Cor. 9:12. Rev. 9:5. f Ex. 34:16. g 28:38. 13:5. 32:7. h 19. 14:21. i Ex. 32:31. 32. 1 Sam. 25:25. Is. 49:24, 25. Jer. 50:20. Mic. 7:19. h 29:27. Ex. 32:12. Num. 11:43, 16. Josh. 7:7—9. Ps. 115:1, 2. Is. 43:55. 48:9—11. Jer. 14:7—9. 17. 2 Sam. 9:14. 1 Sam. 9:18, 19.

V. 19. *Marg. Ref. p.*

V. 20. *Marg. Ref.—a. Notes, Ex. 32:2—6, 35, 36*

V. 21. *Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 32:20.*

V. 22, 23. *Notes, Ex. 17:7. Num. 11:1—3, 33, 34. 13:14:*

V. 24. 31:27. *Note, Num. 20:10—13.*

V. 25. Some conclude that Moses fasted *three times*, forty days each; but there is no sufficient grounds in the narration to think that he did. This verse is evidently a resumption of the subject after a digression; such as are commonly found, where the heart is much engaged, and the speaker is more solicitous to impress the hearers for their good, than to gain their applause. St. Paul's epistles abound in such digressions, which sometimes obscure the sense even to the at entire reader.

V. 26—29. *Notes, and P O Ex. 24: 32: 33: 34: Num. 11: 13: 14:*

6 ¶ And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried: and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

16.^k Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more ^lstiff-necked.

—24. 26:62. Josh. 14:3. Ex. 44:28. x 9:18,25. Ex. 24:18. 34:28. † Or, *former*
—24. y 3:25–27. 19:19. Matt. 27:42. z Ex. 32:34. 33:1. † Or, *in journey*.
33:40. 33:23. Mic. 6:8. Matt. 41:29. 33:41. 33:42. 33:43. 33:44. 33:45. 33:46. 33:47. 33:48. 1 Jer. 23:
20,41. Ac 19:33. 19:34. 19:35. 19:36. 19:37. 19:38. 19:39. 19:40. 19:41. 19:42. 19:43. 19:44. 19:45. 19:46. 19:47. 19:48. 19:49. 19:50. 19:51. 19:52. 19:53. 19:54. 19:55. 19:56. 19:57. 19:58. 19:59. 19:60. 19:61. 19:62. 19:63. 19:64. 19:65. 19:66. 19:67. 19:68. 19:69. 19:70. 19:71. 19:72. 19:73. 19:74. 19:75. 19:76. 19:77. 19:78. 19:79. 19:80. 19:81. 19:82. 19:83. 19:84. 19:85. 19:86. 19:87. 19:88. 19:89. 19:90. 19:91. 19:92. 19:93. 19:94. 19:95. 19:96. 19:97. 19:98. 19:99. 19:100. 19:101. 19:102. 19:103. 19:104. 19:105. 19:106. 19:107. 19:108. 19:109. 19:110. 19:111. 19:112. 19:113. 19:114. 19:115. 19:116. 19:117. 19:118. 19:119. 19:120. 19:121. 19:122. 19:123. 19:124. 19:125. 19:126. 19:127. 19:128. 19:129. 19:130. 19:131. 19:132. 19:133. 19:134. 19:135. 19:136. 19:137. 19:138. 19:139. 19:140. 19:141. 19:142. 19:143. 19:144. 19:145. 19:146. 19:147. 19:148. 19:149. 19:150. 19:151. 19:152. 19:153. 19:154. 19:155. 19:156. 19:157. 19:158. 19:159. 19:160. 19:161. 19:162. 19:163. 19:164. 19:165. 19:166. 19:167. 19:168. 19:169. 19:170. 19:171. 19:172. 19:173. 19:174. 19:175. 19:176. 19:177. 19:178. 19:179. 19:180. 19:181. 19:182. 19:183. 19:184. 19:185. 19:186. 19:187. 19:188. 19:189. 19:190. 19:191. 19:192. 19:193. 19:194. 19:195. 19:196. 19:197. 19:198. 19:199. 19:200. 19:201. 19:202. 19:203. 19:204. 19:205. 19:206. 19:207. 19:208. 19:209. 19:210. 19:211. 19:212. 19:213. 19:214. 19:215. 19:216. 19:217. 19:218. 19:219. 19:220. 19:221. 19:222. 19:223. 19:224. 19:225. 19:226. 19:227. 19:228. 19:229. 19:230. 19:231. 19:232. 19:233. 19:234. 19:235. 19:236. 19:237. 19:238. 19:239. 19:240. 19:241. 19:242. 19:243. 19:244. 19:245. 19:246. 19:247. 19:248. 19:249. 19:250. 19:251. 19:252. 19:253. 19:254. 19:255. 19:256. 19:257. 19:258. 19:259. 19:260. 19:261. 19:262. 19:263. 19:264. 19:265. 19:266. 19:267. 19:268. 19:269. 19:270. 19:271. 19:272. 19:273. 19:274. 19:275. 19:276. 19:277. 19:278. 19:279. 19:280. 19:281. 19:282. 19:283. 19:284. 19:285. 19:286. 19:287. 19:288. 19:289. 19:290. 19:291. 19:292. 19:293. 19:294. 19:295. 19:296. 19:297. 19:298. 19:299. 19:300. 19:301. 19:302. 19:303. 19:304. 19:305. 19:306. 19:307. 19:308. 19:309. 19:310. 19:311. 19:312. 19:313. 19:314. 19:315. 19:316. 19:317. 19:318. 19:319. 19:320. 19:321. 19:322. 19:323. 19:324. 19:325. 19:326. 19:327. 19:328. 19:329. 19:330. 19:331. 19:332. 19:333. 19:334. 19:335. 19:336. 19:337. 19:338. 19:339. 19:340. 19:341. 19:342. 19:343. 19:344. 19:345. 19:346. 19:347. 19:348. 19:349. 19:350. 19:351. 19:352. 19:353. 19:354. 19:355. 19:356. 19:357. 19:358. 19:359. 19:360. 19:361. 19:362. 19:363. 19:364. 19:365. 19:366. 19:367. 19:368. 19:369. 19:370. 19:371. 19:372. 19:373. 19:374. 19:375. 19:376. 19:377. 19:378. 19:379. 19:380. 19:381. 19:382. 19:383. 19:384. 19:385. 19:386. 19:387. 19:388. 19:389. 19:390. 19:391. 19:392. 19:393. 19:394. 19:395. 19:396. 19:397. 19:398. 19:399. 19:400. 19:401. 19:402. 19:403. 19:404. 19:405. 19:406. 19:407. 19:408. 19:409. 19:410. 19:411. 19:412. 19:413. 19:414. 19:415. 19:416. 19:417. 19:418. 19:419. 19:420. 19:421. 19:422. 19:423. 19:424. 19:425. 19:426. 19:427. 19:428. 19:429. 19:430. 19:431. 19:432. 19:433. 19:434. 19:435. 19:436. 19:437. 19:438. 19:439. 19:440. 19:441. 19:442. 19:443. 19:444. 19:445. 19:446. 19:447. 19:448. 19:449. 19:450. 19:451. 19:452. 19:453. 19:454. 19:455. 19:456. 19:457. 19:458. 19:459. 19:460. 19:461. 19:462. 19:463. 19:464. 19:465. 19:466. 19:467. 19:468. 19:469. 19:470. 19:471. 19:472. 19:473. 19:474. 19:475. 19:476. 19:477. 19:478. 19:479. 19:480. 19:481. 19:482. 19:483. 19:484. 19:485. 19:486. 19:487. 19:488. 19:489. 19:490. 19:491. 19:492. 19:493. 19:494. 19:495. 19:496. 19:497. 19:498. 19:499. 19:500. 19:501. 19:502. 19:503. 19:504. 19:505. 19:506. 19:507. 19:508. 19:509. 19:510. 19:511. 19:512. 19:513. 19:514. 19:515. 19:516. 19:517. 19:518. 19:519. 19:520. 19:521. 19:522. 19:523. 19

for his sake, not for our righteousness, but for "the praise of his glory," and according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, the Lord bestows these blessings upon us; and though we have the verdict of our own consciences as well as the testimony of God, against us, "that we have been rebellious" from the beginning of our lives, stubborn and stiff-necked; yet when we humbly call on him, he will save us, write his law in our hearts, and not suffer our enemies to triumph in our destruction.—Alas! that ever

V. 16. Moses here cautioned the people not to rest in the outward seal of circumcision, by which they were distinguished as the professed worshippers of JEHOVAH:

17 For the Lord your God is "God of gods, and "Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.

18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

21 He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.

22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

CHAPTER XI.

Love and obedience to God enforced from his past kindnesses, and the good land prepared for the people, 1-12. Conditional promises, warnings, and exhortations, 13-25. A blessing and a curse set before the people, with orders to publish them from mount Gerizim and mount Ebal, 26-32.

THEREFORE thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments always.

m Josh. 22:22. 1 Chr. 16:5,26. Ps. 136:2. Dan. 2:47. 11:36. n Ps. 136:3. Rev. 17:14. 19:16. o 7:21. Neh. 1:3. 4:14. 9:32. Job 37:22,23. Ps. 99:3. Jer. 20:11. p 2 Chr. 19:7. Job 24:19. Mark 12:14. Acts 10:34. Rom. 2:11. Gal. 2:6. Eph. 6:9. Col. 3:25. 1 Pet. 1:17. q Ps. 69:5. 1:36. 146:9. Is. 1:17. Jer. 49:11. Hos. 14:3. r Ps. 145:9. Matt. 5:45. Acts 14:17. x Ex. 22:1. Lev. 19:33,34. Luke 6:35. 10:5-37. 17:15. Gal. 6:10. Jam. 2:15,16. 1 John 3:17,18. 1:6,13. 1:4. Matt. 4:10. Luke 4:8. a 4:1. 11:22. 13:4. Josh. 23:8. Acts 11:23. Rom. 12:9. x See on 6:13. Ps. 63:11. y Ex. 15:2. Ps. 22:3. Is. 12:9-17. 80:19. Jer. 17:14. Luke 2:32. Rev. 21:2. z 3:2-35. 1 Sam. 12:24. 2 Sam. 7:23. Ps. 106:22. Is. 64:3. Jer. 32:20,21. a Gen. 46:27. Ex. 1:5. Acts 7:14. b 1:10. 28:62. Gen. 15:5. Num. 26:51.

but to seek earnestly that inward renewal to the divine image, and mortification of all depraved affections, of which circumcision was the outward sign, and which distinguishes the spiritual worshipper. (Notes, Rom. 2:25-29. Phil. 3:1-7. 5:3.) The figurative language here used denotes the removal of that blindness from the understanding, that obstinacy and perverseness from the will, and that insensibility, carnal self-love, and idolatrous love of worldly things, which render us morally incapable of loving God according to his commandments, or profiting either by his mercies or his judgments. (Note, Gen. 17:9-12.) This change is therefore the subject both of promises and of precepts. As we ought to love God with our whole heart, it must be our duty to remove whatever prevents our thus loving him; and we are accordingly commanded to do so. (Ezek. 18:30-32. Acts 3:19-21.) But we are, as fallen sinners, of a contrary disposition: to this contrariety to God and his law is original sin, the source of all our actual transgressions, and the very essence of guilt and misery; "because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Note, Rom. 8:5-9.) In this condition the gospel addresses us, with invitations, promises, and precepts: and when we are convinced of the reasonableness and necessity of the required change, and perceive our utter inability to effect it, we have recourse to the promises; and pleading them in prayer, as well as using all other means of grace, we wait on the Lord to work it in us; nor do we ever wait and trust in vain. (Notes, Ps. 51:10. Jer. 4:3,4. 17:14. 31:18-20. Ez. 11:17-20.)

V. 17. As the Lord did not "regard persons," the Israelites must expect, in case they imitated the crimes of the nations, on whom they were commissioned to execute the judgments of God, that he would find instruments at length to inflict similar vengeance on them; notwithstanding those outward distinctions which they disgraced, and religious advantages on which they presumed. (Notes, Acts 10:34,35. Rom. 2:1-11.)

V. 18, 19. The universal care and kindness of God, in his providence, to persons of all nations and characters, are expressed by this language. He is represented as the universal Patron of all those who are peculiarly exposed to oppression or ill-treatment; as strangers are in a foreign country, of which the Israelites had had painful experience in Egypt. They were therefore required to imitate the example of the Lord who had been so kind to them, not that of the Egyptians, who had been so cruel to them. (Marg. Ref.)—It is evident, that unproselyted Gentiles are meant; who were no more of the religion of Israel, than the Israelites were of the religion professed by the Egyptians. Notwithstanding these plain precepts, the Jews in after ages were remarkable for their contempt, hatred, and ill-treatment of other nations; and they deemed themselves justifiable in this conduct; which tended very much to their own ruin after the coming of Christ, as it hardened them against the gospel when preached to the Gentiles also.

V. 20-22. Marg. Ref.

2 ¶ And know you this day: for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen "the chastisement of the Lord your God, "his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm,

3 And "his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;

4 And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day;

5 And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;

6 And what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel.

7 But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did.

8 ¶ Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it:

62. Neh. 9:23. Heb. 11:12. a See on 6:5. 10:12. 30:16-20. Is. 116:1. b Lev. 8:33. Zech. 3:7. c See on 4:1,5,40. 6:1. Ps. 105:45. Luke 1:74,75. d 8:19. 29:10. Prov. 22:19. Acts 37:22. e See on 8:2-5. f See on 5:24. 9:26. g See on 7:19. h See on 4:34. 7:19. Ps. 78:12,13. 105:27. Is. 135:9. Jer. 32:20,21. 1 Ex. 14:27,28. 15:4,9,10,19. Is. 106:11. Heb. 11:29. j Is. 7:20. 78:14. Is. 105:38-41. 106:12. Is. 106:11. k Num. 16:1,31-33. 26:9,10. 27:3. Is. 106:17. * Or, living substance which followed them. 1 Heb. at their feet. 1:53. 7:19. Ps. 106:2, 105:4-6,12. 150:2. m See on 3:10,11. 10:12-15. 26:16-19. 29:47. Ps. 116:17-16. n 31:23. Josh. 1:6,7. Ps. 138:3. Is. 40:31. Dan. 10:19. 2 Cor. 12:9,10. Eph. 3:16. 6:10. Phil. 4:13. Col. 1:11.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The gospel of Christ, when truly believed, prepares the heart to receive, love, and obey the holy law of God; in imitation of him, who said, "I delight to do thy will, yea, thy law is within my heart." (Notes, Ps. 40:6-8. John 4:31-34. Rom. 7:22-25.) and this forms the conclusive proof that our sins are pardoned, and that God is reconciled to us. And "what doth the Lord require of us," even by the strictest precept of the law, as given to his redeemed people through the hands of the Mediator, which should hinder us from delighting in his service? Having received so many mercies and favours, and having such gracious promises of assistance and acceptance, we cannot say that we want either motive, ability, or encouragement for obedience. His majesty and purity, and his excellent loving-kindness and mercy, render it equitable and reasonable, that we should fear and love him with all our soul; and from the united influence of fear and love, that we should obey his commandments, worship him in his ordinances, and walk in all his ways. His commandments are also for our good, and restrain us from nothing, but what is destructive of our own happiness, and that of others; and require nothing, but what conduces to inward tranquility and present comfort.—In proportion as we obey his precepts, we bear his image, and reflect "the beauty of the Lord our God," the beauty of his holiness, of his equity, truth, and love; of his compassion and condescension (though he is so highly exalted,) to the mean, to the vile, to the oppressed and wretched. And what pleasure so divine, what honour so exalted, what privilege so desirable, what ornament, praise, or distinction so great, as to have "the God of gods, and Lord of lords" for our Father and our Friend, to walk with him, and be like him? "This honour have all his saints!" To this they are chosen: this is the fruit of his special love, the effect of his converting grace, and the earnest of eternal glory. Having had a delight in our believing ancestors, he has favoured us with his gospel above many of the nations of the earth; and he has continued the ministry of his word, and has had a remnant of believers, among us hitherto, which may be increased to an innumerable multitude! But let us fear coming short of his great salvation; for the Lord is terrible as well as merciful; and, "without respect of persons, he judgeth according to every man's work." (Note, 1 Pet. 1:17-21.) Let us use the means of grace, and pray earnestly that he may circumscribe our hearts, and wash them from every wickedness; let us, without delay or reserve, come to him and cleave to him as our reconciled God in Jesus Christ, that we may love, serve, and obey him acceptably; and be daily "changed into his image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1. This verse is the practical improvement of the conclusion of the foregoing chapter; while the next verse begins another view of the subject.

V. 2-9. Moses seems here to have addressed himself, particularly to the elders, who had in their youth witnessed the wonderful works which the Lord had wrought both for them and among them; and who were bound to remember them for their own warning, and likewise that they might

9 And that ye may ^{prolong} your days in the land which the LORD ^{sware} unto your fathers to give unto them, and to their seed, ^a land that floweth with milk and honey.

10 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowdest thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs :

11 But ^{the} land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven ;

12 A land which the LORD thy God ^{careth} for : ^{the} eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

13 ¶ And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken ^{diligently} unto my commandments which I command you this day, ^{to} love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul,

14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

15 And I will ^{send} grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

16 ^{Take} heed to yourselves, that ^{your} heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them ;

17 And then ^{the} LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he ^{shut} up the heaven that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit, and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

18 ¶ Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for ^a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20 And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house, and upon thy gates ;

o 4:40. 5:16. 6:2. Ps. 34:12. &c. Prov. 3:2, 16. 9:11. 10:27. p See on 6:18. 9:5. o See on Ex. 3:8. Ex. 20:6. r Zech. 14:18. s See on 8:9. Gen. 27:28. Ps. 65:12, 13. 104:10-13. Is. 28:1. Jer. 2:7. Heb. 5:7. * Heb. seeketh. t 1 Kings 9:3. Ezra 5:5. Ps. 35:13. 34:15. Jer. 24:6. u 9:22. See on 6:17. Ps. 119:4. x See on 4:39. 6:5, 6. 10:12. y 28:12. Lev. 26:4. Job 5:10, 11. 37:11-13. Ps. 85:6-13. Jer. 14:22. Ps. 34:26. Joel 2:23. Jam. 5:7. z 1 Kings 18:5. Ps. 104:14. Jer. 14:5. Joel 1:18. 2:22. t Heb. give. a 8:11. 8:10. Joel 2:19. Hag. 1:6. Mal. 3:10, 11. b See on 4:23. Luke 21:8, 34. Heb. 2:1. 3:12. 4:1. 12:15. c 13:3. 29:18. Job 3:7. Is. 44:30. Jer. 1:26. 1 John 5:1. Rev. 12:9. 13:14. 20:4. d See on 6:15. 30:17, 18. e 28:23, 24. 1 Kings 8:35. 17:1. 2 Chr. 6:26. 7:13. Jer. 14:1-6. Am. 4:7. Hag. 1:9-11. f 4:26. 19:30. Josh. 23:13-16. g See on 6:4-9. 32:46. Ex. 13:9-16. Ps. 119:11. Prov. 3:1. 8:20. 23:7, 23. Col. 3:16. Heb. 2:1. 2 Pet. 1:12. 3:1, 2. h Matt. 23:5. 14:9, 10. Ps. 34:11. 78:5, 6. Prov. 2:1.

testify them to the rising generation who had not been eye-witnesses of them. (Notes, Ex. 14:26-30. 15:17. Num. 16.)

V. 10, 11. Rain seldom falls in Egypt, (Zech. 14:18, 19.) and the land is chiefly watered by the inundations of the river Nile; which generally cause great fertility, but also occasion the people much labour in digging trenches, and forming conveyances for the water into the different parts of the country, as if they were watering a garden. And especially the methods taken to prevent a famine, in case the Nile should not swell to its usual height, were indeed immensely laborious and expensive; but at the same time so successful, that entire famines have been seldom known since they have been used. In digging the canals and trenches, and in the various engines for raising the water, and pouring it out on the land, the foot as well as the hand must be frequently employed. But the Israelites in Canaan, "a land of hills and valleys, that drinketh water of the rain of heaven," would be entirely exempted from these labours.—Moses employs all kind of arguments to engage the people to obedience.

V. 12. These expressions imply that the fruitfulness of that favoured land arose from a special interposition of Providence for it, as the intended residence of his people. (Notes, 32:5.) At this day the same country is remarkably barren, that special favour being withdrawn.

V. 13-17. The Israelites were here reminded, that the fertility of the promised land depended entirely on God; and that they would have no ground to expect this favour, unless they cleaved to him in love and obedience. But in this case he would certainly send rain in due season and proportion; especially the former rain to prepare the ground for the seed, and the latter rain to bring forward the harvest: but if they ran into idolatry, they must expect to be punished by famine and desolating judgments. (Notes, 28:1-14, 24. Lev. 26:3, 4, 19.)

21 That ^{your} days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, ^{as} the days of heaven upon the earth.

22 For ^{if} ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you to do them, ^{to} love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and ^{to} cleave unto him;

23 Then will the LORD ^{drive} out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations, and mightier than yourselves.

24 ^{Every} place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.

25 There shall ^{no} man be able to stand before you: ^{for} the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, ^{as} he hath said unto you.

26 ¶ Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse ;

27 ^A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day ;

28 And ^a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God; but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods which ye have not known.

29 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt ^{put} the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal.

30 ^{Are} they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against ^{the} Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?

31 For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.

32 And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.

4:1. &c. Is. 39:19. k See on 4:40. 5:16. 6:2. Prov. 3:2, 16. 4:10. 9:11. 1 Ps. 72: 5. 89:23. Is. 65:30. Rev. 20:6. m See on 13: 6:17. n See on 13: Matt. 22: 37. 2 Tim. 4:8. 1 John 5:2, 3. o See on 10:20. 30:20. Gen. 2:24. Acts 11:23. 2 Cor. 11:2, 3. p 4:38. 7:1, 2, 23. 9:5. Ex. 23:27-30. 34:11. q Gen. 15:18-21. Ex. 23:31. Josh. 1:3, 4. 14:9. 1 Kings 4:21, 24. 2 Chr. 9:26. r See on 2:25. 7:24. Josh. 1:5. 2:9. 5:1. s Ex. 23:27. t 10:15-20. Gal. 3:10, 13, 14. u 28:1-14. Lev. 26:3-13. Ps. 19:1. Is. 1:19. 2:10. Mt. 5:3-12. 25:31. &c. Luke 11:28. John 13:17. 14:21-23. Rom. 2:7. Jam. 1:25. Rev. 22:14. x 28:15, &c. 29:19 -28. Lev. 26:14, &c. Is. 1:20. 3:11. Matt. 25:41. Rom. 2:8, 9. Gal. 3:10. y 27:12-26. Josh. 8:30-35. z Josh. 5:9. Judg. 7:1. a 9:1. Josh. 1:11. 3:13-17. b See on 5:22, 23. 12:32. Ps. 119:6. Matt. 7:21-27. 28:20. Luke 1:6. John 15:14. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2.

V. 18-21. (Notes, 6:6-9.)—The expression, "as the days of heaven upon the earth," denotes exceedingly long and prosperous lives to individuals, and the continuance of the nation in Canaan to the end of the world; which, doubtless, would have been the consequence of hearty, unreserved obedience. (Marg. Ref. Note, Is. 65:21-23.)

V. 22-25. Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 15:18-21. Ex. 23: 31. Num. 34:1-12.

V. 26-30. This significant ceremony is afterwards more explicitly commanded, and the blessing and curse enlarged on; and likewise the observance of it recorded. (Notes, 27: 12-27. Josh. 8:30-35.) Gilgal was on the west side of Jordan, not far from the place where Israel passed that river; and the Canaanites dwelt over against Gilgal, near the plain of Moreh (Gen. 12:6.) so that the blessing and the curse were to be pronounced nigh to the place, where Abraham the blessed had formerly resided. This appointment of it at this time was a pledge of Israel's passing over Jordan.—In this world we believe, and in part experience, that the righteous are blessed and the wicked are accursed: but beyond the grave the reality and extent of the blessing, and of the curse, will be more perfectly apprehended.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There are certain grand principles in religion, which must be introduced upon every subject; and repetitions in respect of them are so necessary and becoming, that no learned ingenuity or eloquence can compensate for the omission. Such are repentance of sin; faith in Jesus Christ; whatever relates to his person, love, atonement, and grace; regeneration; love to God and man, and the future state of righteous and eternal retributions. The more full the heart of the speaker or writer is of "the good treasure," the more will he enlarge on these subjects; to the disgust of such as, under the influence of pride and worldly affections, savour not heavenly things. In one way or another they will be continually

14 But ^ain the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

15 Notwithstanding, ^athou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God, which he hath given thee; ^bthe unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roe-buck, and as of the hart.

16 Only ^aye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.

17 ^aThou mayest not eat within thy gates ^bthe tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds, or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy free-will offerings, or heave-offering of thine hand;

18 But ^athou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

19 ^aTake heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite ^aas long as thou livest upon the earth.

20 ^aWhen the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, ^bas he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

21 If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen ^ato put his name there, be too far from thee; then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

22 Even ^aas the roe-buck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them; the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

23 Only be ^asure that thou eat not the blood: for ^bthe blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

24 Thou shalt not eat it; ^athou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.

25 Thou shalt not eat it; ^athat it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, ^bwhen thou shalt do *that which is right* in the sight of the LORD.

26 ^aOnly thy ^bholy things which thou hast and ^cthy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose.

27 And thou shalt offer ^athy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: ^band the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh.

28 ^aObserve and hear all these words which I command thee, ^bthat it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest *that which is good and right* in the sight of the LORD thy God.

29 ^aWhen the LORD thy God shall ^bcut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou ^csucceedest them, and dwellest in their land;

30 Take heed to thyself ^athat thou be not snared ^bby following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee: and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, ^cHow did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

31 Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination ^ato the LORD which he hateth, have they done unto their gods: for ^beven their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

32 What thing soever I command you observe to do it: ^athou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

^a See on 5:11. Ps. 5:7, 9:11, 2 Cor. 5:19, Heb. 10:19-22, 13:15, a 21:22. Lev. 17:3-5, b 14:5, 15:22-23, c Gen. 9:4. See on Lev. 7:25-27, 17:10-13, Acts 15:20, 1 Tim. 4:4, d See on 5:11, 14:22-29, 25:12, 14, Lev. 27:30-32, Num. 18:21, e See on 12:19, 15:20, f See on 7, Ps. 32:11, 63:3, 1 Cor. 3:17, 1, 12:3, e 2:6, 16:34, Gal. 3:1-3, g 14:27-29, 2 Chr. 1:11, 13:14, 31:4-21, Neh. 10:34-39, 1 Cor. 9:10-14, h Heb. all thy days. See on 1, h See on 11:24, 19:8, Gen. 15:18-21, 5:21, Ex. 23:31, 34:24, i See on 15, Gen. 31:20, Num. 14:20-24, 2 Sam. 13:39, 23:15, Ps. 63:1, 81:2, 107:9, 119:30, 40:174, 2 Cor. 9:14, Phil. 1:8, 2:26, j See on 5:11, 14:23-24, 16:3, 11, 25:2, Ex. 20:24, 1 Kings 14:21, 2 Chr. 12:13, Ezra 6:12, k See on 14, h Lev. strong, i Gen. 6:4, Lev. 3:16, 17, 17:11, 14, Matt. 20:28, Rev. 5:9, m 16:15, 23, n 23. See on

4:40, 5:16, 1:12-2, Is. 3:10, 48:18, 19, Ex. 33:25, o See on 6:18, 13:18, Ex. 15:26, 1 Kings 11:26, p 6:11, 18, Num. 5:9, 10, 19:19, q See on Gen. 28:20, Lev. 22:18, 1 Sam. 1:20-24, Ps. 65:13-15, r See on Lev. 1:5, 9:13, s Lev. 4, 30, 17:11, t 2:48, See on Ex. 34:11, Lev. 19:37, 2 Chr. 7:17, Neh. 1:5, Ps. 105:45, Ez. 37:24, John 15:3, 10:14, u See on 25, v 9:3, 18:1, Ex. 23:23, Josh. 23, 4, Ps. 78:55, 1 Heb. inherit, or, possesseth them, w 7:16, Ex. 23:31-33, Lev. 18:3, Num. 33:52, Judg. 2:2, 3, Ps. 106:34-38, Ez. 20:28, h Heb. after them, z Jer. 10:2, Ez. 20:32, Rom. 15:2, Eph. 4:17, 1 Pet. 4:3-4, 7:18, 9, Lev. 13:25-30, 2 Kings 17:15-17, 21:2, 2 Chr. 33:2, 36:14, i Heb. of the, z Lev. 18:21, 20:2, Jer. 7:31, 32:35, Ez. 20:31, 23:37, Mic. 6:7, a 4:2, 13:18, Josh. 1:7, Prov. 30:6, Matt. 23:20, Rev. 22:18, 19.

V. 10-14. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 5-7, 16:3-6.*
V. 15-16. *Marg. Ref. Note, 22.*
V. 17, 18. *Tithes.* (17) This means the second tithe; (Notes, 14:22-29, 26:12-15), for the Levites received the whole of the other. (Notes, Num. 18:20-32.) In like manner every male firstling was the portion of the priests alone; (Num. 18:17, 18,) so that either the female firstling, or some other of their young cattle, being presented as peace-offerings, were thus to be feasted on before the Lord.

V. 22. All animals slain for food in the wilderness, were ordered to be brought as peace-offerings to the door of the tabernacle; so that the unclean were in fact at that time forbidden to eat any flesh at all: (Notes, Lev. 17:10-16,) but this restriction was taken off when they entered on the promised land.—*The clean, &c.] Notes, 15:19-23.*

V. 29-31. *Notes, Lev. 18:21, 24-30. Ps. 106:35-38. Jer. 10:2.*

V. 32. *Note, 4:2.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We cannot serve God and Mammon, nor worship the true God and idols, nor depend upon Christ Jesus and superstitious or self-righteous confidences. No coalition ought so much as to be attempted in these cases.—True religion springs from the subversion of every false dependence, and the dethroning of every idol, and tends to the extirpation of every rival and opponent, that the Lord may be our only Portion and Salvation, and receive all our worship and obedience. Nor can we ever approach him with acceptance, but in the way which he has revealed, and in the ordinances which he has appointed; for neither our wisdom nor our imagination, is in this case at all to be trusted. (Note, Ex. 25:40.) In Christ Jesus, as in the true Temple, "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," to him we come by humble faith, and receive the pardon, the reconciliation, and the grace which he bestows from his mercy-seat: thus we learn to love him, to obey his commandments, and to present our spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and every work of compassion and kindness performed for his sake. There we find acceptance of our imperfect services, and learn to delight in obedience; for the ways of our reconciled Father are "ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace," and the repeated

calls to "rejoice before the Lord," here, as well as in the New Testament, should be peculiarly noticed. (Notes, Phil. 4:4, 1 Pet. 1:8, 9.) This holy joy will be excited in our hearts, and generally preserved and increased, in proportion as we abound in love and good works. But we must not be satisfied even with that measure of diligence, which passes current in the visible church; where too often many allow themselves, and are connived at by others, in "doing whatsoever is right in their own eyes." We must consider what the word of God requires: we must remember those primitive times, when "great grace was upon all" the company of Christians, and reflect how they lived; and we must by faith contemplate those who have arrived at their rest and inheritance, and endeavour to conceive how they love the Lord and rejoice in serving him, and be ourselves pressing forward after that perfection.—If we would have a comfortable use of our possessions, and be happy in domestic life, we should honour God with our substance, worship him in our families, and train up our children and servants to attend on all his ordinances. Nay, "whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God:" but this cannot be done, without observing the rules of strict temperance, and submission to Providence, in our use of his good creatures, and having all "sanctified by the word of God and prayer;" or without separating a portion for the poor, and for the provision of such as labour in the word and doctrine, and seek not an inheritance of temporal things among their brethren, and must therefore not be forgotten by them. We must likewise "do all in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to the Father through him;" and exercise in every thing that dominion over our appetites which becomes his disciples, and those who savour heavenly things. And it behoves us to watch against being ensnared by the examples, maxims, fashions, and persuasions of the world; for if we yield at all to them, even in the desires of our hearts, they will draw us into further abominations. But "whatsoever the Lord commands, that must we observe and do, without adding to it, or diminishing from it," that "it may be well with us, and with our children after us for ever."

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1-5. It is here supposed, that professed prophets would arise and "give signs and

CHAPTER XIII.

Enforcers to idolatry must be put to death, 1-5. Even the nearest relations must avenge them, and lead the way in avenging them, 6-11. Idolatrous cities must be utterly destroyed, 12-18.

IF there arise among you ^aa prophet, or ^ba dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder;

2 And ^cthe sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them:

3 Thou shalt ^dnot hearken unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams: for the **LORD** your God ^eproveth you, to know whether ^fye love the **LORD** your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 Ye shall ^gwalk after the **LORD** your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him ^hand cleave unto him.

5 And that ⁱprophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken ^jto turn you away from the **LORD** your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the **LORD** thy God commanded thee to walk in: so shalt thou ^kput the evil away from the midst of thee.

a 1 Kings 13:18, 1s. 9:15, Jer. 6:13, 23:11, Ez. 13:2, 24, Zec. 13:4, Matt. 7:15, 24:11, Luke 6:26, 2 Pet. 2:1, 1 John 4:1, b Jer. 34:25, 2s. 27:9, 29:21, marg. Zech. 10:2, c 18:22, Ps. 7:22, 1 Kings 13:3, Matt. 7:22, 23, 24:24, 2 Cor. 11:13-15, 2 Thes. 2:9-11, Rev. 13:14, d 1s. 8:20, Acts 17:11, Eph. 4:14, 1 John 4:1, e 8:2, g 6:10, 8:17, 1 Cor. 11:19, 1 John 2:19, 4:4, f 1 See on 6:5, 2 Cor. 8:2, g See on 6:13, 2 Kings 23:3, 2 Chr. 34:31, Mic. 6:8, Luke 1:6, Col. 1:10, 1 Thes. 4:12, h See on 10:20, 30:20, Rom. 6:13, 1 Cor. 6:17, 118:20, 1 Kings 19:30, 1s. 9:14, 15, 23:17, Jer. 14:15, 23:15-17, 29:21, 22, Zech. 13:3, Rev. 19:20, * Heb. revolt against, j 10, 7:4, Jer. 50:6, Acts 13:8, 2 Tim. 4:4,

wonders," (that is, predict remarkable events which would come to pass accordingly, or work apparent miracles,) and then endeavour to seduce the people into idolatry. Thus a divine interposition would be pleaded in support of a practice directly contrary to the *first principles* of true religion, as stated in the sacred Scriptures. But those *first principles* having been sufficiently demonstrated, and it being impossible that God should contradict himself; the Israelites were commanded to treat the prophet as a deceiver, and his apparent miracles and prophecies as impostures; and to consider that the Lord permitted such things, in order to prove whether they were cordially devoted in love to his worship, or were glad of a pretence for turning aside to idolatry. (Note, 8:2.) Nay, they must put the deceiver to death without mercy.—The existence and perfections of the one living and true God are fully proved by the works of creation and providence; the revelation made to Israel by Moses had been authenticated by the most public and stupendous miracles; and the worship of **JEHOVAH** alone was the fundamental principle of that revelation. No miracles therefore could be admitted as a proof that the people might violate the first and great commandment of the law, just before given from mount Sinai: for it was impossible such miracles could be wrought by **JEHOVAH**, and if wrought by another, he must be the rival and enemy of **JEHOVAH**.—Those things indeed in the law given by Moses, which related to the *external forms of worship*, being changeable in their nature, might be superseded by a future revelation; and here the evidence of miracles, if public and incontestable, was admissible. Yet it is observable, that our Lord and his apostles did not rest the Christian revelation on miracles only, but they constantly appealed to the Old Testament; the prophecies and promises of which, when fairly interpreted, were suited to raise an expectation of exactly such a change in externals as they effected, and which at the same time fully established all the grand principles and requirements of preceding revelations. In all cases where the evident testimony of the sacred oracles is not evaded or contradicted, miracles may be considered as the seal of God, to the doctrine taught by those who work them: but when the grand principles of Scripture are opposed, they must be allowed insufficient to counterbalance the immense weight of evidence by which that has been authenticated.—We are too much in the dark to determine exactly what created power can effect, and what are its limits: and it seems undeniable that Satan, if permitted, could produce changes in nature which would to us appear miraculous: or give intimations of events *speedily* to take place, which would seem prophetic: though neither of them would be at all worthy to be compared with the stupendous miracles recorded in Scripture, or the system of prophecy herein contained. But as we may be sure this enemy will never interpose to confirm the holy truths of Christianity. (Note, Matt. 12:25, 26.) so we may rest satisfied, that God will not permit him to deceive his upright servants; though he may allow him to prove them, and to show the difference between them and plausible hypocrites. (Notes, Matt. 24: 23-25 Rev. 13:8-10.)—As the revelation of the truth and

6 If ^athy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, ^bwhich ^cis as thine own soul, ^dentice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, ^ewhich thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 *Namely*, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the *one* end of the earth, even unto the *other* end of the earth;

8 Thou shalt not ^fconsent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither ^gshall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him;

9 But ^hthou shalt surely kill him: ⁱthine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

10 And thou shalt ^jstone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the **LORD** thy God, ^kwhich brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of ^lbondage.

11 And ^mall Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.

12 ¶ If thou ⁿshalt hear ^osay in one of thy cities which the **LORD** thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying,

5, k 17:7, 19:19, 22:21, 24, 21:7, 1 Cor. 5:13, Heb. 12:14, 15, 11:23, 28:54, Prov. 18:24, 17:27, Matt. 12:48-50, 2 Cor. 5:16, m 1 Sam. 15:1, 3, 24:17, 2 Sam. 12:31, n 13:3, 27, 28, 29, 24:17, 24:18, 24:19, 24:20, 24:21, 1 John 2:7, 10:12, 12:4, 13:1, 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1, 101:1, 102:1, 103:1, 104:1, 105:1, 106:1, 107:1, 108:1, 109:1, 110:1, 111:1, 112:1, 113:1, 114:1, 115:1, 116:1, 117:1, 118:1, 119:1, 120:1, 121:1, 122:1, 123:1, 124:1, 125:1, 126:1, 127:1, 128:1, 129:1, 130:1, 131:1, 132:1, 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13 *Certain* men, *the* children of Belial, *are* gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;

14 Then shalt thou *inquire*, and make search, and ask diligently: and behold, *if it be truth, and* the thing certain, *that* such abomination is wrought among you;

15 Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, *destroying* it utterly, and all that *is* therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.

16 And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God; and it shall be *an* heap for ever, it shall not be built again.

17 And there shalt *cleave* nought of the *curst* thing to thine hand: that *the* LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, *as* he hath sworn unto thy fathers;

18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, *to* keep all his commandments, which I command thee this day, *to do that which is right* in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

* Or, *weighty* men. y *Y* Josh. 19:22, 20:13. 1 Sam. 9:12, 10:27, 25:17, 25. 2 Sam. 16:7, 20:1, 23:6. 1 Kings 21:10, 13, 2 Chr. 13:7. John 8:44. 2^o or, 6:15. 1 John 3:10. 2:4, 19. 2 Kings 17:21. 1 John 2:19. Jude 19. a 17:4, 19:18. Num. 35:30. Is. 11:3, 4. John 7:24. 1 Tim. 5:19. b 2:34, 7:2, 16. Ex. 23:24. 1 Lev. 27:25. Josh. 6:17-21, 24. Job 40:18. Rev. 17:18. 18:18-24, 19:3, 3. c Num. 21:2, 3. Josh. 6:26, 3:28. Is. 17:1, 25:2. Jer. 49:2. Mic. 1:6. d See on 7:25. Josh. 6:18. 1^o Or, *depute*. See on Lev. 27:23, 28. 1 Cor. 16:22. e Josh. 7:26, 22:30. f Gen. 12:16, 17, 25:4, 24, 28:14. g See on 12:25, 28, 32. Matt. 6:33, 7:21, 24.

off the yoke of the divine law; for this is only another name for the children of the devil. (*Marg. Ref. y.*)—In case a report prevailed, that a whole city in Israel had renounced the worship of God and established idolatry, the rulers and magistrates were required first fairly to investigate the case; and if the fact were fully proved, they were commanded to slay all the inhabitants, and burn the city with all the spoil of it "as an accursed thing," devoted to destruction, a sacrifice to the offended justice of God. Thus the same dreadful punishment was appointed for idolatrous Israelites, as they had been employed to inflict on the devoted Canaanites; and the city itself, like Jericho and the cities of Arad, must be so entirely destroyed, as never more to be rebuilt, except by an act of direct rebellion against God. (*Notes, Num. 21:1—3. Josh. 6:17—21.*)—Many distinctions have been made, both by Jewish and Christian expositors, to abate the severity of this law; but the text gives no countenance to any of them. It should not indeed be supposed that the crime was charged on the city, unless a majority of the inhabitants concurred in it; or that any individuals who had entirely escaped the general contagion, might not separate from their guilty neighbours; and perhaps space might on some occasions be allowed for repentance. The destruction of the spoil would evince, that the prosecution and execution were not the effect of avarice, but of zeal for the honour of God and religion; and nothing can be conceived more suited to restrain the people from idolatry than this statute. (*Notes, 7:25, 26.*) But we never read that it was carried into execution; (*Notes, Josh. 22:12—16.*) and have reason to think that this neglect was a national sin, which hastened the Babylonish captivity. Had some mortified limbs been cut off, the life of the state might have been prolonged. (*Mic. 1:13.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is of the greatest importance to be well acquainted with the truths and precepts of revelation, and well established in them: for we may expect to be proved, not only with that trial of our faith which requires us to suffer, or to renounce our worldly interests, for conscience' sake; but by such plausible temptations as "Satan transformed into an angel of light," can set before us, to impose upon us with evil in the guise of good, and with error in the appearance of truth: nor can any thing be effectually opposed to such temptations, but a plain, express testimony of Scripture. In order to render these temptations more dangerous, our crafty foe often sends them by persons, whom we have been accustomed to look up to as superiors, teachers, and men of God; or by those, for whom we entertain the most tender affection; the former we can scarcely think capable of deceiving, or of being deceived; to the latter, we can hardly find in our hearts to refuse any request. But we must remember, that in all this "the LORD our God doth prove us;" he is our Master, and we must call no man master upon earth: if therefore the servant contradicts the LORD, we must believe the latter and not the former.—The love and duty which we owe to God are so immensely superior to all other obligations, that we must act even towards our dearest friends, as though we hated them, when 'his command or his glory requires it. (*Notes, Luke 14:25—27.*) And if the offending relative must not be spared or

CHAPTER XIV.

Israel must be distinguished from other nations in their mourning, 1, 2; and in their diet, 3—21. A title of their increase to be eaten before the Lord; or the price of it to be spent at the appointed place in religious feasting, 22—27: but every third year to be given in works of charity and piety 28, 29.

YE are *the* children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes, for the dead:

2 For *thou art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.

3 Thou shalt not *eat* any abominable thing.

4 These *are* *the* beasts which ye shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,

5 The hart, and the roe-buck, and the fallow-deer, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois:

6 And every beast that *parteth* the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts; that ye shall eat.

7 Nevertheless, these *ye* shall not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; *therefore they are* unclean unto you.

8 And *the* swine, because it divideth the hoof,

a Gen. 6:24. Ex. 4:22, 23. Ps. 82:6, 7. Jer. 3:19. Hos. 1:10. John 1:12, 11:52. Rom. 8:13. 9:8, 28. 2 Cor. 6:15. Gal. 3:28. Heb. 2:10. 1 John 3:1, 2, 10, 3:2, b Lev. 19:27, 28. 21:5. Jer. 16:6, 41:5, 47:5. 1 Thes. 4:13. c 21. See on 7:6, 26, 18, 19, 28; Ex. 19:5, 6. Lev. 11:45. 19:2, 20:26. Is. 6:13. 62:12. Ex. 21:2. Dan. 8:24. 12:7. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 2:9. d Lev. 11:43, 20:25. Is. 65:4. Ex. 4:14. Acts 10:13, 14. Rom. 14:14. Tit. 1:15. e See on Lev. 11:3—5. f Or, *hason*. Heb. *dishon*. f Ps. 11:2. Prov. 18:1. 2 Cor. 6:17. g Matt. 7:22, 23, 26. 2 Tim. 3:5. Tit. 1:16. 2 Pet. 2:18—22. h Is. 65:4. 66:3, 17. Luke 15:15, 16. 2 Pet. 2:22.

pitied, but be put to death, according to the law of God; surely we are called upon, not only to refuse compliance with those temptations which are enforced by our relations, but plainly to protest against the dangerous tempters, sharply to reprove them, and if we cannot reclaim them, to renounce their friendship.—Nor must we more regard the examples of multitudes, who establish *fashions* of ungodliness, and put piety out of countenance, as singularity, preciseness, or unnecessary scrupulosity. Still we must "cleave to the LORD, and love him, and walk after him," and not after the world; keeping his commandments, and attending on his worship, however others revile or ridicule us for our adherence to them.—The fear and service of God form the true interest of communities as well as of individuals; and the progress of ungodliness precedes the approach of public calamities, both in the nature of things, and in the just judgment of God. The magistrate, therefore, in good policy as well as in duty, is bound to employ his authority to repress wickedness and promote religion; which may be done by various means, without wielding the persecutor's sword, or violating the rights of private judgment and liberty of conscience; especially by countenancing and encouraging the faithful preaching of God's word. But the end of all human punishments, yea, of all the threatenings and judgments of God, is this; "that men should hear and fear," and repent, and forsake their sins, "that the fierce wrath of God" may be averted from individuals, and from nations.—However enormous any crime may be, and however necessary the punishment of it, none must be proceeded against without diligent investigation and full proof; and every one concerned in the prosecution of criminals, should be careful to make it evident, that he is influenced, not by *selfish* motives, but by a regard to public justice. Yet they who connive at and conceal those enormous crimes, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, become partakers of the guilt, and the obstinate in wickedness are near destruction: we must therefore separate from them if we would escape their doom.—But we should carefully observe, that we have even greater cause to fear the wrath of our holy Lord God, under the Christian dispensation, than the Israelites had; because those spiritual judgments, now inflicted, are infinitely more terrible than the most solemn execution of criminals by the sword of justice; and the more entirely the wicked escape punishment in this world, the greater will be their misery in the world to come.—Let us then fear the *spiritual* idolatry of covetousness, and the love of worldly pleasure; and be careful not to countenance them in our families, by our example, or by the education of our children; and may we also "abstain from all appearance of evil," and in every thing "do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD our God."

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 19:5, 6. Lev. 19:27—29.*

V. 3—20. (*Notes, Lev. 11:*) The word rendered "the pygarg" (5) marks out a kind of deer, the hinder parts of which are white: "the wild ox" is generally called the *buffalo*: "the chamois" is supposed to be a kind of goat, remarkable for jumping as it walks or runs; called also the *cameloopardalis*.

yet cheweth not the cud, it *is* unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

9 These *l*ye shall eat of all that *are* in the waters: all that have fins and scales shall ye eat.

10 And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it *is* unclean unto you.

11 Of all clean birds ye shall eat.

12 But *these are they* of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the osprey,

13 And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind,

14 And every raven after this kind,

15 And the owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckoo, and the hawk after his kind,

16 The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan,

17 And the pelican, and the gier-eagle, and the comorant,

18 And the stork, and the heron after his kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

19 And every creeping thing that *lieth is* unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten.

20 But of all clean fowls ye may eat.

21 Ye shall not eat of *any* thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto *the* stranger that *is* in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art *an* holy people unto the LORD thy God. *Thou* shalt not see the a kid in his mother's milk.

22 *Thou* shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds, and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

24 And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or *if* the place be

too far from thee, *which* the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

25 Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose.

26 And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and *thou* shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household;

27 And *the* Levite that *is* within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him: for *he* hath no part nor inheritance with thee.

28 At *the* end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates.

29 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and *the* stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which *are* within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; *that* the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

CHAPTER XV.

On the seventh year the debts of the poor must be remitted; nevertheless the people must give and lend liberally, 1-11. Hebrews are not to be released in the seventh year, unless unwilling to depart, 12-18. The male firstlings of cattle are devoted to God, 19-23.

AT the end of every *seven* years thou shalt make a release.

2 And this *is* the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

3 Of *a* foreigner thou mayest exact it *again*: but that which is thine with thy brother, thine hand shall release;

i Lev. 11:26, 27. j See on Lev. 11:9-12. k See on Lev. 11:13-19. l Lev. 11:20-23. Phil. 3:19. m Lev. 17:15. 22:8. Ex. 4:14. Acts 15:20. n Ex. 12:43-45. Lev. 19:33, 31. o See on 2. Dan. 8:24. 12:7. 1 Pet. 1:16. p Ex. 22:19. 34:23. Rom. 12:2. q 26:12-15. Lev. 27:30-33. Num. 18:21. Neh. 10:37. r 12:7-17. 15:19, 30. s 11:24. 12:21. Ex. 23:31. t See on 12:5. u Ezra 7:14-17, 22. Matt. 21:12. Mark 11:15. John 2:14-16. v 12:15, 20, 21. Ps. 106:14-17. 1 Cor. 6:12, 13. 10:6. * Heb. asketh of thee. x 12:7, 12, 18. 26:11. y 29:12, 19. Gal. 6:6. 1 Tim. 5:17. z 29:15, 12. Num. 18:20. a See on 22:29.

V. 21. The allowance to give the flesh of any animal, that died of itself, to a *poor sojourner*; or to sell it to an alien, either journeying through the country, or living on the borders of it; proves beyond controversy, that the law restricting diet was entirely *ceremonial*, though it conveyed moral instruction, and answered at that time valuable religious purposes: for, had the obligation to abstain from certain meats been of a moral nature, disregard to it would have been sinful in heathens as well as in Israelites; and these must no more be necessary to the commission of sin by others, than commit it themselves. It should also be observed, that as the blood was not separated from these animals, so this allowance likewise proves, that the restriction from eating blood is not of moral obligation. (Note, Lev. 17:10-16.)

V. 22-29. (Notes, 12:17, 18. 26:12-15.) These verses require a second tithe from the produce of the land, which, with that appropriated for the maintenance of the Levites, amounted to a fifth part. Two years together the people were commanded to bring this second tithe to Jerusalem, either in kind or in money; and to feast upon it religiously before the Lord, that they might be drawn to spend the more time at the temple, in the society of the priests, at the ordinances of God, and among their brethren. But the third year they were required to spend it in hospitably entertaining and relieving the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; that is, in every kind of hospitality and charity. This appointment was evidently intended to counteract the covetousness, distrust, and selfishness of the human heart; to promote friendliness, liberality, and cheerfulness; to raise a perpetual fund for the use of the poor; and to teach the people that they would never so comfortably enjoy their worldly portion, as when they shared it with their necessitous brethren. They were taught to convert the common blessings of Providence into a sacred ordinance, by accompanying their most free use of them with the exercises of religion: and this was the way to learn to fear God always, and to obtain his blessing upon all the works of their hands.—Some vindicate *feasting* from these laws; and certainly such temperate, religious, and charitable feasting, is allowable and beneficial. (Note, Luke 14:12-14.) But what has this in common with sensual, luxurious, and ungodly banquets?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those whom God hath chosen to be his children, he will

form to be a holy people, of a peculiar and heavenly disposition, and "zealous of good works." As they are so highly distinguished from other people, they must be careful to set an example of holy moderation in all their affections, and to avoid every thing which may disgrace their profession.—Having a Father in heaven, who ever liveth to supply all their wants and to make up every loss, they need not mourn for earthly friends disconsolately, as others do.—The Lord prohibits us nothing but in a wise and kind regard to our welfare. The language of his prohibitions, rightly interpreted, is, "Do thyself no harm;" do not wound thyself; do not ruin thy health, thy reputation, thy domestic comfort, thy peace of mind; especially do not murder thy soul; be not the vile slave of thy appetites and passions; do not render all around thee miserable, and thyself the most wretched of all; but aspire at that which is noble, excellent, permanent, and useful." Considering these prohibitions, in connexion with the manifold indulgences which he allows us, we must acknowledge that we should all be happy, if we consulted our own and each other's welfare, as much as the law of God does.—Making that our *rule of enjoyment*, we should use providential blessings in subserviency to religious edification, to our own inward peace and satisfaction, to the promotion of brotherly love, and to our mutual usefulness. That "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness," is a truth, of which every man will have experimental proof in proportion to his devotedness to God. May we then choose and pursue this happiness, and compassionate and pray for those deluded millions who seek for pleasure in sin, which is the only cause of all the misery in the universe; and let us learn to value every earthly advantage, as enabling us to glorify God, by disseminating the knowledge of his truth, and by communicating to the relief of our distressed brethren and fellow-creatures.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 2. *Exart.* The debtor no doubt was bound in conscience to pay his debt, if able, at that or any future time; but the creditor was not allowed to sue for it, nor the magistrate to enforce the payment of it: at least if it appeared that the debtor could not without inconvenience part with the money. The word *exact* seems to imply such a limitation; and the law was evidently intended for the relief of the indigent, not for the security of the fraudulent. (Notes, Neh. 5:1-13. Is. 58:3-7. Matt. 6:12.)

V. 3. The Israelites were not allowed to oppress foreign-

4 "Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

5 "Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee; and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother;

8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

9 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

12 ¶ And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

13 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine press: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him.

15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day.

16 And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; (because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee);

17 Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever: and also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.

18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

19 ¶ All the firstling males that come of thy herd, and of thy flock, thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep:

20 Thou shalt eat it before the LORD thy God, year by year, in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

21 And if there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God:

22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean person shall eat it alike, as the roe-buck, and as the hart.

23 Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof: thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

*Or, to the end that there be, d See on 14:29, 28:8, 11. Prov. 11:24, 25, 14:21, 28:27. Is. 58:10, 11. e See on 4:11, 13-15, 28:1-15. Lev. 25:3-14, Josh. 1:7, Ps. 19:11, Is. 1:19, 20, Phil. 1:27, 1 Th. 12:14, Ps. 37:21, 28, 112:5. Prov. 22:7, Luke 6:35, e 28:11, 1 Kings 4:21, 24, 2 Th. 9:26, Ezra 4:20, Neh. 9:27, h 2, Prov. 21:13, Matt. 13:30, Jam. 2:15, 16, 1 John 3:15, 17, 1 Ps. 37:21, 112:5-9, 145:16, Psa. 11:24, 25, 19:17, 22:9, 28:27, Ec. 11:1, 2, 5, Matt. 5:42, Luke 6:31-36, 2 Cor. 9:7-9, 9:5-13, 1 Pet. 4:23, Jer. 17:10, Matt. 15:19, Mark 7:21, 22, Rom. 7:9, Jam. 4:5, 1 Heb. 12:1, 13:1, 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1, 101:1, 102:1, 103:1, 104:1, 105:1, 106:1, 107:1, 108:1, 109:1, 110:1, 111:1, 112:1, 113:1, 114:1, 115:1, 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CHAPTER XVI.

The laws concerning the three great annual feasts recapitulated, with an injunction that every one should then offer according to his ability, 1-17. The appointment and duties of magistrates, 18-20. Groves and images prohibited, 21, 22.

OBSEVE the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.

3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it: seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; (for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste;) that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life.

4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee:

6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

7 And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.

8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God; thou shalt do no work therein.

a Ex. 12, 2, 3, Lev. 23:5, Num. 9:2-5, 28:16. b Ex. 12:23-42, 13:4, 23:15, 34:18. c Ex. 12:5-7, Num. 28:19, 2 Chr. 35:7, Matt. 26:17, Mark 14:12, Luke 22:15. d 1 Cor. 5:7. e See on 12:5, 11, 14, 18. f Ex. 12:15, 19, 20, 39, 13:3-7, 34:18, Lev. 23:6, Num. 9:11, 28:17, 1 Cor. 5:8. f Kings 22:27, 1st. 10:29, 12:7, 2nd. 12:10, 2 Cor. 7:10, 11, 1 Thos. 1:5. g Ex. 12:23, 33:39. h Ex. 12:14, 25:27, 13:7-9, Ps. 111:4, Luke 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:24-26, 1 Ex. 12:15, 13:7, 34:25. i See on Ex. 12:10. * Or, kill. See on 2, 12:5, k Ex. 12:6, Num. 9:3, 11, Matt. 26:20, Heb. 1:2, 3, 9:26, 1 Pet. 1:19, 20, 1 Ex. 12:9, 2 Chr. 35:13, Ps. 22:14, 15. m 2, 6, 2 Kings 23:23, John 2:13, 11:55. n Ex. 12:15, 16, 17, 8, Lev. 23:6-8, 34:26-27, 1 Heb. testam. Lev. 23:36, 2 Chr. 7:9, Neh. 8:18, Joel 1:14, Margins. o 10, 16, Ex. 23:16, 34:22, Lev. 23:15, 16, Num. 28:26-30, 2 Chr. 8:13, Acts 2:1, 1 Cor. 16:8.

factor, and honour and adorn his holy religion. (Notes, Matt. 12:46-50, 25:31-46.) In proportion as faith and love prevail they will triumph over the selfishness of the heart, and over the ingratitude of the world; exclude those numerous excuses which result from unbelief, distrust, and covetousness; and lead us to abound in this grace also.—The aim of every Christian should be daily "to do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith;" and to open his hand liberally in giving or in lending, according to his ability and according to the necessity of his brethren, that distressing poverty may have no place among the followers of Christ; especially searching out such as are most modest, humble, and backward to complain, or to obtrude upon the notice of others.—Though this is no more than a small acknowledgment of inestimable favours already received; yet it shall be considered as "lending to the LORD," and be abundantly recompensed. Let all then watch and pray against an envious, grudging, selfish heart. We need never fear being losers, when the Lord stands security for the debt; nor carrying matters to excess whilst we fall so far short of his measure of love to us: and that which the world often calls prudence, will be found the greatest folly. In the exercise of this loving-kindness, those ought especially to be provided for, who have been useful to us, and spent their strength in our service: and, instead of "it seeming hard to us," when we thus communicate to their comfort; we should be ambitious of rendering all who live in our families or are connected with us, so well satisfied, that they may love us and our houses, and count it their privilege to abide in their situation. Such a Master is our God: all who make trial of his service will account it perfect freedom, and consider it their happiness to join themselves to him, to serve him with all they have and are, and to dwell in his house as his willing servants for ever and ever.—But let us not leave this subject without noticing the benevolent spirit which pervades the sacred Scriptures. For where, in all the admired writings of the Greeks and Romans and other pagans, shall we find so much benevolence and kindness to debtors, slaves, and indigent persons inculcated, as in this single chapter?

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1. *By night.* The Israelites did not actually set off on their journey till the approach

9 ¶ Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn.

10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a free-will-offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

12 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

13 ¶ Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine.

14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.

15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God, in the place which the LORD shall choose; because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy increase, and in all the works of thine hands; therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty.

17 Every man shall give as he is able, accord-

p Num. 31:28, 37, Prov. 3:9, 10, 1 Or, sufficiency. 16, Lev. 5:7, 12:8, 25:25, margins. q 17, 1rov. 10:22, Joel 2:4, Hag. 2:15-19, Mal. 3:10, 11, 1 Cor. 16:2, 2 Cor. 8:10, 12, 9:5-11, r 14, See on 12:5, 11, 14, 18, Is. 64:5, 66:10-14, Hab. 3:18, Rom. 5:1, 2 Cor. 1:24, Phil. 4:4, s See on 5:15, 15:15, Rom. 6:17, 18, Eph. 2:1-3, 11, 13, 10, 13:10, Ex. 23:16, 34:22, Lev. 23:34-36, Num. 29:12, 34:2, 2 Chr. 5:3, 7:8-10, 8:13, Ezra 3:4, Neh. 8:14-18, Zech. 14:16-18, John 7:2, 8 Heb. floor and thy winepress. u See on 12:12, 26:11, Neh. 8:9-12, Ec. 9:7, Is. 12:4-6, 25:6-8, 30:29, 35:10, 1 Thos. 5:16, x Lev. 23:35-42, Num. 29:12-38, y See on 10, 7:13, 22:38-42, 30:16, z Ex. 23:14-17, 34:22, 33, Ex. 23:15, 34:20, 1 Chr. 29:3-9, 14-17, Ps. 96:8, Prov. 3:9, 10, Is. 23:18, 60:6-9, Hag. 1:9, Matt. 21:11, Mark 12:3, 1 Heb. according to the gift of his hand. b See on 10, Lev. 27:8, Ezra 2:63, Mark 12:41-44, 2 Cor. 3:12, 9:6, 7,

of morning; but, while eating the passover, and holding themselves in readiness during the night, the first-born of Egypt were destroyed, which made way for their release; and afterwards by night they passed the Red Sea, when their deliverance was completed.—Moses repeated these laws, as with his dying lips, to this new generation, just before their entrance into Canaan, to leave the deeper impression upon their minds. (Notes, Ex. 12:21-37, 14:19-31.)

V. 2. The word *passover* is here used for the various sacrifices offered at that festival, whether of the flock, (as the paschal lamb,) or of the herd. (Note, John 18:28-32, beginning.)—In the place, &c.] Note, 12:5-7.

V. 3-6. The use of unleavened bread was required to be general through the land, by which they, who were confined at home, testified their concurrence with those who ate the passover at the tabernacle: but that was appointed to be slain and eaten, only in the place where the tabernacle was situated. Thither the males were required to come, both at the passover and the two other great feasts, unless unavoidably prevented: and the women, though not commanded, frequently attended them.—The people when about to leave Egypt ate the paschal lamb in the posture of travellers: and therefore their departure seems to be dated from the time of eating it. (Notes, Ex. 12:23-20, 13:3-7, Lev. 23:5-8, Num. 9:1-14, 28:16-25.)

V. 7. *In the morning.* In case of urgent necessity, the Israelites might return home the next morning after eating the passover. Some, however, think this means the morning, after the conclusion of the feasts; and the celebration of them employed the day on which the passover was eaten, six intervening days, and the last concluding day of a solemn assembly; being eight in the whole, from the fourteenth to the twenty-first day of the month inclusive.

V. 9. *To put the sickle.* That is, to reap the sheaf of first-fruits, which was presented on the first day of unleavened bread. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 23:14-18, Lev. 23:15-21.)

V. 11. *Shalt rejoice, &c.]* Note, 12:5-7. P O. V. 13-17. Marg. Ref. Notes, 31:10-13, Lev. 23:34-43, Num. 29:12-38, 1 Kings 8:63-65. Notes, 14:18, Zech. 14:16-19, John 7:37-39.

ing to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

18 ¶ Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

20 ¶ That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

21 ¶ Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

22 Neither shalt thou set thee up any image, which the LORD thy God hateth.

CHAPTER XVII.

The sacrifices are required to be unblemished, 1. Idolaters to be punished with death, 2-7. Difficult cases must be referred to the priests and judges at the sanctuary, and such as refused to submit to their decision put to death, 8-13. Instructions concerning the appointment and duty of a king, 14-20.

THOU shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God any bullock or sheep wherein is blemish, or any evil-favouredness; for that is an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

2 ¶ If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in

c 1:16, 17:9, 17:15, 21:2, Ex. 18:35, 36, 31:6, 1 Chr. 23:4, 26:29, 2 Chr. 19:5-7, Ps. 32:2, 100:13-15, d 24:17, 27:19, Ex. 22:2, 6-8, Lev. 19:15, 1 A. 1. 1:13, Job 31:21, 22, Prov. 17:23, Ec. 7:1, Is. 1:17, 23, 33:15, Jer. 5:28, Ez. 22:12, Mic. 7:3, Hab. 1:4, Zeph. 3:3-5, Acts 16:37, 23:3, e Ne. on 1:16, 17, 10:17, Ez. 37:3, Prov. 21:28, Acts 10:34, * Or, matters, + Heb. Justice, Justice, f 25:13-16, Mic. 6:8, Phil. 4:8, g See on 4:1, Ex. 18:5, Rom. 10:5, h Ex. 31:19, Jude, 3:7, 1 Kings 14:15, 16:33, 2 Kings 17:16, 21:3, 2 Chr. 33:3, 1 Ex. 20:4, Lev. 25:1, * Or, statue, or pillar, k 12:31, Jer. 44:4, Zech. 8:17, Rev. 2:6, 15, a 15:21, See on Ex. 12:5, Lev. 22:20-25, Mal. 1:8, 13:14, Heb. 9:14, 1 Pet. 1:19, * Or, goat, b Gen. 41:34, 1 Chr. 23:18, 24:4.

V. 18, 19. Besides the judges of the principal court held near the tabernacle, to which in difficult and important cases appeals might be made; inferior magistrates must be appointed in every part of the land, who should execute their office in the gates, or most public places, in every city or considerable town, to administer justice in the simplest and cheapest manner. But the same integrity, impartiality, and disinterestedness, were required in them, as in the superior magistrates. (*Notes, Ex. 18:17-23. 23:1-3, 9. 2 Chr. 19:3-11.*)

V. 21. Groves having been generally adopted in the worship of idols, and made the scenes of the vilest abominations, were expressly and repeatedly prohibited in the worship of God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The frequent repetition of the same laws, forms a humiliating reproach of man's unteachableness in spiritual things; for God does nothing in vain.—From the example of Moses, ministers and parents may learn to renew their instructions and admonitions with their latest breath, that the survivors may have them associated with every remembrance of them. * *Note, 2 Pet. 1:12-15.*—A believer should not forget, for one day, his original state of guilt and misery, his gracious deliverance, and the price which it cost the Redeemer; that gratitude and joy in the Lord may, during the residue of his life, be mingled with godly sorrow, mortification of sin, and humble patience under the tribulations which lie in the way to the kingdom of heaven.—Every one of our services must be performed in communion with the church of Christ, and in dependence on him, our Temple, Altar, Sacrifice, and Passover; “being accompanied with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” We should indeed be thankful that our attendance on God's ordinances does not require such long and expensive journeys, as that of Israel did; but if our hearts be right with God, we shall so delight in his service, that the labour required in it will be our pleasure, or we shall be ashamed that it is not. The expense incurred in making the heart of the poor and destitute rejoice, according to the Lord's blessing upon us, will be our own heartfelt satisfaction: and we shall not so much as wish to “appear before the Lord empty” but shall desire to be “rich in good works, ready to distribute, and willing to communicate” in whatever can glorify God or do good to mankind. (*Note, Heb. 13:15, 16.*) For while the Lord so graciously even commands us to rejoice before him, we should desire to help the joy of all our brethren.—Let us likewise note that magistracy is the express appointment of God; as such we are bound to submit to it, with thankfulness for its advantages, patience under the inconveniences attending its undue administration, and prayers for more placed over us. (*Notes, Rom. 13:1-8.*) But magistrates likewise should consider their accountability to God for the use of their authority; and study to know and do their

the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant;

3 And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

4 And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel:

5 Then shalt thou bring forth that man, or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones till they die.

6 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

7 The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people; so thou shalt cut out the evil away from among you.

8 ¶ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy, within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and set thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:

9 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of the judgment.

25:16, Prov. 6:16, 11:1, 15:8, 30:10, d 5, 13:6, 29:18, e 4:23, 29:25, 31:20, Lev. 25:15, 25, Josh. 7:11, 15, 23:15, Judg. 2:20, 2 Kings 18:12, Jer. 31:32, Ez. 36:18, H. 8:7, 8:1, Heb. 8:9, 10, f See on 4:19, 2 Kings 21:3, Job 31:26, 27, Jer. 8:2, Ez. 8:16, g Jer. 7:22, 23:31, 19:5, 32:35, h 13:12-14, 19:18, Prov. 3:2, John 7:11, 11:3-10, 11:21, 22:21, Lev. 24:14, 16, Josh. 7:25, k 19:15, Num. 35:30, Matt. 18:16, John 8:17, 18, 2 Cor. 13:1, 1 Tim. 5:19, Heb. 10:28, 11:9, Acts 7:58, m 12, 13:5, 18:19, 24:7, Judg. 20:13, n 1:17, Ex. 18:26, 1 Kings 3:16-28, 2 Chr. 19:8-10, o 19:4, 10:11, Ex. 21:13, 14, 20, 22:2, Num. 35:11, &c. p See on 12:5, Ps. 122:5, q Jer. 18:18, Hag. 2:11, Mal. 2:7, r 19:17-21, Ez. 44:24.

duty in uprightness, disinterestedness, and impartiality; that they may both be public blessings, and heirs of everlasting life, as the true disciples of him who “loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity.” And none of us should fear any thing so much, as doing that “which the LORD our God hateth.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1. *Marg. Ref. Notes Lev. 22:18-25.*

V. 2-7. The expression “within any of thy gates,” denoted all residing in the cities, and all who went in and came out at the gates of them: so that it included the inhabitants of the whole land.—This law enjoined that those who committed idolatry should be stoned, as well as those who seduced others to commit it: for that crime especially “transgressed the covenant,” and would become a national forfeiture, if not thus punished.—Had men been commanded to worship creatures, however exalted, it might have been complained of as a degradation; much more if they had been required to worship beasts, inanimate figures, and stocks or stones. But God “had not commanded” such practices, nay, he had expressly forbidden them; and they were entirely man's own foolish inventions, and Satan's abominable suggestions.—This law was the magistrate's rule in administering justice to individuals; as that before considered regulated informations of idolatry, and the punishment of cities, which were guilty of that crime. (*Notes, 13.*) In both cases the witnesses were required to take the lead in the execution of the criminal, that they might be rendered more cautious in their testimony: for though the false witness was the actual murderer of the person put to death unjustly, yet perhaps he would not be so shocked by it, when another was the executioner of the sentence, as when he himself was required to perform that painful office.

Two witnesses, &c. (6) (*Notes, 19:15-21. Num. 35:24-30. Matt. 18:15-17. 1 Tim. 5:19, 20.*) Great weight is laid on this, throughout the Scripture; and is matter of serious inquiry, whether in any ordinary case, the testimony of one unsupported witness, even of fair character, should be depended on, especially when the life of man is at stake.

V. 8-13. This law is addressed to the magistrates before mentioned in the different parts of the land. (*Note, 16:18, 19.*)—In many cases of life and death, or of property, or concerning the law of retaliation, they might find perplexing difficulties. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) Such causes were therefore to be referred to the decision of the superior tribunals, which would be held at the place where the tabernacle would be fixed. (*Ex. 18:22.*)—The priests and Levites, having the most leisure, and being especially appointed to the study of the law, which was not only the rule of conscience, but likewise the law of the land, by their learning would be best qualified to act as judges; and probably the sanhedrim and other superior courts of justice were chiefly composed of them, though not without some persons of the other tribes. “The

10 And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

11 According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, *to the right hand nor to the left.*

12 And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die; and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.

13 And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

14 ¶ When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shall say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me:

15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one

from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

18 And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, *without that which is before the priests the Levites:*

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them:

20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, *to the right hand or to the left;* to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.

• Matt. 23:2-3. 1 Josh. 1:7. Mat. 23:9. Rom. 13:1-6. Tit. 3:1. 1 Pet. 2:13-15. 2 Pet. 2:10. Jude 8. 2 Jo. 5:32. 28:14. Josh. 1:7. 23:6. 2 Sam. 14:19. Prov. 4:27. v. 13:5. 11. Num. 15:30. Ezra 10:8. Ps. 19:13. Hos. 4:4. Matt. 10:14. 1 Heb. 10:26-29. * Heb. not in *heaven*. x. 10:8. 19:5. Luke 10:16. John 12:48. 20:23. 1 Thes. 4:2,3. v. See on 7. 13:5. Prov. 21:11. 1 Tim. 5:20. a. See on 13:11. a. See on Num. 15:30. 31. 17:1. 12:9. 10. 18:9. 26:1-3. Lev. 14:34. Josh. 1:13. 1 Sam. 8:5-7. 19:20. 12:19. d. 1 Sam. 9:15. 16. 10:24. 12:13. 2 Sam. 5:2. 1 Chr. 12:23. 22:10. 29:5. Ps. 2:2-6. e. Jer. 30:21. Matt. 22:17. f. 1 Sam. 8:11. 2 Sam. 4:1. 1 Kings 1:5. 4:23. 10:26-31. 2 Chr. 9:25. Ps. 20:7. Is. 38:9. g. Is. 31:1-3. Jer. 44:1. 12:17. 13. 17:13. 18:28. Ex. 13:7. 14:13. Num. 14:34. Jer. 42:

15, 16. Hos. 11:5. 1 Gen. 2:24. 2 Sam. 3:2-5. 1 Kings 11:1-4. Neh. 13:26. Mal. 2:15. Mat. 19:5. d. 1 Kings 10:21. Ps. 62:10. Prov. 30:9. Matt. 6:19. 20. 13:22. 19:23. Luke 12:15. 1 Tim. 6:9. 17. 12 Kings 11:12. m. 31:9. 55. 36. 2 Kings 22:8. 2 Chr. 34:15. o. 6:6-9. 11:18. Josh. 1:8. 1. a. 1:2. 11:9-7-100. John 5:39. 2 Tim. 3:15-17. o. 8:2. 13:14. 2 Kings 14:10. 2 Chr. 25:19. 26:16. 32:25. 38. 12:19. 23. 34. 37. Ps. 131:1. 2. Is. 2:12. Dan. 5:20-23. Hab. 2:4. 2 Cor. 12:7. 1 Pet. 5:5. p. See on 4:2. 5:32. 12:25. 39. 2. 1 Kings 15:5. q. See on 11:1. 1 Sam. 18:13. 14. 15:23. 1 Kings 11:12. 13:24. 36. 2 Kings 19:30. Ps. 19:11. 132:12. Prov. 27:24. Ec. 8:13.

judge" here mentioned (9) may mean either the high-priest, or such other supreme magistrate, as God from time to time should raise up among them. To these the appeal must be made: and, with all their advantages, it was not likely they would give a false sentence, while they continued free from gross apostasy in religion, and corruption in morals. As, however, the law related, not to *matters of faith and conscience*, but merely to the *administration of justice in the land*; it would be better that an individual should sometimes be aggrieved, than that the advantages of magistracy should be abridged: therefore he who presumptuously refused to submit, whether magistrate or private person, was ordered to be put to death. (*Marg. Ref. v-z.*)—In every state there must be some final award, from which there lies no appeal; and that must be submitted to, even though in some cases it should be unjust: but this gives no countenance to the monstrous claim, which some have made, of being *absolute interpreters of doctrines and precepts, in matters of conscience*, to which all ought to submit, however evidently their decisions contradict the word of God. In this case it suffices to say, "we must obey" and believe "God rather than man;" as Peter replied to the successors of those very persons, to whom this authority was originally given, and to whom it had at that time devolved. (*Notes, Acts 4:13-22. 5:29-31.*)

The priests the Levites. (9) The priests, who were also Levites, seem especially intended. Yet the ordinary Levites acted as magistrates in the days of David, (*Notes, 1 Chr. 23:2-6. 26:29.*) but probably in inferior situations.

V. 14. The appointment of a king is not here *commanded*, nor so much as *counselled*; nay, it is implied, that such a change in their government would originate from a desire of being "like the nations," to whom God would have his people unlike; and it is certain that they sinned when they asked a king. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 8:1-9. 12:16-19.*) Yet the Lord foresaw that this would take place, and he previously gave rules respecting it.—They therefore argue very inconclusively, who infer the lawfulness of slavery, polygamy, or divorces, from those laws which suppose their existence, and establish regulations concerning them: for all such questions must be determined by the plain precepts or general tenor of Scripture, and not by these *judicial regulations*. (*Note, Ex. 21:2.*)

V. 15. Though the people sinned in the days of Samuel, by desiring a king; yet they obeyed this law in referring the choice of one to God. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 8:19-22. 10:17-22. 11:12-15. 2 Sam. 5:1,2.*) * He first chose Saul: but rejecting him, he chose David, and then Solomon, whose posterity reigned till the Babylonish captivity. The Israelites were forbidden to set a *stranger* over them; not so much lest he should oppress them, as lest he should lead them into idolatry. This referred to a king whom they should appoint for themselves; not to a ruler which in providence might be placed over them, without their own concurrence, or, as a punishment for their sins: (*Jer. 27:12,14,17. Note, Jer. 29:4-7.*) but the interpreters of the law, in the days of Christ, deduced from this clause the unlawfulness of *submitting* to a foreign yoke, and incited the people to continual rebellions, which at length terminated in their ruin. (*Note, Matt. 22:15-22.*)

V. 16. Multiplying horses for chariots of war and cavalry,

or for luxury, would increase the splendour of the monarch, and form a ground of confidence distinct from a proper confidence in God, and inconsistent with it, and with considering him as the glory of Israel. Egypt abounded in horses; and the desire of multiplying these would induce the prince to encourage a trade with that kingdom; and this might make way for the Israelites being again subjugated by the Egyptians, or at least corrupted by their idolatries and vices. Whereas, it was the command of God that they should no more return thither, but be totally detached from them.—Accordingly we find, that till the days of Solomon, horses were little used by the Israelites, and they had not much intercourse with Egypt: but afterward the horses of that kingdom proved a continual source of temptation and sin to them. (*Notes, 1 Kings 10 24-29. Ps. 20:6-8. Is. 30:15-17. 31:1-3.*)

V. 17. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Sam. 5:13-16. 1 Kings 11:1-8.*

V. 18-20. Some interpret this command, of the book of Deuteronomy alone: but it is most probable, that the whole law was intended: and if Moses, with his immense engagements, found time for *compiling and writing* the whole, it could not be an intolerable task imposed upon any future prince to *transcribe* it. This would have a very great effect in rendering him well acquainted with the law in every part, for writing not only assists the memory, but causes us to notice every single word of what we transcribe. It is probable, however, that this law was very seldom observed by the kings of Judah, and never by those of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are continually called on to remember the pure and spotless sacrifice of Christ, and reminded to serve God with the best of our abilities, time, and possessions; otherwise our professed obedience will be an abomination. To him all worship and love belong; and idolatry and irreligion of every kind will assuredly be punished, in this world or in the next, with at least as great severity as those crimes which disturb the peace of society.—We are also repeatedly cautioned against rashness in bearing testimony, or in punishing accused persons; that the innocent may not be involved in the same doom with the guilty.—Ministers and magistrates should, in their several places, give diligence to obtain exact and extensive knowledge, as well as to act with integrity and impartiality, that they may not mislead or injure those, who place confidence in their decisions. In both cases, however, there lies an appeal to the infallible Teacher and Judge of the world, who will set all right, and effectually redress all those that trust in him.—The presumptuous offender, who refused to submit to the award of human justice, with all its imperfections, was condemned to die: of what punishment then will the obstinate rebel against the righteous Governor of the universe be adjudged worthy? and with what vengeance will he be recompensed, who despises or abuses the grace of the gospel? (*Note, Heb. 10:28-31.*)—The Lord sees the hearts of his own people too much disposed to be like the world around them; and for their chastisement he frequently permits them to obtain the objects of their foolish desires; still regulating the whole ultimately for their good.—The higher any person is exalted, the more strongly must he be tempted to pride, covetousness, luxury, and lust, those fatal enemies to true

CHAPTER XVIII.

The portion of the priests and Levites, 1—8. Idolatry and witchcraft prohibited, 9—14. A prophet like unto Moses promised, 15—19. False prophets must be put to death, 20. How they were to be known, 21, 22.

THE priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance.

2 Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren; the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.

3 And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep: and they shall give unto the priest his shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw.

4 The first-fruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

5 For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand in minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

6 And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the LORD shall choose;

7 Then he shall minister in the name of the LORD his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, which stand there before the LORD.

8 They shall have like portions to eat, beside what which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.

a 10:9. 12:19. Num. 18:21, 25-62. Josh. 13:33. 18:7. 1 Pet. 5:2-4. b Num. 18:8, 9. Josh. 13:14. 1 Cor. 9:13. c Gen. 15:1. 18:16, 15. 22:24-26. 34:11. 119:57. 16:61-6. Isa. 34:1. 1 Pet. 2:9. Rev. 1:5-6. d 12:27. Lev. 7:30-34. e 26:9. 10:4. Ex. 22:22. 23:19. Lev. 23:10-17. Num. 18:12-21. 2 Chr. 31:4-10. Neh. 10:44-47. f Job 21:20. g 10:8. Ex. 28:1. &c. Num. 3:10. 16:5, 9, 10. 17:5-9. 25:13. h See on Num. 35:2, 3. i Pa. 26:8. 27:4. 63:12. 84:10. 1 Tim. 3:1. 1 Pet. 5:2. j See on 12:5. k 2 Chr. 31:2-4. l Lev. 7:8, 9, 14. Neh. 12:44, 47. Luke 10:7. 1 Cor. 9:14. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. * Heb. his sale by the fathers, n See on 12:29, 30. Lev. 18:26, 27, 30. n 12:31. Lev. 18:21. 20:2-5. 2 Kings 16:3. 17:

godliness. Against those evils, princes especially need to watch, and ought to be cautioned by those who have access to them; lest the extensive influence of their example and authority should become ruinous to millions, who look up to them for protection and prosperity. But alas! who hath boldness, disinterestedness, and zeal, sufficient to venture the loss of their favour, and the consequences of their displeasure, by reminding them of such salutary but offensive truths? (*Notes, 1 Kings 22:8, 13, 14, 26, 27.*) Almost all men rather choose to occupy the more pleasing and profitable place of flatterers; and the remaining few either observe a timid silence, or soon are driven from the verge of courts. (*Note, Amos 7:12, 13.*) Kings themselves have therefore the more need to be employed in the daily study of the Scriptures, and of whatever can enable them to understand the Scripture; that they may become well acquainted with the truth and will of God; and learn that true wisdom, which begins in the fear of him, and in habitual regard to his authority, and to that great day of account, in which there will be no respect of persons. But alas! how much of God's word is overlooked by his professed people! One is almost induced to think that this chapter was omitted in Solomon's copy of the law, and in those of the other Kings of Israel and Judah. And might not an impartial and well-informed person suppose the same respecting some of our Bibles, with reference to those chapters which immediately instruct men in the duties of their several stations, and improvement of their talents, especially the highest and most important stations, in the community, and in the church of God? We all however ought more carefully and exactly to study the Scriptures, to examine ourselves, to watch our hearts, to avoid temptations, and to pray for faith and grace, by which we may be enabled to observe all the commandments of God; for "in keeping of them there is great reward."

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 3. The two cheeks, (probably the whole head with the tongue,) and the maw, are supposed to have been at this time first granted out of the peace-offerings, in addition to what had before been allotted the priests and Levites: for they are not mentioned in the preceding laws. (*Note, Lev. 7:29-31.*)

V. 4, 5. The proportion of each particular to be offered as first-fruits is nowhere fixed; and it seems to have been left to every man's own conscience, according to his circumstances, and as a test of his zeal and liberality.

V. 6—8. It seems that the Levites officiated by courses, or according to some rule, from their first establishment in Canaan: but if any one, out of his course, from cordial love of the ordinances and courts of the Lord, preferred officiating as a servant to the priests at the sanctuary, to living at his own city, he was to be encouraged by some addition to his maintenance. The words rendered "the sale of his patrimony" are variously interpreted, and are obscure to us; but probably they mean, that the Levite must not be deprived of any part of what would otherwise accrue to him, whether from the sale

9 ¶ When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken:

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God: neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

17. 21-6. 2 Chr. 28:3. Pa. 106:37, 38. Jer. 19:4-6. 32:35. * Ex. 22:18. Lev. 19:26, 31. 20:26, 27. 1 Sam. 28:3, 7, 9. 1 Chr. 10:13. 2 Chr. 33:6. Isa. 8:19, 20. 47:13. 10:4. Ex. 22:22. 23:19. Lev. 23:10-17. Num. 18:12-21. 2 Chr. 31:4-10. Neh. 10:44-47. f Job 21:20. g 10:8. Ex. 28:1. &c. Num. 3:10. 16:5, 9, 10. 17:5-9. 25:13. h See on Num. 35:2, 3. i Pa. 26:8. 27:4. 63:12. 84:10. 1 Tim. 3:1. 1 Pet. 5:2. j See on 12:5. k 2 Chr. 31:2-4. l Lev. 7:8, 9, 14. Neh. 12:44, 47. Luke 10:7. 1 Cor. 9:14. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. * Heb. his sale by the fathers, n See on 12:29, 30. Lev. 18:26, 27, 30. n 12:31. Lev. 18:21. 20:2-5. 2 Kings 16:3. 17:

of his portion of the tithes, or the rent of houses in the cities allotted to that tribe, or any private property which he had acquired.—Some indeed suppose, that the priests exclusively are meant; because the expression, "minister in the name of the LORD" properly belongs to them; and because the Levites had no portions out of the sacrifices. But in performing their services at the tabernacle they ministered to the Lord, though as servants to the priests. (*1 Sam. 2:18. 3:1.*) And as the people were repeatedly enjoined to be liberal to them, they would doubtless, at the sanctuary, frequently share the peace-offerings, and all other oblations; except the holy things, of which none but the priests and their families might eat. (*12:12, 18, 19. 14:29. 16:1.*) Both priests and ordinary Levites indeed seem to be intended.

V. 12—13. The several terms here employed, must include every species of that superstition or idolatry, which consists in seeking such information or help from invisible beings, real or supposed, as cannot be obtained from God; or in establishing other rules of conduct than his precepts, explained by the sober use of our rational faculties. And we can expect no instruction or help from him except in the use of such means as are naturally efficacious, or in attending on his instituted ordinances. The translation itself, without criticising the original terms, indisputably proves that the venerable translators supposed all calculations of lucky or unlucky days for undertaking any enterprise, all attempts to charm away diseases by unmeaning observations, all amulets or spells by way of preservative, as well as every kind of fortune-telling, to be prohibited.—Not only would such practices be abominable in the Israelites; but they were so offensive, even in the Canaanites, as to form a chief cause of their dreadful extirpation: being all of them either human imposture, or diabolical delusion; and either way conducive to the gratification of that ambitious spirit, who aspires, in every form, to be the god and prince of this world. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 22:18. Lev. 18:21, 24-30. 19:26. 20:2-5.*)

V. 13. *Be perfect.* That is, *Be singly dependent on the Lord, and devoted to him.* (*Notes, Job 1:1. Matt. 5:43-48.*)

V. 15—19. In order to counteract the temptation, to which the Israelites would be exposed, to imitate the Gentiles in the various arts of divination: the Lord gave them intimations, that he intended to afford them supernatural information, as far as profitable for them.—Many expositors, both Jewish and Christian, suppose that a succession of prophets, till the times of the Messiah, is intended in the promise. But if this be well grounded, (as the context may seem to give some countenance to it,) they must be considered as speaking by the Spirit of Christ, and as preparing the way for his coming; without which all the rest would by no means have been an adequate completion of it. This however is certain, that it is a prediction which has had its main accomplishment in our blessed Saviour. As the great Antitype, he resembled Moses more than any other prophet ever did; and with much greater exactness, than he did any of

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

20 But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

b See on 15. c 5:5. 33:5. Ex. 40:26-29. Num. 12:6-8, 13. Ps. 2:6. 110:4. 1a. 9:6, 7. Zech. 6:13. Luke 24:19. Gal. 3:19, 20. 1 Tim. 2:5. Heb. 3:5, 6. 7:22. 12: 24, 25. d 1a. 50:4. 51:16. John 17:8. e John 4:25. 8:28. 12:49, 50. 15:15. f Mark 16:16. Acts 3:23. Heb. 3:7. 10:25. 12:25, 26. g 19:5. Jer. 14:14. 15:23, 15:31.

the prophets or typical persons mentioned in the Old Testament.—Born in the reign of a persecuting tyrant, his life was sought in his infancy, and wonderfully preserved whilst many other infants were destroyed. (Notes, Ex. 2: 2; Matt. 2: 1.) At the entrance of his work, he rejected the proposal of "the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;" as Moses did the prospect of honour and affluence in Egypt; and preferred a suffering, poor, and despised life. (Notes, Matt. 4:8-11. Heb. 11:24-26.) He was opposed by those very persons, for whose sake he had thus voluntarily impoverished himself; yet, in the appointed time and manner, he accomplished the redemption of his people. (Note, Acts 7:30-36.) His meekness and patience far exceeded those by which Moses was distinguished. He united in one person the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. His transfiguration reminds us of Moses's face shining when he came down from the mount. He feeds his people with the true manna, and gives them living water to drink. Many of his miracles resembled those of Moses; but especially his commanding the winds and waves, and walking upon the sea, remind us of the Red Sea divided at the word of Moses, that Israel might pass through. He was opposed by his brethren as well as by the people; and was especially objected to for espousing the Gentiles as his church. All the prophets and apostles spake as his delegates; even as all the former enforced the law of Moses: the whole Scripture is his word, and all ministers obtain their authority and receive their instructions from him. His knowledge of the Father, and his intimate fellowship with him, are unexampled and appropriate. His life was spent, and laid down, for the benefit of his people, and for their sins; and his resurrection precluded the exact knowledge of his sepulchre, and should have prevented the superstitious veneration for it. When he left his disciples he promised them another Teacher and Comforter, as Moses, before he left Israel, promised them a Prophet like unto himself. And it will most awfully be required of those who reject his salvation, who will not hearken to his instructions, or who refuse to have him to reign over them. (Notes, Acts 2:22, 23. 7:37-43.) But the grand point in which this resemblance calls for our attention, is that marked out to us in the sixteenth verse. Moses acted as mediator between God and Israel, when the people, appalled at the terrors of mount Sinai, said, "Let us not hear again the voice of the LORD our God, neither let us see this great fire any more, that we die not;" and when the LORD said, "They have well spoken that which they have spoken." (Notes, 5:22-29. Ex. 20:18-20.) Thereforth the LORD put his words into the mouth of Moses, through whose intervention they were instructed, in a manner more suited to their character and circumstances; and through whose intercession they were specially favoured as the people of God. But Christ is the "One Mediator between God and man." He was "raised up from the midst of his brethren;" yea, he assumed our nature for that very purpose. "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." (Note, Matt. 11:27.) To these "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven;" but to such as as refuse to hear him, "all things are spoken in parables." "No man cometh to the Father but by him:" for "he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." No one of Adam's fallen race can know God, or learn his truth and will, or approach him with comfort and acceptance, except through Christ; any more than Israel could have endured the revelation of God, and his words from Sinai's fiery top, without the typical mediation of Moses. This is unspeakably the most important resemblance, and so decided and unambiguous a divine declaration on this infinitely important subject, in this ancient book, is peculiarly worthy of observation.—In other things a lively fancy might trace some specious similitude between several prophets and Moses; but in this, none except Jesus Christ ever bore the most remote resemblance to him. At the same time this prediction was a plain intimation, that the dispensation of Moses, and the law which he gave, (except as coincident with the preceptive part of all divine revelation,) were to endure only for a time: for not only would prophets arise to enforce his law; but another Prophet also like to

22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.

CHAPTER XIX.

The law concerning the cities of refuge enforced and explained, 1-13. Landmarks must not be removed, 14. Two witnesses required in a criminal case, 15. How the false witness must be punished, 16-21.

WHEN the LORD thy God hath cut off the nations, whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses;

27:15. Ez. 13:6. Matt. 7:15. 2 Pet. 2:1, 2. h 13:1, 2. 1 Kings 18:27, 40. Jer. 2: 8. Zech. 13:3. Rev. 19:20. 11 Thes. 5:24. 1 John 4:1-3. Rev. 2:2. k Jer. 28: 1-14. l 13:2. 2 Kings 20:1. Jon. 3:4. 4:2. Zech. 1:5, 6. m 20. Jer. 28:15-17. n 6:10. 7:12. 12:1. 17:14. o Heb. inheritest, or possesseth. 19:29. marg.

him, who, as a Lawgiver and Mediator, would introduce a new and more spiritual and permanent dispensation. (Notes, Heb. 7:11-17. 8:7-13.)

V. 20-22. These verses contain a clear prediction, that there should "also arise false prophets among the people," and at length deceivers pretending to be the promised Messiah; and they constitute a direct command to the rulers to punish them with death, as presumptuous transgressors of the divine law. If such impostors spake in the name of any other God than JEHOVAH, the case was clear, and no further proof of guilt was needful; and accordingly Elijah ordered the immediate execution of all Baal's prophets. (Note, 1 Kings 18:40.) If the pretended message from God was evidently contrary to the grand principles of the law, the case coincided with that before stated. (Note, 13:1-5.) If a man only exhorted the people to obey the commands of God, he certainly needed no other credentials: but if his message was doubtful in this respect; and being required to give some proof of his divine mission, he should declare that such or such an event would take place at a certain time, (as Moses had done repeatedly to Pharaoh,) and the event did not take place; the people might be sure he was a deceiver, and need not fear his denunciations.—When a prophet threatened judgments on the people for their sins, there was always an implied hope of mercy in case they repented: and in some instances, general promises of prosperity might be connected with the supposition of continued good behaviour. (Note, Jer. 18:7-10.) But when made absolute, and when the time was fixed, (as in Hananiah's prediction, Jer. 28:) the failure was full proof of imposture. The Jews, in demanding of our Lord a sign from heaven, after all the undeniable and beneficent miracles which he had performed, seem to have had this law in mind. But his doctrine perfectly accorded to the preceding Scriptures rightly understood; he appealed to the testimony of Moses and the prophets, as well as that of John the Baptist, in connexion with his own miracles; every thing in the preceding dispensations was suited to lead the impartial and pious mind to expect such a Messiah as he was, and such a change as he showed an intention to effect; and finally, it was foretold, that he should be put to death by the teachers and rulers of Israel: he would therefore give them no other sign than that of Jonah, which being answered in his death and resurrection on the third day, was in all respects perfectly satisfactory. (Notes, Matt. 12:38-42.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The ministers of the gospel should, by a decent provision, be preserved from pressing temptations to entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may be at leisure for their proper employment; and they are absolutely inexcusable, if covetousness, and other carnal principles, engage them in contentions, lawsuits, or selfish projects. (Note, 2 Tim. 2:3-7.)—We do nothing to good purpose, that we do not engage in "with all the desire of our mind." It is well when this influences us "to leave all for the sake of Christ, and the gospel." He will not suffer such disciples to "lose their reward;" and it is his appointment, that those ministers, who "labour most in the word and doctrine" should be best provided for. Yea, they who will do no more in God's service than man will pay them for, are not worthy of being called the ministers of Christ at all. (Note, Mal. 1:9-11.)—Christians are required simply to trust the Lord, and submit to him; and cannot want any information, security, or assistance, which he will not afford them: and the Lord their God not only doth not suffer them to do such things as he abhorred in the Canaanites, and will much more abhor in them; but he calls upon them to bear testimony against every evil work. We have a Prophet like unto Moses, but infinitely superior to show us the truth and will of God, the way of acceptance and of holiness; nay, to "show us the Father;" for "he hath seen him hath seen the Father;" "he dwelleth in the Father, and the Father in him." (Note, John 14:7-14.) Yet is he raised up from among his brethren, and dwells likewise in human nature. That view of God which he gives, will not terrify or overwhelm, but encourage us: he speaks with fraternal affection and divine authority conjoined. We then be to those who refuse to hearken to his voice, to accept of his salvation, or yield obedience to his sway. But

2 Thou shalt separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.

3 Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

4 And this is the case of the slayer which shall flee thither, that he may live: whose kill he his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past;

5 As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those cities and live:

6 Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him; whereas he was not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.

7 Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three cities for thee.

8 And if the Lord thy God enlarge thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers;

9 (If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the Lord thy God, and to walk ever in his ways;) then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three:

10 That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee.

11 But if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and flee into one of these cities;

12 Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.

13 Thine eye shall not pity him; but thou shalt put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

14 Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's land-mark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.

15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

16 If a false witness rise up against any man, to testify against him that which is wrong;

17 Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days.

18 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

19 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put away the evil from among you.

20 And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

21 And thine eye shall not pity; but life shalt go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

CHAPTER XX.

The priest required to exhort the soldiers before they engage in battle, 1-4. What persons the officers must permit to retire, 5-8. How the cities, which accept of refuge, must be treated, 9-15. The devoted cities to be extirpated, 16-18. Fruit-trees must be spared in a siege, 19, 20.

WHEN thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

2. And it shall be, when ye are come high unto

b 4:41-49. Ex. 21:13. Num. 35:10-15. Josh. 20:2-7. Heb. 6:18. c 1s. 35:8. 57:14. 62:10. Heb. 12:13. d 4:42. Num. 35:15-24. * Heb. from yesterday the third day. 6. Gen. 31:2. Josh. 3:4. 1 Chr. 11:2. 1s. 30:33. margins. † Heb. from. 2 Kings 6:5-7. ‡ Heb. wood. § Heb. findeth. e Num. 35:25. Prov. 27:12. 1s. 32:2. f Num. 35:12. Josh. 20:2. 2 Sam. 14:7. † Heb. smite him in life. g 21:22. Jer. 25:16, 16. † Heb. from yesterday the third day. h 11:24, 25. 12:20. 1s. 18:24-21. 28:14. Ex. 23:31. 1 Kings 4:21. Ezra 4:20. 1 See on 11:22-25. 41:32. j 13:21. 1 Kings 2:31. 2 Kings 16:24. Ps. 94:21. Prov. 6:17. 1s. 59:7. Jer. 7:5. Joel 3:19. Jon. 1:4. Matt. 27:45. k 27:24. Ex. 21:12-14. Num. 35:16-21. Prov. 23:17. * Heb. in life. 11 Kings 2:5, 6, 28-34. m 7:16. 1s. 43:25. 12. Ex. 16:5. n 21:9. Gen. 9:6. Lev. 17:21. Num. 35:33, 34. 2 Sam.

21:14. o 27:17. Job 24:2. Prov. 22:28. 23:10. Hos. 5:10. p 17:6. Num. 85:30. 1 Kings 21:10, 13. Matt. 18:16. 26:51. John 8:17. 2 Cor. 13:1. 1 Tim. 5:18. Heb. 10:28. Rev. 11:3-7. q Ex. 23:1-7. † Kings 21:10-13. Ps. 27:12. 85:11. Mark 14:55-59. Acta 6:13. †† Or, falling away. ††† 19:21, 21:5. M1. 2:7. Matt. 23:2, 3. s See on 13:14. 17:4. 2 Chr. 19:6, 7. Job 29:16. † Prov. 19:5, 9. Jer. 14:16. Dan. 6:24. u 13:5. 17:7. 19:20. 21:20, 21. 22:24. 24:7. x 11:17. 17:13. Prov. 21:11. Rom. 13:9, 14. 1 Tim. 5:20. y See on 13:2. z Ex. 21:2-25. 1 Lev. 24:17-21. Matt. 5:38, 39. s 3:21, 22. 7:1. b Josh. 10:5-8. 11:4-6, 9. Judg. 4:3-9. 2 Chr. 11:11. 2s. 12. 1s. 20:7. 33:16, 17. 1s. 31:1. 37:21, 25. c See o 2:7. Gen. 26:3. Josh. 1:5, 9. Judg. 6:12. 2 Chr. 32:7, 8. Ps. 46:7, 11. 118:6. 1s. 7:14. 8:9, 10. 45:2. Rom. 8:31.

'happy they who trust and obey him! He will lead them into the paths of safety and of peace; he will teach them to distinguish his ministers from those of Satan, however disguised; and he will preserve them from every delusion, until he bring them to the land of perfect light, purity, and felicity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 2-10. (Notes and P. O. Num. 35:9-34. Josh. 20:) Three cities of refuge had already been allotted on the east of Jordan; (4:41-43.) and the other three were ordered to be set apart, as soon as the people were settled in the country west of Jordan: and in case their boundaries should in after ages be enlarged, three more were to be added. In selecting these cities they were commanded to be careful to proportion the distances, "that the way might not be too long" to some one of them, from any part of the land: and the way was also to be prepared; "that innocent blood should not be shed in their land," by the avenger of blood overtaking the unfortunate manslayer, before he arrived at a place of refuge.—The promise of still further enlarging the possessions of Israel, was conditional; and by their disobedience they so far forfeited it, that these additional cities of refuge seem never to have been appointed. The Jews flatter themselves with the expectation of a future accomplishment of these promises, when this addition will be made.

V. 11-13. Notes, Ex. 21:12-14. Num. 35:16-23.

V. 14. As landmarks constituted the customary method of distinguishing landed property in those days; removing them would be a crime among the Israelites, similar to forging, altering, destroying, or concealing the title-deeds of estates at this day; and it would occasion atrocious injustice, and make way for dispute and lawsuits. (Mar. Ref.)

V. 15-21. One witness was insufficient to prove a crime against any person; (Notes, 17:2-7. 1 Tim. 5:19, 20.) and if his evidence was suspected to be false, he would himself be liable to a prosecution. But as it might be difficult to decide such a cause, it must be referred to the supreme court: and if on strict inquiry he was found guilty, the law of retaliation must be adopted and strictly executed, as the

impartial rule of the magistrates in punishing him, without yielding to pity; that the fatal effects of false and malicious testimony might be prevented. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In conveying instruction, familiar examples and illustrations, though taken from the most ordinary occupations or scenes of life, are of very great use, to give determinate ideas of the thing to be inculcated: and in laws especially, precision should be studied, that the distinction between the innocent and the guilty, and between a man's crime and his calamity, may be as plainly specified as it is possible. For whether the criminal escape unpunished, or the innocent suffer, injustice is committed; and in case of bloodshed, guilt is brought upon the land where it takes place. On such occasions compassion for the offender may become cruelty to numbers: it must therefore be moderated; or counteracted by the fear of God, the love of justice, and general benevolence. But to avoid the horrid crime of murder, we must watch and pray against the first emotions of hatred and anger: and to be preserved from injustice, we must beware of covetousness, which is wonderfully ingenious in devising such methods of defrauding as may escape detection, censure, or human punishment. (Notes, Ex. 26:13, 15, 17.)—Alas! what a reproach is it to the whole human species, that God himself forbids the testimony of any one man to be taken in things of consequence! Verily he judges all men to be liars, and none absolutely and in all cases to be trusted; which is not only a caution to judges and juries, but a reason for watchfulness and humiliation to us all.—Few crimes are more atrocious in their nature, pernicious in their effects, or affronting to God, than bearing false witness in matters of great importance; and with us especially, since it is always connected with perjury. It is greatly to be wished that it was more commonly and severely punished by man, according to this most excellent and equitable law; but it will assuredly meet with its due punishment from a righteous God! Let all Christians however be cautious not only in bearing public testimony, but also not to propagate private slanders; and let

the battle, that the priest shall approach, and speak unto the people,

3 And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel; Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies; let not your hearts faint; fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them:

4 For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you

5 ¶ And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

6 And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

7 And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in battle, and another man take her.

8 And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

9 And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

10 ¶ When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

11 And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

d Num. 10:9-9, 31:6. Judg. 20:27, 28. 1 Sam. 14:18. 30:7, 8. 2 Chr. 13:12. e Ps. 27:1-3. Is. 35:3, 4. 41:10-14. Mat. 10:15, 23:31. 30h. 6:11-18. 1 Tim. 5:14. Heb. 12:14. 1 Cor. 2:10. * Heb. be tender. † Heb. make haste. Is. 28:16. Ps. 3:2. 11:14. 12:14. Mat. 2:9. 29. 10k 16:6-18. Acts 18:9, 10. 27:24. 1 Tim. 6:12. Heb. 13:6. 1 Th. 2:22. 1 Th. 2:25. 32:30. Ec. 14:14. Josh. 10:42. 23:10. Ps. 144:1. 2. Rev. 8:37. 1 Th. 1:15. 18. Num. 31:14, 48. 1 Sam. 17:18. 1 Neh. 12:27. Ps. 80. 7:16. † Heb. made it common. Lev. 19:22-25. Jer. 31:5. 1 Is. 65:22. Zeph. 1:13. 12:23-25. 24:5. 14:18. m 23:30. Luke 14:18-20. 2 Tim. 5:4. n 1:28. 2:9. Judg. 7:3. Luke 9:62. Acts 15:37, 39. Rev. 3:16. 21:8. o Num. 13:31-33. 14:1-3. 32:9. 1 Cor. 15:33. q Heb. melt. See on 1:28. marg. Ec. 15:15. 1 Heb. to be in the head of the people. r 2 Sam. 20:19-20. Is. 57:19. Zech. 9:10. Luke 10:5, 6. Acts 19:28. 2 cor. 5:18-21. 6:1. Eph. 2:17. q Lev.

those whose consciences accuse them of these or other crimes, without delay flee for refuge to the hope set before us in Jesus Christ.

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1-4. In all the wars which Israel waged according to the will of God, they might assuredly expect his special assistance. This should have been their only confidence; of this his former wonderful works were their assurance; and of these the priests were required to remind them for their encouragement. It is generally thought, that one of the most considerable of the priests always accompanied their armies, to perform the service there stated.

V. 5-9. The Israelites were accustomed to enter on their houses when finished, by making a cheerful feast for their friends; accompanied, as it seems reasonable to conclude, with a solemn act of devotion, by which their habitations were put under the immediate protection of God, and the blessings of his grace and peace were supplicated, that they might prove houses of harmony and piety. (Note, Ps. 30: title.)—It is probable that these regulations were not intended to take place in the first wars of Canaan, in which all who were able were required to enlist; but in those in which the nation might afterwards engage. They however contain a remarkable illustration of the Lord's condescension to all the allowable affections of human nature, and were calculated to compose armies constituted of persons whose minds were free from discomposure and dismay. Some suppose that the fearful were such as were intimidated by a guilty conscience; and thence infer that atrocious sinners are an encumbrance and a curse to armies, as well as churches. (239. Notes, Josh. 7:10-12. P. O. 10-15. Judg. 7:2, 3.) This is indeed very different from the principles of modern tactics, and the practice of modern statesmen and commanders.—However, until the cowards were dismissed, the subordinate officers must not be appointed.

V. 10-18. We must suppose, in the cases here intended, that the Israelites had some warrantable cause of levying war; which covetousness, ambition, and the thirst of dominion could not be. When, therefore, they had been injured or assaulted by any foreign nation, they were required to proceed in the manner here prescribed; for the Lord purposed by these means to enlarge their dominions, whilst they consumed unnecessary blood. There were doubtless various ways by

12 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it.

13 And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.

14 But the women and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

15 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.

16 But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

17 But thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee:

18 That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the Lord your God.

19 ¶ When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege.

20 Only the trees, which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy, and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.

25:42-44. Josh. 9:22, 23, 27. 11:19, 20. 16:10. Judg. 1:29, 30-35. 1 Kings 9:21, 22. Ps. 120:7. Luke 19:14. r See on Num. 31:7, 17, 18. 1 Kings 11:15, 16. Ps. 2:6-12. 21:39. 110:4. Luke 19:27. 2 Thea. 1:7-8. s Num. 31:9, 12, 13, 35. c. Josh. 8:2. 11:14. 2 Chr. 14:13-15. 20:25. Ps. 68:12. Rom. 8:37. † Heb. spoil. ‡ 7. 2, 3, 16. Num. 21:2. Josh. 6:17, 21. 9:24, 27. 10:28, 40. 11:11, 12, 14. u Is. 34:5, 6. Jer. 49:10. 50:35-40. Ez. 38:21-23. Rev. 19:18. x See on 7:1. y 7:4, 5. 12. 30:31. Ec. 23:33. Josh. 23:13. Judg. 2:3. Ps. 106:34-40. 1 Cor. 15:9. 2 Cor. 6:17. Eph. 5:11. 2 Thea. 3:14. 1 Tim. 6:5. 2 Tim. 2:17, 18. Rev. 18:3-5. z Matt. 3:10. 7:15-20. 21:19. Luke 13:7-9. John 15:2-8. ** Or, for, O man the tree of the field is to be employed in the siege. a 24:5. † Heb. to go from before thee. b 1:28. 2 Chr. 26:15. Ec. 9:14. Is. 37:33. Jer. 6:6. 53:4. Ez. 17:17. † Heb. come down.

they were not only allowed, but, as it seems, commanded, to put to death all the males who were capable of resistance. The lives and property of all men are the Lord's, forfeited to his justice to be disposed of at his pleasure and for his glory. These regulations, however, are not the rule of our conduct, which must be directed by the general law of love; and that prohibits unnecessary bloodshed and plunder, in war as well as in peace.

—One reason of this severity might be, to shadow forth the fatal consequences of persisting in rebellion, and enmity against God, and in contempt of the proposal of peace and reconciliation set before men in the gospel.—Some are of opinion that no terms of peace might, in any case whatever, be offered or allowed to the devoted inhabitants of Canaan; because their measure of wickedness was filled up, and they would be a constant temptation to the Israelites: but we shall meet with events in the course of this history, which will not easily comport with the absolute interpretation. (Notes, Josh. 2:8-16. 6; 22:23. 9; 11:19, 20.) Others, therefore, suppose the meaning to be, that in case the Canaanites rejected peace and servitude, this entire extirpation was to take place: whereas only the grown males were to be put to death, in other cities, in similar circumstances; and the rest of the inhabitants reduced to subjection, as tributaries under the rulers of Israel, but not to personal slavery.—The Jewish writers assert that they might not be spared unless they renounced idolatry: but this would introduce a law enacting persecution, which is nowhere to be found in Scripture, nor any thing like one. The Canaanites, as condemned criminals, were ordered for execution; and it is doubtful, whether peace were to be offered them on any terms; and idolatrous Israelites were to be capitally punished: but the nation had no commission to use the sword in propagating religion; though some Christian writers express themselves as if they had.

V. 19, 20. The original words rendered "for the tree of the field is man's life," are variously interpreted; (marg.) but our translation probably gives the true meaning. The instruction evidently is, that the Israelites should not make unnecessary waste of things useful to man's life, as fruit-trees were; and therefore in sieges they should form their machines of timber-trees only.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

War is an express appeal to the righteous Governor of the world, and should be undertaken and conducted upon such

CHAPTER XXI.

Expiation to be made for the land from murder, when the murderer was concealed, 1-9. How the marriage of an Israelite with a captive maid must be regulated, 10-14. The first-born not to be disinherited to please the beloved wife, 15-17. The rebellious son to be stoned, 18-21. Malefactors not to remain all night on a tree, 22, 23.

IF one be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him;

2 Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain.

3 And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke.

4 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:

5 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near: for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD, and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried;

6 And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley.

7 And they shall answer and say, "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it."

8 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and say not innocent

blood 'unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

9 So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

10 ¶ When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

11 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

12 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and she shall shave her head and pare her nails;

13 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

14 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

15 ¶ If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated: and if the first-born son be hers that was hated;

16 Then it shall be, "when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born, before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born:

a Num. 19:2. Prov. 24:17. Is. 26:21. Acts 23:1. b See on 18:18. Rom. 13:3. c Num. 19:2. Jer. 31:18. Matt. 11:24-30. Phil. 2:8. d 11:1. e 2:21-24. f See on 10:13, 18, 5. Num. 6:22-27. 1 Chr. 23:13. f See on 17:3-12. Mal. 2:7. g Heb. month. h Job 9:30. i Ps. 19:12. 26:6. 51:2, 7, 14. 73:13. Jer. 2:22. Matt. 21:24, 25. Heb. 9:10. h Num. 5:19-28. 2 Sam. 16:8. Jer. 21:21-23, 37-40. Ps. 73:4. i Num. 35:33. 2 Sam. 3:28. 2 Kings 21:4. Jer. 29:13. Ez. 22:3, 24, 33. Jon. 1:14. Matt. 23:35. 1 Thes. 2:15, 16. j Heb. in the midst. k See on 19:

12:13. 11:18. 2 Kings 10:30, 31. m See on 20:10-16. n Gen. 6:2. 12:14, 15. 22:18-20. 34:3, 8. Judg. 14:2, 3. Prov. 6:25. 31:10, 39. o Num. 31:18. p 1 Cor. 11:6. Eph. 4:2. q 1 Or, suffer to grow. Heb. make, or, dress. q Ps. 45:10, 11. Luke 14:26, 27. r Ex. 21:7-11. s 19:21, 29. Gen. 34:2. 1 Gen. 22:31, 35. 1 Sam. 1:4, 5. u 1 Chr. 28:10. 2 Chr. 11:19-22. 21:3. Rom. 8:29. Phil. 4:8. Heb. 12:16, 17.

principles, and such only, as he approves. When the cause warrants this awful appeal, our confidence should be placed, not in chariots and horses, not in fleets and armies, not in experienced commanders and brave soldiers, but in the Lord of hosts himself.—Though the faithful ministers of religion are generally slighted by those who "jeopardy their lives in the high places of the field:" yet in reality none so much want their instructions, counsels, and prayers, both individually, and with respect to the common cause. Nor is any valour rational, but that which springs from faith, a good conscience, a sense of duty, reliance on God, and a hope of heaven: for he who neither "fears those who kill the body, nor him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell," is not valiant, but absolutely mad.—In war itself, justice and the love of peace should dictate every measure: the voice of humanity should be heard distinctly, even in the noise of battle; and wanton cruelty or waste should never sully the soldier's reputation.—Yet in all cases and with every possible mitigation, the horrors of war must, when reflected upon, give pain to the feeling heart: and can only be considered as evidences of the depravity of man, and the power and malice of Satan; and of the just vengeance of God, who thus scourges a guilty world. May he hasten the time when "swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and men shall learn war no more!"—But how dreadful is the case of those, who are engaged in unequal contest with their Maker, who refuse his proposals of peace, and who will not submit to be his servants and render him the easy tribute of worship and praise, and subjection to his easy yoke, and kind commandments! Inevitable ruin awaits them. May we follow peace with God and man; and wage war against our lusts and the powers of darkness, with undaunted courage and unrelenting severity. In this contest, neither the number nor power of our enemies should dismay us; nay, our own weakness should not cause us to tremble or faint: for the Lord himself will fight for us, and save us; and all his wonders wrought for his church ensure our victory. But none can fight this good fight, whose hearts are inordinately attached to worldly objects, or who are afraid of the cross, or the conflict; for they will themselves desert, and discourage others. Above all, ministers should be valiant in the cause, and by their example, as well as exhortations, animate the people for the contest. Finally, whilst we show no mercy to any sin, and will have no friendship with any tempter; let us show a spirit of peace, forgiveness, and benevolence towards all mankind.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1-9. This law was enacted to increase the horror of murder, and to promote the detection of the criminal, by a public and solemn transaction, under the management of the magistrates of the nearest city, associated with the priests; by putting numbers upon inquiry; by calling upon every one to clear himself; and by warning all men not to conceal the criminal.—The "heifer which had not

drawn in the yoke," represented the murderer, the son of Belial, who refused to bear the yoke of God's law; and the "rough valley" might denote the worthlessness of the criminal's character, or the disagreeableness of the transaction. "Striking off the neck of the heifer," not by the priests but by the elders, expressed the desert of the criminal, and their readiness thus to punish him if they could detect him. "Washing their hands," was an external sign of the protestation of innocence and ignorance concerning the murder, which they were required to make: (Note, Matt. 27:24, 25), the prayer, which the priests are supposed to have added, strongly declared that murder contaminates, and leaves guilt upon every land and every person, that does not endeavour by all proper means to bring the criminal to condign punishment: (Note, Num. 35:31-34.) and the whole shadowed forth the atonement and intercession of Christ, through which iniquity is pardoned by a merciful God to his redeemed people.

V. 10-14. The case here regulated would inevitably take place on some occasions: and this statute implies no approbation of an Israelite's marrying a heathen captive, induced merely by her beauty; especially as it does not exclude the case of those who were previously married. If, however, a man became enamoured of his captive, he was not allowed to use force or authority to gratify his inclination, or to proceed with precipitation; but to take time for reflection. (Note, Num. 31:14-18.) By taking the captive into the house, and there keeping her retired, her disposition would be discovered more easily, and if that proved disagreeable, the passion might abate. The becoming attire and ornaments, in which she might be taken captive, being changed for the mean habit of a mourner, might tend to diminish her attractions. "Shaving her head" would certainly have this effect; and the words rendered *paring her nails*, seem rather to mean, *letting them grow*. Some, however, think she was in this interim to be instructed in the law; and that these were external tokens of her renouncing idolatry and embracing the religion of Israel. Her grief also for the death of her parents if slain, or for her separation from them would subside, and her mind be more reconciled to her condition; and if at last the Israelite continued in the same mind, he might marry her.—But in case he humbled her, and afterwards did not choose to continue her as his wife, he must not keep her as a slave, or sell her, but must give her her liberty, and act towards her according to the regulations made concerning women when divorced by their husbands. (Notes, 24:1-4.) All these circumstances would help to increase the caution of the Israelites, and tend to prevent them from rashly entering into these improper connexions.

V. 15-17. This law does not appear exclusively to apply to the case of polygamy, but to him also who had two wives in succession. In either case, the double portion, which according to custom was allotted to the heir, must be given

17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the first-born, *by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the first-born is his.

18 ¶ If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them;

19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place:

20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is a glutton and a drunkard.*

21 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

22 ¶ And if a man have committed a sin

worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree;

23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is *accursed of God*;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

CHAPTER XXII.

Strayed cattle and lost property to be restored, and another's ass or ox, if fallen, to be lifted up, 1-4. The sexes to be distinguished by apparel, 5. The dam not to be taken with her young, 6, 7. Battlements to be made on every house, 8. Improper mixture to be avoided, 9-11. Princes to be sworn on garments, 12. The case of a woman accused of unchastity before marriage, 13-21. Adultery to be punished with death, the betrothed virgin being adjudged a wife, 22-24. Rapes to be punished with death, 25-27. Of formation, 28, 29. Incest forbidden, 30.

THOU shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them; thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

2 And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee

x Gen. 25:5, 6, 32, 34. 1 Chr. 5:1, 2. † Heb. *that is found with him.* y Gen. 49:3. Ps. 105:5. Prov. 23:24, 30; 11:7, 18, 1, 2. a 27:16. Ex. 20:12, 21:15, 17. Lev. 19:31. Prov. 15:5, 20:20. Ez. 22:7. b 9:5, 5 Sam. 7:14. Prov. 13:24, 19:1, 2, 11, 25, 12, 17, Heb. 12:9-11. c Is. 1:5, Jer. 53:3, 18:2, 9:34. 13 Amos. 4:11, 12. d 16:18, 25:7. Zech. 13:3. e Prov. 19:26, 20:1, 23:20, 21, 29-35, 1:13, 10:11, 17:5. Lev. 24:16. Num. 15:35. g 13:5. 19:19, 20:22, 21, 24.

to the eldest son, though not the son of the best beloved wife; which would counteract the effect of unjust and unreasonable partialities, and be a sort of compensation to her who had the misfortune to be comparatively slighted and hated. (Notes, Gen. 29:30-35. 49:3, 4. 1 Chr. 5:1, 2.)

V. 18-21. This law has great wisdom and mercy couched under its apparent severity; and it could not fail of producing most salutary effects, as far as any regard was paid to it. The parents were the only prosecutors; both must concur in the prosecution, and the elders of the city must decide the cause. The prosecution could not be admitted, but for stubbornness and rebellion, connected with gluttony and drunkenness, and persisted in after rebukes and corrections; and these vices tended directly to ruin families and communities. The offender must be convicted, and proved incorrigible, by evidence sufficient to induce the judges to denounce sentence, and the men of the city to execute it. Natural affection would seldom be so overcome, even by the *basest crimes*, as to admit both parents thus to join in prosecuting a son, much less to do so without sufficient cause; and in the very few instances, in which hasty rage, or implacable resentment might induce parents to attempt such a horrid, unnatural murder, as a needless prosecution must imply; the most effectual precautions were taken to prevent the consequences. The execution of the law must of course very seldom take place; and if ever it did, it could not fail to excite general attention and alarm, and prove a salutary warning to tens of thousands.—Its very existence, as far as known, would exceedingly strengthen the authority of parents; give weight to their commands, reproofs, and corrections; and create an additional fear of provoking their deep resentment. It would fortify young men against the enticements of bad companions, and the force of strong temptations, and thus check the progress of wickedness. Moreover, it would be a constant admonition to parents to watch over their children, and not improperly to indulge them, or withhold correction; but to establish their authority over them while young, to pray for them, to check the first budgings of vice, and to set them a good example. This statute therefore, so harmless and beneficial in its operation, yet so contrary to human policy, rather proves than invalidates the divine authority of the book in which it stands recorded.—No impostor would ever have thought of enacting such a law.

V. 22, 23. The Israelites did not execute criminals by *strangulation*, as among us, or by *crucifixion*; yet after they were dead, in detestation to their crimes, their bodies were sometimes ignominiously suspended, or gibbeted, on a tree, or piece of wood. But in honour of human nature, (at first formed after the image of God, afterwards made the Temple in which "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells," and hereafter in innumerable instances to partake of a glorious resurrection;) the body of an Israelite might not hang all night in this situation, whatever his crimes had been; as that would even defile the land. (Notes, Josh. 8:29. 2 Sam. 21:9-14. John 19:31-37.) In the current opinion, they who were thus suspended, were deemed *accursed of God*, and devoted to utter destruction; but the Holy Spirit doubtless dictated this expression with reference to him who "was made a curse for us." (Note, Gal. 3:10-14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those laws are framed most wisely, which have the most effectual tendency to prevent crimes and punishments; and by this rule let the reader judge of the laws before us, compared with the municipal laws of other countries. For whatever can increase our horror of enormous wickedness, or cause the conscience to recoil at the thought of it, must counteract the violence of the passions and the force of temptations, and excite watchfulness against the occasions

h 19:6, 22:26. 1 Sam. 26:16. Matt. 26:66. Acts 23:29, 25:11, 25, 26:31. 1 Josh. 8:29, 10:25, 27. 2 Sam. 4:12. 21:6, 9. Luke 23:33. John 19:31-38. k 2 Cor. 5:31. Gal. 3:13. Heb. the curse of God. 7:26. Num. 25:4. Job 7:12. Rom. 9:3. 1 Cor. 16:22. 11 Jer. 19:25. Num. 35:4. 1 Ex. 23:4. 1 Ex. 24:4. 4:16. Matt. 10:6. 15:24. 18:12, 13. Luke 15:4-6. Jam. 15:19, 20. 1 Pet. 2:25. b 3:4. Lev. 24:4. Prov. 24:11. 28:27. Is. 8:17. 58:7. Luke 10:31, 32.

and inlets to disobedience. The dread of murder should especially be deeply impressed on every heart: and in detecting and punishing all who in any form are guilty of it, magistrates, ministers, old and young, ought to concur; and that man should be adjudged a public enemy, not only who is accessory to the commission of this crime, but who assists the criminal in eluding or escaping justice, by which the guilt of innocent blood rests upon the land.—But alas! all that most of us can do, in preventing the increase of this *national guilt*, is by our earnest prayers.—Reason and religion, with combined force forbid us to lay the reins upon the neck of our headstrong lusts, and command us to teach our strongest inclinations to brook denial or delay, and to view the objects of our inordinate affections, as strip of all their adventitious charms, and with all their defects and deformities, in order to abate the vehemence of passion. Considering things thus coolly, we may, perhaps before it be too late, have our admiration change into disgust, and many fatal consequences may be prevented. But inhumanity, treachery, and injustice, can in no case be palliated or excused, though called by soft names, and varnished over with plausible pretences.—Irregular indulgences frequently end in dislike and ill-treatment of the very object that was inordinately loved; thus, instead of compensation for an injury, (for which indeed no adequate compensation can be rendered,) more injuries are committed.—The Lord will plead the cause of the oppressed, and will not allow that injustice should be done to anyone, either from *partiality* or covetousness. And let it not be passed over slightly, that great iniquity is frequently committed by men, in disposing of their substance by will; and sometimes this forms the last action of their lives.—Disobedience to parental authority must be extremely criminal, when so severe a punishment of it was denounced by God himself; nor is it less provoking to him now, though it generally escapes punishment in this world.—But when young people early become slaves to their appetites, the heart soon grows hard, and the conscience callous, and we can expect no other: than obstinate rebellion and utter destruction. They who would escape ruin, must flee youthful lusts, listen to the instructions of their parents, and submit to reproof and correction; and if parents would not have their children their greatest sorrow, they should "train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—What then do we deserve for our rebellion against "the Father of our spirits?" We were indeed under an awful curse; but Christ hath purchased redemption by becoming a curse for us; yet, whilst we continue in sin, no benefit will thence accrue to us; but rather our condemnation will thus be aggravated. Let us then fear adding obstinacy to rebellion; and let us remember, that though the human body after death ought not to be treated with degradation by man; yet God will doom both the bodies and souls of the wicked, "to depart accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" while "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1-4. (Note, Ex. 23:4, 5.) The nature of the case here leads us to understand by brother, any human being; as our Lord explains the word neighbour. When the owner of lost goods is not known, the finder at least knows that they are not his; nor can be, unless after diligent search and waiting no owner can be found.

V. 5. The prohibition no doubt was intended to exclude the customs of the heathen worshippers, who shamefully violated it for the worst of purposes; yet it is of *mortal tendency*, and of general obligation; as it is added, "for all that do so are an abomination unto the LORD," which is never annexed to a merely ceremonial institution. The practice prohibited is not only indecent and of bad appearance, but has in all ages been made subservient to lewdness, and to

until thy brother seek after it, and 'thou shalt restore it to him again.

3 In like manner shalt thou do with his ass, and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all ~~lost~~ things of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.

4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them; 'thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

5 ¶ The *woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* ~~fabomin~~ation unto the Lord thy God.

6 If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree, or on the ground, *whether they be* young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, 'thou shalt not take the dam with the young:

7 But thou shalt, in any wise, let the dam go, and take the young to thee: 'that it may be well with thee, and *that* thou mayest prolong *thy* days.

8 When thou buildest a new house, 'then thou shalt make a battlement for 'thy roof, that 'thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

9 Thou 'shalt not sow thy vineyard with diverse seeds; lest the 'fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.

10 Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.

11 Thou shalt not wear a garment of diverse sorts, *as* of woollen and linen together.

12 Thou shalt make thee "fringes upon the four 'quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

13 ¶ If any man take a wife, and "go in unto her, and hate her,

14 And give 'occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15 Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother take and bring forth *the tokens* of the damsel's virginity, unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And lo, he hath given occasions of speech

against her, saying, I found not *thy* daughter a maid; and yet these *are* the tokens of my daughter's virginity: and they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of that city shall take that man, and chastise him;

19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give *them* unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel, and she shall be his wife: 'phe may not put her away all his days.

20 But if this thing be true, and *the tokens* of virginity be not found for the damsel;

21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall 'stone her with stones that she die; because 'she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: 'so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

22 ¶ If 'a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman. So shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

23 If a damsel *that is* a virgin be 'betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her:

24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's *wife: 'so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

25 But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man 'force her, and lie with her; then the man only that lay with her shall die:

26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; *there is* in the damsel 'no sin *worthy* of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so *is* this matter:

27 For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel 'cried, and *there* was none to save her.

28 If a man find 'a damsel *that is* a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her, shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife; 'because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

30 A 'man shall not take his father's wife, nor 'discover his father's skirt.

c Matt. 7:12. 1 Thes. 4:6. d Ex. 23:5. Matt. 5:44. Luke 10:29—37. Rom. 15:1. 2 Cor. 12:15. Gal. 6:1-2. 1 Thes. 5:14. Heb. 12:12, 13. e 1 Cor. 11:4—15. f See on 18:12. g Gen. 8:17. 32:11. Lev. 22:28. Prov. 12:10. Hos. 10:14. h See on 4:40. i Ex. 21:29—31. 22:6. Rom. 14:13. 1 Cor. 10:32. Phil. 1:10. 1 Thes. 5:22. 2 Sam. 11:2. Is. 22:1. Jer. 19:15. Matt. 10:27. Mark 2:4. Acts 10:9. k Ex. 18:20. 33:2—9. Matt. 18:6, 7. Acts 20:28, 27. l Lev. 19:19. Matt. 6:24. 9:15. Rom. 11:6. 2 Cor. 1:12. 6:14—16. 11:3. Jam. 1:6—8. 3:10. * Heb. *ruḥ* n see. in Num. 15:39, 33. Matt. 23:5. f Heb. *swings*. n Gen. 29:23, 31. Judg.

15:1-2. Eph. 5:28, 29. o 19. Ex. 20:16. 23:1. Prov. 18:21. p 29. 24:1—4. Matt. 18:8. q 22:24. 13:16. 17:5. 21:21. Lev. 24:16, 23. Num. 15:35, 36. r Gen. 34:7. Lev. 21:9. 2 Sam. 13:13. s 13:5. 17:7. 19:19. 1 Lev. 20:10. Num. 5:22—27. Ex. 23:45—47. John 8:4, 5. Heb. 13:4. u See on 20:7. Matt. 1:18, 19. x Gen. 29:21. 1 Cor. 20:24. y 21:24. 13:5. 1 Cor. 5:2, 13. z Or, *take strong hold of her*. 2 Sam. 18:14. z See on 21:22. a 1 Cor. 13:7. b See on Ex. 22:16, 17. c 19:24. 21:14. d 27:20. Lev. 18:8. 20:11. 1 Cor. 5:1. e Ruth 3:9. Ez. 16:8.

obtain opportunities of perpetrating the grossest crimes; to prevent which it is of great importance, that the distinction of the sexes should be visibly marked in their garments, without variation.—Let stage-players and others of similar occupations well consider, (among many other and great evils connected with their line of life,) how they will answer to God, for their continual violation of this express commandment. And they who encourage and reward them for this disobedience, should ask themselves how far they are accessories to their guilt: and let young people remember that this change of apparel is not to be considered as a frolic, but as an act of rebellion against God.—The spirit of the commandment also requires the distinction of the appearance, deportment, and occupations of the sexes. A man appearing effeminate, and affecting the appropriate employments of women; and a woman of a masculine appearance and behaviour, who engages in the exercises of men; are unnatural and offensive characters. (Note 1 Cor. 11:2—16.)

V. 6, 7. The design of this law might be to enjoin the exercise of tenderness and compassion, and to prevent the destruction of any species of animals. But perhaps some of these requirements were intended for tests, by which it would be proved, whether the people would prefer the will of God to their own inclination, when the reason of the command was not obvious. (Note, Gen. 2:16, 17.)

V. 8. The roofs of the houses in those countries were generally flat, and used for various purposes, as may be seen by consulting the marginal references. If therefore no battlement were made, the builder would fail of taking proper pre-

cautions, and might occasion the death of some person who chanced to fall from it; and this would in a measure render him guilty, and his house defiled. (Notes, Ex. 21:28—36.)

V. 9—12. *Marg. Ref. Notes.* Lev. 19:19. Num. 15:38—40.)

V. 13—21. This law, like many others, was intended to prevent wickedness, by the fear of detection and punishment. The dread of a future discovery, productive of such tremendous consequences, could not fail to increase the natural barriers of chastity, and counteract the effects of sinful passions and strong temptations, among the young women of Israel. And it would also prevent a hard-hearted husband from robbing his injured wife of her reputation, when his affections were transferred to another object. The imposition practised by a woman upon the man she married, was considered in this case as equivalent to infidelity to his bed after marriage.

V. 23—27. In these laws, the betrothed damsel was considered as the wife of the man to whom she was engaged, though they had not come together; and therefore the crime was adjudged adultery. (Notes, Matt. 1:18—21.) But a charitable supposition is admitted in the damsel's favour, in case she was found in a solitary place. (24. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28, 29. *Note.* Ex. 22:16, 17.

V. 30. *Marg. Ref.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we duly regarded the golden rule of "doing to others as we would they should do unto us," many particular precepts of God's word might be omitted. Equity and benevolence would teach us, not to regard trouble and expense in doing a kind action to our neighbour; and would remind us, that we

CHAPTER XXIII.

What Israelites must not enter into the congregation, 1, 2. An Ammonite, or Moabite, is excluded to the tenth generation, an Edomite or Egyptian to the third, 3-8. The camps of Israel to be kept pure from moral, ceremonial, and natural pollution, 9-14. Fugitive slaves to be protected, 15, 16. Who adorn, widow, and navy, to be strictly guarded against, 17-20. Vices must be performed, 21-23. How to act in a neighbour's vineyard and corn-field, 24, 25.

HE that is "wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off," shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

2 A "bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

3 An "Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

a Lev. 21:17-21, 22:22-24, Gal. 3:33. b 2, 3, 8. Neh. 13:1-3. Is. 56:3-4, Lam. 1:10. c Is. 57:3. Zech. 9:5. Job. 8:1. Heb. 12:18. d Ruth 2:13-22. Neh. 13:27, 13:31, 23. e 2, 3, 25, 29. Gen. 14:17, 18. 1 Sam. 23:11. 1 Kings 18:4. Is. 63:9. Zech. 2:8. Matt. 23:25. Acts 9:4. f See on Num. 22:5, 7, 17. Neh. 13:2. g Num. 22:35. 23:5-12, 16-25. 24:9. Mic. 6:5. Rom. 8:31. 2 Cor. 4:17. h 7, 7, 8, 33, 3.

can have no property in any thing that is found, so long as there is a probability of discovering the owner. If a merciful man would assist another's beast that was fallen down, much more should we should we hasten to the relief of a brother, who is fallen into distress or poverty: and above all we should be ready to restore in the spirit of meekness, him who has been overcome by temptation, and has fallen into sin; conscious that we may soon want the same gentleness and assistance.—If we would approve ourselves to be the peculiar people of God, we must have respect to his will and glory, and not to the vain fashions of the world. Even in putting on our garments, as well as in eating and drinking, all must be done with a serious regard to the preservation of our own and others' purity in heart and action; that our garb may testify whose servants we are, and remind us what our conduct ought to be. (*Notes, Rom. 12:1-2, 1 Cor. 10:29-33, Col. 3:16, 17, 1 Tim. 2:8-10.*) Our obedience should also be universal, and not only to the weightier, but even to the minuter matters of the law, that it may be well with us. Yea, our eye should be single, our heart simple, and our behaviour in all things consistent.—The violation of chastity, being so great a wickedness, and in females especially of such fatal consequences; how cautious should they be what company they keep, what places they frequent, to what language they listen, what books they read, and into what situations they venture! Indeed both men and women should seriously and daily meditate on God's abhorrence of unchastity; on the certain detection and punishment of the wicked in a future state, and the fatal effects which will probably follow in this world: that their minds may be fortified against temptation, by a dread of sin and of its consequences. How carefully should parents keep out of the sight and way of their children, whatever can pollute their imaginations or inflame their passions! and how should all join in execrating those wretches, who wantonly bring ruin upon their fellow-creatures for the sake of gratifying a mean sensual inclination! Nor is the cruelty of those much less to be abhorred, who rob the innocent of their reputation by infamous slanders, from malice or any other base passion.—We should never forget the peculiar atrociousness of adultery in every form, and the punishment which awaits those who are guilty of it. We may also recollect, that all deception in contracting marriage is both very wicked, and a source of future misery; that the nearer we stand related to God, the more inexcusable are our crimes, "folly in Israel" being worse than elsewhere; and that the most favourable construction should be put on doubtful actions, and a discrimination made between different degrees of criminality. Finally, our purity should be dearer to us than our life; and our cry to God for help in temptation should be no less earnest, than the cry of a person in danger of being murdered. When we thus call upon him, he is ever near and ready to assist us, and his grace will be always sufficient for us.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. It is evident that this law was not meant to exclude mutilated Israelites, either from the common benefits of civil society, or any essential religious advantages; but merely to lay them under a disgraceful distinction. This would tend to discourage parents from thus mutilating their children; a practice which was exceedingly common in those ages and countries. To this they might often be induced by the custom which prevailed, of employing eunuchs in the houses of the great and the courts of princes: so that they often rose to the highest posts of honour and authority. (*Notes, 2 Kings 20:17, 18. Dan. 1:3-7.*) Some expositors therefore consider the phrase, "shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD," as meaning, that they should be incapable of bearing any office in that government, which was placed over the people of God, who must thus enter a protest against this custom, and deliver selfish parents from this temptation. But others think that the persons intended might not enter the inner court of the sanctuary, or join in celebrating the sacred feasts, as in full communion with the congregation of the LORD; but must be contented to worship

4 "Because they met you not" with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and "because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor, of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

5 Nevertheless "the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, "because the LORD thy God loved thee.

6 Thou shalt "not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.

7 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for "he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; "because thou wast a stranger in his land.

8 "The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the LORD, in their "third generation.

Ps. 73:1. Jer. 31:3. Ez. 16:8. Mal. 1:2. Rom. 9:13. 11:28. Eph. 2:4, 5. 12 Sam. 8:2. 12:31. 1 Sam. 9:12. Neh. 13:23-25. * Heb. good. 1 Gen. 23:21-26, 30. Num. 20:14. Ob. 10-12. Mal. 1:2. k 10:19. Gen. 45:17, 18. 46:7. 47:12, 27. Ex. 23:21. 23:9. Lev. 19:34. Ps. 105:23. Acts 7:10-18. 1 See on 1. Rom. 3:29, 30. Eph. 2:12, 13. m 2, 3. Ex. 20:5, 6.

without it, as uncircumcised Gentiles were allowed to do. Indeed it is probable that the exclusion related to both these particulars: for, as the blemished priests might not officiate at the altar, it is reasonable to conclude, that the blemished Israelite must neither enter the inner court of the sanctuary, nor fill up any public office in the congregation; in order that the people and ordinances of God might be preserved in purity and honour.

V. 2. The word "bastard" must be understood according to the *judicial law*, which does not regard the children of a concubine, when owned by the father as spurious; but only those which sprang from such connexions as were expressly prohibited with an annexed penalty, and who would therefore be often disowned and always disgraceful; or the offspring of harlots, whose fathers were not known. The exclusion of such persons, and their posterity, from the court of the sanctuary, and from public offices, would not be a hardship on them, worthy to be put in competition with the advantage arising from the tendency of this law, to restrain men from such practices as would disgrace their offspring from age to age.—Some expositors, especially the Jewish, suppose that by "not entering into the congregation of the LORD" we should understand, *not marrying an Israelitish woman*; but, as the bastards, being Israelites, were forbidden to intermarry with the Gentiles, this interpretation would leave them scarcely any opportunity of marrying; which the mention of their posterity supposes them to do. For the allowance to marry Hebrew slaves, or proselyted Gentile slaves, seems only made to avoid the difficulty; and the distinction has no foundation in Scripture: for Hebrew slaves, and gentiles when fully proselyted, were a part of the congregation of the LORD, and admissible to all sacred ordinances; with only the exception made in the next verses.

V. 3-5. It is supposed that the Ammonites were the more criminal, in refusing to assist the Israelites; though nothing is recorded concerning it: as the Moabites were in hiring Balaam to curse them. They were both descended from an incestuous connexion: (*Note, Gen. 19:31-38.*) yet that is not here mentioned, but merely their enmity to Israel. It was therefore settled by a perpetual ordinance "for ever," that the descendants of an Ammonite or Moabite, who had been proselyted, should not enter into the congregation to the tenth generation: and some interpret this to mean, that their posterity must never be admitted. (*Note, Neh. 13:1-3.*)—As Ruth the Moabitess was married to Boaz, and from her David and the kings of his race descended; it has been thought that the law only related to males, and not to females: of this however no sufficient proof seems to be given. It does not appear that intermarriages were particularly intended; and the conduct of Boaz, being required by another law, was not faulty: (*Note, Ruth 4:1-8.*) perhaps the excellent character of Ruth might be supposed to except her and her posterity from the general rule; and in respect to David and the kings of his line, they were not chosen by Israel, but appointed by God himself. Had the law been intended to prohibit intermarriages with the several persons mentioned, no doubt that would have been expressly stated: as it is, when intermarriages with the Canaanites and other idolaters are forbidden.

V. 6. This did not prohibit the Israelites from showing kindness to individuals among the Moabites and Ammonites, especially when proselyted; much less did it allow them to make war on them without reason, or to refuse them terms of peace: but it merely forbade them to enter into any strict alliance with the nations so long as they existed, or intimate connexions with individuals while they continued idolaters. This was the more requisite, as that part of Israel, which dwelt east of Jordan, bordered upon the Ammonites and Moabites, and they were continually liable to be seduced or injured by them.

V. 7, 8. The Edomites were more nearly related to Israel, than the Moabites and Ammonites were; and therefore, though they had in some degree seen unfriendly, they must

9 ¶ When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.

10 If there be among you any man that is not clean, by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp:

11 But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and, when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again.

12 Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad.

13 And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon: and it shall be when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back, and cover that which cometh from thee:

14 For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee: therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.

15 ¶ Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee:

16 He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.

17 ¶ There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.

n Josh. 7:11-13. Judg. 20:26. 2 Chr. 19:4. 20:3-13. 31:20,21. 32:1-22. Luke 3:1. Lev. 19:11-14. e Lev. 15:18. Num. 5:2,3. 1 Cor. 5:11-13. p Lev. 11:25. 15:17-23. q Heb. turneth toward. r Lev. 14:9. 15:11,12. 22:6. Ps. 51:2,7. Ez. 36:25. Matt. 3:11. Luke 11:38,39. Eph. 5:26,27. Heb. 9:9,10. 10:22. 1 Pet. 3:21. Rev. 1:5. q Heb. attested down. r Ez. 24:6-8. s Gen. 17:1. Lev. 26:12. 2 Cor. 6:16. t Heb. nakedness of any thing. u Sam. 30:15. Ob. 14. Philim. 10-19. v Is. 16:3,4. Luke 15:15-24. Tit. 3:2,3. s Heb. is good for him. y Ex. 22:21. 23:9. Jer. 7:6. Zech. 7:10. Mal. 3:5. Jam. 2:6. y 2nd 31:39. Lev. 19:29. || Or, sodomites. Rom. 1:26. x Gen. 19:5. Judg. 10:22. 1 Kings 14:15. 15:12. 22:48. 2 Kings 23:7. Rom. 1:27. 1 Cor. 6:9. 1 Tim. 1:10. y Ez. 16:

be regarded more favourably, and not shunned and excluded from them, as the nations before mentioned. And as the Israelites had, at first in their extreme distress, been hospitably entertained in Egypt; they were required to forgive the subsequent oppression which they had suffered, and to requite the preceding kindness: so that the descendants of a proselyte, either of Edom or Egypt, in the third generation must be allowed to become entitled to all the privileges of a native Israelite.

V. 9-14. These precepts not only related to the camp of Israel, previously to their conquest of the promised land, and settlement in it; but at all times when they went forth to fight their enemies. They were first reminded to use vigorous measures for reformation, and to pay a strict attention to their ceremonial purifications; (*Notes, Lev. 15:*) and then not to forget a due regard to natural cleanliness, not only from decency and for health's sake, but from respect to that God of purity, who, as it were, headed their armies and encamped among them; and also as an emblem of their inward purity.

V. 15, 16. We cannot suppose, that this law required the Israelites to entertain slaves, who had robbed their masters, or left their service without cause; but such only as were cruelly treated, and fled to them for protection, especially from the neighbouring nations. (*Marg. Ref.*) To such they were commanded to afford shelter and show great kindness; both in order to recommend their religion, and to give them an opportunity of learning it.

V. 17, 18. The magistrate was commanded not to connive at, (much less to license,) houses of prostitution and uncleanness; and not to allow any person openly to carry on the infamous trade of a prostitute or sodomite, but to expel and extirpate such nuisances to the uttermost.—The words used denote persons *dedicated*, or *consecrated*, that is, to the basest kinds of lewdness; according to the infamous licentiousness and unnatural vices of an openly perpetrated at the temples of idolaters, from which much of the gains of the priests and priestesses arose. For neither in this, nor any other place, where the word *sodomite* is used in our translation, is there, in the original, any allusion to Sodom, or its inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref., x Heb.*)—The priests must not receive any oblations or sacrifices brought by persons of such vile characters: for God would not accept them; though they should attempt to cloak their wickedness, or compensate for it, by making and performing religious vows. (*Prov. 7:14.*) If the price of a dog be understood literally, not only the meanness of the animals, but their greediness, and resemblance of shamelessly lewd persons, should be considered as the reason of the restriction, and the extraordinary association. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many, however, understand it of the hire of unnatural crimes: yet figurative language seems hardly admissible in statutes.

V. 19, 20. *Notes, Ex. 22:25-27.*

V. 21-23. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 28:20-22. Num. 30:2. Ez. 5:4-7*

18 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

19 ¶ Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother: usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury.

20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to, in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

21 ¶ When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

23 ¶ That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a free-will-offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

24 ¶ When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill, at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.

25 ¶ When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

33. x Ps. 22:16. Prov. 26:11. Is. 56:10,11. Matt. 7:6. Phil. 3:2. 2 Pet. 2:22. Rev. 22:15. a See on 21. 12:6. Lev. 7:16. Ps. 6:4-6. Is. 61:8. Hab. 1:13. Mal. 1:14. b Ex. 22:25. Lev. 25:35-37. Neh. 5:1-7. Ps. 15:5. Ez. 18:7,8,13,16-18. 22:12. Luke 6:34,35. c 14:21. 15:3. Lev. 19:33,34. d See on 15:10. Prov. 19:17. Is. 1:19. Luke 14:14. 1 Cor. 15:58. e Is. 66:20. 25:1-3. Lev. 27:2. &c. Num. 30:2. &c. Is. 56:12. 66:13,14. 76:11. 116:18. Jon. 1:16. 2:9. Nah. 1:15. f Judg. 11:30,31,35. 1 Sam. 1:11. Prov. 20:25. Ez. 5:4,5. g 1 Sam. 14:24. Jer. 44:25-27. Mark 6:22,23. Acts 23:12,1. h Rom. 12:13. 1 Cor. 10:26. Heb. 13:5. i Matt. 12:1,2. Mark 2:23. Luke 6:1,2.

V. 24, 25. This law was a valuable kindness to the labourer, the poor, the widow, and the traveller; it was a pledge to the Israelites of the fruitfulness of the land, whilst they continued obedient; it inculcated liberality, and at the same time instructed them not to encroach upon each other.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to value the privileges of the Lord's people, both for ourselves and for our children, above all other advantages; and should carefully avoid whatever may throw a hindrance in the way of their possessing them. No personal blemishes, no crimes of progenitors, no difference of nations, can exclude us from these blessings: but an unsound heart will deprive us of them; and a bad example, an improper education, and even unsuitable marriages, may occasion the loss of them to our children.—The conduct of God, as the righteous Governor of the universe, is not recorded for the imitation of private persons; but all men ought to follow the example of his patience, lenity, readiness to forgive, and kindness to his enemies.

Nor should we ever forget how he turns the curses of opposers into blessings, in behalf of those whom he loves, and teaches to love him.—The more imminent and evident the danger we are exposed to, the greater should be our watchfulness, diligence, in self-examination, and earnestness in prayer for forgiveness, peace with God, and protection from him: and the scourge of war should remind the governors of kingdoms, and the commanders of armies, to exert themselves for reformation, and an attendance upon the ordinances of God. Nor can the help of the Lord be warrantably depended on by societies, or by individuals, while iniquity is indulged and connived at.—No natural filthiness is so loathsome to our senses, as the uncleanness of the heart is offensive to a holy God: in vain therefore do men, by pompous forms of godliness, costly oblations, or multiplied acts of showy beneficence, strive to compensate for their iniquity, while they indulge unlawful inclinations. Such services are an attempt to bribe the Judge of the earth to "acquit the wicked;" but he abhors the blasphemous endeavour. It is the bounden duty of legislators and magistrates, to do all in their power, to prevent, to repress, and extirpate, the recesses of licentiousness here forbidden; and surely immensely more might be done, than is so much as attempted in Christian countries, or in this land, and its great cities: but whether they can or cannot banish such pernicious criminals, God will exclude for ever from the holy city, and shut up for ever in the lake of fire, all who persist in or encourage them.—The people of God must also keep at a distance from cruelty and oppression: and ever be ready to patronise the cause of the oppressed. Fidelity to their engagements, and liberality without grudging to all around them, should mark their characters; for God is able to make all sufficiency to abound towards them: and at the same time they should be the last persons to encroach upon others. In fine, temperance, chastity, purity, equity, mercy, and truth, are the necessary fruits of

CHAPTER XXIV.

The law of divorces, 1-4. Newly married men exempted for one year from war and public services, 5. Laws for the punishment of men-stealers; concerning pledges, and the separation of lepers, 6-13. The hire of servants not to be detained, 14, 15. Parents and children not punishable for each other's crimes, 16. Justice must be done to the friendless, 17, 18. Liberal dealings to be left for the poor, 19-22.

WHEN a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife:

4 Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

5 ¶ When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business, but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

6 ¶ No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh a man's life to pledge.

7 If a man be found stealing any of his bre-

thren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die, and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

8 ¶ Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.

9 Remember what the LORD thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt.

10 ¶ When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.

11 Thou shalt stand abroad; and the man, to whom thou dost lend, shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.

12 And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge.

13 In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee; and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

14 Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

15 At this day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

a 21:15. 22:13. Ex. 21:10. * Heb. matter of nakedness. b 3. Jer. 3:9. Matt. 5:31. 19:7-9. Mark 10:4-12. † Heb. cutting off. Is. 50:1. c 22:19, 29. Mal. 2:16. Matt. 1:19. Luke 16:18. 1 Cor. 7:11, 12. d Lev. 21:7, 14. 22:13. Num. 30:9. Ez. 44:22. Matt. 5:32. Mark 10:11. 1 Cor. 7:15. e Jer. 31:7. Lev. 18:14-23. Josh. 22:17, 18. g See on 20:7. Gen. 2:24. Matt. 19:4-6. Mark 10:6-9. 1 Cor. 7:10-15. Eph. 5:29, 32. Tit. 2:4, 5. † Heb. not any thing shall pass upon him. h Prov. 5:18. Ec. 9:9. 1 Cor. 7:29. i Ex. 22:25, 27. Rev. 18:22. k 20:19. Gen. 44:30. Luke 12:15. 1 Ex. 21:16. Ez. 37:13. 1 Tim. 1:10. Rev. 18:13. m See on Ex. 21:16. 22:1-4. n See on 19:19. o Lev. 13: 14. Matt. 8:4. Mark 1:44. Luke

5:14. 17:14. p Luke 17:32. 1 Cor. 10:6, 11. q Num. 5:2. 12:10-15. 2 Kings 7:3. 2 Chr. 26:20, 21. r S on 15:8. § Heb. lend the loan of any thing to thy brother. a 17. Job 22:6. 24:3, 9. 1 Ex. 22:26. Job 24:7, 8. 29:11-13. 31:16-20. Ez. 18:7, 12, 15. 33:15. Amos 2:8. 2 Tim. 1:16-18. u 15. Job. 4:38. v 26:25. 15:9, 10. Job. 10:5. 11:2, 9. Is. 5:8. Dan. 1:27. Jer. 1:27. 2:1-17. y Lev. 25:40-43. Job 24:10, 11. 31:13-15. Prov. 11:31. 22:16. Ez. 22:7. Amos 2:7. 4:1. 8:4. Mal. 3:5. Luke 10:7. z Lev. 19:13. Prov. 3:27, 28. Jer. 22:13. Matt. 20:8. Mark 10:19. † Heb. fifteth his soul unto it. Ps. 24:4. 25:1. 88:4. a 15:9. Ex. 22:23, 24. Job 31:38. 34:25. 35:9. Prov. 23:22, 23. 25:10, 11. Is. 5:7. Jam. 5:4.

that spirit, which dwells in all the true disciples of Jesus Christ.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1-4. Divorces were always a deviation from the original institution of marriage, consequent upon man's depravity as a fallen creature, arising from the inconstancy of his mind and the impetuosity of his passions. This customary device God did not please, in the judicial law, the magistrate's rule, totally to prohibit; lest it should occasion the cruel treatment, or even the murder, of those women, who were become disagreeable to their husbands.

The uncleanness, on account of which the Israelites were "suffered, for the hardness of their hearts, to put away their wives," was not adultery, or any suspicion of it; for both these cases were otherwise provided against: (22:22. Lev. 20:10. Notes, Num. 5:12-31.) but some ceremonial uncleanness, or diseases, or some natural or moral objection which formed a real grievance.—In the days of Christ, the Jewish teachers, having construed the permission into a commandment, extended it to the most frivolous matters; so that a licentious mind could not desire more allowance. Hence divorces prevailed to the disuse of polygamy, and to the still greater hard-ship of the women, who were sent away, one after another, under colour of this law, on various pretexts, to make way for a new object of the roving affections. This accounts for the discourses of Christ being more explicitly against divorces; though the reason of them equally determines against polygamy; "for from the beginning it was not so." Notes, Matt. 5:31, 32. 19:3-9. Mark 10:2-12.)—But whilst divorces were allowed, they were also regulated.

A man could not be in a fit of anger send away his wife, but must have time for reflection, while the legal instrument was preparing. For he must give her a bill of divorce properly authenticated, and properly specifying the reason; and we may suppose some provision was also made her out of her husband's substance. And it was no part of God's law to prohibit either party from marrying again; which restraint, when imposed by an absurd policy, is often no better than authorizing fornication. The woman might marry again and again, if set at liberty; but she must never more return to her former husband. This restriction, while it would operate as a check to inconstancy and rashness in the husband, would prevent the shameful practice of exchanging and lending wives, which prevailed in many nations. Israel would be preserved from that national guilt which such crimes enhance; and, as far as these regulations were adhered to, some of the worst effects of divorces would in good measure be prevented.

V. 5. This most condescending exemption would operate in fixing the affections of married persons, and in preventing divorces; for early or long separations tend to alienate the affections, and form temptations to inconstancy.

V. 6. Hand-mills were then generally used, and men would be deprived of

the means of preparing their necessary food, if their millstones were taken from them. The same reason holds good against receiving in pledge, or distraining for debt, any of those instruments of labour, by which men are accustomed to earn their livelihood. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 22:25-27.)

V. 7. Christianity has annihilated that distinction of nations, which for typical and political reasons, was during a time established; and in this respect every man is now our brother, whatever be his nation, complexion, or creed. How then can the merchandise of men and women be carried on, without transgressing this commandment, or abetting those who do? An inhabitant of England, if he stay at home, and steal a horse, or a sheep, is condemned to death; but if he take a voyage to Africa, he may steal, or purchase of those who do steal, hundreds of men and women, and not only escape with impunity, but grow great like a prince. According to the law of God, whoever stole cattle restored four or five fold, whoever stole one human being, though an infant or an idiot, must die. May we not call upon British legislators to rectify this flagrant abuse?—Since this was written, the author, with tens of thousands more, has to bless God, that this expectation has been answered, in the abolition of the slave-trade, by an act of the legislature; but further powerfully coercive measures are still needful, fully to accomplish the benevolent design. (Notes Ex. 21:15-17. Rev. 18:11-19.)

V. 9. The leprosy of Miriam was inflicted by the Lord, and she humbled herself under the rebuke, notwithstanding her rank and character; yet she was excluded from the camp during seven days; but was restored upon her submission at the request of Moses. Hence the people might learn how to submit themselves in similar circumstances. (Notes and P. O. Lev. 13:14. Num. 12.)

V. 10, 13. Though the Israelites might not take increase of their brethren, they might take a pledge; provided it were something which the borrower could conveniently part with, and which he willingly proposed. But if, in his necessity, he brought what he could not well spare, they were commanded from conscience towards God, to restore it by sunset; and this, when done from a right motive, would be accepted as an act of righteousness by a merciful God, and rewarded accordingly; and he would also punish the neglect of it. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 22:25-27. Ez. 18:5-9.)

Not go into his house, &c. (10.) "As if the legislator said, Intrude not into his abode, if he is not willing to expose to the stranger's eye the humiliating circumstances of want and nakedness, which attend his destitute state; or perhaps there is some little monument of his better days, which he reserves to console his misery, which he would not wish the person to whom he implores aid, to see, lest he should demand that in pledge, and either, if denied, refuse relief, or by tearing away this almost sacred relic, to which his heart clings, to

16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

17 Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless, nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:

18 But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

19 When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the works of thine hands.

20 When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger; for the fatherless, and for the widow.

21 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

22 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

CHAPTER XXV.

Not more than forty stripes must be inflicted on malefactors, 1-3. Oxen treading out the corn not to be muzzled, 4. The widow of him who died childless to be married by his brother, who, if he refused to take her, must be divorced, 5-10. The punishment of an immoral woman, 11, 12. Just weights and measures to be used, 13-16. The memory of Amalek to be blotted out, 17-19.

IF there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment that the judges may

judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

2 And it shall be if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault by a certain number.

3 Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.

4 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

5 ¶ If brethren dwell together, and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

6 And it shall be, that the first-born which she beareth, shall succeed in the name of his brother, which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

8 Then the elders of the city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her:

9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall

b 2 Kings 14:5-6. 2 Chr. 25:4. Jer. 31:29-30. Ez. 18:20. c 16:19. 27:19. Ez. 22:1. 22:2, 6, 9. 1 Sam. 12:3-4. Job 22:9-11. 17. Ps. 11:5. 94:3-5, 20-21. Prov. 22:31. 31. Ec. 5:8. 12:13. 3:15. 3:15. Jer. 5:28. 22:3. E. 22:7, 29. Amos 5:7-12. Mic. 2:1, 2. 7:3. Zech. 7:10. Mal. 3:5. 1:10. 3:14. Jam. 2:6. 1 Cor. 9:22. 22:2. e See on 22:5, 15, 15:16, 16:12. Lev. 19:9, 10, 33:22. Ruth 2:16. e 20:21. See on 14:29, 35:13. h 15:10. Job 31:16-22, 42:12. Ps. 41:1-3. 112:9. Prov. 11:24, 25, 14:21, 19:17. Is. 32:8. 56:7-11. Luke 6:35, 38. 14:13, 14. 2 Cor. 9:8-10. 1 John 3:17-19. * Heb. bought it after thee. 1 S. 9 on 19. Lev. 19:9, 10. 1 Heb. after thee. k 18. See on 5:14, 15, 7:8. Is. 54:1. 2 Cor. 8:9, 10. Eph. 5:1, 2. 1 John 5:10, 11. a 16:18-20. 17:8, 9. 19:17-19. Ez. 23:6, 7.

2 Sam. 23:3. 2 Chr. 19:6-10. Job 29:7-17. Ps. 58:1, 2. 82:2-4. Prov. 17:15. 31:8, 9. Is. 1:17, 23, 52:3. 11:4. 32:1, 2. Jer. 21:12. Ez. 44:24. Mic. 3:1, 2. Hab. 1:4, 13. Mal. 3:18. Matt. 3:10. b Matt. 16:17, 27:25. Luke 12:47. Acts 5:40. 16:22-24. 1 Pet. 2:20, 24. c 22:2. 11:3, 25. d Job 18:3. Luke 15:8, 19-12. Jam. 2:2, 3. Prov. 12:10. 1 Cor. 9:9, 10. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. * Heb. thrasheth. Is. 28:27. Hos. 10:11. f Matt. 22:24. Mark 12:19. Luke 20:28. 1 Or, next kinsman. (Gen. 38:8. Ruth 1:12, 13. 3:9, 4:5. g Gen. 38:9, 10. h 14, 29, 20. Ruth 4:10. Ps. 9:5. 109:13. 1 Or, next kinsman's wife. i 21:19. Ruth 4:1-7. k Ruth 4:7, 8. Is. 20:2. Mark. 1:7. John 1:27. 1 Num. 12:14. Job 30:10. Is. 50:6. Matt. 26:67. 27:30. Mark 10:34.

ambitter his distress. No, says the law, the hovel of the poor must be sacred as a holy asylum: the eye of scorn and the foot of pride must not dare to intrude: even the agent of mercy must not enter abruptly and unbid, without consulting the feelings of its wretched inhabitant.—Graves on the Pentateuch, Vol. ii. p. 27.—It need scarcely be said, how worthy these well-grounded remarks on the humane requirements of the divine law are of the serious consideration of all concerned in granting or refusing relief to paupers in this Christian land; and in respect of the conditions, on which relief is generally granted or withheld.

V. 14, 15. *Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 19:13.*

V. 16. God himself, who can bring good to individuals out of public calamities, might justly involve the children in the parent's punishment; but he would not allow the magistrate to do it, especially in matters of life and death. (*Notes, Ez. 20:5. 2 Kings 14:5, 6.*)

V. 17, 18. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 5:12-15. 15:13-15.*

V. 19-21. *Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 19:10.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The impetuous lusts and selfish hardness of men's hearts, if not restrained by a constant miracle, or subdued by divine grace, will inevitably occasion manifold abuses in every society, contrary to the moral law of God; nor can the best human laws, or their most impartial and steady administration, wholly prevent them. But these abuses proportionably mar all our comforts, and neither conscience nor prudence will permit a true Christian to join in them.—Even where Providence, or indiscreet choice in marriage, hath allotted a Christian a trial, instead of a useful and pleasant companion; he will from his heart prefer this affliction, to such relief as tends ultimately to licentiousness, confusion, and misery: and divine grace will sanctify it, support him under it, and teach him so to behave as will gradually render it more tolerable. But every method should be used to cement the affections of married persons, and to exclude temptations to inconstancy. While we leave those to the tribunal of God, who prosper by the most horrible oppression, or most infamous traffic; it suffices here to observe, that there are readers who would be disgusted, were we to follow the inspired writer, in his repeated exhortations to humiliation before God, to purity, piety, justice, mercy, kindness, impartiality, and beneficent consideration of the poor and destitute, the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger, and to enlarged liberality in every thing.—It is not hard to prove that these things are calculated to ensure from our merciful and gracious God, in answer to the prayers of those who partake of our kindness, a blessing upon every work of our hands, instead of the curse which is

brought down by the cry of the oppressed; the only difficulty is, to bring our minds habitually and steadily to attend to them in our daily walk and conversation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1. *Marg. Ref. a. Notes, Job 29:7-17. Ps. 82:2-4. Prov. 31:8, 9. Is. 1:16-20.*

V. 2, 3. Many crimes had been mentioned, for which no punishment was specified. In all these cases it is supposed that scourging was used at the discretion of the magistrates, and according to the degree and aggravations of the crime. This punishment was inflicted in open court, under the inspection of the judge; and without respect to the rank of the criminal. (*Marg. Ref.*) But lest the malefactor should seem vile, as a slave or a beast, the number of forty stripes must not be exceeded; and lest they should miscount, the Jewish magistrates always confined themselves to thirty-nine, which St. Paul repeatedly endured. (2 Cor. 11:24.)—If petty offences were more generally thus chastised, and capital punishments were less frequent among us, it might be immensely more advantageous to the community. But the excessive severity of inflicting several hundred lashes for one crime, tends, among other things, to prejudice the minds of Englishmen against this punishment; though it is peculiarly salutary, when prudently and moderately inflicted on young offenders especially.

V. 4. The Israelites and most of the ancients, were accustomed to beat out their grain with the feet of oxen or with instruments drawn by them. (*Notes, Hos. 10:9-11. 1 Cor. 9:7-12. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18.*)

V. 5-10. The custom here regulated had long prevailed; (*Notes, Gen. 38:14-16.*) and was probably introduced to preserve some remembrance of those who died childless. It seems to have been adopted in the Mosaic law, mainly to keep the inheritances separate, as allotted to each family, and to preserve the genealogies distinct until the coming of Christ; as well as to provide for the destitute widow, when the estate devolved on the next heir. If a married man died without issue, his brother or near kinsman was required to marry the widow; and the eldest son of this marriage inherited the estate of the deceased, and thus preserved his name in the genealogies.—If any one refused to comply with this custom, being averse from the person or character of the widow, he must be publicly disgraced. By pulling off the shoe he was rendered like the slaves, who generally went barefoot; and the widow even spit in, or before, his face, in contempt of the man who had thus disgraced her, and shown such disrespect to the memory of the deceased.—It is not agreed among commentators, whether married men were concerned in this law or not; and it is not material to . . . as if

answer and say, "So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house."

10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

11 ¶ When men strive together, one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets;

12 Then thou shalt cut off her hand, "thine eye shall not pity her."

13 ¶ Thou shalt not have in thy bag "diverse weights, a great and a small."

14 Thou shalt not have in thine house "diverse measures, a great and a small."

15 But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; "that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."

16 For all that do such things, and "all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God."

17 ¶ Remember "what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary: and the feared not God."

19 Therefore it shall be, "when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that

"thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The thankful acknowledgments to be made at presenting the first-fruits, 1-14. A profession and prayer for every third year respecting the second tithe 15-19. A summary of the covenant between God and Israel, 16-19.

AND it shall be "when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;

2 That "thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there."

3 And thou shalt go unto "the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country "which the LORD swore unto our fathers for to give us."

4 And the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand, and set it down "before the altar of the LORD thy God."

5 And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous:

6 And "the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

7 And when "we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked

m Gen. 38:8-10, Ruth 4:10, 11, 1 Sam. 2:30, n Rom. 3:8, 1 Tim. 2:9. c See on 18:13, 21. p Lev. 19:35, 36. Prov. 16:11, 20:10. Ez. 45:10, 11. Am. 8:5. Mic. 1:12. q Heb. a stone and a stone. t Heb. an ephah and an ephah. r 4:40. 5:16, 33. 6:18. 11:19. 27:20. Ex. 20:12. Ps. 34:12. Eph. 6:3. 1 Pet. 3:10. r 18:12. 22:5. Prov. 11:1. 20:23. Am. 8:5-7. 1 Cor. 6:9-11. 1 Thes. 4:6. Rev. 21:27. s Ex. 17:8. Num. 24:20. 25:17, 18. t Neh. 5:9, 15. Ps. 35:1. Prov. 16:8. Rom. 3:18. n Josh. 23:1. x 1:4. Ex. 17:14, 16. Judg. 6:3. 7:12, 23. 1 Sam. 14:48. 15:27-8. 30:1-17. 1 Chr. 4:43. Ezech. 3:1. 7:10. 9:7-10. Ps. 83:7-17. s 5:31. 6:11, 10. 7:1. 12:19. 17:14. 18:9. Num. 15:2, 18. b 16:10. 18:4. Ex. 23:16, 19. 24:26. Lev. 2:12, 14. Num. 18:12, 13. 2 Kings 4:42. 2 Chr. 31:5. Neh. 10:

35-37. 12:44. 13:31. Prov. 8:9, 10. Jer. 2:3. Ez. 20:40. 44:30. 48:14. Rom. 8:23. 11:16. 16:5. 1 Cor. 15:20, 23. 16:2. Jam. 1:18. Rev. 14:4. c See on 12:5, 6. Josh. 18:1. 2 Chr. 6:6. d 18:17. Heb. 7:26. 10:21. 13:15. 1 Pt. 2:5. e Gen. 17:8. 26:3. Ps. 105:9, 10. Luke 1:72, 73. Heb. 6:16-18. f Matt. 5:23, 24. 23:19. Heb. 13:10-12. g Gen. 24:1. 25:20. 28:5. 31:20, 24. Hos. 12:12. h Gen. 27:41. 31:40. 43:12. 45:7, 11. Is. 51:1, 2. i Gen. 45:1-7. j 105:23, 24. Acts 7:15. k Gen. 46:27. Ex. 1:5. 1 See on 10:2. Gen. 47:27. Ex. 1:7, 12. m 4:20. Ex. 1:11, 14, 16, 22. 5:9, 19, 23. n Ex. 2:23-25. 3:9. 6:5. Ps. 50:15. 103:1, 2. 116:1-4. Jer. 33:3. Eph. 3:20, 21. o Ex. 4:31. 1 Sam. 9:16. 2 Sam. 16:12. Ps. 102:19, 20. 119:132.

had reference to a particular case which no longer exists, and our duty is not in the least affected by the determination.—(Notes, Ruth 4:1-10. Matt. 22:23-33.)

V. 13-16. The Israelites were not only forbidden to use diverse weights and measures, a large one to buy with, and a small one to sell with; but they were not allowed to keep such in their houses. It is observable that these too common practices are branded as "an abomination to the LORD" equally with idolatry, adultery, and other most scandalous crimes. (Marg. Ref. p. r.)

V. 17-19. (Notes, Ex. 17:8-16.) The Lord commanded Moses to write the sentence against Amalek, "as a memorial" in a book: and accordingly he here again repeats it almost at the close of the whole law, that it might not be forgotten by posterity. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In administering justice, impartiality in distinguishing between the innocent and the guilty, and proportioning punishments to crimes, is peculiarly requisite; but it is generally advisable to incline towards the side of lenity rather than that of severity, aiming at the reformation, and not the destruction of the criminal, as far as public security will admit. Every punishment should be inflicted with solemnity, and in most cases publicly, that all the spectators may be impressed with dread, and be warned not to offend in like manner.—And though criminals must be put to shame, as well as to pain, for their warning and humiliation; yet care should be taken, if possible, that they do not appear totally vile: lest having no further reputation to lose they should become desperate.—Kindness is due not only to men, but even to the beasts; and every living creature which contributes to our ease, pleasure, or advantage, should receive from us such reciprocal satisfactions as it is capable of, in proportion to the benefits conferred: much more then should servants and labourers be suitably recompensed; and, by parity of reason, ministers, who are instrumental to men's salvation, should be maintained comfortably at their expense.—In all our actions we ought to aim at the good of those around us, especially of the Lord's people; and to promote the continuance of true religion in the next generation, and its diffusion into those places which are at present destitute of it: and in contracting marriage particularly we should "seek a godly seed," who may preserve the name of deceased believers, and fill up their places in the church; in every way showing respect to dead, and kindness to living relatives: for whatever disgrace we, without cause, put upon others, will in the event rebound upon ourselves.—A solemn and testified ratification ought to distinguish the honourable relation of marriage from all illicit connexions; and married persons should be known as such, to preserve them and others from temptation: and though

affections cannot be forced, yet they should be subordinated to reason and religion.—The customs and manners of different ages may render that consistent with female delicacy at one time, which would not be deemed so at another: but there are certain outrages to modesty, which no age can tolerate, no provocation or extremity palliate; but which must ever be branded with infamy, and should be punished with un pitying severity.—Every kind and degree of fraud is abhorred by the righteous God, and should be dreaded by us; for dishonest gain always brings a curse upon men's property, families, and souls; and the day of judgment will bring strange things to light in this respect. Happy they who now judge themselves, and thus repent, and forsake their sins, that they may not be condemned at that awful season.—Let every persecutor and injurer of the Lord's people hear, and take warning from the example of the Amalekites; however they now cast off the fear of God, and behave with cruelty and despite to the meek and poor; he will one day plead the cause of his servants, avenge all the injustice done them, and "blot out the name of every enemy from under heaven;" and the longer judgment tarries, the more dreadful will be its execution at last.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1-4. All the people, when settled in Canaan, were required to present annually some part of its several kinds of fruits, and the first ripe of each; of which the priests had the use, after it had been solemnly offered to God with a thankful acknowledgment of his faithfulness, and after it had been placed before the altar. The quantity was not prescribed; (Note, 15:13-15.) for it was a free-will-offering, to the denial of their own appetite, which would especially crave the first ripe fruit. (Mic. 7:1.) Every production would not be ripe at the same time, and some could not be preserved till the rest were ready. It is, therefore, generally thought that these first-fruits were presented at the feast of Pentecost, by those who went up together to worship; but we must suppose, that the best and choicest, and such as could be preserved were thus presented, and the rest, as occasion required, were offered to the priests in their several cities; or, as others think, carried to the sanctuary at some other time. (Note, Jer. 24:1.)

V. 5-11. Jacob is called "a Syrian," because he lived many years in Padan-aram, or Mesopotamia, which was one division of Syria. His mother also was a Syrian by birth. (Marg. Ref. g.)—He was greatly distressed when he went to Laban; and when he returned, his life was endangered, both from him, and from his brother Esau. (Notes, Gen. 28:32-33.) He was afterwards ready to perish by famine in Canaan, which occasioned his removal into Egypt, where his posterity were miserably enslaved: (Notes, Gen. 46: Ex. 1:2.) yet, notwithstanding all these straits and dangers, the

on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

8 And ^{the} LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an out-stretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs and with wonders.

9 And she hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, *even* a land that floweth with milk and honey.

10 And now, behold, ^I have brought the first-fruits of the land which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God.

11 And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

12 ¶ When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase, ^{the} third year, which is the year of tithing, and ^{hast} given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and unto the widow, according to all thy commandments, which thou hast commanded me; ^I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them;

14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away thereof for any unclean use, nor given aught thereof for the dead; but I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

p See on 4:34, 5:15. Ex. 12:37, 41, 51. 13:3. 14:16, &c. Pa. 78:12, 13. 105:27. 106:1-7. Is. 63:12. q Jer. 23:14. 1 Sam. 7:12. Ps. 105:44. 107:7, 8. Acts 26:2. r Ex. 3:8. Ex. 20:15. s See on 2:16, 17. 1 Chr. 29:14. Rom. 12:1. 1 Pet. 4:10, 11. 4:18, 4. Ex. 22:29. Num. 18:11-13. u 6:1-13. Is. 22:27, 29. 86:9. 95:6. Is. 66:23. Rev. 22:9. s See on 12:12, 18. 16:11. 28:47. Ps. 63:5-5. 100:12. Is. 65:14. Zech. 9:17. Acts 2:46, 47. Phil. 4:4. 1 Tim. 6:17, 18. y See on 14:22-28. s 12:17-19. 16:14. Prov. 14:21. Phil. 4:18, 19. 12. 14:29. 24:19-21. Job 31:16-20. b Pa. 18:21-24. 26:1-3. Acts 24:16. 2 Cor. 1:12. 11:31. 1 Thes. 2:10. 1 John 3:17-22. c Pa. 119:53, 139:141, 153, 176. Prov. 8:1. d 16:11. Lev. 7:20. 21:1, 11. Hos. 9:4. Mal. 2:13. e Ps. 106:28. Ex. 24:7. f See on 7:1 Kings 8:27, 43. Pa. 102:19, 20. Is. 57:15. 63:15. 66:1, 2. Zech.

Lord's promises to him had been punctually performed. These mercies the Israelites were directed to acknowledge annually, in this public and solemn manner, in order to humble them; to remind them of their obligations to love and serve God, and to offer him their tribute of praise and gratitude; and thus to render them more cheerful and liberal in the enjoyment of his bounty.

V. 12-15. This related to the second time before considered. (Note, 14:22-29.)—Two years together they paid the Levites' tithe, and the festival tithe: but in the third year, they paid the Levites' tithe, and the poor man's tithe: that is, what was wont in other years to be spent in feasting, was wholly spent every third year upon the poor. *Mede, quoted by Bp. Patrick*.—Once in three years this solemn protestation was required from every proprietor of land in Canaan, probably in the presence of the priests at the tabernacle. They all declared, that the whole of this second tithe had been employed to those purposes for which it was appropriated: and that no part had been used by them in mourning, or at funerals, which rendered them unclean; or in any superstitious ceremony, in imitation of the idolaters around them. As the matter lay very much between God and their conscience, this protestation was the more suitable, and would tend both to remind them of their duty and render them afraid of neglecting it. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 12:5-7, 18:6-8.)

V. 17-19. By thus personally acceding to the national covenant, every Israelite openly professed himself the servant and worshipper of JEHOVAH, and engaged to walk obediently in his commandments: and by admitting each into it individually, as well as the nation as an incorporated society, the Lord avouched himself to be their God, their Protector, and Portion; and engaged that while they were obedient he would prosper them, and advance them to honour and distinction above all other nations, as well as continue to them the religious advantages by which they were distinguished from all others. This was a figure of that covenant-relation which subsists between a reconciled God and every true believer; and of the privileges and duties belonging to it and resulting from it.

Peculiar people. (18) עַם סֵּלִיחַ. Note, Ex. 19:5.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whatever God at any time has promised, will assuredly in due season be fulfilled, notwithstanding obstacles, improbabilities, and delays: and in all our comforts we should observe

15 'Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

16 ¶ This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

17 Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice:

18 And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments;

19 And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A command to write the law on plastered stones, set up on mount Ebal; where an altar of whole stones must be built, and sacrifices offered, 1-10. Six tribes are directed to stand to bless on mount Gerizim; and six to curse on mount Ebal, 11-13. Curses to be pronounced by the Levites, and confirmed by the people, 14-26.

AND Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.

2 And it shall be, on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan, unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:

3 And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD

2:13. Matt. 6:9. Acts 7:49. g Pa. 27:9. 51:18. 90:17. 115:12-15. 137:5, 6. Jer. 31:23. h See on 4:1-6. 6:1. 11:1. 12:1, 32. Matt. 28:20. 1. 6:5, 17. 8:2. 13:3, 4. John 14:15, 21-24. 1 John 5:2, 3. k 5:2, 3. Ex. 15:2. 24:7. Is. 12:2. 44:5. Zech. 13:9. Acts 27:33. Rom. 6:13. 1 Cor. 10:13. 1. See on 10:13. 13:4. 5. 30:16. Josh. 22:5. 1 Kings 2:3, 4. m See on 13:18. 15:5. n See on 7:6. 14:2. 28:9. Ex. 19:5, 6. Jer. 31:23. Ex. 36:25-27. Tit. 2:14. o 4:7, 8. 28:1. Pa. 148:14. Is. 62:12. 66:20-21. Jer. 13:11. 33:9. Ex. 16:12-14. Zeph. 3:19. 1. 1. 2:5. Rev. 1:5, 6. s See on 4:1-3. 11:32. 26:16. Luke 11:28. John 15:14. 1 Thes. 4:12. Jam. 2:10. 6:1. 9:1. 11:31. Josh. 1:11. 4:1, 5. c 3. See on 26:1. d Ex. 11:19. 36:26. e Josh. 8:32. Jer. 31:31-33. 2 Cor. 3:2, 3. Heb. 8:6-10. 10:16.

his faithfulness as well as his goodness.—It is advantageous to meditate frequently on the Lord's dealings with us, and to consider from how low an estate, and through what impediments, he hath brought us to our present comforts and prospects: and it is so edifying to others, on proper occasions, to speak on these humiliating and enlivening subjects, that whatever leads us to them is well worthy of regard.—It is surely most reasonable, both by word and deed, to ascribe unto God the glory due unto his name. We should honour him with our first and best in every thing, to the denial of our own appetites and passions. On some occasions it is honourable to God, and edifying to the church, when it is done publicly: it is always a source of rejoicing to ourselves when it is done properly.—At the day of judgment we must render an account of every thing committed to our stewardship; it is therefore our wisdom to be frequently calling ourselves to a previous account, how we employ our time, possessions, or endowments.—We must be watchful, not only to avoid dishonesty; but that "our conversation may be without covetousness," that pious and charitable uses have their portion, and that temperance and beneficence be duly regarded by us, in obedience to the commandments of our God. Thus shall we evince that, according to the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, the Lord is our God, and we are his people; and that we are waiting, in his appointed way, for the performance of his gracious and glorious promises.—It may at some times consist with humility, and tend to edification, openly to protest our integrity; and the consciousness of it is always matter of rejoicing, and of confidence at the throne of grace: and in all our applications we should remember to plead for peculiar blessings on our fellow-Christians, and for the extending of those blessings to our fellow-sinners even to the ends of the earth.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. In the foregoing chapter, Moses closed his repetition and explanation of the law, with such additions as were requisite; and here, in conjunction with the seventy elders, he proceeded to enjoin two solemn observances to be attended to, after the entrance of Israel into Canaan: the former was done to assist their memories, the latter to affect their hearts.

V. 2. This command was given by Moses, in his lifetime but it must be obeyed, when, after his death, Israel had entered Canaan. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3, 4. Some expositors think, that the whole book of Deuteronomy was written on these plastered stones.

thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

4 Therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.

5 And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them.

6 Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God.

7 And thou shalt offer peace-offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God.

8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

9 And Moses, and the priests the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God.

10 Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

11 And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,

12 These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin.

13 And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

f See on 6:3, 28:9. Lev. 20:24. Num. 13:27. 14:8. Josh. 5:8. Jer. 11:5. 32:22. g 11:29, 30. h Ex. 24.4. Josh. 8:30, 31. 1 Kings 18:31, 32. Ex. 20:25. k See on 1:1. Eph. 1:5. 1 See on 1:2. Lev. 3:1. 7:11—17. Acts 10:35. Rom. 5:1, 10. Eph. 2:16, 17. Col. 1:20. Heb. 13:20, 21. m See on 12:7, 12. 16:11, 14. 23:11. 2 Chr. 30:23—27. Neh. 8:10. Ps. 100:1, 2. Is. 12:3. 61:3, 10. Hab. 3:18. Phil. 3:3, 4. n See on 3. o Hab. 2:2. John 16:25. 2 Cor. 3:12. p See on 26:16, 17. Rom. 6:17, 18, 22. 1 Cor. 6:9—11. Eph. 5:8, 9. 1 Pet. 2:10, 11. q See on 10:12, 13. 11:7, 8. Lev. 19:2. Matt. 4:5, 6, 8. Matt. 5:48. Eph. 4:17—24. 1 Pet. 1:14—16. 4:1—3. r 11:25—29. Josh. 5:33, 34. Judg. 9:7. s Gen. 29:33—35. 30:18, 21, 35. 18. t See on 4. * Heb. for a curing. u Gen. 29:32. 30:6—13, 20. 49:3, 4. x 33:9, 10. Josh. 8:33. Neh. 8:7, 8. Mal. 2:7—9. y 26:16—19. Gen. 9:25. 1 Sam. 28:19. Jer. 11:3. z See on 4:15—23. 5:8. Ex. 20:4, 23. 32:1—4. 34:17. Lev. 19:4. 26:1. Is. 44:5, 10, 17. a 29:17. 1 Kings 11:5—7. 2 Kings 23:12. 2 Chr. 33:2. Is.

that they were twelve in number, according to the tribes of Israel. Others restrict the writing to the preceptive part of it; others to the ten commandments only; while many are of opinion that the latter part of this chapter alone was meant. Indeed, as the stones were placed upon mount Ebal, whence the curses were denounced, it is probable that these were added: but we may conclude, that at least the ten commandments, and the great outlines of the whole law, were likewise inscribed in the most legible manner. (8.)

V. 5—7. In ordinary cases no altar might be used, except the brazen one at the door of the tabernacle: but on this occasion, the Lord directed an altar of rough stones to be formed, in order to a renewed confirmation of the covenant, similar to that used when it was first ratified at mount Sinai. (Notes, Ex. 20:21—25. 24:3—8.) This altar built upon mount Ebal, and the sacrifices of burnt-offerings on this occasion offered, aptly taught the people that the curse of the law could be removed by him alone, who gave himself an atoning sacrifice for sinners; and the peace-offerings with the sacred feast implied, that joyful communion with a reconciled God may be maintained through Jesus Christ, notwithstanding the most tremendous curses of the law.

V. 8—10. Marg. Ref. Notes, Matt. 28:19, 20. 1 Thess. 4:1—5.

V. 12, 13. Mount Gerizim and mount Ebal lay near together with a valley between; and what was spoken in a loud voice on the one might be heard on the other. (Note, Judg. 9:7.) No doubt the blessings, as well as the curses, were audibly pronounced and ratified in a general manner, by the tribes appointed for that purpose: so that by this solemnity all Israel deliberately consented to the national covenant; declared that they expected the blessings stipulated to them, only in a way of obedience; and confessed that, individually and nationally, they should merit, and might expect, to be accused of God, if they were disobedient to his commandments. But some priests and Levites were chosen to pronounce from mount Ebal the subsequent particular curses; (14) though the tribe of Levi stood on mount Gerizim. No mention is made of any special acts of obedience, on account of which blessings were pronounced; as the blessings do not belong to those who obey some and neglect others of God's commandments; "for he that keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all." (Notes, Matt. 19:16—22. Jam. 2:8—13.) No man therefore can claim the recompense of his obedience as a debt; but all must receive it as an unmerited favour: and the silence of the Scriptures is

14 And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,

15 Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place: and all the people shall answer, and say, Amen.

16 Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother: and all the people shall say, Amen.

17 Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark: and all the people shall say, Amen.

18 Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way: and all the people shall say, Amen.

19 Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow: and all the people shall say, Amen.

20 Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt: and all the people shall say, Amen.

21 Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast; and all the people shall say, Amen.

22 Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother: and all the people shall say, Amen.

23 Cursed be he that lieth with his mother-in-law: and all the people shall say, Amen.

24 Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly: and all the people shall say, Amen.

25 Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person: and all the people shall say, Amen.

26 Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say, Amen.

44:19. Ex. 7:20. Dan. 11:31. Matt. 24:15. Rev. 17:4, 5. b Gen. 31:19, 34. Ps. 44:20, 21. Ez. 8:7—12. 14:4. c See on Num. 5:22. Jer. 11:5. 28:6. Matt. 6:13. 1 Cor. 14:16. d 11:18—21. Ez. 10:16—21. Lev. 19:13. Prov. 30:11—17. Ez. 22:7. Matt. 15:4—6. e 19:14. Prov. 22:28. 23:10, 11. f See on Lev. 19:14. Job 29:15. Prov. 28:10. Is. 56:10. Matt. 15:14. Rev. 2:14. g See on 10:18. 24:17. Ex. 22:21—24. 23:8, 9. Ps. 82:4—6. Prov. 17:23. 31:5. Mic. 3:9. Mal. 3:5. h 22:30. Gen. 35:22. 48:4. Lev. 18:9. 20:11. 2 Sam. 16:22. 1 Chr. 5:1. Ez. 22:10. Am. 2:7. 1 Cor. 5:1. 1 Ex. 22:19. Lev. 18:23. 20:15. k Lev. 18:5. 20:17. 2 Sam. 13:14—14. Ez. 22:11. 1 Lev. 18:17. 20:14. m 19:11. Ex. 20:13. 31:12, 14. Lev. 24:17. Num. 35:31. 2 Sam. 3:27. 11:15—17. 12:9. 12. 13:28. 20:9, 10. n 10:17. 16:19. Ex. 23:7, 8. Ps. 15. 5. Ez. 22:12, 13. Mic. 3:10, 11. 7:2, 3. Matt. 26:15. 27:3, 4. Acts 1:18. o See on y. 15. Ex. 11:9, 31. Matt. 25:41. 1 Cor. 16:22. p Jer. 11:3. Ez. 18:24. Rom. 3:19, 20. Gal. 3:10.

to be considered in such cases, as conveying important instruction.—It is observable, that all the tribes appointed to bless were descended from Leah and Rachel the free-women; and Reuben who had been disgraced for his misconduct, with Zebulun the youngest of Leah's sons, were added to the four tribes descended from the bond-women, to complete the number of tribes, which stood on mount Ebal to ratify the curses. (Note, Josh. 8:30—35.)

V. 15. The curses here denounced were specially intended in every case, as a restraint from secret wickedness. Several of the crimes specified, if proved against any one, exposed him to capital punishment; as idolatry, incest, murder, and others. But in many cases the criminal might elude detection, and punishment by the magistrate: yet let him not hope to escape with impunity; for the dreadful curse of God would rest upon him; and at length vengeance would certainly overtake him, if he continued impenitent. (24)—The word Amen, which the people were required to add, after each of these curses, implied their express assent to it, or confirmation of it: not as desiring that they or their brethren should be accused; but as declaring their conviction that the guilty would be accused; that they deserved to be so; and that they expected to be themselves accused, if they committed the crimes thus openly protested against. (Marg. Ref. Note, Num. 5:22. 1 Kings 1:36, 37. Jer. 28:7.)—The objection often made to the solemnity prescribed by the church of England on Ash-Wednesday, that people go to church to curse their neighbours, is very frivolous: for the Amen, now spoken by Christians, means neither more nor less, than that which God commanded the Israelites to annex to the same curses; and under every dispensation, they who live in the practice of gross wickedness are accused, and should be reminded of it.

V. 16. Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 21:15—17.

V. 17. Marg. Ref. Note, 19:14.

V. 18. Maketh the blind to wander.] By parity of reason, it is at least equally criminal wittingly to give pernicious counsel to the ignorant, or to injure those who cannot take care of themselves. (Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 19:14.)

V. 19—25. Marg. Ref.

V. 26. This is rendered by St. Paul "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them," nearly according to the Septuagint; and so as evidently to include the whole law. The word all is here in Italics; and probably deferent to St. Paul's quotation of the verse, Gal. 3:10, induced the venerable translators to insert it; yet it would have been, a east in

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Blessings promised to Israel, while obedient, 1-14: and awful curses, of every kind imaginable, denounced if they were disobedient, 15-68.

AND it shall come to pass, *if thou shalt* hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and *to* do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God *will* set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

2 And all these blessings shall *come* on thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

3 Blessed *shalt thou be* in the city, and blessed *shalt thou be* in the field.

4 Blessed *shall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

5 Blessed *shall be* thy basket and thy store.

6 Blessed *shalt thou be* when thou comest in, and blessed *shalt thou be* when thou goest out.

7 The LORD *shall* cause thine enemies, that rise up against thee, to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and *thence* before thee seven ways.

8 The LORD *shall* command the blessing upon thee, *in* thy store-houses, and in all that thou *settest* thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

9 The LORD *shall* establish thee an holy people unto himself, *as* he hath sworn unto thee, if thou

shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

10 And all people of the earth shall see, that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

11 And the LORD shall make thee *plentiful* in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and *to* bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt *lend* unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

13 And the LORD shall make thee *the* head, and not the tail: and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; *for* that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day to observe and to do *them*:

14 And *thou* shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

15 *But* it shall come to pass, *if* thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that *all* these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.

a See on 11:13, 15:5, 27:1, Ex. 15:26, Lev. 26:3, 1 s. 106:3, 111:10, Is. 1:19, 3:10, 55:2, 3, Jer. 11:4, 12:16, 17:24, Luke 11:28, b Ps. 119:6, 123, Luke 1:6, John 15:14, Gal. 3:10, Jam. 2:10, 11, c See on 26:19, 1 s. 91:14, 133:14, Luke 9:48, Rom. 2:7, 1:15, 4:15, 7, 1 Tim. 4:3, e Ps. 107:35, 37, 126:1-5, 144:12-15, Is. 65:21-23, Zech. 8:3-5, f Gen. 22:12, 39:5, Am. 9:13, 14, Hag. 2:19, Mal. 3:10, 11, g 11:7, 13:8, Gen. 22:17, 49:25, Lev. 26:9, Ps. 107:38, 127:3, 128:3, Prov. 10:22, 13:22, 30:7, h 26:2, Ex. 23:25, i Or, douch, or kneeling troughs, 131:2, Num. 27:17, 2 Sam. 3:25, 2 Chr. 1:10, Ps. 121:8, j 25, 32:30, Lev. 26:7, 8, 2 Sam. 22:39-41, Ps. 59:23, k Josh. 3:32, 10:11, 41:42, 1 Sam. 7:3, 4, 10:11, 2 Chr. 14:2-6, 9-15, 19:4, 20:22-25, 31:20, 21, 32:21, 22, l Lev. 25:21, Ps. 42:8, 44:4, 133:3, m Lev. 21:4, 5, 10, Ps. 144:13, Prov. 3:9, 10, 11, 21:9, Mal. 3:10, 11, n Or, barns, 2 Kings 6:27, Matt. 6:28, 13:30, Luke

12:18, 24, 25, n See on 15:10, o See on 7:6, 26:18, 19, 29:13, Gen. 17:7, Ex. 19:5, 8, Is. 1:26, 62:12, Tit. 2:14, 1 Pet. 2:9-11, p See on 7:8, 13:17, 29:12, Jer. 11:5, Heb. 6:13-18, q Num. 6:27, 2 Chr. 7:14, Is. 63:19, Dan. 9:13, 19, r See on 4:6-8, 11:25, Ex. 12:33, 14:25, Josh. 5:1, 1 Sam. 18:12-15, 25:29, Jer. 33:9, Rev. 8:9, s See on 4:30, 9, Lev. 31:9, t Or, for good, 8 Heb. belly, Job 19:17, Ps. 132:11, margin, 111:14, Lev. 26:4, Job 38:22, Ps. 65:9-13, 135:7, Joel 2:23, 24, u See on 14:29, 15:10, v 44:15, 6, Prov. 22:7, x Num. 24:18, Is. 1:4, 15, y See on 1:4, 6-9, Phil. 1:27, z See on 5:32, 11:26-28, Josh. 23:6, 2 Kings 22:2, Prov. 4:26, 27, n Lev. 26:14, Lam. 2:17, Dan. 9:11-13, Mal. 2:2, Rom. 2:8, 9, b See on 2:27-28, 29:20, Is. 3:11, Gal. 3:10.

my view, better to render the verse literally, if it had been merely to prevent cavils and objections; such as modern Jews make against both them and the apostle. (See Answer to Rabbi Crooll, by the Author, pp. 227, 228.) The cavil indeed is ignorant; for the word *all* was inserted by the Greek translators, called the LXX, long before even St. Paul's days; who took it for substance as he found it. The meaning is exactly the same with it or without it. (28:1.) Hence we learn, that *continual obedience is the confirmation* here spoken of; and are likewise taught, that these curses were intended not only to deter the Israelites from sin, but to show them their need of mercy, and to establish the distinction between "the righteousness of faith," and "the righteousness of works." This especially must be the meaning of the last verse, by which all the Israelites were evidently called on to condemn themselves, as deserving of the curse denounced; and this truth, properly perceived, forms the grand preparation of heart for understanding and valuing the salvation of the gospel.—All these curses were denounced against transgressors, not of the ritual law, but the moral; each of the special instances being referable to one or other of the ten commandments. (Notes, Gal. 3:6-14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As our fallen nature is entirely indisposed to retain suitable impressions of heavenly things; we ought to use every proper means of assisting our memories, awakening our consciences, and affecting our hearts with them. But, blessed be God, the numerous copies of the Scriptures among us, if properly studied, and thus familiarized to our minds, may supersede the necessity of such methods as were prescribed to Israel: and the end of the gospel ministry is, and the aim of all preachers ought to be, to make the word of God as plain as possible to the meanest capacities. Yet, unless the Holy Spirit efficaciously prosper their labours, men will not, even by these means, be "made wise unto salvation;" we should therefore continually and earnestly beseech the Lord to bestow this blessing upon us. But without the interposition of the atoning blood of Christ, we sinners can neither have communion with a holy God, nor perform any acceptable obedience to him: for his righteous law peremptorily requires an uninterrupted, spiritual, and persevering obedience to every precept; and condemns all without exception, who at any time, or in any instance, transgress it. Under its awful-curse we transgressors remain, till the redemption of Christ be applied to our hearts: and under that curse every unbeliever will perish for ever, and be constrained to acknowledge the justice of his condemnation. Happy they, who now "submit to the righteousness of God," and, being self-condemned, seek salvation from his mercy through Jesus Christ, according to that new covenant, of which he is Surety: for them "there is no condemnation," their "salvation is for ever, and

their righteousness shall not be abolished;" and every blessing is ensured to them by promise, by covenant, and by oath. But none, who live in the habitual practice of known sin, are partakers of these privileges; and, however they may conceal their wickedness from the cognizance of the magistrates, or the censures of ministers and the church, the curse of God will fall upon them, with weight proportioned to their abused privileges and hypocritical profession.—Wherever "the grace of God bringeth salvation," it teaches the believer to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" confirming all the words of the divine law, and delighting in them, after the inward man, though he cannot render it a perfect and unflinching obedience. In this evangelical dependence and conscientious walk, true peace and solid joy are to be found. Thus God may be glorified and man benefited; and magistrates, ministers, and persons of every rank, should unitedly employ all their authority, influence, and example, to promote this our holy religion.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. This chapter greatly resembles the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus, which was addressed, almost forty years before, to the forefathers of this generation of Israel at mount Sinai. It contains a very copious and affecting exposition of the blessing and the curse mentioned in the foregoing chapter, with many things evidently prophetic of the events, which have befallen the nation to this very day. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3-14. (Notes, Lev. 26:3-12.) In a variety of expressions, every kind of prosperity, personal, relative, and public; in their property and enjoyments; in their temporal advancement and spiritual privileges; are engaged to the Israelites, while they continued obedient; and their succeeding history furnishes full demonstration, that, as long as they adhered to the worship and service of God, it was uniformly thus with them *as a nation*, and in some degree *individually*. Their remarkable prosperity in every thing, while obedient, convinced the surrounding nations, that they were immediately protected and assisted by the Lord, whose name they worshipped, and whose people they professed to be; inasmuch, that they were often afraid to assault them. Consulting the marginal references will lead to the best exposition of the terms employed, and frequently point out the fulfilment of the promises and threatenings.

The head, &c. (13) That is, they should be more honourable than other nations, and have dominion over them as in the days of David and Solomon. (Notes, 13, 44 Is 9:13-17.)

V. 15. All the terrible curses which were denounced against the Israelites when disobedient, have indeed uniformly "overtaken them," in every situation, and in every country, from that day to this; as it must be evident to all those who are in the least acquainted with their history

16 Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

17 Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.

18 Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine and the flocks of thy sheep.

19 Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

20 The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken me.

21 The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

22 The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

23 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

24 The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

25 The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

26 And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls

of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.

27 The Lord shall smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the hemoroids, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.

28 The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart.

29 And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways; and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore: and no man shall save thee.

30 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.

31 Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.

32 Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people; and thine eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand.

33 The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always;

34 So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

35 The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and

c See on 3. Prov. 3:33. Is. 24:6-12, 43:28. Jer. 9:11, 26:6, 44:22. Lam. 1:1, 2:11-22, 4:1-13. Mal. 4:6, d 55. Gen. 3:17, 18, 4:11, 12, 5:29, 8:21, 22, 1 Kings 17:15, 17, Jer. 14:2-5, 18. Lam. 5:10. Joel 1:4, 8-18, 2:3. Am. 4:6-9. Hag. 1:8-11, 2:16, 17. Mal. 2:1-2. r See on 2. Ps. 69:22. Prov. 1:32. Hag. 1:6. Zech. 5:3, 4. Mal. 2:2. Ps. 135:16-25. f See on 4. 5. Jer. 18:16-19. Ps. 109:9-15. Lam. 2:11, 2:22. Jer. 9:11-14. Mal. 2:3. Luke 23:29, 30. g See on 16. Lev. 24:10-16. Hag. 2:17. h See on 6. Jude. 5:6, 7. 2 Chr. 15:9, 11a. 7:11. Mal. 2:2. k Ps. 80:4-16. Is. 30:17, 51:20, 66:15. Zech. 14:12, 13. John 3:36. 1 Thes. 2:16. i Heb. which how wouldst do. 1 See on 4:28. Lev. 26:31-33, 34. Jos. 23:13. n Ps. 55:13. Lev. 25:25. Num. 14:12, 16:46-49, 25:9, 2 Sam. 24:15. Jer. 17:3, 18:1, 21:6, 27. 24:10. Am. 4:10. Matt. 24:7. n See on Lev. 26:16. 2 Chr. 6:28. Jer. 14:12. i For dought. o 1 Kings 37. Am. 4:9. Hag. 2:17. p Lev. 20:19. 1 Kings 17:1, 18:2. Jer. 14:1-5. Vol. 47. q 12. Gen. 10:21. Job 18:15. Is. 6:24. Am. 4:11. r See on 7. 29:30. Lev. 26:17, 36:37. Is. 30:17. s Jer. 15:2-9, 24:9, 29:18, 34:17. Ex. 23:16. Luke 21:24. t Heb. for a removing.

V. 16-22. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 23. The language is remarkable: "Thy heaven;" that part of the heaven, which was over the country of Israel, should have no more moisture in it than brass has; and consequently their land would become hard "as iron," for want of rain; while the clouds might give showers in abundance, and the earth be moist and fruitful in other regions.

V. 24. Instead of the rain in its appointed seasons, the Lord declared that he would visit the people with such extreme drought, as should render their land dry dust and barren sand; which, rising in the air in vast quantities, would thence descend in hot showers, destroying the remnant of vegetation, and almost suffocating all living creatures. A drought of this kind occurred in the time of Ahab. Jeremiah also laments one that was very terrible. (Notes, Jer. 14:) and it is remarkable that this formerly fertile land is at present noted for its sterility; and is so thinly inhabited, as scarcely to contain a hundredth part of its ancient inhabitants, even according to the largest computation!

V. 25. This prediction was in some degree verified, when the Assyrians carried away the ten tribes; and by the Babylonish captivity, and its consequences: but it has been receiving a more singular accomplishment for almost eighteen hundred years, in the dispersion of the Jews all over the earth, subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

V. 26. To be deprived of burial was in general accounted by the Israelites a dire addition to other calamities. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Sam. 21:9-14.)

V. 27. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 28. In the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans this was the case, as it appears from the history: but in that by Titus and the Romans, and in the subsequent conduct of the miserable relics of the Jews, their infatuation was so evident, that every one who reads of their conduct must be convinced, they were given up to judicial blindness and madness, or they never could have been so bent upon their own destruction. While, by their obstinate resistance to the Roman power, without the least prospect of escaping, they ensured their own miseries; by their intestine rage they became the executors of the wrath of God upon themselves, almost saved their enemies the trouble of destroying them, and absolutely put it out of their power to preserve them. (34)

V. 29. (Marg. Ref.) Only oppressed, &c.] The unjust

t 1 Sam. 17:44-46. Ps. 79:1-3. Is. 34:3. Jer. 7:33, 8:1, 16:4, 19:7, 34:20. Ez. 39:17-20. x 35. Ez. 39:9, 15:26. y 1 Sam. 5:6, 9:12. Ps. 78:66. z Lev. 13:2-9. 21:20. Is. 3:17. a 1 Sam. 16:14. Ps. 60:3. Is. 6:10, 19:11-17, 42:19. Jer. 4:9. Ez. 4:17. Luke 21:25, 34. Acta 13:41. 2 Thes. 2:9-11. b Job 5:14, 12:25, Ps. 69:24. Is. 38:10. Lam. 5:17. Zeph. 1:17. Rom. 11:7-10, 25. 2 Cor. 4:5, 4. c Jude. 5:11, 4:2, 3, 6, 1-8, 10, 13, 13:1. 1 Sam. 13:5-7, 19-22. Num. 9:26-28, 37. Ps. 105:40-42. Lam. 5:8. Luke 21:24. d 20:6, 7. Job 31:10. Jer. 8:10. Hos. 4:2. e Job 31:8. Is. 5:9, 10, 65:21, 22. Jer. 12:13. Lam. 5:2. Am. 5:11. Mic. 6:15. Zeph. 1:13. f Heb. profane, or, use it as common meat. 20:8. marg. f Jude. 6:4. Job 14:15. i Heb. return. g 1 Sam. 21:30. 2 Chr. 29:8. Neh. 5:3-5. Jer. 15:7-9, 16:2-4. Ez. 24:25. Joel 3:6. Am. 5:27. Mic. 4:10. h 65. Job 11:20, 17:5. Ps. 69:3. 119:82, 123. Is. 38:14. Lam. 2:11, 4:17, 5:17. i See on 30. Is. 17:7. Jer. 5:17, 8:16. j See on 7. Jer. 4:17. k See on 28. Is. 83:14. Jer. 25:15, 16. Rev. 16:10, 11.

and cruel exactions and oppressions, accompanied by every token of contempt and abhorrence, with which the Jews have been treated, in almost every nation, and during every age, since the times of Christ, can scarcely be conceived, except by those who are conversant in their history: but it is impossible, within the limits of this exposition, fully to elucidate so compendious a prophecy; and it must suffice to say, that no people on earth have been so long and so generally insulted, oppressed, and crushed, as they have been, according to the testimony both of their own writers and of others.

V. 30, 31. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 32. No might.] Neither power to resist the violence done them, nor money to redeem their enslaved offspring.—'In several countries, in Spain and Portugal particularly, their children' [those of the Jews] 'have been taken from them, by order of the government, to be educated in the popish religion. . . . The fourth council of Toledo ordered, that all their children should be taken from them for fear they should partake of their errors, and that they should be shut up in monasteries, to be instructed in the Christian truths. . . . And when they were banished from Portugal, 'the king, says Mariana, 'ordered all their children under fourteen years of age, to be taken from them, and baptized: a practice not at all justifiable,' adds the historian—'because none ought to be forced to become Christians, nor children to be taken from their parents.' Bp. Newton.

V. 34. (Marg. Ref. Note, 28.) 'After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the worst of the Jews took refuge in the Castle of Masada; where, being closely besieged by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar, their leader, first murdered their wives and children; then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest; this being done, one of the ten was chosen in like manner to kill the other nine; which having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner: and only two women and five boys escaped, by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground.' Bp. Newton.

V. 35. *Marg. Ref.* (Notes, Job 2:7, 8.)

V. 36. (Marg. Ref.) The former clause of this verse was especially accomplished, when Zedekiah and his people were carried captives to Babylon. Without doubt the Israelites in general, who were carried captives by the Assyrians, and many of the Jews in Chaldaea, were finally incorporated with the nations among whom they lived, and were given up

in the legs with *as swift* that cannot be healed, from the sole of *as swift* foot unto the top of thy head.

36 The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

37 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

38 Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in: for the locust shall consume it.

39 Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them; but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes: for the worms shall eat them.

40 Thou shalt have olive-trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil: for thine olive shall cast his fruit.

41 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them: for they shall go into captivity.

42 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.

43 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high: and thou shalt come down very low.

44 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

45 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hast hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee.

46 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

47 Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

49 ¶ The LORD shall bring a nation against

thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young:

51 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

52 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

54 So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and towards the remnant of his children which he shall leave:

55 So that he will not give to any of them the flesh of his children, whom he shall eat; because he hath nothing left him in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

56 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter.

57 And towards her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and towards her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

58 ¶ If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

1 See on 27. Jer. 2:6, 7. Is. 1:6. 3:17, 24. 2 Kings 17:4—6. 24:12—15. 25:6, 7. 2 Chr. 33:11. 36:20. Is. 39:7. Jer. 22:11. 12:24—27. 24:8—10. 39:5—7. 52:8—11. Lam. 4:20. Ez. 12:12, 13. n 64. See on 4:28. Jer. 16:13. Ez. 20:32, 33, 39. Joel 2:17, 28. 29:22—28. 1 Kings 9:7, 8. 2 Chr. 7:20. Is. 44:13, 14. Jer. 24:9. 25:9. Joel 2:17. Marg. Zech. 8:13. p 14. 5:10. Mic. 6:15. Hag. 1:5. q Ex. 10:14, 15. Job 2:25. Am. 1:9. 7:1, 2. r Job 1:4—7. 2:2—4. Job. 4:7. s Ps. 33:5. 104:15. Mic. 6:15. ¶ Heb. *they shall not be thine.* 1 See on 32. Lam. 1:5. u See on 38, 39. Am. 7:1, 2. + Or. *possessors.* x Judg. 2:3, 14, 15. 4:2, 3. 10:7—10. 14:4, 15. 11:12. 1 Sam. 13:23. 7:19—23. 2 Kings 17:30, 33. 24:14—16. John 18:31. 19:15. y See on 12:13. Lam. 1:5. z See on 5. 29:20, 21. Lev. 25:38. Prov. 13:21. Is. 1:20. 65:14, 15. Jer. 24:10. Lam. 2:15—17. Ez. 7:15. 14:21. a See on 11:27. 28. Ps. 119:21. Jer. 7:22—25. b 37, 59. 29:20, 24. Is. 4:18. Jer. 19:8. 25:18. Is. 64:18. 29:32, 33. 36:20. c See on 12:7—12. 16:11. 32:13—15. Neh. 9:35. 1 Tim. 1:7—19. d 2 Chr. 12:3. Neh. 9:35—37. Jer. 5:19. 17:4. e Jer. 44:17, 18, 22, 27. Lam. 5:2—6. Ez. 4:16, 17. Is. 47:8. Jer. 27:12, 13. 28:13, 14. Matt. 11:28.

to their idolatry. But some think, that the violence frequently done the Jews in popish countries, through which they are compelled by severe persecutions to conceal their religion, and to worship the images of saints and angels, was also predicted. (Note, 63.)

V. 37. The name of Jew has long been a proverbial mark of detestation and contempt, among all the nations whither they have been driven; and is so to this day: so that Christians, Mohammedans, and Pagans join in it. 'You use me like a Jew.... None but a Jew would have done this.... I would not have done so to a Jew.' Bp. Patrick.—This is fact; but doubtless it is wicked, thus to reproach those who are under the divine rebuke, and who are living, though reluctant, witnesses of the truth of our holy religion, and of the Lord's indignation against those who reject or oppose it; and they, who thus reproach them, are generally too closely copying this part of their example. (Marg. Ref. o. Note, Is. 65:13—15.)

V. 38—41. Marg. Ref. Notes, Is. 5:8—10. Hag. 1:5—11. 2:15—19. Mal. 3:7—12.

V. 43, 44. These verses had an early accomplishment in the time of the Judges, as well as in later ages. (Note, 13.) The remains of the conquered nations were permitted to rise up against the Israelites, to gain the ascendancy over them, and cruelly to oppress them, whenever their sins had provoked the Lord.

V. 45. Marg. Ref. Note, 15.

V. 46. The miseries and persecutions, which the Jews

g Num. 24:21. Is. 5:26—30. Jer. 5:15—17. Dan. 9:26. Hab. 1:6, 7. Luke 19:43, 44. h Jer. 4:13. 48:40. 49:25. Lam. 4:19. Ez. 17:3, 12. Hos. 8:1. Matt. 24:28. 1 Jer. 5:15. Ez. 38:1. 1 Cor. 14:21. i Heb. *hear.* j Heb. *strong of face.* Prov. 7:13. Ez. 8:1. margins. k Dan. 7:7. 8:23. l 2 Chr. 36:17. Is. 47:6. Hos. 13:16. Luke 19:44. 21:23, 24. 1 See on 33. Is. 1:7. 12:8. m Lev. 26:26. Jer. 15:13. 17:3. Ez. 12:19. Hag. 3:16, 17. n Lev. 26:25. 2 Kings 17:5, 6. 18:13. 24:10, 11. 25:1—4. Jer. 21:4—7. 37:8. 39:1—3. 52:4—7. Ez. 4:1—8. Dan. 9:26. Zach. 12:2. 14:2. Matt. 22:7. 24:15, 16. Luke 19:43, 44. 21:20—24. o 18:55, 57. Lev. 26:29. 2 Kings 6:28, 29. Jer. 19:9. Lam. 2:20. 4:10. Ez. 5:10. Matt. 24:19. ¶ Heb. *belly.* p See on 15:9. Prov. 23:6. 29:22. Matt. 20:15. q 18:6. 2 Sam. 12:3. Mic. 7:5. r Is. 103:13. Is. 49:15. Matt. 7:9—11. Luke 11:11—13. s Jer. 5:20. 34:2. 52:6. t Is. 3:18. Lam. 4:3—5. u See on 54. ¶ Heb. *after-birth.* v Gen. 49:10. y See on 15. Lev. 26:14, 15. Jer. 7:9, 10, 28—28. z 6:13. Ez. 3:14, 15. 6:3. 34:5—7. Jer. 53:18. Is. 42:8. Jer. 5:12. Matt. 10:28. Heb. 10:30, 31. 12:28, 29.

have endured, and which in some measure they still endure, without apparent prospect of redress, are unparalleled in the history of mankind, both for their weight, their number, and their duration; yet after all their oppressions and massacres with which they have been wasted, and the long-continued dispersion by which they have been scattered, they still remain a distinct and very numerous people! (Notes, Num. 23:9. Jer. 30:10, 11.) These events, compared with the favour of God in ancient times manifested towards them, and with the predictions concerning them, should not only excite our astonishment, but turn unto us for a testimony; and should serve, instead of successive miracles, to assure us of the truth of the Scriptures. And when the predictions likewise, concerning their conversion to Christ, shall be accomplished, the whole taken together will indeed be a sign and a wonder to all the nations of the earth, and become the forerunner of a general success of true Christianity. (Note, Rom. 11:11—15.)

V. 47, 48. Marg. Ref. Notes, Jer. 27:3, 28:13, 14.

V. 49—57. Though the Chaldeans are often described under the similitude of an eagle, yet it is generally agreed, that these verses especially predict the desolations brought on the Jews by the Romans, the last and most terrible enemies of that nation; who came from a country far more distant than Chaldea; whose standard was an eagle; who spake a language to which the Jews were then entire strangers, being wholly unlike the Hebrew, of which the Chaldean was merely a dialect; whose victories were rapid; whose appearance was terrible; whose yoke was an iron yoke, and the

59 Then the LORD will make ^athy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, *even* great plagues and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

60 Moreover, he will bring upon thee ^ball the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee:

61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which ^cis not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD ^dbring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

62 And ye shall be left ^efew in number, whereas ye were ^fas the stars of heaven for multitude: because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

63 And it shall come to pass, *that* as the LORD ^grejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought: and ye shall be

^a 46, 29-20.—28. 31:17, 18. 32:26. 1 Kings 9:7—9. 16:34. Lam. 1:9, 12. 4:12. Dan. 9:12. Hos. 3:4. Mic. 1:9. ^b See on 7:15. Ex. 15:25. ^c Heb. *cause to ascend*. ^d 4:37. Lev. 25:22. 2 Kings 13:7. 24:14. Neh. 7:4. Is. 1:9. 21:6. Jer. 42:2. 62:29—30. Mark 13:20. Rom. 9:27—28. ^e See on 10:22. Neh. 9:23. Rom. 9:27. ^f 30:9. Is. 62:5. Jer. 32:41. Mic. 7:13. Zeph. 3:17. Luke 13:6—10. 23:31. ^g Prov. 1:24. Is. 1:24. Ex. 5:13. 33:11. ^h 7:22. *marg.* Jer. 12:14, 15. 18:7.

havoc which they made of the nation was most tremendous. By their armies Jerusalem was at length besieged, sacked, and utterly desolated: and during this siege, the famine was so extreme, that even rich and delicate persons, both men and women, ate their own children, and concealed the horrible repast lest others should tear it from them. ⁱ Women snatched the food out of the very mouths of their husbands, and sons of their fathers, and (what is most miserable) mothers of their infants. ^j Josephus. *Wars of the Jews. Book v. Ch. x. Sect. 3.*—In every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another; snatching away the miserable provisions of life. ^k Book vi. Ch. iii. Sect. 3.—A woman distinguished by birth and wealth, after she had been plundered by the tyrants, (or soldiers,) of all her other possessions, . . . boiling her own sucking child, ate half of him, and concealing the other half, reserved it for another time. ^l Book vi. Ch. iii. Sect. 4.—Perhaps the histories of all other nations on earth together, do not contain so many well-authenticated instances of this most horrid effect of desperate hunger, as are found in that of the Jews, according to this most extraordinary ancient prediction of their celebrated lawgiver. (*Marg. Ref.* on 53—57. *Notes*, Lev. 26:29. 2 Kings 6:28, 29. Lam. 4:10.)—After Jerusalem had been utterly desolated by the Romans, they were continually so provoked by the insurrections and daring crimes of the Jews, that they persecuted them even almost to extirpation: so that when the numbers destroyed in the siege, (not less than 1,100,000,) and the tens of thousands which were afterwards slaughtered year after year in every country, are considered, it appears wonderful that there were any remains of them left.

^m Young one. (57) *Marg.*

V. 55. (*Marg. Ref.*)—[Written.] Moses here as a preacher, appeals to the law, as at this time written in a book.

V. 59. The plagues of the Jews have been indeed made wonderful: and the Babylonish captivity, the punishment of their complicated idolatries, was so inconsiderable, either for the *misery* or *continuance* of it, compared with their sufferings since they rejected and crucified their Messiah. That the superior malignity of that crime, above all which went before it, is legibly written in the punishment. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, Gen. 49:10.)

V. 61. After this tremendous catalogue of curses, lest there should be any possible temporal misery, which had not been mentioned, the whole is comprised in one general denunciation; that every species and every degree of misery should come upon them, if they still continued disobedient.

V. 63. The miseries of his creatures are not in themselves pleasing to the Lord; but he is pleased with that display of his justice, truth, wisdom, and power, which become him as the Judge of all the earth. (*Note*, Jer. 32:39—41.)—ⁿ Adrian, . . . after a strange desolation before mentioned, prohibited by a public decree, ratified with the Senate's consent, any Jew to come within sight of Judea. ^o *Bp. Patrick*. Thus the Jews were totally expelled from the land of promise and very attempt to settle them again in it has hitherto been ineffectual: so that to this day fewer of them are found in that country, than almost in any other.

V. 64. A Jewish writer, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*, has these words: 'In the Roman captivity, the Jews were dispersed and dissipated through all the regions of the east and of the west. For every nation of which the Roman army consisted, when they returned to their own countries, carried some of them along with them, into Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and all other countries, which either Christians or Mohammedans now possess.' Indeed it is certain they have been ever since scattered abroad throughout the earth: so that, as to their *national existence*, the judgments of God have pursued them even to their destruction.—It is too common

to plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

64 And the LORD shall ^pscatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and ^qthere thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone.

65 And among these nations ^rshalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but ^sthe LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and ^tailing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.

66 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee: ^uand thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.

67 In ^vthe morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

64 And the LORD shall ^pscatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and ^qthere thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone.

65 And among these nations ^rshalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but ^sthe LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and ^tailing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.

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24:6. 31:28, 40. 42:10. Dan. 7:8. ^h See on 4:27, 28. Lev. 26:33. Neh. 1:8. Jer. 16:13. Luke 21:24. ⁱ See on 36. Jer. 16:13. ^j Gen. 8:9. Is. 57:21. Ex. 5:12—17. 20:32—35. Amos 9:4, 5, 10. ^k Lev. 26:38. Is. 51:17. Ex. 12:18, 19. Hos. 11:10, 11. Hab. 3:16. Luke 21:26. ^l Lev. 26:16. Is. 65:14. Lam. 3:65. Matt. 24:8. Rom. 11:10. ^m 67. Lam. 1:13. Heb. 10:27. Rev. 6:15—17. ⁿ See on 34. Job 7:3, 4. Rev. 9:6.

for the Jews, in popish countries to comply with the idolatrous worship, . . . and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than their effects should be confiscated. ^p *Bp. Newton*.—The Spanish and Portugal inquisitions reduce them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites, or burnt.—The number of these dissemblers is very considerable. . . . They are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiastics, and entering into all the ecclesiastical dignities. . . . The most surprising thing is, that this religion spreads from generation to generation, and still subsists in the persons of dissemblers in a remote posterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances, change their names, and take ancient scutcheons; they are still known to be of Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of monks and nuns are full of them. . . . Orobio, who relates the fact, knew these dissemblers: he was one of them, and bent the knee before the sacrament.—Moreover he brings proofs of his assertion, in maintaining, that there are in the synagogue of Amsterdam, brothers and sisters, and near relations, to good families in Spain and Portugal; and even Franciscan monks, and Dominicans, and Jesuits who come to do penance, and make amends for the crime they have committed in dissembling. ^q *Basnage's History of the Jews*.—As the latter part of this prophecy evidently relates to the present state of the Jews; (and this even their own writers allow:) the prediction, that in their dispersed state "they should serve other gods, which neither they nor their fathers had known, even wood and stone," seems so evidently to mark out this hypocritical compliance with the *new* idolatry of the antichristians, in the worship of the images of saints and angels, as even to add to the credibility of the extraordinary facts here stated by their historian.

V. 65—67. The dispersed Jews would find no alleviation or respite from misery. Accordingly they have hitherto found no country, in which they are treated as denizens; all suspect them as enemies, and behave to them as aliens; if they do not harass, oppress, and persecute them. It may be useful to state a fact or two, out of very many, in illustration of these verses.—A dreadful massacre was made of the Jews at Lisbon, in the year 1506, for three days together; 'where men were not suffered to die of their deadly wounds, but were dragged by their mangled limbs into the market-place, where the bodies of the living and the slain, with others half alive and half dead, were burnt together in heaps. The spectacle was so horrible, that it quite astonished the rest of this wretched people, two thousand of which perished in this barbarous manner. Parents durst not mourn for their children, nor children sigh for their parents; . . . so that their hearts no doubt were ready to break with grief.' . . . 'A decree was made,' . . . (in Spain 1493,) 'that all the Jews should either change their religion, or quit the country in three months. . . . Three hundred thousand, old and young, men and women, went away on foot in one day, not knowing whither to go. Some went into Portugal, others into Navarre, where they conflicted with many calamities: for some became a prey, or perished by famine and pestilence. And therefore others committed themselves to the sea: . . . but there they met with new disasters: for many were sold for slaves when they came on any coast, many were drowned, many burnt in the ships that were set on fire.—After this a plague . . . swept away the rest of the miserable wretches, who were hated by all mankind; so that all that vast number perished, . . . except a very few.' ^r *Bp. Patrick*.—Nothing seems more suited to confirm a sensible but hesitating inquirer concerning the truth of revelation, than a careful comparison of this chapter, and of the prophecies of the New Testament respecting the Jews, with their actual history to the present day: this appears to be capable of effecting every thing, which any external evidence imaginable can effect; and the demonstration *thence* deduced

68 And the Lord shall 'bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again; and 'there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Moses reminds Israel of the Lord's wonderful works, in order to their again ratifying the covenant, 1-9. He addresses all who were required to do this, 10-17. He tremendously denounces the doom of presumptuous transgressors, 18-28. He distinguishes between things secret, and things revealed, 29.

THESE are 'the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with

• 17:16. Jer. 43:7, 44:12. Hos. 8:13, 9:3. p. Ex. 20:2. Neh. 5:8. Euth. 7:4. Joel 3:3-7. Luke 21:24. a. 12:21:25. Lev. 26:44-45. 2 Kings 23:3. Jer. 11:2, 6. 34:18. Acta 2:25. b. 4:10-13, 23. 5:2, 3. Ex. 19:3-5, 24:2-8. Jer. 31:32. Heb. 8:9. c. See on Ex. 19:4. Josh. 24:5, 6. Ps. 78:43-51, 105:27-36. d. See on 4:

and which may be continually re-examined at leisure, and with deliberation, seems more convincing than miracles: for these are *transient acts*, and can only be reviewed in the testimony with which they are authenticated. 'What stronger proofs can we desire of the divine legation of Moses?—How these instances may affect others I know not, but for myself I must acknowledge, they not only convince, but amaze and astonish me beyond expression.' *Bp. Newton.*

V. 68. Many of the Jews rebelliously went into Egypt after the Babylonian captivity, and there miserably perished. (*Notes, Jer. 41:—44:*) Multitudes went thither, and settled under the successors of Alexander. But this verse seems especially to point out an event, which took place subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and the desolation made by Adrian. Numbers of the captives were sent by sea into Egypt, (as well as into other countries), and sold for slaves at a vile price, and for the meanest offices; and many thousands were left to perish from want: for the multitude was so great, that purchasers could not be found for them all at any price. God had brought the nation out of Egypt triumphantly, and had forbidden them to return; and had not their sin incurred the severest vengeance, he would never have permitted them to be forced thither: but, by their iniquities, they provoked him to reduce them to as abject a condition, as that from which he had redeemed them; nay, more abject and wretched.—Mr. Henry closes his comment upon this most awful chapter, with mentioning a wicked man, who was so enraged at the threatenings contained in it, that he tore the leaf out of his Bible. 'But,' says this pious author, 'to what purpose is it to deface a copy, whilst the original stands upon record, in the divine counsels, by which it is unalterably determined, that "the wages of sin is death," whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear?'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In vain doth human language exhaust its powers, in attempting to express the whole meaning of these important *ERMS, THE BLESSING, AND THE CURSE OF ALMIGHTY GOD*. All events are absolutely at his disposal, all creatures are his servants, and he can make us as happy, or as miserable as he pleases. If he determine to bless us, he can command a confluence of health, riches, and reputation; and will give fruitful fields, flourishing families, and peaceful habitations, in case these be good for us. He can advance men above their neighbours, and cause them to triumph over their enemies: he can communicate every temporal good, along with the ordinances of his courts, and the graces of his Spirit. He can even connect great honour with deep humility; and give success in every undertaking, comfort in every connexion, and abundance of all things, with a thankful, liberal, and spiritual mind: yet all this is very little compared with that future, everlasting, and complete felicity, in the contemplation of which our thoughts and our language are absolutely swallowed up.—On the other hand, if the Lord purpose to inflict vengeance, what miseries can his curse inflict even in this present world! An assemblage of direful diseases, rackings, pains, pinching poverty, and dreary famine, with armies of victorious enemies, exercising every cruelty enhanced by galling insult, are ready to obey his mandate. At his word too, remorse seizes the conscience, and anguish and despair possess the heart; yea, maddening rage, envy, and impotent revenge, join with disappointed ambition, avarice, and lust, to render the whole soul one wild tumult of conflicting passions, to obliterate every tender feeling, and to infatuate the devoted wretch, by depriving him of all power to extricate himself, and plunging him still deeper into utter ruin. His own wretchedness will be also aggravated by witnessing the distress of friends, relatives, and children, rendered miserable through his crimes: and all this, and far more than words can describe, may with accumulating weight press upon him, for wearisome weeks, and months, and years, without prospect of relief but from death, the thought of which appals the soul with still deeper horrors. But this is only "the beginning of sorrows" to those, who are under the curse of God: what will then be their un-abating and everlasting misery in that world, where "their worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched?" Yet to such wretchedness is every one exposed, who lives in disobedience to God's commandments; and his wrath is revealed from heaven expressly for our warning, "that we may fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD OUR GOD." None will suffer

the children of Israel in the land of Moab, 'beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

2 And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, 'Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

3 The great 'temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:

4 Yet the Lord hath not 'given you an ear to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

32-35. 7:18, 19. Neh. 9:9-11. e. See on 2:30. Prov. 20:12. Is. 6:9, 10. 69:12. Ex. 36:36. Matt. 13:11-15. John 8:43. 12:38-40. Acta 2:36, 27. Rom. 11:7-10. 2 Cor. 3:15. Eph. 4:18. 2 Thes. 2:10-12. 2 Tim. 2:25. Jam. 1:13-17.

any misery above his deserts: but indeed we are all exposed to this awful curse for breaking the law of God. Yet, blessed be his name, we are under so gracious a dispensation, that nothing but obstinate impenitence can expose us to the more tremendous part of it. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," and having borne, in his own person, the substance of all that agony and anguish, which our sins had merited, and which we must otherwise have endured for ever. To those who believe in him, "there is no condemnation;" all temporal calamities are converted into salutary chastisements; whatever be their proportion of temporal blessings, every thing is given or withheld, as most conduces to their final and eternal felicity; and even in this present world, their comfort and happiness is far superior to that of the most prosperous sinner. To this Refuge and Salvation let sinners flee; in these privileges let believers rejoice, and serve their reconciled God with gladness of heart, for the "abundance" of all spiritual blessings with which he has blessed them; while gratitude to the Saviour, meditation on his sufferings, and a consciousness of their own deserts, reconcile them to every cross and self-denial. But let none call these blessings their own, who do not endeavour to observe and do all the commandments of God, with uprightness of heart: for even the believer can enjoy the present comfort of them, no further than he "exercises himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man."—As "all things work together for good to them who love God;" so all things concur in ruining his enemies, and in enslaving to the vilest of masters those that refuse to obey him, whose 'service is perfect freedom.' Even prosperity increases their pride and insolence, their table becomes a snare, the curse of God imbibers their blessings; and it will pursue them, until it overtake and sink them into final destruction.—As these predictions concerning the Israelites, compared with their accomplishment, demonstrate the divine inspiration of the Scriptures; how should the example of that people warn all who see and hear these things, not to provoke the Lord to anger by disobeying his commands, and despising his gospel!—But let all who love the truth and word of God, remember to pity and pray for the conversion of the benighted Jews; and likewise to beseech the Lord in behalf of our much favoured, but most offending land; that reformation, and the revival of true religion, may preserve us from being bereaved of our distinguished mercies, and feeling those miseries, from which we have hitherto been graciously exempted.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. The covenant ratified with this new generation, (like the law given them,) was substantially the same, as that before ratified with their fathers at mount Sinai.—In this chapter the covenant is proposed, and the consequences of violating it are declared: but a more explicit ratification of it was afterwards made, from mount Gerizim and mount Ebal. (*Notes, 27: Josh. 1:13-35.*)

V. 2, 3. Numbers of the persons addressed had, in their youth been eye-witnesses of the miracles referred to, and could attest the reality of them to their children and juniors. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. Fallen man never makes a proper use of his senses and faculties, and of religious instruction and outward advantages, without the special preventing grace of God. An entire indisposedness to that which is *spiritually good*, and a strong propensity to evil, the effects of our fall in Adam, are the sources of all actual wickedness, and render us the objects of the Lord's holy abhorrence, and righteous displeasure. No doubt Omnipotence could overcome these hindrances in every man: but the exercise of the power of God is directed by infinite wisdom, and regulated as most conducive to his glory. No sinner can *deserve* so valuable a benefit from his offended Creator; but every man might *righteously* have been left to the effects of his corrupt propensities, which are never in the holy Scriptures admitted as an excuse for sinful actions. Indeed men in general perceive no occasion for renewing grace: they have no desire after it, and will use no means to obtain it. But on the contrary, by their voluntary wickedness, they do violence to natural conscience and the common sense of mankind, and thus often provoke God *judicially* to leave them to themselves. (*Notes, 2 Thes. 2:8-12.*) He has, however, appointed certain methods to be employed, to convince sinners that the change is absolutely necessary: and they are commanded and encouraged to seek it. Thus the path of

5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might know that I am the Lord your God.

7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them.

8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

10 ¶ Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel.

11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the heaver of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water:

12 That thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day:

(*See on 8:4. Neh. 9:21. Matt. 6:31, 32. g Josh. 9:5, 13. Matt. 10—10. h See on 8:3. Ex. 16:14-15. Neh. 9:15. Ps. 78:24, 25. 1 Num. 16:14, 20-21. 1 Cor. 10:4. Eph. 5:18. 2 Tim. 2:14-17. Num. 21:21-35. 32:33-42. Ps. 135:10-12. 138:17-22. 1 Sam. 1:4, 6. Josh. 1:7. 1 Kings 2:3. Ps. 10:10. 103:17, 18. Is. 56:1, 2, 4-7. Jer. 5:15. Luke 11:28. Heb. 13:20, 21. 1:4, 10. 31:12, 13. 2 Chr. 23: 16. 31:29-32. Neh. 8:2. 9:1, 2, 38. 10:28. Joel 2:16, 17. Rev. 6:15. 20:12. in 5:14. Ex. 12:38, 43, 49. Num. 11:4. n Josh. 9:21-27. Gal. 3:28. Col. 3:11.*)

duty and safety is made plain; and they who attend to these instructions, "receive the blessing from the God of salvation," the Giver of "every good and perfect gift." (*Notes, Jam. 1:13-18.*) who at last will convince all his enemies that they alone were to blame for their sins.—The faithful minister will be thankful when any receive "hearts to perceive and eyes to see." (*Notes, Matt. 13:16, 17.*) but while so many remain blinded to their own character, interest, and duty, he must wait, with earnest expectation and prayer, for a more extensive blessing, and will seem to think nothing done, as long as so much remains undone. This appears to have been precisely the feeling of Moses at this time. There were doubtless many exceptions; yet the bulk of the people still remained insensible to the real design and tendency of all that the Lord had spoken and done among them; and multitudes had provoked him to give them up to their own hearts' lusts. This grieved the pious and affectionate spirit of Moses, who used this language, not only to reprove their hardness of heart, but also to warn, instruct, and excite them: for if "God had not given them a heart to perceive, and eyes to see," it was undeniable that they had wilfully hardened their hearts, and stupified their consciences against every thing which they had seen and heard.—Maimonides rightly and judiciously explains these words, when he saith, "They had not disposed themselves to receive this grace from God." *Bp. Patrick.* It may, however, be worth the reader's while to compare this statement with the words of the apostle: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." And also with the language of our Liturgy, and Articles; "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law."—We have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will, and working in us when we have that good will. *Article x.*

V. 5, 6. (*Notes, 8:2, 3.*) By the special blessing of God on the manna, which the people despised as light bread, that immense multitude had been preserved as healthy and fit for their various exercises, as any other people on the productions of the corn-field and vineyard.—Moses here reports the very words of God, as if he had himself addressed the people.

Clothes, &c. (5) *Note, 8:4.*—As far the greatest part of the clothing of all ranks and ages in Israel, were made of linen, for which they had no resources in their own possessions, and exceedingly little opportunity of obtaining supplies from others; the reality and greatness of the miraculous interposition in this behalf, were the more extraordinary.

V. 7-9. 2:32-37. 3:1-11. *Notes, Num. 21:21-34. 32.*

V. 10-12. The national covenant, made with Israel, was in some things a shadow of the covenant of grace; as it also represented the outward dispensation of the gospel. (*Note, Ex. 19:5.*) This covenant is confirmed with true believers "for the good of them and of their children after them;" and in their families, the profession of Christianity is principally continued. (*Notes, Jer. 32:39-41. Acts 2:37-40. Rom. 11: 16-21.*) Thus they enjoy permanent religious advantages, which are seldom withdrawn, unless they renounce the religion of their forefathers, or evince a total disregard of it. As others likewise embrace the gospel, their families also become a part of the visible church, which thus spreads from nation to nation, and descends from one generation to another. The infant-offspring, therefore, of such persons as are favoured with the gospel, are greatly interested in the conduct of their

13 That he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath:

15 But with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day;

16 (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the nations which ye passed by;

17 And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them:)

[*Practical Observations.*]

18 Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood:

19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the

o 5:2, 3. Ex. 19:5, 6. Josh. 24:25. 2 Kings 11:17. 2 Chr. 15:12-15. * *Heb. pass. p. 14. 2 Chr. 15:12-15. Neh. 10:23, 29. a See on 7:6. 26:18, 19. 29:9. b See on Gen. 17:7. Ex. 6:7. Jer. 31:33. 32:38. Heb. 11:16. * *Jer. 31:31-34. Heb. 8: 7-12. c See on 5:3. Jer. 32:39. 50:5. Acts 2:39. 1 Cor. 7:14. u 2:4, 9, 19, 24. 3:1, 2. d *Heb. dungy gods. x 11:16, 17. 13:1-15. 17:2-7. Heb. 8:12. y Jer. 9:15. Hos. 10:4. Amos 6:12. Acts 8:23. Heb. 12:15. z Or, a poisonous herb. Heb. rosh.***

parents: is it that they value the blessings of the new covenant as their own portion, and desire them as the portion of their beloved children, and intend to bring them up accordingly, seem equally authorized and required to bring them under the external obligations, and to seek for them the external pledges of it, as these Israelitish parents were.—This transaction might, in many ways, at the time and afterwards, benefit both the parents and their offspring; as it had a direct tendency to stir up the parents to pray for their children, and to instruct them as they grew up: and if when they came to years of understanding, they were reminded how solemnly they, as well as their parents, had entered into covenant with God, it would tend to restrain their passions, awaken their consciences, and excite them personally to seek the covenant blessings, which could only be forfeited by their own wilful sins. (*Note, Mark 10:13-16.*) It therefore pleased God to order the covenant to be ratified, not only by the principal persons in Israel, or by the adults; but by the women and children, nay, by the strangers and meanest slaves, that is, by the whole company.

V. 13-15. The oath, which the Lord swore unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is here adduced as confirming the covenant made with the nation of Israel; yet St. Paul refers to it as the security of all who "have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them" in the gospel: for by it temporal blessings, and the means of grace, were ensured to the posterity of the patriarchs according to the flesh; and likewise the special blessings, which Abraham was personally interested in by the righteousness of faith, to all his spiritual seed of believers, who are sealed with the true circumcision of the heart. (*Notes, Gen. 17:1-12. Rom. 4:9-12. Gal. 3:6-22. Heb. 6:13-20.*)—Even such as were absent, and the unborn children of the whole company, to the latest posterity, were included in the covenant: since nothing but apostasy, idolatry, or rejection of the promised Saviour, could cut off the entail of the national advantages; and nothing but personal unbelief and disobedience could prevent individuals from sharing in the spiritual blessings.

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) They had opportunity in Egypt of seeing too much of their vile idolatries. And so they had as they passed by the country of Moab and Midian, when some had been seduced to the worship of Baal-peor. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 18. This, and the following verses referred to the curses of the preceding chapters, and taught the people to dread the infliction of them upon individuals, and families, as well as on the nation at large, if they violated the covenant now proposed to them, especially by idolatry, however secret. This crime, in an Israelite, must be preceded by wilful apostasy from God, and contemptuous defiance of him: it was an explicit renunciation of the covenant, and an act of direct rebellion.—There is something similar in the case of those who have been baptized, and brought up under the dispensation of the gospel, if they become infidels or live wicked lives; they more implicitly renounce God and refuse the blessings of his covenant, than any other persons can do.—The word translated gall, may mean hemlock, or some other poisonous plant. The enmity of man's heart against God is a root which bears the poisonous and bitter fruits of idolatry, impiety, hypocrisy and every kind of wickedness. (*Notes, Acts 8:18-24.*) A person of corrupt principles and bad character, is likewise a root which produces an increase of these pestiferous plants, by his persuasions, influence and example.

words of 'this curse, 'that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, 'though I walk in the 'imagination of mine heart 'to add 'drunkenness to thirst.

20 The LORD ^dwill not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and 'his jealousy shall 'smoke against that man, and 'all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall 'blot out his name from under heaven.

21 And the LORD shall 'separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that ^{are} written in this book of the law:

22 So that the generation to come of your children, that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses ^{which} the LORD hath laid upon it;

23 And that the whole land thereof is 'brimstone, and 'salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, ^{like} the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah

^z See on 12. Gen. 2:17, a 17:2. Num. 15:30. Ps. 104:4—6, 11:18, 94:6, 7. Prov. 24:1. Jer. 5:12, 13, 7:3—11, 28:15—17, 44:16, 17, 27. Ez. 13:16, 32. Eph. 5:6. b Num. 15:31. Ez. 11:9. Rom. 1:21, 2 cor. 10:5. Eph. 4:17. * Or, *stubbiness*. Jer. 3:17, 7:24. *maelias*. c J. 8:15, 16. 31:7. Is. 30:1, 55:12. Eph. 4:19. † Heb. *the drunken to the thirsty*. d Ps. 78:50. Prov. 6:34. Is. 27:11. Jer. 13:14. Ez. 11:7, 13, 8:18, 9:10, 24:14. Rom. 8:32, 11:21, 2 Pet. 2:4, 5. * Ex. 20:5, 31:14. Ez. 78:58, 79:5. Cant. 8:6. Ez. 8:3, 5, 23:25, 36:5. ^z See 12. Zeph. 1:18. 1 Cor. 10:22. † Ps. 18:9, 74:1. Heb. 12:29. ^z 27:15—29, 28:15—68. h See on 9:14, 25:19. Ez. 32:32, 33. Ps. 69:23. Prov. 3:5, 1 Josh. 7: Ez. 13:9. Mal. 3:18. Matt. 48:1, 25:32, 41, 45. † Heb. *is written*. ‡ Heb. *wherein he LORD hath made stick*. k Job 13:15, 16. 34:9. Luke 12:39. Rev. 19:20. 1 Judg. 9:45. 1 s. 107:34. Jer. 17:6. Ez. 47:11. Zeph. 2:9. Luke 14:34, 35. m Gen. 14:2, 19:24, 25.

and the attempts of idolatrous Israelites to entice others to the same practices, till they became general, seems to have been especially meant. (Notes, 2 Tim. 2:14—18. 5:17, 18. Heb. 12:15—17.)

V. 19, 20. Unbelief and false principles cherish presumptuous hopes of impunity; and in this way men embolden themselves and one another in wickedness, and expect to be happy, notwithstanding the awful threatenings of the sacred Scriptures. (Note, Ec. 8:11—13.) Thus "they walk in the imagination of their heart to add drunkenness to thirst." This seems to be a metaphorical expression, denoting the eager gratification of depraved inclinations; while men greedily drink down iniquity, as the drunkard does his liquor, without regard to consequences. (Note, Job 15:14—16.) The arrangement of the words in the original has led some to render them, "to add thirst to drunkenness;" and then they imply the insatiableness of men's sinful passions, which hanker for more and more indulgence after the greatest excesses. But some think that the expression relates to the zeal, with which sinners try to corrupt others; as if the land which was overflowed, should pour out its waters to deluge that which still continued capable of cultivation. Perhaps it may also refer to the sensual excesses, which were employed as incentives to the worship of idols, and which tended greatly to promote idolatry.—More terrible words can scarcely be conceived than those which follow; and as they respected the people of Israel, their accomplishment has been equally remarkable. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 21—25. The tremendous destruction of individual transgressors is here considered, as connected with the ruin of the nation, through the fatal effects of corrupt influence and bad examples. The warning then becomes prophetic, and coincides with the predictions already considered. (Notes, 4:25—28, 28:15—67.) The entire desolations during the Babylonish captivity, and the waste and sterile condition of that once fruitful land, from the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans to this day, are foretold in emphatical language. But the most striking circumstance is this; the Jews themselves (along with strangers and enemies) are introduced, ascribing all these calamities to the wrath of God against them for their sins, especially their idolatry. (Marg. Ref. n—p. Note, Jer. 40:2, 3.) In numberless instances this has been verified in the judgment formed of them by others; and the Jews in general at present concur in the decision.—The barrenness of the land of Canaan at present, contrasted with the description of its fertility contained in the Scriptures, has led infidels to bring forward many specious arguments, or subtle insinuations, against the divine authority, and indeed the veracity of the sacred writers: for present appearances lead them to conclude that it never could have been so fruitful as it is represented in Scripture. But they seem not at all aware, that in the pains which they take to show the present sterility of those regions, they authenticate the very Book which they intend to oppose; and illustrate the fulfilment of the prophecies delivered by Moses, whose credit as an historian, and as an inspired writer, they aim to undermine. For who can deny, that these ancient records predict the singular barrenness of the promised land in subsequent ages, as the just punishment of Israel's apostacy and wickedness; as well as describe its extraordinary fruitfulness, when God put Israel in possession of it? Who can say, even on rational grounds,

and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

24 Even all nations shall say, "Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what *meaneth* the heat of this great anger?"

25 Then men shall say, "Because 'they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt.

26 For 'they went and served other gods and worshipped them, 'gods whom they knew not, and 'whom he had not 'given unto them:

27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it 'all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the LORD 'rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, 'as it is this day.

29 The 'secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are 'revealed belong unto us, 'and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Jer. 20:16. Hos. 11:8, 9. Am. 4:11. n 1 Kings 9:8, 9. 2 Chr. 7:21, 22. Jer. 22:8. Lam. 2:15—17, 4:12. Ez. 14:23. Rom. 2:5. o Is. 47:5. Jer. 40:2, 3, 50:7. p 1 Kings 19:10—14, 16, 24, 1—6. Jer. 22:9, 31:32. Heb. 9:9. q Judg. 2:12, 13, 5, 8. 2 Kings 17:7—18. 2 Chr. 36:12—17. Jer. 18:3—13, 44:2—6. r 28:64. 11 Or, *who had not given to them any portion*. † Heb. *desidered*. * 20:21, 27:15, &c. 28:15, &c. Lev. 26:14, &c. Dan. 9:11—14. t 28:25, 36, 64. 1 Kings 14:15, 2 Kings 17:18, 23. 2 Chr. 7:20. 1 s. 52:5. Prov. 9:22. Jer. 42:10, Luke 21:23, 24. u 6:24. 8:13. Ezra 9:7. Dan. 9:7. s Job 11:6, 7, 24:23. Ps. 25:14, Prov. 3:32. Jer. 23:18. Dan. 5:18, 19, 27—30. 4:9. Am. 5:7. Matt. 13:35. John 15:15, 21:22. Acts 1:7. Rom. 11:33, 34, 16:25, 26. 1 Cor. 2:16. y Ps. 78:2—7. Is. 8:20. Matt. 11:27—30, 13:11. John 20:31. Rom. 16:26. 2 Tim. 1:5. z See on 6:7, 20:2.

that the Almighty God cannot effect such a change? or object to the declaration, "A fruitful land maketh he barren, for 'the wickedness of them who dwell therein?" (Ps. 107:34.) And, whatever second causes have concurred, undoubtedly "thus it was written," and thus it is; "and this God hath wrought, and it is marvellous in our eyes." (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26. The Lord not only did not command the idolatry of Israel, but he did every thing which was proper to keep them from so degrading an abomination.—The clause rendered, "which he had not given them," may however mean, that the false gods never conferred any benefits on them. (Marg.)

V. 28. As it is this day.] Probably the clause was added by Ezra, or by some scribe, who had witnessed the desolations of the Babylonish captivity. But the emphasis of it, as acknowledging the accomplishment of this ancient prophecy, supposing the words, "as it is this day," to be spoken by a modern Jew, after the long-continued dispersion of the nation, is inconceivably enhanced.

V. 29. It is here intimated, that many things, in the divine councils and conduct, might appear very dark to the Israelites. They would be ready to propose questions about those future events, which were foretold in general terms; and to raise objections against the Lord's dealings with them. The awful curses might appear needlessly severe, and they would inquire into the reasons of them, with irreverent curiosity, and a disposition to justify themselves and the nation. Of this disposition Satan might avail himself, and tempt them to unbelief; to entertain hard thoughts of God, and his law and service; to excuse their disobedience; or to indulge vain speculations instead of attending to their duty. They were therefore cautioned against these delusions, by an important distinction of easy and universal application. Man ought not to intrude into those things, which it has pleased God to conceal from him: for who can penetrate into the secrets of his wisdom; or discover his decrees and counsels, the reasons of his conduct, and the mysteries of his nature, further than he reveals them? (Notes, Is. 40:12—17, 45:9, 10. Rom. 11:33—36.) "Secret things belong to the Lord;" and all inquiries into them are arrogant and presumptuous. But he has revealed every thing that can be really beneficial; and our attention in this respect should reach to the whole of these discoveries, and terminate with them. "Those things which are revealed belong to us;" not to increase our stock of barren notions, but to encourage and regulate our obedience, "that we may do all the words of this law." They belong also to our children, and to them we should communicate the instruction which God has afforded us.—Almost all the heresies and controversies which have corrupted the purity or disturbed the peace of the church in every age, have originated from disregard to this distinction; from vain attempts, by human reasonings and authority, to fill up supposed chasms in revelation, and to make it more apparently consistent and systematical, than it has pleased God to make it; from deducing disputable consequences from revelation; or from tracing back its sacred mysteries to some unrevealed antecedent causes. But the silence is as instructive as the language of Scripture; its truths must be apprehended by humble faith, and they disdain to be comprehended or modelled by our proud reason. They are intended to subserve practice; not to gratify curiosity, or foment angry controversies. Yet there is danger on the other side; and a disposition to speak of

CHAPTER XXX.

Prophecies and promises of mercy to Israel in after ages, 1-10. The nearness and plainness of the things enjoined, 11-14. Life and death solemnly set before the people, 15-20.

AND it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee:

2 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I

a See on 30. Lev. 26:40-46, b 15:19, 11:26-28, 27, 28; 29:18-23. Lev. 26: c 1 Kings 8:47, 48. Is. 46:8. Ez. 18:28, Luke 15:17. d Gen. 4:14. Jer. 8:3. e 1:29-31. Neh. 1:9. Is. 55:7. Lam. 3:32, 40. Hos. 3:5, 6:1, 2. 14:1-3. Joel 2:12, 13. Zech. 12:10. 2 Cor. 3:15. f 6:5. 13:3. 1 Chr. 29:17. Ps. 41:12, 119:80.

many things, concerning which a great deal is revealed in Scripture, as *immaterial*, or not to be understood; and to *sink*, (so to speak) as far as men are able, a large portion of the "whole counsel of God," as if it had better never have been written; not only tends to obscure divine truth, but to countenance the too prevailing opinion that the language of the sacred oracles is obscure, and conveys no clear and distinct or even safe meaning, without some note, or comment, or safeguard.—Such writers, if God had consulted them, would have advised the omission of many parts of revealed truth, especially in the epistles of St. Paul.—But all the revealed things belong to us. To know the perfections of God, and our obligations to love and serve him; our relations to him and to the eternal world; our state and character as sinners, and our duty as under a dispensation of mercy; to know the way of acceptance, and the source of grace and comfort in Jesus Christ: to understand our duty as redeemed sinners, with respect to our several stations and relations in life; our talents and the way of improving them, with the motives and assistances and encouragements which revelation proposes: and to be aware of the enemies and dangers to which we are exposed, and the means of escape, and the consequences of our conduct:—this is the substance of useful knowledge, and, when reduced to practice, constitutes heavenly wisdom. This the Scriptures plainly reveal: by this light we may live and die comfortably, and be happy eternally; after having on earth glorified God, served our generation, and left our dying exhortations and blessings as a bequest to posterity. But all which man attempts to add to revealed truth, or substitute in its place, is merely an *ignis fatuus*, which bewilders the benighted traveller; and, while it amuses him with its glimmering, misleads him into the pit of destruction, and leaves him to sink in it. (*Notes, Is. 8:20. Matt. 6:22, 23.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. They who have consented to the new covenant of mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, and have given up themselves to be his people, should embrace every opportunity of renewing the open profession of their hopes, obligations, and grateful love; and of avowing, to the world and to the church, that they desire to "walk worthy of God, who has called them to his kingdom and glory." It is delightful to behold numbers of the rising generation come forward to consent to the same covenant, and acknowledge their obligations and purposes, by divine grace, "of walking by the same rule, and minning the same things." In order to this, the nature and blessings of the covenant ought to be proposed to men in general, who should be exhorted and invited with all earnestness to lay hold on it: the encouragements of the gospel should be stated, and the awful consequences of neglecting so great salvation declared with the greatest solemnity, the most urgent expostulations, and the most affectionate warnings. In these things all are alike concerned: kings and princes, captains and senators, rich and poor, bond and free: and blessed be God, the strangers of the Gentiles, nay, the most abandoned sinners, are invited, and should be even "compelled to come in," and to participate the gracious feast, as far as energetic arguments and earnest persuasions can prevail. Even infants, though yet unconscious of their wants, duties, and privileges, are concerned; and they should be devoted to God, and brought up for him, as the children of the covenant and the seed of the church.—But though means should be used by every man with his neighbour; (*Notes, Is. 22-5. Mic. 4:1-4. Zech. 3:9, 10.*) yet God alone can give men "a heart to perceive, eyes to see, and ears to hear," for good and saving purposes. We must, therefore, seek the blessing from him; and give him the praise when it is vouchsafed.—While the true Christian, or the zealous minister, mourns that so few believe and obey the gospel, in comparison of the multitudes who are "blinded by the god of this world; the consideration should add fervency to his prayers for others, and to his grateful praises on his own account.—Every mercv, which we enjoy, should bind us more strictly to cheerful obedience; and every divine truth, if properly received, will have a practical and holy effect upon us: nor can we expect to prosper in the best sense, "unless we keep and do the words of his covenant."

V. 18-29. That covenant which is ratified by the promise and oath of God, to all who believe in the name of the divine Mediator, is established on better promises than the covenant made with the nation of Israel; and secures to them

command thee this day, thou and thy children, 'with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

3 That then the LORD thy God will turn thee captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

4 If any of thine be driven out 'unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

Jer. 3:10, 4:14, 29:13. Eph. 6:24. g Ps. 106:45-47, 126:1-3. Is. 56:8. Jer. 31:10. Lam. 3:32. Rom. 11:20, 26:31. h Ezra 1:1-4. Ps. 147:2. Jer. 22:27. Ez. 34:12, 13, 36:24. Zech. 8:7, 8. i 28:64. Is. 11:11-16. Ez. 39:25-29. Zeph. 3:19, 20.

all things pertaining to eternal salvation. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 23:5. Is. 55:1-3. Heb. 8:3-6.*) Yet, alas! many, who only deceive themselves, suppose that they are interested in these blessings, and thence take encouragement to continue in sin. The lusts of their heart were never mortified by converting grace; and therefore when occasion offers, they spring up into practices as poisonous and as bitter as hemlock and wormwood. Thus many are defiled, or hardened in prejudice, unbelief, and ungodliness; or buoyed up in vain confidence: and the dire evil eats as a canker, pervades great multitudes, and corrupts whole churches; while the tempters themselves "draw back unto perdition," or perhaps propagate pestilential heresies.—But, however the curses denounced in Scripture may be disbelieved and despised, their tremendous effects will assuredly convince the most daring sinners, without distinction of rank or sex, and without regard to multitudes, "that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." And though the heart of man now rages in enmity against them; the period is approaching, when not only spectators, but the criminals themselves, whilst enduring their direful accomplishment, will be constrained to admit the justice of their own condemnation.—But it is the grand design of Satan to embolden men in sin by the hopes of impunity, and as they are prone to flatter themselves, they love to be flattered by others; and find many ready to assure them, that "they shall have peace, though they walk after the imagination of their hearts," and gratify their favourite passions.—They persuade themselves, and find others concur with them, that they need not be so strict, and that God will not be so severe, as vulgar readers of the Bible imagine: and so, by some ingenious interpretation, they evaporate the force of these awful declarations, till they fall fast asleep in the jaws of destruction! And should some faithful minister, out of love to their souls, address them in scriptural language, concerning "the curse of God" and "the wrath to come;" he would be liberally repaid with reproaches, and branded as a bigot, an uncharitable wretch, a man of a vulgar and narrow mind, an enthusiast, or a madman. But the Lord will not spare such presumptuous transgressors, who treat his truth as a lie, blaspheme his justice as cruelty, and set his vengeance at defiance: against such persons "his anger and jealousy will smoke, and all the curses that are written in this book will rest upon them;" "their names shall be blotted out from under heaven," and they shall be "separated unto evil" afar off from the company of the redeemed; where full conviction shall be attended with "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth," in anguish and despair.—But these things are not written, nor are these observations made, God is witness, in order that this misery should be endured by those who are thus addressed: but that all, that hear and read, may take "warning and flee from the wrath to come;" that they may profit by the divine judgments upon others; that they may flee for refuge to the hope of the gospel; that they may fear coming short of the grace of God; that they may deny their sinful inclinations every indulgence, and watch against the beginnings of evil and the inroads of negligence; and, above all, that they may shudder at the thought of venturing upon sin, by abusing the grace of the gospel.—Many, who themselves are ungodly, can readily enough perceive the steps by which others descend to destruction, and acknowledge the justice of their punishment; though they are blind to the sentence of condemnation which hangs over them also. But let every one of us look to his own case: let us avoid sloth and dissipation, and deeply reflect on these infinitely important subjects; let us be careful not to repress our convictions, nor indulge in empty speculations, bold conjectures, and impious objections to the truths and ways of God; and let us not curiously pry into unrevealed things. On the contrary, may we use revelation "as the lantern of our paths," by which to see the safe and happy road through this dark and dangerous world, that we may walk in it ourselves, and point it out to our children also.—In that world above, whither this light will guide the humble and obedient believer, even things which are now secret will be discovered; all darkness and difficulties will vanish; perfect light will shine upon all the counsels and judgments of God; and the whole will terminate in universal and everlasting approbation, admiration, gratitude, praise, and felicity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1-10. This passage evidently refers to the prophetic denunciations of the two preceding chapters, which, as it has been shown, had their main

5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.

6 And the LORD thy God will circumscribe thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

7 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments, which I command thee this day.

9 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

11 ¶ For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off:

12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

15 ¶ See; I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;

16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away and worship other gods, and serve them;

18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land whither thou passest over Jordan, to go to possess it.

19 ¶ I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live;

20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; (for he is thy Life, and the Length of thy days;) that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

10:16. Jer. 4:4. 9:26. 32:39. Ez. 11:19,20. 36:33,37. John 3:7-7. Rom. 2:25. 29. 11:26. 2 Cor. 5:17. Col. 2:11. k 6:5. Ex. 29:5. Matt. 23:37. Rom. 8:28. 1 Cor. 8:3. Jam. 1:12. 2:5. 1 John 4:16-19. 5:3,4. 1 Num. 24:14. Ps. 137:7-9. Is. 10:12. 14:12. Jer. 25:12-16. 29:34. 31:24-25. 34-37. Lam. 3:54-66. 4:21,22. Ps. 25:5,6. 119:15. Am. 1:3,5,9,11,13. Zech. 13:3. m See m 2. Prov. 16:1. Is. 1:25,26. Jer. 31:33. 33:9,40. Ez. 11:19,20. 36:27. 37:24. Rom. 11:25,27. Eph. 2:16. Phil. 2:13. n See on 23:4,11-14. Lev. 26:4-6,9,10. o 28:63. Is. 62:5, 63:19. Jer. 32:41. 33:9. Zeph. 3:17. Luke 15:6-10,32. John 15:11. p See on 2:3. q Neh. 1:2. Ez. 18:21. 33:11,14,19. Acts 3:19. 26:20. r Ps. 147:13,30. Is. 45:19. Rom. 16:25,26. Gal. 1:26,27. s Prov. 30:4. John 3:13. Rom. 10:6,7. t Acts 10:23,33. 16:9. Rom. 10:14,15. u Prov. 21:5. 3:13-18. 8:11,16. 16:26. Matt. 12:42. John 6:27. Acts 8:27, & c. x Ez. 2:5. 31:3. Luke 10:11,12. John

5:46. Acts 13:26,38-41. 28:23-28. Heb. 2:1-3. y Jer. 12:2. Ez. 33:31. Matt. 7:21. Rom. 10:3-10. z 1:19. 11:26. 28:1, &c. 32,47. Mark 16:16. John 3:16. Gal. 3:13,14. 5:6. 1 John 3:23. 5:11,12. a See on 6. 1 Cor. 7:19. 1 John 5:2,3. b See on 29:18-28. 1 Sam. 12:25. John 3:19-21. c 17:17. 1 Kings 11:2. Prov. 1:32. 14:14. 2 Tim. 4:4. Heb. 3:12. 12:25. d 8:19,20. 31:29. Josh. 23:15,16. Is. 63:17,18. e See on 4:26. 31:28. 32:1. Is. 1:2. Jer. 22:30. 30. 1 Tim. 5:21. f See on 13. 11:26. g Josh. 24:15-22. Ps. 119:30,111,173. Prov. 1:29. 8:39. Is. 56:4. Luke 10:42. h Jer. 32:39. Acts 2:39. i See on 6:16. 10:13. 11:24. k See on 4:4. 10:20. Josh. 23:8. Acts 11:23. Rom. 12:9. 1 Ps. 27:1. 36:9. 66:9. John 11:25,28. 14:6. 17:3. Acts 17:25. Gal. 2:20. Col. 3:3,4. Rev. 21:6. 22:1,17. m See on 4:40. 5:16. 11:19. 12:10.

accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and in the subsequent dispersion of the Jews to the present day: little doubt therefore can remain that these prophetic promises are yet unaccomplished; and that the relics of the nation shall, in some future and not very distant period, be converted to Christ, and probably be gathered together and reinstated in Canaan. (Notes, 429-31. Lev. 26:40-45. 1 Kings 8:46-53.) The language here used is in a great measure absolute; not containing merely a conditional encouragement, but predicting an event which would assuredly take place: for the Lord himself engaged to "circumscribe the hearts" of the people; and when this has taken place; and divine love has supplanted the love of sin, they certainly will consider and repent, and return to God and obey him. (Notes, 10:16. Gen. 17:9-12. Rom. 2:25-29.) And then he will rejoice over them to do them good, and prosper them in all things; and at the same time he will terribly punish their enemies, who have cruelly insulted and oppressed them. (Notes, 23:37. Jer. 31:31-40. 32:39-41. Ez. 36:25-38. 37:20-28. 38: 39:23-29. Zech. 12:9-14. Rom. 11:16-32.)

V. 11-14. What Moses here spake of the commandments, St. Paul applied to the method of a sinner's justification, by faith in Jesus Christ. (Not Rom. 10:5-11.) For the covenant, proposed to Israel in a form of commandments, did not consist of the moral law alone, obedience to which especially constitutes "the righteousness of works;" but of the ceremonial law also, in which Christ was typified, "as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and though a large proportion of the Israelites mistook the nature of these instructions, (as multitudes of professed Christians utterly misunderstand the sacraments of the New Testament,) yet in the legal ordinances, their dispensation of the gospel was principally contained. There never was, since the fall of man, more than one way to heaven; which is marked out in both Testaments, though not with equal clearness and precision. Moses therefore assuredly meant to include that way of acceptance, which the apostle more explicitly described; and St. Paul's words implied the same conscientious obedience, of which Moses more fully treated.—Under both Testaments, the word of God brings the good and right way near to us: so that we need not travel for instruction, as ancient philosophers did; nor seek information from men, at immense labour and expense; nor need we anxiously or curiously desire to be wise above what is written. For the sacred Scriptures will suffice for every useful purpose, if we make ourselves acquainted with them; if we believe and love them, and treasure them up in our hearts in order to reduce them to practice. (Notes, Col. 2:8-10. 2 Tim. 3:14-17.) The expression "in thy mouth and in thy

heart," seems to refer to the time, when "the LORD shall circumscribe the hearts" of the Jews. (6.)

V. 15-20. Marg. Ref. Notes, 11:29,30. 27:28.) The exhortations of these verses, as addressed to the nation of Israel, are indeed enforced chiefly by temporal sanctions; but the use which the apostle makes of the preceding verses, fully warrants our application of them to the hearts and consciences of individuals, by the more powerful motives of eternal recompense.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

"The holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ;" and "thoroughly to furnish us for every good work." And the instruction which they convey, forces itself upon our attention, judgments, consciences, and affections, by every argument, warning, and encouragement, which can render it impressive and efficacious. But in vain does a kind Providence bring these advantages near; in vain do ministers endeavour to convey divine truths to the conscience, in the most convincing manner; if men will thrust them away in unbelief and love of sin: nor will hearing, understanding, or disputing about them, avail us, if they do not sink into our hearts and influence our conduct. When eternal salvation is thus proposed unto us, and the acceptance or refusal of it fairly referred to our choice; nothing can prevent our felicity, but our own folly and wickedness; and they who refuse the offered grace, eventually choose and love death and perdition, and are cruel to their own souls. The ministers of Christ ought therefore plainly to declare, that except sinners repent, they will surely perish, as well as to set before them in the most solemn and affecting manner, "life and death, blessing and cursing;" that if they cannot prevent their destruction, they may deliver their own souls. And in this case, not only will they at last become witnesses against them: but heaven and earth will bear record, that they deserve their doom, and have none to blame but themselves.—But are we sensible of the reality and importance of the eternal state? Do we "choose that good part which shall never be taken from us?" Let us beg of God to "circumscribe our hearts," to subdue our lusts, and to implant his love: then shall we be prepared for serious reflection, for godly sorrow, and true repentance: then shall we value his salvation, and hope in his mercy: then shall we return to him as our Rest and Portion, worship and obey him as the Lord our God, and cleave unto him as our Father and our Friend. Then will every ordinance, and every act of obedience, be pleasant; love and gratitude will enlarge our hearts; and justice, temperance, truth, and kindness will mark our paths. Every good gift will be communicated from a reconciled God: every enemy will by degrees be subdued, and at length destroyed; and a blessing will be reserved for our posterity, when we

charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and *presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation.

15 And the LORD appeared in the tabernacle in the pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt *sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and *break my covenant which I have made with them.

17 Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will *hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall *befall them; so that they will say in that day, *Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?

18 And I will surely hide my face in that day, for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

19 Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: *put it in their mouths, that this song may be *a witness for me against the children of Israel.

20 For *when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto thy fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and *waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.

21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify *against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their

seed: for I know their imagination which they *go about even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

22 Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.

23 And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong, and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them; and I will be with thee.

24 ¶ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of *writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

25 That Moses commanded the Levites, which *bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying,

26 Take this book of the law, and put it *in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for *a witness against thee.

27 For I know thy rebellion, and thy *stiff-neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

28 *Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and *call heaven and earth to record against them.

29 For I know that after my death ye will utterly *corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you: *and evil will befall you in the latter days, because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

30 And Moses *spoke in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

e Ex. 34:2. Josh. 24:1. 1 Sam. 10:19. Job 1:6 2:1. Rom. 12:1. Jude 24. f See on Ex. 33:9, 10, 40:38. Pa. 99:7. g Gen. 25:8. 2 Sam. 7:12. Is. 57:2. Acts 13:36. h Heb. 1:2. Gen. 20:11. h. Ex. 32:8. 34:15. Lev. 20:3-5. Jude, 2:17. Pa. 73:27. 105:39. Is. 57:3-8. Jer. 3:1-3. Ex. 16:23-36. 23:5-8. &c. Hos. 2:2-5. Rev. 17:2-5. 19:2. 132:15. Jude, 2:12. 10:6-13. 23:5-8. 2:11-13. k Lev. 26:15. Jude, 2:20. Jer. 31:32. l See on 29:20. 32:21-22. Jude, 2:14, 15. Pa. 2:12. 50:11. m 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 15:2. Jer. 33:33-39. Hos. 9:12. n 32:20. Job 31:24. Pa. 27:9. 30:7. 89:46. 104:29. Is. 31:7. 64:7. Jer. 39:29. ¶ Heb. end. Hos. 9:32. marg. Job 34:11. o See on 29:24-27. Num. 14:42. Jude, 6:15. Is. 63:17. p See on 16:17. r 22:20. 32:1, &c. 44:5. s See on 4:9, 10. 6:7. 11:19. t 4:15. 2 Sam. 14:9. Is. 51:16. 59:21. Jer. 9:21. 26:5. Matt. 10:15. John 12:48. s See on 6:10-12. 7:1. 8:7. v See on Ex. 3:8, 17. s 8:10-14. Neh. 9:23, 26. s 32:15. Neh. 9:25, 33. Pa. 17:10. 73:7. 119:70. Ex. 5:28. 50:11.

Ex. 34:16, 20. Hos. 13:6. b See on 16:17. c See on 19. ¶ Heb. before. d Gen. 6:5. 8:21. Pa. 139:2. Is. 46:10. Ex. 38:10, 11. Hos. 5:3. John 2:24, 25. Acts 2:3. 4:28. § Heb. do. e See on 9:19. f See on 7:8, 14. Josh. 1:5-8. g See on 3. 3:28. Jude, 4:45. h See on 9. 17:18. i See on 9. k 1 Kings 8:9. 2 Kings 22:8-11. 2 Chr. 34:14, 15. l See on 19. 2 Kings 22:19-19. Rom. 3:19, 20. Gal. 2:19. m 32:20. n See on 9:6. Ex. 32:9. 2 Chr. 30:8. Pa. 78:3. Is. 48:4. Acts 7:51. o See on 9:24. p See on 12. 29:10. Ex. 18:25. Num. 11:16, 17. q 4:26. See on 30:19. 32:1. Is. 1:2. Luke 19:40. r 32:5. Jude, 2:19. Is. 14. Hos. 9:9. Acts 20: 30. 2 Tim. 3:1-6. 2 Pet. 1:14, 15. s 28:15, &c. 29:20-22. Lev. 26:14, &c. Luke 19:42-44. 21:24. t 4:30. Gen. 49:1. Job 19:25. Ex. 38:8. 1 Tim. 4:1. 2 Tim. 3:1. Heb. 1:2. 2 Pet. 3:3. u See on 4:5. John 12:49. Acts 20:27. Heb. 3:2, 5.

parish churches in this kingdom, proves the means of salvation to many souls, who are in great measure left destitute of other means of instruction. It were however to be wished, that the several clergymen, employed in this service, were mindful to read the appointed portions audibly, distinctly, and deliberately; as this would give probable ground to expect far more extensively beneficial effects, to result from so laudable an institution.

V. 14, 15. Joshua, not being a priest, never went within the tabernacle; and the context leads us to conclude, that Moses and he stood before the door of it at this time.—“The pillar of the cloud” generally rested on the top of the tabernacle; but, on particular occasions, it removed to the entrance, and the glory of the LORD appeared in it. (Note, 23.)

V. 16, 17. Marg. Ref. Note, Judg. 6:13.

V. 18. When God withhold his gracious influences, man's evil inclinations invariably lead him into sin; and when he withdraws his protection and blessing, (which is implied by the figurative expression of “hiding his face,”) man necessarily sinks into misery. Our dependence on God is in every respect absolute: and it is proper we should know it; that we may fear to provoke him, and seek to please him; that we may wholly trust him, and give him all the praise of our knowledge, holiness, and felicity; but that we may abhor the blasphemy of charging our sin or folly to his account, from whose unchangeable perfection good and only good can flow. (Notes, 29:4. Jam. 1:13-18.)

V. 19. Poetry, when well composed, and upon an interesting subject, is exceedingly attractive, as well as easily fixed and retained in the memory: and in almost every nation in the earlier stages of civilization and literature, men delight in poetical compositions, which are learned, recited, or sung with a sort of enthusiastic eagerness. (Note, Ex. 15:1.) To this propensity of the human mind the LORD was pleased to adapt his instructions. A sacred song, containing the substance of the preceding addresses, was appointed to be composed by Moses, doubtless under divine inspiration: with whom Joshua, as his coadjutor and successor, was joined; and on him it would devolve, to see that the subsequent command was obeyed. For the people were required to learn it, and to teach it to their children, from generation to generation. Thus they would have it frequently in their memories and mouths when the other parts of the law were generally neglected: and indeed God himself engaged that it should not be

forgotten. (21)—This song, (which was also a prophecy,) in after ages, when the predictions contained in it had received their accomplishment, would vouch the divine inspiration of Moses; show the cause of the people's miseries; bear witness to the justice of God against their wickedness; and form a powerful call to them to repent and return to him as the only method in which they could obtain deliverance. (Notes, 32.)

V. 20, 21. Marg. Ref. Notes, 32:15. Prov. 30:7-9.—I know, &c. (21.) The LORD knows what is in man, and whither his inclinations will lead him if left to himself; and nothing can be more undeniable, or more incomprehensible, than his foresight of the innumerable volitions of rational agents, to the remotest futurity, and his method of overruling them all to accomplish his wise and righteous purposes, without in the least interfering with their free agency. Thus neither his foreknowledge, nor his deep decrees, cause or excuse man's wickedness, or diminish the punishment which sinners will justly suffer. (Note, Ex. 38:10.)

V. 23. (Note, Num. 27:19.) “The LORD, who had hitherto spoken by Moses, now spoke to Joshua himself, and gave him this charge.” Bp. Patrick. The language must imply this; or else Moses repeated to him the very words of God, and in his name. (14. Notes, Josh. 1:1-8.)

V. 26. In the side of the ark.] In a coffer, or box, without the ark. (Marg. Ref. k.)—This appears to have been a correct and authentic copy of the five books of Moses, probably written with his own hand; which would be reserved, that, in case of errors or disputes, or defect of other copies, it might be referred to, and would be a witness against the sins of Israel, whenever it was examined.—This is an express declaration, that Moses himself was the writer of the whole law, in that very form in which it was kept by the priests in the sanctuary. (Note, 2 Kings 22:8-14.)

V. 29. These repeated declarations were in fact prophecies, which have been accomplishing ever since. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. It is very profitable for us to consider how life passes; and how much of our day is spent, in proportion to the progress made in the work allotted us; that we may be the more earnest in preparing for our final account, and in rendering our remaining services to the church and to the world.—Even when old age is healthy and vigorous, we should remember that the limits of human life are fixed, by him who

CHAPTER XXXII.

The song of Moses, contrasting the perfections of God, and his special goodness to Israel, with Israel's ingratitude and apostasy, 1-18; and predicting terrible judgments on them for their sins, which would yet end in mercy, 19-43. Moses exhorts the people to set their hearts on the words which he has spoken, 44-47. The Lord orders him to go up to mount Nebo, to view the promised land, and die, 48-52.

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

1:28, 30:19, 31:28, Ps. 49:1-2, 50:4, Is. 1:2, Jer. 2:12, 6:19, 22:29, b2 Sam. 23:4, Job 29:22-23, Ps. 72:6, Is. 55:10-11, Hos. 6:4, 14:5, 1 Cor. 3:6-8, Heb. 5:7, c2, 34:28, Mic. 5:7, Zech. 10:1, d Ex. 3:13-16, 6:3, 20:24, 34:5-7, Ps. 29:1, 2, 89:16-18, 105:1-5, 145:1-10, Jer. 10:6-7, 23:6, Matt. 1:23, b2, John 17:25, c5-24, 1 Chr. 17:19-21, Ps. 145:3, 150:2, Jer. 10:6, Eph.

hath denounced the sentence of death against us. Nor need we, if believers, desire to live in this world: for we must feel pain, experience conflict and temptation, and witness iniquity, while we continue here: and when our journey is ended, and our victory completed, God will raise up other instruments by which to carry on his great designs: and be himself the ever-living Guardian of those, about whom we are most affectionately anxious. We have only to do our work, and if able, to be doubly active when the shadows of the evening approach; and, with all our influence and zeal, endeavour to impress divine truths upon our survivors, confirming our living profession with our dying testimony.—Satan constantly aims to embolden men in sin, and intimidate them from duty: we should therefore animate ourselves and each other to obedience, and awe our minds from sin, by meditating on the promises and denunciations of God's word.—But the human heart is so insensible, that every method should be tried, to keep up a due attention to the truths, precepts, and worship of God among men: and all opportunities should be embraced, and every avenue to the heart seized to excite some useful conviction, and to stir up the remembrance of some forgotten doctrine or neglected duty. (Note, 2 Pet. 1:12-15.)

V. 14-29. Not only the bulk of mankind, but even the best of men, need repeated encouragements and charges, to engage them steadily in the work of God, especially in arduous and perilous services in this evil world.—But the Lord will never fail nor forsake such as trust in him: they may therefore be strong and of a good courage, however numerous, malicious, or powerful their enemies are: for in such a cause, and with such a Helper, they shall certainly triumph over all opposition, till every promise in the book of God has been accomplished. Every former mercy to the church or to themselves, warrants the assurance of future successes, and they are “encompassed with a cloud of witnesses” who unitedly testify the achievements of faith.—To the priests, the Lord's ministers, is the written word of God especially committed, to be by them preserved and delivered uncorrupted unto the people; and men, women, children, and strangers should be diligently instructed from it, that they may learn to fear and serve God in the obedience of faith. Every ordinance, every copy of the Scriptures, every faithful sermon, every pious book, every psalm, or hymn, which is printed, read, or sung, nay, the very words of men's own mouths, will rise up in judgment and bear witness for God, against those, who, notwithstanding all, forsake him, and commit iniquity. And to his holy abhorrence of sin we must ascribe all the miseries which are endured on earth, as well as the torments which are reserved for the wicked in hell.—Alas! that the liberality of the Lord should occasion increasing ungodliness; and that prosperity should generate ingratitude! Hence it becomes necessary for the Lord to correct those most, whom he loves best; and hence we have all need to fear prosperity more than the severest affliction, and to be doubly watchful and instant in prayer under the smiles of Providence. (P. O. 6: latter part. P. O. 8: *ibid*.)—The more accurately wise and holy men have studied, and the longer they have observed human nature, comparing it with the word of God, the more they have perceived and lamented its proneness to rebellion: and when the most powerful restraints fail to deter men from sin, with what impetuosity will they rush into it when left to follow their own inclinations! But if we grieve to see the present prevalence of wickedness, and entertain gloomy apprehensions of yet increasing ungodliness; let us remember that thus it was with Moses, with the apostles, and with most of those who have served God, and their generation: and having used our influence, and poured out our prayers, to prevent it as much as we can; let us leave the matter with him who will maintain his own cause, and who is “able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. This bold and poetical invocation of the heavens and the earth, or the whole creation, to attend to what was about to be spoken, and to judge between the Lord and his worshippers, was adapted, and intended, to convey a strong idea of the vast importance of the subject, and to awaken the seriousness and attention of all who should hear or read it. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2. As the rain and dew, gently distilling, soften the earth and produce a beautiful verdure and fertility; so this song tended, and the inspired writer aimed, to soften the Israelites into repentance, and gently to insinuate into their minds those good instructions, which, by the divine blessing,

2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

3 Because “I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4 He is the Rock, this work is perfect; for he

1:19, f 18,30,31, 1 Sam. 2:2, 2 Sam. 22:2,3,32,47, 23:3, Ps. 18:2, 61:2-4, 52:15, Is. 26:4, marg., 28:16, 32:2, Matt. 16:18-19, 1 Cor. 10:4, 1 Pet. 2:6, gal. 3:1, Ps. 18:30, 19:7, 138:3, Matt. 5:48, Jam. 1:17, h 10:18, Gen. 19:25, 1 Sam. 2:2, Job 8:3, 33:14, Ps. 9:16, 97:2, 59:4, 101:1, 103:6, Is. 30:19, Jer. 9:25, Dan. 4:37, John 5:22,23, Rom. 1:32, 2:2,5, Jam. 4:12, Rev. 15:3,4.

might render them fruitful in good works, and prosperous in the Lord's favour: and such would be the effect as to many. (Marg. Ref.)—Some interpret the former clause of the judgments of God, which like torrents of impetuous rain sweep down all before them; and observe that the effect of this song was to hasten and aggravate the miseries of obstinate sinners, by rendering their conduct more execrable.

V. 3. To “publish the name of the Lord,” is to delineate the glorious perfections and character of JEHOVAH, even of that God whom the Israelites forsook for their worthless idols. (Notes, Ex. 34:5-7. Matt. 11:25-27. 28:19,20, John 1:18. 17:25,26.)—To “ascribe greatness unto our God,” is to acknowledge his self-existence, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, almighty power, and universal absolute authority (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-19. Dan. 4:1-3,34-37. Matt. 6:13. Rom. 11:33-36.)

V. 4. “He is the Rock.” This is the first time God is called a rock in Scripture: and the expression seems to denote that his unchangeable power, faithfulness, and love, as revealed in the promised Saviour, form an immovable foundation, on which we may build our hopes of felicity; and that under his protection we may find refuge from all our enemies, and in all our troubles: as the rocks in those countries frequently sheltered the inhabitants from the heat of the sun, from impetuous tempests, and from hostile invasions. (Notes, 30:31. 1 Sam. 2:1,2. 2 Sam. 22:2,3. Ps. 61:1,2. Is. 32:1,2. Matt. 16:18.)—“His work is perfect.” Absolute perfection is in God alone: relative perfection is all that belongs to creatures; and it belongs to them all, as he at first made them; to a worm as much as to an archangel. Every work of God is the result of perfect goodness, the contrivance of perfect wisdom, and the effect of perfect power; and is complete in its kind and for its use, and to fill its appointed station in the grand scale of existence. Every providential dispensation is perfectly expressive of his divine justice, truth, goodness, and wisdom. His law is perfectly holy, just, and good; and is exactly suited to answer the ends which he proposed in giving it: his gospel is perfect also, and suited to answer still nobler and more important ends. The Mosaic dispensation was perfectly adapted to its purpose for the appointed period. The New Testament dispensation has a higher and more enlarged kind of perfection. Every part of the universal plan is perfectly fitted to the station which it occupies, and the whole is a perfect plan, and will at length be perfectly executed: as will every work which God has begun: nor could any alteration be made in any of his works, without proportionally deducting from their excellency. All real defect arises from another quarter, from apostasy and rebellion, and their consequences. Much imagined defect is real excellence; and the objections made to it are the offspring of pride and ignorance. If that which suits its place, and answers the intention of its Maker, were advanced to a higher rank of beauty and dignity, its relative excellence would be destroyed. So long as the distinction between the infinite and absolute perfection of the Creator, and the finite capacities of the creature, remains, there can be no end of such vain attempts of increasing created perfection by advancing it to superior dignity: and the idea leads to the supposition of a perfect kingdom, where all are rulers and none subjects. These things should not be overlooked by those on the one hand, who are continually discovering supposed defects in the works of God, without knowing the intention of the great Contriver; nor on the other hand by those who speak of reason and of the law of God, when distinguishing them from revelation and from the gospel, in such degrading language, as seems to imply, either that God is not the Giver of them, or that things opposite to each other may proceed from the same immutable Fountain of light, truth, and holiness. These were intended, and are calculated, for distinct purposes; and man's perversion of them is alone to be found fault with.—“All his ways are judgment.” All the dealings of God with his rational creatures are regulated by infallible wisdom and perfect justice. “He is a God of truth,” of entire veracity, sincerity, and fidelity:—“and without iniquity,” never using his power or authority to oppress or injure any, never requiring more than his due; never punishing any of his innumerable subjects who have not deserved it, or above their deserts. And “just and right is he;” none therefore can have any cause to revolt against him, as the world in general, and as Israel in particular, had done. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ps. 25:9, Is. 45:20-25. Mic. 7:15-20.)

V. 5. “The work of God is perfect,” so that sin and its effects cannot originate from him. The rebellious Israelites

art covered *with fatness*: then he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed 'the Rock of his salvation.

16 They ^aprovoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with ^aabominations provoked they him to anger.

17 They ^asacrificed unto devils, ^anot to God; to ^agods whom they knew not, ^ato new gods ^athat came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

18 Of ^athe Rock ^athat begat thee thou art un- mindful, and hast ^aforgotten God that formed thee.

19 And ^awhen the LORD saw it, he ^aabhorred them, because of the provoking ^aof his sons and of his daughters.

20 And he said, ^aI will hide my face from them, ^aI will see what their end *shall be*: for they are ^aa

very froward generation, ^achildren in whom ^ais no faith.

21 They have ^amoved me to jealousy with *that which is not God*; they have provoked me to anger ^awith their vanities: and ^aI will move them to jealousy with *those which are not a people*, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For ^aa fire is kindled in mine anger, and ^ashall burn unto ^athe lowest hell, and ^ashall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire ^athe foundations of the mountains.

23 I will ^aheap mischiefs upon them; I will ^aspend mine arrows upon them.

24 *They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction*: I will also send ^athe teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of ^aserpents of the dust.

25 The ^asword without, and terror ^awithin,

q 6:10—12, 8:10—14, 31:20, Neh. 9:25, 26, Is. 1:4, Jer. 2:7, 7:23, 29, Hos. 13: 5, r See on 4, Ps. 1:46, 39:26, 95:1, s 5:9, 1 Kings 14:22, Nah. 1:12, 1 Cor. 10:22, t See on 7:25, Lev. 18:27, 2 Kings 23:13, u Lev. 17:7, Ps. 108:37, 38, 1 Cor. 10:20, 1 Tim. 4:1, Rev. 9:20, * Or, which were not God, 21, Jer. 10: 15, 1 Cor. 8:4, 10:11, v 23:64, Is. 44:8, x Judg. 5:8, y See on 4:15, z 6:12, 8:11, 14:19, Ps. 9:17, 44:20—22, 106:21, t 22:10, 11, Jer. 2:32, 3:31, Hos. 8:14, 14, Lev. 26:11, 30, Judg. 2:14, Ps. 51:5, 10:3, 78:59, 106:40, Am. 2:2, 3, Zech. 11: 8, Rev. 3:16, 17, Or, despised, Lam. 2:6, b Ps. 92:6, 7, Is. 1:2, Jer. 11:15, c See on 3:17, 18, 13:24, 34:29, Ps. 104:29, Is. 64:7, Jer. 17:18, Hos. 9:12, d See on 5, Is. 65:2—5, Matt. 11:16, 17, Luke 7:31, 32, e 2 Chr. 30:20, Is. 7:9, 30:9, f See on 17, Mark 9:19, Luke 18:3, 2 Thes. 3:2, Heb. 11:6, f See on 16, Ps. 78:58, g 1 Sam. 12:21, 1 Kings 16:13, 26, Ps. 31:6, Jer. 8:19, 10:8, 14:22, Jon.

the Hebrews; though but lately known to the Greeks.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. i.)*

V. 15. The word "Jeshurun" seems to mean, *The upright one*; and Israel was such by profession, and comparatively so in reality, for some time: but when greatly prospered, the people degenerated, and grew untractable and rebellious; like the cattle that kick against the gad, instead of being excited by it to labour. (*Note, 1 Sam. 2:29.*) They used their abundance intemperately, and grew proud and luxurious. This rendered them forgetful of God and ungrateful to him, and indisposed them for his spiritual worship and holy service: (*Note, Is. 63:9, 10.*) in proportion, they became attached to the sensual worship of filthy idols, to which they apostatized, forsaking and lightly esteeming their great and gracious Benefactor: and when they were reproved by the prophets, or corrected by the Lord, they were fired with indignation, and revolted more and more. (*Note, Is. 1:5, 6.*)

V. 17. The word, rendered devils, means *destroyers*: and such the false gods proved to their worshippers, instead of benefactors. Thus Satan is called by the apostle *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*, the one of which in Hebrew, and the other in Greek, signifies a *destroyer*. (*Note, Rev. 9:11.*) and our Lord says "he was a murderer from the beginning." (*John 8:44.*) Apostate spirits therefore are evidently meant: and indeed the whole system of idolatry, and of every species of false religion, ultimately centres in the worship and service of Satan; who, as the proud rival of God, ambitiously aspires to be the god and king of this world. Not only were the evil geni of the heathens in reality devils; but their good geni also, and all their demons or gods, as far as they had any distinct existence. Whether a mere phantom, or some peculiar demon under the name of Baal or Jupiter, or some deceased hero, or the virtues and vices, were worshipped under these images; the things which were sacrificed unto them "were sacrificed unto devils;" and it is reasonable to suppose, that the same word should in an idolater's vocabulary be used in a good sense, as signifying a deity, which in the word of God, and in the language of his worshippers, signifies a demon, or devil. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Cor. 10:18—22.*) In this system of Satan, old gods, or "new gods that newly came up," (what a monstrous absurdity!) the deification of living as well as of deceased men, the change from one idolatry to another in ceaseless variety, equally suited his purpose. This explains the secret of that *intercommunity* of gods and religions, which the *liberal and candid* Heathens (as many now affect to call them,) universally allowed of, but which the bigoted Jews would not conform to; who were therefore hated and despised for their *unchangeable* singularity, by which they condemned all their neighbours. The Jews were indeed faulty in despising and hating the Gentiles, and were really chargeable with bigotry in some respects: yet the worshippers of JEHOVAH could not possibly have any intercommunity with the worshippers of the devil; Satan himself would have aimed at no more, and the whole law of God forbade it. For the same reason, different modes of irreligion, or false religion, may admit of this *candid* intercommunity; but true Christianity cannot thus be warped: and therefore many, who pride themselves upon their candour and liberality of sentiment, can scarcely find words sufficiently to express their contempt of those bigots, who explicitly declare that there is but one way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification; and that no man, who is not interested in the merits and atoning sacrifice of the divine Saviour, and a partaker of his regenerating Spirit, can possibly obtain heaven, or escape condemnation, whatever be his moral character among men. Yet all Christians should maintain this scriptural ground: and then by showing others

2:8, Acts 14:15, h Hos. 1:10, Rom. 9:25, 10:19, 11:11—14, 1 Pet. 2:9, 10, 129, 20, Num. 16:35, Ps. 21:19, 83:14, 97:3, Is. 66:15, 16, Jer. 4:4, 15:14, 17:4, Lam. 2:3, 4:1, Ez. 36:5, Nah. 1:6, Mal. 4:1, 2, Mark 9:43—48, 2 Thes. 1:8, Heb. 12:29, Jude 7, i Or, hath burned, j Ps. 86:13, Is. 30:43, Zeph. 3:8, Matt. 10: 28, 18:9, 23:33, k Or, hath consumed, l 29:23, Is. 21:16, 20, 1 Job 9:5, 6, Ps. 46:12, 144:5, Is. 54:10, Mic. 7:14, Nah. 1:5, Hab. 3:10, m 28:15, &c, Lev. 26:18, 24, 28, Is. 24:17, 18, Jer. 15:2, 3, Ez. 14:21, Matt. 24:7, 8, n Ps. 7:12, 13, Lam. 3:13, Ez. 5:16, o 28:53—57, Jer. 14:18, Lam. 4:4—9, 5:10, p Heb. burning coals, Ps. 18, 12—14, 130:4, Hab. 3:5, q Lev. 26:22, Jer. 15:3, 37, Ez. 5:17, 14:15, 21, q Gen. 3:14, 49:17, Is. 65:25, Am. 9:3, r Lev. 26:36, 37, Is. 30:16, 17, Jer. 5:21, Lam. 1:20, Ez. 7:15, 2 Cor. 7:5, s Heb. from the chambers.

all civil respect and tender kindness; by manifesting continually a disposition to sympathize with them, and a readiness to relieve them, with modesty and courteousness; they should endeavour to convince them that, not proud bigotry and uncharitable severity, but regard to the truth of God's word, and a reluctance to do any thing to buoy up the groundless hopes of those who neglect the great salvation of the gospel, influence them in making this profession. (*Notes, 2 Cor. 6:14—18. 2 John 7—11.*)

V. 18. "God, the author of thy being; who ^aformed thee" into a kingdom of priests.' *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 4:30, 31.)*

V. 19, 20. The Israelites are called "the sons and daughters" of JEHOVAH in respect to *privilege*; while, because of their character, that relation is disowned. (5)—Having received their natural and national existence, and all their peculiar advantages, from the Lord, they so provoked him by multiplied idolatries, that he *abhorred, or disowned* them, and as it were turned them out of his house; and declared that he would withdraw his protection and withhold his wonted interposition in their favour: and even afterwards, whilst they groaned under their miseries, that he would look on as an unconcerned spectator, until they were brought to the utmost extremities; because they were a froward and perverse generation, destitute alike of *faith and faithfulness*. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 26:30. Is. 63:10. Zech. 11:7—9.*)

V. 21. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ez. 20:5. 34:11—17.*) Many of the judgments inflicted on the offending Israelites, by the Canaanites, Philistines, Midianites, Chaldeans, and others, might form a partial accomplishment of this prediction: but the apostle applies it, no doubt most justly, to the calling of the Gentiles into the church. (*Rom. 10:19.*)—The Jews, proud of their abused privileges, had not only treated the heathen as foolish and vile, which, as given up to base idolatries, they doubtless were; but even as dogs compared with themselves, to whom as children they supposed that all spiritual blessings exclusively and unalterably belonged; (*Note, Matt. 15:25—28.*) and it therefore provoked the jealousy of the Jews to a degree of indignant rage, to see them enter into the church, and admitted to equal privileges with themselves. This eventually tended to their own entire exclusion; and has even to this very day exceedingly exasperated them against Christianity. (*Note, 1 Thes. 2:13—16.*)

V. 22. The tremendous effects of the wrath of God are here represented under the metaphor of a fire, which, kindled upon the surface of the earth, should burn even to its centre; and, according to a very general notion of the ancients, quite through to the place of miserable departed spirits. The word here used, (שָׂרָפָה, *sharaph*, Sept.) signifying 'the unseen state,' seems to intimate that the wrath of God would pursue its objects, after death, to that place "where their worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched." (*Note, Ps. 16:8—11.*)

Lowest hell.) *Note, Ps. 86:12, 13.*

V. 24. *Serpents of the dust.*—Or, 'serpents which crawl upon and lick the dust.'—(The word (שָׂרָפָה) rendered "serpents," is used by Micah in a similar sense. *Mic. 7:17. Heb.*)—The marginal references best explain the highly poetical language of these prophetic denunciations.

V. 25. *Marg. Ref.*
V. 26, 27. The idolatry and rebellions of Israel *deserved*, and the justice of God seemed to demand, that they should be banished to the remotest corners of the earth, where they might never more be heard of, or even that they should be entirely extirpated: but he knew that his enemies would misunderstand this event, and would in consequence be elated with insufferable insolence, and emboldened to utter blasphemies, and to deny all that was recorded of his wonderful

shall 'destroy both 'the young man and the virgin, the sucking *also*, with the man of gray hairs.

26 I said, 'I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men;

27 Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, 'lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, *and* lest 'they should say, 'Our hand *is* high, and the LORD hath not done all this.

28 For they are 'a nation void of counsel, neither *is* there any understanding in them.

29 Oh, 'that they were wise, *that* they understood this, *that* 'they would consider their latter end!

30 How should 'one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had 'sold them, and the LORD had 'shut them up?

31 For 'their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves *being* judges.

32 For their vine *is* 'of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: 'their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters *are* bitter:

* Heb. *beresee*. † Lam. 2:19-22, 4:4. ‡ 29:25, 35, 37, 64. Lev. 26:33, 38. Luke 21:24. † 1 Sam. 12:22. ‡ 37:28, 29, 35. 47:7. Lam. 1:3. Ez. 20:13, 14, 20-22. Zech. 1:14, 15. † Ez. 32:12. Num. 14:15, 16. Josh. 7:9. Ps. 115:1, 2. Is. 10: 8-15. 37:10, 12-23. Dan. 4:30-37. † 7:1. Our high hand and not the LORD hath done all this. w. 6. Job 24:28. Ps. 81:12. Prov. 17:1. Is. 27:11. 29:14. Jer. 4:2, 8, 9. Hos. 4:6. Matt. 13:14, 15. Rom. 11:25. † Cor. 3:19. ‡ 5:39. Jer. 31:13. 107:15, 43. Is. 49:18, 19. Hos. 14:9. Luke 19:41, 42. y. 10, 3. 47:7. Jer. 5:1. 17:11. Lam. 1:9. Luke 19:20. 16:19-25. ‡ Lev. 26:8. Josh. 23:10. Judg. 7:22, 23. Num. 11:15-17. 2 Chr. 24:21. Is. 30:17. ‡ Judg. 2:14. 3:8. Ps. 44:12. 14:1. 2 Sam. 2:2. 1 Chr. 17:13. 69:9-12. 7:20, 21. Jer. 40:3. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 6:26, 32. ‡ 1 Sam. 2:2. 1 Chr. 17:13. 69:9-12. 7:20, 21. Jer. 40:3. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 6:26, 32. ‡ 1 Sam. 2:2. 1 Chr. 17:13. 69:9-12. 7:20, 21. Jer. 40:3. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 6:26, 32.

works in Egypt and at the Red Sea. (Notes, Ez. 32:11-14. Num. 14:13-19. Ez. 20:7-9.) He therefore determined to spare the nation: and he still, for similar purposes, continues the Jews as living witnesses of the truth of the Scriptures. For no doubt, the triumphs of modern infidels would have been more insolent, and their blasphemies more abundant, had there been no traces of such a people as Israel any where discoverable upon earth.—By a bold figure, the sacred poet ascribes to the Almighty, language taken from the conduct of men, who are deterred from such things, as they have a strong inclination to, through fear of disagreeable consequences. As God abhorred idolatry, pride, and blasphemy, and was determined not to give this occasion for them, he is said "to fear the wrath of the enemy;" because he acted as men do when thus afraid. (Notes, Gen. 6:6, 7. 2 Kings 18:28-35.)

V. 29. The Israelites, had they been wise, would have attended to these warnings and instructions, and reflected on the consequences of their conduct; and so avoided all such things as led to personal or national ruin, and observed all such as conducted to prosperity and felicity: thus they would have "considered their latter end."—For, notwithstanding all the predictions which had been delivered, they would certainly have prospered had they been obedient; and notwithstanding the divine decrees, it is equally certain that none will come short of eternal life, but the impenitent and unbelieving.—It is so agreeable to the divine holiness and love that his rational creatures should be obedient and happy, and that sinners should repent, believe, and be saved, that he is represented as desiring and even wishing for it. This must be understood in the same manner as his "fearing the wrath of the enemy;" with reference to the conduct which he approves in us, and not with respect to his own government of the world, which is in all respects perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, and good, though often too deep for our investigation. (Notes, 5:28, 29. Ps. 81:13. Ez. 33:11. Matt. 23:37-39. Luke 19:42-44.)

V. 30, 31. Unless the Israelites had provoked God by their crimes to sell them as slaves, and to deliver them, as malefactors shut up in prison, into the hands of their enemies, no power could possibly have prevailed against them. For he would have continued to be their omnipotent Protector and Helper; and in that case, they would have been uniformly victorious over all assailants, according to the examples recorded in Scripture. (Marg. Ref. a, b.) How amazingly different from this has their condition been during above 1700 years!—The idols of the Gentiles, on which they professed to depend, had never equalled the wondrous works of JEHOVAH, even by their own confession; and therefore they could never have prevailed against Israel, had not their Rock and Defender been turned from them, yea, turned against them. (Marg. Ref. c.)

V. 32, 33. The nation of Israel, though planted a generous vine, of an excellent stock, in a rich soil, and with every advantage of culture, did not bring forth the good fruits of righteousness: (Notes, Is. 5:2-7. Jer. 2:20, 21.) nay, it even rivalled Sodom and Gomorrah in wickedness: and as this conduct in them was more dishonourable to God, and more poisonous to the minds of others, by prejudicing them against God and religion, it would therefore be eventually more bitter to themselves.—Thus Josephus describes the Jews before their ruin by the Romans:—"They were a more atheistical

33 Their wine *is* 'the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

34 *Is* not this 'laid up in store with me, *and* sealed up among my treasures?

35 'To me *belongeth* vengeance and recompense: 'their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and 'the things that shall come upon them *make* haste.

[Practical Observations.]

36 For 'the LORD shall judge his people, and 'repent himself for his servants: when he seeth that *their* 'power is gone, and *there is* 'none shut up, or left.

37 And he shall say, 'Where *are* their gods, *their* rock in whom they trusted;

38 Which did 'eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-offerings? let them rise up and help you, *and* be 'your protection.

39 See now that I, *even* I, *am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: 'neither *is* there any that can deliver out of my hand.

51. Matt. 11:24. d 29:18. Is. 5:4. Heb. 12:15. e Job 20:14-16. Ps. 68:4. 140. 3. Jer. 8:14. marg. Rom. 3:13. f Job 14:17. Jer. 2:22. Hos. 13:12. Rom. 2:5. 1 Cor. 4:5. Rev. 20:12, 13. g 43. Ps. 84:1. Nah. 1:2, 8. Rom. 12:19. 13:4. Heb. 10:30. h Ps. 73:17-19. Prov. 4:19. Is. 8:15. Jer. 6:20. 13:15. 1 Pet. 2:2. 1 Jo. 5:19. 30:12, 13. 60:22. Hab. 2:3. Luke 18:7, 8. 2 Pet. 2:3. 3:8-10. k Ps. 7:8. 50:4. 96:13. 135:4. 1 Judg. 2:18. Ps. 90:13. 106:45. Jer. 31:20. Joel 2:14. Amos 7:9. 6. § Heb. hand. m 1 Kings 14:10. 21:21. 2 Kings 9:8. 14:26. n Judg. 10:14. 2 Kings 3:13. Jer. 2:28. o Lev. 21:21. Ps. 50:18. Ez. 16:18, 19. Hos. 2:8. Zeph. 2:11. § Heb. *an hiding* for you. p Is. 41:4. 45:5, 22. 46:4. 48:12. 1 Heb. 1:12. Rev. 1:11. 2:8. q 1 Sam. 2:6. 2 Kings 5:7. Job 5:18. Ps. 68:20. Is. 43:13. Hos. 6:1. Luke 24:49. 1 Sams. 1:18. r Job 10:7. Ps. 50:22. Is. 45:13. Mic. 5:8.

generation than the inhabitants of Sodom."—"There was no act of wickedness that was not committed: nor can one imagine any thing so bad that they did not do; endeavouring, publicly as well as privately, to excel one another, both in impiety towards God and injustice to their neighbours."—"Had not the Romans destroyed them, the earth would have opened and swallowed them, or fire from heaven would have consumed them." (Marg. Ref. Note, Ez. 16:48-51.)

V. 34, 35. All the wickedness of Israel was noticed and registered, as in a book, by the Lord, until the appointed time of vengeance: and it would then appear that it had been reserved in store, to be produced against them, to manifest his justice in their punishment; even as a man seals up his treasures, and deposits them in a secure place till he wants to use them.—For it belongeth to God, the Judge of all, to execute vengeance on the wicked; it is his peculiar office and prerogative; so that none are authorized to take vengeance, except as commissioned by him. (Note, Num. 31:2.) But in perfect wisdom he waits the most proper season; and though his judgments seem to linger, they in reality make haste and are at hand. For when sinners deem themselves most secure, and suppose that their foot stands firm, he causes it to slide in due time, and they suddenly fall into destruction. (Marg. Ref. Note, Heb. 10:28-31.)

V. 36. The Lord pleaded the cause of the pious remnant of Israel in every age; he rescued the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; the Messiah appeared in the appointed season; and the nation has from time to time received many gracious deliverances: but as this sacred poem relates to the same events which have already been considered in the preceding chapters; this part also certainly refers to mercies still reserved for them, even their future conversion and restoration.—When the appointed period shall arrive, the Lord will plead their cause, and avenge them on all their oppressors; he will change his conduct towards them, as a man does when he repents; but not till he has brought them into utter distress, so that none shall be any where *shut up*, and exempted from hostile depredations; or *left*, who shall not be carried captive, and at the mercy of their conquerors: and he will continue their punishment, till they are brought to renounce all dependence on human help. (Notes, Is. 63: 15-19. 64: Ez. 36:25-32. Hos. 2:14-17. 3:4, 5. 14:1-8. Zech. 12:9-14. Rom. 11:25-32.)—This evidently predicts the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the consequent desolations of their land, and the long-continued dispersion which has ensued.

V. 37-39. It is most obvious to understand this, not as a reproach cast on the Jews by their enemies, but as the rebuke of God in his providence; exposing Israel's folly in sacrificing to worthless idols, and as it were feasting them on their abundance. Let the idolaters, in their distress, apply for help to the objects of their abominable worship, and not expect it from JEHOVAH whom they had so basely forsaken. (Notes, Judg. 10:13, 14. Hos. 2:8, 9.) But the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah may be considered as a *continuation* of these idolatries, and the completion of their national guilt: and of all this complicated wickedness he will make the Jews deeply sensible, before he appears to deliver them from their present miseries. Then they will learn that there is no God but JEHOVAH; that he alone is able to save and

33 For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

34 If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain, and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will 'avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

44 And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.

45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel.

46 And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day; which ye shall command your children to observe, to do all the words of this law.

e Gen. 14:22. Ex. 6:8. Num. 14:24-30. Jer. 4:2. Heb. 6:17, 18. Rev. 10:5, 6. 1 Pt. 7:12. Is. 27:1. 34:5, 6. 66:16. Ez. 21:9, 10, 11, 30. Zeph. 2:12. v See on 35. Is. 1:24, 30, 31, 60, 68. v 9. See on Ex. 30:5. Rom. 1:32. 9:7. 2 Tim. 3:4. x See on 7:2. Ps. 33:1. 116:8. Jer. 46:10. Ez. 35:6-8. 38:21, 22. Or, praise his people, ye nations; or, sing ye. 1 Gen. 12:3. 1 Kings 8:43. Ps. 22:27. Is. 11:10. 19:23, 25. Luke 2:10, 11, 32. Acts 13:47, 48. Rom. 15:9-13. Rev. 5:9, 10. v See on 35. Job 13:21. Jer. 15:14. Lam. 2:5. Luke 15:27, 33, 34, 21, 32-34. Rom. 12:19. Rev. 6:10. 15:24, 18:23, 19:2. 1 Pt. 6:5. v See on 31:22, 30. 1 Cor. 10:1.

to destroy, to afflict and prosper, and that none can deliver him out of his hand. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Sam. 2:4-8*.)

V. 40-42. "Lifting up the hand" was at that time customary in taking solemn oaths: (*Marg. Ref.s.*) and when JEHOVAH swore by his own self-existence and eternity, the sentence, whether of mercy or of judgment, became irrevocable and irreversible. And therefore, if the Lord prepared for vengeance, as a man for battle, and put his hand to the dreadful work of executing judgment on the wicked, he would do it effectually; nor should any of those, who had provoked his indignation, be able either to resist or escape. Especially he will revenge himself upon those, who at any time have injured his people. (*Notes, Is. 34: 63:1-6. Rev. 19:11-21.*)—The words rendered "from the beginning of revenges on the enemy;" are obscure, and may mean, "from the highest to the lowest of the enemy."—This conclusion seems to relate to the final deliverance of Israel, and the destruction of all who oppose that deliverance, and of every enemy of God and his people; and future events may hereafter illustrate this part of the prophecy, as history has explained the foregoing parts of it.

V. 43. When the Gentiles were called into the church, and the Jews who opposed it were severely punished, this prophecy began to be accomplished; but when upon their future conversion, the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all opposers be destroyed, it will be completely fulfilled. The restoration of the Jews to their own land, and its subsequent fertility, seem also predicted. (*Notes, Rom. 11:11-15. 15:8-13.*)

V. 45-52. Moses, having delivered the preceding prophetic song to Israel, with earnest attestations and exhortations, continuing the "labour of love" to his latest breath, received the summons from God to take a view of the promised land, and then close his eyes in death. (*Notes, 3:23-28. 34:1-6. Num. 20:10-13, 22-28. 27:15-17.*)—The expression, "gathered unto thy people," here relate to the soul, not to the body; for none of Moses's people were buried on mount Abarim: yet the words are not used exclusively of the righteous. (*Note, Gen. 25:7, 8.*)—The Israelites should have learnt, that as Moses felt short of the promised land, and could not bring them into possession of it, so his law did not contain a perfect revelation of God's will, but they were to expect something beyond it. *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. Divine truths, if proposed with solemnity and affection, and accompanied by fervent prayers, resemble the gentle dews and rains which refresh and fructify the earth: and while numbers, alas! turn away from instruction with neglect and dislike, many in every age welcome the blessing, and show the beneficial tendency of it in their holy and useful lives. (*Note, Ps. 72:4-7.*)—When the glorious perfections of God, and his dealings with mankind in general, and with every individual, and their real character and conduct towards him, shall be completely made known to the whole world, either his mercy in their salvation, or his justice in their condemnation, will be universally acknowledged by all. In every controversy between the great Creator, and his rational creatures, the heavens and the earth, and every part of the world, will be witnesses for him "to declare his righteousness," and to convict and silence all who have rebelled against him: for the benefits which he has already conferred, and which he is still conferring, are so strong obligations entirely to love and serve him, that their ingratitude and disobedience admit of no ex-

47 For it is 'not a vain thing for you, because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

48 And the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying,

49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession;

50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:

51 Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel, at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

52 Yet thou shalt see the land before thee, but thou shalt not go thither, unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

See on Num. 13:3, 16. e See on 6:6, 7, 11:18. 1 Chr. 22:19. Ez. 40:4. Luke 9:44. Heb. 2:1. 13:19. Lev. 18:5. Prov. 3:1. 2:18, 22. 4:22. Is. 45:19. Matt. 6:33. Rom. 10:5, 6. 1 Tim. 4:8. 6:6-8. 1 Pet. 3:10-12. 2 Pet. 1:3, 16. Rev. 22:14. e Num. 27:12, 13. f 34:1. See on Num. 33:47, 48. g 34:2-5. Is. 33:17. 2 Cor. 5:1. h Gen. 15:15. See on 25:18, 17. 49:33. Dan. 12:13. 1 Num. 20:25, 28. 30:38. k 3:23-27. Num. 20:11, 12, 24. 27:14. l 1, strife at Kadesh. Num. 33:14, 15. v See on Lev. 10:3. 1 Kings 15:21-25. 1 Pet. 4:17. m 49. 34:1-3. Num. 27:12. Heb. 11:13, 39.

cuse. (*Note, Rom. 1:18-20.*) Yea, every advantage, by which any of them are distinguished from others, increases their obligation and aggravates the guilt of transgression.—In our own case we should recollect that our favoured land, not less desirable in many respects than Canaan itself; the place of our abode, if peculiarly pleasant or suitable; our temporal provision, and the abundance which many possess, with a variety of other advantages national and personal; are as much the special gift and appointment of God to us, as the land of promise was to Israel, and as really demand our gratitude and cheerful obedience.—We too, as well as they are singularly favoured with the light of revelation and the ordinances of true religion, and are professedly the Lord's people. We hear continually of a redemption far more precious than that of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and are invited to partake its inestimable blessings: but unless we are "redeemed from all iniquity, and purified to the Redeemer as a peculiar people, zealous of good works," all our privileges will only increase our condemnation.—And alas! the dark and deep stains of every atrocious wickedness, which mark our national character, are not "the spots of God's children," but demonstrate that in general we are Christians only in name; and comparing our mercies with our conduct, it may well be said to us, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?"—Indeed he found us all dead in sin, and slaves to Satan, and basely in love with our chains; and even when "warned to flee from the wrath to come," and invited to liberty and felicity, we were disposed to cleave to the world and shrink from the difficulties and perils of a godly life. But his Spirit quickened our souls, stirred us up from the dust, sweetly and powerfully showed us our danger and our refuge, gave us effectual assistance, and led us in paths which we had not before known. Thus we became the redeemed servants of God, "his portion and the lot of his inheritance;" yea, his beloved children and heirs of eternal glory; and were favoured with holy consolations and earnestness of heavenly felicity. Yet, alas! how often have we all merited the reproach of ingratitude and folly! How frequently have we "grieved his Holy Spirit," even if we have been kept from dishonouring his name! How often have we moved him to jealousy by our inordinate attachment to earthly objects! How many times have we provoked him to hide his face from us, and to chasten us for our sins, "that we might not be condemned with the world!" In short how much reason do we find on the retrospect, to humble ourselves before God, and to plead with him for his mercy's sake, to pardon our sins, to renew our souls, and "to establish our goings in his ways, that our footsteps slip not!"

V. 15-35. It is a striking proof of human depravity, that prosperity almost always increases pride and ungodliness, as well as luxury and sensuality. Our national riches and successes have manifestly produced this hateful effect: like "Jeshurun, we have grown fat and kicked;" and the most daring infidelity, impiety, and profligacy, which abound on every side, prove that we have forsaken God, and provoked him to jealousy, even as the Israelites did by their multiplied idolatries and enormous crimes. Indeed it is an observation, which every reflecting man has had occasion to make, that many who in adversity or low circumstances behaved well, and seemed favourable to religion, when *became prosperous* and wealthy grow insolent, and profane, and seem to say unto

heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

6 ¶ Let "Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few.

7 ¶ And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient

n Gen. 49:3,4. Num. 32:31-32. Josh. 22:1-9. o Gen. 49:8-12. Judg. 1:1, &c. Ps. 78:68,70. Mic. 5:2,3. Mal. 3:1. Heb. 7:14. p 2 Sam. 3:1, 5:1, 19:24. 1 Chr. 12:22. 2 Chr. 17:12-19. Is. 9:7. Rev. 19:13-16. q 2 Sam. 7:9-11, 12. Ps. 2, 20:2, 21:1, 8. 110:1,2. Luke 19:27. 1 Cor. 15:25. Rev. 20:10-15. r Ex. 28:30,36. Lev.

scenes, which would be much better conceived by the Israelites than they can be by us. When JEHOVAH came down, to manifest his glory, and promulgate his law, from mount Sinai, either the splendour of his majesty illuminated the distant mountains of Seir and Paran; or his approach was preceded by some glorious appearances from those mountains, as the rising sun is ushered in by the light of the dawning day: or, as some think, the words relate to the continued and glorious presence of God with Israel, while they were in the desert, near to those mountains. (Notes, Ps. 68:7,8. Hab. 3:3-5.) At mount Sinai, however, he was attended by "ten thousands of saints," or holy ones, or holy angels; who ministered to him in that grand display of his divine majesty. (Notes, Ex. 19:16-20. Ps. 68:17. Gal. 3:19-22. Heb. 2:1-4. Jude 14-16.) Thence he gave the law, not only speaking it with a loud voice from the midst of the fire, but writing it upon tables of stone, which he delivered to Israel as a sacred deposit; and he enforced obedience to it with his whole power and authority; for it "went from his right hand for them." It is called a *fiery law*, not only as delivered from the midst of fire, but because of the *fiery indignation* to which all transgressors are doomed, except as they find mercy through the gospel. Its sanctifying effects also, when written in the hearts of believers by the finger of the Spirit, where, as fire, it consumes the lusts, purifies the affections, and assimilates the soul to its own holy nature, may perhaps be intimated.

V. 3. Even the promulgation of this fiery law was the effect of the Lord's special love to Israel; and in connexion with the gospel, as delivered to them under the legal ceremonies, (the shadows of good things to come,) it was the grand means of rendering them holy, and consequently safe and happy. (Notes, Ex. 20:1. John 1:17.)—As externally a holy people, they were taken under his immediate protection, while they "sat at his feet;" and received his instructions; even as all his true saints are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Pet. 1:3-5.)

V. 4, 5. The law was given from God, and by Moses; who was also the mediator of that covenant, by which the congregation of Jacob's posterity was incorporated, and which secured to them their temporal inheritance, while they retained their national fidelity. Yet the law itself, as comprising the whole revelation made to them, was their most valuable inheritance; as it showed them the way of peace and life eternal, and ensured these blessings to all who truly attended to it.—In giving the law, Moses acted as a prophet: but he was also in reality "a king;" for he possessed all the authority, and performed all the functions of a king; though he neither took upon him the name or the state of royalty, nor received any tribute from Israel; and though he joined with him the heads of the people, and of the tribes, both as his council, and as subordinate magistrates. (Note, 18:15-19.)—Some suppose, that JEHOVAH himself is here meant; and doubtless he was King over Israel in all ages, and in an especial manner, whoever were his deputies: for in this sense, the judges were kings, as really as David and Solomon, though not so called.

V. 6. The order in which the tribes are here blessed, is different from all those elsewhere observed.—Reuben the first-born, though degraded by Jacob, and superseded by Judah as to the precedence in the encampments, is here first mentioned. (Note, Gen. 49:3,4.) Notwithstanding these disgraces, and the rebellion in the wilderness, under Dathan, Abiram, and On, in which many of this tribe perished, Moses predicted that it should not be destroyed, but should be multiplied to a great number; by which he also expressed his cordial good-will to them, notwithstanding their personal misconduct towards him. As the Reubenites, having received their inheritance east of Jordan, were preparing to pass over Jordan, and fight for their brethren, we may also suppose that some reference is had to this circumstance, and that the blessing implies a prayer for their protection.—The Septuagint join Simeon with Reuben in this benediction: but it is probable, that they did so merely because Simeon is not mentioned in the chapter. (Note, 8.)

V. 7. (Note, Gen. 49:8-12.) Judah was the governing and conquering tribe; and Moses prayed that he might be protected and rendered victorious, when he went forth to battle, and be brought back triumphant to his people; and that the tribe might have sufficient forces from among themselves, and from the other tribes; and especially the help of the LORD OF HOSTS himself. This was evidently a prophecy which was fulfilled to Judah till the days of Christ, and in him shall be accomplished to the end.—Some commentators

for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

9 Who said unto his father and to his mother,

9:8. Num. 27:21. 1 Sam. 28:6. Ezra 2:63. Neh. 7:85. s Lev. 21:7. Num. 16:5. 2 Chr. 23:6. Ezra 8:23. Ps. 16:10, 106:16. Heb. 7:26. Rev. 3:7. t 2:3,16. Ex. 17:7. Num. 20:13. Ps. 91:7. u Ex. 32:26-29. Lev. 10:6, 21:11. Mal. 2:5. Ma'c. 10:37. 12:48. 22:16. Luke 14:26. 2 Cor. 5:16. Gal. 1:10. 1 Thes. 2:4. 1 Tim. 5:21.

interpret the clause, "bring him to his people," as predicting the coming of the Messiah. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8. (Note, Gen. 49:5-7.)—Levi and Simeon had been left under a severe rebuke by Jacob; and the tribe of Simeon had in nowise distinguished itself; on the contrary, it had been notoriously guilty in the transgression of Baal-peor, and was greatly reduced in the wilderness. (Notes, Num. 25:6-8. 26:14.) A portion therefore was assigned it within the lot of Judah, with which it was in great measure incorporated; and perhaps for that reason, it was not separately mentioned in this prophecy. (Note, Josh. 19:1-9.)—But the curse of Levi had been turned into a blessing, on account of the transactions here referred to. Levi was the dying prophet's own tribe; but he only mentioned it as the tribe which the Lord had chosen for himself; and, as the welfare of Israel was so immediately connected with the Levitical priesthood, he expatiated the more in his benediction and prophecy concerning it. The Urim and Thummim, or illuminations and perfections, (Note, Ex. 28:30.) by which the high-priest inquired of the Lord, formed one distinguishing token of his favour to this tribe; and Moses prophetically prayed for the continuance of these to the succeeding high-priests, during many generations; which implied also the continuance of all needful gifts and graces to every order of that tribe, that they might fill up their several places, to the glory of God, and the maintenance of true religion in Israel.—It is however confessed by the Jews, that the "Urim and Thummim" were lost in the Babylonish captivity, and that nothing was substituted in their room: but in our "Holy One," our great High-Priest, whom Aaron and his sons feebly shadowed forth, the things signified remain, and from him are communicated to all his true ministers and people, according to their measure. (Notes, Eph. 4:7-13.)—There were two *Miribahs*, one of which is also called *Massah*, where probably Aaron and the Levites remarkably distinguished themselves, in opposing the murmurs of the people. (Marg. Ref. t.) At the other Meribah Aaron was found faulty: (Note, Num. 20:10-13.) yet there is a tradition that the tribe of Levi approved themselves faithful. The prophet, however, in this passage, seems to have referred to some remarkable instances not elsewhere recorded, in which the Levites were tried, and honourably distinguished themselves in the cause of God.

V. 9. In the provocation of the golden calf, the Levites, at God's command, inflicted punishment on the ringleaders, without respect to rank or relation, and in a very zealous and impartial manner. (Note, Ex. 32:27-29.) Perhaps some of their own tribe and near relations were deeply involved in that guilt, whom they no more spared than other criminals; and though men might censure this severity, yet God highly approved of it, and honoured those who so honoured him. (Notes, Num. 25:6-13. Luke 14:25-27. 2 Cor. 5:16.)

V. 10. Besides offering sacrifices, officiating at the sanctuary, and acting as magistrates, the priests and Levites were the authorized public teachers, through the cities and villages in the several tribes of Israel. Too many of them, however, in after ages, were more attentive to their perquisites than to their duty; (as it is generally the case in similar collective bodies;) and the ignorance and wickedness of the people were frequently chargeable upon their negligence and scandalous lives; so that the prophets were extraordinary messengers sent from God, especially to reprove the priests and Levites, and stir them up to their duty.—Some learned men indeed think, that the prophets were the only teachers of Israel; and that, publicly instructing the people was no regular part of the office assigned to the priests or Levites, except as some of them acted as magistrates. But the preceding statement accords far better with the language of Scripture, here and elsewhere. (Marg. reading and Marg. Ref. on it. Note, 2 Chr. 17:7-9. 30:21,22. Ezra 7:6-10. Neh. 8:5-7. Mal. 2:4-9.)

V. 11. The Levites had no landed inheritance, but were maintained out of the portion which God had reserved for himself; by which their interests were connected with the support of his worship. On this provision Moses predicted a special blessing from God. Some indeed interpret this clause, of their *abilities for their sacred ministry*, that the Lord would both enable them for their work, and prosper them in it.—The faithful discharge of their office might give offence, and so raise up enemies against them; while avarice would prompt numbers to defraud them, or even to seek the abolition of the whole order, as useless, that they might seize upon the revenues: but vengeance was prophetically denounced against all who should hate them, or rise up against them, on any account whatever; as enemies to God and religion,

I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10 They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt-sacrifice upon thine altar.

11 Bless, LORD, this substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

12 And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

14 And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon,

15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof; and for the good-will of him that dwelt in the bush; let the blessing come

upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

17 His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

[Practical Observations.]

18 And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents.

19 They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

20 And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and tear-eth the arm with the crown of the head.

21 And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments with Israel.

22 And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan.

23 And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD; possess thou the west and the south.

* Or, let them teach. 17:9-11. 24:8. Lev. 10:11. 2 Chr. 17:8-10. 30:22. Neh. 6:13-15. 18. Ez. 41:23. Jer. 4:6. Mal. 2:6-8. Matt. 23:23. John 1:15-19. † Or, let them put. Ez. 30:7-8. Num. 16:40-46. 1 Sam. 2:28. 2 Chr. 26:18. Luke 1:9-10. Heb. 7:25. 9:24. Rev. 8:3-5. * Heb. at thy nose. x Lev. 19:13, 17. 12:13. Ps. 51:19. Ez. 43:27. y 18:1-5. Num. 18:8-20. 35:2-8. z 2 Sam. 24:23. Ps. 20:3. Ez. 20:40-41. 43:27. Mal. 3:1. 1. Is. 99:21. Jer. 15:10. Am. 5:10. Mat. 10:14-15. Luke 10:10-12. 16. 1 The. 4:8. b See on 27. 29. Josh. 13:11-24. Judg. 1:21. 1 Kings 12:21. 2 Chr. 11:1. 15:2. 17:12-19. Ps. 132:14. 137:22-25. c Ps. 91:4. Is. 51:16. Matt. 23:37. d See on Gen. 48:5. 15:13-20. 49:22-26. e 32:2. Gen. 27:28-29. Job 29:19. Ps. 110:3. Prov. 3:20. 19:12. 1 Is. 4. Hec. 14:5. Mic. 5:7. Zech. 8:12. z 28. Is. Lev. 26:24. 2 Sam. 23:4. Ps. 65:9-13. 71:16. 84:11. Num. 4:5. Matt. 5:45. Acts 14:17. 1 Tim. 6:17. y Heb. thrust forth. i Heb. moons. Ps. 8:3. 104:19. Rev. 22:2. z Gen. 49:36.

and even to the true interests of the nation. (Note, Mal. 3:7-12.)

V. 12. (Note, Gen. 49:27.) The tribe of Benjamin had their inheritance adjoining to mount Zion; and part of Jerusalem, and as some suppose, the temple itself, was situated within it. This was a distinguishing token of the Lord's love to them: the sanctuary was their security while they adhered to it; for they were covered by the protection of the Lord continually, and had his power engaged in their behalf.—This tribe adhered to the family of David and the worship of God, when the ten tribes revolted and apostatized; and thus it became inseparably united and incorporated with that of Judah; and was preserved in consequence, when the ten tribes were scattered among the nations. (Marg. Ref. b.)

V. 13-16. It is here predicted, that the inheritance of the tribes descended from Joseph, should, through the blessing of God, be peculiarly fertile. By the seasonable rains and refreshing dews,—those precious things which come down from above and make the earth fruitful,—and by the springs which issue from beneath, and the benign influences of the sun, all kinds of valuable productions, peculiar to each revolving moon in succession, would be abundantly afforded. The mountains and hills of Joseph would grow vines, and olives, and timber-trees; and from beneath would be dug metals and minerals, and stone for building. In short, their land should abound with every precious production, that the earth and its fulness can afford; all which, with a variety of spiritual privileges, would descend upon these tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, from the good-will and peculiar kindness of JEHOVAH.—The first appearance of the Lord in the burning bush, seems to have been recollected with grateful pleasure by the dying prophet; and he characterized Him, who would thus bless the sons of Joseph, from this circumstance, that he condescended, as “the God of Abraham” and of his seed, to dwell in a mean bush; and had now taken up his more abiding residence in the midst of Israel, who was equally unworthy of such an honour; but would in like manner be preserved by his gracious presence. (Notes, Ez. 32-6.)—Joseph had been especially beloved by Jacob; he was renowned for piety, wisdom, and usefulness; his memory was dear to Israel and to Moses. On these accounts Moses enlarged in blessing his posterity, which evidently refers to the prophetic blessing Jacob had pronounced on him, under the same title of “him that was separated from his brethren.” (Note, Gen. 49:22-25.)

V. 17. Joseph, as if he had been the first-born, had the birthright and the double portion, instead of Reuben; and Joshua, under whom Canaan was conquered, was of the tribe of Ephraim. Many proofs were given by these tribes of their courage, and they were signalized with much success, being powerful among their brethren and victorious over their enemies. This is figuratively noted by Joseph's being as “the firstling of his bullock, and his horns being as the horns of unicorns, with which he should push the people together to the ends of the earth,” or to the extremities of the land. The

descendants of Joseph were also remarkable for their numbers; but in both respects Ephraim exceeded Manasseh, as Jacob had foretold, and Moses here attested; though Ephraim was much decreased in the wilderness, and was then less numerous than Manasseh. (Marg. Ref. on Num. 26:34, 37. Notes, Gen. 48:15-22.)

V. 18, 19. Zebulun and Issachar, sons of Leah, were united in this blessing, and their inheritances in Canaan, as appointed by lot, lay together. (Notes, Josh. 19:10-23.) It was predicted that Zebulun would prosper, and consequently “rejoice in his going out,” that is, say some, as a merchant; “for he was a haven of ships.” (Notes, Gen. 49:13-15.) Thus “he sucked the abundance of the seas and of the treasures hid in the sand,” that is, he reaped, as it were, the harvest of the sea, or worked its mines. In this case, we may understand his “calling the people to the mountain,” of the endeavours which those of this tribe would use, in bringing the strangers, with whom they traded, acquainted with true religion.—But, as the Zebulunites were situated at a distance from the Mediterranean sea, and upon the sea of Tiberias; perhaps their fishery was intended, and not their foreign trade: and in this way, the sea yields a revenue more valuable than the productions of mines of gold, and almost equal to the harvest of the plain.—Of Issachar it is foretold, that he should prosper, and “rejoice in his tents,” as a shepherd tending his flock. And both Zebulun and Issachar would be zealous for the ordinances of God, and in “offering the sacrifices of righteousness” out of their just gains; and would use their influence in persuading others to accompany them to the mountain at Jerusalem, on which Moses foresaw that the temple would be built, but which lay very distant from the lot of these tribes, which was in Galilee.

V. 20, 21. (Note, Gen. 49:19.) The increase of Gad is here predicted, as the immediate work of the Lord, and to be acknowledged with adoring gratitude. When this tribe, in conjunction with Reuben, obtained his petition for a possession east of Jordan, of the first-fruits of Israel's conquests, “he provided the first part for himself, and was seated in a portion of the lawgiver,” that is, in the portion which Moses the lawgiver had allotted him: (Notes, Num. 32:29-41.) for most of the tribes had their inheritance assigned them by Joshua and Eleazar: in this he dwelt as a lion; and when any of the surrounding nations attacked him, he not only tore their army, enfeebling their power, but their head too in bringing them under subjection. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 5:18-22. 12:15.)—After the Gadites were established in their own settlements, they, and the tribe of Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh, marched boldly across Jordan along with the rest of Israel, to assist in executing the righteous judgments of God on the Canaanites. (Notes, Josh. 1:12-15. 22:1-4.)

V. 22. (Note, Gen. 49:16, 17.) Jacob had compared Dan to a serpent, but Moses likened him to a young lion, when leaping from Bashan he irresistibly seized his prey. In Samson, who was of this tribe, both these emblems were realized: and when the Danites suddenly seized the city at the

24 ¶ And of Asher he said, *Let Asher be blessed with children; ¶ let him be acceptable to his brethren, and ¶ let him dip his foot in oil.*

25 *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.*

26 ¶ *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who ¶ rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.*

27 The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall

thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them.

28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: ¶ the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heaven shall drop down dew.

29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy help, and who is the Sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

etien. 49:20. Is 115:15, 128:3, 6. d Prov. 3:3, 4. Ec. 12:10. Acts 7:10. Rom. 14:18. 15:3. e Job 29:6. * Or, under thy shoes shall be iron. S. 9. Luke 15: 12. Eph. 6:15. f 2 hr. 18:9. Ps. 133:3. Is. 40:29. 41:10. 1 Cor. 10:13. 2 Cor. 12:9, 10. Eph. 6:10. Phil. 4:13. Col. 1:11. g Ex. 15:11. Ps. 66:8. Is. 40:18, 25. 43:11—13. Jer. 1:6. h See on Gen. 24:15. 1 Ps. 15:10. 88:4, 33:34, 104:3. Is. 19:1. (Hab. 3:8. k Sam. 15:29. Ps. 90:2. 102:24. Is. 9:6. 57:13. Jer. 10:10. Mic. 5:2. 1 Tim. 1:17. Heb. 9:14. l Ps. 18:2. 27:5. 36:7. 46:1, 7, 11. 49:3. 91:1, 2, 9, 15. Prov. 18:10. Is. 32:2. Luke 13:34. Phil. 3:9. m Gen. 49:24. Prov. 10:23. Cant.

2:6. Is. 26:4. 1 Pet. 1:5. Jude 24. n See on 9:3. John 10:28, 29. Rom. 8:2. 16: 20. Rev. 20:2, 3, 10. o Ex. 33:16. Num. 23:1. Jer. 23:6. 33:16. Ez. 34:25. Rev. 21:27. 22:14, 15. p 8:7. Ps. 66:26. Prov. 5:15—18. Is. 48:1. q See on 13:11. 11. 32:2. Gen. 27:28. r 4:7, 8. Num. 23:20—24. 24:5. 2 Sam. 7:23. Ps. 33:12. 144:15. 146:5. s Is. 12:2. 45:17. 1 Tim. 4:10. t Gen. 15:1. Is. 84:11. 115:9. 11. u Jude. 7:20. Ps. 7:12. 45:3. Is. 27:1. 34:5, 6. Jer. 12:12. 47:6. Rev. 1:6. 19:21. † Or, subdued. Ps. 18:44. 66:3. 81:15. margins. x 32:13. Josh. 10:24. 25. Hab. 3:19.

northern extremity of Canaan, they were like the young lion leaping on the defenceless cattle. (Judg. 15: 16: 18.)

V. 23. (Note, Gen. 49:21.) Great peace and prosperity, from the special favour of the Lord, were predicted to Naphtali: and it is a tradition of the Jewish writers, that though the lot of this tribe lay in the northern part of the land, yet it was so remarkably fruitful, that they generally brought the first-fruits before the other tribes.—The lot of Naphtali lay to the south of that country on which Dan seized; and near to the sea of Tiberias: ("possess thou the sea and the south:" Heb.) for the situation of this tribe in relation to the Danites seems intended.

V. 24, 25. (Note, Gen. 49:20.) Asher signifies blessed: and to this tribe Moses predicted a numerous increase, with much love and friendship from their brethren; and likewise most excellent olive-oil in vast abundance.—Some suppose that the promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass," referred to the productive mines of iron and brass, which abounded in Asher's lot, and were thus continually under his feet; but it has long been interpreted as a proverbial expression; which indeed is the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. If a man were about to travel in rough roads, or to climb craggy precipices, or to be stationed upon a slippery eminence, it would be useful for him to have plates or spikes, of iron or brass fixed to his shoes: and, in like manner, the Lord would prepare Asher for every difficulty which he would have to encounter. According to this interpretation, the words, "And as thy days, thy strength," are explanatory of the preceding clause, and signify, that as the day of trial required, strength should be communicated; or, as some expound the passage, "As thy wants, so shall be thy sufficiency." (Note, Eph. 6:14—17.)

V. 26. Moses added to this prophetic blessing on each tribe in particular, a declaration of the glory of God and the happiness of Israel in general, and these were his last words which are recorded.—The "God of Jeshurun" (Note, 32:15.) "rides upon the heavens;" that is, he comes in glorious majesty, and with irresistible force, to defend his people, and destroy their enemies; and in so doing displays all his excellencies, his wisdom, justice, truth, and love, in the most conspicuous manner. (Notes, Ps. 104:3. Is. 19:1.)

V. 27, 28. The eternity, immutability, and almighty power of God, form the secure Refuge and the firm support of his people in all dangers, pressures, and difficulties: for his arms of everlasting and unfailing power are put under them to sustain them. (Note, 32:4.) The word rendered "Refuge," literally signifies Dwelling-place, for God is their Home, Rest, and Felicity. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ps. 90:1, 2. John 6:52—58.) This would secure to Israel the conquest of Canaan, and enable them to execute the divine command in the destruction of its inhabitants: and it would likewise ensure their peaceable and prosperous possession, so long as they were obedient, and did not forfeit their national covenant.—Alone: (28) Note, Num. 23:9.

V. 29. Israel, being thus saved by the Lord, and rendered victorious by his power, as their Shield and Sword, would become terrible to their enemies; who would be constrained to dissemble their enmity, and yield a feigned or reluctant submission, as the Gibeonites did to Joshua. Thus Israel would be a most happy nation, and have most extraordinary privileges.—But the true "Israel of God" possess all these blessings in the noblest sense, and have them secured to them by still more precious promises, and an incomparably better covenant. (Notes, Ps. 84:11, 12. Rom. 8:28—39. Heb. 11: 13—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7. The faithful servants of God dare not flatter men in their sins, or shun to declare his whole counsel as far as they are able, even when that renders it necessary to denounce the most tremendous curses against all impotent sinners; but at the same time, their hearts are full of the most compassionate and tender love; and could those whom their faithfulness exasperates, witness their affectionate desires and fervent prayers in secret for them, it must in some degree abate their resentment. (Note, Jer. 13:15—17.) Nay, even the awful warnings, which are most convincing and alarming to the conscience, spring from tender concern for the eternal welfare of sinners; and they who are hated for giving them, com-

monly live and die praying earnestly, that all the blessings of the new covenant may be communicated to their enraged persecutors. (Acts 7:51—60.)—Though the divine law is "holy, just, and good;" yet when fully explained and enforced, and when applied by the Holy Spirit, it is still "a fiery law;" and sometimes occasions terrors, as great, and at last as well grounded, as those which appalled Israel, when they heard it from the midst of the fire upon mount Sinai. (Note, Heb. 12:18—21.) How intolerable then is the thought of being compelled to meet the Judge, at the consummation of all things, to receive the eternal sentence according to it!—Yet this "fiery law" is most useful to show us our need of a Saviour, and the nature, glory, and preciousness of his salvation: and when delivered to us by Jesus Christ, and written in our hearts by his Spirit, it peculiarly evidences the Lord's love to us, and directs us how to express our love to him. They, who have thus received the law from the hands of the Saviour, are "his saints;" who, "being justified by faith, have peace with God through him;" and, secure under his protection, they sit down at his feet daily to derive further instruction from his words, acknowledging him as their King, and yielding him prompt and willing obedience.—The blessings with which the Lord blesses this "church of the first born," are suited to each person's case, and are sufficient for them in every situation: and whilst every one properly fills his appointed place, all become blessings to others and receive benefit from them; whether appointed to the magistracy or ministry, or in a more private situation; and whether intrusted with wealth, or called upon to labour for bread, or even when, incapable of labour, to subsist upon charity.

V. 8—17. They who are employed in the sacred ministry, should be tried persons, approved of God, possessed of enlightened understandings, sound judgments, and upright hearts; that, being filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to souls, they may not respect the persons of men, nor fear their frowns. They should be entirely superior to the allurement of covetousness and ambition, and even to an undue bias of natural affection; not desiring the advancement or affluence of their brethren or children. For their most important employment consists in teaching men the truths, precepts, and ordinances of God, with all faithfulness and diligence, that they may observe his word and keep his covenant. They should therefore give themselves wholly to the study of the Scriptures; and pour out their fervent prayers to the Lord, to increase their ability, and to prosper the work of their hands; and leave it to him to provide for them and for their families after them, as well as to defend them and plead their cause against all who rise up against them. It is also the duty of all to pray for the ministers of the Lord; that he would both give his abundant blessing on those who are faithful and able, and communicate wisdom and grace to all who bear the sacred office, that they may be rendered blessings to the people; and also perpetuate a succession of such ministers to future generations, and send forth skilful, faithful, and successful labourers into every part of the earth.—To be situated near the lively ordinances is a precious gift from the Lord to his beloved: and they, who value and improve this privilege, will find their situation so secure and comfortable, that they will not be induced to change it for any temporal convenience, emolument, or indulgence.—We should thankfully receive from the blessing of the Lord, those valuable productions, which the fruitful earth yields through the successive seasons of the year, by the genial influences of the heavens above. But those good gifts which come down from "the Father of lights," through the "rising of the Sun of righteousness," and the pouring out of his Spirit, are infinitely more precious: and these belong to all who are separated from others by faith and holiness. For he, who once deigned to dwell in the bush, still dwells in all his people, to sanctify and preserve them: and thus "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

V. 18—29. Happy are they who, through the blessing of God on any honest occupation, are enabled to maintain their families, and have a heart to consecrate their gain unto the Lord; who shrink not from labour, and freely incur expense, in offering "spiritual sacrifices of righteousness, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ;" and who zealously improve every opportunity and advantage to bring others to join with

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Moses ascends mnt. Nebo, and views the promised land, 1-4. His death, burial, and age, and Israel's mourning for him, 5-8. Joshua succeeds him, 9. No prophet arises like to him, 10-12.

AND Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho: and the LORD showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan,

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,

3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.

4 And the LORD said unto him, "This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither."

*a See on 32:49. Num. 27:12, 33:47. * Or, the hill. See on Num. 21:20. marg. b 4. 3:27. Num. 32:35-40. Ez. 40:2. Rev. 21:10. c Gen. 14:14. Josh. 19:47. Jude. 18:29. d 11:24. Ez. 28:31. Num. 34:8. Josh. 15:12. e Judg. 1:16. 3:13. 2 Chr. 28:15. f Gen. 14:24. 19:32. Num. 34:3. g Gen. 12:7. 13:15. 15:18-21. 26:3. 28:13. 1's. 103:9-11. h 3:27. 32:52. Num. 20:12. John 1:17. 1 Josh. 1:1. Mal. 4:4. John 8:35, 36. 2 Tim. 2:21. Heb. 3:3-6. 2 Pet. 1:1. Rev. 15:3. k 1:1.*

them in so reasonable a service. Having chosen and secured, through the grace of God, "the first part for themselves," even "that good part which shall never be taken from them," (*Note, Luke 10:38-41.*) what can they do so becoming and profitable, as to assist their neighbours in seeking the same inheritance?—But in thus decidedly joining with the Lord against his enemies, they must expect opposition, and they will need to unite the boldness of the lion, the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove in their character and conduct. Being "satisfied, however, with the favour of the Lord, and filled with his blessing," and "being acceptable to their brethren," and useful to their fellow-sinners, they may well bear this trial. For all difficulties are rendered advantageous to true believers: and if their way be rough, their "feet shall be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and their strength in every case proportioned to the emergency. (*Note, 2 Cor. 12:7-10.*)—No words can express the glorious excellencies of "the God of Jeshurun," or the privileges and felicity of his believing people. The righteousness in which they are justified is everlasting, and their salvation is secure. Being one with Christ by his life-giving Spirit, they are already "saved in the LORD," "the eternal God is their" present "Refuge," his everlasting arms form their unfailing support; all his perfections are engaged in their behalf; he will hasten to their assistance with invincible force whenever their enemies assault them; and silence all the accusations of their malicious slanderers: (*Note, Is. 54:15-17.*) he will guard their peace and character, as well as the life of their souls; he "will choose their inheritance" for them, and put them in possession of it; and there shall they dwell alone, (28) when their inward foes shall all be slain, and the devil and his angels driven away into everlasting punishment. There shall they be filled with the love of their God and Saviour, and be perfected in love to him and to each other, and all their employment shall be praise and grateful adoration. There will the felicity of every happy inhabitant reciprocally enhance that of all the rest; nor shall any emulation remain, but which shall most love and glorify the supreme Object of their united affections and adoration, and the Source of all their joys.—God help us to seek, and set our affections on those things which are above, and to detach our souls from earthly, polluted, perishing objects; that we may not have our lot in the regions of darkness and despair, but with "the Israel of God" in the realms of love and bliss ineffable.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1-4. The last chapter closed the words and writings of Moses, and this chapter must have been added by another hand: but it is uncertain whether by Joshua, or by Samuel, or by some other prophet. Some indeed maintain, that Moses himself wrote it, by the Spirit of prophecy. This however is not at all probable: but by whomsoever it was written, the information must have been originally communicated by immediate revelation. Perhaps the three last verses were added as late as the days of Ezra: but all the subsequent books of Scripture assume as undoubted facts the things recorded in it.—Moses appeared reluctant to leave his work; but that being finished, he manifested no unwillingness to die. He now acquiesced in the will of God who refused him an entrance into Canaan: (*Note, 32:3-28.*) he was animated with the immediate prospect of glory, which loosened all earthly attachments, and supplied him with strength and spirits to ascend the mountain, where he was to put off the tabernacle of his body; and it seems probable that he went alone, and died without a witness, or a companion to close his eyes.—*Abarim* is supposed to be a ridge of mountains, *Nebo* the highest mountain in that ridge, and *Pisgah* the summit of that mountain.—The vision of Moses was miraculously assisted, in taking a distinct and deliberate survey of the promised land, as it was afterwards divided among the tribes of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*) This would gratify his endeared affection for the people: and it

5 'So Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD,

6 And he buried him in a valley, in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7 And Moses was man hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

9 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the Spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

14. 39:50. Josh. 1:1, 2. 1 Jude 9. m 31:2. Acts 7:23, 30, 36. n Gen. 27:1. 48:10. Josh. 14:10, 11. 1 Heb. moisture fed. o Gen. 50:3, 10. Num. 20:21. 1 Sam. 25:1. Is. 57:1. Acts 8:2. p Ex. 31:3. Num. 11:17. 1 Kings 3:9, 12. 2 Kings 2:9, 15. Is. 11:2. 1'an. 6:3. John 3:34. Col. 2:3. q Num. 27:18-23. Acts 6:8. 8:17-19. 1 Tim. 4:14. 5:22. r Josh. 1:16-18.

was also a type of those prospects of the heavenly rest, which reconcile the believer to dissolution.

V. 5. "Moses, the servant of the LORD," was obedient unto death, and as willingly obeyed this as he had any foregoing command, though it seemed much harder.—In this he resembled Jesus Christ: but Moses died in honour, in peace, and in the most easy manner; our Saviour expired on the ignominious and torturing cross!

V. 6. The bones of Joseph were carried into Canaan to be interred: but the Lord himself, (the immediate antecedent to the pronoun *he*), buried the body of Moses, and so concealed it, that when this account was written no man knew of his sepulchre; and we have reason to conclude it was never afterwards found. The ministrations of angels was probably employed, but no human assistance; and we may be sure nothing was placed that could lead to a discovery. (*Note, Jude 9, 10.*) No doubt this precaution was used to prevent superstition and idolatry; as many ages afterwards the Israelites burnt incense to the brazen serpent which Moses made. (*Note, 2 Kings 18:4.*) But not being allowed to venerate the relics of their lawgiver, they seem never to have been guilty of that species of superstition which has so long disgraced the Christian church.—When Moses died, the Lord buried him; but when Christ died, he was raised from the dead: for the Mosaic dispensation was superseded by the Christian, but Christianity shall endure to the end of time.—Nothing can be conceived more directly opposite to Scripture, than the tradition, sanctioned by several ancient Christian writers, and apparently favoured by some moderns, that Moses did not die, but went to heaven alive, as Enoch and Elijah did. We should be very careful not to give any countenance to this method of opposing tradition, or vain reasonings, to the divine testimony; for it opens the door to every kind of skepticism.

V. 7. The life of Moses was remarkably divided into three periods, each consisting of forty years: during the first he sustained the rank of a courtier; during the second he was a shepherd in the wilderness; and during the third, he filled the important station of a lawgiver and "king in Jeshurun." (*Ex. 7:7. Num. 33:39. Acts 7:23, 30.*)—Though he lived so much longer than the most of his contemporaries, (*Ps. 90:10.*) he had experienced no failure in his faculties, but died, not by the course of nature, but according to the will of God, when his work was finished. Thus also Christ died in the vigour of life.—Some suppose that the shining of Moses's face continued to his death.

V. 8. The Israelites not only paid Moses the customary honour at his death, but seem to have been deeply sensible of their loss. And perhaps even those who formerly were refractory and rebellious, when he had opposed their sins, at this time sincerely lamented the loss of so faithful a friend.

V. 9. *Notes, Num. 27:18-21. Josh. 1:1-9.*

V. 10-12. Whether Joshua, or Samuel, or some later writer, inserted these words, they contain an acknowledgment, that the promise made to Moses had not at that time been accomplished. (*Note, 18:15-19.*) No prophet had arisen in all respects qualified and honoured of God as Moses had been, nor did any one arise until the coming of Christ: but he exceeded Moses as the Son does the servant; (*Note, Heb. 3:1-6.*) and not only was known of the Father face to face, but came forth from the bosom of the Father to reveal him, and his truth and salvation, to sinful men. Several even of the Jewish writers are sensible that this passage refers to the Messiah; for one of them writes thus:—"It cannot be but that a prophet shall at last arise like to Moses, or greater than he: for the King Messiah shall be as great or greater. Therefore these words are not to be expounded, as if there should never be such a prophet: but that in all the time of the following prophets, till the cessation of prophecy, none should arise like to Moses. But after that there shall be one like him, or rather greater than he." Doubtless this author writes

10 ¶ And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face;

11 In all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to

Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land;

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.

a 18:15-18. Acts 3:22,23. 7:37. t 4:5,5. Ex. 33:11. Num. 12:6-8.

u 4:34,7:19. Ps. 78:43-53. 105:26-33.

absurdly enough, in supposing the cessation of prophecy to take place before the coming of the principal Prophet. Yet his testimony serves to show that the ancient Scriptures naturally induced an expectation of a subsequent and more illustrious revelation, and a far more honourable person than any who had then appeared.—Another Jewish writer says, on the words of Isaiah, "He shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high;" (Is. 52:13.) that "the King Messiah shall be exalted above Abraham, extolled above Moses, and be very high above the angels of the ministry." Upon which Conradus Pellicanus thus glosses, and concludes his commentary, as I shall do mine, "What it is to be above the angels let the Jews explain; we can understand nothing by it, but the very Word of God, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, and without him nothing was made that was made:" viz. the Lord God of Hosts, to whom in perfect Unity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory for ever, Amen.' *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we must ere long be called into the eternal world, our wisdom and happiness consist in habitual readiness for that solemn event: and if we have experienced the salvation of God, we are prepared, and should be willing to depart whenever it pleases him.—To "stand with our loins girded," diligently doing our proper work, and waiting the summons of the Lord, will best ensure those views of heavenly rest, and those foretastes of joy, which gild the prospect, and cheer the heart of believers in passing that last gloomy vale. We need not be *anxious* about the presence of beloved relatives,

or the solace of the Lord's people or ministers in our dying moments: for should our departure be sudden, alone, or even among strangers, the love and presence of our God and Saviour will abundantly suffice. Still less should we be concerned where our bones are laid; as the burial of Christ has consecrated every spot where a believer is interred, and his omnipotent voice will at length raise us incorruptible. But we should fear leaving any occasion of sin to survivors: for the enmity and envy which follow the Lord's servants while they live, are frequently changed into superstitious regard for them after their decease; so that sometimes even their mistakes will then be espoused, and their failings imitated: and many eminent saints, now in glory, could they again revisit this lower world, would embrace that opportunity of burying, or burning, or expunging some passages out of writings that they have left behind, perhaps without intention of being made public; and which Satan has afterwards made use of as a handle against divine truth, far beside the intention of the writer, yet under the venerable sanction of his established reputation.—While respect is paid to the memory of the deceased, the living servants of God ought not to be undervalued: for, though in some respects inferior to their predecessors, God will qualify them for their work. His authority should therefore be honoured in them; and the measure of wisdom and holiness, which he has given them, esteemed and regarded. And as Jesus ever liveth to take care of his own cause, we need not mourn for the most eminent men, "as those who have no hope" that the loss will be made up, to the church of God.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

WE now enter on that portion of the Old Testament, which is commonly distinguished as *historical*. For though the books of Moses contain a large proportion of history, and are the only authentic records existing of those primeval ages; and though several of the prophetic books are in part historical; yet these having been denominated "the *law* and the *prophets*," from the grand peculiarities of each, the books before us may properly be called *historical*, by way of distinction.—From the death of Moses to that of Nehemiah, at least 1050 years intervened; indeed some genealogies in Nehemiah extend beyond that period: and of this succession of ages these books contain a connected and regular narrative, which is extremely interesting to the sober student, as well as edifying to every pious reader.—If we except some Phœnician fragments, filled with inconsistencies, and of doubtful authority; and a few traditions concerning the Egyptians and Assyrians, distorted by the most extravagant relations, and evidently replete with fables; there is scarcely any thing extant, which gives us the least information of what was transacted in any of the nations of the world, during by far the greater part of this period. For it does not yet appear, that any dependence can be placed on those narratives from the eastern world, which have lately been brought into Europe, and have excited considerable attention; and which some have so highly extolled, as to insinuate, not only that they render questionable other ancient histories hitherto of approved authority, but that their testimony ought to have some weight even in opposition to the records of the Scripture. Yet it is notorious, that they are so disfigured by fable or allusion, as to be scarcely intelligible; and that they relate events of the most extravagant and incredible antiquity. Leaving these, however, till fuller investigation has shown what credit they deserve: it is obvious to remark, that Herodotus, who used to be called the *father of history*, is supposed to have been contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, the latest writers of these scriptural records: and all that he collected, concerning times long preceding his own, is generally allowed to be of doubtful authority, and blended with much that is altogether fabulous. Yet the history on which we are entering, though *modern*, compared with that contained in the books of Moses, commences at least 1000 years before the days of this *father of history*! And (except as skeptics choose to confound well-attested public miracles, wrought by the almighty God, for the most important of all purposes, with the absurd and pernicious fables of pagan writers,) the whole narrative is exceedingly probable and rational, and accords with the known character and general conduct of mankind, in the various circumstances in which they are placed. It also agrees with the most sober traditions and detached fragments of antiquity; and serves to elucidate many obscure parts of profane history, and to decide many questions in respect of ancient chronology. It also coincides with the manners and customs of those eastern regions, in the remotest ages, as far as any accounts of them have come down to us.

Many learned men have endeavoured to elucidate Scripture by passages from pagan writers; and their labours have not been useless: yet, almost uniformly, one hesitation occurs to the reflecting reader on every case; namely, a doubt whether the pagan customs were not as ancient as the scriptural narration, which they were adduced to illustrate; or whether the scriptural history and institutions were not the real source, from which the pagan notions and customs were derived. It would be a very interesting employment, to inquire how far, on the other hand, ancient history, chronology, and even geography, and various things connected with these branches of learning, are indebted to the sacred volume. For though the records here transmitted to us, principally refer to a people in many respects far from considerable, and also unjustly despised in the world; yet they continually call the reader's attention to the most ancient transactions of all the surrounding nations: so that more satisfactory information is derived from the Scriptures concerning the Egyptians, the Phœnicians or Tyrians, the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and even the Medes and Persians, than from the writings of those persons who profess to give us the histories of those nations.

These considerations are suited to impress the mind of the reflecting reader with a high veneration for this part of the sacred Scripture, which beyond comparison is in all respects the most wonderful book in the world; but the nature and tendency of the history here given us should still more endear it to every real Christian. Not to anticipate the instructions which will be deduced from every chapter, it may in general be observed, that the whole is suited to make known to us the perfections and providence of God, in the most interesting and affecting manner, to show what is the real character of man; and to evince both the immense importance and excellency, and the genuine nature, of true religion.—Even amidst the events of history, types and prophecies are interposed, especially of the Redeemer, who is never wholly kept out of sight in any part of the sacred narratives. Public miracles, of the most extraordinary nature, challenging the investigation of the most virulent enemies, and wrought on purpose to confirm those messages from God, which were most offensive, either to idolatrous rulers, or a rebellious nation, are likewise here recorded. We are not expressly informed who was the writer of each book in this collection; but we have several intimations, that the *prophets*, or *seers*, of whom continual mention is made, were employed in this service. (1 Chr. 29:29. 2 Chr. 12:15. 20:34. 26:22.) It is indeed not improbable, that the contemporary prophets wrote the principal transactions of their own times, under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, by whom they were preserved from error and partiality, guided in selecting such facts as were most proper to be recorded, and instructed immediately where ordinary sources of information failed; and that subsequent prophets

under the same superintendence, gave the history its present form. Perhaps some parts of it were compiled from ancient records, as late as the times of Ezra, who was himself an inspired writer; and the rest revised by him and his assistants, with some short notes, elucidating the several parts of the narrative; and this may account for a few expressions, which seem to belong to later times than those of the events related, as well as for the references to some books then known, but not now extant.—Very little history, subsequent to the days of Ezra, is transmitted to us in Scripture, previous to that contained in the New Testament; and a few incidents or genealogies, which seem to pertain to a rather later period, might be added by the prophet Malachi. But the silence of the Old Testament, for substance the same as we now have it, was evidently settled in the time of Ezra, and has never

These books, however, were undoubtedly a part of the sacred Scriptures, to which our Lord and his apostles continually appealed, and which the Jews in general received as the oracles of God, and as given by inspiration from him.—And it is exceedingly worthy of notice, that the several parts of the Bible thus reciprocally attest each other, and presuppose the undoubted truth of the history which they record, and the divine authority of the doctrines and commandments delivered in them—so that, like the stones in a well-constructed arch, each supports and is supported by all the rest. In particular, the Psalms, the prophetic books, and every part of the New Testament, assume as acknowledged truth, that these historical records contain undoubted facts; and these several divisions of the sacred Volume often constitute an important comment on each other.

The books, on which we now enter, do not contain a complete political history of Israel, but merely a connected account of the most material events, or of such as were most suited to convey important instruction: and because transactions, which in the general estimate of mankind are considered as comparatively little, frequently inculcate the most salutary lessons of heavenly wisdom; these are often very fully recorded, while the more splendid concerns of courts and camps are passed over in silence, or but cursorily noticed.

The authority and value of this division of the sacred Scriptures being thus ascertained, a few additional remarks on the book of JOSHUA, with which it opens, may suffice.—In all the versions, as well as in the original, it is named from JOSHUA, either as the author, or as the principal subject: and it is probable he wrote the substance of it. (24:26.) The writer speaks of himself as a person concerned in the transactions which he relates: (5:1) and the mention of Rahab, as still living in Israel, implies that he was a contemporary. (6:25.) But some passages doubtless were added afterwards, perhaps by Phinehas, or rather by a subsequent prophet: (19:47. 24:29—33.) yet several things adduced as proofs that the book was written at a later period, by no means establish that conclusion.—Among the various passages in which the history contained in this book is attested by other sacred writers, the following may be selected: 1 Kings 16:34. 1 Chr. 2:7. Ps. 114:3—5. Acts 7:15. 13:19. Heb. 4:3. 11:30, 31. 13:5. Jam. 2:25, and at the same time it may be observed, that this book appeals to the books of Moses, as then extant; and marks repeatedly the fulfilment of the promises and predictions contained in them, or confirms them as undoubtedly to be accomplished. (1:8. 3:30—33. 11:15, 20, 23. 14:2—9. 20:2. 21:43—45. 22:1—9. 23:6—16. 24:2—10, 19, 20.)

The Pagan writers were in some measure acquainted with this history; and several of their fables are supposed to have been derived from it: especially the story of Phaeton driving the chariot of the sun for the space of one day, seems to have originated from the sun's staying his course for one day, at the word of Joshua; and it clearly shows, that a tradition prevailed of one day, in ancient times, having been wholly unlike all others, either before or after it.—It is probable that the Carthaginians were originally Phœnicians, or Canaanites, who fled from the victorious sword of Joshua, first to Tyre, whence they colonized to Africa.

This book does not contain any explicit prophecies, except as the warnings given to the people, to expect the completion of those delivered by Moses, may be considered as prophetic; or as the curse denounced on him that should rebuild Jericho was of that nature. (6:26.) But Joshua himself, his wars and victories, and the inheritance which he was appointed to assign to Israel, were typical pre-intimations of Christ and his conflicts and triumphs, and the rest reserved for all his true people.—This will be shown more fully as we proceed; and the wars which Joshua waged, and the devastations which he made, fully vindicated from the objections that have been made against them.

Expositors have generally computed, that about seventeen years passed between the death of Moses and that of Joshua; seven of which were spent in the conquest of Canaan, and ten in the peaceable possession of the land: but some learned men think that Joshua survived his victories twenty years, or nearly.—Every part of the book conveys useful instruction; but the exhortations, with which Joshua took his leave of the people just before his death, are peculiarly interesting and affecting.

The Lord confirms Joshua as the successor of Moses, 1, 2. He shows the extent of the promised land, and instructs and encourages Joshua, 3—9; who gives orders about passing over Jordan, 10, 11; and reminds the two tribes and a half of their engagement, 12—15. The people promise obedience, 16—18.

NOW after the death of Moses, the servant of the LORD, it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses's minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I have given to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place, that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the

land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of

a 12:6. See on Deut. 33:1. 34:5. Acts 13:36, 37. Rom. 1:1. Tit. 1:1. Jam. 1:1. Rev. 1:8. b Ex. 17:9—13. See on Num. 13:8, 16. Deut. 1:38. 31:3, 23. 34:9. Acts 7:45. Josue, c Ex. 24:13. Num. 11:28. 1 Kings 19:16. 2 Kings 3:11. 4:27—29. 5:23, 24. Matt. 20:26, 27. Luke 16:10. d See on a. 1. Is. 42:1. Heb. 3:5. 6. 7:23—27. e Num. 27:16—21. Deut. 3:28. 31:7. 34:9. Deut. 11:24. Tit. 1:2. e Gen. 15:18—21. Ex. 23:31. Num. 34:12—18. Deut. 1:7. 3:25. 11:24. 1 Chr. 3:9. 18:3. h Deut. 7:24. 20:1. Ps. 46:11. Rom. 8:31, 37. 19:17. 21:7. 27. Ex. 5:12. Deut. 31:23. Matt. 20:20. Acts 18:10. 2 Tim. 4:17. j See on Deut. 31:6

—8. Is. 41:10—16. 42:2—5. Heb. 13:5. k 7:9. 1 Sam. 4:9. 1 Kings 2:2. 1 Chr. 22:13. 23:10. 2 Chr. 32:7, 8. Ps. 27:14. Is. 35:3, 4. Dan. 10:19. Hag. 2:4. Zech. 8:9. 1 Cor. 16:13. Eph. 6:10. 2 Tim. 2:1. * Or, thou shalt cause this people to inherit. 1 Num. 34:17—29. n Gen. 28:3. a See on 1. 11:15. Num. 27:23. Deut. 31:7. o 1 Pet. 5:32. 12:32. 28:14. Prov. 4:27. 8:30. p 1 Pet. 29:8. 1 Kings 2:3. 1 Chr. 22:13. q Or, do wisely. 8. marg. q Deut. 6:6—9. 11:18, 19. 17:18, 19. 30:14. 31:11. Ps. 37:31. 40:10. 119:42, 43. Is. 59:21. Matt. 12:35. Eph. 4:29.

217—21.) These things were typically taught by the death of Moses, and the succession of Joshua.

V. 3, 4. Lebanon seems to have been the termination of an extensive prospect, which lay open to Joshua at this time.—In the days of David and Solomon the whole country contained in this grant, was possessed by Israel, or tributary to their kings: but in general, through sin, they came short of that prosperity which they might otherwise have enjoyed. (Notes, Ex. 23:31. 2 Sam. 8:3. 1 Kings 4:21.)

V. 5. Marg. Ref. Notes, Deut. 31:3—8. Heb. 13:5, 6.

V. 7. The successor of Moses, that eminent servant of God, the ruler over so numerous and untractable a people as Israel, and that people the worshippers of the true and living God; and the commander in so perilous an undertaking as the conquest of Canaan, would need great strength of grace and courage of faith: especially that he might persevere in the path of duty, unmoved by terrors, difficulties, or persuasions, and neither "turn to the right hand nor to the left;" not only observing the commandments of God himself, but impartially exerting his authority in enforcing them on all the people,

thy mouth; but 'thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; 'be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 ¶ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within 'three days 'ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.

12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

13 Remember 'the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.

14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren 'armed, all 'the mighty men of valour, and help them;

15 Until 'the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have

possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them; 'then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan, toward the sunrising.

16 And they answered Joshua, saying, 'All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go:

17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: 'only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.

18 Whosoever he be 'that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: 'only be strong, and of a good courage.

CHAPTER II.

Two spies, sent by Joshua, enter Jericho, and are concealed by Rahab, 1-6. She informs them of the terror which had seized the Canaanites, 8-11; and covenants with them, 12-21. They return, and make their report, 22-24.

AND Joshua the son of Nun 'sent out of 'Shittim two men, 'to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, 'even Jericho. And they went, and came into an 'harlot's house named Rahab, and 'lodged there.

2 And it was 'told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in 'lither to-night of the children of Israel, to search out the country.

3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, 'Bring forth the men that are come to

1 Sam. 2:23, 19:14. 11. 11:15, 97:90. Prov. 2:1-5, 3:1, Col. 3:18. 1 Tim. 4:14-15. 2 Sam. 1:1, 2:1. 12. 12:1-15. 13. 13:1-15. 14. 14:1-15. 15. 15:1-15. 16. 16:1-15. 17. 17:1-15. 18. 18:1-15. 19. 19:1-15. 20. 20:1-15. 21. 21:1-15. 22. 22:1-15. 23. 23:1-15. 24. 24:1-15. 25. 25:1-15. 26. 26:1-15. 27. 27:1-15. 28. 28:1-15. 29. 29:1-15. 30. 30:1-15. 31. 31:1-15. 32. 32:1-15. 33. 33:1-15. 34. 34:1-15. 35. 35:1-15. 36. 36:1-15. 37. 37:1-15. 38. 38:1-15. 39. 39:1-15. 40. 40:1-15. 41. 41:1-15. 42. 42:1-15. 43. 43:1-15. 44. 44:1-15. 45. 45:1-15. 46. 46:1-15. 47. 47:1-15. 48. 48:1-15. 49. 49:1-15. 50. 50:1-15. 51. 51:1-15. 52. 52:1-15. 53. 53:1-15. 54. 54:1-15. 55. 55:1-15. 56. 56:1-15. 57. 57:1-15. 58. 58:1-15. 59. 59:1-15. 60. 60:1-15. 61. 61:1-15. 62. 62:1-15. 63. 63:1-15. 64. 64:1-15. 65. 65:1-15. 66. 66:1-15. 67. 67:1-15. 68. 68:1-15. 69. 69:1-15. 70. 70:1-15. 71. 71:1-15. 72. 72:1-15. 73. 73:1-15. 74. 74:1-15. 75. 75:1-15. 76. 76:1-15. 77. 77:1-15. 78. 78:1-15. 79. 79:1-15. 80. 80:1-15. 81. 81:1-15. 82. 82:1-15. 83. 83:1-15. 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thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were.

5 And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order upon the roof.

7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan, unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

8 ¶ And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;

9 And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt: and what ye did unto the two

kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

[Practical Observations.]

11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

12 Now therefore I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father's house; and give me a true token:

13 And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

14 And the men answered her, Our life is for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town-wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, Get ye to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide

g Gen. 42:9-12:31. 2 Sam. 10:3. 1 Chr. 19:3. h Ex. 1:15. 2 Sam. 16:19. 17:2. 2 Kings 6:19. 17. Neh. 13:19. Is. 63:11. 2 Chr. 21:25. k Jer. 50:21. Rom. 37:8. 1 Chr. 22:8. 2 Sam. 11:2. Matt. 24:17. m Ex. 32:2 Sam. 17:19. 1 Kings 18:13. 2 Kings 11:2. Jer. 36:26. Col. 3:3. Heb. 11:23. n Jud. 3:26. 12:5. o 5. Acts 5:23. p Ex. 18:11. 2 Kings 5:15. Job 19:25. Ec. 9:12. Heb. 11:1. q Gen. 13:14-17. 15:18-21. Ex. 3:6-8. Deut. 32:28. Ps. 115:1. Job 2:15. r Ex. 23:27. Deut. 2:35. 11:23. 28:10. Judg. 7:14. 1 Sam. 14:5. 2 Kings 7:5. s Heb. melt. 11. 1 Sam. 14:16. 2 Sam. 17:10. Ps. 112:10. Is. 19:1. Nah. 2:10. s 4:24. Ex. 14:21-31. 15:14-16. t Num. 21:

24-35. Deut. 2:30-37. 3:1-8. u See on 5:1. 7:5. 14:8. Deut. 1:28. 20:8. Is. 13:7. Nah. 2:10. v Heb. rose up. Rev. 6:16. x Deut. 4:39. 1 Kings 8:60. Ps. 53:18. 102:15. Jer. 16:19-21. 19:4. 34:35. 6:25-27. Zech. 8:20-23. y 9:15. 18-20. 1 Sam. 30:15. 2 Chr. 36:13. Jer. 12:16. z 1 Sam. 20:14-17. 26:12. 28. Euth. 8:8. 2 Tim. 1:16-18. Jam. 2:13. a 13. Rom. 1:31. 1 Tim. 5:8. b 18. Ex. 12:13. Mark 14:44. c Heb. instead of you to die. 1 Kings 20:39. e 6:17. 25. Num. 10:29-32. Judg. 1:24, 25. 2 Sam. 9:1. Prov. 18:24. Matt. 5:7. d 1 Sam. 19:12-17. Ac. 9:25. 2 Cor. 11:33. e 6:20. f 22. 1 Sam. 23:14, 29. Ps. 111:

1:11.)—It might be very useful to him to learn many things respecting the avenues of Canaan, the situation of Jericho, which was first to be assaulted, and the disposition of its inhabitants; and these might be known by ordinary means as well as by immediate revelation. Two persons, probably not of eminent rank, but of approved prudence, incircumity, and faith, were therefore selected, and sent by Joshua to search out, not the land at large, but Jericho and its confines, to bring their report to him, and not to the congregation: for the word "secretly" seems to refer to his sending them; not to their concealing themselves from the Canaanites:—"He secretly sent two men, &c." Most likely, this measure was adopted according to some intimation of the will of God; for the spies were evidently guided and protected in a peculiar manner, and many important good consequences resulted from their enterprise. (Notes, Num. 13.) They undertook this perilous service with boldness and promptitude; and passed Jordan, doubtless at the fords, the river not having yet overflowed its banks as it did soon after. Being arrived at Jericho, "they came into a harlot's house, . . . and lodged there." Perhaps Rahab kept some kind of a house of entertainment for travellers; especially as she stated that "two men had come to her" of whom she knew nothing: yet from the testimony of two apostles, (Marg. Ref. d.) there can be no reasonable doubt but she had been a harlot, though now, it is probable, she was converted by the faith which was wrought in her; which was so eminent, that she was not only admitted into the society of God's people, but married into a noble family of the tribe of Judah from whom Christ sprang. *Bp. Patrick*. It may be supposed from these circumstances, that she was not far advanced in life at this time.—It is however evident from the whole narrative, that the spies were led thither by a special providence; and that Rahab entertained them out of regard to Israel and Israel's God, and neither for lucre, nor for any evil purpose.

V. 2, 3. The twelve spies, sent by Moses, seemed to have passed unsuspected through the whole land; yet these two men no sooner entered Jericho than the king heard of it, and sent to apprehend them; while at the same time he, and the other kings of the country, seem entirely to have neglected to guard the passes of Jordan, the natural barrier of the land! (Note, 3:2.) The spies were known or supposed to be Israelites, either by their apparel or appearance; and their business in that case could not be doubted.

V. 4-6. The words translated "The woman took the two men, and hid them," might be rendered, "she had taken, . . . and hidden them."—It is evident that Rahab was acquainted with the business of the spies, before she received the message from the king: and being sensible of the danger to which they would be exposed, when every one was upon the watch as aware of the situation and purposes of Israel, and perhaps hearing the rumours about them, she had previously concealed them under some stalks of flax which were laid on the flat roof of her house: and by her answers to the messengers, she not only led them to suppose that the men were gone, but also that she was very desirous that they should be apprehended, which exceedingly tended to prevent suspicion.—Various opinions have been formed concerning Rahab's conduct on this trying occasion. Some object, that her treachery to her king and country cannot be vindicated;

but it may be answered, that as she firmly believed the God of heaven had devoted the Canaanites to be utterly destroyed by the Israelites, (9-11.) she must either side with Israel and Israel's God against her country, or perish with it in a hopeless contest against the Almighty; so that, in her circumstances, she could not have acted otherwise, if influenced by a true and living faith. (Notes, James 2:25, 26.) In fact every true convert equally renounces the alliance of the Lord's enemies, however nearly connected, and refuses to join with them in rebellion and persecution of his servants. (Notes, Luke 14:25-27. 2 Cor. 5:16.) But as no people can possibly produce such an authenticated commission from God to destroy another nation, as Israel had to destroy the Canaanites, Rahab's conduct, in uniting interests with the enemies and invaders of her country, though her absolute duty, cannot now be drawn into precedent.—In respect to the falsehoods that she uttered, were not a general question of some importance and of great difficulty involved, it would be most obvious to resolve it into her ignorance of the divine law; and to say, that the principle and substance of her conduct being good were accepted, and that the sin which incidentally mixed with it was pardoned. But indeed, if it were her indispensable duty if possible to protect the spies, and there were no other conceivable way of doing this, it seems not necessary to condemn her conduct altogether.—Stratagems of war, and similar impositions upon determined enemies and persecutors, are not absolutely condemned in Scripture, though inconsistent with exact veracity; (Marg. Ref. h.) and if deception could in any case be justifiable, we can scarcely imagine one in which it would be more so. It is however certain, that in no case, except one equally extraordinary, ought the example to be imitated. (Notes, Ec. 1:19. 1 Sam. 19:12-17. 21:1, 2. 27:8-12.)

V. 7. "The fords," or passages, were no doubt parts of the river, where it might be passed without danger, either by walking or swimming across. Here, probably, the messengers waited a considerable time to intercept the spies; and lest they should have stayed in the city, the gates were immediately shut to prevent the possibility of their escape.—But they found a way of getting out of the city, and in due time of crossing Jordan at the fords. (15:23.)

V. 8-11. We have here an account of Rahab's faith and its fruits, which are spoken of with decided approbation by the apostles Paul and James. (Notes, Heb. 11:31. Jam. 2:25, 26.) She had heard of the miracles which God had wrought for Israel, and the promises that he had made to them; and whilst the same report exasperated or intimidated the other inhabitants of the land, she firmly believed JEHOVAH to be the only true God in heaven and earth, and the Israelites his only accepted worshippers; that his promises would certainly be fulfilled and his threatenings take effect; and that there was no way of escaping his vengeance, but by uniting interests with his people. Indeed Balaam himself seems to have been convinced in his judgment of these grand truths, as well as to have professed them with his lips; but then his ambitious and covetous heart abhorred them, and he persisted in enmity to God and Israel: while the conduct of Rahab proved, that she had the genuine principle of divine faith, which induced her to renounce all her interests among the devoted Canaanites; and to venture her life, and expose

yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, *“We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.”*

18 Behold, *when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father’s household, home unto thee.*

19 And it shall be, *that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless; and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.*

20 And if thou utter this our business, then *“we*

will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned. And the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but *found them not.*

23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them.

24 And they said unto Joshua, *“Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land: for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.”*

g 20. Gen. 24:3-8. Ex. 20:7. Num. 30:2. 2 Sam. 21:1,2,7. h 21. Lev. 14:4. Num. 4:8. 19:6. Heb. 9:19. * Heb. gather. i 13. 6:23. Gen. 7:1. 12:2. 19:12-17. Exd. 5. 8. Luke 19:9. Acts 10:27-33. 11:14. 2 Tim. 1:16. k Ex. 12:13,23. Num. 33:4-28. 1 Kings 2:26-42. Matt. 24:17. Acts 27:31. Phil. 3:9. Heb. 10:29. 1 John 2:47,28. l 1 Lev. 20:11. 2 Sam. 1:16. 3:28,29. Ex. 33:4,5. Matt. 27:

24,25. Acts 18:6. 20:26. m 14. 2 Sam. 4:11. 1 Kings 2:32. Matt. 27:25. n See on 17. o See on 18. Matt. 7:24. John 2:5. p 1 Sam. 19:10-12. 2 Sam. 17:20. Ps. 62:6,7. q 1:8. 21:44,45. Num. 13:32,33. Prov. 25:13. r See on 9-11. Ps. 48:5,6. Rev. 6:16,17. † Heb. melt. 11. 5:1. Ex. 15:15.

herself to the imminent danger of the most cruel tortures, in expressing her love for the people of God. (Notes, Heb. 11:1,2,5,6.)

V. 12-16. Rahab asked no other recompense for her perilous service, than preservation for herself and her near relations, when the promises of God to Israel had been fulfilled. Even the regard manifested to her relatives, who were not sensible of their own danger, was a genuine effect of true grace. Rahab likewise gave the spies all the information in her power, and all which they wanted; and she deemed the solemn oath of JEHOVAH a sufficient security for the performance of their engagements! When, with great attention, caution, and trouble, she had dismissed them, and given them proper counsel, she performed her promise of secrecy; and at the appointed time collected her relatives into her house, as it had been agreed: and thus without reserve joined interests with the people of God. (Note, 6:22,23.) Her whole conduct manifested a reverential fear of the Lord, an entire belief of his word, a desire and hope of his favour, an affection for his people, and a disposition to forsake, venture, and suffer any thing in his cause. Multitudes, who had seen all the miracles wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who had every advantage of instruction in the camp of Israel, continued unbelievers; very few indeed manifested such strong faith, such holy fear, such confidence in God, and such a disposition to labour and suffer for his sake, as this stigmatized inhabitant of accursed Jericho, who had only heard a general and indistinct report of his wonderful works for Israel! It cannot therefore be reasonably doubted, that her faith had, before this, been accompanied with deep repentance of those sinful practices, from which she derived the name of “the harlot;” which however is given her where her faith and works are most celebrated, as illustrating the great evangelical truth, that “where sin hath abounded, grace much more aboundeth.” The same principles would also prepare her mind to receive further instruction concerning the promised Messiah, and the true meaning of those sacrifices which typified his atonement, when that further advantage was afforded her. (Notes, Acts 10:1,2. latter half. 3-8,27-33.)

V. 17-20. These spies, not doubting that Joshua and Israel would confirm the transaction, most solemnly assured Rahab of security if she disclosed not the business; intimating, that they should expect death by some judgment of God if they deceived her; yet as men who revered an oath, and dreaded the guilt of perjury, they desired to have the terms of the agreement precisely stated and exactly explained before they parted; and they selected that house which had protected them, to be the refuge of those who were found in it, when others were utterly destroyed.—Though the Israelites were forbidden to form any alliance with the nations of Canaan, yet it is evident that individuals, who came cordially into their interests, might be spared. (Notes, 9:19,20. 11:19,20.)—This passage may remind us of the door sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb, that was the security of Israel, when the destroying angel was slaying the first-born of Egypt; which typified the sinner’s security under the protection of the atoning blood, who has fled to it for refuge from the wrath and curse of an offended God. (Note, Ex. 12:11-14.)

V. 21. It is probable, that Rahab immediately bound the scarlet line, or cord, in her window; that no suspicion might be excited by doing it when Israel approached the city.

V. 23, 24. Having been thus wonderfully protected and restored in safety, the spies seem to have spoken little on the strict watch kept by the inhabitants of Jericho, or on their own narrow escape. But they reported the dismay of their enemies, not only as an encouraging circumstance, but as a token that the Lord had delivered them into their hands, having thus begun to perform his promises in their behalf. They seem, however, to have made their report privately to Joshua, and not to the people or elders. (Notes, Num. 13:26-33. 14:1-19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. As the greatest, wisest, and best of men must on many occasions use, as it were, the eyes and ears of others; it is of prime importance, that persons should be selected, on whose veracity and fidelity firm dependence may be placed.—The Lord has “a remnant according to the election of grace,” in many unlikely situations, and even of such as have previously borne very bad characters; for he will glorify his mercy and grace in saving some of every kind.—That reproach of former sins, which rests upon the reputation of atrocious offenders after they are pardoned, ought to be patiently endured: and they should thence take occasion to renew their repentance; and to pour out their earnest prayers, that their future conduct may both demonstrate the reality, and illustrate the nature, of that grace which they have received; that those may be ashamed, who persist in reviling them; and that many may glorify God on their account, be edified by their example, and encouraged by witnessing their good conversation in Christ.—The feeblest means, when accompanied by the divine blessing, produces most glorious effects: while the carnal heart, if left to itself, grows hardened in infidelity under the most conclusive evidence, and the most convincing ministry of the world! (Notes, Matt. 11:20-24. 12:41,42.)—When the worst of sinners truly believe the word of God, a blessed change infallibly takes place: for the divine Spirit, through the exercise of faith, excites in them fear of wrath, hatred of sin, hope of mercy, reverence of the name and authority of the Lord, and love to him and his people; which are manifested by such actions, as they have opportunity and ability to perform. Thus they are led to repent, and to do works meet for repentance; to renounce worldly objects and connexions, as far as evident duty requires them; and to unite interests with the people of God: and they are prepared for self-denial, and to venture persecution and even death itself, rather than give up their hope and pursuit of salvation. They may at first have very little explicit knowledge of divine truth; and much infirmity, and many mistakes may mix with their endeavours to obey God, and to do good to his people: but their conduct will be conscientious, and their disposition teachable, and their light will increase continually. (Notes, Ps. 25:8,9. Prov. 4:18,19. Hos. 6:1-3.) And no faith, which is not manifested by these good fruits, will justify the sinner before God, or even his profession before his fellow-creatures.

V. 12-24. When we really discover the danger to which our souls are exposed, from the wrath of an offended God, and are earnestly seeking salvation, we shall begin to feel for those who are not sensible of their own lost condition. This will induce us to attempt doing what we can to forward the salvation of our beloved friends and relations: and thus they who have been the grief and disgrace of their families, may, by the mercy of God, become their protection as well as ornament.—If we lost sinners have a prospect of escaping destruction, we should not seek great things for ourselves, either in the world or in the church: yet such distinctions are often conferred on those who least aspire to them.—While we are serving God, and employed for the good of his people, we may securely confide in his protection, and need not fear what man can do unto us; as the dangers, to which we may be exposed, will eventually excite the greater admiration of the truth, love, and power of God in our preservation: yet we should use every prudent and lawful means of safety; and be thankful to the instruments of it, and endeavour to recompense them. But even in exercising gratitude, we must not oblige our benefactors in any thing contrary to the will of God, or to the interests of his people; nor flatter them with the hope of deliverance from future punishment, except in the method of the gospel: and if any of our engagements are ratified with an oath, the utmost reverence and caution should be used in taking, and the greatest exactness in fulfilling, that solemn obligation.—While the accomplishment of some of God’s promises, is a pledge for the performance of the whole to the

CHAPTER III.

Israel arrives at Jer. Jan. 1. The officers give orders concerning the passage : and Joshua also directs both priests and people, 2-6. The Lord encourages and instructs Joshua, 7-9 : and again, Joshua to the people, assuring them that the waters will be divided before the ark, 10-13. The waters are divided, and Israel passes the river, while the priests bearing the ark, stand in the midst of it, 14-17.

AND Joshua ¹rose early in the morning ; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host ;

3 And they commanded the people, saying, "When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

4 Yet there shall be ^aa space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure ; come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go ; for ye have not passed *this* way heretofore.

5 And Joshua said unto the people, ^bSanctify yourselves : for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know "that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

a Gen. 22:3. 1 s. 119-60. Jer. 7:13. 25:3. 26:5. Mark 1:35. b 2:1. Num. 25:1. Mic. 6:5. c See on 1:10, 11. d 11. See on Num. 10:33. e 6:8, 14-17. 14:10. 5:6. Num. 15: 15. Deut. 31:9, 25. d 11. See on 6:18. 1 Chr. 15:11, 12. f Ex. 13:21, 22. Matt. 8:19. 16: 24. Rev. 14:4. g Ex. 3:5. 19:12. Ps. 89:7. Heb. 12:28, 29. h Heb. since yesterday and the third day. Gen. 31:2. Ex. 4:10. 1 Chr. 11:2. 1 s. 30:35. margin, b 7: 13. Ex. 19:10-15. Lev. 10:3. 26:7. Num. 11:18. 1 Sam. 16:5. Job 1:5. Joel 2: 1. 13:15. Ps. 114:1-7. k See on 3: Num. 11:15. 10:33. Mic. 2:13. John 14:2. 8. Heb. 6:20. 14:14. 1 Chr. 23:2. 2 Chr. 1:11. Job 7:17. Phil. 1:20. 8:14-11. m See on 1:17. n 1 Chr. 15:11, 12. 2 Chr. 17:8. 29:4-11. 15:27, 30. 30:12. 31:9, 10. 35:2-6. Neh. 12:24-28. 13:22, 28. o 17. Ex. 14:13. 1 Sam. 3:26. p See on Deut. 4:1. 12:8. q Num. 16:28-30. 1 Kings 18:36, 37. 22:28. Ps. 9:

true believer ; those terrors of conscience, and that sense of divine wrath, which dismay the ungodly, but do not bring them to repentance, are fearful presages of approaching destruction. (*Notes*, Prov. 10:24. 11:23.)

NOTES.—*CHAP. III. V. 1.* Early in the morning, Joshua took measures for the removal of the whole congregation and all their baggage and possessions, from Shittim to the banks of Jordan, which is supposed to have been about seven miles distant. There they arrived in the course of the day ; and lodged that night, that they might be ready to pass over the next morning.

V. 2. Three days from the orders before mentioned now passed, (1:11.) and perhaps from the return of the spies, during which time the people had made all requisite preparations. It does not appear whether they expected a miraculous interposition to facilitate their passage, or whether they had thoughts of crossing the river in some other way : but they were very obedient and tractable, and seem to have harboured no distrust about the event.—At any time, the passage of such a multitude of men, women, children, flocks and herds, with all their substance, by fords or other ordinary means, must have been attended with much difficulty and delay, and with great danger if the enemies had opposed them ; but when Jordan overflowed all its banks, it would probably have been impracticable : (15) for whatever appearance this river may make to modern travellers, the whole history represents it, as having been at that time a considerable and rapid stream.—The miraculous passage of Jordan was peculiarly suited to attend the other wonders which the Lord had wrought for Israel. Thus their entrance into Canaan corresponded with their departure out of Egypt ; (*Notes*, Ex. 14:15.) and the dismay of the Canaanites would be increased, the faith of Israel strengthened, their expectations raised, and their conquests facilitated.—It can only be attributed to a supernatural power, intimidating or infatuating the minds of the Canaanites, that they never attempted to defend this barrier of their country, or to obstruct the passage of Israel.

V. 3, 4. The Levites, of the family of Kohath, carried the ark, in ordinary circumstances : but on this signal occasion, as well as some others, the priests, (who were of that family,) performed this service. (*Num.* 4:15. 10:21. *Notes*, 6:3-5. 1 Kings 8:3.) They were commanded to march about three quarters of a mile before the people, till they arrived at their destined station ; by which it appeared that the ark, as a pledge of JEHOVAH's protection while they were obedient, secured the people, not they it. A noble defiance of the enemies of

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God.

10 And Joshua said, "Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites and the Jebusites.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12 Now therefore take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above ; and they shall stand upon an heap.

14 ¶ And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people ;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water ; (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest ;)

16 That the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up upon an heap, very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan ; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off : and the people passed over right against Jericho.

16. Is. 7:14. 2 Cor. 13:2, 3. r Deut. 5:26. 1 Sam. 17:26. 2 Kings 19:4. Jer. 10: 10. Hos. 1:10. Matt. 16:16. John 6:69. 1 Thes. 1:5. Heb. 10:31. e 22:31. Ex. 17:7. Deut. 31:7. Judg. 6:12, 13. t See on Gen. 15:15-18. Ex. 3:8. 23:27-30. 33:2. Deut. 7:1. Ps. 44:2, 3. u Ps. 24:1. Is. 54:5. Jer. 10:7. Mic. 4:13. Zeph. 2: 11. Zech. 4:14. 6:5. 14:9. v See on 3-6. Is. 3:12. x 4:9. y 15:16. Ex. 14:19. 22:2. z 16. Ex. 15:8. Ps. 33:7. 78:13. 114:3-5. Hab. 3:15. a See on 3:6, 6:8. Acts 7:44, 45. 1 Cor. 1:24, 25. b 15. 26:6. c 4:18. 1 Chr. 12:15. Jer. 12:5. 49:19. d 4:15-12. Lev. 23:10-16. Deut. 16:1-9. e See on 13. 1 s. 28:10. 17:19. Matt. 8:26, 27. 14:24-33. f 1 Kings 4:12. Zartanah. 7:46. Zartanah. g 15:2. Gen. 14:3. Num. 34:3. Deut. 3:17.

Israel was thus given ; who were challenged to attack the un armed priests, or to seize the unattended ark. The faith and courage of the priests were also tried, and displayed for an example to the people ; and reverence for this symbol of JEHOVAH's presence was expressed in a manner suited to the nature of that dispensation. The whole congregation would also have a fairer opportunity of viewing the ark, the dividing of the waters, and "the way by which they were to go," than if it had been nearer ; and as they witnessed the obedience of the inanimate creation to their covenant God, they would thus be instructed to obey likewise.

V. 5. *Sanctify yourselves.* *Note*, Ex. 19:10-15.— Besides the legal purifications, one cannot but think that he intended they should dispose their minds, by holy meditations and prayer to God to receive his benefits, and to be more sensible of them when they were bestowed on them. *Bp. Patrick*, (*Notes*, 2 Chr. 29:5. Joel 2:15-17.)

V. 7. The people desired to see that God was with Joshua, as he had been with Moses ; (1:17.) and the Lord promised him, (probably by immediate revelation,) that by dividing the waters of Jordan, he would put honour on him, as he had honoured Moses at the Red Sea. In this manner the Lord was pleased to mark out the persons, whom he appointed to govern Israel, till in the days of Samuel they desired to have a king ; and then he selected Saul, and afterwards David and his posterity, to that office.—At the river Jordan, and probably at Beihabara, or the house of passage, even at the very same place where Israel passed over that river, the Lord Jesus began to be magnified by the descent of the Holy Spirit, and by a voice from heaven. (*John* 1:28. *Notes*, Matt. 3:13-17.)

V. 8. At the brink of the water the priests were commanded to stop, until the channel of Jordan had become dry ; and then to take their station in the midst of it, till all the people were passed over. (17)

V. 10-13. Joshua in calling JEHOVAH "the living God," and "the Lord," or Proprietor and Governor, "of all the earth," as well as "the God of Israel," seems especially to have aimed to render the stupendous miracle about to be wrought, (and which he foretold, that it might be the more impressive,) a convincing proof in the minds of the people, that all the gods of the nations were idols destitute of life and power ; and that idolatry (to which they were excessively prone,) was as senseless, as it was impious and abominable. (*Notes*, Deut. 4:35-40. 2 Kings 19:14-19. Is. 54:4, 5.)

V. 15. *Jordan overfloweth, &c.* This annual inundation

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

CHAPTER IV.

Twelve men are appointed to take twelve stones out of Jordan for a memorial; and twelve stones are set up in the midst of Jordan, 1-9. The people pass over; God magnifies Joshua; and the priests are ordered to bring the ark out of Jordan, which then overflows as before, 10-18. The date of this event, 19. The twelve stones are set up in Gilgal, where Israel encamped, 20-24.

AND it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man;

3 And command you them, saying, Take you

h 3:6. i 4:3. 2 Kings 2:8. k Ex. 14:22-29. Ps. 66:6. Is. 25:8. Heb. 11:29. a 3:17. Deut. 27:2. b 3:12. Num. 14-15. 13:2. 24:18. Deut. 1:23. 1 Kings 18:31. Matt. 11:1-5. c See on 3:13. d 24:27. Gen. 28:12. 1 Sam. 7:12. Ps. 103:2. 114:4. Luke 19:40. e 8:19, 20. f See on 2. Mark 3:14-19. g 22:27. Ex.

arose from the melting of the snows upon mount Lebanon. The barley-harvest was at hand, or already begun; and the overflowing of the river seems to have taken place, just before Israel was commanded to pass over it, which served to render the miracle more incontestable and stupendous. (2:7, 23.)

V. 16, 17. The waters below the place where Israel then was, ran off towards the dead or salt sea, which was once the plain of Sodom, and left the channel dry for the space of several miles; whilst those above accumulated, and stood like mountains very far back towards the sea of Tiberias, without inundating the adjacent country. (*Marg. Ref. f, g.*) As an illustrious example of faith and obedience, the priests, who bare the ark, marched into the midst of the dry channel, and there took their stand, with the waters piled up far higher than their heads, and nothing to prevent their being overwhelmed by them, but the invisible power of God. Here they abode all day, till the people, encouraged by their example, had in succession marched over the river, with all that appertained to them, and were safely landed on the further shore! (*Notes, 4:3-10.*)—The passage through the Red Sea took place in the night, when the Israelites were fleeing from the Egyptians with great trepidation; but they passed Jordan in the daytime, with previous warning, leisurely, directly opposite to Jericho, and with a triumphant defiance of the Canaanites.—This passage of Israel over Jordan into the promised land, after their weary wanderings in the wilderness, evidently typified the believer's passage through death to heaven, when he has finished his course in this sinful world.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who are attentive to the duties of their station, and enemies to sloth and self-indulgence, are likely to be eminent and useful; and they alone.—We ought to proceed in our appointed course, notwithstanding remote difficulties, which may appear to us insurmountable; and to rely on the Lord to remove them when the critical moment arrives: for his interpositions are intended to excite, not to supersede, our activity. But we should look well to the path of our feet, especially when "we have not passed that way heretofore." (*Notes, Prov. 4:26, 27.*)—The precepts of the word of God, his providential dispensations, and the counsel and example of his ministers and people, when properly attended to; together with the inward teaching of this Holy Spirit, humbly sought by earnest prayer; will make our way plain to us, though perplexed in itself. (*Note, Prov. 3:5, 6. P. O. Is. 30:18-33.*) and we cannot in general go wrong in keeping close to the ordinances of God, and thus, as it were, following the ark in all its removals. In so doing, we need not fear rivers of trouble, mountains of difficulty, or hosts of opposing foes; but confiding in the faithful promise, the almighty power, and covenant love of our God, "the living God, the Lord of the whole earth," we may proceed with boldness and alacrity.—Whether we be called to endure poverty, pain, reproach, persecution, or death, we are following "the Author and Finisher of our faith;" nor can we set our foot in any perilous or arduous spot, through the whole journey, but faith will there desert the print of the Redeemer's foot, who trod that very path to glory above, and who calls us to "follow him, that where he is, there we may be also."—His ministers especially, are required to set the people an example of obedience, patience, and unshaken confidence in him; by abiding in those perilous or difficult stations which he has assigned them, when others fear to pass that way; and in so doing they may expect peculiar support and protection: (*Note, Acts 8:1.*) but if they hesitate to take the lead in facing danger and enduring hardship; and show an undue attention to their own ease, security, and indulgence, their exhortations will be very lightly regarded.—The more adventurous we are in the path of duty, the greater evidence we shall have of the Lord's love and care of us; for he will not disappoint the expectation of faith, but in due season exceed our most enlarged hopes. But would we experience the more signal effects of his love and power, we must study to put away from us the pollutions of sin, and be peculiarly careful not "to grieve the Holy Spirit;" we must diligently follow

hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones; and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging-place where ye shall lodge this night.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man;

5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel;

6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

12:14. 13:9. 31:13. Num. 16:38. Is. 55:13. Es. 20:12, 20. h Ex. 12:26, 27. 13:14. 1:20. e 6:20, 21. 11:19. Ps. 44:1. 71:16. 78:3-6. Is. 38:19. Acts 2:39. i Heb. narrative.

his directions, and give him all the glory.—Thus the Christian's course originates from "the working of the mighty power of God," in his deliverance from the yoke of sin and Satan; and that same power daily carries on the work of "renewing him in the spirit of his mind," amidst innumerable snares, temptations, and countervailing obstacles; but in the last conflict especially, he will find that the Lord "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that he asks or thinks, according to that power which now worketh in him;" (*Note, Eph. 3:20, 21.*) so that even the feeble Christian shall conquer in this conflict, and pass safely through this path beset with terrors. This shall continue invariably to be the case, till all the company of the redeemed "are clean passed over," and landed safe on Canaan's shore,—for though none of them have passed this way heretofore; yet Jesus their Brother and Friend, the true "Ark of the covenant," has gone before, and crossed the river, when its floods were swelled to a tremendous height; and thus he has divided the floods before them. He safely reached the heavenly shore, when he rose from the dead as the first-fruits of his people, and ascended into heaven as their Fore-runner; and he began to be magnified in the sight of all Israel, when, thus risen and ascended, he sent down his Holy Spirit, to give assistance to his apostles, and success to his holy gospel. To those who neglect his great salvation, death may well be "the king of terrors" for its consequences will be to them tremendous beyond expression. But to believers even this "king of terrors" is become a friend. "To them to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (*Notes, Phil. 1:19-26.*) This world is a dreary wilderness, and they are often weary of their toilsome pilgrimage, though fed with the Bread of heaven, and drinking the Waters of life from the Rock of Salvation; and though guided and guarded by their gracious Redeemer through all the dangers of the way; in their deliberate judgment they count it "far better to depart hence to be with Christ" and they may meet death in the most horrid form (like Jordan overflowing all his banks,) without terror, if they are but able to keep the eye of faith fixed upon the Saviour, and on the inheritance provided for them in heaven.—Let us then treasure up our experiences of his faithful and tender care during the whole course of our lives, that they may come in aid to our faith and hope in this last conflict: let us carefully consider the examples of others, whose happy death we witness, or of which we read and hear, to allay our fears and encourage our hearts: let us prepare daily for this important season, by faith and repentance; and a conscientious attention to the duties of our station; and let us watch and pray against anxious or distressing fears. The Lord will provide for our passage over this Jordan, when the time comes: yea, he will come and meet us, and by his animating presence invigorate our faith and hope; till we join the innumerable multitude, that in the Canaan above are singing the praises of their greater Deliverer, who hath both redeemed them from far worse than Egyptian bondage, and brought them safe to the promised land, through his precious blood, and by his all-conquering arm.

NOTES.—CHAPTER IV. V. 2. These twelve men had before been selected, to hold themselves in readiness. (3:12.) One was chosen out of every tribe: (4) for though some had received their inheritance on the other side of Jordan, they were all brethren, united in interest and religion; and it was proper they should all join in perpetuating the memory of this signal miracle.

V. 3-9. After all the people had passed over Jordan, and before they marched to the place of encampment, or had any opportunity of refreshing themselves and taking care of their families; they were required to use proper measures for transmitting to posterity a memorial that Jordan had been divided "before the ark of the Lord;" and so give parents an opportunity of instructing their children concerning the wonderful works of God for Israel. (*Note, 20-24.*)—The priests patiently and courageously kept their station, not only till the whole multitude was passed over, but also till these twelve men had returned into the midst of the river, and taking each a large stone, probably as great as we can carry

7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

9 And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished, that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over.

11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

12 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them.

13 About forty thousand, prepared for war, passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

14 ¶ On that day the LORD magnified Joshua

in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.

19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

20 And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.

21 And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones?

22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

23 For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over:

24 That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty; that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.

3:13-16. *J* See on 6. Ex. 12:14, 23:12, 30:16. Num. 16:40. Is. 66:3 *marg.* 1 Cor. 11:24. k 2-5. 1:16-18. 1 Ps. 111:2-4. m Gen. 28:33. Deut. 34:5. Judg. 1:26. 1 Sam. 30:25. 2 sam. 4:3. 2 Chr. 9:9. Matt. 27:8. 33:15. n See on 3:16, 17. Is. 23:16. o Num. 27:21-23. Deut. 31:9. p Ex. 12:39. Ps. 119:60. Prov. 27:1. Ec. 9:10. 2 Cor. 6:2. Heb. 3:7, 8. q 18. 3:9, 17. r 1:14. Num. 32:20-32. * Or, ready armed. Eph. 6:11. s 5:10. 2 Kings 25:5. Jer. 39:5. 52:8. t 1:15-18. See on 7:1. Cor. 10:2. u Ex. 14:31. 1 Sam. 12:18. 1 Kings 3:28. 2 Chr. 30:12. Prov. 24:21. Rom. 13:4. v See on 3:3-6. Ex. 25:16-22. Rev. 11:19. x Gen. 8:16-18. Dan. 3:26. Acts 16:23, 33-39. y See on 3:13, 15.

had returned with them to the shore; and until twelve stones had been set up in the midst of the river. The twelve stones were taken from the very spot where the priests had kept their station; and the twelve other stones were set up in the same place. As the water would there be always of considerable depth, it may be supposed that these stones were formed into a kind of pillar, or monument, generally visible from the banks of the river.—The concluding words might be written by Joshua at the close of his life, or perhaps added by some later prophet. (*Marg. Ref. m.*)

V. 10. *Moses commanded.* We do not read, that Moses gave any instructions about the passage of Israel over Jordan: but he charged Joshua to obey the LORD, and the people to be observant of Joshua; to which they peculiarly attended on this occasion.—It is said, “the people hastened,” as none of them wasted any time: perhaps some were timorous through unbelief; but there was no undue haste or confusion. (*Note, Is. 28:16, conclusion.*)

V. 11. The people beheld the water standing still on a heap while the ark was in the river; but come tumbling down when it was gone: which demonstrated that it was God's presence with them, to which alone they owed this miraculous mercy. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. This armed body of men, unencumbered with families or flocks, and prepared to repel the enemy, if they should attack them, would leave the other tribes more at liberty to attend upon their personal and domestic concerns. (*Note, 1:12-15.*)—Probably the inhabitants of Jericho witnessed from the walls of the city this astonishing scene; and saw their invaders encamp in those very plains, where it might have been expected the inhabitants of the land would have mustered their forces to oppose them. (*Note, 3:2.*)

V. 14. In consequence of the honour which God put on Joshua on this occasion, the Israelites stood in awe of him, and submitted to his authority ever after, as the divinely appointed successor to Moses; perceiving that the LORD was with him, as he had been with Moses. (*Note, 1:16-18.*)

V. 15-18. The priests did not quit their station, till Joshua, who had commanded them thither, ordered them thence; nor did he thus order them till the LORD commanded him: so obedient were all parties to the word of God, and so entirely confident of his protection! As soon as the priests had reached the shore, and the ark, the symbol of the LORD's presence, had left the river, the waters reverted to their natural course, and flowed over all the banks as before; showing that the power of him, who enacted the laws of nature, had on this occasion suspended them, for the display of his glory in performing his promises to the people. (*Notes, 11. Dan. 3:26, 27.*)

† Heb. plucked up. x Ex. 14:26-28. a 3:15. 1 Chr. 12:15. † Heb. sent. Is. 8: 6. b Ex. 12:2, 3. c 5:9. 10:6, 43. 15:7. 1 Sam. 11:14, 15. 15:33. Am. 4:4. 5:5. Mic. 6:5. d See on 3:8. e See on 6. Ps. 105:2-5. 145:4-7. f Heb. to-morrow. † See on 3:17. Ex. 14:29. 15:19. Ps. 66:5, 8. Is. 11:15, 16. 44:27. 51:10. Rev. 16: 12. g Num. 3:11. Ps. 77:16-19. 78:13. Is. 43:16. 63:12-14. h Ex. 9:16. 1 Sam. 2:10. 1 Sam. 17:46. 1 Kings 8:43. 2 Kings 5:15. 19:19. Ps. 106:8. Dan. 3:26-29. 6:26, 27. i Ex. 15:16. 1 Chr. 29:12. Ps. 89:13. k Ex. 14:31. 20:20. Deut. 6:2. Ps. 76:6-8. 89:7. Jer. 10:6, 7. 32:40. † Heb. all days.

V. 19. The Israelites passed over Jordan, exactly five days short of forty years after they left Egypt, and just in time to prepare for the celebration of the passover, upon their entrance into Canaan, as they had celebrated it just before their departure out of Egypt. (*Note, Ex. 12:3-10.*)

V. 20-24. It is most natural to conclude, that these stones were placed separately on some eminence, where they would be conspicuous: and being exactly twelve, according to the number of the tribes in Israel, and probably no other stones near, at all like them in size and kind; they would naturally excite inquiries, how they came there, and what was meant by them. Thus the miraculous division of Jordan, (as completing that kindness to Israel, which was begun at the division of the Red Sea,) would frequently become the subject of conversation, both among the Israelites, and those who came thither from distant nations; the tradition of this event would be perpetuated and circulated very widely; and even the Gentiles might be induced to examine the sacred oracles, and to inquire further concerning the glorious perfections and wonderful works of Israel's God.—In these respects this memorial would tend to promote true religion; “that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty.” But it would especially give parents an opportunity of diverting the inquisitiveness of their children into a profitable channel, by encouraging them to ask questions on the subject; and by giving them such answers, as would tend to bring them acquainted with the works of God, and to impress them with the fear of his name; that so one generation after another might be confirmed in worshipping him alone, and be restrained from idolatry.—These stones are supposed to have remained till the days of Christ, or even longer. (*Notes, Ex. 12:11-14. 13:8-10. Ps. 78:3-8. 111:4.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The works of the LORD are so worthy of remembrance, and the heart of man is so prone to forget them, that various methods must be adopted to keep them in remembrance.—Our own ease should be disregarded, and our ordinary employments or refreshments postponed, that we may lose no time in rendering to the LORD the tribute of praise for mercies received, while the sense of gratitude glows in the heart, and before the lively impression has time to wear off.—There is a peculiar style in the works and in the word of God: majestic in simplicity, expressive and emphatic; but with genuine dignity, disdaining the encumbrance of useless ornament and affected splendour. Never did triumphal column or arch, with all the magnificence of architecture, form so proper a monument of some celebrated victory, as did the twelve red stones from Jordan's channel of the miraculous passage of

CHAPTER V.

The Canaanites are afflicted, 1. Joshua, at God's command, circumcises Israel: the need there was of this, 2-8. The place is called Gilgal, 9. The passover is kept at Gilgal, 10, 11. The manna ceases, 12. One appears to Joshua, calling himself "The Captain of the Lord's host," 13-15.

AND it came to pass, when ¹all the kings of the Amorites, which ²were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the ³Canaanites, ⁴which ⁵were by the sea, ⁶heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted; neither was there spirit in them any more because of the children of Israel.

2 ¶ At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make these ⁷sharp knives, and ⁸circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.

3 And Joshua ⁹made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at ¹⁰the hill of the foreskins.

4 And this ¹¹is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: ¹²All the people that came out of Egypt that ¹³were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way after they came out of Egypt.

5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people that ¹⁴were born in the wilderness by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, ¹⁵they had not circumcised.

a 12:29-34, 24:15. Gen. 10:15-19, 15:18-21, 48:22. Judg. 11:23, 2 Sam. 21:2, Ex. 16:3. Am. 2:9. c 17:12, 18. Gen. 12:6. Ex. 23:28. Judg. 11:4, 42. Exa. 9:1. Ps. 135:11. d Num. 13:29. Judg. 3:3. Zeph. 2:4-6. e See on 2:9-11. Ex. 15:14, 16. Ex. 48:6. Rev. 18:10. f 1 Sam. 25:37. 1 Kings 10:5. Is. 13:5-8. Ex. 21:7. Gen. 5:6. Or, knives of flint. Ex. 4:25. g Gen. 17:10-14. Deut. 10:16. 30:6. Rom. 2:29. 4:11. Gal. 2:11. h Gen. 17:23-27. Matt. 16:24. i Or, Gibeon harvest. 1 Num. 14:29. 26:64, 65. Deut. 2:16. 1 Cor. 10:5. Ex. 3:17

Israel into Canaan, under the conduct of the ark of the Lord, Such is the instituted memorial of the Redeemer's dying love: simple, impressive, and entirely calculated to show forth his death and passion in the most affecting manner; to be a suitable profession of our repentance, faith, and grateful love; and to express our devotedness to him, our fellowship with him and his people, and our expectation of future harmonious felicity in the realms above. Yet all this is veiled under so plain an exterior, that the carnal eye can see no comeliness or excellency in it, any more than in him whose love is commemorated: and to make it suit the grovelling minds of the world, and the selfish purposes of the ambitious, it has been dressed up with pomp and parade of meaning and of ceremony; which have so disguised and perplexed the divine appointment, that many of the true disciples of Christ have been strangely frightened from it, as if some formidable mischief lay concealed within; to the dishonour of the Lord, and the detriment of their own souls. But we should take every proper occasion of attending on that sacred ordinance, learning from the word of God its simple meaning and intention; and should gladly speak of them, when opportunity is afforded, to our children, our neighbours, and to every inquirer. In this, and in every thing else, the curiosity of children should be improved as an opening to their instruction: and they who take pleasure in searching out the works of the Lord, and in diffusing their knowledge among strangers, or perpetuating it to posterity, shall more and more understand his loving-kindness and mercy. (Ps. 107:43).—Gladly should we all render every service we can to the church of God, and consider ourselves as having one common interest with all the families of the redeemed, however separated by rivers, seas, or mountains, or by the more *unnatural* partition-walls of sects and parties: and in so doing, we may safely commit our families and interests to the protection of Israel's God.—When, with careful attention to the commands and providence of God, we have taken the place, and engaged in the service, assigned us; we ought patiently to abide in it, and not to attempt to remove, till we evidently commands us thence. Nothing can hurt us in doing this, and nothing should intimidate us from it. In like manner also, we ought patiently to wait our dismissal from this sinful world, ready to depart, but willing to bear the cross and maintain the conflict, till the Lord's purposes for his own glory be accomplished in us.—But the removal of the righteous is frequently like the opening of the flood-gates of divine judgments upon guilty nations, which have been restrained by their presence, example, and prayers; and much more when the ministers and ordinances of God are removed, may national calamities be expected. But let us bless God that this is not the case with our favoured land: let us unite in prayer that it may not be: and let us also remember, that we may derive benefit from all the mercies shown to his church in all ages and nations, and should bless God for them; and every recent favour should excite us to repeat his praises for former blessings.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. Great terror had before pervaded the minds of the inhabitants of Canaan, in every part of the country: yet the kings seem to have kept up their courage, till they heard that the barrier of the land had been

6 For the children of Israel ¹⁶walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that ¹⁷were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD ¹⁸swore, that he would not show them the land, which the LORD swore unto their fathers that he would give us, ¹⁹a land that floweth with milk and honey.

7 And ²⁰their children ²¹whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

8 And it came to pass ²²when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp ²³until they were whole.

9 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I ²⁴rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you: wherefore the name of the place is called ²⁵Gilgal unto this day.

10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and ²⁶kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even, in the plains of Jericho.

11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, ²⁷unleavened cakes, and parched ²⁸corn in the self-same day.

12 And ²⁹the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither

—19. j Deut. 12:9, Hos. 6:6, 7. Matt. 12:7. Rom. 2:25. 1 Cor. 7:19. Gal. 5:6, 6:15. k Num. 14:32-34. Deut. 1:3, 2:7, 14. Ps. 65:10, 11. Jer. 2:2. 1 Num. 14:32. Heb. 3:11. m See on Ex. 3:17. Ex. 20:6, 15. Joel 3:18. n Num. 14:31. Deut. 1:39. o Heb. when the people had made an end to be circumcised. p Gen. 34:25. q Gen. 34:14. 1 Sam. 17:25, 36. Ps. 119:39. Jer. 8:25. Ex. 20:7, 23:8. Eze. 2:11, 12. § That is, rolling. 4:18. g Ex. 12:3, &c. Num. 9:1-5. f Ex. 12:18-20, 13:6, 7. Lev. 23:14. e Ex. 16:35. Neh. 9:20, 21. Rev. 7:16, 17.

broken through, by a miracle similar to the dividing of the Red Sea; and that the whole multitude of Israel was actually encamped in their country, with the express purpose of possessing it, and extirpating the former inhabitants. On hearing this, their hearts melted with terror, as wax before the fire; and this both anticipated, and facilitated their destruction. (Marg. Ref.)—The words "*We* were passed over," intimates that the writer was one of the company.

V. 2-8. It is probable, that there had been a general circumcision, a short time before the departure of Israel from Egypt, of all those who were then found uncircumcised: and with reference to it, this circumcision, which took place immediately on their entering the promised land, was called "*the second time*." It is evident that the Israelites, who had been born in the wilderness, were left uncircumcised; but it is not so manifest whether this omission arose from negligence; or whether the Lord dispensed with it during their wanderings, when every removal would have rendered it dangerous to many infants; or whether the nation was laid under a kind of interdict, when the rebellious generation was doomed to die in the wilderness. It is generally agreed, that the passover was celebrated only once, during Israel's continuance in the desert; and the people there did not want any mark of distinction from other nations: so that circumcision, in respect of its principal objects, was not so requisite in that situation, as after they were settled in Canaan; where every instituted ordinance, and every method of distinction and separation, must be used. The command, however, given to Joshua, and by him to the people, to perform this painful operation on so great a multitude, immediately upon entering the enemy's country, when it was well known that they would by it be for some time utterly disabled, formed a very great trial of their faith; (Note, Gen. 34:25-28.) and their prompt and universal obedience, in such critical circumstances, manifested a confidence in the Lord's protection, and a submission to his will, which confirm the sentiment, that this was the best of all the generations of Israel.—As circumcision might be performed by any one; though the number to be circumcised was great, the whole would soon be completed, probably on the first day after their passage over Jordan.

V. 9. When the Israelites were brought into the promised land, and the covenant of the Lord was thus solemnly ratified with them, as the seed of Abraham, by the appointed seal; the reproach of their Egyptian bondage, and idolatrous customs, was *rolled away*; and it was plain, that the Lord had not brought them forth into the wilderness to destroy them. (Notes, Gen. 17:7-12, 23-27. Ex. 4:24-26. 1 Sam. 17:25, 26.)—The word "*Gilgal*" signifies *rolling*. The same place was also called "*the hill of the foreskins*;" because of the great numbers whose foreskins were left buried there. (3)

V. 10. The general circumcision of the people was preparatory to the solemn observance of the passover in its season; for no uncircumcised person might eat of it. (Notes, Ex. 12:43-45, 48, 49.) This was a proper entrance upon the promised land, as a holy land. The celebration of the passover immediately preceded Israel's departure out of Egypt; and formed nearly their first employment on entering Canaan.

had the children of Israel manna any more; 'but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood **a Man** over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?*

14 And he said, Nay; *but as 'Captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.* And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, *What saith my lord unto his servant?*

15 And the Captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy.* And Joshua did so.

t Deut. 6:10, 11. Prov. 13:22. Is. 65:13, 14. John 4:38. u Gen. 33:1, 5. Dan. 8:3, 10. 5 x 2. Gen. 18:3. 22:24—30. Judg. 13:8, 9, 11, 22. Dan. 10. 5. Hos. 12:3—5. Zeph. 1:8. Jer. 1:13. y Num. 22:22. 1 Chr. 2:16, 17. 2 Chr. 12:17, 18. Ex. 23:20—22. Is. 55:4. Dan. 10:13, 21. 12:1. Heb. 2:10. Rev. 12:7. Is. 11:4. * Or, Prince. b Gen. 17:3, 17. Lev. 9:24. Num. 16:24, 45. Matt. 8. 2. Luke 5:12. Acts 10:25, 26. Rev. 19:10. 22:8, 9. c 1 Sam. 3:9, 10. Is. 6:8. Acts 9:6. d Ex. 4:

for they were both brought out of Egypt, and into the land of their inheritance, "that they might keep the LORD's statutes, and observe his laws." (Note, Ps. 105:43—45.) Having been circumcised on the eleventh day of the month, they would be enabled to eat the passover on the evening of the fourteenth; while those who had before been circumcised might prepare for their brethren: and by the time that the days of unleavened bread were ended, they would be perfectly healed and fit for action. In the mean time the Canaanites were intimidated, and restrained from assaulting them. Nay, their very confidence in thus setting their enemies at defiance, while they attended to the ordinances of their religion, and engaged JEHOVAH to fight their battles, if it were known among the inhabitants of the land, would tend to increase their consternation. (Note, Ex. 34:24.)

V. 11, 12. The people would find abundance of old corn in the deserted granaries of the affrighted inhabitants; and the barley harvest being ripe, after offering the sheaf of first-fruits, they ate also new parched corn: and thus the manna, being no longer necessary, ceased, after having been sent them regularly for almost forty years! (Ex. 16:35.)

V. 13—15. Joshua was either taking a view of Jericho, in order to attack it, or employed in serious meditation and prayer, or both alternately; when he was surprised with the appearance of one, in form as "a Man, ... with his sword drawn in his hand." Joshua, not at all intimidated, accosted him, and demanded of him whether he was an ally or an enemy; and he received for answer, that he was come not only as an Ally, but as Commander-in-chief over the LORD's host, and over Joshua himself: upon which Joshua recognised and worshipped him as his Lord; and reverently prostrating himself upon the earth, waited and asked to know his will. Not only was this worship received, but he was further commanded to show the same token of respect to the heavenly vision, which had been required when the LORD appeared to Moses in the bush: (Notes, Ex. 3:2—6.) and this being done, he received from him the orders contained in the ensuing chapter, which is a continuation of the subject, and is very improperly separated from the close of this.—All these circumstances prove beyond a doubt, that this *armed Man* was no other than the Son of God, JEHOVAH, the second Person in the sacred Trinity, the Captain of our salvation, anticipating his incarnation, and assuring Joshua of success in this war. (Notes, Gen. 32:30. Hos. 12:3—6. Phil. 2:5—8.) 'Jesus, our Lord, the Prince of his Father's host, appearing to him who was a type of him, at Jericho, with a drawn sword, promised to be the Defender of his people.' Archbp. Usher. 'The Angel, who suffered himself to be worshipped, and by whose presence the place where he appeared was sanctified, so that Joshua was commanded to put off his shoes, no doubt was he whom all the angels in heaven worshipped.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How dreadful is the case of those, who are irreversibly devoted to destruction, for whom no mercy is reserved, and who see the deserved vengeance of God advancing towards them with steady pace, without any possibility of averting or escaping it! Such will be the horrible situation of the wicked, when summoned to appear before the tribunal of an offended God. Nor can words express the anguish of their feelings, or the greatness of their terror, when they shall call in vain "upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them," and hide them from the intolerable frown of their angry Judge, and from the dire sentence which he is prepared to execute upon them. As "men's hearts cannot endure, or their hands be strong," in such circumstances; oh, that they would now take warning, even before it be too late, that they would flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the salvation of the gospel!—The maxims and conduct of the church of God are widely different from those of the world. What other general ever opened a campaign in an enemy's country,

CHAPTER VI.

Jericho is shut up: and the Lord instructs Joshua how to conduct the siege, 1—5. Joshua directs the priests to carry the ark round the city, preceded by other priests, sounding with trumpets, and attended by the people, 6, 7. They thus march round the city daily for six days, and seven times on the seventh day, 8—16. The city and all in it, (except Rahab and those with her,) are devoted to destruction, 17—19. The people shout, the walls fall down, and the city is taken and destroyed; but Rahab is preserved, 20—25. A curse is denounced on him who should rebuild Jericho, 26. Joshua becomes renowned, 27.

NOW Jericho 'was straitly shut up, 'because' of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

2 And the LORD said unto Joshua, 'See, I have given unto thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

3 And 'ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven 'trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh

10:13. Ps. 110:1. Matt. 22:41. Luke 1:43. 20:42. John 20:28. Phil. 3:8. e Ex. 3:5. Acts 7:32. 33. 2 Pet. 1:18. * Heb. did shut up, and was shut up. 2, 7. 2 Kings 17:4. a 23—24. Ps. 127:1, 2. b See on 5:13—15. c 9:24. 8:4. 11:6—8. Judg. 11:21. 2 Sam. 5:19. Neh. 9:24. Dan. 2:21, 41. 4:17, 35. 5:18. d 7:14. Num. 14:9. 1 Cor. 1:21—25. 2 Cor. 4:7. e Lev. 25:9. Num. 10:41—10. Judg. 7:7, 15—22. 2 Chr. 13:12. 20:17, 19, 21. Is. 27:13. Zech. 4:6.

in the manner that Joshua did? On such occasions, all attention paid to the exercises of religion is too generally considered as a needless waste of time. Yet, if the help of God be indeed the best security for success, and if his anger is more to be feared than the sword of any enemy, it will be found true policy to begin every expedition with repentance of sin, and attendance on the solemn worship of the Lord, and with using every method of securing his protection; though to a carnal eye that method may appear unfavourable to success. (Note, Matt. 6:33, 34.)—But especially the Christian soldier must thus begin his spiritual warfare: nor can he face any of his enemies without "the circumcision of the heart," as the internal "seal of the righteousness of faith," and the ratification of the new covenant between a reconciled God and his soul. (Notes, Rom. 2:25—29. 4:9—12.) Then feeding on Christ, the Paschal Lamb who was sacrificed for sinners, and keeping the "feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," he will be prepared for the conflict. (Note, 1 Cor. 5:6—8.) Yet he will not prosper so long as he neglects any of the ordinances or commandments of God; or lies under the reproach of living in conformity to the world, or of acting in any respect inconsistently with his holy profession. But duly attending to the worship of God and the means of grace, and daily girding on his divine armour, he may boldly defy all his enemies, and rest assured of the presence and protection of the great "Captain of salvation," whose Person he will reverently worship, whose orders he will diligently observe, on whose assistance he will entirely depend, and by whom he will at length be made more than conqueror.—Many things are amiss in the best state of the church on earth, but when young persons have not so much as the appearance of religion, it will redound to the reproach of their parents, being generally the consequence of their misconduct. When the upright believer is convinced of his neglect or sin, he will readily set about amendment, and when he is in a proper frame of mind, he will account the most self-denying commands, or mysterious dispensations of the Lord, reasonable, wise, and kind. Finally, what the Lord requires of his people, he will supply them with the means of performing: when one source of provision fails, he will open another: nor shall the manna for their souls ever fail, till they arrive at the Canaan above, and feast on its rich and inexhaustible provisions.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. The king and people of Jericho did not possess courage enough to attack the invaders; but they shut themselves up in the city, where doubtless they expected to defend themselves under the protection of the walls, till succours should arrive from other quarters. It does not appear that they made any advances toward an accommodation.

V. 2. (Note, 5:13—15.) It is indisputable that the very person, who in the preceding chapter called himself "the Captain of the host of the LORD," is here called JEHOVAH, 'which shows he was not a created angel, but God himself, who alone could promise and perform what follows.' Bp. Patrick. By commission from him, and according to his instructions, Joshua was directed to conduct his hostilities against the Canaanites: and this authority sanctioned, and even sanctified all the terrible executions with which it was attended; the sword in his hand being the sword of justice drawn against condemned criminals. (Notes, Num. 31:2, 14—18.)

V. 3—5. By prescribing this extraordinary method of besieging Jericho, the Lord was pleased to put honour upon the ark as the symbol of his presence, and to manifest that all the victories of Israel were from him: for this was a specimen of them. The faith and patience of the people were thus proved and increased. Their regard to the priesthood likewise would be augmented; and they would be induced the more readily to give the priests their dues, when the Lord had thus employed them in the conquest of the land. The preaching of the gospel also, and its effects were typified.—The words

day ye shall compass the city ⁷seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.

5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all ^bthe people shall shout with a great shout: and ^cthe wall of the city shall fall down ^dflat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

6 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, ^kTake up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.

7 And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him ^lthat is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.

8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on ^mbefore the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the ⁿrearward came after the ark, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make ^oany noise with your voice, neither shall ^pany word proceed out of your mouth ^quntil the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11 So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about ^rit once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And ^sJoshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

13 And seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD, ^twent

on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rearward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* going on and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And ^uthe second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

[Practical Observations.]

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early, ^vabout the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: ^wonly on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, ^xShout, for the LORD hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be ^yaccursed, *even it*, and all that *are* therein, to the LORD: ^zonly Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, ^{aa}because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 And ye, ^{ab}in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, ^{ac}lest ye make *yourselves* accursed when ye take of the accursed thing, and ^{ad}make the camp of Israel a curse, ^{ae}and trouble it.

19 But ^{af}all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, ^{ag}are ^{ah}consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into ^{ai}the treasury of the LORD.

20 So the people shouted when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that ^{aj}the wall fell down ^{ak}flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

21 And they ^{al}utterly destroyed all that *was* in

1 Gen. 22:3, 7-23. Lev. 4:6, 14-16, 25-8. Num. 23:1. 1 Kings 18:43. 2 Kings 6:10. Job 42:8. Zech. 4:2. Rev. 1:4,20. 5:1,6. 8:2,6. 10:3. 15:1,7. 16:1. g 16, 20. Ex. 19:19. h 10:12. 1 Sam. 4:5. 17:20,52. 2 Chr. 13:15. Jer. 5:15. i 15:25. 12. 30:25. 2 Cor. 10:4,5. Heb. 11:30. * Heb. *under it*. k 8:13. See on 3:3. Ex. 25:14. Deut. 20:2-4. Acts 9:1. 13:1,14. 4:13. m See on 3:3. Num. 23:20. n 13. Num. 10:25. Is. 22:12, 58:8. 1 Heb. *gathered host*. t Heb. *your voice to be heard*. Is. 42:2. Matt. 12:19. o 2 Sam. 5:23,24. Is. 28:16. Luke 24:49. Acts 1:7. p See on 3:1. Gen. 22:3. q See on 6-8. John 2:5-8. 6:10, 11. 9:5,7. Heb. 11:7,8. r 1 Chr. 15:25. Matt. 24:13. Gal. 6:9. s 3:11,15. 1:15, 119,147. Matt. 28:1. 2 Pet. 1:19. u See on 4. v See on 5. Jude. 7:20-22. 2 Chr. 13:15. 20:22,23. w Or, *devoted*. 7:1. Lev. 27:28,29. Num. 21:2,3. 1 Chr.

2:7. Ezra 10:8. marg. Is. 34:6. Jer. 48:10. Ez. 59:17. Mic. 4:13. 1 Cor. 16:22. Gal. 3:10,13. x See on 2:1. y 22:23. 2:4-6,22. Gen. 12:3. 1 Sam. 15:6. Matt. 10:41,42. 25:40. Heb. 6:10. 11:31. Jam. 2:25. z Rom. 12:9. 2 Cor. 6:17. Eph. 5:11. Jam. 1:27. 1 John 5:21. a 7:11,12,15. Deut. 7:26. 13:17. b 7:11,12,22. 18-20. 1 Sam. 14:28-42. Ec. 9:18. Jon. 1:12. c 7:25. 2 Sam. 21:1. 1 Kings 18:17,18. d 2 Sam. 8:11. 1 Chr. 18:11. 26:20,25,28. 28:12. 2 Chr. 15:18. 31:12. Is. 23:17,18. Mic. 4:13. j Heb. *holiness*. Lev. 19:24. marg. Zech. 14:20,21. e 1 Kings 7:51. 14:25. 2 Kings 24:13. 1 Chr. 26:20. Neh. 7:70,71. 10:38. Jer. 38:11. Matt. 27:6. Mark 12:41. f 1 See on 5. 2 Cor. 10:4,5. Heb. 11:30. 1 Heb. *under it*. g 9:24,35. 10:29,39. 11:14. Deut. 2:34. 7:2,3,16. 20:16,17. 1 Sam. 15:3,8,18,19. h Kings 20:42. Jer. 48:18. Rev. 18:21.

(שִׁשְׁרֵי תְּרִיבִים), translated "rams' horns," may be rendered *trumpets of the jubilees*, that is, such as were to be blown in the year of jubilee: for the entrance of Israel into the promised land was indeed a *jubilee* to them. (Notes, Lev. 25:8-22.)

Instead of the dreadful trumpet of war, they were ordered to sound the trumpet of joy, as already conquerors, in the anticipation of assured faith. The word signifying *horn*, occurs indeed in the fifth verse; but, even if interpreted literally, it only proves that *horns* were used, without restricting the meaning to *rams' horns*: and perhaps *horn* may be understood figuratively for *trumpet*. (1 Chr. 25:5.) No scriptural instance, on any other subject, is adduced, in which *רֶמֶס* signifies a *ram*; that it has this meaning, is principally inferred from the Chaldee paraphrase. Probably the trumpets before made, and others of the same kind, were used on this occasion; for, as the number of the priests increased, more trumpets were doubtless formed, either of silver, or of some other materials. (Note, Num. 10:2-10.)—The repeated prescription of the number *seven* must not pass unnoticed: "Seven priests," "seven trumpets," "seven days," and "seven times on the seventh day." (Marg. Ref. e, f.) This attention to the number *seven*, in Scripture, probably had reference to the creation of the world in six days, and the Lord's resting on the seventh day, which completed the first week: this was the first reason assigned for the sanctification of the sabbath, and occasioned the measuring of time by the periodical return of the seventh day, in most ages and nations ever since. (Notes, Gen. 2:2,3.) One of these seven days must have been a sabbath-day; the Jews say, that it was the last, on which the city was taken; and as they were doing the work of God, for his glory, no objection arises against it from the fourth commandment; any more than against the man's carrying his bed on the sabbath-day, in honour of Christ who had healed him. (Notes, John 5:10-18.)

V. 7. It may be supposed, that the procession was made at such a distance, as to be out of the reach of arrows or missile weapons from the walls. It would be needful for the army to go before in order to level the fences and remove all obstructions in passing round the city. So unprecedented a procession would doubtless at first create much surprise, and some consternation, among the inhabitants; but when one day passed after another, and no effect followed, they would probably become secure, and treat the whole with derision as a senseless parade.

V. 9. The armed men preceded the priests who blew the trumpets, and those who carried the ark: but after them the people in general seem to have followed, with some persons appointed to close the rear, and to prevent any from straggling from the main body.

V. 10. This implies, that a profound silence must be observed, and that no conversation was allowed.

V. 16. *Given you the city.* It is not before said, that Joshua had given the people this assurance: and some think that he was directed to conceal from them the event of the procession, in order to make the fuller proof of their faith and obedience. (Notes, 3:2-4.)—He could not give this notice to the whole body, except by messengers, sent to make proclamation in different places: and these might sufficiently notify what follows also, though not before explicitly mentioned.

V. 17-19. (Note, Lev. 27:28,29.) This city was, as it were, the first-fruits of Canaan, and as such wholly devoted to the Lord. The only advantages which the people derived from this miraculous victory, were the destruction of their enemies, the dominion of the land, and the enriching of the sanctuary. For every living creature must be slain, except Rahab, and those who had taken refuge in her house: whatever part of the spoil was not consumed with fire, was ordered to be brought into the treasury of the Lord: and if any Israelite dared to appropriate the smallest part to himself, the curse of Jericho would rest upon him, and upon the camp of Israel, until he and all that appertained to him were utterly destroyed. (Notes, 7: Deut. 7:25,26. 1 Sam. 15:1-3, 8,9,22,23. 1 Kings 20:41,42.) The whole was to be made a solemn and awful sacrifice to the justice of God upon a people which had filled up the measure of their iniquities.

V. 21. The Canaanites were ripe for destruction; and the Lord was pleased, instead of destroying them by a pestilence, a famine, an earthquake, a deluge, or fire from heaven, to employ the Israelites as the executioners of his vengeance, both for their warning and instruction, and for that of all who read these records. Had an angel been commissioned to slay them, (as one did Sennacherib's army,) who would have charged him with iniquity or cruelty? (Note, 2 Kings 19:35.)—In all public calamities infants are involved; and tens of thousands of infants die in great agony every year. Now, either God is not the Agent in these calamities, (which opinion, though often implied in men's reasonings on these subjects, is not far from atheism;) or they must consist with the most perfect jus

the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 But ^hJoshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, ^{as} ye sware unto her.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her ^kkindred, and ^lleft them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they ^hburnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: ^monly the silver, and the gold,

and the vessels of brass, and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

25 And Joshua ⁿsaved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and ^oshe dwelleth in Israel *even* unto this day: because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 ^pAnd Joshua ^qadjured *them* at that time, saying, ^rCursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it.

27 So ^sthe LORD was with Joshua; and ^tthis fame was *noised* throughout all the country.

h 17: 2:1, &c. 12:12-14, 17-20. 9:15, 18-20. 2 Sam. 21:2, 7. Ps. 15:4. Ez. 17: 13, 16, 18, 19. 12:18. Gen. 32:2, 18:21, 19:29. Acts 27:21. Heb. 11:7. ⁱ Heb. families. ^k Num. 5:2, 3. 31:19. Acts 10:23. 1 Cor. 5:12. Eph. 2:12. 18:28. Deut. 13:16. 2 Kings 23:9. Rev. 17:16. 18:8. ^m See on 19. n 11:19, 20. Judg.

tice and goodness. What injustice then could there be, in his ordering the destruction of a guilty race by the sword of his people? Or what injustice can be charged on them, while executing his express commission, as ratified by undeniable miracles? If the history be authentic, this was the case: and that must be judged of by other rules.—It is evident that the hand of God would be far more noticed in these uncommon events, than if he had destroyed his enemies by the ordinary course of second causes; as the very objections and clamours of infidels demonstrate; and the malignity of sin, with the indignation of God against sinners, and his power and determination to inflict condign punishment on them, would be far more conspicuous and impressive. Thus, in all governments, solemn public executions, in which the punishment of the criminal is avowedly inflicted for a specified offence, have always been deemed far more suited to produce salutary effects on the minds of all concerned; than secretly and without notice putting criminals to death in a dungeon, or elsewhere. In short, every man, who by reading the account of these awful judgments, in any age or place, has been led to a deeper sense of the evil of sin, and warned to repent and seek mercy from the Lord, will to eternal ages glorify the divine wisdom and goodness, in the very dispensations, which embolden the blasphemies of the impenitent and unbelieving. (Notes, 2. Num. 31:2.)

V. 22, 23. As Rahab's house stood upon the wall of the city, the preservation of it must have been the effect of the Lord's special care: for had he so pleased, she might have perished when the wall fell down, without any violation of the engagement into which the spies had entered in behalf of Israel. (Notes, 2:12-20.)—But her faith saved her: this temporal deliverance was the pledge of eternal felicity: she was first honoured as the means of preservation to her relations; and then she became a wife and mother in Israel, and an ancestor of David and of Christ!—She and all her relations were, however, excluded from the camp of Israel, till they had been purified, according to the law.

V. 25. *She hid, &c.* Which proceeded not merely from her humanity, but was a noble act of courageous faith. ^h *By Patrick.*

V. 26. Jericho, as devoted to utter destruction, was to be left a perpetual desolation, and if any man ventured to rebuild it, he would do it at his peril. (Note, 1 Kings 16:34.) Probably Joshua bound the nation, by means of their princes and elders, by an oath, as connected with this curse, that they would leave it in ruins.

V. 27. No wonder that the fame of that commander was celebrated, even by enemies, before whom the river was divided, and the strong walls of the city fell down, without any visible cause.—Joshua might very well write this of himself, as the whole honour was referred to the LORD God of Israel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. When sinners are repeatedly warned to flee from the wrath to come, and alarmed and disquieted in their consciences with apprehensions of impending vengeance, and yet harden their hearts in impenitence, and disdain to sue for peace or ask forgiveness from God; they may be considered as "devoted to utter destruction" nor can any counsel, courage, strength, or numbers, afford them the least security, in their infuriated contest with the Almighty.—When the Lord effects his purposes by such means and instruments as we deem *aliquate*; our views are apt to terminate upon *them*, and to overlook *Him* "who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will." To obviate this propensity, our God sometimes deviates from the common track, and works by methods or instruments, which in themselves appear not at all suited to produce the intended effect; nay, indeed have no direct connexion with it. (Notes, Num. 21:6-9. Ez. 37:1-10. John 9:4-7.) But it is our duty to use only those means which the Lord appoints, or allows; to submit to his will and depend upon his blessing; and with patient waiting and self-denying diligence to expect the event: and we shall thus succeed as far as is conducive to our real good.—He takes peculiar pleasure in leading men's attention to his own truths and ordinances; in exercising their faith and patience; in inuring them to submit their understandings implicitly to his teaching, and their will to his authority; and in securing to himself their

praises and thankful acknowledgments. In promoting true religion especially, he works by means and instruments, which the proud, the learned, the wise, and the wealthy, of this world generally despise. The doctrine of a crucified Saviour, GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH, as the only foundation of a sinner's hope of acceptance, and the only source of sanctifying grace; preached by ministers, frequently of obscure birth and moderate abilities, and destitute of the advantages of eminent learning or eloquence; sometimes even homely in their appearance and address; and who are themselves conscious of much unworthiness, and insufficiency for so arduous and important an employ:—this, I say, from generation to generation, in every country of the world, has been the Lord's ordinary method of accomplishing those purposes, which philosophers, moralists, and lawgivers, have attempted in vain; namely, of teaching numbers "to do good who have been accustomed to do evil." The disregarded Trumpet blown by the despised minister,—the preaching of the cross, which is foolishness to them that perish,—is only the token: the operation is from God. (Notes, Rom. 1:13-16. 1 Cor. 1:20-31. 2:3-5. 2 Cor. 4:7. 10:1-6.) When that signal is given in simple dependence upon "the exceeding greatness of his mighty power," it becomes indeed mighty through him and Satan's strong holds fall before it. Thus, at different periods, have heathen idolatry and Popish superstition sunk before this trumpet's feeble blast, attended with the shout, the fervent united prayers of the true Israel.—At some future period, (perhaps commencing early in the seventh thousand years,) this gospel shall be preached far more earnestly, more generally, and more successfully than ever; all Satan's remaining bulwarks shall fall down to the ground; and the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ. (Notes, Is. 30:23-25. Rev. 11:15-18.)—In the mean time the gospel is never preached in vain, in any nation, city, or village, by ministers of any name who simply seek the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Let experience decide, whether in our age and nation this same "foolishness of preaching" has not done more towards checking the enormous progress of profligacy and open ungodliness, and producing a regard to the ordinances and commandments of God in every part of the land, than all other means combined; and whether a greater number of undeniable instances of atrocious sinners being transformed into new creatures, leading new lives, and becoming excellent relations and members of society cannot be produced, among those who profess and preach "Christ Jesus and him crucified," than among those who patronise a system, deemed more rational, wise, and liberal.—The latter is man's contrivance, and is left to its own efficacy; the former is the ordinance of God, and like the trumpets sounding round the walls of Jericho, is rendered effectual by his almighty power.

V. 15-27. Would we witness the blessed effects of the gospel, the ministers of Christ must strictly adhere to the directions of their Lord, and simply expect, pray, and wait for his blessing; not yielding to weariness, though they long seem to labour in vain. They must be "instant in season, and out of season," embracing every opportunity of preaching the word to few or to many, every day, but abounding on the Lord's day; and they must disregard the causeless reproaches, scoffs, and slanders of opposers: but be careful that they give no occasion to those, who seek occasion of speaking reproachfully. The people also, who know the joyful sound, should show their concurrence by a diligent attendance upon the word preached: they should endeavour to strengthen the hands and encourage the hearts of the ministers, by their holy examples and concurring endeavours, in their families and among their connexions; and unite in earnest and constant prayers for the blessing of God upon their labours.—But it should be peculiarly noticed, that the same gospel, which proclaims salvation to the chief of sinners who believe, becomes the occasion of increasing and accelerating condemnation to the obstinate and impenitent; who are never more in danger of immediate destruction, than when most careless and secure. (1 Thes. 5:3.)—Where the Lord hath given faith he will in due time complete salvation: and when his grace is betowed upon one in a family, that one is often made the honoured instrument of bringing others to share the same blessings.—The

CHAPTER VII.

Achan takes of the accursed thing; and Israel is defeated before Ai, 1-5. Joshua, with the elders, humbles himself, and complains before God, 6-9; who shows the cause, and directs him how to proceed, 10-15. Achan taken by lot, confesses his crime, 16-23. He and all belonging to him are stoned, burned, and destroyed, 24-26.

BUT the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.

2 And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, "Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up: but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai, and make not all the people to labour thither: for they are but few.

4 So there went up thither of the people about

22:16, 2 Chr. 24:18. Exa. 9:6. Dan. 9:7. b 22:20. c 1 Chr. 2:6, 7. Achan, Zimri. d See on 6:17, 18. e 22:18, 2 Sam. 24:1. 1 Chr. 21:7. Ec. 9:18. Jon. 1:1. 1 Cor. 5:1-9. Heb. 12:15, 16. f 12:9. Gen. 12:8. Hui. Neh. 11:31. Achan, 7. 19:12. Gen. 29:19. Hos. 4:15. h 2:1. Prov. 20:18. 24:6. Matt. 10:16. Eph. 5:15. i Heb. about 2000 men, or about 3000 men. j Prov. 13:4. 21:25. Luke 13:24. Heb. 4:11. 6:11, 12. 2 Pet. 1:5, 10. k Lev. 25:17. l Lev. 28:25, 32:30. Is. 30:17. 59:2. + Or, Mordai. l See on 2:9, 11. 5:1. Lev. 25:35. Ps. 22:14. Is. 13:7. n Gen. 37:29, 31. Num. 14:6. 2 Sam. 13:31. Exa. 9:3-5. Esth. 4:1. Job 1:20.

sovereign judgments of God, however they are at present objected to, will, at the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, appear most perfectly righteous.—Whoever is honoured as an instrument in the Lord's work, should count the glory of God his first object, and patiently wait his time and manner of being graciously recompensed; for a covetous, selfish professor, or minister of religion, who is more attentive to his own gain than to the glory of God, is not only accused himself, but a curse to the society or congregation to which he belongs.—That can never be lost which is devoted to God, nor wasted which is spent in his service; and not the least kindness shown to any of his people for his sake will go unrewarded.—But how deep are the counsels of God! Grace abounds to some of the chief of sinners, while vengeance is poured out upon others! His salvation and his curse are both for ever: and we be to that man who attempts to obliterate the memorials, or disannul the attestations, which the Lord has made, of his abhorrence of sin, and his vengeance against impenitent sinners!

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1. The most promising appearances had been often blasted by the sins of the people; but here wrath came upon the whole congregation, through the sin of one man! (Note, 22:20.)—Contrary to the express command of God, and in contempt of his awful curse, (Note, 6:17-19.) Achan had ventured to appropriate part of the spoil of Jericho. The temptation was strong; and there is more cause to wonder that none else were guilty, than that one was; especially as the Israelites were comparatively poor, and such treasures as Jericho contained were alluring objects. At the opening of the worship at the tabernacle, we meet with one striking instance of the severity of divine justice. (Notes, Lev. 10:1-3.) Here, upon the commencement of the wars of Canaan, we read of another: and the infancy of the Christian church presents a similar example. (Note, Acts 5:1-11.) All these were doubtless intended to increase reverence and godly fear, and to promote circumspection; as well as to prevent wickedness in general, and hypocrisy in particular, from disgracing the camp of Israel, or the church of God.—That the example of Achan might excite the more general vigilance in Joshua, in the elders, and in every Israelite, they were given to understand, that the guilt of an individual, in these atrocious crimes, would be accounted a national sin, until detected and punished; for they were all one body; nor could any part be infected with so dire a disease, without the detriment and danger of the whole.

V. 2. (Notes, Gen. 12:8. 28:19.) Beth-el, which signifies the house of God, seems to have been afterwards called Beth-aven, or the house of vanity, when the golden calf was placed there to be worshipped: yet it is probable the name Beth-aven was far more ancient than that event; and that either some town, or some tract of land, in that neighbourhood, was so called in the days of Joshua. (18:12.)—It is taken for granted by some learned men, that terms of peace were offered to each of these cities, before it was assaulted, according to the law given by Moses. (Note, Deut. 20:10-18.) But several things in that law could be applicable only to cities belonging to other nations, and not to the devoted Canaanites; no mention is made of this in the history; and some things seem irreconcilable with the supposition, that peace was offered to these cities. "The Israelites were to offer peace to the Canaanites, and spare their lives, on condition of their emigrating for ever from their country; or renouncing idolatry, adopting the principles of the patriarchal religion contained in the precepts of Noah, resigning their territory, dissolving their

three thousand men; and they fled before the men of Ai.

5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate, even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

6 And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the even-tide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

7 And Joshua said, Alas! O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!

8 O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies!

9 For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?

[Practical Observations.]

Acts 14:14. n Num. 16:22, 45. 2 Sam. 12:16. o Judg. 20:23, 26. 21:2. 2 Sam. 1:12. p 1 Sam. 4:12. 2 Sam. 13:19. Neh. 9:1. Esth. 4:1. Job 2:12. Ez. 27:30. Jon. 3:6. Mic. 1:10. q Ex. 5:22, 23. Num. 14:3. 2 Kings 3:10. Ps. 116:11. Jer. 12:12. Heb. 12:5. + Ex. 14:11, 12. 17:3. Num. 20:45. Matt. 17:13, 20. Mark 8:17, 18. + Ex. 16:3. + See on 1:2-4. u Exa. 9:10. Hab. 2:1. Rom. 3:5, 6. i Heb. necks. v Ex. 39:12. Num. 14:13. w Ps. 83:4. 124:2, 3. x Deut. 32:27. Ps. 106:6-8. Ez. 20:9. Joel 2:17. John 12:28.

national union, and submitting to become slaves. For it is evident, that they could not tolerate idolatry, nor enter into any equal leagues, which the idols who were worshipped as the guardian gods of the adverse party, must be supposed to witness and sanction; nor leave in possession of their cities and lands, those nations, whose country the great JEHOVAH had assigned to them as their peculiar inheritance. . . . But if the nations of Canaan had renounced idolatry, and submitted to slavery or emigration, they might have been preserved from extermination, is strongly confirmed, by that passage of the sacred history, which adds this remarkable observation: "Joshua made war a long time with all these kings.—There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all others they took in battle; for it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they might come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses." *Graves on the Pentateuch*, Vol. ii. note, pp. 38-45. (Note, 11:19, 20.)—It appears evident, that had the Canaanites, or any part of them, of their own accord, sued for peace, or rather for the sparing of their lives, on the terms here mentioned; they might have been spared. For the Israelites had no commission to pursue into other lands those who, fleeing from the sword of Joshua, emigrated; nor did any of the rulers or kings of Israel afterwards attempt to destroy the subjected remnant of the ancient inhabitants. (Note, 1 Kings 9:20-22.)—But the supposition that these terms were to be previously proposed to them, has no scriptural foundation. (Notes, 9:3-5, 14, 15.)

V. 3-5. The easy conquest of Jericho had not only encouraged the people to hope for great success, through the power of the Lord fighting for them; but had also excited a contempt of the enemy, and a disposition to spare themselves, and to expect the Lord to do all for them, without using the proper means. Even Joshua seems to have formed his measures on this occasion, without asking counsel of the Lord; (Notes, 9:14, 15. Num. 27:21.) who left all parties to follow their own devices, in order to bring to light and punish Achan's sin. Yet, as they must have been unsuccessful, now that the Lord had left them, his providence should be observed in this circumstance; for the discomfiture of the whole army would have been far more discouraging, than that of a small company.—Being, however, left to themselves, their courage wholly forsook them, and they fled with precipitation: and though the loss sustained was comparatively small, they were excessively dismayed on account of it.—Whether those who fell were secretly guilty of any atrocious crimes or not, the Lord was no doubt righteous in this dispensation.

V. 6-9. Joshua, and the elders of Israel, very justly considered this ill success as a divine rebuke, and properly expressed their sorrow and humiliation before the ark of the Lord, in the most self-abasing posture, and with the customary tokens of deep distress. (Marg. Ref. m, n.) Joshua's pleas in prayer also were excellent; and his concern for the honour of God, far more than even for the fate of Israel, if their enemies should prevail and destroy them, was the genuine language of "the spirit of adoption." (Notes, Ex. 32:11-14. Num. 14:13-19.) Yet this was evidently mixed with much infirmity. To consider this trivial check as the forerunner of total ruin; to inquire wherefore the Lord had brought them over Jordan; and to admit the thought, that it was in order to deliver them into the hands of the Amorites, were proofs of unbelief, which may be accounted for, but

10 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?

11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.

12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow; for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.

14 In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man.

15 And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath; because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel.

16 So Joshua arose up early in the morning,

Ex. 14:15, 1 Sam. 15:22, 16:1. 1 Chr. 22:16. * Heb. fullest, 6. * See on 1:20, 21. a 23:16. Dent. 17:2. Judg. 2:20, 2 Kings 18:12, 14, 24:5, 50:1-2, Jer. 31:32, Hos. 6:7. b See on 6:18, 19. c Mat. 3:8, 9. Matt. 22:21. d 2 Kings 5:25, 26. John 12:5, 6. Acts 5:1, 2, 9. Heb. 4:13. e Lev. 5:15. Hab. 2:6. Zech. 5:4, 12:13-20. Num. 14:45. Ps. 54:5. Prov. 23:1. Jer. 59:2. Hab. 1:13. g 6:18. Hag. 7:25. h Jer. 6:8, 23:33. Hos. 9:12. h 3:5. Ex. 19:10-15. Lam. 3:40, 41. Joel 2:16, 17. Zeph. 2:1, 2. i See on 11, 2 Chr. 28:10. Matt. 7:5. k 1 Cor. 5:1-5, 11-13. 17:18. 1 Sam. 10:19-21, 14:41-42. Prov. 16:33. Jon. 1:7. Acts 2:19-22. m 25:28. Dent. 13:15-16, 1 Sam. 14:33-39. n See on 11. o Gen. 34:7. Judg. 6:2. 2 Sam. 13:15. 1 Chr. 21:16. p See on 3:1. Gen. 22:3. Ps. 119:60. Ec. 9:10. q See on 14. r See on 15. 38:30. Zarah. Num. 26:20. 1 Chr. 24:7. s Num. 32:23. 1 Sam. 14:42. Prov. 13:21. Jer. 2:26. Acts 5:1-10. 12 Tim.

were wholly inexcusable, especially after the express promises and miraculous successes which he had just before received. —To attempt, by a qualifying interpretation, fully to vindicate so high a character as Joshua, would form a perfect contrast to the impartiality of the sacred historian.

V. 10-12. At the very time, when the Lord showed his gracious acceptance of Joshua's humiliation and prayers, he gently rebuked his despondency and unbelief. He had already spent a full proportion of time in this manner; and, as chief magistrate he had other work to do; which when he had duly performed, he might expect better success. (Notes, Ezra 10:2-5.)—The Lord had not failed of his promises, nor was he unable to help his people: but they had sinned; and by appropriating a part of the devoted spoils of Jericho, they had exposed themselves to the wrath of God, as well as deprived themselves of his protection; and the crime was so great, that unless the offender were made a public example, it would be interpreted as a breach of covenant, and the Lord would not any more be with the people.—(Notes, 1. 6:17-19.)

V. 13-18. The Lord did not point out the criminal immediately; but he left the matter in ambiguity for some time, and at last brought it to light gradually: that both magistrates and people might learn to do their duty, and to keep a vigilant eye over one another; and that the delay and the process might make the transaction more solemn, and excite the more careful self-examination, and sanctification of themselves, by every method appointed in the law. (Note, 35.) After this, the decision seems to have been made by lot, as an appeal to the heart-searching God. (Note, Prov. 16:33.)—The feelings of Achan must have been very poignant, when he was thus, by one lot following another, singled out as the accursed person, for whose sake wrath was come upon Israel. (Notes, 1 Sam. 14:36-44. Jon. 1:7-10.)—It may be inquired why Achan, being conscious of guilt, did not abscond: but it may be answered that his flight would have been a confession of the crime, which perhaps he still hoped to conceal; he could only have retired among the devoted Canaanites; and he would have been in great danger of being intercepted, had he attempted it. Indeed it is not probable, that Joshua and the elders publicly disclosed the business, till the morning of the decision.—Some think that Achan, being deeply penitent, waited his doom in submission to the divine justice: yet in that case it is most probable that he would have made an immediate confession.—The tribe, family, and parentage of the offender are specified with great exactness, that the infamy might not rest on the reputation of any other of the same name. (Marg. Ref. r.)

V. 19. Without the least reproach, and with great meekness, Joshua gave Achan the best counsel of which his

and brought Israel, by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken:

17 And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarahites: and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man; and Zabdi was taken:

18 And he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

[Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.

21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent: and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took

2:25. Tit. 2:9. Jam. 1:20. 1 Pet. 3:8, 9. u 1 Sam. 6:5. Is. 42:12. Jer. 13:16, 17:18. John 9:24. Rev. 16:3. v Num. 5:6, 7. 2 Chr. 30:32, 33:12. Ps. 32:5, 51:3. 1 rov. 23:13. Jer. 3:12, 13. Dan. 9:4. 1 John 1:8-10. x 1 Sam. 14:43. Jon. 1:8-10. y Gen. 42:21. Ex. 10:16. Num. 22:34. 1 Sam. 15:24, 30. Job 7:20, 33-27. Ps. 38:15. Matt. 27:4. z Gen. 3:6, 6:2. 2 Sam. 11:2. Job 31:1. Ps. 119:37. Prov. 23:31, 28:22. Matt. 5:28, 29. 1 John 2:15, 16. a Gen. 10:10. marg. b Heb. tongue. c Ex. 20:17. Dent. 7:25. 1 Kings 21:1, 2. 2 Kings 5:20-27. Hab. 2:9. Luke 12:15. Rom. 7:7, 8. Eph. 3:5. Col. 3:5. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. Heb. 13:5. 2 Pet. 2:15. c Prov. 4:23. Mic. 2:1, 2. Jam. 1:15. d 2 Sam. 11:6-17. 2 Kings 5:24, 25. Is. 28:15, 29:15. Luke 12:2. s Heb. poured. e See on 1. Job 20:15. Prov. 15:27. Ec. 5:13. Ex. 22:13, 14. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10.

circumstances could possibly admit. He addressed him even with the tender appellation of "My son," and exhorted him "to give glory unto God by confessing his sin." This would imply an acknowledgment, that the commandment was reasonable, and the penalty equitable; that he himself was indeed the transgressor, and merited the punishment. It would give the Lord the glory of his omniscience, justice, holiness, authority, and truth, and indeed of all his perfections; and by taking shame to himself, and accepting the punishment of his sin in this world, Achan might best seek for mercy to his soul in the world to come. (Note, Ps. 51: title.)—Joshua's conduct in this difficult service is worthy of the imitation of all Christian magistrates, when under the painful necessity of pronouncing the sentence of death upon criminals.

V. 20. Had not Achan's confession been extorted by the preceding process, and delayed till he could no longer conceal his guilt, he might justly have been deemed a true penitent. Though late, however, it was frank and ingenuous: he not only allowed the fact, and the offence against Israel, but acknowledged "that he had sinned against the LORD God of Israel;" he descended to particulars, attempted no excuse or extenuation, complained not of the severity of the sentence, and made no attempts to prevent or delay its execution. (Notes, Job 33:27-30. Jon. 1:8-16. Luke 23:39-43.)

V. 21. The temptation entered by the eye, and excited the concupiscence of the carnal heart: thus "lust was conceived and sin brought forth." (Notes, Gen. 3:6. Ex. 20:17. Jam. 1:13-15.) The goodly Babylonish garment, (some magnificent robe brought from Shinar, or Babylon, doubtless at a great price,) was rescued from the flames: and gold and silver, to the amount of a hundred pounds sterling, or rather more, were sacrilegiously kept back from the treasury of the Lord. For such a goodly price did Achan render himself accursed, forfeit the fair prospect of a rich inheritance in Canaan, become "the troubler of Israel," and ruin his whole family. Besides the imminent danger to which he exposed his immortal soul! No sooner had he got possession of his plunder than it became his burden: had he not been miraculously detected, he would have been consumed with terrors, and not have dared to use his ill-gotten treasure: and when the other Israelites had been enriched, and enjoyed their abundance with credit and a blessing, he would have lost all the comfort of his portion! So differently do the objects of temptation appear at a distance, from what they do when apprehended, and when the infatuation ceases! (Notes, 2 Kings 5:20-27. Matt. 27:3-5.)

V. 22. The silver, and probably the gold also, lay under the garment of Shinar, as it is called in the original.

V. 23. The accursed thing being thus separated from Israel's substance, and laid before the LORD, both evi-

Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

25 And Joshua said, ^bWhy hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And

all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. ^mSo the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger: wherefore the name of that place was called The valley of Achor unto this day.

f6:18,21. Gen. 18:25. Ex. 20:5. Num. 16:27-31. Job 20:23-28. g 15:7. Is. 65:10. Hos. 2:15. h 11-13. f 18. Gen. 34:20. 1 Kings 13:17,18. 1 Chr. 2:7. Hab. 2:6-9. Gal. 5:12. 2 Thes. 1:8. 1 Lev. 20:2. 24:14. Deut. 18:10. 17:5. 21:21.

22:21-24. k 15. Gen. 33:24. Lev. 20:14. 21:9. 13:29. 10:27. 2 Sam. 18:17. Lam. 3:33. m Deut. 13:17. 2 Sam. 21:14. Is. 40:2. Joel 2:13,18. Jon. 3:9,10. Zech. 6:8. ⁿThat is, trouble. See on 25.

denced Achan's guilt, and the innocence of others; that the wrath of the Lord might rest on him, and be turned away from them.

V. 24. *His sons, &c.* No intimation is given that Achan's sons, or any of his family, were accessory to his crime: nothing but their punishment can excite a suspicion of it. Magistrates indeed were forbidden to put the children to death for the parents' crimes, unless expressly authorized to do so by God himself: but all lives are the Lord's, and forfeited by sin; the ungodly deserve worse punishment than temporal death, and the righteous are the sooner taken to heaven. Some have thought that Achan's children were only spectators of his awful doom; but the narrative implies that they were involved in it. (25).—This circumstance would be a vehement expression of the exceeding enormity of the offence, and would render the example more affecting and alarming. (Note, Ex. 20:5.)

V. 25, 26. It seems that Achan and his family were first stoned, and then burned; which might denote the anger of God, that beyond death will pursue and punish the impenitent.—The heap of stones would perpetuate the memory of his sin and punishment, for the instruction of future generations: as would also the name given to the place, which signifies *Trouble*. (Note, Hos. 2:14-17.) Indeed Achan is himself called *Achor*, or *Trouble*, in the subsequent history. (Note, 1 Chr. 2:7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. When by their heinous sins men provoke the Lord to anger, he commonly leaves them to mistaken counsels, and thus they are corrected by their own iniquity.—The people of God can never expect to prosper in any undertaking, concerning which they have not inquired of him, to know his will and implore his assistance; (Note, Prov. 3:5,6.) or in which they have indulged sloth and vain confidence, or tempted God by the neglect of proper means. But human nature is prone to extremes: like children, we are easily elated by a little success, and presume that we shall carry all before us: and when, in order to humble us and check our self-confidence, the Lord is pleased to throw some discouragement in our way; we are easily cast down into despondency, and induced to forebode the most fatal consequences.—Every failure in such undertakings, as evidently accord to the will of God, and the duty of our place and station, should cause us to humble ourselves before him, to flee to his mercy-seat, to pour out our hearts in prayer, and inquire "wherefore he contendeth with us;" and to plead his promises and the glory of his great name, as engaged to support that cause which we are endeavouring to promote, whatever becomes of us and our worthless names.—Yet in the very prayers of the best of men there is often much evil, which the Lords might justly condemn, and for which he frequently rebukes and chastens them; especially when they appear ungrateful for former mercies, and murmur or despond on account of present trials, distrust his faithfulness, or suspect his future intentions, as declared by his express promises.

V. 10-18. "What shall we say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" It is not enough that the forces be recruited, the passes strengthened, the cowards punished, the valiant rewarded, the soldiers animated by word and deed, and the ensuing assault conducted with more skill and circumspection. The matter is not thus: "Israel hath sinned," and God is provoked; and nothing can ensure success, till his indignation is turned away, and the accused thing is removed out of the camp. Times of public danger and calamity, therefore, with nations professing Christianity, peculiarly require zeal for reformation: notorious criminals ought then to be searched out, and brought to condign punishment; especially such as have enriched themselves by sacrilege, perjury, murder, oppression, and iniquitous traffic. While such criminals are suffered to escape with impunity; nay, till something effectual has been done towards expiating national guilt, by the execution of public justice, on those whose daring crimes have brought the wrath of God on a guilty land; there is little cause to wonder, if the inhabitants turn their backs upon their enemies, and little hope that God will be with them any more, notwithstanding their fastings and prayers. Since these things have been so much disregarded in protestant countries, they have been left to quarrel with one another; and to become the instruments of each other's correction, instead of being united and prospered, in repelling the assaults of their common enemies.—And may it not also be seriously questioned, whether the case be not the same with respect to the success of the gospel, and the state of religion among us? It is to be feared that there has often been more zeal shown, in supporting the interests of one party against another, than for the

interests of vital godliness against the cause of infidelity, profigacy, and formal profession; and that in this competition, men, in other respects conscientious, not only accept the proffered support of some one not unlike covetous and sacrilegious Achan, but assiduously seek after it. It is still more evident, that there has not been due care taken to censure or exclude such persons, as are evidently the slaves of avarice, worldly lusts, and the pride of life; and to direct the searching word of God to their consciences, in such a manner as effectually to make them understand, that their profession of the doctrines of the gospel, their attendance on the ordinances, and their support of the ministers of Christ, will never save their souls, unless their idols be dethroned, and their hearts and lives renewed by converting grace. There is reason to fear that there are Achans in many of our congregations, whose lives prejudice men against the truth, and bring a secret blight on our ministry: nor "will the Lord be with us any more," unless we use our best endeavours, without any partial or personal regards, to separate them from among us. And it is proposed as a matter of serious inquiry, whether the present lamentable divisions among the professors of evangelical truth: the confessedly small success of the gospel, compared with that of former times; and the most alarming progress of open infidelity; be not in great measure owing to the same cause as Israel's defeat before Ai.—But first of all we should look into our own hearts, and make diligent search, whether there be not some accursed things there which God sees and abhors; some unmortified lust, some iniquitous gain "put among our own stuff," some withholding from God and the poor their dues, in order to gratify avarice, or support luxury and the pride of life. If this is the case, no wonder we do not prosper in our souls, or in our ministry; no wonder if we get little benefit from our attendance on ordinances, or see no considerable effects from our unremitting and most earnest preaching from year to year. Nor can we expect to prosper any better, until the accursed thing be destroyed out of our hearts, removed out of our houses, and forsaken in our lives. Let us, however, not only be careful, that we ourselves do not disseminate any secret iniquity; but remember that we are accountable for our families also, if we do not use all our circumspection, and exert our utmost authority, to preserve them free from every accursed thing. In this way will Israel prosper, our souls be "like a watered garden," and "the word of God have free course and be glorified." He will be with us and fight for us, and Israel shall no more turn their backs upon their enemies.

V. 19-26. Would we avoid the commission of gross iniquity, we must "make a covenant with our eyes" and all our senses: we must learn to behold every object by faith through the medium of God's word, not by sense through the medium of a worldly judgment and a carnal mind; we must repress the first movings of concupiscence, and pray earnestly not to be led into temptation; we must habituate ourselves to meditate on the future consequences of sinful gratifications to our characters, families, connexions, and temporal interests,—to our conscience, peace, and eternal concerns,—to the church of God, and the world around us; and to place ourselves, by an effort of the imagination, in those very circumstances in which we should be, were the sin committed, and the infatuation vanished; and to consider what our judgment and feelings in that case would be. We should also treat all expectations of secrecy and impunity as the delusions of Satan. From our Judge we can conceal nothing; and secreting our offences from our fellow-criminals will avail us very little, since we may be sure our iniquity will at length find us out. (Note, Num. 32:23.) We should also accustom ourselves to self-dinial and patient waiting: for the blessings that God reserves for his people are like fruit, which will be wholesome when it has had time to ripen, but will certainly be noxious if greedily and prematurely gathered.—When we are conscious that we have sinned, we should ingenuously confess our guilt; and if the matter requires it, we should glorify God and take shame to ourselves, by an open acknowledgment of our crimes, and justify him in all the punishments which we now endure: for, blessed be his name, through him who was made a curse for us, all manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to the true penitent. But even when final condemnation is escaped, what terrible effects does sin produce! What fatal consequences often ensue in this world, to the sinner himself, and to all connected with him! How "one sinner destroyeth much good!" What will then be the wrath to come! Let us take warning, and without delay flee from it to Jesus, the sinner's Friend.—Finally, though atrocious criminals should be punished with unrelenting firmness, and all should unite in protesting against their crimes; yet their misery should not be

CHAPTER III.

Joshua encouraged and instructed by God to form an ambushment against Ai. The city is taken and destroyed with the inhabitants, its king hanged up, and the spoil divided, 9-29. An altar is built on Beth-el, sacrifices are offered, the law is written on stones, and the blessings and curses pronounced, as Moses had commanded, 30-35.

AND the LORD said unto Joshua; "Fear not, neither be thou dismayed; take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: ¹see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.

2 And thou shalt do to Ai and her king, as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: ²only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves. ³Lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

3 So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away ⁴by night.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, ⁵even behind the city; ⁶hgo not very far from the city, but be ye all ready:

5 And I, and all the people that ⁷are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, ⁸that we will flee before them,

6 (For they will come out after us,) till we have ⁹drawn them from the city; for they will say, ¹⁰They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.

7 Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: ¹¹for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.

8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, ¹²that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. ¹³See, I have commanded you.

9 ¶ Joshua therefore sent them forth; and they went to lie in ambush, and abode ¹⁴between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua ¹⁵lodged that night among the people.

10 And Joshua arose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

11 And ¹⁶all the people, ¹⁷even the people of war that ¹⁸were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now ¹⁹there was a valley between them and Ai.

12 And he took about ²⁰five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai on the west side of the city.

13 And when they had set the people, ²¹even all the host that ²²was on the north of the city, and their ²³liers in wait ²⁴on the west of the city; Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

14 And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw ²⁵it, that they hastened and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but ²⁶he wist not that ²⁷there were liers in ambush against him behind the city.

15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled ²⁸by the way of the wilderness.

16 And all the people that ²⁹were in Ai were ³⁰called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were ³¹drawn away from the city.

17 And there was not ³²a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, ³³"Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he ³⁴had in his hand toward the city.

19 And ³⁵the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hastened, and set the city on fire.

20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, ³⁶the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven; and they had no ³⁷power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.

21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.

22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they ³⁸let none of them remain or escape.

23 And ³⁹the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

a See on 7:6, 7, 9. Deut. 1:21, 7:18, 31:8. Ps. 27:1, 46:11. Is. 12:2, 41:10-16, 42:2, Jer. 46:27. Matt. 8:26. b See on 6:2. Ps. 44:3. 1. Sam. 2:21, 37:38, 4:25, 35, c 24, 28, 29. See on 6:21, 10:1-28. Deut. 3:2, d 57. Deut. 20:14, Job 27:16, 17, J. 38:6. Prov. 13:22, 28:20. Jer. 17:11. Luke 12:20, 21. e 7:9, 12:14, 19. Judg. 9:25-33, 2 Chr. 13:13, 20:22. Jer. 51:15. f Matt. 24:39, 50, 25:6. f. Thea. 5:2, 2 Pet. 3:16, 18. g 1 Cor. 9:25, 2 Cor. 10:3, 1. Sam. 15:2, 3. Acts 2:21. h Ec. 7:19, 14:14. i Job 41:31. Matt. 10:16. h. Heb. 11:34, 15:9. Judg. 20:32, 33. j 5:11, 9:12. k See on 1. 2 Kings 7:1, Prov. 21:36, 31:1, 25, 6:24. m 19, 16. Ps. 5:6, d 2 Sam. 13:28. n 12, 7:2. Gen. 12:9. Heb. Ex. 2:

28. Neh. 7:32. o Gen. 32:21. p See on 3:1, 6:12, 7:16. Ps. 119:60. q See on 1-5. r See on 2:3. t Or, of Ai. 1 Heb. lying in wait. s 5:12, t 5:16. u Judg. 20:34. Ec. 9:12. Dan. 4:31. Matt. 24:39, 50. 1. Thea. 5:1-3, 2 Pet. 2:3. x 19:12, y 19:20, z 20:36-39, z 5:6. Judg. 20:31. Ps. 50:16. Ez. 38:11-22. Rev. 16:14, 18:19-21. a 3:24, 25, 11:20. Deut. 2:30. Job 5:13. Is. 19:11-13. b 7:26. Ex. 8:5, 17:11. Job 15:25, c 6-8. d Gen. 19:28, Is. 31:10. Rev. 19:9, 19:3. e Job 11:20. Ps. 48:5, 76:5. Am. 2:14-16. Rev. 6:13-17. f Heb. hand. f 6:21, 10:28, 11:11, 12. Deut. 7:2. Job 20:5. Luke 17:26-30. 1. Thea. 5:3. g 29, 10:17, 1 Sam. 15:8. Rev. 19:20.

insulted, nor their immortal souls forgotten: but calm exhortations, serious instructions, and compassionate exhortations, should be used to bring them to repentance, that they may obtain mercy from God, in a future world; and every method should be adopted, which can render the example of public justice productive of as deep and durable an impression as possible, upon the minds of the survivors.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Jericho had been taken by miracle, without danger or fatigue; in order to teach the people to depend on God, and to give him the glory of all their success. But they seem to have inferred that they might despise their enemies and indulge themselves. (Note, 7:3-5.) They were therefore in the next instance instructed, that diligence, self-denial, and the exertion of all their powers, both of body and mind were required, in order to secure success; and the whole force of Israel was commanded to march against this small city. Some think, however, that this was ordered, that all might equally share the spoil.—An ambush was also to be formed, by the command of God himself; for it was as lawful to outwit their enemies, as to overpower them. No treaties were violated, no oaths broken, no falsehoods uttered; and it cannot be requisite to inform our enemies of our intentions and purposes, however they may be deceived by appearances. But perjuries, lies, and infractions of treaties, cannot, in any war or in any case, be allowable or excusable. (Notes, 2:4-6. 9:19, 20. 2 Sam. 21:1-3. Ez. 17:15-21. 21:25-27.)

V. 9-12. There is some difficulty in determining, whether the thirty thousand men, first mentioned, (3, 4.) at length assaulted the city openly, whilst only the five thousand lay in

ambush; or whether the whole force of Israel appeared in arms against Ai, and the thirty thousand formed one ambushment, and the five thousand formed a second in another place. But the latter opinion agrees best with the narrative.

V. 13, 14. After the first party was sent to lie in ambush, a whole day seems to have been spent in making preparations; and every thing being ready, Joshua during the next night drew up his army in the valley, and so was seen in the morning by the king of Ai.

V. 17. Greater infatuation cannot be imagined, than upon so trifling an advantage as the former, (7:4, 5.) and so slight an appearance of further success as the present, to leave the cities defenceless that they might pursue a numerous army! But the Canaanites were left to be blinded by pride, obstinacy, and rage against Israel, in order to their more speedy destruction. (Notes, 3:2, 9:1, 2. 11:19, 20.)—The king and people of Beth-el appear to have been confederate with those of Ai, and to have been subdued and destroyed at the same time.

V. 18. Joshua stretched forth his hand with the spear, perhaps with some flag upon it, at the time when God commanded him: probably it was a preconcerted signal to those who were in ambush, expected by some appointed to watch for it: and it was an especial token of the divine assistance. He seems to have remained upon some eminence, in the sight of the Israelites, during the battle; and to have persevered in holding up his spear, till all the enemies were destroyed; as Moses had done with his rod, during Joshua's conflict with the Amalekites. (26. Note, Ez. 17:8-13.)—Thus Joshua conquered by seeming to yield: and this has been accommodated to Christ, when "by death he overcame him who had the power

24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.

25 And so it was that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai.

26 For Joshua drew not his hand back, where-with he stretched out the spear until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city, Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD, which he commanded Joshua.

28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day.

29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until even-tide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

30 Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel, in mount Ebal;

31 As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lifted up any iron:

h 10:30-41. 11:10-14. Num. 21:24. 118. Ex. 17:11, 12. k 2. 11:14. Num. 31:22-26. Ps. 50:10. Matt. 20:15. 1 Dent. 13:16. 2 Kings 19:25. Is. 17:1. 25. 2 Jer. 9:11. 19:2. 50:26. Mic. 3:12. m See on 4:9. a 10:18, 28, 30, 33. Dent. 21:23. Josh. 7:1. Is. 17:10. 11:5. 12:23. Rev. 19:17, 18. e 10:27. p 7. 26. 3. Gen. 14:15. q Gen. 8:10. 12:7, 8. e 33. Dent. 11:28. 27:4-6, 13. e 34:25. 1:8. 2 Kings 11:5. 2:8. 21:10. 27:4. 35:12. Ex. 6:18. Neh. 13:1. Mark 12:26. 1:18. 2:23. e 27:5. 1 Kings 15:31, 32. u Ex. 18:12. 24:5. Dent. 27:6. x Dent. 27:4, 5. y 25:2. 21:1. Dent. 27:12, 13. 29:10, 11. z 3:3, 6, 14. 4:10, 18.

of death," deprived the king of terrors of power to hurt his people, and prepared the way for the utter destruction of this last enemy.

V. 25. The men of Beth-el, who aided those of Ai, seem not to be included in this number.

V. 27. Thus the people began to receive a gracious recompense for their self-denial, in refraining from the devoted spoil of Jericho; Achan having already received the just punishment of his sacrilege.

V. 28. When a few houses had been set on fire, the flame and smoke would suffice to convince the men of Ai of their desperate situation. But after the Israelites had plundered the city, the whole was burnt down, and left to be a perpetual desolation; and the ruins continued as a proof of the transaction, till the close of Joshua's life, and probably long after, though we read of a city of nearly the same name in Nehemiah. (Neh. 11:31. *Aija*, or *Aiya*.)

V. 29. The kings of Canaan lay under the same curse as their subjects, and probably were more deeply criminal. The reserving of the king of Ai for a solemn execution, would tend to strike terror into the other kings, contribute to the success of Israel, and give their proceedings the stamp of a judicial process, and of executing the vengeance of God upon his enemies. (Notes, 10:24. 1 Sam. 15:32, 33. Is. 24:21, 22.)

V. 30-35. (Notes, Deut. 11:29, 30. 27.) As soon as Joshua found access to the mountains, Gerizim and Ebal, which the Lord had appointed; he without delay, and notwithstanding the unsettled state of Israel, and the machinations of their enemies, proceeded to renew the ratification of the covenant between the Lord and his people, as it had been commanded by Moses. Accordingly he built the occasional altar, (Marg. Ref. t.) and offered the instituted sacrifices; writing the law, or the prescribed abstracts from it, on the plastered stones; proclaiming the blessings and curses from the two mountains, according to the appointed form; and reading over the whole law to all the people.—It is evident, that the books of Moses, as written by him, are here repeatedly spoken of as extant at the time of this transaction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-22. When sin is repented of, and put away as "an accursed thing," we may expect encouragement, and a blessing from our reconciled God and Father: and the more we fear him with filial reverence, and dread to offend him, the less need have we to "fear what man can do unto us."—When we truly believe, and rightly understand, that "without the LORD we can do nothing," that our sufficiency and success must come from him, and that all the glory must be rendered to him; we shall be far from lying down in supineness and self-indulgent sloth; on the contrary, we shall be excited to use, with all diligence and perseverance, every commanded and allowable means; and to seek the help and blessing of God to render them effectual. Ined inactivity,

and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

33 And 'all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark, and on that side, before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well as the stranger as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

CHAPTER IX.

The kings of Canaan confederate against Israel, 1, 2. The Gibeonites by fraud obtain a covenant of peace, 3-15. The fraud is detected; yet their lives are spared on the account of the oath sworn to them, 16-21. They are made bond-servants, and willingly submit, 22-27.

AND it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof,

6:6. Dent. 31:9, 25. 1 Chr. 15:11-13. a Ex. 12:49. Lev. 24:22. Num. 15:16, 29. b See on 3:2. c Dent. 31:10-12. Neh. 8:2, 3. 13:1. d Lev. 26: Dent. 27:14-26. 28:20, 21. 30:19. e Dent. 4:2. Jer. 26:2. Acts 20:27. f Dent. 29:11. Ezra 10:1. Neh. 8:2. Joel 2:16. Mark 10:14. Acts 21:5. g Heb. walked. a 10:2-5, 23, 28-39. 11:5-10, 11. 13:7-24. b 1:15. 3:17. 5:1. 22:4, 7. Dent. 4:49. e 1:14. 15:12. 23:4. Num. 34:6. d 11:17. 12:7. 13:5. Dent. 3:25. e 24:11. Gen. 15:18-21. Ex. 3:17. 23:23, 31. 34:11. Dent. 7:1.

because we can do nothing of ourselves, when the Lord has promised effectual help to those who call upon him, must be the effect of man's perverseness and Satan's suggestions, thus wresting the Scriptures from their most obvious meaning: for in all other important concerns, common sense teaches us, that the less we can do of ourselves, the more need we have to seek the help, and to observe the directions of those who are able and disposed to assist us. And thus to be diligent and earnest with all our heart and soul in seeking salvation, resisting temptation and striving against sin, is true Christian wisdom, and the due medium between the extremes to which human nature is prone: for in such an arduous conflict, we need both exertion and much assistance, and they who speak as if a little exertion and a little help might suffice, know nothing experimentally of the warfare.—In every undertaking, prudent counsel is as conducive to success, as vigorous exertion; and on some occasions well-timed yielding secures the advantage better than pertinacious opposition.—They who "honour the LORD with their substance," and are not in haste to be rich, will eventually be no losers; yet Christians must wait till they arrive at the heavenly Canaan to receive their full reward: and there they will enjoy their everlasting portion, when that of worldlings will be spent, and their souls fixed in utter misery. Indeed "the prosperity of fools destroys them," and their short-lived presumptuous rejoicing will speedily end in lamentations, and mourning, and we.—As the Lord gives wisdom to those whom he loves, and means to prosper; so he infatuates those who have filled up the measure of their iniquity.

V. 23-35. It is our duty to reverence the aged, to honour those who are placed in authority over us, and to compassionate the weak and helpless, the feeble sex and tender age; but the Judge of all the earth will involve all the impenitent in one common condemnation, without any other distinction, than that of their different degrees of guilt; so that they who have abused the greatest abilities, riches, or authority, will be distinguished by the largest measure of divine vengeance.—However busy, unsettled, or exposed we are, the concerns of religion must have our first attention; and if we "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things else shall be added unto us." In doing this we must rest our hope on the atonement of the great Redeemer; and keep the holy law of God continually before us, as the rule of our grateful obedience. We must remember the awful curses of the old covenant, to quicken our pace in fleeing to the refuge which is appointed us, to keep alive the salutary fears of coming short, and to restrain us from sin in an hour of temptation. But we must embrace and plead the precious promises of the new covenant, for our encouragement, in denying ourselves and bearing the cross. We ought also to instruct our families, and train up our children in the knowledge of these most important subjects; and speak of them freely even to

2 That they 'gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua, and with Israel, with one accord.

3 And when the inhabitants of 'Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto 'Jericho and to Ai,

4 They did 'work wilily, and went, and made as if they had been ambassadors; and took old sacks upon their asses, and 'wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up;

5 And 'old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

6 And they went to Joshua unto 'the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, 'We be come from a far country; now therefore make ye a league with us.

7 And the men of Israel said unto 'the Hivites, Feradventure ye dwell among us: and 'how shall we make a league with you?

8 And they said unto Joshua, 'We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?

f 2 Chr. 20:1. Ps. 21:2. 83:2-8. Prov. 11:21. Is. 8:9,10,12. Joel 3:9-13. Acts 4:26-28. Rev. 16:14. 20:8,9. * Heb. *mouth*. g 17. 10:2. 2 Sam. 21:1,2. h 6:8. i Gen. 34:18. 1 Kings 20:31-33. Matt. 10:16. Luke 16:8. k Ps. 119:83. Matt. 9:17. Mark 2:22. Luke 5:37,38. l 13. Deut. 29:5. 33:25. Luke 15:22. m 510. 10:43. n 1. 1. Gen. 2:1-15. 1 Kings 8:41. 2 Kings 20:14. o 11:18. Gen. 10:17. 34:2. Ex. 3:8. p Ex. 23:31-33. 34:12. Num. 33:52. Deut. 7:2,3. 20:16. Judg. 2:2. q 11:23,25,27. Gen. 9:25,26. Deut. 20:11. 1 Kings 9:20,21.

strangers, who are conversant among us. Happy are they, who begin early in life to attend to them: for in their declining age they may look back with comfort to their early engagements, and the unnumbered benefits which they have derived from them.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. The inhabitants of Canaan in general must have heard, that the Israelites had passed over Jordan, and commenced hostilities: and in particular, that they had destroyed Jericho and Ai; and solemnly covenanted with JEHOVAH, as if already in possession of the country. Had they not been intimidated or infatuated, they would with combined force have opposed the passage of Israel over Jordan: but after all the miracles which had been wrought, an accommodation, if possible, was the only thing which they could reasonably attempt. (Notes, 3-5. 51.) From this, however, they were withheld by a desperate obstinacy and rage; and being ripe for vengeance, they were left to be hardened, and blindly to rush upon destruction of their own accord.—They confederated together at this time; but subsequent events seem to have deranged their first plans, and delayed their proceedings. The varied expressions here used, include the inhabitants of the land to the utmost western and northern borders. As the Girgashites are not mentioned in the history of the subsequent wars, (3:10, 24:11.) it has been concluded that they generally emigrated after the fall of Jericho.—This might indeed be the case; but the tradition of one of their Rabbies, quoted by Selden, that three letters were written by Joshua, before the invasion of the land by Israel, purporting, 'Let those who choose to flee, flee; let those that choose peace, enter into treaty; let those that choose war, take up arms': that in consequence of this, the Girgashites, believing the power of God, fled away retreating into Africa:—this, I say, has no foundation in Scripture, and is by no means consistent with the narrative there given. See *Graves on the Pentateuch*, Vol. II. pp. 43, 44.

V. 3-5. The Gibeonites had heard of the late destruction of Jericho and Ai, with the slaughter of all the inhabitants, as well as of the former miracles wrought in Egypt; and also of the destruction of Og and Sihon, with their subjects. (9:10.) They had also learned, that the Israelites were commanded to destroy all the inhabitants of the land, without entering into any league with them, or giving quarter; and that the Lord had expressly promised to give them the victory over them all. (24.) The other inhabitants of the land likewise had heard the same, and were thus rendered the more determined in their opposition: but the Gibeonites, or at least some of their principal men, (for it does not appear that they had a king,) were induced to believe that the word of the Lord would certainly be accomplished, and that all opposition would be unavailing; and they concluded, that the only prospect of safety lay in an accommodation, upon any terms. Had they cast themselves, without reserve, upon the mercy of Israel, and of Israel's God, there is no doubt that they would have been spared, as Rahab and her relations had been: for though the Lord would not allow his people to make exceptions to his general rule of destroying the Canaanites, for their own ease and emolument, by forming alliances with them while they continued idolaters; yet in this and all other cases, he was ready to favour those who trusted in his mercy. The Gibeonites, however, not being acquainted with this limitation, and interpreting the general command in its utmost rigour, despaired of being preserved, if they were detected; but they supposed, that if they could bring the rulers of Israel under the bond of an oath, even by means of deception, that

9 And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come, 'because of the name of the Lord thy God: for 'we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

10 And all that he did to the 'two kings of the Amorites that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at 'Ashtaroth.

11 Wherefore our elders, and all the inhabitants of our country, spake to us, saying, 'Take victuals 'with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, 'We are your servants; therefore now make ye a league with us.

12 This 'our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:

13 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new, and behold they be rent; and these our garments and our shoes are become old, by reason of the very long journey.

14 And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.

2 Kings 10:5. r 1 Kings 8:41. 2 Chr. 6:32,33. Neh. 9:5. Ps. 72:19. 83:18. 148. 13:1. 55:5. s 24. 2:9,10. Ex. 9:16. 15:14. Num. 14:15. Is. 66:19. t Num. 21:24-25. Deut. 2:30-37. 3:1-7. u 12:4. Deut. 1:4. 1 Chr. 6:71. x 1:11. Matt. 10:9,10. Luke 9:3. 1 Heb. in your hand. Gen. 43:12. y See on 8. Esth. 8:17. z See on 4:5. 1 17. they received the men by reason of their victuals. a Ex. 28:20. Num. 27:21. Judg. 13:1. 20:18,28. 1 Sam. 14:15,19. 22:10. 23:5-12. 30:7,8. 2 Sam. 2:1. 5:19. 1 Chr. 10:14. Ezra 8:21. Prov. 3:5,6. Is. 30:2. Jam. 1:5.

oath would secure them from death. Accordingly they formed a stratagem, which cannot be vindicated; though it may admit of some excuse, from their imminent danger, and from their ignorance of the divine law: and they succeeded according to their expectation.—The supposition of some expositors, that these Gibeonites had before this refused terms of peace when offered them, is not only unsupported by facts but it is contrary to the general tenor of the narration.—The ambassadors, probably, were the chief persons among them, but they pretended to be sent by some foreign princes; and, according to the customs of those days, when inns at regular stages were not known, and consequently men took with them provisions for their journey, as is now done for a voyage; they fitted themselves out in such a manner, that they appeared to have come from a very distant country, to show that their provisions were either exhausted or spoiled by the length of their journey, and even their clothes and vessels worn out. No doubt the several circumstances were artfully devised, and appeared very plausible to Joshua and Israel; though we cannot so well judge of them by modern manners and customs.

V. 7. God had forbidden Israel to enter into a league with any of the devoted nations. (*Marg. Ref. p.*) An equal league, say many learned men: but the Scripture makes no such distinction. Indeed an agreement to spare the lives of such persons or tribes, as chose either to leave the country: or, renouncing idolatry, resigning all their possessions, and submitting to be slaves, to continue among the Israelites; is the only league, which it is supposed might be made with them. But even this does not appear to have been proposed to them beforehand.—*Hivites.* *Marg. Ref. o.*

V. 8-11. The ambassadors probably meant to insinuate, that the Israelites had never heard the name of their country, because of its great distance; though their countrymen had so far off heard the report of the works which God had wrought for his people, in desolating Egypt and rescuing them, and in destroying before them the kings of the Amorites. And they stated, that these reports had so impressed their minds, as to render them greatly desirous of their friendship; that for this purpose they had undertaken a very fatiguing journey; and that the nation was willing to become the tributaries of Israel, if they might in return have security that they should not be destroyed at any future period, by their increasing power and spreading dominion.—At the same time, they artfully avoided mentioning the passage of Israel over Jordan, and the destruction of Jericho and Ai; as willing it should be understood, that they had not yet heard of these more recent miracles and successes.—The address was well calculated to insinuate itself into the minds of the Israelites, who would doubtless be gratified with the thought of being so renowned, that their power was dreaded, and their friendship courted, by distant nations: while the favour of Joshua, and of the more pious among them, would be conciliated by the respectful mention which they made of the name and works of JEHOVAH; especially as it had been foretold that these miracles should produce this effect. (Notes, 2 Sam. 14:13-20. 15:7-9. Prov. 29:5.)

V. 14, 15. Joshua and the chief persons in Israel, having examined the provisions of the pretended ambassadors, hastily concluded, that the state of them corroborated the account which they had given; and without further hesitation entered into league with them, and by oath engaged that, instead of destroying, they would protect the people whom they represented. This precipitate treaty, entered into with strangers

15 And Joshua ^bmade peace with them, and made a league with them to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of three days, after they had made a league with them, ^cthat they heard that they ^dwere their neighbours, and ^ethat they dwelt among them.

17 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities ^fwere ^gGibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, ^hand Kirjath-jearim.

18 And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation ⁱhad sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.

19 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, ^jWe have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore, we may not touch them.

20 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, ^klest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore unto them.

21 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers

of water unto all the congregation; ^las the princes had promised them.

22 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, ^mWherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, ⁿWe are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?

23 Now therefore ye ^oare ^pcursed; and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

24 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that ^qthe LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

25 And now, behold, ^rwe are in thine hand: ^sas it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.

26 And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

27 And Joshua ^tmade them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, ^uin the place which he should choose.

12:12-19, 6:20-25, 11:19, 14:20, 20:10-11, 28:18, 21:21, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1, 101:1, 102:1, 103:1, 104:1, 105:1, 106:1, 107:1, 108:1, 109:1, 110:1, 111:1, 112:1, 113:1, 114:1, 115:1, 116:1, 117:1, 118:1, 119:1, 120:1, 121:1, 122:1, 123:1, 124:1, 125:1, 126:1, 127:1, 128:1, 129:1, 130:1, 131:1, 132:1, 133:1, 134:1, 135:1, 136:1, 137:1, 138:1, 139:1, 140:1, 141:1, 142:1, 143:1, 144:1, 145:1, 146:1, 147:1, 148:1, 149:1, 150:1, 151:1, 152:1, 153:1, 154:1, 155:1, 156:1, 157:1, 158:1, 159:1, 160:1, 161:1, 162:1, 163:1, 164:1, 165:1, 166:1, 167:1, 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CHAPTER X.

Five kings were against Gibeon, 1-5. At the request of the Gibeonites Joshua came to assist them; and, being encouraged by God, he routes the enemy with great slaughter; while still greater numbers are destroyed by hail-stones. 6-11. At Joshua's word the sun and moon stand still, 12-15. The five kings are discovered in a cave, and shut up there, till at length they are nominously put to death, 16-21. Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, a taken and destroyed, with the king of Gezer, and many others, 22-42. The army returns to Gilgal, 43.

NOW it came to pass, when ^aAdoni-zedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; (^bas he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and ^chow the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

2 That ^dthey feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of ^ethe 'royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.

3 Wherefore Adoni-zedek ^fking of Jerusalem, sent unto Hoham king of ^gHebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of ^hLachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,

4 Come up unto me, ⁱand help me, that ^jwe may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua, and with the children of Israel.

a Gen. 14.13. Heb. 7:12. b 6:21. 8:22-29. c 9:15-27. 11:19,20. d 2:9-13, 24. E. 15:14-16. Deut. 11:25. 23:10. Ps. 48:4-6. Prov. 1:26,27. 10:24. Heb. 10:27,31. Rev. 6:15-17. e 1 Sam. 27:5. 2 Sam. 12:26. f Heb. cities of the kingdom. 1:15. 12:10-13. 15:35,39,41,63. 18:26. g 14:15. Gen. 23:2. 37:14. Num. 13:22. 2 Sam. 2:11. h 2 Kings 18:14,17. 2 Chr. 11:9. Mic. 1:13. 1:18. 9:10. 41:3-7. Acts 19:24-27. 21:28. Rev. 16:17. 20:8-10. k 9:15. Matt. 11:9. 16:1. John 15:19. 16:2,3. Acts 9:23. 2 Tim. 3:12. Jam. 4:4. 1 Pet. 4:4. 16. See

come," and to seek shelter from the threatening storm, only increase the enmity and desperation of others.—When the consciences of sinners are first alarmed with the dread of wrath, and filled with the anguish of remorse, they are generally actuated by a "spirit of bondage." (*Note, Rom. 8:14-17.*) and being greatly ignorant of God, of his law, and his gospel of rich grace abounding even to the chief of sinners, they frequently seek relief by such methods as only serve to increase their guilt; and their carnal contrivances, and false dependences, are seldom free from assumed appearances and hypocritical pretences, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and do actually impose upon themselves. Yet when there is an evident earnestness to escape the wrath of God, we may confidently expect a happy event; that which began with a large mixture of evil, may yet end well; and sinners, who were under an awful curse, may become blessed and a blessing.

Y. 16-27. The Lord Jesus (the true Joshua) sees through every disguise and abhors all iniquity; yet he will not reject sinners, either on account of former crimes, or of the manifest evil which pollutes their endeavours for salvation. But he will reprove them, and convince them of their guilt; he will bring them to repentance, and shame them out of their secret hypocrisy; he will teach them to trust in his mercy alone; he will save their souls and make them his servants: and though he correct them for their sins, or allot them a low station and hard service in his church; yet he will teach them to acquiesce, and be thankful, and readily to say, "Behold, we are in thy hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do." And indeed, to exchange the highest station in the world, for the meanest place among the servants and in the courts of the Lord, though it appears a degradation, and is a trial, will in due time be found to be very great preferment. (*Note, Ps. 84:10.*) But he overrules many things for his own glory, and the advantage of his church, which are not done according to his commandments, and consequently are not examples for us to imitate.—Though we have been imposed upon, we must not think ourselves at liberty to retaliate: solemn engagements made, even to our hurt, must be conscientiously adhered to: and much allowance should be made for those whose minds are disquieted with the fear of impending ruin, and who have not enjoyed the advantage of good instruction.—But if men, in order to save their lives, are considered as acting reasonably, when they renounce all their interests, stoop to any concessions, accept of any terms, and become willing to endure any hardships: how reasonable is it, that we should be influenced by the fear of eternal punishment, and the hope of everlasting life, to renounce the world, mortify our lusts, deny ourselves, and submit to the cross: to humble and abase ourselves in the very dust before God; and to "count all but dung, that we may win Christ and be found in him?" (*Note, Phil. 3:8-11.*) that we should be in haste to have the covenant of peace ratified to our souls; to cut off the offending limb, and to pluck out the offending eye; and in short, to yield up ourselves to the Lord without reserve, craving only that our souls may be saved, and that he would make us his servants, though in the lowest place, and amidst the greatest hardships! In coming thus to the Saviour, we do not proceed upon a peradventure: we are invited to draw nigh, and are assured that "whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out." But let us take heed, that we come and

5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua ^mto the camp to Gilgal, saying, ⁿ"Slack not thy hand ^ofrom thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the ^pmountains are gathered together against us.

7 So ^qJoshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, ^r"fear them not; for I have delivered them into thine hand: there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal ^sall night.

10 And ^tthe LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter ^uat Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to ^vBeth-horon, and smote them to ^wAzekah, and unto ^xMakkedah.

on 9:1,2. Gen. 15:16. m 5:10. 9:6. n 2 Kings 4:24. o 9:15,24,25. Is. 33:22. p 21:11. Deut. 1:15. Ps. 125:2. Luke 1:39. q Is. 8:12,14. r 1:5-9. 8:1. 11:6. Deut. 3:2. 20:1-4. Judg. 4:14. Ps. 27:1,2. Is. 41:10-15. Rom. 8:31. s 1 Sam. 11:9-11. Prov. 22:29. 24:11-12. Ec. 9:10. 2 Tim. 2:3. 4:2. t 11:8. Judg. 4. 15. 1 Sam. 7:10-12. 2 Chr. 14:12. Ps. 18:14. 44:3. 78:55. u 15:28,31. x 16:3. 5:21,22. 1 Sam. 13:18. y 11. 15:35. Jer. 34:7. z 28. 12:16. 15:41.

cleave to the Lord with an upright heart. We hope indeed that many of the Gibeonites were true believers, though not native Israelites: but we are sure that many who preach, and write, and labour very diligently, and even useful to others, are only "hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation of the LORD," and have no inheritance in Israel, but are themselves castaways.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1-5. Adoni-zedek signifies the lord of righteousness, and this king was probably a descendant, as well as successor of Melchizedek, "the king of righteousness;" though he retained nothing of his progenitor's piety, but the mere name which his conduct belied. It cannot reasonably be doubted, that Jerusalem was the same place as Salem: (*Notes, Gen. 14:18-20. Ps. 76:2.*) and some think it obtained the name Jerusalem, about the time when Israel invaded Canaan.—The kings, whose dominions lay further north, as well as those in the south, had confederated against Israel, and probably were collecting their forces for a general assault: (*Note, 9:1,2.*) but the report of Gibeon's alliance with Joshua, induced these five kings, whose territories lay in the south, and near to the encampment of Israel, dreading the consequences of such an example, and desirous of revenge, to attack the Gibeonites, separately and in haste, that they might crush them, and intimidate others from imitating them; and that so they might be afterwards the more at liberty to attack the Israelites: but they only accelerated and facilitated their own destruction.—Jericho and Ai seem to have been the key of the land; but Gibeon was a larger city, and its inhabitants far more numerous and powerful.—The Gibeonites were among the Israelites, as allied to them and under their protection; but not as living in their camp or quarters.

V. 6. The Gibeonites confided in Joshua and Israel, that they would come to the defence of those, whom they had admitted to be their servants; for subjection entitles to protection: and they so confided in the God of Israel, that they did not doubt of their success in the expedition. But they informed Joshua that no time was to be lost.—The Amorites were the most powerful of the distinct tribes inhabiting Canaan; and therefore all the inhabitants are sometimes called by that general name. For Hebron was occupied by Hittites, and Jerusalem by Jebusites; and even the people of Gibeon, who are generally called Hivites, are also said to be "of the remnant of the Amorites." (*2 Sam. 21:2.*)

V. 7. The headquarters of Israel were still at Gilgal. (*43. Note, 5:10.*) There Joshua left the unarmed multitude, doubtless with a sufficient guard; and marched, with the men of the most approved valour, to defend the Gibeonites against the kings of Canaan.

V. 8. The enemies hitherto encountered were of small force, compared with the troops of these combined kings; and therefore the Lord encouraged Joshua by the assurance of a complete victory.

V. 9, 10. Joshua was an able commander; his army consisted of "mighty men of valour;" his measures were concerted with prudence, and executed with vigour and despatch; he marched all night, attacked the enemy at unawares, and doubtless his troops behaved well: yet the whole victory is ascribed to the Lord. (*Notes, Ps. 44:1-3. 144:10.*)—Their prudence, courage, and strength were his gift; he intimidated and confounded their enemies, and he rendered their measures successful

11 And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones, than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

12 Then spake Joshua to the Lord, in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

13 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

14 And there was no day like that, before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel.

15 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal. *[Practical Observations.]*

16 ¶ But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

18 And Joshua said, "Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them;

19 And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the Lord your God hath delivered them into your hand.

a Gen. 19:21, Judg. 5:20, Ps. 11:6, 18:12, 13, 77:17, 18, Is. 25:2, 30:30, Ez. 13:11, Rev. 11:19, 16:21. b See on 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

V. 11. Hailstones of an enormous size were showered down from above, and directed in so extraordinary a manner by the Lord himself, that they smote and slew the fugitive Canaanites in great multitudes, but did not fall upon any of their pursuers! (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 9:33. Rev. 16:17—21.*)

V. 12—14. Joshua doubtless acted, on this occasion, by an immediate impulse upon his mind from the Spirit of God. He first "spoke to the Lord" in earnest prayer; and then to the sun and moon, as by authority from him, commanding those luminaries to stay their course. This he did publicly before all Israel, that they might hear the charge which he gave, and observe the obedience of these heavenly bodies. It would have been improper either that he should speak, or that the miracle should be recorded, according to the terms of modern astronomy. The sun appeared to the Israelites over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon, which is supposed to have been situated in a different direction: and there they appeared to be stayed in their course for "a whole day;" either for the space of about twelve or fourteen hours, or for the time of one diurnal revolution.—Many inquiries have been made concerning the way in which this miracle was wrought, and many difficulties and objections have been urged against understanding it literally. But the fact, as far as we are concerned about it, is authenticated by the divine testimony; and the manner in which it was accomplished, lies entirely out of our province, because beyond our discovery and comprehension. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" This question forms a sufficient answer to ten thousand difficulties, which puny objectors, under the assumed title of philosophers, have in every age been starting against the truth of God in his written word. (*Note, Gen. 7:10—12.*)—As there are no records of profane history so ancient as this event, it cannot be any cause for wonder, that Pagan authors have not mentioned it. Yet some intimation of it seems given in the fable of Phaeton driving the chariot of the Sun, and throwing all things into disorder, so that there was one day wholly unlike all before or after it.—This extraordinary miracle not only gave Israel an opportunity of completing their victory, but rendered Joshua honourable in the eyes of all the people; and both him and them terrible to the surrounding nations. It was also a public attestation, that the God of Israel was the Lord of the whole earth, and of the heavens; and a protest against idolatry; whilst the sun and moon, the worship of which formed the most ancient and plausible kind of idolatry, were obedient to the commands of the servants of JEHOVAH, the God of Israel. (*Note, Deut. 4:19.*)—The book of Jasher seems to have been a collection of records or poems, concerning the chief events of the wars of Israel. In this collection, it is

20 And it came to pass, when Joshua, and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities.

21 And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace; none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

22 Then said Joshua, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

23 And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

24 And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

25 And Joshua said unto them, "Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

26 And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanged upon the trees until the evening.

27 And it came to pass, at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid,

22, Mic. 7:17, m 22, Judg. 9:46—49, Job 21:30, Am. 5:19, 9:1, Matt. 27:66, n Ps. 18:37—41, Jer. 49:10, 1 Heb. cut off the tail, Is. 9:14, 15, o 20, 2 Sam. 17:13, 20:6, Jer. 8:14, p 10, 8:24, 2 Chr. 13:17, q 15—17, r Ex. 11:7, Is. 54:7, 57:4, s See on 16—18, t See on 1:3, u Levit. 33:29, Judg. 8:20, Ps. 2:8—12, 91:13, 107:40, 110:15, 149:8, 156:5, 60:11, 112, Mal. 4:3, 6:1, 16:20, Rev. 2:26, 27, s See on 1:9, t Levit. 31:6—8, 1 Sam. 17:37, Ps. 63:9, 77:11, 2 Cor. 1:10, 2 Tim. 4:18, y See on Deut. 3:21, 22, 17:3, s Judg. 8:21, Is. 53:3, a 8:29, Num. 25:4, Deut. 21:22, 23, 2 Sam. 21:6, 9, Ezech. 2:23, 7:9, 10, Matt. 27:5, Gal. 3:13, b 2 Sam. 16:17.

probable, there were further particulars concerning this miracle: or a poem on the occasion, well known among the Israelites. (*Notes, Num. 21:11—15. 2 Sam. 1:8.*)

V. 15. It cannot be supposed that Joshua would march his army twenty or thirty miles in the midst of victory, just after the above-mentioned miracle had been wrought, to give them time to complete the destruction of their enemies. (19) This verse therefore forms an evident interruption of the narrative; it is not found in some versions; it is *verbatim* the same as the last verse of the chapter; and probably was inserted here by the error of some ancient transcribers.

V. 16—18. The kings escaped the hailstones and the sword, only to be reserved to a more ignominious death. For the cave, in which they took shelter, became first their prison, and then their grave. (*Notes, 8:29. 2 Kings 19:36, 37.*)

V. 20. A few stragglers escaped the general carnage, and got refuge in the fenced cities, but were soon followed thither and destroyed. Some, however, might flee to fenced cities farther to the north of the land, and at length to Tyre or Zidon; and so finally escape the slaughter. It is probable that numbers, in the more northern regions, thus fled from the sword of Israel; and produced a superabundance of inhabitants in those ancient cities, which made way for the colonies being sent into Africa, which ancient history records; and from which Carthage especially arose, the powerful but unsuccessful rival of Rome. (*Note, Gen. 9:24, 25.*)

V. 21. Probably, a camp was prepared at Makkedah, for the reception and accommodation of the army after the victory, in consequence of the kings being imprisoned in the cave near to it.—No mention is made of any Israelite having been killed, missing, or wounded; though we are particularly informed of the thirty-six men who were slain before Ai: but all are said to have returned in peace to the camp. (*Notes, 7:3—5. Num. 31:48—54.*) It may therefore be concluded, that every one was preserved; and the victory was so complete, that there was none who dared so much as to speak a word in contempt or reproach of the Israelites. (*Note, Ez. 11:7.*)

V. 24, 25. This action of the captains was not intended as a personal insult to the kings; but they subscribed, as it were, their condemnation as the hardened enemies of God, and doomed by him to ignominy and destruction: as rejoicing in his victory and triumph over them, and as taking encouragement respecting the remaining kings of Canaan. (*Marg. Ref. v, x.*)—The transaction was evidently typical of the conquests of the Redeemer, as rejoiced in by his people; who, in overcoming their spiritual enemies by his help, anticipate that glorious season, when all his and their 'des sha' be put

and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day,

28 ¶ And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, *them, and all the souls that were therein*; he let none remain: *and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.*

29 Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah:

30 And the Lord delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein: he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof *as he did unto the king of Jericho.*

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

32 And the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish: and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him, and they encamped against it, and fought against it:

35 And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword; and all the souls that

were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron, and they fought against it:

37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that *were* therein: he left none remaining, (according to all that he had done to Eglon,) but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that *were* therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir: and fought against it:

39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, *as the Lord God of Israel commanded.*

41 And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen even unto Gibeon.

42 And all these kings, and their land, did Joshua take at one time; *because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.*

43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

See Gen. 4:9, 2:25, d 32, 35, 37, 39, 6:21, Deut. 7:2, 16, 20, 16, 17, Ps. 21:6, 9, 110:1, Luke 19:27, 1 Cor. 15:25, e 30, 3:2, f 12:15, 15:42, 21:13, 2 Kings 8:22, 19:8, Jer. 52:1, g 24, 6:21, 8:2, 29, h 3:5, 12:11, 15:39, 2 Kings 19:8, 2 Chr. 11:9, Mic. 1:13, i 12, 12, 16, 3:10, 21:21, Judg. 1:29, 1 Kings 9:16, 17, 1 Chr. 6:17, 2:34, k 3, 12:12, 15:39, l 32, m 37, Lev. 26:44, Job 19:10, n 8:5, 14:13, 13:51, 21:13, Gen. 13:18, Num. 13:22, Judg. 1:10, 2 Sam. 5:1—5, 15:9, 10, 1 Chr. 12:23, o 12:13, 15:13, 49, 21:15, Judg. 1:11—15, p 33, 37, 40, 11:8, Deut.

3:3, 2 Kings 10:11, Ob. 18, q 15:21—63, 18:21—28, 19:1—8, 40—48, r 35, 37, 1 Kings 15:29, Ps. 9:17, 2 The. 1:7, 3, s 6:17, t 3:27, 9:24, Ex. 23:31—33, 34:12, Deut. 7:2, 16, 20, 16, 17, 21:13, 15:42, Num. 13:25, 32:8, 34:4, Deut. 9:23, o Gen. 10:19, Judg. 16:21, 1 Sam. 6:17, Zech. 9:5, Acts 8:26, x 11:16, 15:51, y 14, Ex. 14:11, 25, Ps. 44:3—8, 46:7, 11, 80:3, 113:6, 1a, 8:9, 10, 13:4, Rom. 8:31—37, z 15, 4:19, 1 Sam. 11:14.

under his feet. (Notes, Gen. 3:14, 15, Ps. 110:5, 6, Rom. 16:17—20.)

V. 26, 27. *Marg. Ref. Note, 8:29.*

V. 28. Makkedah seems to have been taken by a sudden onset, the very day on which the other victory was obtained, and which had been lengthened out by the sun standing still: and while the five kings were ignominiously suspended before the city.—Some learned men however think, that nothing more is meant by the words *that day*, than that Makkedah was taken on the same day on which it was assaulted.—We are not expressly told, how the king of Jericho was slain: but probably he was hanged up, as the king of Ai was, and as these five kings were. (Notes, 8:29.)

V. 31—33. The king of Lachish had been before put to death. (23:26.)—Probably a detachment vanquished the king of Gezer, and destroyed his people, while Joshua and the main body took Lachish.

V. 36, 37. The king of Hebron was one of the five before hanged: (23:26.) but, as some time had now elapsed, probably his successor had been appointed. This might be deemed the more necessary, as it was a considerable place, having other cities dependent upon it.—It is not agreed, whether Caleb at this time conquered the Anakims, or whether some of them now escaped to Gaza; (Notes, 11:21—23.) and afterwards returning got possession of Hebron, and were destroyed by Caleb when the land had been divided. The latter opinion seems more consonant with the history. (Notes, 14:6—15, 15:13, 14, Judg. 1:10—15.)

V. 40—43. When the Israelites had first passed Jordan, they made but slow progress. Jericho was taken by miracle; but the city was desolated, and all the spoil was destroyed, or dedicated to sacred uses. (Notes, 6:17—19, 26.) They shared the spoil of Ai, but the city was burnt and made a heap. (Note, 8:28.) Gibeon surrendered and was spared. (Notes, 9.) But when their faith, patience, and obedience had been properly proved, their success was more rapid; and they were enriched by the spoil of all these cities, and by the houses both of the cities and villages, which were preserved for their use; and by the acquisition of all the adjacent country, and its flocks, and herds, and crops, and stores; while the inhabitants were either destroyed or driven away. Thus God gave them "great and goodly cities, which they built not; houses full of good things, which they filled not: and wells digged, which they digged not." (Deut. 6:10, 11.)—The Israelites, however, still continued in a body at Gilgal, and did not as yet inhabit their cities.—They had now conquered almost all the southern part of the land.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15. When sinners renounce the service of Satan and the friendship of the world, that they may make peace with God and join interests with Israel; they must not "marvel if the world hate them," if their former friends become

their most rancorous foes, and if they meet with unexpected opposition and temptations. For thus Satan the God of this world discourages many who are convinced of their danger, and almost persuaded to be Christians; but are so afraid of the cross, that they dare not venture to act according to the dictates of their consciences. Yet indeed these trials should excite new converts to greater diligence, in seeking the comfortable assurance that the covenant of peace is ratified with them by a merciful God; in surrendering themselves the more unreservedly to his service; and in applying to him for protection and deliverance. For the meanest and most feeble of those who have just begun to serve the Lord, notwithstanding former crimes and present infirmities, are equally entitled to his defence, with those who have long and faithfully been his servants.—They, who are enemies to the Lord's people because they belong to him, are adjudged his enemies: nor do any sinners more hasten and augment their own condemnation, than such as combine to impede the progress of true religion, by persecuting and intimidating those who seem disposed to serve God.—No difficulties or dangers need dismay the believer, when in the path of duty and confiding in the Lord: and it is peculiarly incumbent upon us to defend and rescue the oppressed and afflicted, who have exposed themselves to trouble for our sake or the gospel's, and who look to us for help. In such a cause we ought not to be backward to endure hardship and fatigue, and expose ourselves to loss or inconvenience, rather than grieve, by needless delays, those who depend on our aid.—The assurance of divine assistance should animate us to action, and to devise and execute every proper plan to ensure success; and when we trust in the Lord, and give him the praise, we shall experience assistance in some measure proportioned to our boldness and diligence.—The sun, moon, and stars in their courses, (Note, Judg. 5:20.) yea, the whole creation, will fight for the Lord's people against his enemies, though not so miraculously, yet as effectually, as in the days of Joshua; for all things combine to promote the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked. How infatuated then are they who harden their hearts against that God, whose mandate can arm all the universe to execute vengeance on his enemies!

V. 16—43. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished:" their wisest counsels prove a snare to entangle them; their most valiant and vigorous exertions expose their weakness, and end in disgrace and dismay; their choicest blessings are changed into a curse; and their secure retreats become their prisons, or their graves.—Kings and mighty captains, who are disobedient to God, will at last be treated as arch-rebels, to be distinguished only by the deepest infamy and the heaviest vengeance: and all the Israel of God will join the triumph of the Captain of their salvation, in trampling upon the necks of their proudest opposers, and exclaiming, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord!" (Ps. 109:1, Ps.

CHAPTER XI.

The remaining kings of Canaan confederate against Israel, 1-5. God encourages Joshua, who attacks and conquers them, 6-9. He burns Hazor, and takes the cities of the other kings, and destroys the inhabitants in obedience to the Lord, 10-15. A general account of his conquests, 16-18. The hearts of the Canaanites hardened, 19, 20. The Anakims destroyed, 21, 22. The land rests from war, 23.

AND it came to pass, when ^aJabin king of ^bHazor had heard *those things*, that ^che sent to Jobab king of ^dMadon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph.

2 And to the kings that *were* ^eon the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of ^fChinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of ^gDor on the west:

3 And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and ^hthe Jebusite in the mountains, and to ⁱthe Hivite under ^jHermion, in ^kthe land of Mizpeh.

4 And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even ^las the sand that *is* upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

5 And when ^mall these kings were ⁿmet together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

6 And the LORD said unto Joshua, ^oBe not afraid because of them; for ^pto-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel:

a 10. 12:19. 19:36. Judg. 4:2, 17. b 10:34. Ps. 2:1-4. 83:1-3. Is. 26:11. 32:2, 5-7. c 11:29, 20. 19:15, 25. d 21. 10:6, 40. Luke 1:39. e 12:3. Seeon Num. 34:11. Chinnereth. Luke 5:1. Gennesareth. f 12:35. 17:11. Judg. 1:27. 1 Kings 4:11. g 15:9, 13. Num. 13:29. 2 Sam. 24:16. h 10:33. 13:11. 15:11. 17:11. 18:11. 19:11. 20:11. 21:11. 22:11. 23:11. 24:11. 25:11. 26:11. 27:11. 28:11. 29:11. 30:11. 31:11. 32:11. 33:11. 34:11. 35:11. 36:11. 37:11. 38:11. 39:11. 40:11. 41:11. 42:11. 43:11. 44:11. 45:11. 46:11. 47:11. 48:11. 49:11. 50:11. 51:11. 52:11. 53:11. 54:11. 55:11. 56:11. 57:11. 58:11. 59:11. 60:11. 61:11. 62:11. 63:11. 64:11. 65:11. 66:11. 67:11. 68:11. 69:11. 70:11. 71:11. 72:11. 73:11. 74:11. 75:11. 76:11. 77:11. 78:11. 79:11. 80:11. 81:11. 82:11. 83:11. 84:11. 85:11. 86:11. 87:11. 88:11. 89:11. 90:11. 91:11. 92:11. 93:11. 94:11. 95:11. 96:11. 97:11. 98:11. 99:11. 100:11. 101:11. 102:11. 103:11. 104:11. 105:11. 106:11. 107:11. 108:11. 109:11. 110:11. 111:11. 112:11. 113:11. 114:11. 115:11. 116:11. 117:11. 118:11. 119:11. 120:11. 121:11. 122:11. 123:11. 124:11. 125:11. 126:11. 127:11. 128:11. 129:11. 130:11. 131:11. 132:11. 133:11. 134:11. 135:11. 136:11. 137:11. 138:11. 139:11. 140:11. 141:11. 142:11. 143:11. 144:11. 145:11. 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14 And all ^{the} spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves: but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, ^{neither} left they any to breathe.

15 As ^{the} Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, ^{and} so did Joshua: ^{he} left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.

16 ¶ So Joshua took ^{all} that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all ^{the} land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same;

17 Even from ^{the} mount Halak, ^{that} goeth up to Seir, even unto BaaI-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon: and ^{all} their kings ^{he} took, and smote them, and slew them.

18 Joshua made war ^a long time with all those kings.

19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save ^{the} Hivites, the in-

habitants of Gibeon; all ^{other} they took in battle.

20 For ^{it} was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, ^{and} that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them: ^{as} the Lord commanded Moses.

21 And at that time came Joshua, and cut off ^{the} Anakims from the mountains; from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; ^{Joshua} destroyed them utterly with their cities.

22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel; ^{only} in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.

23 So Joshua took the whole land, ^{according} to all that the Lord said unto Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, ^{according} to their divisions by their tribes. ^{And} the land rested from war.

z 9:27. Num. 31:9. Deut. 6:10, 11. 20:14. a 11. 10:40. b See on v. 12. Ez. 34: 11-13. c Deut. 7:2. 31:7. d 1:7. Ez. 39:42, 43. Deut. 4:5. 2 Chr. 30:12. Deut. 12:12, 22. 1 Sam. 15:1-3, 8, 9, 11, 19-22. Matt. 23:23. Luke 11:42. Acts 20:20. 27. ^{Heb. removed nothing.} f Gen. 15:18-21. Num. 34:2-13. Deut. 34:2, 3. g 9: 1. 12:8. h 10:41. i 21. Ez. 17:23. 36:1-3, 8. j Or, the smooth mountain. k Gen. 52:3. Lev. 2:1. 33:2. 13. 1:4. 12:7. 13:5. m 12:7-24. Deut. 7:24. n 23. 14:7-10. o See on 9:3-27. p See on Ex. 4:21. 9:16. Deut. 2:30. Judg.

V. 16. *The land of Goshen.* (10:41.) This district of Canaan seems to have derived its name from the land of Goshen in Egypt; (*Gen.* 47:6.) perhaps from some similarity to that region, which was observed in it, in appearance or fertility.—Some think that “the mountain of Israel” means Beth-el; and others that it was some place where Jacob resided, which was called Israel from him.

V. 17. The length of the land from the borders of Seir, or Edom, to mount Lebanon, is here described.

V. 18. Caleb was forty years of age when he went from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and he was eighty-five when those conquests were completed. (14:7—10.) Almost thirty-nine years of this time were spent before Israel passed over Jordan; so that this calculation leaves between six and seven years for the term of Joshua's wars.—The whole country from north to south was then subjected, and all the inhabitants, with whom the Israelites had met, were destroyed. The subsequent history shows that the nations were not exterminated, but that numbers concealed themselves till they were again able to make head against Israel; and many, it is supposed, fled to Zidon and Tyre, and thence migrated into distant countries and settled colonies in them. (*Notes*, 7, 8. 10:20. *Gen.* 9:24, 25.)

V. 19, 20. The Lord had forbidden Israel to make any league with the idolatrous inhabitants of the land: but the examples of Rahab and of the Gibeonites show, that individuals or cities, who would renounce idolatry, and heartily come into the interests of Israel, might be spared. The Canaanites in general, however, were not in the least disposed to do this; and they never so much as proposed any terms of accommodation. “For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts” they had filled up the measure of their iniquity; and were judiciously left to blindness, pride, and obstinate enmity, and to the power of Satan: and the dispensations of Providence were appointed in that manner, which most tended to render them pertinacious in resisting, and to drive them to desperation; in order that they might bring upon themselves that vengeance which they had justly merited, and of which the Lord had constituted the Israelites his executioners, by the commission given to Moses. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, Ex. 4:21. 9:12—16. 14:3, 4. *Deut.* 2:30.) This last reason is added, and repeatedly mentioned, (15) to show that Joshua and Israel did not act out of cruelty, revenge, or avarice; but simply in obedience to God, *which alone* could induce pious men to make such undistinguishing slaughter of their fellow-creatures: and doubtless, many of them did very great violence to their own feelings and inclinations, while engaged in that service. (*Notes*, Num. 20:14—21. 21:21—25. 31:14—18.)

V. 21—23. The Anakims, whose name had formerly so terrified the unbelieving Israelites, no ways distinguished themselves in this war, but were subdued and destroyed with the other inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)—It seems evident, that Joshua conquered the Anakims, and desolated their cities before the division of the land: yet several of the principal persons escaped into the country of the Philistines, and settled there; from whom Goliath, and the other giants afterwards mentioned, descended. But after a time some of them returned, with followers, and rebuilt the cities: and Caleb and Othniel, to whom that part of the country was assigned, vanquished and destroyed them after the division of the land, perhaps after the death of Joshua. (*Notes*, 10:36, 37. 14:6—15. 15:13—17. *Judg.* 1:10—15.) The conquered cities had doubtless before us been garrisoned, and some of the people dispersed through the country to cultivate the lands; and preparation was now making for the regular partition of it among their

14:4. 1 Sam. 2:25. 1 Kings 12:15. 22:20—23. 2 Chr. 25:16. Is. 6:9, 10. Rom. 9:12, 23. q See on 12:15. r 14:12—14. 15:13, 14. Num. 13:22, 35. Deut. 1:28, 2, 31. Judg. 1:10, 11, 20. Jer. 3:23. 9:23. Am. 2:23. s 10:42. 24:11, 12. Ps. 110:5, 6. 149:6—9. Rev. 6:2. 19:11—21. j Judg. 3:3. 1 Sam. 17:4. 2 Sam. 21:1, 23. 1 Chr. 20:4—8. u Ex. 23:27—31. 34:11. Num. 34:2—13. Deut. 11:23—25. x 14:—16. 18: 19: Num. 26:53, 54. y 14:15. 21:44. 22:4. 23:1. Ps. 46:9. 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. Heb. 4:5, 9.

tribes and families. New occupations, with which the nation had hitherto been entirely unacquainted, now called for their attention: but the Lord, who gave them the land, was able to teach them to cultivate it; and they would soon make proficiency under such an Instructor. (*Note*, Is. 28:23—29.)—Great numbers of the ancient inhabitants still continued in the land, or waited in the adjacent countries for an opportunity of regaining their possessions; but, for the present, they lay concealed, or remained quiet; so that the Israelites were not molested by their assaults or incursions.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer must never put off his armour, or expect durable peace, till he closes his eyes in death; nay, as his strength, consolations, and usefulness are increased, he may expect more heavy trials and severe conflicts: but while he continues watching and praying, he may confidently trust that none of his enemies shall be permitted to assail him, till he is prepared for the battle.—The strongest faith would naturally grow weak, if we were left to ourselves; and whenever we view difficulties or dangers with an eye of sense, our hearts are overwhelmed with discouragement. But Jesus ever liveth to intercede for his people, and their faith shall not fail, however Satan may assault them. (*Note*, Luke 22:31—34.) By waiting upon the Lord they renew their strength; and their hopes revive, and their hearts rejoice, even in the midst of tribulation. Perplexing trials render their dependence on God more simple, their prayers more fervent, and in the event their gratitude more lively: and without exception, every cross and temptation, which the believer is enabled properly to endure, enriches his soul with increasing holiness, and will enlarge his everlasting inheritance.—The possession of those things on which the carnal heart is prone to depend, is unfavourable to the life of faith and the walk with God; and it is immensely better to be without secular advantages, than to have our everlasting interests endangered.—They who prosper in the ways of the Lord, attend to the precepts and directions of his word as well as to the promises; while simplicity of faith is shown by unreserved obedience. (*Notes*, Heb. 11:8—10, 13—16.)—The servants of God have different employments allotted them; but every service requires *self-denial*, in respect of some or other of our natural inclinations; and therefore, without the habit of submitting our will to his command, we cannot implicitly follow him. Nay frequently in pleasing God, we must expose ourselves to the censure and reproach of our fellow-creatures; and our best actions may by ill judging men be supposed to result from the worst of principles: but the testimony of our conscience, and the approbation of our Judge, will compensate all consequences.—Would we approve ourselves upright, we must “leave nothing undone which the Lord has commanded;” for though omissions are not so scandalous, either in the world or in the church, as commissions, they are as certainly acts of disobedience, and effects of a will unsubjected to the divine authority.—However tedious, sharp, and difficult the believer's warfare is, his patience in tribulation may be encouraged by the joyfulness of hope; for he will, ere long, rest from sin and sorrow in the Canaan above.—But how dreadful is the case of the obstinate unbeliever, who is not moved, either by promises, warnings, judgments, or mercies, to seek reconciliation to his offended God!—When transgressors have provoked Him to leave them to themselves, they soon, by increasing presumption and hardness of heart, make way for the execution of this purposed vengeance, and for the display of his righteousness in their eternal destruction: (*Note*, Rom. 2:4—6.) nor will numbers, strength, or eternal confidences avail, when God shall arise to execute judgment on his

CHAPTER XII.

A list of the kings subdued by Moses, eastward of Jordan, 1-6: end of the one; and thirty kings conquered by Joshua, westward of that river, 7-24.

NOW these are the kings of the land which the children of Israel smote and possessed their land on the other side Jordan, towards the rising of the sun; from the river Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east;

2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon:

3 And from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain; even the salt sea on the east, the way to Beth-jeshimoth: and from the south under Ashdod-pisgah.

4 And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

5 And reigned in mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites, and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon;

6 Them did Moses the servant of the Lord, and the children of Israel, smite: and Moses the servant of the Lord gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

7 ¶ And these are the kings of the country, which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon, even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession, according to their divisions:

8 In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

a 1:15, 22-4. b Num. 21:13-24. Deut. 2:24. Jude. 11:18. Is. 16:2. c 11:3, 17. Deut. 3:8, 9. 4:48. e 13:3, 3. d Num. 21:23-30. Deut. 2:24-37. 3:6-16. Neh. 9:22. Ps. 135:11. 136:19, 20. e Gen. 32:22. Jude. 11:13, 22. f See on 11:2. John 6:1. Sea of Tiberias. g 3:16. 15:2, 5. Gen. 14:3. 19:25. Deut. 3:17. h 13:20. i Or, Teman. j Or, the springs of Pisgah, or the hills. Num. 21:20. Deut. 3:17. marg. 4:49. l See on Num. 21:33-35. Deut. 3:1-7. j 13:12. Deut. 3:11. k See on Deut. 1:4. l See on 1:13. Deut. 3:8, 9. 4:47, 48. m 13:11. Deut. 3:10. n Deut. 3:14. 1 Sam. 27:8. 2 Sam. 3:3. 13:37. 15:8. 23:34. 2 Kings 25:23. o Num. 21:24-35. p 13:3-32. Num. 32:29-42. Deut. 3:12-17. q 1. r 13:17. s 1. See on 1:17. 13:5. t Gen. 45:6. 3:3. 39:8, 20, 30. Deut. 2:1, 4. 1:3, 4. 11:23. 13:19. Deut. 11:23, 24. k 10:40. 11:16. x Gen. 15:13-21. Ex. 3:8. 23:23, 29-31. Deut. 7:1. 9:1. y 6:2-21. z 8:1. &c. a See on 10:23.

enemies.—Those trials and perils, the prospect of which deter many from a life of godliness, and often excite the apprehensions of the true believer, are frequently in experience too inconsiderable for notice, and only excite shame and surprise, upon the recollection of the alarms which they occasioned. Let sinners then take warning not to harden their own hearts, lest God should give them up to judicial hardness: let them lay down their arms of rebellion, and humbly sue for "peace, and they shall make peace;" the effect of which shall be "quietness and assurance for ever." And let none of us dread any thing in comparison of the wrath of God, which is more tremendous than we can possibly conceive. (Note, Ps. 90:1.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1-6. This chapter connects the history of the conquest of Canaan with the subsequent account of its division to the tribes of Israel. The passages referred to in the margin, seem to give all the useful information that can be collected concerning the narrative. (Notes, Num. 21:21-34. 32:29-41. Deut. 2:24-37. 3:1-11.)

V. 7. "Halak" signifies either division, or smooth. Perhaps this mountain divided the land of Judah from Idumæa. (11:17. marg.)

V. 14. The Israelites utterly destroyed king Arad and his cities, in the lifetime of Moses, and called the name of them Hormah. (Note, Num. 21:1-3.) Probably "the king of Arad," here mentioned is the same person. As his kingdom was on the southern border of Canaan, and not east of Jordan, it came into the possession of Israel under Joshua; and therefore he is numbered in that division of kings. Yet Hormah is here mentioned as a distinct kingdom from that of Arad: and perhaps there was another place of that name. (Num. 14:45.)

V. 24. Every considerable town or city was under the government of a king, who possessed the adjacent fields and villages, and ruled, as it is generally supposed, with despotic sway: and though the Canaanites doubtless waged frequent wars,

9 The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Beth-el, one;

10 The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

12 The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

13 The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

15 The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

16 The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Beth-el, one;

17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Heber, one;

18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

19 The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

20 The king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

22 The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;

23 The king of Dor, in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

24 The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

CHAPTER XIII.

What parts of the land were still uns subdued, 1-6. Joshua is directed to divide the whole by lot, 7. The inheritance of the two tribes and a half, 8-13. The borders of Reuben, 15-23; of Gad, 24-28; of the half tribe of Manasseh, 29-32. No inheritance assigned to Levi, 34, 35.

NOW Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

2 This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri,

3 From Sihon, which is before Egypt, even

b See on 10:3, 23, 36, 37. c 10:3, 23. d 10:3, 23, 31, 32. e 10:3, 23. 15:39. f 10:33. g 10:3, 38. h 13:36. i Num. 14:45. 21:3. k Num. 21:1. 11:29, 30. m 1 Sam. 22:1. n 10:23. o 8:17. Gen. 12:8. 28:19. Judg. 1:22. p 15:34. q 15:13. 1 Kings 4:10. r 19:30. 1 Sam. 4:1. t Or, Sharon. 33:9. u 11:1. t 11:1, 10, 11. Judg. 4:2. u 11:1. 19:15. x 11:1. 19:25. y 17:11. Judg. 5:19. z 1 Kings 4:13. 2 Kings 23:29, 30. a 15:23. 19:37. 21:32. b 19:11. c 15:55. 1 Sam. 25:2. Is. 33:2. d 11:2. 17:11. e Gen. 14:1, 2. Is. 9:1. f See on 4:19. 5:9, 10. g 1 Kings 15:23. 2 Kings 15:14. a 14:10. 23:1, 2. 24:29. Gen. 18:11. 1 Kings 1:1. Jude. 1:7. h Heb. to possess it. Deut. 31:3. b Ex. 23:29-31. Deut. 11:23, 24. Judg. 3:1. c Gen. 10:14. 26:1. Joel 3:4. d 11:13. 12:5. 1 Sam. 27:8. 2 Sam. 3:3. 13:37, 38. 15:8. e Jer. 2:18.

and laid adventures over each other; yet no one had acquired the sovereignty of the whole.—When Julius Cæsar landed in Britain, he found four kings in the single county of Kent: how many then must there have been in the whole Island!—A single view of a good map of ancient Canaan will show the reader all that learned men have conjectured or determined concerning the relative situation of the several places, which are mentioned in this and the following chapters. And indeed that is the only method of obtaining a clear idea of the subject.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The enjoyment of present blessings should revive the grateful remembrance of former mercies: and the benefit derived from the labours of the living servants of the Lord should remind us to respect the memories of those who have heretofore served Him and their generation. The national covenant, mediated by Moses, engaged many temporal advantages to Israel; but Jesus alone brings the whole multitude of believers to the promised rest and inheritance: and though his true people enjoy many blessings from him in this world: yet they do not enter upon the possession of their complete felicity, till they pass over the Jordan of death to the mansions above.—The vengeance of a righteous God, inflicted upon all these kings and their numerous subjects for their wickedness, should impress our minds with reverential awe of his majesty and purity, and with dread and hatred of sin: while the fruitful land, which he bestowed upon his chosen people, and thus prepared for their reception, should inspire our hearts with humble gratitude, and with hope and confidence in his mercy. In both instances the final event of all things is represented; when the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." Let us then "flee from the wrath to come," and seek and pray to be numbered with the saints here, that we may be numbered with them in glory everlasting.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1-5. Joshua is supposed

unto the borders of Ekron northward, [†]which is counted to the Canaanite: [†]five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdoothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the [†]Avites:

4 From the south, all [†]the land of the Canaanites, and [†]Mearah that [†]is beside the Sidonians, unto [†]Aphek, to the borders of [†]the Amorites:

5 And the land of the [†]Giblites, and all [†]Lebanon toward the sunrise, from [†]Baal-gad under mount Hermon, unto the entering into Hamath.

6 All the inhabitants of the hill-country, from Lebanon unto [†]Misrephoth-maim, and all the [†]Sidonians; [†]them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: [†]only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

7 Now therefore divide [†]this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which [†]Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them:

9 From [†]Aroer, that [†]is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that [†]is in the midst of the river, and [†]all the plain Medeba unto Dibon;

10 And [†]all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon;

11 And [†]Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salchah:

12 All the kingdom of [†]Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for [†]these did Moses smite, and cast them out.

13 Nevertheless, the children of Israel [†]expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

14 Only [†]unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire [†]are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

15 [†]And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families:

Gen. 10:15-19. Num. 34:2-14. [†]q Judg. 3:3. 1 Sam. 6:4,16,17. Zeph. 2:5. n Deut. 2:23. [†]Armo. 1:10-40. 11:3. 12:7,8. [†]* Or, the case. k 19:30. 1 Jude. 1:34,45. m 1 Kings 5:18. mare. Ps. 83:7. E. 27:9. n Deut. 1:7. 3:25. o 12:7. p 11:17. q Num. 34:8. Is. 10:9. Amos 6:2. r 11:8. s 23:13. Gen. 15:18-21. E. 23:30. 31. Jude. 2:21-23. t Seeon 11:1,2. u Num. 26:52-56. 33:54. 34:2-14. Ex. 47:13-25. v 22:2-29. z 4:12. 22:4. Num. 32:32-42. Deut. 3:12-17. y 16. 12:2. Deut. 3:12,16. z Num. 31:1,2. Is. 15:2. Jer. 48:18,22. a See on Num. 21:24-26. b 12:2-5. Deut. 4:47,49. 1 Chr. 2:23. c 12:4. 1 Chr. 3:10,11. d 14:3,4. Num. 21:23-35. e 1:23,13. Deut. 33:9. Jude. 2:3. f Sam. 3:3. 13:57,38. g 133. 14:3,4. Num. 16:34-24. Deut. 10:9. 12:19. 18:2. h 12:2. Num. 21:28-30. 22:33-38. Deut. 3:12. Is. 15:1,2,4. 16:7-9. Jer. 48:

to have been about one hundred years of age at this time; though not being informed how old he was when Israel left Egypt, we can only conjecture what time passed between that event and his death, at the age of one hundred and ten years. (24:29.) It is probable, however, that he found himself less capable of military services, than he had formerly been. (14:10,11.) A large proportion of the land yet remained in the possession of the ancient inhabitants; and perhaps he supposed that the division was not to take place till the whole was actually subdued. But the Lord was pleased graciously to remove his anxiety, and to direct his conduct, by commanding him, whilst he was able, and without further delay, to make preparation for dividing the land among those tribes which had not received their inheritance. The whole country, not excepting the parts possessed by the ancient inhabitants, was ordered to be thus allotted to Israel; which tended to remind them of the extent and certainty of the divine promises, and to encourage them to seek the more complete performance of them. It was also a caution, not to enter into any alliance with the remains of the devoted nations: and the leaders of each tribe were thus excited to levy war against those Canaanites, who kept them out of their inheritance.—Sihor was “the river of Egypt,” and some think a branch of the Nile; but this is not likely; it was rather some small rivulet just at the entrance of Egypt.—The Philistines were not descended from Canaan, but from Mizraim the son of Ham: (Gen. 10:6,13-20.) yet they were numbered with the Canaanites in this distribution. (Marg. Ref. d, g, m—q.)

V. 6. The Israelites had acquired the land by conquest; but they were authorized to seize upon what they could, i

16 And their coast was [†]from Aroer, that [†]is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that [†]is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba:

17 Heshbon, and all her cities that [†]are in the plain; Dibon, and [†]Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baameon,

18 And [†]Jabaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath 19 And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareh shahar in the mount of the valley,

20 And [†]Beth-peor, and [†]Ashdod-pisgah, and [†]Beth-jeshimoth,

21 And [†]all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, [†]whom Moses smote [†]with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon dwelling in the country.

22 [†]Balaam also the son of Beor, the [†]south-sayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword, among them that were slain by them.

23 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

24 [†]And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad, according to their families:

25 And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and [†]half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer, that [†]is before [†]Rabbah:

26 And from Heshbon unto [†]Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from [†]Mahanaim unto the border of [†]Debir;

27 And in the valley, Beth-aram, and [†]Beth-nimrah, and [†]Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of [†]Chinnereth, on the other side Jordan, eastward.

28 This [†]is the inheritance of the children of Gad, after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 [†]And Moses gave inheritance unto the half-tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half-tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families.

30 And [†]their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan,

21-24. [†]Or, the high places of Baal, and the house of Baal-meon. Num. 21:19. 22:41. 32:38. h 21:33,37. Num. 21:23. Jahaz. 1 Chr. 6:78,79. Jahaz. i Num. 25:3. [†]Or, springs of Pisgah, or the hill. k Ex. 25:9. 1 Deut. 3:10. m Num. 21:24-35. Deut. 2:30-36. n Num. 31:8. o Num. 22:5-7. 24:1. 31:8. 2 Ps. 2:15. Jude. 11. Rev. 2:14. 19:20. [†]q Or, disinner. p Num. 32:34-41. o Num. 21:28-30. Deut. 3:19. Jude. 11:13-27. r Deut. 3:11. 2 Sam. 11:1. 12:26. E. 21:20. Am. 1:14. s 20:8. Gen. 31:49. Jude. 10:17. 11:21,30. 1 Kings 22:8. t 21:38. Gen. 32:12. 2 Sam. 2:8. 17:27. u 2 Sam. 9:5. 17:27,30. Lodebar. x Num. 23:36. y Gen. 33:17. Jude. 8:5,14-16. 1 Kings 7:46. [†]z 12:2. 12:3. Chinnereth. Num. 34:11. Deut. 3:17. Luke 5:1. Gemnesret. a 26. Num. 32:39-41. Deut. 3:12-15. 1 Chr. 2:21-23.

nor to have it all in common, nor to share it out by consent or arbitration; but, with a solemn appeal to God himself, to divide it by casting lots: for Canaan was his land, and Israel was his people. This was likewise the readiest way of satisfying all parties, and preventing discontent and discord; and it most aptly typified the Lord's choosing, in his infinite wisdom and love, the temporal provision and eternal inheritance of his true people.—As every tribe had its inheritance determined by lot; so it is probable, that afterwards the subdivisions to every family and each individual were regulated in the same manner: and thus their estates would descend to posterity, not so much as the inheritance of their fathers, as that which the Lord had immediately assigned them. (Note, Prov. 16:33.)

V. 7-13. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Num. 32:29-42.)—With whom. (8.) That is, with the other half-tribe of Manasseh. V. 14. “The sacrifices made by fire” included all the oblations, of which any portion was burnt on the altar. (33.)

V. 15-20. (Marg. Ref.)—Dibon. (17.) Dibon seems to have been situated in the confines of Reuben and Gad, and inhabited by some of each tribe. (Num. 32:34.) The same may perhaps be said of Heshbon. (26. 21:36-39. 1 Chr. 6:80,81.)

V. 21, 22. Dukes of Sihon.] (Num. 31:8. Note, Num. 22:4.) These princes of Midian are here called Dukes of Sihon, probably because they had been his tributaries. (Deut. 2:30-37.)—These authenticated records concerning the boundaries of the inheritances belonging to each tribe, were intended to prevent litigations, or decide differences in future ages.—Balaam. (22.) Notes, Num. 22:5. 31:8

V. 24-28. Marg. Ref.

and all the towns of Jair, which *are* in Bashan threescore cities;

3. And half Gilead, and ^aAshtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were pertaining* unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, *even* to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.

32 These *are* the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward.

33 But unto ^athe tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance; the LORD God of Israel *was* their inheritance, as he said unto them.

CHAPTER XIV.

The country west of Jordan to be divided by lot, to the nine tribes and a half, 1-5. Caleb demands Hebron and obtains it, 6-13.

AND these *are* the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them.

2 By ^alot *was* their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half-tribe.

3 For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half-tribe on the other side Jordan: ^abut unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them.

4 For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell in, with their suburbs for their cattle, and for their substance.

5 As the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6 ^aThen the children of Judah came unto Joshua, in ^aGilgal; and ^aCaleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, said unto him, ^aThou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses

the man of God, concerning me and thee in ^aKadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD ^asent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and ^aI brought him word again, as ^ait *was* in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people melt: but I ^awholly followed the LORD my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, ^aSurely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever; because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel ^awandered in the wilderness; and now, lo, I *am* this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As ^ayet I *am* as strong this day, as I *was* in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so *is* my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; (for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims *were* there, and that the cities *were* great and fenced:) ^aif so be the LORD *will* be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

13 And Joshua ^ablessed him, and ^agave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an inheritance.

14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenezite, unto this day; ^abecause that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

15 And ^athe name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba, which *Arba* ^awas a great man among the Anakims. ^aAnd the land had rest from war.

b See on 12:4. c 14. 13:7. Num. 13:29. Dent. 10:9. 18:1,2. a See on Num. 31:17-29. b Num. 26:55-59. 33:51. 34:13. Ps. 135:5. Prov. 16:33. 19:15. Matt. 23:34. c 13:8. Num. 32:29-42. Dent. 3:12-17. d See on 13:14,33. e Gen. 48:5. 1 Chr. 5:1,2. f 21:2-42. Num. 35:2-8. 1 Chr. 6:54-51. g 4:1. 10:43. h Num. 13:6. 11:5. 14. 15:17. Num. 32:12. i k Num. 14:24,30. Dent. 1:35-38. 1 N. 12:7,9. Dent. 33:1. 31. 5:10. Judg. 1:36-56. 1 Kings 13:1,4. 2 Kings 4:36,42. - 7,11. Ps. 90: title. 1 Tim. 6:11. 2 Tim. 3:17. m Num.

13:28. n Num. 13:15-20. o Num. 13:26-33. 14:6-10. p 14. Num. 14:24. Dent. 1:38. Jer. 14:4. q 1:3. Num. 14:22-24. r 11:18. Num. 14:33,34. ^a Heb. walked. b Dent. 31:2. 34:7. Ps. 90:10. 111:21,22. Num. 13:23,33. u Num. 14:8,9. 21:34. 1 Sam. 14:6. 2 Chr. 14:11. Ps. 18:32-34. 27:1-3. 44:3. 60:12. 118:10-12. Rom. 8:31. Phil. 4:13. x 22:5. Gen. 47:7,10. 1 Sam. 1:17. Cant. 6:9. y 10:37,37. 15:13. 21:11,12. Judg. 1:20. 1 Chr. 6:55,56. z 8,9. 1 Cor. 15:58. a 15:13. Gen. 23:2. b 11:23. Judg. 8:11,30. 5:31. 6:29.

V. 29-32. Num. 32:39-42. Dent. 3:13-17.

V. 33. As Moses was himself of the tribe of Levi, he gave a special proof that he acted by divine authority, in thus overlooking his own family and his own tribe: for though the Levites were well provided for, yet the security of that provision was so interwoven with Israel's adherence to the worship of God, that, had they universally apostatized, the Levites would have been left destitute, whilst all the other tribes would have had possession of their estates; that is, without some immediate divine interposition.—Had Moses acted according to the natural bias of the human mind, he would probably have first provided for his own tribe; but on the contrary, he expressly appointed that they should have no inheritance in Israel. And his sons appear to have entered fully into the disinterested and unambitious spirit of their father; though in no respect distinguished from the rest of the Levites. (*Marg. Ref. Notes. Gen. 48:5. Num. 31-3. 18:20.*) The way in which this subject is uniformly mentioned, implies that the Levites had as good a title to their tithes and perquisites, as their brethren had to their estates.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Old age, gradually and almost insensibly, creeps upon mankind: and though their infirmities might, one would think, suffice to remind aged persons of their time of life; yet they generally need to be put in remembrance of it, and excited to prepare for approaching dissolution.—“Whatever our hand findeth to do,” respecting the glory of God, the salvation of our souls, or the good of our fellow-creatures, we should “do it with our might;” and the expectation of death, as well as the calamities of life should warn us to redeem our time, and seize upon present opportunities of usefulness. (*Note, Ec. 9:10.*) Our season of labour and of service will soon expire, and we shall shortly be at rest: we ought not therefore now to indulge sloth, or shrink from hardship; yet if it be the Lord's will to lay us aside, we should be willing to leave our designs unfinished, or to be completed by other hands. He knoweth all our infirmities, and will not forsake his servants, when old and incapable of work: when however the heart is zealous, they who cannot perform one service, will devise to be useful in some other way, though not equally splendid and honourable.—But one succession after another of godly persons and able ministers dies, and leaves an immense proportion of the earth in the possession of the great enemy of God and man; though the promise assures us that it will all in due

time be wrested out of his hands, and become entirely the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Indeed none of us in this world live up to our privileges and spiritual blessings, as delineated in the word of promise; being kept out of possession by our foes, and especially by “sin that dwelleth in us;” but this consideration should animate us to be active and courageous, and to expect and seek for still greater and richer acquisitions of knowledge, holiness, and heavenly consolations.—In the present state of human nature, it is the Lord's will that there should be distinctions of property, that every one may know and be contented with his own.—Wherever our habitation is placed, and in whatever honest way our portion is assigned us, we should consider them as allotted us by God, and acquiesce and be thankful: and every prudent method should be devised to prevent litigations about property.—The mercies of the Lord to his people, and his judgments upon his enemies, especially those who have tempted others to wickedness, ought never to be forgotten, and should frequently be mentioned; because they are honourable to him, and profitable subjects for our meditation.—The ministers of the Lord should study to show that they are peculiarly indifferent about worldly interests: and the people should take care that they want nothing suitable to their station; that they may neither be discouraged, nor taken off from serving at the altar. But happy are they, who have the Lord God of Israel for their inheritance, how little soever of this world falls to their share: his providence will supply their temporal necessities; and his ordinances and spiritual consolations will feast their souls, until they arrive at that “fulness of joy, and those pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 3-5. (*Notes, 13:14-33. 21. Num. 35:2-8.*) As the descendants of Joseph formed two tribes, the nation consisted of twelve tribes, according to the number of Jacob's sons, without reckoning the tribe of Levi and as Joseph was allowed a double portion, Levi was otherwise provided for.

V. 6-15. Before the persons, appointed for that service, (*Note, Num. 34:16-29.*) had begun to divide the land by lot, Caleb came to Joshua at Gilgal, (where probably the tabernacle and ark of the Lord still remained,) to require that Hebron and the lands adjacent might be assigned to him; and his brethren of the tribe of Judah, attended him, as supporting his claim. It is probable, that when the other spies terrified the people about the Anakims who dwelt in Hebron, Ca-

CHAPTER XV.

As boundaries of the lot of Judah, 1-12. Caleb takes Hebron, 13, 14. Caleb having taken Hebron, receives Caleb's daughter in marriage; who obtains a blessing from her father, 15-19. The cities in the lot of Judah, 20-62. The Jebusites retain Jerusalem, 63.

THIS then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families: *even to the border of Edom; the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast.*

2 And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh southward.

3 And it went out to the south side to Maaleh-acrabim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa:

4 From thence it passed towards Azmon, and went out unto the river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea. This shall be your south coast.

5 And the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan: and their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea, at the uttermost part of Jordan.

6 And the border went up to Bethhogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and

14:2. Num. 33:35-35, 1 Num. 33:37, 24:3-5, Ex. 47:19, c 3:16, Gen. 14:3. Num. 34:3, Ex. 47:8-18, * Heb. tongue. Is. 11:15, * Or, the going up to Acrabim. Num. 34:4, Judg. 1:38, d Gen. 14:7, Num. 20:1, 32:8, e Num. 34:5, 118:1, Ex. 23:31, g Num. 34:12, h 18:19, 20, 118:7, k 15, 10:38, 39, 17:26, l 6:10, Hos. 2:15, m 4:19, 5:10, 10:43, n 2 Sam. 17:17, 1 Kings 15:9.

lel proposed to take that place for his inheritance, and to wait for it till the Anakims were dispossessed: and that by divine direction Moses had engaged by oath that it should be so, at the time when the Lord declared that Joshua and Caleb alone should live to enter the promised land. (*Notes, Num. 14:24, 27-30.*) Caleb therefore solicited the performance of this engagement, and spake of it as well known to Joshua and all concerned. He likewise took occasion to rejoice in the testimony of the Lord, that he had "followed him wholly;" and in that of his conscience, that he had given "his report, as it was in his heart;" and having intimated how the other spies discouraged the people to their own destruction, he thankfully mentioned the goodness of God, in keeping him alive for forty-five years, whilst all that generation were wasted in the wilderness, and amidst all the perils of the wars in Canaan; and that he, at eighty-five years of age, was as strong, and as capable of war, as he had been at forty. All this became one, who was so eminent a character and venerable for age: being more than twenty years older than any man in Israel, except Joshua and some of the Levites. It seems from the narration, that the Anakims had again possessed themselves of Hebron, after it was taken by Joshua, and that Caleb undertook to drive them out. (*Note, 11:21-23.*) This he was ready to attempt, confiding, not in his own strength or valour, or in the assistance of his brethren, but in the Almighty God: and, in order to mark this more strongly, though it does not appear that he doubted the event, he thus expressed his confidence: "If the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out."—Joshua and the princes, without hesitation, consented to his proposal: and "Joshua blessed him;" he prayed that he might have success in his intended expedition, and comfort in his inheritance.—In the next chapter we read of his driving out the Anakims; (*Notes, 15:13-19.*) and when the lots were cast, Hebron fell within the portion of Judah, so that he was not separated from his brethren. (15:54.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who desire to prosper and be comfortable in their undertakings and possessions, must "acknowledge the Lord in all their ways," refer every matter to his decision, and regulate their whole conduct by his commands.—The continuance of our lives, notwithstanding internal decays and diseases, and external perils and injuries, and while numbers are dying around us, ought thankfully to be acknowledged as the Lord's doing; and if health and vigour are enjoyed, at that time of life which to others is labour and sorrow, this demands peculiar gratitude. But old age, even when exempt from infirmity and pain, is neither honourable nor comfortable, except it be found in the way of righteousness; for a long life, spent in increasing guilt, diffusing wretchedness and wickedness, and "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath," will prove the occasion of proportionably deeper condemnation. But they who seek the Lord early and "follow him wholly," and stand immovably firm in times of general apostasy and prevailing ungodliness, or in seasons of sharp temptation and imminent danger: if afterwards favoured with long life, and enabled to spend it in glorifying God and doing good, are the most distinguished and honourable of the human species. They may look back upon their lives past, spent, by the grace of God, in some measure usefully; and they may look forward to dissolution as speedily approaching, with holy consolation.—(*Notes, 2 Tim. 4:6-8, 2 Pet. 1:12-15.*) They have a tes-

timony to their characters in the hearts of others, and may rejoice in the testimony of their own consciences. They have much to be thankful for; and it will become them, and they will know how with modesty and humility, to speak of all that God has done for them and by them; which will encourage others, and redound in many thanksgivings to his name. Though "the outward man decay," they will feel themselves as strong for their spiritual warfare as ever; and not fear by the help of God to drive out every enemy, which prevents their possession of the promised inheritance. Such eminent believers sometimes survive envy, calumny, and prejudice; their sun, which has long been obscured by intervening clouds of slanderous reports, groundless jealousies, and rancorous enmity, breaks through and shines with bright serenity before it sets. God himself blesses them; all around perceive it and call them blessed, and concur in showing them distinguishing respect: and great usefulness awaits their latter days, their closing scene, and dying testimony; while they declare to all around them, that the Lord, in performing his promises, has exceeded their largest expectations.—Let then young persons be persuaded to seek the Lord early: let tried and tempted Christians be encouraged to endure and wait patiently; and let those, who meet with opposition, calumny, neglect, or ill success in their well-meant endeavours to do good, stand their ground steadfastly.—Let us all trust in the faithful and merciful promises of God without wavering; and aim so to walk with him, that if we are taken away more early in life, we may be found ready; and if spared till old age, may close it honourably, usefully, and comfortably.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1-12. (*Num. 34:3-6.*) After some general survey of the land, Joshua proceeded to allot to Judah, Ephraim, and the half of Manasseh, their situations and inheritances, before they left Gilgal; and afterwards removing to Shiloh, a more extensive and accurate survey seems to have been made, and the other tribes had their portions assigned them by lot also. (*Notes, 18:1-10.*)—The inheritance, which Judah actually possessed, was large; for it was intended that this tribe should have the preëminence, and it was the most numerous of all the tribes. But that which was at first allotted to them, contained half the southern part of Canaan, and was found too extensive: so that some deductions were afterwards made. (*Note, 19:1-9.*)—The relative situation of the tribes seems to have been decided by lot; but the proportion of land for each, to have been determined, in some measure, by the discretion of the persons appointed for that service.—"Bohan the son of Reuben," (6) was either one of Reuben's sons, who died before Jacob left Canaan, and had been buried in the place here mentioned; or some eminent person that had lately died there.—Several of the places spoken of must have been different from those called elsewhere by the same names. (*Marg. Ref.*) The portion, here marked out, was bounded, on the south, by the wilderness of Zin, and the southern coast of the salt sea; on the east by that sea, reaching to the place, at which it receives the waters of Jordan; on the north, by a line drawn nearly parallel to Jerusalem, across from the northern extremity of the salt sea, to the south boundary of the Philistines and to the Mediterranean Sea; which sea was its boundary, as far the river of Egypt.

V. 13. *Gave.* Or, *had given.* (*Note, 14:6-15.*)—*Hebron.* *Note, Num. 13:21, 22.*

57 Cain, Gibeah, and ¹Timnah; ten cities with their villages:

58 Halhul, Beth-zur, and ¹Gedor,
59 And Maarah, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon;
six cities with their villages:

60 ¹Kirjath-baal, (which is Kirjath-jearim,) and
Rabbah; two cities with their villages:

61 In the wilderness, ¹Beth-arabah, Middin,
and Secacah,

62 And Nibshan, and the city of salt, and ¹Engedi; six cities with their villages.

63 As for ¹the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

CHAPTER XVI.

The borders of Joseph's posterity, west of Jordan, 1-4. The lot of Ephraim, 5-9; who does not drive out the Canaanites from Gezer, 10.

AND the lot of the children of Joseph ¹fell from Jordah by Jericho, unto ¹the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Beth-el,

2 And goeth out from ¹Beth-el to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of ¹Archil to Ataroth.

3 And goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, unto the coast of ¹Beth-horon the nether,

110 Gen. 28:12, Judg. 14:1, 1 Chr. 4:39, 11:14, 1 Sam. 7:12, m 6, 13:13, p 1 Sam. 13:23 31:1, 2 Chr. 20:2, o Judg. 1:9, 21, 2 Sam. 5:6-9, 1 Chr. 11:4-8, 3; Heb. *went forth*, a 8:15, 13:61, 18:12, 2 Kings 2:19-21, b 18:13, Gen. 28:19, Judg. 1:22-23, c 2 Sam. 16:16, 1 Chr. 27:33, d 19:13, 1 Kings 9:16, 17,

and part in that of Benjamin; (18:28. *Notes, Deut. 33:12.*) but the Jebusites possessed a part of it, till conquered by David. (*Notes, Judg. 1:8, 21, 2 Sam. 5:6-8.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

God delights to honour and bless those who honour and obey him, and to answer the expectations of such as confide in him; and wise and good parents will humbly endeavour to copy his example, in their conduct towards dutiful and obedient children.—It is a very valuable privilege to be closely united with families distinguished for faith and piety; and to contract marriage with those who have been ¹trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—When the character of parents, the education of their children, and the children's consequent prudent and pious conduct combine: there is the fairest prospect that they will be settled in life, to the mutual comfort and advantage of all the parties concerned.—Nature teaches us to desire temporal benefits for our children: but *grace* will teach us to be far more desirous and earnest, in using means that they may be partakers of spiritual blessings.—When persons in the married state consult each other's comfort and advantage, and study to order all their concerns with mutual confidence and agreement, domestic felicity will be their recompense.—But, if affection to a creature animates men to such strenuous efforts and perilous adventures, what will the love of God our Saviour do, if it bear rule in our hearts? (*Note, 2 Cor. 5:13-15.*) The desire of enjoying his favour, of expressing our gratitude to him, and of promoting his glory, will prove a principle of self-denying obedience and patient suffering for his sake, even ¹"stronger than death" itself. (*Cant. 8:6, 7. Phil. 1:19-26.*) And if earthly parents, "being evil, know how to give good gifts to their children; how much more will our heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him!"—Husbands and wives commonly concur in seeking accessions to their temporal riches, and under certain limitations it may be allowable: but it is much better when they concur heartily in seeking "those things which are above," and praying for these spiritual blessings, in behalf of each other, of their children, and all around them. Indeed, all the blessings of both ¹"the upper and the nether springs," belong to the children of God; and, as related to Christ, they have the first or the largest portion for his sake, freely given them by the Father, as the lot of their inheritance. But they must exert themselves vigorously to subdue those enemies within and without, which keep them out of possession of the promised blessings: and he is ever ready to assist all who call upon him to succour them in this warfare. May the Lord then excite our diligence and increase our faith, that we may ¹"be strong in him and in the power of his might;" and then, instead of saying, "We cannot drive them out," we shall exclaim, "I can do all things, through Christ who strengtheneth me." (*Note, Phil. 4:10-13.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-8. (*Marg. Ref.*) The inheritance of Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, extended from Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, across the country. It lay north of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan, and south of the other tribes. The southern part of this general allotment was assigned to Ephraim, and the northern to Manasseh.

V. 9. *Separate cities.*] Some cities, which fell within the lot of Manasseh, seem to have been afterwards assigned to the Ephraimites who more wanted them: the

and to Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at ¹the sea.

4 So ¹the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

5 ¹And the border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*; even the border of their inheritance on the east side was ¹Ataroth-addar, unto Beth-horon the upper.

6 And the border went out toward the sea, to ¹Michmethah on the north side, and the border went about eastward unto ¹Taanath-shiloh, and passed by it on the east to Janohah:

7 And it went down from Janohah to ¹Ataroth, and to Naarath, and came to ¹Jericho, and went out at Jordan.

8 The border went out from ¹Tappuah westward unto the river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at ¹the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families.

9 And ¹the separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

10 And ¹they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but ¹the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.

1 Chr. 7:21-23, 2 Chr. 8:5, e Num. 34:6, f 17:14, g 2, 19:13, h 17:7, i 18:1, k 1 Chr. 7:28, 13:16, 6:1, 26, Num. 33:48, m 12:17, 17:8, n 17:9, 19:28, o 3, 6, Num. 34:6, p 17:9, q 16:63, Judg. 1:29, 1 Kings 9:16, r Num. 33:52-55, Deut. 7:1, 2.

same probably was done in the case of some other tribes. (17:9, 11.)

V. 10. As there is no intimation that these Canaanites renounced idolatry, and came heartily into the interests of Israel; and as the Ephraimites were strong enough to subject them and compel them to pay tribute; no excuse can be made for their conduct, in sparing those whom God commanded them to destroy, and in making a league with them. (*Notes, 17:11-18.*) But they consulted their present ease more than either their duty, the common good of Israel, or their own true and durable interest. (*Note, Judg. 1:28.*) Gezer seems to have remained in the hands of the Canaanites till the days of Solomon. (*Note, 1 Kings 9:16.*) "The thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, were completely checked and defeated in the Jewish soldiery, by the very conditions on which alone they were enabled to subdue the condemned nations: and . . . the feelings of national hostility . . . were controlled and mitigated, by solemnly enjoining the exercise of as great severity in punishing idolatry among . . . themselves, as they were compelled to exercise against the condemned nations of Canaan: and it is evident from the event, that it was with reluctance, and only by compulsion, they exercised these severities, because, as soon as the impulse was withdrawn, they ceased to exercise any such severity, and on the contrary treated with culpable lenity, and regarded with a dangerous complacency, the remnants of those impious nations, whose total extermination, they had been warned was necessary to guard against the contagion of their vices and idolatries." *Graves on the Pentateuch*, Vol. ii. pp. 101, 102.—Contenting themselves with the tributes which were paid to them, they grew effeminate; . . . but applied themselves to the cultivation of their lands, which producing them great plenty and riches, they neglected the regular disposition of their settlement, and indulged themselves in luxuries and pleasures." *Josephus, quoted by Graves*, Vol. ii. p. 132.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our situation and provision in this present life, as well as our future inheritance, are appointed by the only wise and righteous God; and we should learn to acknowledge his goodness with thankfulness, and be contented with our portion, whether more or less abundant; because he knows what is best for us, and we have far more than we deserve.—The distinctions of property accord to the appointment of God, and must therefore be conscientiously maintained: nay, so far from fraudulently or violently attempting to entrench on them, we must not *covet* any thing that is another's, nor envy his prosperity, but rejoice in it. Yet brotherly love is not tenacious, but freely imparts what is superfluous, for the good of those in want, saying, "What is that between me and thee?" We should indeed in all things be more happy, did we more diligently obey our God.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1 Though Manasseh was the first-born of Joseph, yet Ephraim inherited before him. (16: *Note, Gen. 48:17-20.*) Machir is supposed to have been the only son of Manasseh, at least who lived to have children; (*Note, 1 Chr. 7:14, 15.*) and in some instances, *an only son* is called the first-born. (*Note, Matt. 1:24, 25.*) He was a man of war; probably he had distinguished himself whilst in Egypt, in the assault which the Philistines made upon the Ephraimites, and had defended his brethren. (*Note,*

CHAPTER XVII.

The lot of the half-tribe of Manasseh, 1, 2. The case of Zelophehad's daughters, 3-6. The borders of Manasseh, 7-11. The Canaanites remain, but are tribute, 12, 13. The sons of a sister petition for another lot, which Joshua refuses them, 14-18.

THERE was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the first-born of Joseph; to wit, for Machir, the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.

2 There was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families: for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hepher, and for the children of Shemida: these were the male children of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, by their families.

3 ¶ But Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters; and these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

4 And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father."

5 And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan;

6 Because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

7 ¶ And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lieth before Shechem, and the border went along on the right hand, unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah.

8 Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but Tappuah, on the border of Manasseh, belonged to the children of Ephraim:

9 And the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river: these cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh; the

coast of Manasseh also was on the north side of the river, and the outgoings of it were at the sea.

10 Southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea is his border, and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.

11 And Manasseh had in Issachar, and in Asher, Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.

12 Yet the children of Manasse could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities, but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

13 Yet it came to pass when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

14 ¶ And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?

15 And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood-country, and cut down for thyself there, in the land of the Perizzites, and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.

16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are of Beth-shean and her towns, and they who are of the valley of Jezreel.

17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim, and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power; thou shalt not have one lot only:

18 But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down; and the outgoings of it shall be thine; for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

n Gen. 41:51, 46:20, 48:18, Deut. 21:17. b Gen. 50:23. Num. 26:29, 27:1, 32:9, 10, 14, 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. c Num. 26:29, 32:33, 40, Deut. 3:13-15. d 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. e 2 Chr. 7:18. f Num. 26:29, 32:33, 40, Deut. 3:13-15. g 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. h 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. i 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. j 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. k 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. l 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. m 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. n 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. o 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. p 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. q 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. r 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. s 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. t 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. u 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. v 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. w 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. x 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. y 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15. z 1 Chr. 2:23, 7:14-15.

Chr. 7:21, 22.) And as his posterity were supposed to inherit his valour, some of them had their inheritance east of Jordan, upon the frontiers, that they might defend them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3-6. Five portions were allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh, west of Jordan; and that of Hepher, who seems to have had no son but Zelophehad, was divided among his five daughters. So there were ten portions, though of different magnitude. (Notes, Num. 27:1-11. 36.)

V. 7-10. (Marg. Ref.) The lot of Manasseh had that of Ephraim on the south, and the Mediterranean Sea on the west: but on the north-west it bordered on Asher; and towards the north-east, on Issachar. (Notes, 16:1-9. 19:17-31.)

V. 11-13. The inhabitants of some of these cities were subject to Manasseh: at first they could not drive them out, for want of faith and courage; and when they had prevailed against them, they let them remain as tributaries, contrary to the express command of God. (Note, 16:10.)—Three countries. (11) Or, districts.

V. 14, 15. Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim, and his brethren might expect some special favour on that account. Their inheritance perhaps was less valuable than that of Judah; and as they thought, only sufficient for one tribe, and they were two: a considerable part of their land was held by the ancient inhabitants; and they supposed that if the Lord blessed and increased them in future, as he had in times past, they should be much straitened for room. These formed the grounds and encouragements of their petition. But they evidently undervalued the portion which the Lord had assigned them by lot: and they coveted what belonged to others, while they neglected to get possession of their own land. As a great people they were better able to labour and to fight, to clear and cultivate the unimproved

2 (1) 35:22. Zech. 12:11. Megiddon. z 15:63. 16:10. Ex. 23:29-30. Num. 33:26-30. Judg. 2:25. Rom. 6:12-14. a Judg. 1:23. 2 Sam. 3:1. 1 Sam. 6:10. Phil. 4:13. 2 Th. 4:18. b 16:16. Deut. 20:11-15. 1 Sam. 13:5. c 2 Chr. 8:7. S. e Gen. 48:22. S. e 26:31-37. Deut. 33:17. d Gen. 18:9. e Luke 12:46. f Gen. 13:7. Ex. 33:2. Ezra 9:1. 1 Or, Rephaim. Gen. 14:5. 15:20. 2 Sam. 5:18:2. g 18:19. 4:3. h See on 11:1. 15:18. Judg. 6:33. 1 Kings 4:12. 18:35. 21:1-32. 2 Kings 9:10-37. Hos. 1:4, 5. k See on 14:15. 15:15. 20:7. m 11:4-6. 13:6. Num. 14:6-9. Deut. 20:1-4. P. 27:1, 2. 41:10-16. 51:12, 13. Rom. 8:31, 37. Heb. 13:6.

woodlands, and to dispossess the Canaanites. And as the Lord had blessed them hitherto, they had the more encouragement to confide in his assistance: nor would Joshua show partiality to his kindred, any more than Moses had done.

V. 16. Chariots of iron.] It is supposed, that these chariots were armed with sharp scythes from the axes, on each side, underneath, and in different directions. They were drawn by swift and strong horses, and driven by expert charioteers, who were generally accompanied by warriors that fought from the chariots. They made dreadful havoc among undisciplined troops, or such as were not accustomed to them; and were exceedingly formidable in the first onset. But able commanders, by a skilful disposition of their forces; and well-disciplined troops, by regular and expeditious movements, rendered their force and fury vain: and sometimes by wounding and affrighting the horses, they were driven back upon their own army with terrible confusion and destruction. Wherever, therefore, war became a science, they fell into disuse as unwieldy and dangerous.—The objection made "by the children of Joseph," to Joshua's exhortation, was evidently the result of unbelief. What were chariots of iron to the Almighty power of Israel's God? (Notes, 11:4, 5. Num. 13:30, 31. Judg. 4:10, 14.)

V. 17, 18. Joshua gently reproved the claimants for calling their portion "one lot," and pointed out the improvement of which it was capable; and the extensive tracts of land, which might be cleared, and rescued from the Canaanites: and he assured them, that if they exerted their valour, power, and industry in dependence on the Lord; the iron chariots, and the strength of the Canaanites, would prove no bar to their success and prosperity.—The mountain, or wood, here spoken of, had perhaps not before been expressly allotted to these tribes; yet it lay within or near, the assigned limits.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Prudent foresight, and believing dependence on the Lord

CHAPTER XVIII.

The tabernacle is set up at Shiloh, 1. Joshua causes the remainder of the land to be described in seven parts, 2-9. He divides it by lot, 10. The lot and borders of Benjamin, 11-20. Their cities, 21-28.

AND the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there: and the land was subdued before them.

2 ¶ And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

4 Give out from among you three men for each tribe; and I will send them, and they shall rise and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them: and they shall come again to me.

5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

6 Ye shall therefore describe the land into

19:1, 21:2, 22:9. b Jude. 18:31. 1 Sam. 1:3, 24, 4:3, 4. 1 Kings 2:27, 14:2, 4. Ps. 78:60, Jer. 7:19-14, 28:6. c Jude. 18:9. Prov. 2:2-6, 10:4, 13:4, 15:19. Ec. 9:10. Zeph. 3:16. Matt. 20:8. John 6:27. Phil. 3:13, 14. 2 Pet. 1:10, 11. d 3:2, 4:2. Num. 14:14, 13:2. e 6:9, f 15:1, g. 19:1-9. g 16:17. h 8:10, 14:2. Num. 26:51, 33:54, 34:13. Ps. 105:11. Prov. 16:33, 18:18. Acts 13:19. i 13:

for the performance of his promises, inducing cheerful obedience to his commands, will ensure to us an inheritance among his people in the heavenly Canaan, and every thing truly good for us in this world.—But, alas! even professed Christians are often more disposed to murmur, envy, and covet, than to be content, thankful, and ready to distribute. Indeed we are all more prone to grasp at what belongs to others, than to manage our own to the best advantage, and many complain of poverty, and encroach upon the benevolence of others, because they rebel against the sentence of divine justice, “Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow.” Men excuse themselves from labour on any pretence: and nothing serves the purpose better, than having rich and powerful relations; though by providing for them these are often most criminally partial and unfaithful in disposing of those funds, with which they were intrusted for the public benefit. But there is more real kindness in pointing out to men the advantages within their reach, that they may be excited to improve them, than in gratifying their indolence and profusion. True religion gives no sanction to these evils: “We commanded,” says the apostle, “that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.” and many of our *canons* are only the language of sloth, which magnifies every difficulty into an impossibility, and represents every danger as inevitable destruction.—This is especially the case in our spiritual work and warfare: but even our *professed* relation to the Captain of the LORD’s host will not avail us, if we be indolent and self-indulgent. Our very complaints, that comforts are withheld, frequently result from negligence and fear of the cross; and when convinced that we can do nothing, we are apt to sit still and attempt nothing. But “as many as the Lord loves, he rebukes and chastens;” and if we belong to him, he will stir us up to be diligent, bold, and persevering in well-doing; to break our league with every sin, and renounce our worldly pleasures and sinful interests; to rise superior to our fears, and to exert our best endeavours. Then our complaints will be silenced, or rather turned into joyful thanksgivings; and, if “the LORD hath blessed us hitherto,” this should suffice to shame us out of our distrust and repinings.—May he teach us here to believe and obey, and give us an inheritance among his saints in glory everlasting!

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. The tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh, were settled in their possessions; and perhaps many others were dispersed in some parts of the land to cultivate it, where they could do it safely; it was therefore proper, that the tabernacle should be removed to a more central situation than Gilgal, where it had hitherto remained; and Shiloh was selected for that purpose, doubtless by direction from the Lord, who might be consulted on the occasion by Urim and Thummim. (Notes, Ex. 29:30. Num. 27:21.) This city was in the centre of Canaan, and as convenient as possible for all the tribes; and it was proper that the ark and tabernacle, the visible symbols of JEHOVAH’s presence, and the glory of the land, which stamped a relative holiness upon it, should be in the midst of it. Shiloh was in the lot of Ephraim, the tribe to which Joshua belonged: and it was expedient, that the sanctuary should be near the residence of the chief governor.—The name of this city is the same, as that by which Jacob predicted the Messiah; (Note, Gen. 49:10.) and some expositors suppose, that it was called Shiloh on this occasion, when selected for the resting-place of the ark, and the observance of those institutions which typified our great Peace-maker, and our access to God through his atonement and intercession.—That part of the

seven parts, and bring the description hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.

7 But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go, and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh.

9 And the men went, and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts, in a book, and came again to Joshua, to the host at Shiloh.

10 And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel, according to their divisions.

11 ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families;

14:33. Num. 18:20, 23. Deut. 10:9, 18:12. k 13 8-31. Num. 32:20-41. Psal. 3:12-17, 4:47, 48. l See on 6:10, 7:13-18. 13:7, 11:1, 1:1, 1:8 am. 14:1. Acts 1:24-26. Rom. 14:19. m See on 6:8 Prov. 19:15, f 17, g 48:20. Matt. 27:35. Acts 13:19. n 1 s. 16:5, 6, 47:4, 61:5. John 17:2. v 1 s. 2:18. Col. 1:12.

country being subdued, the Israelites could assemble without interruption; and all personal cares and employments seem to have been laid aside, while, with one consent, they attended to this solemn and joyful religious duty. No doubt those, who still continued encamped, removed and pitched around the tabernacle as they had before done, both in the wilderness and in Canaan.—In this place the sanctuary of God remained, till the ark was taken by the Philistines in the time of Eli; (1 Sam. 4:) but soon after it seems to have been removed to Nob; though the ark was placed at Kirjath-jearim, probably till David removed it to mount Zion. (Notes, 1 Sam. 7:1, 21:1, 2. 2 Sam. 6:2.) So that the tabernacle was stationed at Shiloh between three and four hundred years. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2. The dissatisfaction, which Ephraim and Manasseh had expressed respecting the inheritance allotted them, seems to have induced Joshua to stay the proceedings of the persons employed in dividing the land, till the camp had been removed to Shiloh, and another survey had been made. (Notes, 17:14-13.)

V. 3-10. The people, enriched with plunder, and living in plenty, were more incontinent on present ease and indulgence, than on obtaining possession of their permanent inheritances; which could not be done without new dangers and fatigues. (Note, 16:10.) In the mean time the Canaanites were recovering strength and courage, a great part of the land remained uncultivated, and the Israelites were impoverishing themselves, and contracting bad habits.—After a year or more had been spent in this manner, whilst they were but little acquainted with that part of the land which was not yet divided, Joshua reproved their slackness, and directed them how to proceed. Some general survey indeed must have been made, previous to the allotment of portions to the aforementioned tribes; but it had not been sufficiently exact and complete. Three persons, therefore, were chosen out of every tribe concerned, that an impartial and amicable settlement might be made; and perhaps they went in three companies for expedition. These surveyors, according to the instructions given by Joshua, made an exact measurement and description of the country as they could, both as to its extent and fertility; and divided the remains of the land into seven parts, that the seven remaining tribes might have their inheritances assigned them by lot: the situation being thus determined, and the quantity proportioned to their numbers. While employed in this perious work, they were, doubtless, peculiarly emboldened and protected by the Lord; and the Canaanites were intimidated and restrained from assaulting them: so that they all returned in safety to Shiloh; and Joshua with religious solemnity cast lots for them before the Lord.—On this survey it appeared, that Judah’s portion had been made disproportionately large: and therefore Simeon had his taken out from it; and Dan also, at least in part. (Notes, 19:1-9, 40-48.)

In a book. (9) The surveyors seem to have formed some kind of map of the country, as well as a description of it in writing. The Egyptians, from the situation of their fields, as annually overflowed by the Nile, acquired great skill in surveying and measuring land: and some of the Israelites had, no doubt, learned this from them: and further immediate teaching from God might be vouchsafed on this occasion. (Notes, Ex. 31:1-6.)

V. 11-20. (Marg. Ref.) In the prophetic blessing of Moses, Benjamin is placed between Judah and Joseph; (for Levi had no inheritance assigned him:) and at length, by lot, the portion of Benjamin fell between them. (Notes, Deut

and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

12 And their border on the north side was from Jordan: and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven.

13 And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, which is Beth-el, southward, and the border descended to Ataroth-addar near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon.

14 And the border was drawn thence, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that lieth before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah. This was the west quarter.

15 And the south quarter was from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoi;

16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to En-rogel,

17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben,

18 And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah;

19 And the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah, northward; and the outgoings of the border were at the north bay of the salt sea, at the south end of Jordan. This was the south coast.

20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of

Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz,

22 And Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el,

23 And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah,

24 And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophui, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages:

25 Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroti,

26 And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah,

27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah,

28 And Zelah, Eleph, and Jebusi, (which is Jerusalem), Gibeath, and Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

CHAPTER XIX.

The lot of Simeon, 1-9; of Zebulun, 10-16; of Issachar, 17-23; of Asher 24-31; of Naphtali, 32-39; of Dan, 40-48. The inheritance assigned to Joshua, 49-51.

AND the second lot came forth to Simeon, A even for the tribe of the children of Simeon, according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

2 And they had in their inheritance, Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and Moladah,

3 And Hazar-shual, and Balah, and Azem,

4 And Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah,

5 And Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah,

6 And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem; thirteen cities and their villages:

7 Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages:

8 And all the villages that were round about these cities, to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon, according to their families.

9 Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon:

15:1-8, 16:1-10, Deut. 10: 13:12, p 2:1, 3:16, 6:1, 16:1, q 7:2, Hos. 4:15, 5:5, 10:5, r 16:2, Gen. 28:19, Judg. 1:22-26, s 10:11, 16:3, 21:22, t 15:9, 60, 1 Sam. 7:12, 2 Sam. 6:2, 1 Chr. 13:6, u 15:9, x 15:8, 2 Kings 23:10, 2 Chr. 28:3, 33:6, s 30:33, Jer. 7:31, 32, 19:2, 6:11, 32:35, y See on 15:8, 18:16, 1 Chr. 13:19, z 28, 15:63, Judg. 1:8, 21:19, 10:10, a 15:7, 2 Sam. 17:17, 1 Kings 19:15, 22, b 1 Chr. 13:19, 15:63, c 1 Heb. 10:29, 15:2, marg. 1a, 11, 15, c 16, 12:3, Gen. 14:3, 19:25, Num. 34:3, d eut. 3:17, d 11, e 12:21, 6:1, Luke 10:30, 15:1, f 19, 15:6, g 18, 15:6, h Gen. 10:18, 12 Chr. 13:4, i 1 Kings 12:29, 32, k 1 Sam. 13:17, l 21:17, Ezra 2:26, Neh. 7:30, m 9:17, 10:2.

33:7, 17.) The borders of this tribe on the north were the same as those of Ephraim on the south: and his southern boundaries the same as the northern borders of Judah; but drawn from west to east, instead of from east to west. (15:1-12, 16:1)-As the inheritance of Benjamin did not reach to the Mediterranean Sea, and no other sea or lake is supposed to have been in those parts; perhaps the expression, "compassed the corner of the sea southward" (14) might be rendered, "made a circuit on the side next the sea towards the south;" for this clause seems to connect the account of the northern border, which is contained in the preceding verses, with that of the southern which follows.

V. 21-28. Marg. Ref. Which is Jerusalem. (28) Note, 15:63.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The ordinances of religion form our most important business, and must be attended to in the first place, even in preference to our worldly affairs, if we would be happy in our own souls, and prosper in our undertakings: (Note, Matt. 6:33, 34.) and when properly administered and attended on, by all ranks and orders of men, they form the glory and bulwark of any nation: for "them that honour God he will honour, and they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed." We indeed have the true Tabernacle, the true Ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, not only in the midst of us, but every where present: and when we meet in the courts of the Lord, he is as really though not sensibly present, as he was between the cherubim in the tabernacle of Israel. (Notes, Matt. 18:19, 20:28, 28:19, 20.) But what return do we render for such benefits? What improvement do we make of them? Alas! the ordinances of God are generally neglected; his sabbaths are violated; his truths are opposed, despised, or abused; and his commandments and authority are trampled upon! Few in comparison seem to value the salvation proposed to sinners in the gospel: and even they who profess to accept of it, are often, through indolence, self-indulgence, and fear of difficulties, rendered very irresolute and slack in "possessing the inheritance which the Lord God hath given them." Indeed many of them do not understand the extent of their

privileges, because they have not carefully surveyed them: and when preserved from terrors and distress of conscience, and able to keep up some tolerable hope of salvation, with a little comfort from time to time in sacred ordinances; they seem to think that they possess all that can be expected in this world, and consider heaven as an estate in reversion, when they shall be ejected from their present too well beloved tenure of worldly possessions! Nor are they aware, that a close walk with God, increasing conformity to him, love of him and of one another, and a will in all things subjected to his will, form the very substance of heavenly felicity; and that much more of these blessed privileges may be enjoyed on earth, than any of us have hitherto experienced. But the Captain of our salvation will rebuke this slackness: and he commands his ministers to declare to his people, the truths which respect their present sanctification and progress in divine life, as well as their future inheritance, that they may be excited to press onward to the enjoyment of them. At his command we may boldly undertake any service, and need fear no enemies. He assigns to each of us our present and our future portion: yet in this appointment he takes into the account that diligence, vigilance, and faithfulness, which through his grace we are enabled to exercise: and as the industrious husbandman and intrepid warrior are generally, so the diligent, watchful, and courageous Christian is always, the most prosperous. "Having therefore food and raiment, let us be therewith content;" and may our wealth be laid up in the land of promise above, whither all the tribes of the redeemed will in succession shortly arrive, and receive their incorruptible inheritance. (Notes, Matt. 6:19-21. Col. 3:1-4.)

NOTES.-CHAP. XIX. V. 1-9. (Marg. Ref.) The inheritance of the tribe of Judah was found to be more than was necessary, or than properly came to their share; a portion was therefore allotted to the tribe of Simeon, taken from the south-west part of it: and it seems that, without murmuring, Judah renounced his claim, at the instance of Joshua, and of those who had been nominated to the office of dividing the land. (Notes, 15:32. Gen. 49:5-7. Num. 26:14.)-Sheba

for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them; therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

10 ¶ And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun, according to their families; and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid.

11 And their border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river that is before Jokneam;

12 And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrising unto the border of Chisloth-tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia.

13 And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-methoar to Neah;

14 And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jipthah-el;

15 And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: twelve cities with their villages.

16 This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun, according to their families, these cities with their villages.

17 ¶ And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar, according to their families.

18 And their border was toward Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and Shunem,

19 And Hapharaim, and Shihon, and Anaharath.

20 And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez,

21 And Remeth, and Engannim, and Enhadadah, and Beth-pazzez;

22 And the coast reacheth to Tabor, and Shanaimah, and Beth-shemesh, and the outgoings of their border were at Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages.

23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar, according to their families, the cities and their villages.

24 ¶ And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families.

25 And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph,

26 And Alammelech, and Amad, and Misheal; and reacheth to Carmel westward, and to Shihor-libnath,

27 And turneth toward the sunrising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jipthah-el toward the north side of Bethemek, and Neiel, and goeth out to Cabul on the left hand;

28 And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, even unto great Zidon;

29 And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre, and the coast turneth to Hosah; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea, from the coast to Achzib:

30 Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages.

31 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families, these cities with their villages.

32 ¶ The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families.

33 And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan:

34 And then the coast turneth westward to Asnoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sunrising.

35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth,

36 And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor,

37 And Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor,

38 And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, according to their families, the cities and their villages.

40 ¶ And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families.

41 And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh,

42 And Shaalabbin, and Ajalon, and Jethlah,

43 And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron,

44 And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath,

45 And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon,

46 And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border before Japho.

47 And the coast of the children of Dan went

o Ex. 16:19. 2 Cor. 8:14, 15. p 18:6, 11. q Gen. 49:13. Deut. 33:19, 19. r 12:22. 1 Kings 4:12. 1 Chr. 6:68. Jokneam. s 22. Judg. 4:6, 12. Ps. 89:12. t 21:23. Delorah. u 1 Chr. 6:72. v 2 Kings 14:25. Gath-hepher. * Or, which is denoted. Ex. 21:34, 35. Judg. 1:30. Nahallal. y 11:1. 12:20. z 1 Kings 21:1, 15, 16. 2 Kings 8:29. 9:15, 30. Hos. 14:5. a 1 Sam. 28:4. 1 Kings 1:3. 2:17, 21. 2 Kings 4:8, 12. b 21:29. c 12. Judg. 4:6. 1 Chr. 6:72. Jer. 46:18. d 38. 21:16. 1 Kings 4:19. 2 Kings 14:11-13. e 2 Sam. 9:16. f 11:1. 12:20. g 21:30. 1 Chr. 6:74. Mithah. h 1 Kings 15:20. Cant. 7:5. Is. 33:9. 35:3. Jer. 46:18. i 1. k 1 Kings 9:13. l See on 2o. m John 2:1, 11. 146. Cerna. n 11:8. Judg. 1:14. Is. 23:2, 4, 12. t Heb. Tzor. 2 Sam. 5:11. Is. 23: 26: 27: 28: o Gen.

was the same place as Beer-sheba, or a suburb of that city: otherwise there would have been fourteen cities.

V. 10-16. (Marg. Ref.) Zebulun was younger than Issachar: yet he was placed next before him, both in the prophecy of Jacob, and in that of Moses: (Gen. 30:18-20. 49:13-15. Deut. 33:18, 19.) and his inheritance was allotted to him before Issachar had his. It lay to the north of Issachar, near to the lake of Gennesaret, in the region of Galilee.—There were twelve principal cities in the lot of this tribe; but they are not here particularly enumerated; for many of the places mentioned were merely the boundaries of the lot assigned to Zebulun. The Beth-lehem, here mentioned, lay at a great distance from Beth-lehem-Judah, (Note, Mic. 5:2.)

V. 17-23. The inheritance of Issachar lay to the south of Zebulun, the south-west of Naphtali, the south-east of Asher, and the north of Manasseh; and reached almost from Jordan to the Mediterranean: yet the lots of Manasseh and Asher are supposed to have met on the sea-shore. (Marg. Ref.)—The nature of the case is sufficient to satisfy any person, upon reflection, that these accounts must to us be obscure, and particular explanations of them in great measure uncertain.

V. 24-31. (Marg. Ref.) The inheritance of Asher lay to the most northern part of the land; having Issachar on the south-east, the extremity of Manasseh on the south, and Zebulun and Naphtali on the east.—It seems to have formed an angle almost as far as Zidon; though Tyre, which is more to the south, was without its boundaries.—Tyre, though not so old as Sidon, yet was of very high antiquity. It was a strong city in the time of Joshua; it is called צֵר כְּנָעַן "the

city of the fortress of Sor." Josh. 19:29. Interpreters raise difficulties in regard to this passage, and will not allow it to have been so ancient: with what good reason I do not see, for it is called by the same name, "the fortress of Sor," in the history of David: (2 Sam. 24:7.) and the circumstances of the history determine the place to be the very same. Bp. Louth on Is. 23:7.—Perhaps the Canaanites, aided by the Zidonians, fortified Tyre, when first expelled by Joshua. (Notes, 10:20, 11:18. Is. 23:1, 6, 7. Ez. 26:3-6.)—Cabul seems to have been a city, and therefore distinct from the country thus called by Hiram King of Tyre: but it was in the same neighbourhood, and probably had its name for a similar reason. (1 Kings 9:13. Marg.)—There is a doubt, whether the Kanah, here mentioned, be the same place where Christ wrought his first miracle, or another city of the same name more to the north.

V. 32-39. (Marg. Ref.) The inheritance of Naphtali lay east of Asher; but it did not extend quite so far to the north. It bordered on Zebulun on the south and south-west, and reached to the lake of Gennesaret, or the sea of Tiberias.—It is not easy to determine what is meant by the clause "to Judah upon Jordan towards the sunrising;" (34) for the lot of Naphtali was far distant from Judah. But some suppose, that it communicated and traded with Judah by Jordan, the eastern border of the land.

V. 40-48. The inheritance of Dan lay on the north and north-west of Judah, as it is generally supposed; being taken, in part at least, from the country at first allotted to that tribe: for several of the cities here mentioned were numbered among

out *too little* for them; therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called 'Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

49 ¶ When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them:

50 According to the word of the Lord, they gave him the city which he asked, *even* "Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

51 These are the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot, in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of dividing the country.

CHAPTER XX.

God commands Joshua to appoint the cities of refuge, 1-6. Their names and situation, 7-9.

THE Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

3 That the slayer that killeth *any* person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and

July 18: 7, 27, 32. *Leish*, m Ex. 45: 7, 8. n 24: 30. *Juda*, 2: 9. *Timnath-serah*, 1. in 7: 24. n 14: 1. Num. 34: 17-29. Ps. 47: 34. Matt. 20: 23. 23: 34. John 14: 23. 17: 2. Heb. 1: 8. p 18: 1. e 5: 14. 6: 2. 7: 10. 13: 1-7. b Ex. 21: 13, 14. Num. 35: 6, 11-14. *Num*, 1: 11-14. *1 Kings*, 8: 1. Rom. 8: 1, 33, 34. Heb. 6: 18, 19. c Num. 35: 15-24. *1 Kings*, 1: 1. *1 Kings*, 2: 7. Jer. 38: 7. e. a. 26: 9. f Num.

those of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It also bordered on Benjamin to the north-east, on Ephraim to the north, and on Simeon to the south. The country possessed by the Philistines, seems in part to have belonged to the inheritance of Dan: and the clause rendered, "the coast of Dan went out too little for them," may mean, that the Danites were deprived of their country by the ancient inhabitants, and therefore had not a sufficient portion; and the following brief account of a transaction afterwards more fully recorded, was added to complete the description of the inheritance at length possessed by this tribe. Probably this occurred soon after the death of Joshua; and the addition to the narrative might be made by Phinehas. (*Judg.* 20: 28. *Notes*, *Judg.* 18.)

V. 49, 50. Joshua waited till all the tribes were settled, before he required any provision for himself. It is probable, that the Lord had commanded the Israelites to give him an inheritance, at the time when he gave orders about Caleb: accordingly he desired to have Timnath-serah, which was not a city of great note, nor situated in the best of the land: but it lay in the lot of his own tribe, and not far from Shiloh, where the ark of God was placed. Thus he closed all his great and memorable services, by an example of moderation, equity, piety, and industry in rebuilding the city assigned him, which does great honour to his character.—It does not appear that Joshua left any posterity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If the true believer have entered into engagements which are likely to prove injurious to him, he will not retract, nor disappoint those who confide in him: but if he have obtained an undue advantage in any contract, he will recede from it without murmuring, in compliance with the requisitions of equity and kindness. For "love seeketh not her own," and "doth not behave unseemly." (*Note*, 1 Cor. 13: 4-7.)—They are most favoured in Providence, who are placed nearest to the sanctuary, and have most advantages, and the fewest hindrances, to the salvation of their souls; though they do not possess worldly influence or distinctions: and as far as we have the choice referred to us, we should always decide by this rule. But a Sovereign God dispenses his favours as he pleases; and one man has his habitation assigned him in "the valley of vision," and another his "in the very region of the shadow of death;" "according to the good pleasure of his will."—Disinterestedness and an unassuming deportment shed a peculiar lustre upon eminent characters: and they who labour most to do good to others, will be indifferent about their own worldly interests, and willing to forego all things, rather than preclude themselves from the sweet pleasure of communicating felicity. An inheritance in the Canaan above they must and do covet; but it will be soon enough to enter upon that, when they have done all the service to their brethren, of which they are capable; nor can any thing more effectually assure them of their title to it than laying themselves out properly to bring others to desire, to seek, and to

they shall be 'your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities, shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high-priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 ¶ And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, (which is Hebron,) in the mountain of Judah.

8 And on the other side Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

35: 12, 24, 25. Heb. 9: 26. * Heb. sanctified. g 21: 32. 1 Chr. 6: 76. h 21: 21. Gen. 33: 18, 19. 2 Chr. 10: 1. i 14: 15. 21: 11, 13. k Luke 1: 39. 12: 36. Dent. 4: 43. 1 Chr. 6: 78. m 21: 38. 1 Kings 22: 3. 1 Chr. 6: 80. n 21: 27. o Num. 35: 15. p See on 4: 6.

obtain possession of it. (*Note*, Phil. 1: 21-26.)—But Jesus has far outdone all others, in this and in every other respect. "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." He would not enter upon his inheritance, till by his obedience unto death, he had secured the eternal inheritance for all his people: nor will he account his own glory completed, until every ransomed sinner is put in possession of his heavenly rest.

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1-6. As soon as the tribes of Israel had received their promised inheritance, they were reminded to separate the cities of refuge; the use and typical meaning of which have already been explained. (*Notes*, Ex. 21: 12-14. Num. 35: 11-34. Deut. 19: 2-10.) When the manslayer arrived at the city of refuge, he passed a kind of trial before he was taken under the protection of the elders; who, it seems, were allowed to exclude or apprehend him, if he were adjudged a wilful murderer. And afterwards he must stand in judgment before the congregation, or the magistrates; and if then condemned, he was to be delivered to the avenger of blood. (9) This would prevent those abuses, which were generally made of sanctuaries among other nations, in which the most atrocious criminals found protection.—Few or none of those actions which human laws punish capitally, can be done entirely without intention, except depriving a man of his life, which may be purely accidental, and not in the least criminal; and the avenger had no power, except against the manslayer: so that the cities of refuge were appointed in this case alone.

V. 7-9. All these cities were afterwards assigned to the priests and Levites; (21: 11, 13, 21, 27, 32, 36, 38) and they were most conveniently situated on each side of Jordan, and in all the different parts of the land.—As this institution was an evident type of the sinner's refuge from the deserved wrath of God, the signification of the names of these cities has been noticed by some expositors with reference to the person, character, offices, and love of Christ. "Kedesh" signifies *holy*; and Jesus, the Holy One of God, is "made sanctification to us." "Shechem," a shoulder; "and the government is upon his shoulder." "Hebron," fellowship; and through him sinners have fellowship with God: "Bezer," a strong-hold; and "he is a strong-hold to those who trust in him." "Ramoth," exaltations; and "he is exalted to be a Prince and Saviour;" and "Golan," exaltation, or joy; and in him all believers are justified and glory, or rejoice.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have cause to be thankful that we have been preserved from the murderer's sword; and if we ourselves have not committed murder; for the violent passions of the human heart, instigated by Satan's temptations, naturally terminate in that horrid crime, if God withdraw his restraining hand. Nay, we owe it to His goodness, that we have not been deprived of life by another, even contrary to his intention; and if we have been preserved from the great calamity, of being

CHAPTER XXI.

The Levites require their cities, 1, 2. Forty-eight from the other tribes are given them, 3-8. The cities of the priests, 9-19; of the other Kohathites, 20-26; of the Gershonites, 27-33; of the Merari es, 34-42. An acknowledgment, that the promise of God to Israel was fulfilled.

THEN came near unto the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel;

2 And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, "The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses, to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle."

3 And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the Lord, these cities and their suburbs.

4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.

5 And the rest of the children of Kohath had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

6 And the children of Gershon had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, in Bashan, thirteen cities.

7 The children of Merari, by their families, had out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

8 And the children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.

9 ¶ And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are here mentioned by name;

10 Which the children of Aaron, being of the families of the Kohathites, who were of the children of Levi, had: for theirs was the first lot.

11 And they gave them the city of Arba, the father of Anak, (which city is Hebron,) in the hill-country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.

12 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh, for his possession.

13 Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest, Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer, and Libnah with her suburbs,

14 And Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs,

15 And Holon with her suburbs, and Debir with her suburbs,

16 And Ain with her suburbs, and Juttah with her suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with her suburbs: nine cities out of those two tribes.

17 And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with her suburbs, Geba with her suburbs,

18 Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs, four cities.

19 All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.

20 ¶ And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim.

21 For they gave them Shechem with her suburbs in mount Ephraim, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Gezer with her suburbs.

22 And Kibzaim with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs: four cities.

23 And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs,

24 Aijalon with her suburbs, Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: four cities.

25 And out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Taanach with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: two cities.

26 All the cities were ten, with their suburbs for the families of the children of Kohath that remained.

a 19:51. Ex. 6:14,25. b 14:1. 17:4. Num. 34:17-29. c See on 18:1. d Num. 35:2-8. Ex. 48:19-19. Matt. 10:10. Gal. 6:6. 1 Tim. 5:17,18. e Gen. 49:7. Dent. 33:8-10. 1 Chr. 6:54-81. f 9-19. 1 Chr. 6:54-60. g 20-26. Gen. 46:11. Ex. 6:16-25. Num. 3:27. 1 Chr. 6:51,19,61,66-70. h 27-33. Ex. 6:16,17. Num. 3:21,22. 1 Chr. 6:52,71-76. 134:40. Ex. 6:19. Num. 3:90. 1 Chr. 6:53,77-81. i 18:1. Num. 33:54. 35:3. Prov. 16:33. 18:18. k Num. 35:2. 1:12-18. 1 Chr. 6:55. l Heb. called. m See on 4. Ex. 6:18,20-26. Num. 3:2-4,19,27. 4:2. 1 Or. Kirjath-arba. 15:13,14,54. Gen. 23:2. 35:27. Judg. 1:10. n 2 Sam. 2:1-

3. 5:1-5. 15:7. Luke 1:39. o 14:13-15. 1 Chr. 6:55-57. p 20:7. Num. 35:6. q 10:22. 15:42. 1 Chr. 6:57. Is. 37:38. r 15:48. 1 Sam. 30:27,28. s 15:50. Ezr. 10:41. t 13:51. 1 Chr. 6:58. Hilen. u 12:13. 15:49. v 15:42. 1 Chr. 6:59. Achan. v 15:55. z 15:10. 1 Sam. 6:9,12. 1 Chr. 6:59. a 9:3. 18:25. 1 Chr. 6:60. b 18:24. Geba. c 1 Kings 2:26. Is. 10:30. Jer. 1:1. d 1 Chr. 6:60. Almeth. e 5. 1 Chr. 6:66. f 20:7. Gen. 33:19. Judg. 9:1. 1 Kings 12:1. g 16:10. 1 Kings 9:17. 17:1. 1 Chr. 6:67. h 16:35. 18:13,14. 1 Chr. 6:68. i 13:44,45. k 10:12. 19:42. Aijalon. 1 Chr. 6:69. 117:11. Judg. 5:19.

the unwilling cause of death, even to our beloved friends and relations. The subject before us also warns us to pray, that we may be kept from sins and calamities of this distressing nature; and be made ready, if without warning we should be called into eternity.—No sanctuary should protect the wilful murderer, and no favour should on any account be shown him: and no protection, assistance, or kindness can be too great, to be extended to the unfortunate manslayer.—But let us again take occasion to bless our God for that Refuge, which he has prepared in his Son, for our guilty, perishing souls. They who flee to him by true and living faith, will be secured from all condemnation; yea, though they have committed the most atrocious crimes, not even excepting the worst of murders: (Notes, Acts 26:9-11. 1 Tim. 1:12-16.) nor will any protection, instruction, sanctification, fellowship with God, or joy in him, be withheld from them. His power and presence will be their strong tower against all their enemies: nor will the exalted Saviour fail, in consequence of his own death, to restore all of them to their forfeited inheritance; nay, to exalt them to share his glory, in the presence of "his Father and their Father, of his God and their God." To him let sinners flee before the sword of vengeance overtake them; for he is ever near, and he hath said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out." In him let believers abide, hope, and rejoice; and may we all love, obey, and imitate him, more and more. (Note, Heb. 6:16-20.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. The Levites had waited till all the other tribes were provided for and were about to separate, before they preferred their claim. They had received no inheritance of land among their brethren; and they were therefore as justly entitled to the tithes, first-fruits, and holy things, and to forty-eight cities with their suburbs for their habitation, as the other Israelites were to their lands. (Note, Num. 35:2-8.) The cities, however, were made conducive to the common benefit of the nation; as the Levites were thus dispersed in every part, to instruct and edify the people by their doctrine and example; and also as watchmen, to restrain idolatry, and to provide for the punishment of those who were notoriously guilty of it: and

as it was their interest, as well as duty, to retain the people in the worship of JEHOVAH alone, this was a very suitable expedient. It is probable, from the subsequent history, that others lived in these cities besides the Levites, as their tenants, for the advantage of their instructions, or to carry on trades. Thus the Levites were plentifully provided for, as long as the people adhered to the worship of God, and respected his commandments: but liable to be deprived of their provision, if the people apostatized. (Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.)

V. 3-5. When the proper number of cities had been given by the several tribes, the families of the Levites cast lots for them: and the first lot fell to that of Aaron, not in the neighbourhood of Shiloh, where the ark was then placed, but in that of Jerusalem, where the temple was built above four hundred years afterwards. (Note, 1 Kings 6:1.)—The rest of the Kohathites also had their cities not far from their brethren. (9-26.) The family of Aaron could not at this time be very numerous, though it had greatly increased since his appointment to the priesthood; yet thirteen cities were allotted to it as a patrimony, in the divine foreknowledge of its future enlargement: for we have reason to think, that no other family increased so much in proportion, after Israel's departure from Egypt, as that of Aaron.

V. 6-8. Marg. Ref.

V. 11, 12. Either the city was not included with the territory of Hebron, in the grant made to Caleb; or, as it is more probable, he willingly gave it to the priests, that he might set an example to his brethren of cheerfully contributing to the maintenance of religion. (Note, 14:6-15.)

V. 13-24. Marg. Ref.

V. 25. Aner and Bileam are mentioned in the Chronicles, instead of Taanach and Gath-rimmon. (1 Chr. 6:70.)—Either the cities had at this time different names, or afterwards their names were changed; or the Levites, being by some means dispossessed of the cities first assigned them, received others from their brethren.—A careful examination of the marginal references will discover several other variations of this kind, which may be accounted for in the same manner. (1 Chr. 6. 54-81.)

27 ¶ And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the other half-tribe of Manasseh, they gave ^aGolan in Bashan with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Beeshterah with her suburbs: two cities.

28 And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs, ^aDabereh with her suburbs,

29 ^aJarmuth with her suburbs, En-gannim with her suburbs: four cities.

30 And out of the tribe of Asher, ^aMishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs,

31 Helkath with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs: four cities.

32 And out of the tribe of Naphtali, ^aKedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and ^aHammoth-dor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her suburbs: three cities.

33 All the cities of the Gershonites, according to their families, were thirteen cities with their suburbs.

34 ¶ And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, ^aJokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs,

35 Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs: four cities.

36 And out of the tribe of Reuben, ^aBezer with her suburbs, and ^aJahazah with her suburbs.

37 Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs: four cities.

38 And out of the tribe of Gad, ^aRamoth in Gilead with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and ^aMahanaim with her suburbs,

39 ^aHeshbon with her suburbs, ^aJazer with her suburbs: four cities in all.

40 So all the cities for the children of Merari,

m 20:8. Deut. 1:4, 4:43, 1 Chr. 6:71. a 19:12, 1 Chr. 6:72, 73. o 10:3, 23. 12:11. p 19:25-28. Mishael. 1 Chr. 6:74, 75. Mashal. q 19:37. 20:7. 1 Chr. 6:76. r 19:35. Hammoth. a 12:22. 19:11, 15. s 20:3. Deut. 4:43. 1 Chr. 6:73, 79. Jazer. u 13:18. Num. 21:23. v 20:8. 1 Kings 22:4. 1 Chr. 6:80. y Gen. 32:2. 2 Sam. 17:24. 19:32. z 13:17, 21. Num. 21:26-30, 32, 37. 1 Chr. 6:81. a Num. 31:1, 35. Marger. Is. 16:8, 9. Jer. 48:32. b Gen. 49:7. Num. 35:1-8.

V. 27-33. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 34, 35. Only two are mentioned in Chronicles, and they have different names. (1 Chr. 6:77.) Probably the Levites had been deprived of those allotted to them at first, and had afterwards two others given them in their stead.

V. 36-40. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 41, 42. 'So God ordered by Moses, Num. 35:7. And it is a demonstration, that Moses was divinely inspired, to make such an appointment; before they knew whether, without straitening the other tribes, they could afford so many cities to the Levites.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 43-45. This acknowledgment of the faithfulness of God to his promises, was a very becoming conclusion to the history of the conquest and division of the land. For wise and gracious reasons, some of the Canaanites were permitted to continue among the Israelites; but at this time they gave them no molestation: nor would they have ever made head against them, but on the contrary they would soon have been exterminated, had not the people provoked the Lord to employ them for chastisement, as we shall read in the subsequent history. When, however, the several tribes and families had settled in their estates, and cultivated them without disturbance; every particular of the Lord's promises, on that head, had been punctually fulfilled.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The maintenance of the ministers of religion should be considered, as required by the command of God, and not as a matter of mere choice or discretion. They "who labour in the word and doctrine," have as good a title to a comfortable support, as other men have to their estates; and, on some occasions must be allowed, without censure, to assert their claim against such as would defraud them: but this should always be done with evident reluctance as a matter of necessity; and with a willingness to refer themselves to the arbitration of impartial persons. And, in ordinary cases, it more accords to the examples of the New Testament, when they choose to "suffer all things," rather than to take any steps which may impede the success of their labours. Yet this excellent spirit in faithful ministers, is so far from excusing those who defraud them, that it greatly aggravates their sin.—It is very desirable that all the temporal concerns, relating to this sacred function, should be amicably settled, and arranged in such a manner, as to subserve its grand object; to occasion to the clergy as few avocations, temptations, or discouragements as may be; and to afford them every advantage of access to the people; that they may exhort, instruct, and reprove them without falling under their contempt, or dreading their displeasure. As on this extraordinary occasion, the cities of

by their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were by their lot, twelve cities.

41 All the cities of the Levites, within the possession of the children of Israel, were forty and eight cities with their suburbs.

42 These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them; thus were all these cities.

43 ¶ And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers: and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

44 And ^athe Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; and the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.

45 There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

CHAPTER XXII.

Joshua dismisses Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, with his commendation, counsel, and blessing; and with a large booty, 1-9. They build an altar of testimony near Jordan; at which the other tribes are offended, prepare for war, and send to expostulate with them, 10-20. They explain and vindicate their conduct to the satisfaction of their brethren, 21-33. The name of the altar, or the inscription on it, 34.

THEN ^aJoshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

2 And said unto them, ^bYe have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you:

3 Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord your God.

4 And now the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them:

Deut. 33:10. e Gen. 12:7. 13:15. 15:18-21. 26:3, 4. 28:4, 13, 14. Ex. 3:8. 23:27-31. Ps. 44:3. 106:42-45. d 1:15. 11:23. 22:4, 9. Deut. 7:22, 23. 31:3-5. Heb. 4:9. e 23:14, 15. Num. 23:19. 1 Kings 8:56. 1 Cor. 1:9. 1 Thes. 5:24. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:18. a See on Gen. 32:18-33. Deut. 29:7, 8. b Num. 32:20-29. Deut. 3:18-20. c 1:12-18. d Phil. 1:23-27. e See on 21:43, 44. Deut. 12:9.

the priests and Levites were assigned them immediately by God himself, through the casting of lots; so, in ordinary cases, every one should consider his station as determined by divine Providence, and should cheerfully continue to perform the duties of it, though he seem to have more discouragements and inconveniences than the rest of his brethren; and not venture to remove, till satisfied, after serious consideration, prayer, and consultation of his pious friends and seniors, that the Lord calls him to another place.—Happy is the land where faithful ministers of Christ are to be met with in every district! The people will not be impoverished by maintaining them: nor will they in general much complain in this respect; so long as ministers diligently apply themselves to dispel ignorance and error, and to diffuse the light of divine truth; to stop the progress of immorality, and promote the practice of universal holiness; and, by their doctrine, influence, example, and prayers, to render all within their sphere more wise, holy, and happy.—Persons of eminence should take the lead in every good work, that their examples may excite others; always remembering, that pre-eminence in real usefulness is the most valuable distinction.—In due season, all the promises of God will be accomplished to his true people: and their believing hope, and patient waiting, and self-denying obedience, will terminate in joyful songs of triumph, and thankful celebrations of his faithfulness, love, and power. Then will it be universally acknowledged that "there hath not failed aught of any good thing, which the Lord hath spoken;" nay, that he has exceeded their largest expectations, and made them more than conquerors, and brought them to their delightful rest and inheritance. May none of us at that season be found among his enemies, "who shall be destroyed for ever!"—Let no true believer despond, because of delays, tribulations, and temptations; for God has confirmed his promise and covenant "with an oath, that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." Let us then beg of him to enable us to confide in him entirely, to obey him unreservedly, and to wait for him patiently; for we have need of patience, that "after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise." (*Note, Heb. 6:11-20. P. O. 13-20. Jam. 5:7, 8.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1-4. The detachment of the two tribes and a half had been absent from home seven years at least; except as any of them had visited their families, or been exchanged for others of their brethren. During this long war they had been very obedient to Joshua: and they did not attempt to return, till it was ended, the land divided, and their brethren settled; and then Joshua honourably dismissed them. (*Notes, 1:12-18. 4:12, 13.*)

therefore now return ye, and 'get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan,

5 But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, ^{to} love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to ^{be} cleave unto him, and to ^{be} serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul.

6 So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents.

7 Now ^{to} the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possession in Bashan; but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them;

8 And he spake unto them, saying, ^oReturn with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: ^odivide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.

9 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the

half-tribe of Manasseh, ^obuilt there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

11 And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, ^{at} the passage of the children of Israel.

12 And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.

13 And the children of Israel ^osent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, ^oPhinehas the son of Eleazar the priest;

14 And with him ten princes, of each ^ochief house a prince, throughout all the tribes of Israel, and each one was ^{an} head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

15 And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying,

16 Thus saith ^{the} whole congregation of the LORD, What ^otrespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, ^{to} turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might ^{be} rebel this day against the LORD?

17 ^{Is} the iniquity of Peor too little for us, ^ofrom which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

18 But that ye must turn away this day from ^ofollowing the LORD? And it will be, seeing ye

[12:1-3; 23:11-13, Num. 26:33-42. 1 Cor. 9:1-17, 29:8. ^o See on Deut. 4:12, 6:9-11, 17:11-22. Ex. 15:23. 1 Chr. 28:7, 38:10-13, 119:4-6, Prov. 4:23. Is. 55:2. Jer. 12:16. Heb. 6:11, 12:12, 12:15. 2 Pet. 1:5-10. h. Ex. 20:6. Dent. 6:5, 10:12, 11:1-3. Matt. 22:37. John 14:15, 21-23, 21:15-17. Rom. 8:28. Jam. 1:12, 2:5. 1 John 2:3, 12:3. Dent. 4:4, 10:20, 13:4. Acts 11:23. Rom. 12:9. k. 24:14, 15. 1 Sam. 7:3, 12:20. Matt. 4:10, 6:24. Luke 1:74. John 12:26. Acts 27:32. Rom. 1:9, 17:8, 14:13. Gen. 14:19, 47:7, 10. Ex. 39:43. 1 Sam. 2:20. 2 Sam. 6:19, 20. 2 Chr. 30:18. Luke 21:14. Heb. 7:5, 7. m. 13:29-31, 17:1-12. n. Dent. 6:13, 17:18. 2 Chr. 17:5, 32:27. Prov. 3:16. 1 Cor. 15:58. Heb. 11:26. e. Num. 31:27. 1 Sam. 30:24. p. 13:11, 25:31. Num. 32:29, 39, 40. Dent. 9:15, 16. Ps. 60:7. q. 25-28, 4:5-9, 24:26, 27. Gen. 28:18, 31:46-52. r. Lev. 17:

V. 5. The sacred writer does not record any instructions, given by Joshua to this company, concerning civil government, or military discipline, or the cultivation of their lands; for nothing was deemed worthy of insertion in the sacred volume, but what had some relation to religion. Perfect obedience to the divine law was no more practicable in the days of Joshua, than at present; yet his exhortation takes no notice of this; for the standard of obedience cannot be too perfect. (Note, Matt. 5:13-48.) and our aim cannot be too high; since we are sure to fall very short of what we propose to ourselves. (Notes, Rom. 7:13-25. Phil. 3:12-14.) But the consciousness of our imperfections subserves the purposes of humiliation; and the feeling of our insufficiency dictates fervent prayers for forgiveness and assistance.

V. 6, 7. Joshua blessed his brethren, when he parted with them: that is, he expressed his affectionate good-will to them by earnest prayers, and by pronouncing a blessing on them; which was done by princes and others, on some occasions, and not by the priests alone, though by them most solemnly. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 14:18-20. 47:7. Num. 6:23-26. 2 Chr. 30:26, 27.)—The separate mention made of the Manassites, (descended from Joseph, the progenitor of Joshua,) who were now leaving their brethren, induces some expositors to conclude that he blessed them apart, and gave them presents, as a token of affection and remembrance.

V. 8, 9. Notes, 13:7-33. Num. 32:16-42. Deut. 3:12-22. Divide, &c. (8) Note, 1 Sam. 30:22-25.

V. 10. This altar must have been situated to the east of Jordan, in the inheritance of the two tribes and a half: as it could not otherwise have answered the end for which it was erected; (Note, 21-29.) or indeed have excited the suspicion of their brethren, that they meant to establish a schismatical worship in their own country, instead of attending at the tabernacle with the other tribes. Yet the verse, as we read it, conveys the idea, that it was erected to the west of Jordan; but the clause rendered "in the land of Canaan," may be translated, "by the land of Canaan;" and the words "over against the land of Canaan;" in the next verse, show this to be the proper rendering. On returning home, these victorious soldiers, and faithful assistants of their brethren, did not attempt to erect any trophy, on which to record their own exploits; but they desired to form a monument, that should prove to future ages their relation to the other tribes, their interest in the sacrifices and worship of God at his sanctuary, and their right, with that of their posterity, to join in all the ordinances there administered. For these purposes they

built a very large altar, which might be seen at a great distance, exactly in the shape of the altar of Shiloh.—They would have acted more prudently, if they had previously consulted the Lord, or explained their intention to Joshua, Eleazar, and the elders; but, as they approved themselves upright, we do not find their indiscretion censured. (Notes, 21-34.)

V. 12-16. The command of God was express that no sacrifices should be offered except at the door of the tabernacle; and building another altar seemed to imply an intention of offering sacrifices, which might prove a step to apostasy and idolatry, crimes to be punished by death, without respect to affinity or to numbers. (Notes, Deut. 13:)—Though the supposed criminals were brethren, and had been very faithful and serviceable to the other tribes; yet zeal for the honour of God and religion swallowed up all inferior regards, and they prepared to unite their arms against the offenders. But they were too precipitate; and they seem to have convened at Shiloh rather in an angry spirit, as if eager to be engaged in so horrid a warfare. Even if sacrifices had been offered, it would have been too rigorous, to punish the action as idolatry; and in this extreme case, they were commanded to make diligent search, and to proceed on nothing short of absolute certainty. (Deut. 13:14.)—When however the elders were assembled at Shiloh, the wisdom and authority of Joshua, Eleazar, and others, seem to have tempered their zeal; and they resolved previously to attempt the recovery of the offenders by more lenient measures. They therefore determined to send an embassy; Phinehas, whose zeal had before been so signalized, being placed at the head of it; and having obtained an audience, he and his associates delivered their embassy in very plain terms, which indeed appear rather severe; but on that very account they the more aptly denote, how much the people were engaged in the cause of God and religion; and how fully satisfied, that the law of Moses was indeed enacted by the express authority of God.

V. 17, 18. The disgrace of the crime committed by the Isr. elites with the Midianitish women, and in worshipping Baal-peor, still lay upon them; and the tokens of divine displeasure were yet felt among them, notwithstanding the plague which destroyed many thousands; or rather the words may imply, that there were many individuals who had never truly repented of that wickedness, but yet lay under the guilt of it, and were disposed to renew their provocation. (Notes, Num. 25:). In short the fire had been smothered up, but was not totally extinguished; and it was therefore very

rebel a-day against the LORD, that to-morrow he will be with with the whole congregation of Israel.

19 Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God.

20 Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

21 ¶ Then the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel,

22 The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, we knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day.)

23 That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering, or meat-offering, or if to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the LORD himself require it:

24 And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing; saying, 'In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel?

25 For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the LORD: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD.

26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice:

27 But that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations, after us, that we

might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt-offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us, or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifices, but it is a witness between us and you.

29 ¶ God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt-offerings, for meat-offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.

30 ¶ And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel, which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them.

31 And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.

32 And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again.

33 And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to

* 2 Sam. 17:11, 12. Num. 16:22. 2 Sam. 24:1. 1 Chr. 21:14. * Ex. 15:17. Lev. 19:25-28. Amos 7:17. Acts 10:14, 15. 11:8, 9. 18:11. Lev. 17:3-9. Deut. 12:5, 6. 2 Chr. 11:13, 15, 17. 18: 7, 15, 18, 24. 1 Cor. 10:8. 2 Pet. 2:6. Jude 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1:1. 16:1. 18:13. 24:26. Acts 18:24. Jam. 1:19. 1 Pet. 3:15. * Ex. 18: 21-23. Mic. 5:2. 1 Ex. 18:11. Deut. 10:17. Ps. 82:1. 95:3. 97:7. 135:2. Dan. 2: 47, 11:35. 1 Tim. 6:16. Rev. 19:16. m 1 King 8:39. Job 10:7. 23:10. Ps. 7: 3. 44:21. 139:1-4. Jer. 12:3. 17:10. John 2:23. 21:17. Acts 1:21. 2 Cor. 11:13, 31. Heb. 1:13. 2 Cor. 11:13. 24:1. 1 Pet. 3:16. Heb. 7:9. Mal. 3:18. Acts 11:2-18. 2 Cor. 5:11. 11:13. 13:9. 14:10. Ps. 7:3-5. Acts 25:11. * Gen. 9:5. Deut. 18:19. 1 Sam. 20:15. 2 Chr. 31:22. Ps. 11:1-4. Ex. 3:18. 33:6, 8. * Gen. 18:19. * Heb. To-morrow. 4:6. Gen. 30:33. Ex. 13:14. Deut. 6:20. margins. * 27.

2 Sam. 20:1. 1 Kings 12:16. Ezra 4:2, 3. Neh. 2:20. Acts 8:21. * 1 Sam. 26:19. 3 Kings 12:27-30. 14:15. 15:30. * 10:34. 24:27. Gen. 31:38, 52. 1 Sam. 7:12. u Deut. 12:5, 6, 11, 17, 18, 26, 27. * Ex. 25:40. 2 Kings 16:10. Ez. 43:10. Heb. 8:5. * y 24:16. Gen. 44:17. 1 Sam. 12:23. Rom. 3:6. 6:2. 9:14. * z 23:2. 13:14. 2 Kings 18:22. 2 Chr. 32:12. * a 33. Judg. 8:3. 1 Sam. 25:32, 33. Prov. 15: 1. * c 11:18. * 1 Heb. was good in their eyes. (Gen. 28:8. 1 Sam. 23:6. 2 Chr. 30:4. Eccl. 1:21. margins. * b See on 3:10. 1 Lev. 25:11, 12. Num. 14:41-43. 2 Chr. 15:2. Ps. 68:17. Is. 12:6. Zech. 9:23. Matt. 1:23. * Heb. then. c 12-14. Prov. 25:13. d See on 30. Acts 15:12, 31. 2 Cor. 7:7. 1 Thes. 3:6-8. e 1 Sam. 25:32, 33. 1 Chr. 29:20. Neh. 8:5, 6. 1 an. 2:19. Luke 2:28.

dangerous to admit of any thing, which might give it an occasion of breaking forth again, lest still wider devastation should ensue.—Baal-peor lay near the lot of these tribes.

And it will be, &c. (18) 'Their pious fear, lest God should be offended, made them immediately fall into this vehement expostulation.' *Ep. Patrick.*

V. 19. This proposal displayed, in a very affecting manner, the piety and disinterestedness of Israel. They had reproved their brethren sharply, and were prepared to wage war against them with their whole force if the glory of God and religion required it; yet they loved them with so generous an affection, that they would rather divide their estates with them, than be under this painful necessity! If then Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh deemed their inheritance polluted, because they had in it no altar on which to offer expiatory sacrifices, before which other sacred ordinances might be administered, as the appointed means of rendering their possessions and employments pure and holy; and on that consideration had been induced to transgress the commandment of God; the other tribes would cheerfully relinquish a proportion of their inheritances in Canaan, to make room for them, rather than leave them to persist in this ruinous expedient. (Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.)

V. 20. The thirty-six men who were slain before Ai, and all the family of Achan, had perished with him in his iniquity; and wrath would have come upon the whole congregation, had he not been punished. If then one man's sin wrought so much indignation, what would be the consequences of the apostasy of two tribes and a half! (Notes, 7.)

V. 21-29. This answer of the Reubenites, and the other tribes concerned, is well worthy of admiration. They took in good part the suspicions, reproofs, and even harshness of their brethren; and did not object to the authority of the elders at Shiloh, or even to the terms in which the ambassadors had delivered their message: but, with the utmost solemnity and meekness, they explained their intention, and gave all the satisfaction in their power. They appealed to the LORD, against whom they were supposed to have rebelled, with great propriety and reverence. The titles, by which they addressed him, "The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods," formed a very proper confession of their faith;

as well as an act of worship to him, the eternal, almighty God, who was exalted far above all creatures, however great, and even those which other nations worshipped as their gods, being sole "Lord of all." This glorious God knew, and Israel would know by their subsequent conduct, that they were not guilty of the things with which they were charged; and indeed if they could be proved guilty, they acknowledged that they did not deserve, and therefore did not ask, to be spared. (Note, Ps. 7:3-5.) They further declared, that their motives, in erecting this altar, were directly contrary to those which had been imputed to them. For they were anxiously afraid, lest in process of time, the other tribes should not own them as brethren, or admit them to the ordinances of the LORD, and to his sanctuary: and lest their posterity, by reason of the distance, or their slackness in attending the solemn feasts, should at length be excluded as Gentiles, and thus be tempted and gradually decline to idolatry. (Note, 1 Sam. 26:17-19.) And they solemnly protested that no other motive had induced them to build this altar, after the fashion of that at Shiloh; but that it might remain to succeeding generations a memorial that they were Israelites, that they were interested in all the sacrifices offered upon the altar of JERUSALEM, and had a right to join with Israel in all their public religious solemnities.—The words rendered "the LORD God of gods," may indeed be read as three names of God: EL, ELOHIM, JEHOVAH: and some expositors, both Jewish and Christian, have thought that they refer to a distinction of persons in the divine Unity.

V. 30, 31. This answer entirely removed the suspicions from the minds of the ambassadors; and they were highly pleased that their brethren were not guilty, and that they were so piously disposed.—Had they been guilty, or had they, by a disdainful answer, provoked the other tribes to war against them, they would have occasioned sin and punishment to the congregation: but their pious, frank, meek, and wise reply, led to an amicable conclusion, and prevented the fatal consequences. (Notes, Judg. 20:8-14. 21:2, 3.)

V. 33. While the Israelites desisted from their purpose of waging war against their brethren, they not only rejoiced, but united in praises and thanksgivings to God, for not rendering so painful an employment their bounden duty.

destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar *'Ed*: for it *shall be* a witness between us that the Lord is God.

CHAPTER XXIII.

**Joshua, now grown old, c. mooves the elders of Israel; and exhorts them by the mercies of God, and the prospects of future blessings, to be steadfast in his service, 1-10. He warns them against connections with idolaters; and protests, that the threatenings of God, in case of their disobedience, would as certainly be fulfilled, as his promises had been, 11-16.*

AND it came to pass, a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age.

2 And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their

** That is, A witness. See on 27. 24-27. 1 Kings 18:39. Is. 43:10. Matt. 4:10. a. 1:23. 2:14. 22:4. Ps. 46. b. 13:1. Gen. 25:8. Deut. 31:2. * Heb. come into days. b. 24:1. Deut. 31:28. 1 Chr. 28:1. Acts 20:17-35. c. Deut. 4:9. Ps. 44:1.*

V. 34. The word *Ed*, or a witness, in the first clause, is not in the original; and the meaning seems to be, that the persons concerned inscribed these words on the altar, "It is a witness between us, that the Lord is God." By this inscription they took effectual care, that their altar might neither occasion superstition, nor be a stumbling-block to their brethren.—Thus was this affair happily terminated: and though human infirmity is discoverable on both sides, yet the reader will thence collect the most pleasing ideas of the general and zealous regard, which was then paid to the worship and ordinances of God; and be confirmed in the sentiment, that this was indeed the very best of all the generations of Israel. No doubt seems to have existed in the minds of any of the parties concerned, respecting the reality of those miracles, by which the giving of the law was said to have been attended; or, of the special power and justice of God, by which the transgressors of that law would certainly be punished. But had not the preceding history, which has been considered, been known as indisputably true by this generation; such a full conviction of these grand principles could never have prevailed; and if this generation knew these things to be true; it would be too late afterwards for any to deny or question the truth of them; when the whole of their civil polity as well as religious observances was grounded upon them.—It is remarkable that Joshua is not once named in this transaction: but this only shows, that he did not in his old age assume any regal authority; but left the elders and magistrates to conduct the general business, only acting himself when great occasions made it necessary. Yet we cannot doubt, that his wisdom and piety influenced the counsels of the elders and people at this time.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The work of God and the welfare of his people should be preferred to our most important personal interests, our sweetest domestic comforts, and our most endeared affections: and all our engagements ought to be discharged with strict punctuality, without the least appearance of evasion, and, if possible, to the complete satisfaction of all parties. Nay, the believer should be so pleased with serving the cause of Christ on earth, as to be willing to continue yet longer, in this world of warfare, labour, and trouble, and to wait patiently till the Lord Jesus honourably dismisses him. (*Notes, Phil. 1:19-26.*) But if we are numbered among his soldiers, we must cheerfully and punctually obey his orders, that we may at last receive his commendation. Of this honour we ought to be ambitious, and of this alone.—He will bless those whom he approves; and recompense them in proportion to the self-denial, hardship, and affliction, which they have endured for his sake: nay, the power, number, and malice of our enemies, and the long continuance of our warfare, will eventually increase the riches of our gracious reward; which all our brethren will share with us, by rejoicing in our fulness of joy, as we shall also rejoice in theirs.—Due commendation ought not to be withheld from those who behave properly; and gratitude to the instruments, very well consists with superior gratitude to the Author of all our mercies. (*Notes, Ezra 7:24-28. Phil. 4:14-20.*) Our best counsels and fervent prayers are a debt, which we owe especially to those who have been useful to us; and the comfort of others should be regarded equally with our own.—The true interests of individuals and of nations does not consist in wealth or greatness, but in loving the Lord their God, cleaving to him, and obeying his commandments; and we should aim very high in this, or our attainments will be very low.—When urgent affairs have called or detained men from their families for a season, they should return home as soon as they are able, that they may instruct and rule over them in the fear of God; and all their acquisitions should be shared with them, and not spent in personal indulgence or excess.

V. 10-34. We should highly value the ordinances of God, and desire to perpetuate them to our posterity, that they may inherit 'the communion of saints,' and be preserved from temptations to ungodliness or false religion: and when our situation in life, or the choice which we have inadvertently made for ourselves, or for them, exposes them to peculiar dan-

gers, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age:

3 And ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the Lord your God is he that hath fought for you.

4 Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.

5 And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised unto you.

6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law

2. Mal. 1:5. d. 10:14, 42. Ex. 14:14. Deut. 20:4. e. 13:6. 18:10. f. Heb. at the sunset. f. 12:13. 13:6. Ex. 23:30, 31. 33:2. 34:11. Deut. 11:22. g. Num. 33:52. 53. h. 1:7-9. Jer. 9:3. 1 Cor. 16:13. Eph. 6:10-19. Heb. 12:4. Rev. 21:8.

ger, we should devise every prudent means of preventing the fatal effects.—We ought indeed carefully to "take heed that our good be not evil spoken of;" yet they, who are truly zealous for the honour of God, and active in promoting true godliness, must not think it strange, if their honest and proper measures be suspected or censured, even by such of their brethren as are no less zealous than they; but who, from concurring circumstances, are led to express their zeal in another way.—It is incumbent on us constantly to watch against a disposition to rash judgment, uncandid surmises, and harsh reproofs; and to cultivate and pray for the contrary spirit; but if it be our trial to be rebuked with severity, and loaded with calumny; we should be thankful for the testimony of our consciences, and for confidence in appealing to our heart-searching Judge, that we are misrepresented or misunderstood. And if the Lord knows our innocence, "Israel shall know" it in due time; for when our consciences are clear, he will at length clear our character, which we may therefore safely commit to his keeping. While exposed to this trial, we ought cautiously to avoid all recriminations, to speak with mildness and seriousness, and be ready to offer such explanations, as may obviate misconstructions, and satisfy the minds of our pious and candid brethren: (*Notes, Acts 11:1-17.*) and whatever has been wrong or suspicious, we should be willing to alter.—But "charity hopeth all things, and rejoiceth not in iniquity;" and they, who "abound in this grace also," will be glad to find themselves mistaken, in that unfavourable opinion of their brethren, which they had reluctantly entertained; and will bless God for evidences of their faith and piety.—When boldness in opposing sin, and sharpness in reproving or punishing it, are the effects of genuine zeal and love, they will be attended with a disposition to renounce our own interests, that God may be glorified, and that temptations may be removed out of the way of our brethren: and we have learned a most important lesson, when we are brought to dread sin more than poverty or suffering.—In appeals to the Lord, we ought to have our minds possessed with a solemn, reverential awe of his majesty, authority, heart-searching knowledge, and perfections; and never to call him to witness about any thing trivial or doubtful, or in a light and rash manner. (*Note, Ex. 20:7.*)—Happy will be when all professed Christians shall learn, in their differences, to copy the example of Israel recorded in this chapter; and to unite zeal and steady adherence to the cause of truth, with candour, meekness, a readiness to understand each other, to explain, and to be satisfied with the sufficient explanations and concessions of their brethren. Oh! how long shall acrimony, misrepresentation, ridicule, opprobrious epithets, and an obstinate pertinacity in defending every title, and carrying every sentiment to the utmost extreme;—how long, I say, shall these things disgrace the very name of religious controversy, and confirm the prejudices of thousands against those precious truths, which have often been, and still are, contended for in so odious a manner? When will Christians remember, that "by this all men shall know the disciples of Christ, when they have love one for another?" and when will they recollect that "if they bite and devour one another," they are likely to be "consumed one of another?" For the world, and "the god of this world," have no higher gratification than to see the different denominations of professing Christians exposing, reviling, and ridiculing each other. May the Lord increase the number of those, who "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and may increasing grace and consolation "be with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," by whatever name they are distinguished!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. Different opinions prevail as to the time that elapsed between the settlement of Israel and the death of Joshua; but perhaps it was not less than sixteen or seventeen years. (*Note, 13:1-5.*) The transaction recorded in this chapter, seems to have occurred in his last year.

V. 2. *For all Israel, and for, &c.]* Or, "For all Israel, even for their elders, &c."—When Joshua had given the following charge to the elders and judges, and to the rulers of

of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left:

7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you, neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause ^{to} swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them.

8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

9 For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

10 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

11 Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

12 Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

13 Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations

from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

14 And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land, which the LORD your God hath given you.

16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

1 Deut. 5:32, 12:92, 17:20, 28:14, Prov. 4:9, 27, k 12, Ex. 23:33, Deut. 7:2, 3, Prov. 4:14, 1 Cor. 15:33, 2 Cor. 6:14—17, Eph. 5:11, 1 Ex. 23:13, Num. 32:38, Ps. 16:4, Hos. 2:17, m Jer. 5:7, Zeph. 1:5, * Or, For if ye will cleave, &c., 22:15, A. 4, 10:20, 11:22, 13:4, Acts 11:23, † Or, Then the Lord will drive, 5, 21, 43:44, Deut. 11:22, 15:9, 15:14, † Lev. 26:8, Deut. 32:29, Jud. 3:31, 15:15, 1 Sam. 14:6, 12—16, 2 Sam. 23:8, q 10:42, Ex. 14:14, 23:27, Deut. 3:22, 20:4, P. 35:1, 44:4, 5:46, 7, Rom. 8:31, † 22:5, Deut. 4:9, 6:5, 12, Prov. 4:23, Luke 21:31, Eph. 5:15, Heb. 12:15, † Heb. your souls, e Ex. 20:6, Rom. 8:28, 1 Cor. 8:3, 16:2, Jude 20, 1 Ps. 35:3, 125:3, Ez. 15:21, Zeph. 1:6, Matt. 12:45, John 6:66, Heb. 10:33, 39, 2 Pet. 2:18—22, 1 John

2:19, u Gen. 2:24, 24:3, 1 Sam. 18:1—3, 1 Kings 11:2, Rom. 12:9, v Ex. 34:12—16, Deut. 7:3, 1 Kings 11:4, Est. 9:13, 12, Neh. 13:23—28, 2 Cor. 6:14—17, x Ex. 23:33, Num. 33:55, Deut. 7:16, Jud. 2:2, 3, Ps. 106:35—39, y Deut. 7:16, Jud. 2:3, Ps. 69:22, 2 Tim. 2:26, z Lev. 26:31—35, Deut. 4:28, 28:63—68, 29:28, 30:18, 2 Kings 17:23, 25:21, 26, Luke 21:24, a 1 Kings 2:2, Job 30:23, Ez. 9:10, 12:5, Heb. 9:27, h 21:43—45, Ex. 3:9, 23:27—30, Lev. 26:33—33, Num. 23:19, Deut. 28:1—34, 1 Sam. 3:19, 1 Kings 8:56, Luke 21:33, c Lev. 26:14, k, † Deut. 28:15—68, Jud. 3:8, 12, 4:1, 6:1, 10:6, 7, 13:1, 2 Chr. 36:16, 17, Luke 21:22—24, 1 Thes. 2:16, d 13.

thousands and of hundreds; they would be enabled to communicate the substance of it in their several districts, that all Israel might hear. Probably this was done at Shiloh, on one of the solemn feasts.

V. 6. (Note, 1:7.) While the Israelites adhered strictly to the law of Moses, they would be kept entirely distinct from the Canaanites and the surrounding nations, and would in consequence be exposed to their hatred and opposition. They were likewise required to carry on unceasing war against the inhabitants of the land, avowedly aiming at their entire extermination; which as far as steadily adhered to, would expose them to their unabating and most rancorous enmity. Great courage would therefore be required, in order to a determinate obedience in such circumstances; and probably Joshua had observed, that the people were become more intent upon quietly enjoying their present possessions, than on boldly improving their advantages, as the Lord by Moses had commanded them. (Notes, 16:10, 17:11—13.)—It is evident that the people at this time possessed and might read the books of Moses; otherwise there could have been no ground for an exhortation in the words here used.

V. 7. The habitual mention of the names of idols, had it been allowed, would gradually have introduced the custom of swearing by them in common discourse; and this would have abated the abhorrence of idolatry, and have prepared the way for other more express acts of idolatry. It is also generally supposed, that Israel must not put an idolater to his oath, so as to cause him to swear by his idol; or form any agreement in which such oaths were used. This would tend exceedingly to prevent all compacts with idolaters.—The paintings, statues, and poems, exquisitely finished by human ingenuity, but replete with references to the detestable heathen mythology, which abound in Christian countries, tend exceedingly to habituate the mind, to reflect upon the Roman and Grecian idolatry without horror, nay, with a kind of pleasure; to banish the language of piety from men's lips; and thus to subvert in no small degree, the cause of skepticism, infidelity, and ungodliness. (Note, Ex. 23:13.)

V. 10. After the people were dispersed in their possessions, they might not be able to bring such large armies into the field, as when encamped in one body: but that ought not to discourage them; for one Israelite should chase a thousand Canaanites, so long as they cleaved unto the Lord, seeing he himself "would fight for them." (Marg. Ref. Note, Deut. 32:30, 31.)

V. 11—13. Marg. Ref.—Snares and traps, &c. (13) The remnant of these nations would first be "snares and traps" to the people, and then "scourges in their sides, and thorns in their eyes." If they entered into any amicable correspondence with them, the women would allure them to form connexions and marriages with them; and by their blandishments entice them to idolatry. (Notes, Ex. 23:32, 33, 34:11—17, Num. 25:1—5, 31:14—18, Deut. 7:1—4.) Thus they would be taken in Satan's snares and traps; for Canaanites must always be enemies to Israelites under every mask; and they would watch every opportunity of avenging themselves. So that, when Israel had provoked the Lord to withdraw his protection, these nations would be ready instruments of their chastisement; but if that did not bring them to repentance, their cruelties would torment them as a thorn in

the eye would do, and at length even drive them out of the promised land.—The subsequent history abundantly illustrates these emphatical expressions. (Marg. Ref. x. y.)

V. 14—16. The Israelites were deeply affected with the wonderful performance of the promises, which God had made to their fathers; and Joshua, almost with his last breath, (as he supposed,) most solemnly assured them, that the threatenings would be accomplished with equal certainty and exactness, whenever they transgressed their covenant by apostasy and idolatry. (Notes, Lev. 26:14—29, Deut. 4:25—28, 28:15—68, 29:18—28, 32:19—36, Deut. 9:12—14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Through the deceitfulness of the human heart, we are never more in danger of forgetting the Lord, than when most favoured with temporal prosperity.—They who possess influence, from age, authority, reputation for wisdom and piety, or eminent services, should employ it all, with unwearied perseverance, to their latest breath, in promoting the practice of true godliness.—Gratitude, duty, and regard to our own best happiness, with united energy, require us to adhere to our profession of the gospel and to walk consistently with it; yet we all need to be frequently reminded, exhorted, and warned concerning these things. (Note, Acts 11:23, 24.)—As long as men cleave to the Lord, though they have abated somewhat of their fervour and diligence, there is good ground of hope that admonitions will have a proper effect: but the diseases of the soul, like those of the body, should be resisted before they have gathered strength.—We cannot too often be called upon, to meditate on the past and present kindness of God to us; and to reflect upon his gracious promises, and awful threatenings; and we should treasure up our experience of the exact performance of his word, to strengthen our expectation of its entire accomplishment in due season; for hope and fear, and every passion, ought to be engaged to restrain men from sin, and to keep them close to their duty.—It is true wisdom to discern and shun the temptations and inlets to sin, of which none are more dangerous than ungodly companions. Acquaintance, friendship, and marriage, with persons of no religion, or false religion, have generally been progressive steps towards the mere professor's apostasy, and the believer's loss of all his earnestness, comfort, and usefulness. (Note, Gen. 6:1, 2.) They, who at first are tempters, will eventually prove the scourges of those who have listened to their seductions; and either bitter distress in this world, or utter destruction in the world to come, are the unavoidable effects of yielding to temptation. This all ought "to know for a certainty," that they "may take good heed unto themselves," and not allow the love of any creature to seduce them from the love of God, and obedience to his laws.—Our minds should be filled with an abhorrence of every kind of ungodliness, equal to that which the most conscientious persons feel of murder or adultery; for, whatever fallen man may think to the contrary, the guilt of neglecting and despising the glorious God our Creator is far greater, than that of injuring our fellow-creatures. (Note, Ps. 51:4.)—Our inward foes are the most dangerous; and they will cause us much misery, unless we oppose and mortify them with unrelenting severity; so that this warfare will require great courage and resolution. And if we resolutely adhere to the word of God as our rule, turning aside neither to the right hand nor to the left; we shall certainly be hated,

CHAPTER XXIV.

Joshua convenes Israel, and lays before them a brief history of the Lord's kindness to their ancestors from the days of Terah, 1—13. His exhortations to choose the service of God, and renew the covenant, 14—25. He sets up a stone as a memorial, 26—30. His death, age, and burial, 31. Israel serves the Lord till some time after Joshua's death, 31. Joseph's bones are buried, and Eleazar dies, 32, 33.

AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to ^aShechem, and ^bcalled for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they ^cpresented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, ^d“Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old times, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and ^ethey served other gods.

3 And ^fI took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and ^ggave him Isaac.

4 And ^hI gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and ⁱI gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but ^jJacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and ^kI plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them; and afterward I brought you out.

6 And ^lI brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and ^mthe Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea.

7 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and ⁿyour eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ^oye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And ^pI brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and ye fought with them: and I gave them into

your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Then ^qBalak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:

10 But ^rI would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

11 And ^sye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and ^tthe men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

12 And ^uI sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; but ^vnot with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and ^wcities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them: of the vineyards and olive-vineyards which ye planted not do ye eat. [*Practical Observations.*]

14 ^xNow therefore ^yfear the LORD, and ^zserve him in sincerity and in truth; and ^{aa}put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and ^{ab}in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, ^{ac}choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or ^{ad}the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ^{ae}as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and said, ^{af}God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, ^{ag}he *it* is that brought us up, and our fathers, out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those

a Gen. 12:6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. b Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. c Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. d Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. e Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. f Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 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despised, and reproached, by them whose pride is affronted, or whose consciences are made uneasy, through our holy singularity and faithful reproof. We need not however fear them; “for the LORD our God will fight for us, as he hath promised,” and nothing shall by any means hurt us: and though useful instruments and valued friends may be removed, yet the Lord ever liveth to protect, uphold, guide, comfort, and bless us. But sinners have cause to tremble at his indignation: for he will as surely execute his most tremendous threatenings, as perform his largest promises: and hypocrites or apostates will be as severely dealt with as open infidels and profligates. Let us then “watch and pray that we enter not into temptation;” let us trust in the faithfulness, love, and power of God; let us plead his promises and cleave to his commandments; and then we shall be happy in life, in death, and for ever!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. To Shechem.] Shechem was nearer than Shiloh to Timnath-serah, Joshua's residence; (Note, 19:19, 50.) and he being old and infirm, convened the tribes and elders of Israel to that place. Some think, that he caused the ark and the tabernacle to be conveyed thither on this occasion, to give the greater solemnity to his last meeting with his people; for it is said, “They presented themselves before God.”—Finding his life prolonged, perhaps beyond expectation, he was desirous of once more enforcing upon them the great things of religion, in the most solemn and affecting manner possible. (Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10, 19–26–28.)

V. 2. Of the flood.] That is, of the river Euphrates.—It is said, that “they served other gods;” hence it is evident that Abraham, as well as Terah and Nabor, had been guilty of idolatry; and this was probably the case till he was called to the knowledge of God, when above seventy years of age. (Note, Gen. 11:28–32.)

V. 3–8. Marg. Ref.—Your eyes have seen. (7.) Many of those who, being under twenty years of age, had witnessed these miracles, were doubtless still living; and several of the elders, judges, and officers whom Joshua addressed, might be of this number.

V. 9, 10. Balak intended war against Israel, and previously called Balaam to curse them, which he would gladly have done; but, as the Lord refused to grant his desires or

15–26, 28:5–10, 15:43–7, 16:11–17, 4:10–12, 23, Ps. 114:3, 5, 6:10, 11:1, Neh. 9:24, 25, Ps. 78:45, 105:44, Acts 7:45, 13:19, 1 Cor. 10:7, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. b Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. c Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. d Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. e Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. f Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. g Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. h Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. i Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. j Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. k Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. l Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. m Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. n Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. o Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50. p Gen. 12:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49

great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwell in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, "Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, "Nay, but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are witnesses.*

23 Now therefore "put away (*said he*) the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the peo-

ple that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

28 So Joshua let the people depart, every man to his inheritance.

29 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

30 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

31 And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua; and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

32 And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which

Ex. 10:2, 15:2. Ps. 116:16. Mic. 4:2. Zech. 8:23. Luke 1:73, 74. m 23. Ruth 1:15. Matt. 6:9. Luke 14:25-32. n Lev. 10:3, 19:2. 1 Sam. 6:20. 29. 39. 5.9. 15. 16. 6. 4. 3. 11. 13. Hab. 1:13. o Ex. 24:3. 31. 14. 1 Cor. 10:26-22. p Ex. 23:21. 1 Sam. 3:14. 2 Chr. 35:15. 14. 27. 11. q 23:12-15. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 35:12. 2 Sam. 22:18. 128. 63. 10. 65. 11. 12. Jer. 17:13. Ex. 18:24. Acts 7:42. Heb. 10:29, 37, 38. f Ex. 19:8. 20:19. 21:3, 7. Deut. 1:27, 28. 26:17. 1a. 44:5. g Job 19:6. Luke 19:22. h Ps. 119:111, 173. Luke 10:42. i 14. Gen. 35:2-4. Ex. 20:23. Judges. 10:16. 1 Sam. 7:3, 4. Hos. 14:2, 3, 8. 1 Cor. 10:19-21. 2 Cor. 6:16-18. x Ex. 15:25. 24:3, 7, 8. Deut. 5:2, 3. 29:1, 10-15. 2 Chr. 15:12, 15. 23:

16. 29:10. 34:29-32. Neh. 9:38. 10:23, 29. y Ex. 24:4. Deut. 31:24-26. z Judg. 9:6. a 4:3-9, 20-24. Gen. 28:18-22. b Gen. 33:4, 8. c 22:27, 28, 34. Gen. 31:44-52. Deut. 4:26. 30:19. 31:19, 21, 26. 1 Sam. 7:12. d Deut. 32:1. 1s. 1:2. Hab. 2:11. Luke 19:40. e Job 31:23. Prov. 30:9. Matt. 10:33. 2 Tim. 2:12, 13. Tit. 1:16. Rev. 3:8, 1. f Jude 2:6. g Deut. 34:5. Judg. 2:8. h Ps. 116:17. 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. Rev. 14:13. h Gen. 50:22, 26. 1 Chr. 29:11. i 2 Sam. 22:30. 1 Deut. 31:29. Judg. 2:7. 2 Chr. 24:17, 18. Acts 20:29. Phil. 2:12. j Heb. prolonged their days after. m Deut. 11:2. 31:13. n Gen. 50:25. Ex. 13:19. Acts 7:16. o Gen. 33:19. 48:22.

and in stirring up the minds of men, from resting in the former to seek after the latter. The method, which Joshua adopted in treating with the Israelites, was admirably calculated, and evidently intended, to produce this effect. Many of them were already spiritual worshippers: a much greater number might be favourably disposed towards the worship and service of God, but, through prostration and worldly avocations, not yet fully engaged in it; and doubtless many had a secret dislike to religion, who would have been ashamed to confess it, and who would be shocked at the proposal of renouncing the worship of God, and openly professing themselves idolaters. Of this state of mind this aged believer aimed to take the advantage, and to lead them by his proposal to reflect upon their own inconsistency, formality, or prostration; and to engage deliberately, seriously, and "with full purpose of heart," in the Lord's service. Thus he intimated, that apostasy from God to the worship of idols would not be more destructive to them, than hypocrisy or a lifeless form; that, if the service of God were worth any thing, it was worth every thing; that for his part, he had made up his mind, and had deliberately and decidedly chosen to serve the Lord fully and heartily; that he was determined to use all his authority and influence with his family, to prevail with them to follow his example; and that he greatly desired to persuade all his beloved countrymen to make the same choice, and to act in the same manner. (*Marg. Ref. f. h. Notes, Gen. 18:18, 19. Ruth 1:11-17. 1 Kings 18:21.*)

V. 19. Joshua by no means intended to deter the people from the service of the Lord; but to put them upon their guard against the objections commonly made to a life of strict godliness, as if intolerably difficult, or even impracticable; and to lead them to count their cost, and to consider beforehand what they engaged to do. (*Notes, Luke 14:25-35.*) With great address, arising from deep knowledge of the human heart, he seized the advantage of their present impressions, to render them abiding, to increase the earnestness of the people, and to lead them solemnly to enter into a willing engagement to serve God alone.—When a certain degree of inclination towards any object has once possessed the heart, it is always increased by the prospect of difficulties; provided they appear surmountable by contrivance, exertion, and perseverance. This management of Joshua, therefore, directly tended to lead the Israelites to reflect upon the perfections of JEHOVAH, and upon the nature of his service; to advert to their own unholiness and insufficiency; and to that encouragement and hope of assistance which were given them in the books of Moses; to induce them to esteem acceptably serving God, as a prize worthy of their utmost labour and earnestness; to render them diligent, watchful, humble, and dependent in their endeavours; and to prevent the effect of subsequent difficulties and temptations, by exciting the expectation of them. Such was the tendency of his address, and such, by the blessing of God, appears to have been its effect upon many of them.—The original words, translated "He is an holy God," are literally, *He is holy* *Gods*, the adjective being plural, as well as the noun; and

the expression has frequently been cited in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity.—As he has no equal, he will endure no rival.—The word rendered *forgive* may mean *tolerate*. (*Notes, Ex. 20:5. 34:5, 7, 11-17.*)

V. 20. The longer and the more open profession the people should make of worshipping JEHOVAH, the deeper would be their guilt and condemnation, if they should at last apostatize to idolatry. Of this Joshua reminded them; that they might duly consider the solemn engagement about to be made, and be upon their guard against subsequent temptations.

V. 21, 22. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 24:3, 4, 6-8. Deut. 5:28, 29. 26:17-19.*

V. 23. *Incline your heart.*] This expression shows how earnest this venerable servant of God was, to lead the people into the inward exercises of true piety, and to excite them to be spiritual and hearty, as well as entire, in their religion. (*Notes, Deut. 6:5. 1 Kings 8:58. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:10-19. Prov. 23:26.*)

V. 25. Thus Joshua led his auditory solemnly to renew their covenant to be the Lord's people; and to adhere to his worship, and that in the most intelligent and deliberate manner; and he formed the whole into a statute and ordinance, which was promulgated for all Israel to receive and obey. (*Notes, Deut. 29:10-15. 2 Kings 11:17-20. Neh. 9:38. 10:1.*)

V. 26. This ratification of the covenant seems to have been inscribed in that copy of the law, which was laid up by the sides of the ark, as a perpetual memorial of the transaction. (*Note, Deut. 31:26.*) and probably it was also inserted in all the other copies of the law which were then extant.

V. 27. This great stone would testify, to succeeding generations, that event which it was set up to commemorate; and it would be a witness against the people, if they afterwards revolted to idolatry. (*Notes, 22:34. Gen. 31:45, 46. Deut. 31:19.*)—This idea contains a forcible charge of insensibility against mankind, as if they were more regardless of their Maker, than the inanimate creatures, which by answering the end of their creation, seem to exclaim against the ingratitude and rebellion of the human species. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Luke 19:40.*)—In this affecting manner Joshua took his leave of Israel, went home from this last and perhaps best service to God and them, and was speedily taken to his rest in heaven. (*29:30. Notes, Deut. 34:1-5.*)

V. 29-32. It is remarkable that Joshua lived just as many years as his renowned ancestor Joseph had done: yet he was not buried in the same place with him, but in his own inheritance, which seems to have been the general practice. (*30:32. Note, Gen. 50:22.*) The Israelites had carried the bones of Joseph with them in all their wanderings, and never attempted to bury them, till they were peaceably settled in the land. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 50:24-26. Ex. 13:19. Heb. 11:22.*)

V. 33. As the cities assigned to the priests lay in the lots of Judah, Benjamin, and Simeon; it is probable that the people voluntarily gave to the high-priest a place of residence near Shiloh, while the tabernacle continued there; and that this was called "the hill of Phinehas, because he dwelt longer there than Eleazar had done."

Jacob bought of the sons Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

* Or, *lamb*. p 14:1. Ex. 6:23,25. Num. 3:32. 20:26—29. q Job 30:23. Ps. 49:

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—13. It is beautiful and honourable, when zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, gather strength, at a time when the body is ready to drop into the grave; and while life is spared, and any measure of health afforded, if our hearts glow with love and zeal, we shall devise some method to serve the cause of godliness, and to fix salutary impressions upon the minds of those around us; nay, sometimes when the body is least capable of executing proper methods of doing good, the soul possesses most vigour for devising them. (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* 1:12—15.)—In repeating our exhortations, heavenly wisdom will teach us to vary the manner of reaching the conscience, and engaging the affections; but we can never with propriety omit the commemoration of the Lord's mercies: by frequent meditation on that subject, we shall recollect more and more instances of his goodness; and whatever in our experience demands our gratitude to God, will also furnish us with cause of humiliation, and of encouragement.—The largeness and freeness of the divine mercy are illustrated in so distinct a manner, even in the salvation of the most eminent saints mentioned in Scripture, that "the chief of sinners" may thence take encouragement in returning to the Lord. (*Notes*, 1 *Tim.* 1:12—16. *P. O.* 12—20.)

V. 14—33. The practical conclusion to be drawn from every delineation of the character of God, and from the memorial of his wondrous works and abundant mercies, is this: "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth." But without sincerity and truth, all professions of repentance, faith, fear, or love, are mere hypocrisy, and will avail us nothing.—The service of God must be our voluntary choice: if we were disposed to use our reason aright, we could not but choose it: after all our sins, we are invited to do so; and blessed be his name, he hath promised not to reject us, if we seek him in the appointed way, and are decided in preferring his favour to the pleasures of sin and the vanities of the world. We must, however, diligently study the nature of true religion, and what it will cost us; to what it may expose us, and in what it will employ us; that we may be prepared for temptations, tribulations, conflicts, and self-denials; be aware of our insufficiency; and seek help and comfort from on high. The Lord our God is jealous, just, and holy: he will not be trifled with, he cannot be imposed upon, he abhors a double mind, and will not accept a divided heart; he hates lukewarmness, (*Note*, *Rev.* 3:14—16.) and will as certainly punish the apostate, as forgive the humble believer. Yet our only danger lies in forsaking him; for if we adhere to his service with an upright and willing mind, none of our mistakes, imperfections, or enemies can fatally injure us. But we cannot serve the Lord without renouncing other masters, and "inclining our hearts unto him;" nor can we incline our

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

10. Is. 57:1,2. Zech. 1:5. Acts 13:36. Heb. 7:24. 9:26,27. r *Judg.* 20:23.

hearts without his grace, which he readily bestows on all who pray for the promised gift of his Holy Spirit. Depending upon his assistance and merciful acceptance, notwithstanding all our difficulties and impotency, we may with confidence say, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord;" and to every objection we may answer, "Nay, but we will serve the Lord;" and close all by positively averring, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey;" nor need we scruple the most open and solemn ratification of his covenant, by which we avouch him to be our God and ourselves to be his people. For though the house of God, the Lord's table, and even the very walls and trees, before which we have uttered our solemn purposes or serving him, would obstet against us if we denied him; and all the good, which he had done us, would become an occasion of evil to us; yet we may trust his grace to enable us to fulfil our engagements, and be confident that he will "put his fear into our hearts, that we shall not depart from him." (*Note*, *Jer.* 32:35—41.)—They who in the plainest terms have shown the necessity and difficulty of serving God, and the danger of forsaking him; and who have pressed others most strongly to count their cost and to prepare for temptation; should be the most forward to avow their own purpose of choosing and cleaving to his service, and of using their most earnest endeavours, and exercising all their influence and authority, along with their fervent prayers, that the blessings of true religion may be the inheritance of their children and of all connected with them. Thus, in our several stations, we should all deliberately determine, by the grace of God, to serve him ourselves, and to do the utmost in our power, that our households may serve him likewise. And though God alone can give grace, yet he greatly approves and blesses such zealous attempts to engage and confirm men in his service; and in some instances the pious labours of one single day may produce the most important and beneficial effects for years, or even for generations to come.—After a life thus spent and thus concluded, how comfortably may the believer meet the stroke of death, and retire to his rest in the realms of bliss! Thus the most useful men, having served their generation, according to the will of God; one after another fall asleep, and see corruption: but Jesus, having spent and ended his life on earth, far more assiduously and effectually than either Joshua or Joseph, arose from the dead, and saw no corruption. He not only brings his ransomed tribes to their rest, but lives with them, and reigns over them, to consummate and perpetuate their felicity to all eternity: and wherever their bodies are interred, he will shortly raise them incorruptible, and transform them into the likeness of "his own glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." (*Note*, *Phil.* 3:20,21.)

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

The title of this book is taken from the original Hebrew; and shows the principal subject of it, as containing the history of those Judges, whom God raised up among his people, before he placed any king over them. These were not a regular succession of governors, but occasional deliverers, of different tribes and families, who were employed to rescue the nation from oppressors, to reform religion, or to administer justice. They do not seem to have assumed any degree of regal magnificence, or to have exercised any expensive or burdensome authority: yet they were for the time the immediate vicerogers of JEHOVAH, the King of Israel. It is probable, that when there was no Judge, the Levites, elders, and ordinary magistrates, together with the high-priest and the other priests, conducted the affairs of the several tribes, and administered justice, as circumstances would admit, according to the law of Moses; and that when there was a Judge, he presided over them.—It is generally supposed that the prophet Samuel, the last of the Judges, wrote this book; and indeed, it seems to have been written during the reign of Saul. For the words repeatedly used, "In those days there was no king in Israel," (17:6. 19:1. 21:25.) imply that there was a king when the history was published: yet, it appears also, that the Jebusites still kept possession of Jerusalem, from which David at length expelled them. (1:21. 2 *Sam.* 5:6—9.)—It consists of two parts: in the first sixteen chapters, a compendious narrative is given of the affairs of Israel, from the death of Joshua to that of Samson, during the term of about three hundred years; though the chronology is peculiarly intricate in this book, both in the Old and New Testaments: (1 *Sam.* 12:10,11. 2 *Sam.* 11:21. *Neh.* 9:28. *Ps.* 83:9—11. *Is.* 9:4. 10:26. *Acts* 13:20. *Heb.* 11:32.) and it is certain that it formed a part of that sacred volume, to which Christ and his apostles constantly appealed as to the Oracles of God: but I do not recollect any express prophecies contained in it.

The condition of Israel does not appear so prosperous, nor the national character so religious, in this history, as from the foregoing records it might have been hoped: but it is probable, that the worship at the sanctuary was regularly maintained and attended on, and that there was a pious remnant in the land amidst the repeated apostasies and multiplied idolatries of the nation in general. By a superficial reader of the sacred history, the whole period under the Judges may be easily mistaken for an uninterrupted series of idolatries and crimes; from his not observing, that the lapses which incurred punishment, and the divine deliverances which attended repentance, are related so fully and distinctly, as to occupy almost the whole narrative; while long periods, when under the government of the Judges, the people followed God, and the land enjoyed peace, are passed over in a single verse, as productive of *recesses* which required a particular detail: *Graves*, Vol. ii. pp. 116, 147.—The whole account however illustrates the character given of human nature in the Scriptures; and shows in a most affecting manner, the consequences of attending on the worship and service of God, or of neglecting them, in respect of national prosperity or adversity.

CHAPTER I.

Judah and Simeon war against the Canaanites, defeat Adoni-bezek and retaliate on him his cruelty to captive kins, 1-7. Jerusalem is taken, 8, 9. The sons of Anak slain, 10. Othniel takes Debir and marries Caleb's daughter, 11-15. The Kenites dwell with Judah, 16. Hirshah, Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, are taken by Judah and Simeon; and Hebron is given to Caleb, 17-20. Benjamin is unable to drive the Jebusites from Jerusalem, 21. Ephraim and Manasseh take Bethel, 22-25. A Canaanite builds a city called Luz, 26. The Canaanites are not wholly expelled by Moses, 27, 28. By Ephraim, 29; by Zebulun, 30; by Asher, 31, 32; by Naphtali, 33. The Amorites force Dan into the mountain, 34-36.

NOW after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

2 And the LORD said, Judah shall go up; behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

3 And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites, and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

4 And Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men.

5 And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek; and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

6 But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes.

7 And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath required me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

8 (Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.)

9 And afterwards the children of Judah went

a Josh. 24:29-30. b 21:18-23. Ex. 29:30. Num. 27:21. 1 Sam. 22:9-10. 23:9, 10. c Gen. 49:8-10. Num. 2:7. 7:12. P. 7:68-70. Heb. 7:14. Rev. 7:5. 19:11-16. d Gen. 29:33-35. Josh. 19:1. e 17. 2 Sam. 10:11. f Ex. 23:29-29. Deut. 7:2. g Josh. 19:8-10. 11:6-8. 1 Sam. 14:6-10. 17:16-17. 1 Kings 2:26, 27. g 1 Sam. 11:8. Heb. the heads of their hands and of their feet. 1 Chr. 11:10. e 2 Sam. 11:8. 1 Chr. 11:10. f 1 Sam. 15:33. 14:33. 1 Matt. 7:2. Luke 6:37. h Ex. 21:25. Lev. 21:15. 21. 1 Sam. 15:33. 14:33. 1 Matt. 7:2. Luke 6:37. i Josh. 24:29. Rev. 13:10. 16:8. 1 Rom. 2:15. k 21. Josh. 15:63. 1 Josh. 10:26. 11:21. 15:13-20. 1 Or, low country. m Josh. 14:15. n 20. Num. 13:22. 83. Josh. 15:13. 14. P. 33:16. 7. Ec. 9:11. Jer. 2:3. o Josh. 10:38, 39. 15:15.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1. Joshua left no successor, as Moses had done; and therefore some time after his death, (it is not known how long,) the people, being convinced that the war against the Canaanites should be continued, were in doubt how it was to be conducted, and which tribe should take the lead in 'his service; and in these respects some of the principal persons inquired of the Lord, probably by Urim and Thummim. (Notes, Ex. 28:30. Num. 27:21.) It would have been well if they had always continued in the same mind: but sloth, cowardice, and unbelief, and perhaps a misjudged lenity, prevailed with them, to leave their work unfinished; which created them almost an infinity of trouble and misery afterwards. (Notes, Josh. 16:10. 17:11-13. 23:13.)

V. 2. (Notes, Gen. 49:8-10.) The numerous and valiant tribe of Judah, whence the Messiah was to descend, and which was in all things to have the precedence, was directed to renew the war; and by their example to embolden their brethren, and to mark out to them the path to victory and prosperity. For it is evident that this first expedition was intended to make way for others, being undertaken by common consent for the public benefit; and the Lord, in promising to put Judah in possession of his inheritance, intimated his purpose of rendering that event subservient to the more complete conquest of the whole country.—Probably the Israelites had rapidly increased since the division; and now, wanting room, they were excited to greater activity against their enemies.

V. 3. As the lot of Simeon lay within that of Judah, it was very proper for them to assist each other against the common enemy. (Note, Josh. 19:1-9.)—It is probable that Caleb commanded in this war. (9-15.)

V. 4. And the LORD delivered. 'We meet with no such religious expression, which occurs often here in these holy books, in any heathen writer.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. f.)

V. 5-7. Adoni-bezek signifies the lord of Bezek. This prince had, it seems, been a great warrior, and a severe tyrant over his vanquished enemies; for he had seventy of the petty princes of those times, one after another, his prisoners; and having disabled them, with great disgrace and pain, by cutting off their thumbs and great toes, he forced them to

down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley.

10 And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron, (now the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba,) and they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: (and the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher.)

12 And Caleb said, He that smitteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

14 And it came to pass, when she came to him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted from off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?

15 And she said unto him, Give me a blessing: for thou hast given me a south land, give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

16 And the children of the Kenite, Moses's father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad: and they went and dwelt among the people.

17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.

18 Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

19 And the LORD was with Judah, and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.

a Josh. 15:16, 17. 1 Sam. 17:25. 18:23. q 8:9. r Gen. 33:11. 1 Sam. 25:18, 27. 2 Cor. 9:5. marg. Heb. 6:7. s 4:11, 17. Num. 10:29-32. 24:21, 22. 1 Sam. 15:6. 1 Chr. 2:55. f Ex. 3:1. 4:18. 18:17, 12:14-17, 27. Num. 10:29. u 3:13. Deut. 34:5. 2 Chr. 28:16. x Num. 21:1. Josh. 12:14. y Num. 10:32. z See on 3. a 2 Chr. 14:10. Zephathak. b Num. 14:45. 30:3. Josh. 19:4. c 3:3. 16:1, 2, 21. Ex. 23:31. See on Josh. 13:3. 15:45-47. 1 Sam. 6:17. d 2. 6:12, 13. Gen. 39:2, 21. Josh. 1:5, 9. 14:12. 2 Sam. 5:10. P. 46:7, 11. Is. 7:14. 8:10. 41:10, 14, 15. Matt. 1:23. Rom. 8:31. g Or, he possessed the mountain. e 27-32. Josh. 7:12. Matt. 14:30, 31. 17:19, 20. Phil. 4:13. f Josh. 11:1-9. 17:16-18.

gather their food as dogs under his table. The Israelites hearing of this, probably by divine direction, retaliated upon him; and his own conscience extorted from him a confession of the justice of God in this punishment! (Marg. Ref. h.) Some have thought that he was a true penitent, and that on this account his life was spared.

V. 8. The tribe of Judah had, perhaps some time before, seized on the city of Jerusalem: though part of it lay within the lot of Benjamin, which seems to have been yielded to them. But the Jebusites still held the hill of Zion. (Notes, 21. Josh. 15:63. 2 Sam. 5:6-8.)

V. 10-15. (Notes, Josh. 15:13-19.) The words rendered, "they slew Sheshai, &c." may be rendered, "they smote Sheshai." In the passage referred to it is said, "Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak" but it is not clear that he slew them. (20)—The same expedition is evidently meant, which probably took place at this time; but the account of it was inserted in the book of Joshua, to complete the history concerning Caleb. Having been employed in the public affairs of Israel, he seems not till this time to have obtained full possession of the inheritance granted him.

V. 16. (Note, Num. 10:31, 32.) The descendants of Hobab, the son of Jethro, (who it seems acceded to the invitation given him by Moses,) at their first entrance into Canaan, pitched their tents near Jericho, called also "The city of palm-trees," (Marg. Ref. u,) which lay in the lot of Benjamin: but afterwards they joined themselves to Judah, and settled in the borders of the wilderness, where they seem to have lived a quiet life, little interfering in public affairs. (Notes, 4:11. 1 Chr. 2:55. Jer. 35:1-7.)

V. 17. Marg. Ref. Note, Josh. 12:14.

V. 18. The Philistines having been spared, contrary to the divine command, when their cities were taken, in a short time recovered possession of them, and were indeed "pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides" of Israel, during many ages. (Note, Josh. 23:13.)

V. 19. The men of Judah were unable to drive out the inhabitants of the valley; not that the Lord refused to help them, but because their courage and faith failed them at the sight of the iron chariots, which were of no use in the mountain. (Note, Josh. 17:16.) They forgot how Joshua had attacked and destroyed the Canaanites, who had this form-

20 And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.

21 And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

22 ¶ And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Beth-el: and the Lord was with them.

23 And the house of Joseph sent to descry Beth-el. (Now the name of the city before was Luz.)

24 And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will show thee mercy.

25 And when he showed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword: but they let go the man and all his family.

26 And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.

27 ¶ Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

28 And it came to pass, when Israel was

strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

29 Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwell in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell in Gezer among them.

30 Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol: but the Canaanites dwell among them, and became tributaries.

31 Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acccho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:

32 But the Asherites dwell among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

33 Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries unto them.

34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain; for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

35 But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Ajalon, and in Shaalbin: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries.

36 And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akkrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

g Num. 14:24. Deut. 1:36. Josh. 14:9-14. 15:13,14. 21:11,12. h See on 10. Num. 13:22. i 19:10-12. Josh. 15:63. 18:11-28. 2 Sam. 5:6-9. k Num. 1:10-32. Josh. 14:4. 16:1-4. 1 Chr. 7:29. Rev. 7:9. l See on 19. 2 Kings 13:7. m 18:2. Josh. 21:7-21. n Gen. 28:19. 35:6, 48:3. o Josh. 2:12-14. 1 Sam. 30:13. p Josh. 6:22-25. q 2 Kings 7:6. 2 Chr. 1:17. r Josh. 17:11-13. s See on Josh. 17:11-13. 15:19. Josh. 21:25. u Ex. 23:32. Deut. 7:2. 1 Sam. 15:9.

dable advantage: and when they lost their confidence in God, they could do nothing. (Notes, Josh. 11:4-6. Matt. 14:28-32.)

V. 21. When this history was written, probably by Samuel, the Jebusites kept possession of mount Zion, which lay in the lot of Judah; and they seem also to have lived under tribute with the Benjamites in that part of the city which belonged to them. (Note, 8.)

V. 22-26. (Marg. Ref.) The assailants of Bethel, having seized a man of the race of the Canaanites, found out, by his means, some unguarded place or private entrance, by which they took the city. He seems to have acted, not from faith in God or love to Israel, but out of fear, and to save his life: and therefore, when set at liberty, he did not unite interests with the worshippers of JEHOVAH, as Rahab had done; (Notes, Josh. 2:4-11.) but retiring to his countrymen, who had sought shelter in some adjacent regions, he built a city, which he called after his own city: yet not Bethel, or the house of God; but according to its old name, Luz. (Note, Gen. 28:19.)

Land of the Hittites. (26) The Scripture does not any where show, where this land of the Hittites was situated: but it was without the boundaries of the promised land. (Note, 2 Kings 6:7.) This confirms the opinion, that the Israelites might spare the lives of such Canaanites, as either submitted to become slaves, and renounced idolatry, or emigrated into other regions. (Notes, Josh. 6:2, 9:3-5. 11:9,20.)

V. 28. The people neglected their opportunity through self-indulgence, when they had their enemies in their power; probably letting the idolaters live among them as tenants, even in the villages: and afterwards they were unable to drive them out. Thus their sin prepared its own punishment, and the love of present ease became the cause of their perpetual disquiet. (Notes, 1:18. Josh. 17:11-15. 23:13.)

V. 34, 35. In the distress of the Danites, the descendants of Joseph seem to have come to their assistance; and thus they checked the progress of the Amorites, confined them within narrow limits, and compelled them to pay tribute to the Danites. None of these tribes, mentioned in the latter part of the chapter, properly improved their advantages, satisfying themselves with rendering those tributaries, whom the Lord had commanded them utterly to destroy, or at least to expel from the country, unless they renounced idolatry, and submitted to be bond slaves. The power of the Amorites and Philistines soon compelled the Danites to seek possessions in a distant part of the land. (Notes, 18: Josh. 19:40-48.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No detached efforts, however judicious and spirited, without steady and constant perseverance, can effect important changes, rectify abuses in church or state, or give permanent and enlarged success to true religion. For all such attempts may be compared to raising a large weight to a great height, in which the whole labour is lost, if the exertion ceases before the object be fully accomplished.—They who have the precedence in rank or reputation, should go before others in every good

work, undismayed by dangers and difficulties, that they may animate them by their example: the strongest ought not to despise, but to value the assistance of the weakest; and it becomes the people of God to unite together and help each other against their common enemies; and especially to assist the whole "church militant here on earth," with their constant and fervent prayers.—We are sure to have all profitable success, when we engage in any enterprise according to the Lord's direction, and in dependence on his help: and whatever labour, conduct, or courage we display, or whatever human aid we employ, to him the whole glory belongs.—What a slippery place is worldly prosperity! especially when it increases pride, insolence, or cruelty; for "a haughty spirit goes before a fall." Men often read their crimes in their punishment: and at last every mouth shall be stopped, and all sinners be constrained to admit the justice of God in their extremest miseries. Happy they, who justify him in their temporal afflictions, plead guilty before his mercy-seat, and by repentance and faith seek deliverance from the wrath to come. (Note, Rom. 3:19,20.)—Great things might be achieved by the professors of the gospel, if they unitedly endeavoured to promote the common cause of truth and righteousness; for then the "Lord would be with them," and every mountain would sink into a plain. But when outward difficulties are viewed by the eye of sense, and the Almighty power of God is forgotten, our hearts grow discouraged, our expectations feeble, and our attempts timid and wavering: and then no wonder that we do not prosper; for according to our faith will be our vigour, zeal, and success. Love of ease, indulgence, and worldly advantages, both spring from, and foster unbelief. Thus many an awakened sinner, who seemed to have escaped Satan's bondage, "is entangled again, and overcome, and his last state is worse than the first." Thus even many a believer, who begins well, is hindered: he grows negligent and unwatchful, and afraid of the cross; his graces languish, his evil propensities revive, Satan perceives his advantage, and plies him with suitable temptations; the world recovers its hold; he loses his peace, brings guilt into his conscience, anguish into his heart, discredit upon his character, and reproach upon the gospel; his hands are tied, his mouth is closed, and his usefulness ruined. And though, through sharp rebukes and salutary chastisements, he be so recovered, that he do not finally perish; yet he may lament through his remaining days, and groan upon his dying bed, to reflect what opportunities of glorifying God and serving his church he has irrecoverably lost: nay, perhaps in that solemn hour, he will be distressed with perplexing doubts about the state of his own soul! (P. O. Heb. 4:1-11.) Even the very best of Christians in this way suffer some loss, and do not live up to the extent of their privileges and usefulness. Let us then "watch and be sober," and pursue our victory against every inbred foe; not content with supposed delivery from the dominion of sin, but aiming continually to weaken and "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts," even unto entire extir-

CHAPTER II.

An angel rebukes the people for disobedience: and the place is called Bochim, from their weeping, 1-5. They serve the Lord till Joshua and the elders die; but in the next generation run into shamful idolatry, 6-13. God is angry with them, yet pities their distresses, and raises up judges to deliver them, 14-18. Their ingratitude provokes him to permit the Canaanites to remain in order to prove Israel, 19-23.

AND ^aan ^bAngel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to ^cBochim, and said, ^dI made you to go up out of Egypt and ^ehave brought you unto the land which ^fI sware unto your fathers; and ^gI said, ^hI will never break my covenant with you.

2 And ⁱye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: ^jbut ye have not obeyed my voice: ^kwhy have ye done this?

3 Wherefore ^lI also said, ^mI will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be ⁿas thorns in your sides, and ^otheir gods shall be a snare unto you.

4 And it came to pass, when the Angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that ^pthe people lifted up their voice, and wept.

5 And they called the name of that place ^qBochim: and ^rthey sacrificed there unto the Lord.

6 ¶ And when ^sJoshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And ^tthe people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that ^uoutlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel.

8 And ^vJoshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, ^wbeing an hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in ^xTimnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

10 And also all that generation were ^ygathered unto their fathers: and there arose another

generation after them, which ^zknew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

[*Practical Observations.*]

11 And the children of Israel ^{aa}did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.

12 And they ^{ab}forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed ^{ac}other gods, of the gods of the people that ^{ad}were round about them, and ^{ae}bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

13 And they forsook the Lord, and ^{af}served Baal and Ashtaroth.

14 And ^{ag}the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and ^{ah}he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and ^{ai}he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they ^{aj}could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was ^{ak}against them for evil, ^{al}as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had ^{am}sworn unto them: and they were ^{an}greatly distressed.

16 Nevertheless, ^{ao}the Lord raised up judges, which ^{ap}delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

17 And yet ^{aq}they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a ^{ar}whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned ^{as}quickly out of the way ^{at}which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; ^{au}but they did not so.

18 And when the Lord raised them up judges, then ^{av}the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it ^{aw}repented the Lord because of ^{ax}their groanings, by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

19 And it came to pass, ^{ay}when the judge was dead, ^{az}that they returned, and ^{ba}corrupted them-

a 6:12, 13, 3 Gen. 16:7-10, 12, 22:11, 48:16. E. 3:2-6, 14:19, 23:20, 33:14, Josh. 5:13, 14, Is. 63:9, Hos. 12:3-5, Zech. 3:1, Mal. 3:1, Acts 7:30-33. c *On Mesenger.* v. 5. c Ex. 3:7, 8, 14:14, 20:2, Deut. 4:34, Ps. 78:51-53, 105:36, 117:8, Lev. 26:42, Num. 14:34, Ps. 89:34, Jer. 14:21, 33:20, 21, Zech. 11:10, 1 E. 23:32, 33, 34, 12-16, Num. 33:52, 53, Deut. 7:2-4, 16:25, 26, 12:23, 20:16-18, 2 Cor. 6:14-17, g Eru. 9:1-3, 10-13, Ps. 78:55-58, 106:34-40, Jer. 7:23-29, 2 Thes. 1:8, 1 Pet. 4:17, h Gen. 3:11, 12, 4:10, E. 32:1, Jer. 2:5, 18:31-33, 36, 121, Num. 33:53, Josh. 23:13, j E. 32:53, 34:12, Deut. 7:16, 1 Kings 11:1-7, Ps. 106:36, k 1 Sam. 7:5, Eru. 10:1, Prov. 17:10, Jer. 31:9, Zech. 12:10, 14:1, Jer. 7:28, 26, v. 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 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patron. For we can have no fellowship with the enemies of God within us or around us, but to our hurt; and therefore our only wisdom and interest is, to declare and maintain unceasing war against them, even unto the end of our days.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1-5. The language of the reproof here given, demonstrates who this angel was. (*Notes, Gen. 16:10, 11. 22:11, 12, 16-18. 48:16. E. 3:2.*) 'These words evidently show, that it was not a created angel, but an uncreated, even that very person who appeared to Joshua hard by Jericho, (*Josh. 5:13, 14*) which I have shown there was God himself. For who but God could speak in this style, "I made you to go out of Egypt?" No prophet, nor any created angel, would have been so bold: but would have preface to this speech, in some such words as these, "Thus saith the Lord, I have made you to go, &c." Supposing then this angel to be the same with him that appeared, it was fit for him now to appear as coming from Gilgal, to put them in mind of that illustrious appearance of God near that place, and the assurance that he gave them of his presence with them in the conquest of the land, and the solemn covenant he made with him, by the renewing of circumcision in that place; which upbraided them with their base ingratitude to God, and their sloth in not endeavouring to expel the Canaanites." *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Josh. 5:2-10, 13-15. 6:3-5.)*—It was then the great Angel of the covenant, the Word and Son of God, who spake as JEHOVAH, as HE who brought Israel out of Egypt, put them in possession of Canaan, entered into covenant with them, gave them commandments, and now called them to account for their disobedience; showing that they, not he, had violated the national covenant. (*Marg. Ref. f-j. Notes, 23. Ex. 23:20-23. 34:11-17. Josh. 23:13.*) He first appeared at Gilgal, and afterwards was seen coming to Shiloh, where the people were assembled at one of his solemn feasts: for it is probable, from the sacrifice which they offered, that they were at Shiloh.—The spot where he

appeared was called *Bochim*, or *The weepers*, because of their weeping. But though they showed signs of deep humiliation, and many of them might be truly penitent; yet the subsequent history evinces that no general or permanent reformation took place.

V. 6-10. (*Josh. 24:29-31.*) This part of the history seems here repeated, to show the reason given for the severe reproof just before mentioned. While Joshua lived the people had served the Lord with considerable diligence: but after his death, and that of the elders, who by their authority and admonitions had kept them to the worship of God, they relapsed into idolatry. As the elders, who survived Joshua, might, some of them at least, live several years after his decease: this term should be deducted from the general account of Israel's idolatries, recorded in this book. (*See Preface.*)—The place where Joshua was buried, is here called *Timnath-heres*, instead of *Timnath-serah*: the word *heres* signifies the sun; and it has been thought, that it was so called, because of some memorial there erected, of the Lord's miraculously retarding the course of the sun at Joshua's word. (*Note, Josh. 10:12-14.*)

V. 11-13. Baalim and Ashtaroth are both plural, the one masculine, and the other feminine; and they seem to be used generally for all the gods and goddesses, which were worshipped by the neighbouring nations. (*Note, 10:6-9.*)

V. 14. *He sold them.* As the judge was used to sell the criminal, or the creditor the debtor, for a slave, that the injured party might be reimbursed by their price; so the Lord recovered, as it were, that glory by punishing Israel, of which they had robbed him by their sins; and he made the Canaanites the instruments of his righteous indignation. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Deut. 32:30, 31. Is. 50:1-3.*)

V. 15-22. (*Marg. Ref.*) These verses contain a general account of the state of Israel, after their relapse into idolatry, (10, 11.) during the days of the judges; which is more particularly illustrated in the subsequent chapters.

selves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them: they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

20 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

21 I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the nations which Joshua left when he died;

22 That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord, to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

23 Therefore the Lord left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

r Jer. 16:12, Matt. 23:32. * Heb. let nothing fall of their. s 1 Sam. 15:23, Ps. 78:8, Jer. 3:17, 23:17, t 14, 3:8, 10:7, Ex. 32:10, 11, Deut. 32:32, u Ex. 24:3-8, Deut. 24:10-13, Josh. 24:16-21, 21-25, Jer. 31:32, Ez. 20:37, x 3, 3:3, Josh. 23:13, 1:2, 21-25, y 3, s on 3:1-4, z Gen. 22:1, Deut. 8:2, 16, 13:3, 2:18, 32:31, 1:3, 21:10, Ps. 66:10, Prov. 17:13, Mat. 9:2, 3, 1 Or, suffered, a 2:21, 22, Deut. 7:22, b Deut. 8:2, 16, 2 Chr. 32:31, Job 23:10, Prov. 17:13, Jer.

Repented. (18) Note, Gen. 6:6, 7, Deut. 32:36.—“He altered the course of his providence,” Bp. Patrick.

When the judge was dealt, &c. (19) While the several judges lived, religion was generally upheld.

V. 23. The Lord foresaw the future conduct of Israel, and therefore so ordered it in his Providence, that a remnant of the Canaanites should be spared: that by them the proneness of his people to idolatry might both be manifested and chastised. (Notes, 1-4, 3:12, Josh. 23:13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The goodness of God to mankind, his faithful engagements to those who trust him, and the beneficial tendency of all his precepts, combine to enhance the evil of every transgression: yet men will often gratify their impetuous lusts, though their own reason and conscience testify, that they are acting a foolish and ungrateful part! for, as no good reason can be given for disobedience, it is much more easy to convince the judgment, than to dispose the heart to renounce sinful pursuits. But if transgressors cannot endure the rebukes of God's word, and the convictions of their own conscience; how will they be able to stand before the tribunal of the holy, heart-searching Judge, who now in the endeared character of a Saviour, and in the mild accents of love, warns and persuades them, to “repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance?”—“As many as he loves, he rebukes and chastens,” indeed all temporal afflictions are in their tendency *castigatory*, and warn men to forsake sin, and seek forgiveness, ere it be too late: but the eternal punishment of the world to come will be entirely penal, the final vengeance of God upon his incorrigible enemies.—It is pleasing to see men weep for their sins; but though such relents attend that “godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of,” yet they frequently wear off; nay, even faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ may be professed, and the memorial of his dying love attended on, with great apparent affection, yet without renovation of heart and newness of life. We have to mourn over many, whom on such grounds we supposed to be converts, and to regret “that their goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.” (Hos. 6:4).—The worship of God is in its own nature joy, praise, and thanksgiving, and our crimes alone render weeping needful: yet considering what we are, and what we have done, it is much to be wished, that our religious assemblies were more frequently called “Bochim,” “the place of the weepers.” “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”—Were we duly attentive to the word of God, we might foresee many of those events which take place in his Providence. We might especially foretell severe afflictions to those godly persons, who associate and connect themselves with the openly profane; or who relax their diligence in mortifying and striving against sin, and in watching against temptation.—Alas! that prevalence of religion, which appears in times of general reformation, often arises from temporary affections and personal regards: so that when the influence and example of some respected or beloved person ceases; when there is no longer any fear of grieving him, or being rebuked by him; and when the emotion of the passions subsides; men's unmortified lusts again recover the ascendancy, and many fair appearances die away.

We have need therefore to examine how matters stand with ourselves, and to pray without ceasing, “that we may be rooted and grounded in love,” and “that Christ may indeed dwell in our hearts by faith.” And pious parents should be very diligent in instructing their children, and very earnest in praying that they may inherit their faith and grace: for the speedy decline of religion, after it has been very flourishing, must generally be ascribed in great measure to their negligence in this respect; so that very often the ignorance and ungodliness of children are a disgrace to the memory of their parents.

CHAPTER III.

The nations left to prove Israel, 1-4. The people are seduced by them into idolatry, 5-7, sold into the hands of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, but delivered by Othniel, 8-11; and into that of Eglon king of Moab, but delivered by Ehud, 12-30. Shamgar slays six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad, 31.

Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them; (even as many of Israel's cas had not known all the wars of Canaan;

2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;

3 Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwell in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

4 And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the com-

6:27, 17:9, 10, Zech. 13:9, John 2:24, 1 Pet. 1:7, 4:12, Rev. 2:23, c 2:10, d Gen. 2:17, 3:5, 7, 2 Chr. 12:8, Matt. 10:34—39, John 16:33, 1 Cor. 9:25, 27, Eph. 6:11-18, 1 Tim. 6:12, 2 Tim. 2:3, 4:7, e 10:7, 14:4, Josh. 13:3, 1 Sam. 4:1, 2, 6:18, 13:5, 19:23, 29:2, f 4:2, 23:24, Gen. 10:15-19, Num. 13:29, g 10:12, 17:7, Gen. 49:13, Josh. 11:5, 13:18, 28:28, h Sam. 31:8, 1 Pet. 1:7, 3:9, Josh. 11:3, 18:5, i Ecce on 1, Ex. 15:25, Deut. 33:8, 1 Sam. 11:6, 2 Toss. 2:9-12,

V. 11-23. The carnal mind of man is enmity against God; the tendency of our fallen nature is to apostasy; and the vilest lust, or the meanest worldly object, will be preferred to his favour and the pleasure of his service, even by those who have the benefit of his written word and the preaching of the gospel; unless his almighty power be continually exerted, his grace communicated to them, and his image renewed upon their hearts. This is the cause of all human misery, in time and to eternity; for if men rob God of his glory, he will sell them for their sins into the hands of their enemies, and satisfy his justice in their punishment: and how wretched must they be, against whom are the oath and the hand of the immutable and almighty God! Their heaviest distresses on earth, unless timely repentance intervene, are the forerunners of eternal misery.—The vilest of the profane are more likely to prosper for a time, than apostate professors: nay, backsliding and inconsistent believers are more sure to experience affliction in this world, than any other persons. Yet the Lord has long patience, and manifests great compassion to his people; he is ready to forgive and to relieve; he raises up instruments to effect their deliverance, and overrules their chastisements for good: and in all his dealings with them, it will at length be manifest, that they are saved not for the sake of their own righteousness, but for the sake of his great name; that “it is of his mercies, that they are not consumed;” and that he saves them from, and notwithstanding their manifold transgressions.—The more the human heart is proved, the worse it is manifested to be; and so long as “we cease not from our own doings,” we can only be stubborn and rebellious (19).—For his own glory the Lord tries men, as silver is tried; and while he distinguishes between those who choose his ways, and those who forsake them; he will secure to himself the whole praise of all that is good in his people.—Too late his enemies will curse their folly, in neglecting those things which were commanded them; and the reflection that their opportunity is lost for ever will complete their misery. Let us then without delay obey the call of the gospel, declare war against every sin, and follow after holiness, unto the end of our days; that we may have “an entrance ministered unto us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. Israel was surrounded by warlike nations, and it was also a type of the church militant here on earth: it was not therefore proper that the people should be enervated by sloth and luxury, but rather inured to hardship and conflict. This the Lord was pleased to effect by the remains of the devoted nations, who were spared when they ought to have been destroyed; and the Israelites were in consequence engaged in continual contests with them. They had moreover tasted the sweets of victory without feeling the evils of war, in their first conquest of the land; but they proved ungrateful for the mercy, and left their work unfinished; and were therefore made to feel the evils of war without the advantages of victory, in their future conflicts. (Notes, 2:1-5, 23.)

V. 3. The Canaanites, here mentioned, seem to have been a tribe inhabiting the northern part of the land. (Marg. Ref. h. Note, 4:2, 3).—Zidon or Sidon seems to have been included in the grant made to Israel. (Josh. 13:6, 19:28.)

V. 4. The remnant of the devoted nations continually made trial of the Israelites, by their example, allurements, and influence. When the people, amidst these snares, firmly adhered to the Lord and his worship, the event was honourable: but in general the trial detected the hypocrisy of their hearts, and their proneness to idolatry; and then their tempers became their scourges. (Notes, Gen. 22:1, Deut. 8:2, Josh. 23:13.)

V. 5-7. Instead of attempting to extirpate the inhabitants of the land, the Israelites endeavoured to live amicably with them; and this induced them to intermarry with them, and then

23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.

24 When he was gone out his servants came; and when they saw that behold the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer-chamber.

25 And they tarried till they were ashamed; and behold he opened not the doors of the parlour: therefore they took a key and opened them; and behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.

27 And it came to pass when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

28 And he said unto them, Follow after me; for the Lord hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan towards Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man.

30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.

31 ¶ And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad: and he also delivered Israel.

CHAPTER IV.

Israel, again revolting, is oppressed by Jabin and Sisera, 1-3. Deborah strikes up Barak for their deliverance, 4-8. Barak destroys the army of Jabin, 10-18. Sisera is slain by Jael the Kenite, 17-22. Jabin subdued and destroyed, 23, 24.

AND the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead.

2 And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

3 And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

* Or, doeth this easement. 1 Sam. 24:3. p 19. q 6:34. 1 Sam. 13:3. 2 Sam. 20:22. 2 Kings 9:13. r 7:24. 17:1. 19:1. Josh. 17:15, 18. s 4:10. 7:17. 17:9, 15. 1 Sam. 17:47. u 12:5. Josh. 2:7. * Heb. fat. See on 17. Deut. 32:15. Job 15:27. Ps. 17:10. x 11. 5:31. y 5:6, 8. z 1 Sam. 13:19-22. 17:47, 50. 1 Cor. 1:27. a 2:16. b 2:11, 19, 20. 3:7, 12. 6:1. 10:6. Lev. 6:23-25. Neh. 9:23-30. Ps. 106:43-45.

expected some information concerning the state affairs, or the secret combination of his countrymen: yet he was strangely infatuated to trust himself alone with an Israelite.

V. 20. *From God.*] The word here used is common to the true God, and the supposed deities of the Gentiles. Eglon, expecting some oracle from God, rose up in reverence, and afforded Ehud the opportunity of effecting his purpose. Ehud indeed had a secret errand, a message from God, unto him; but it was of a far different nature than Eglon expected.

V. 21-25. *(Marg. Ref.)* This powerful oppressor would thus be found weltering, after the most disgraceful manner, in that very place where he had often indulged his pride, sloth, and luxury! As he fell without noise, and died without being able to cry for help, Ehud had a full opportunity of escaping; and he departed with that circumspection and deliberation, which sprang from confidence in God, and a consciousness of having done his duty.

V. 27, 28. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 7:23-25. 12:1-7.*

V. 29. *Ten thousand.*] So small an army of valiant soldiers, served to curb the whole kingdom of Israel, when once it was subjected: but they might have been easily reinforced from beyond Jordan. Ehud had therefore taken possession of the fords, not only that none might escape, but that no more might come to the assistance of the Moabites: and when their prince was dead, they were too much intimidated to make any effectual resistance. (*Note, 1 Sam. 17: 50-53.*)

V. 30. The land had rest until eighty years from the close of the aforementioned forty years were expired. This is the more general interpretation.—Yet some think, that the oppression of Jabin in the northern part of the land, coincided with some of the years of rest in the southern part, here mentioned. (4:2, 3.)

V. 31. Shamgar, being employed in agriculture when the Philistines invaded the land, was supernaturally animated to attack them, and miraculously assisted in making this slaughter among them, with no other weapon than an ox-goad. This broke their force and spirits for a considerable time. (*Note, 15:14-17.*) Shamgar succeeded Ehud; but it is not said how long he acted as judge, or whether he did so at all, except in this one action.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. Temptations and trials detect the wickedness of the hearts of sinners: they discover where sin, and where grace, has dominion: they tend to undeceive the self-deluded; and they manifest, exercise, and strengthen the graces of believers; who being called to be soldiers, must learn and practise war all their days; and in their conflict with Satan, sin, and this evil world, must be inured to hardships, watchfulness, and self-denial, for their future and eternal good. (*Notes, Eph. 6:10-20. 1 Tim. 6:11, 12. 2 Tim. 2:3-7. 4: 6-8.*) They are constrained to live in the world, but they are not of the world, and are forbidden to conform to it: for the friendship of the world is more fatal than its enmity; as the latter can only kill the body, but the former murders many an immortal soul.—When the heart is not established by grace, the descent from the most plausible profession of piety is natural, and almost imperceptible. Polite attentions and civilities to ungodly people, (in which it is thought there can surely be no harm,) by an easy step introduces men to more intimate connexions; then concessions must be made, and they must be a little conformable to such kind friends or relatives. And as it is not easy to draw the line, one compliance prepares for another, till frequently a specious profession

ends in apostasy. But if true believers thus backslide from God, they shall surely and speedily be corrected; and know by experience that the friendship of the wicked, and the gain of transgression, will not profit them in the day of trouble: most certainly therefore they can never profit the sinner! "in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."—Those afflictions, however severe and tedious, which bring the Lord to remembrance, and excite men to self-examination and repentance, faith, and humble, earnest prayer, are invaluable blessings. And as "he is ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon him;" he will not upbraid the penitent, nor fail to appear for his relief: how wonderful then is it, that men, groaning under sufferings and terrors, are so long ere they cry unto him for help! (*Note, Ps. 32:3-5.*)—If we would get out of trouble effectually, we must begin with repentance, and seeking forgiveness; and then, in due time, deliverance, rest, and inward peace and comfort will ensue.

V. 12-31. Alas! how inveterate is man's propensity to ingratitude towards God! and how readily do we relapse into our former offences! The secret history of every one of us, even if kept from open scandals, or visible declensions, greatly resembles the history of Israel: "O foolish people, and unwise; do we thus requite the Lord, ... that bought us?" This renders repeated chastisements absolutely necessary; for so perverse are we, that the more indulgently we are treated by our heavenly Father, the more disobedient we generally prove! Yet, after our most aggravated provocations, and in our deepest distresses, if we again cry unto him, he will deliver us; and the meanest instrument, and the most unlikely method, shall be effectual, if he appoints and blesses them.—Luxury, sloth, and pride, fatten men for destruction: the Lord delights to abase those who exalt themselves against him, and oppress his people; and to render infamous, as well as to cast into the abyss of misery, those who have been the haughty and the terrible of the earth.—What message from God, but a message of vengeance, can a proud rebel expect? Such a message is evidently contained in the word of God: and though we are not commissioned, or even allowed, to be the executioners of it, yet his ministers must boldly declare it, without fearing the frown or respecting the persons of sinners. (*Notes, 1 Kings 21:17-22. 22:8, 13, 14, 16-28.*) But blessed be God, they have another message to deliver, a message of mercy and free salvation; and that of vengeance only applies to those who neglect and refuse the gracious proposal.—With reverent attention let us hear this message: in humble faith let us seek and accept of this great salvation: let us beg of God to enable us "to bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and let us enlist under the Redeemer's banner, put on his armour, and declare determined war against his enemies. He has begun our triumphs, by his victory over the powers of darkness upon the cross, and over the king of terrors by his resurrection: the trumpet of his gospel calls us to follow after him; and, obeying that summons, the day will be ours, and we shall conquer, triumph, and reign with him in glory for evermore.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 2, 3. Jabin king of Hazor had formerly confederated against Israel, with other kings in the northern part of the country, and Joshua had slain him, and burned his city. (*Notes, Josh. 11:3-3, 10, 11.*) And in process of time the Canaanites had rebuilt it, and another Jabin, probably descended from him, reigned there with great power. Hazor lay in the northern part of the land, and doubtless Harosheth in that neighbourhood. The remains of the nations

4 And ¹Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

5 And she dwelt under ^kthe palm-tree of Deborah, ^lbetween Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel ^mcame up to her for judgment.

6 And she sent and called ⁿBarak the son of Abinoam out of ^oKedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, ^pHath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, ^qsaying, Go, and draw toward mount ^rTabor, and take with thee ^sten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun?

7 And ^tI will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and ^uI will deliver him into thine hand.

8 And Barak said unto her, ^vIf thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, ^wthen I will not go.

9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: ^xnotwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

10 And Barak called ^yZebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh: and he went up with ten thousand

men ^zat his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

11 ¶ Now ^aHeber the Kenite, ^bwhich was of the children of ^cHobab the father-in-law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of ^dZaanaim, which is by Kedesh.

12 And they showed Sisera, that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to ^emount Tabor.

13 And Sisera ^fgathered together all his chariots, ^geven ^hnine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that ⁱwere with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, ^jUp; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: ^kis not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.

15 And ^lthe LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host with the edge of the sword, before Barak: so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet.

16 But Barak ^mpursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the hosts of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not ⁿa man left.

17 ¶ Howbeit Sisera ^ofled away on his feet to

Act. 15:20. 2 Kings 22:14. Neh. 6:14. Jpel. 2:28,29. Mic. 6:4. Luke 2:36. Ecce 21:19. 1 Cor. 11:5. Gal. 3:28. k Gen. 30:8. 1 Joth. 16:2. 19:22,25. 1 Sam. 1:1,19. 7:16,17. 25:1. Jer. 31:15. m Ex. 18:13,16. 19:35. Deut. 17:8—12. 2 Sam. 15:2—5. n 5:1. Heb. 11:32. o Josh. 19:37,21:32. p Jo. h. 1:5. Ps. 7:6. Ia. 13:2—5. Acts 13:47. q 8:18. 1 Sam. 10:3. Pa. 89:12. Jer. 46:18. Hos. 5:1. r 10: 5:14—18. s Ex. 14:4. Josh. 11:20. Ez. 38:10—16. Job 3:11—14. t 5:2,1. 1 Kings 18:40. Ps. 83:9,10. u Ia. Ex. 21:13. Josh. 8:7. 10:8. 11:6. 1 Sam. 20:18. v Ez. 4:10—14. Matt. 14:30,31. x 1 Sam. 2:20. 2 Chr. 25:18. y See on 2:14. z 17—22. 5:24—27. 9:54. 2 Sam. 20:21,22. a 5:15.

b 5:15. 1 Sam. 25:27. marg. c 1:16. Num. 10:22. 24:21. d Ez. 2:18. 3:1. 18:1. e Josh. 19:33. Zaanaim. f 6. Josh. 19:37. g 6. Josh. 19:12,34. h Ps. 89:12. Jer. 46:18. i Heb. gathered by cry, or, proclamation. j See on 2:3,7. 1:19. 28. Gen. 19:14. 44:4. Josh. 7:13. 1 Sam. 9:26. k Deut. 9:3. 2 Sam. 5:24. Pa. 68:7. l 16: 52:12. Mic. 2:13. k 5:21,22. Josh. 10:10. 2 Kings 7:6. 2 Chr. 18:15—17. Ia. 83:9,10. 1 Lev. 26:7,8. Josh. 10:9,30. 11:8. Ps. 104:35. Item. 2:12. Jam. 2:13. m 1 Heb. unto one. n Job 12:15—21. 16:7—12. 40: 11,12. Ps. 37:35, 36. 107:40. Prov. 29:23. Am. 5:19,20.

of Canaan having in great numbers resorted thither to assist Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, in whom he placed great confidence; and to obtain his protection: it was called "Harosheth of the Gentiles," or *nations*.—The Israelites, having relapsed into idolatry, were grievously oppressed by these enemies for twenty years, before they heartily set about reformation, or united in earnest prayers for deliverance. (Notes, 3:9,10,14.)

V. 4. Deborah, notwithstanding her extraordinary call to judge Israel, could not *personally* undertake those military expeditions, which generally distinguished its deliverers; but she used her authority to repress iniquity, to reform religion, and to execute impartial justice to the people:—She is called "the wife of Lapidoth," but the termination of the word is the feminine of the plural, and seldom used for the names of men. Some have therefore supposed it to be the name of the town in which she dwelt, and render the clause, *the woman of Lapidoth*: others refer it, according to the signification of the original word, either to her occupation, as making *lamps*; or to the inspiration of the Almighty; translating it "a woman of illuminations;" and others understand it as meaning, that she was an *illustrious* woman, and a *light* in Israel. Yet our rendering is most natural. (Note, 2 Kings 22:14.)

V. 5. *Under the palm-tree* That is, in some lowly habitation, shaded by a large palm-tree, more suited to the sanctity of a prophetess than the dignity of a judge. Her character of a prophetess being established, the people readily referred their differences to her decision: the ordinary courts probably being shut up, and the magistrates deprived of authority of Jabin's oppression: but perhaps he feared no danger from a woman acting in this capacity. It has been thought by several learned men, that after it pleased God to raise up, from time to time, extraordinary rulers and deliverers, under the title of judges; the different tribes and cities of Israel grew more and more remiss in the appointment of "judges and officers in all their gates." (Note, Deut. 16:18,19.) This might perhaps, at first arise from the prevailing power of their oppressors; as well as the extraordinary authority of their judges. It seems, however, to have become very generally the case. Yet Deborah, and the other judges, might only receive appeals from inferior magistrates, in more difficult cases. (Notes, 5:9. Ex. 18:17—23. Deut. 17:8—13.)

V. 6, 7. It is not certain, whether Barak had previously been employed by Deborah or not; for he dwelt at a distance from her. But, by direction from God, he was at this time singled out, and commanded whither to go and what troops to raise; and assured both of opportunity to attack, and assistance to subdue, the enemies of Israel. These orders were sent to him as the commandment of "the LORD God of Israel;" but under the tyranny of a powerful and jealous oppressor, he could draw together an army only by persuasions and exhortations, and thus induce a number of men to assemble at Kedesh-naphtali, and thence to follow him to Tabor; (Marg. Ref.) whither the Lord engaged to draw Sisera, or influence his mind to meet him. (Notes, Hos. 11:3,4. John 6:41—46.)

V. 8, 9. The danger of this enterprise was great and mani-

fest: and though Barak had faith, yet it was not so strong as to exclude misgivings, and to overcome all reluctance to the service. It does not appear, that he doubted whether Deborah spake by authority from God or not; but he hesitated concerning success unless she went with him. He would, no doubt, desire her presence, counsel, and prayers, as a prophetess, and the judge of Israel: but he was culpably afraid; and, not honouring God as he ought to have done, he was deprived in part of the honour, which he would otherwise have obtained. Perhaps Deborah in her answer intended, that the credit of the victory would be given to her and not to Barak; but the Spirit of God foretold the death of Sisera by Jael. (21)—Barak seems to have come to Deborah, and she accompanied him back to Kedesh-naphtali.—The high-priest with Uriam and Thummim, the other priests with the trumpets, and the Levites, are not at all mentioned in these transactions. (Notes, 20:18—28. Ex. 28:30. Num. 10:1—10. 27:21. Josh. 9:14,15.)

V. 10. Barak resided in the lot of Naphtali, on which Zebulun bordered: he therefore made known his purpose in that neighbourhood, and collected ten thousand foot-soldiers chiefly from these two tribes, though some others at length assisted them. (Notes, 5:14—18.) At the head of this small army, (as it appears when compared with that of Sisera, which was very great,) he marched on foot to meet the enemy, without either cavalry or war chariots; and Deborah attended him, to encourage his faith and confidence in God. (Notes, 1:19. Deut. 20:1—4. Josh. 16:10. 17:16—18. Ps. 20:6—8.)

V. 11. The other Kenites dwelt upon the borders of the wilderness of Judah; (Note, 1:16.) but Heber had removed with his family to the northern part of the land, where he dwelt in tents, and found convenient pasturage for his flocks. —This is inserted to explain what follows concerning Jael.

V. 14. Barak secured his small army by the advantage of the ground, until a favourable opportunity presented itself of attacking the enemy: but Deborah assured him, that the very day was come; and that "the LORD was gone forth before him, and had delivered Sisera into his hand." Thus encouraged, he boldly marched down into the plain, where the iron chariots had their utmost advantage; and so the victory became more illustrious. (Note, Josh. 17:16.)

V. 15. Doubtless Barak and his army displayed both conduct and bravery in this battle: yet the victory is wholly ascribed to the Lord, who both gave them skill and courage, and rendered these effectual by terrifying their enemies, or throwing them into confusion. (Note, Josh. 10:9,10.) It is to be lamented that this pious and rational language of the Scriptures should, among Christians, be so frequently changed for a phraseology which borders upon heathenism, or even atheism; by ascribing all events to fortune, luck, second causes, or human courage and policy; and excluding the mention of the first great Cause of all things. (Note, 2 Kings 5:1.)

V. 16. *Not a man left.* Note, 2 Chr. 20:22—25.

V. 17. Sisera had quitted his chariot, probably to escape notice, and he fled away on foot like a common soldier. For the same reason he hastened to the tents of Heber, with whom Jabin had made some league or alliance; or whom Jabin had

the tent of ^aJael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for ^{there} was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not: and when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle.

19 And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty: and she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.

20 Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent; and it shall be, when any man doth come and inquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here; that thou shalt say, No.

21 Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: (for he was fast asleep, and weary:) so he died.

22 And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.

n 5:6, 24. o Ps. 69:32. Is. 57:21. * Or, *vapour, blanket*. p 5:25. Gen. 24:43. 1 Kings 17:10. Is. 47:12. John 4:7. q Josh. 2:3-5. 2 Sam. 17:20. r 3:21, 31. s 2:26. 15:15-16. 1 Sam. 17:43, 49, 50. 1 Cor. 1:9, 27. t Heb. *put*. u 5:27. v 2 Sam. 17:3-10. w 15. x 1 Chr. 22:18. Neh. 9:24. y 18. 39:37, 47:3. 81:14. 1 Cor. 15:23. Heb. 11:33. z 1 Heb. *going, went and was hard against*. 1 Sam. 3:12. a Ex. 15:1, 21. Num. 21:17. 1 Sam. 2:1. 2 Chr. 20:27, 27, Job 38:7. Ps. 18:24.

suffered, as inoffensive persons, not of the race of Israel, to live peaceably by him.—It is probable that Jael's tent was distinct from that of Heber; (*Gen. 24:67. 31:33.*) and perhaps Sisera sought refuge in it on that account, as less likely to be searched.

V. 18, 19. Probably, Jael really intended kindness to Sisera, when she invited him into the tent, and showed him all the hospitality which it afforded; but, by a *divine impulse*, she was afterwards led to consider him as the determined enemy of the Lord and his people, and to avail herself of that opportunity to destroy him. (*Notes, 21. 5:24.*)

V. 20. Jael is not said to have promised Sisera, that she would deny his being there: she would give him shelter and refreshment, but not utter a falsehood to oblige him.—A very criminal deviation from "simplicity and godly sincerity," is become customary among professed Christians; I mean the instructing and requiring servants to *prevaricate*, (to word it no more harshly), in order that their masters may be preserved from the inconvenience of unwelcome visitants. Surely, some more manly, candid, and Christian method might be substituted, of giving an impertinent intruder to understand that he was not welcome; and to intimate to *friends*, that their company would be more seasonable at another time! And it should be considered, whether they who require their servants to disregard the truth for their pleasure, will not teach them an evil lesson, and habituate them to use falsehood for their own pleasure also. (*Note, Eph. 4:25.*)

V. 21. When Jael saw Sisera fast asleep, and was made sensible, by some intimation from God, that she ought to destroy him, her faith overcame all reluctance, and every feminine fear: and with the hammer and a nail of the tent, which she was accustomed to handle, she speedily and effectually accomplished her purpose.—The divine mandate superseded all other obligations; but her conduct is not recorded for our imitation in ordinary circumstances. (*Notes, 3:15-25. Josh. 2:4-6, 8-11.*)

V. 24. In this instance the Israelites observed the command of God to extirpate the Canaanites, and not to make any league with them, or put them under tribute.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most promising reformations are often speedily obstructed and counteracted, when the reformer is removed.—Notwithstanding the painful effects of sin which men repeatedly experience, they readily venture again upon it; thus provoking God to punish them with increasing severity: and tempters commonly prove instruments of correction, or of vengeance. But the Lord's thoughts and ways are not as ours: when they, who have most frequently and grievously rebelled, begin to pray unto him, he is ready to hear and help them: (*Notes, Is. 55:6-9.*) nay, he often regards the mere cry of distress, and relieves men from temporal misery, saying, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." He selects his instruments in that manner, which most tends to mortify the pride, and expose the weakness, of his haughty opposers. Yet unbelief weakens men's hands: and, being dishonourable to God, it eventually discredits those who give way to it.—The counsel and prayers of persons eminent for faith and piety are highly to be valued; but our confidence must be placed, not in them, but in the presence and protection of the Almighty. Whether it please him "to save by many or by few," he has all hearts in his hands, and can soon procure willing and suitable persons for his work; and a variety of incidents,

23 So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

24 And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

CHAPTER V.

The song of Deborah and Barak introduced, 1. A call to kings and people to consider this and other works of God for Israel, 2-5. The sin and misery of Israel shewn, 6-8. Praises rendered to God: commendations bestowed on some Israelites, and censures on others, 9-23. The conduct of Jael celebrated, 24-27: the disappointment of Sisera's mother represented, 28-30: and a prayer added for victory to the people of God, and ruin to their enemies, 31.

THEN sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying,

2 Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.

3 Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

4 LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

Is. 12:1-6, 25:1, 26:1. Luke 1:46, 67, 68. Rev. 15:3, 4. 19:1-8. h 2 Sam. 22:47, 48. Ps. 49:11, 41. 87:8. 138:15, 19. 149:6-9. 147:16, 5:6. 18:20. 19:2. c 9. 2 Chr. 17:16. Neh. 11:2. Ps. 110:3. 1 Cor. 9:17. 2 Cor. 8:12. 9:7. Phil. 2:13. Philem. 14. d Deut. 32:1, 3. Ps. 2:10-12. 49:1-2. 119:46. 138:4, 5. e 7. Gen. 6:17. 9:9. Ex. 31:6. Lev. 26:28. 1 Kings 18:22. 19:10, 14. Ezra 7:21. f Deut. 33:2. Ps. 68:7, 8. Hab. 3:3-6. g 2 Sam. 22:8. Job 9:6. Ps. 18:7-15. h Ps. 77:17.

which originate from the voluntary conduct of men actuated by secular motives appear by the event to form a part of his secret counsel. (*Notes, 7:4-15. 1 Sam. 14:6-10.*) As courage and faith are his gifts, he so dispenses them, as most conduces to his own glory; and shows the strongest that they need to be encouraged, and that on some occasions they are surpassed, by their weaker brethren.—How wretched are they who have the Lord for their enemy! since, whatever be their number or power, they can make no resistance, and will in vain attempt to flee away and escape. Soon will they be ashamed of their present confidence and glorying. They may indeed court the friendship of the Lord's despised people, or seek refuge in obscurity: but sooner or later they must all perish, perhaps suddenly; and be hurried from the commission of daring crimes into the presence of their angry Judge!—Every natural inclination must be subordinated to the will of God, and all our connexions with his enemies must be broken off, if we would enjoy his favour, and be numbered among his people. We should indeed love, pray for, and be kind to our greatest enemies: yet there are some of his foes, to whom we must not bid God speed, nor entertain them in our houses. (*Note, 2 John 7-11.*) We should, however, persevere to the uttermost in our endeavours to reclaim them; and direct our most implacable resentment against our own evil propensities and habits, aiming at nothing less than their entire destruction.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. (*Notes, Ex. 15:1. Deut. 31:19.*) By means of this song of praise, the affections of love and gratitude to God would be more powerfully excited, and more deeply fixed in the hearts of believers in Israel; the events commemorated would attract more general notice, become more exactly known, and be much longer remembered, than by any prose narration; and multitudes would become acquainted with them, who had not the opportunity of reading the records of them.—Probably, this sacred poem was composed by Deborah, and sung by her and Barak, and the whole army, and multitudes of the Israelites, soon after the victory was completed. (*Notes, Ex. 15:20, 21. 2 Chr. 20:18-21, 26-28.*)

V. 2. Whatever had been done by Deborah, or Barak, or the army, the Lord must have all the praise of this victory: the will, the power, and the success were all derived from him: yet it was proper that the people who had willingly followed Barak, when invested with no regular authority, should be mentioned with commendation.—Israel was the more bound to praise the Lord for avenging them upon their oppressors, as they had brought their miseries upon themselves by their own crimes. (*Notes, Num. 31:2. Rev. 18:20.*)

V. 3. The kings and princes of the surrounding nations were contriving the ruin of Israel: the kings of the earth have too generally been seeking their own glory, or calling upon the people to worship idols; and this song was likely to be heard or read by many of them through successive generations. The prophetess therefore calls on them to hear what God had wrought for Israel, and against their enemies, and to take warning not to copy the example of Jabin and Sisera. She reminds them that praise and glory belong to JEHOVAH, and not to them or their idols; that it would be dangerous for them to rival him who poureth contempt upon ambitious princes, or to oppress his people; and that it was their true wisdom, honour, and interest to seek his favour, to become his servants, and to use their authority in promoting

5 The 'mountains' melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.

6 In the days of 'Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of 'Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked by-ways.

7 The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

8 They chose 'new gods; then was war in the gates: 'was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?

9 My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.

10 'Speak, ye that ride on white asses, 'ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

11 They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water; there shall they rehearse the 'righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates. [Practical Observations.]

i Deut. 4:11. Ps. 97:5. 114:4. Is. 64:1-3. Nah. 1:5,6. Hab. 3:10. * Heb. fowed. j Ex. 19:18. 20:18. Deut. 4:11,12. 5:22-25. Heb. 12:18. k 3:37. l 1:17,18. m Lev. 25:22. 2 Chr. 15:5. Lam. 1:4. 4:18. Mic. 3:12. n Heb. walkers of paths. o Heb. crossed ways. p Is. 13:5. q Ps. 8:9. r 1:19. s 4:4-6. 2 Sam. 20:13. Is. 49:23. Rom. 16:13. p 2:12,17. Deut. 32:16,17. q 4:3. 1 Sam. 13:19-22. r See on 2. 1 Chr. 29:9. 2 Cor. 8:3,4. 12:17. 9:5. s Or, meditate. Ps. 105:2. 145:5. 5:11. s 10:4. 12:14. t Ps. 107:12. Is. 23:6. Joel 3:12. u Lam. 5:4,9. x Grin. 28:20-22. Ex. 3:17-19. Is. 23:6. Heb. righteousnesses. 1 Sam. 12:7. Ps. 145:7. Mic. 6:5. y See on 7. z Deut. 32:34. Job 29:7. Is. 25:6. Jer. 7:2. a Ps.

his glory, as she showed that she did, and would do. (Notes, Ps. 2:7-12. Dan. 4:1-3.)

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref.) The extraordinary displays of the divine Majesty, which the Israelites had witnessed at mount Sinai, are here described in very poetical language, and compared with the present interposition of the LORD for Israel. The presence of God had, as it were, thrown all nature into convulsions: the thunderings and lightnings were attended by impetuous showers of rain; and mount Sinai was in such agitation, that it seemed to be melted from before the LORD. (Notes, Deut. 33:2. 2 Sam. 22:7-16. Ps. 68:7-10. 77:16-20. Hab. 3:3-10.)

V. 6, 7. Shamgar seems to have lived towards the close of the eighty years' rest before mentioned, and he helped to lengthen that tranquillity. (Notes, 3:30,31.) But Israel growing more wicked, the difficulties and sufferings of the nation increased, and nothing was done effectually for their relief, till Jael completed Barak's victory by the slaughter of Sisera. This seems to be the meaning of the passage, which might perhaps be rendered, "from the days of Shamgar to the days of Jael."—During this time the land was so infested by invaders, and harassed by oppression, that none could travel in safety on the highways, but men went in by-paths or crooked ways: the villages also were deserted, and the fields left uncultivated; whilst the inhabitants sought refuge in the fenced cities, where they were in danger of perishing by famine. (Notes, 2 Chr. 15:1-7. Is. 37:9.)

A mother in Israel. (7) Deborah employed her authority for the real good of the people, with that disinterested assiduity which a mother shows to her beloved children. Kings should be fathers of their people, using their authority as may most conduce to render them happy: and Deborah was indeed "a mother to Israel," especially in supporting true religion, with which both their temporal prosperity and eternal salvation were inseparably connected. (Note, Is. 49:22,23.)

V. 8. Joshua had engaged the people solemnly to "choose the LORD for their God," and to serve him only: (Notes, Josh. 24:14-27.) but they grew weary of his holy service, and "chose new gods," with new names, and "newly come up;" (Deut. 32:17.) and probably after the death of Ehud, they had run into some new kinds of idolatry. But under all these idols Satan was virtually worshipped, who permitted his deluded votaries to indulge their sensual lusts, in order to allure them to his service. They soon however paid dear for their gratifications, when their cities were seized on, and they were subdued, disarmed, and oppressed, by those enemies, over whom they had formerly triumphed, and whom they ought to have extirpated!—It is probable that many of Barak's soldiers were armed, not with shields and spears, but with bows, slings, ox-goads, and other instruments of husbandry; but some had swords, and others might seize on the arms of the enemy when the battle had begun. (Notes, 1 Sam. 13:19-22.)

V. 9. Some of the governors or principal persons, especially in Naphtali and Zebulun, willingly offered their assistance, and ventured their lives in attacking the Canaanites: of these the prophetess spake with peculiar affection and respect, and gratefully blessed the LORD for them. (Notes, 1 Chr. 12:16-18. 2 Chr. 17:13-19.)

V. 10. It seems that riding upon white asses was a distinction appropriated to magistrates, and principal persons in

12 ¶ Awake, 'awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and bleed thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

13 Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

14 Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against 'Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of 'Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.

15 And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also 'Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. ¶For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.

16 Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? ¶For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.

17 Gilcad abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? 'Asher continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his breaches.

57:8. 108:1,2. 108:2. Is. 51:9,17. 52:1,2. 60:1. Jer. 31:26. 1 Cor. 15:24. Eph. 5:14. b Ps. 68:18. Is. 14:2. 33:1. 49:24-26. Eph. 4:8. 2 Tim. 2:26. marg. c Ps. 49:14. Is. 41:15,16. Ez. 17:24. Dan. 7:18-27. Rom. 8:37. Rev. 2:26,27. 3:9. d 3:27. 4:15,16. e See on 3:13. Ex. 17:8-16. f 4:10,14. g See on Num. 32:39. h Heb. draw with the pen, &c. h See on 1 Chr. 12:32. i See on 4:14. ** Heb. His feet. Acts. 20:13. 11 Or, in the, &c. Acts 15:39. 11 Heb. imprecations. Prov. 22:13. 2 Cor. 11:2. k Num. 32:1-5,24. Phil. 2:21. 3:19. s Or, in. 15 marg. l See on Josh. 13:25,31. m Josh. 19:4-31. n Or, sea-port. o Or creeks.

Israel; which was a proof, not so much of their poverty, as of their simplicity, in that they had not yet learned to multiply horses and chariots, in conformity to their heathen neighbours. (10:4. 12:14. Note, Deut. 17:16.) They who had this distinction were called upon, in their several districts, and while in safety and credit, they travelled about, to administer justice, or upon their own concerns, to teach the people, by their example, to celebrate the praises of the LORD.

V. 11. The people could not go out of the gates of the cities to draw water, without being exposed to the arrows of the oppressors, who watched that opportunity to murder them; so that in some cases they must either perish by thirst, or seek to quench it at the peril of their lives. With the rulers, magistrates, and travellers, the common people also were exhorted to praise the LORD, every time they drew water in safety, and to "rehearse his righteous acts;" (or righteousnesses, marg.) his justice in the destruction of their enemies, nay, in the miseries which they had endured for their sins; and his faithfulness in delivering them, and enabling them to return to their habitations and employments in peace and security.

V. 12. The governors and people having been excited to praise the LORD, Deborah here called upon her own soul, or, by way of response instructed the people to call upon her, to shake off drowsiness, and be in earnest in this most reasonable and delightful employment; for "he that will set the hearts of other men on fire with the love of Christ, must himself burn with love." Hooker. (Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-20.)—Barak also was excited to prosecute his victory: he had destroyed the whole army of Sisera in the field of battle; let him also gather the unarmed multitude as his captives, and complete the destruction of the oppressors.

V. 13. Multitudes of the Israelites had been slain, or driven into other countries by oppression; yet the LORD had made the remnant of them, even under the conduct of a woman, to have dominion over their powerful and renowned enemies.

V. 14. Deborah next proceeds to enumerate those who assisted on this occasion, beginning with Ephraim. It is probable, that the Amalekites were coming to the assistance of Jabin; and that a body of men of the tribe of Ephraim, (sprung from Ephraim as their root,) opposed and prevailed against them: yet Benjamin moved first, and the Ephraimites assisted him.—The governors of Machir, or Manasseh, came to the assistance of Barak, and formed useful commanders and the Zebulunites were so much in earnest, that even their students, or artists, came to join the army, and to serve the common cause. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15, 16. Both the princes and people of Issachar came, of their own accord, to attend on Deborah, and to accompany Barak, when he was sent down into the valley, with his small number of foot-soldiers poorly armed, to meet the army and war-chariots of Sisera. (8. Note, 4:14.)—Yet Reuben kept at a distance, as satisfied to the common cause, or unconcerned about it; which excited much uneasiness and resentment, and occasioned many thoughts in the minds of his brethren. But he made the care of his flocks the pretence for remaining at home on this conjuncture.

V. 17. The tribe of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, inhabited mount Gilcad: and Machir before mentioned seems to have been that half of Manasseh which dwelt west of

18 "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

19 The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.

20 They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

21 The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

22 Then were the horse-hoofs broken by the means of the prancings, the prancings of their mighty ones.

23 "Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

24 Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

25 He asked water, and she gave him milk: she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

n See on 4:10. * Heb. exposed to reproach. e Path. 4:16, Acts 20:24. 1 John 3:16, Rev. 12:11. p 4:10, 10:14. q Josh. 10:22-27. 11:1, &c. Ps. 4:4-6, 68:12-14, 118:8-12, Rev. 17:12-14, 19:19. r See on 1:27. 1 Kings 4:12, 20:418. t Josh. 10:11. 1 Sam. 7:10. Ps. 77:17-18. u 4:15. v Heb. paths. z 4:13, 1 Kings 18:40. Ps. 83:9-10. y Gen. 49:18. Is. 25:10. Mic. 7:10. z Ps. 20:7, 33:17, 147:10-11. Is. 5:28. Jer. 47:3. Mic. 4:13. 7 O, trampings, or, prancings. a 1 Sam. 26:19. Jer. 48:10. 1 Cor. 16:22. b See on 2:1. 4:6, 8:11. 13:3. Matt. 23:41. c 4:13, 10. Neh. 3:5. d 1 Sam. 17:47, 18:17, 25:28. Rom. 15:18. 1 Cor. 3:9. 2 Cor. 6:1. e 4:17. Gen. 14:19. Prov. 31:31. Luke 1:42.

Jordan. (14.) It is probable, that all the Israelites, who dwelt east of Jordan, abode at home and refused their concurrence. The tribes of Dan and Asher did the same; the one being occupied in merchandise, or fishery; and the other, as some think, in repairing the breaches, or stopping the incursions, which the sea had made upon their inheritance. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 13. From these two tribes Barak had raised his army; and they had boldly ventured and even despised their lives, in meeting the enemy, with their iron chariots, in the open field of battle. (Notes, 4:6, 7, 14.) But some of the others were ready to follow the blow, though not present in the first engagement.—It is remarkable that Judah and Simeon are not mentioned in this poem, either as deserving censure or commendation: and this cannot well be accounted for; unless the inhabitants of the southern part of the land were at that time so circumstanced, that it could not be expected they should help their brethren of the north. (Note, 3:30.)

V. 19. Some other kings of Canaan had confederated with Jabin, entirely out of hatred against Israel, without receiving any recompense for their assistance.

V. 20. The angels are called "morning stars," (Job 38: 7.) and their assistance may be here meant: or in poetical language, a violent tempest, raised at that time, which greatly facilitated the destruction of the Canaanites, might be ascribed to the influences of the stars in their courses; which thus, without any such miraculous alteration in the heavens, as took place in the days of Joshua, fought effectually against Sisera and his army. (Note, Josh. 10:12-14.)—Some think the battle continued during part of the night; and that the bright shining of the stars enabled Israel more successfully to pursue and more effectually to destroy their enemies.

V. 21. The river of Kishon.] Marg. Ref.—The stream of this rivulet seems to have been so swelled by the rains which had fallen, that numbers of the Canaanites, attempting to cross it, were swept away by it.—Deborah, by exciting Barak and the Israelites against their powerful enemies, and by their strong faith and fervent prayers, had trodden down their strength in the very dust. (Note, Mic. 7:8-10.)

V. 22. Marg. Ref. Note, Is. 5:26-30.

V. 23. It is probable that Meroz was some town or city near to the field of battle, and that the inhabitants were more inexcusable in not affording their assistance, than those who lived at a distance: and perhaps their refusal arose from a secret favour borne to the Canaanites. The Lord did not want their help against the mightiest of his enemies; but their conduct proved their unbelief and degeneracy.—Deborah did not curse them out of personal resentment, but "the Angel of the Lord" commanded her to pronounce a curse upon them; that Angel of the Lord, who was the "Captain of the Lord's host." (Note, Josh. 5:13-15.)—Perhaps Meroz had before been a flourishing city; but in consequence of this curse, it became so obscure that its situation is at present unknown. (Note, Josh. 6:26.)

V. 24. The inhabitants of Meroz, though Israelites, feared he power or valued the friendship of the Canaanites, more than they dreaded the power and desired the favour of God; and they were therefore joined with the accursed Canaanites. Jael, though not a native Israelite, from faith and love to the cause of God, preferred the friendship of his oppressed people to that of their enemies; and she was joined with them

26 She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer: and with the hammer she smote Sisera; she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

27 [At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

28 The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

29 Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,

30 Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two? to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

31 So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years.

f See on 4:19-21. g Heb. she hammered. g 1 Sam. 17:49-51. 2 Sam. 20:22. h Heb. between. h Ps. 52:7. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. i Heb. destroyed. i 2 Kings 1:2. (aut. 2:9. k 4:15. Cant. 8:14. Jam. 5:7. ** Heb. her wounds. l Ex. 15:9. Jos. 20:5. m Heb. the head of a man. m Gen. 37:3. 2 Sam. 13:18. Ps. 45:14. n Ps. 45:4, 53:10-11, 88:1-3, 89:9-18, 97:8. Rev. 6:10, 18:20, 19:2, 3. o Ex. 20:6. l Pet. 6:5. Ps. 91:14, 97:10. Rom. 8:28. 1 Cor. 8:3. Eph. 6:24. Jam. 1:12, 2:5. 1 Pet. 1:8. 1 John 4:19-21. 5:2, 3. p 2 Sam. 23:4. Is. 19:4, 5, 37:6. Prov. 4:18. Dan. 12:3. Hos. 6:3. Matt. 13:43. q 3:11, 30.

in the blessing, yea, had a special and superior blessing. (Notes, Matt. 25:31-46. Gal. 3:6-14.) And indeed, "in the ten" she jeoparded her life as much as the soldiers did "in the high places of the field." (Notes, 4:21. Josh. 2:8-16.)

V. 26, 27. When Jael had driven the nail through the head of Sisera, she perhaps cut it off with his own sword: though indeed no intimation is given of it in the history; and the words may merely be a poetical repetition of the same idea by a variety of terms. (Note, 1 Sam. 17:50-53.)—When he felt the anguish of the nail penetrating his head, perhaps he struggled to arise, but fell down again, and bowed, and died at her feet; finding death where he had sought life, and a terrible enemy where he expected a kind friend.

V. 28. The mother of Sisera, with impatient expectation, looked for his return, and wondered what so long delayed him; not in the least fearing his success in a contest with so unequal an enemy as Barak and his forces appeared to her. In an ordinary poem we should say, this was finely imagined: but we may here conclude it was actually the case.

V. 29. Wise.] This seems to be spoken ironically. He, ladies, in their great wisdom, suggested that Sisera only waited to divide the immense spoil which had been taken; and she so wisely pleased her vain mind with the soothing imagination!

V. 30. (Marg. Ref.)—A damsel or two.] What a picture does this give of an ungodly and sensual heart! How shameful are these wishes of an aged mother for a beloved son, and his officers and soldiers: that a woman of honour and virtue, as we say, could delight her fancy, with conceiving the Israelish virgins divided among the conquerors, as their property, to be exposed to their unbridled, domineering lust! And that nothing more excellent could be conceived by her trifling mind, than to see her son, and his attendants and concubines, arrayed in fine garments, wrought by the singular skill and industry of their vanquished enemies!

V. 31. The mother of Sisera is left to enjoy her imaginary triumph, and meet her bitter disappointment; while the hymn of praise concludes with praying for similar destruction to all the enemies of the Lord, and prosperity to those who love him; that their characters may be honourable, their endeavours successful, their course increasingly useful, and their path shining more and more; till they resemble the noonday, when the sun by his full strength has dispelled the mists and clouds which his rising draws up, and which at first obscure his way, but afterwards increase his splendour. (Notes, Ps. 68:1-3. Rev. 19:1-6.)

Had rest forty years.] It is not agreed whether these years are to be computed from the time that Deborah was raised up to be judge; or from the beginning of the oppression by Jabin. The former is the more obvious interpretation. (Notes, 3:11, 30.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. No delay should be made in returning thanks to God for his mercies; for our praises are most acceptable, pleasant, and profitable, when they flow from a full heart. nor should we be backward to celebrate his praises, and declare our obligations to him, before his most determined enemies, or in the presence of the mightiest and haughtiest of the princes of the earth. Let them be reminded, that the Lord is above them; and against them, so long as they seek their own glory and oppose his cause: let them be warned:

CHAPTER VI.

Israel, relapsing into sin, is oppressed by Midian, and reproved by a prophet, 1-10. The Angel of the Lord appoints Gideon to deliver them, and confirms his commission by consuming his oblation with fire, 11-21. Gideon chooses his men, and calls them to JEHOVAH SHALOM, 22-24. By divine command, he destroys Baal's altar and grove, and offers a sacrifice to JEHOVAH, 25-27. His citizens pursue to put him to death; but his father defends him, and calls him Jerubbaal, 28-32. He raises an army, and is encouraged by a twofold sign, 33-40.

AND the children of Israel ¹did evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of ²Midian seven years.

2 And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong-holds.

3 And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them;

4 And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, ⁵until thou come

9:13, 14, 19, 20. Lev. 26:14, &c. Deut. 28:15, &c. Neh. 9:26-29. Ps. 106:34-42. 1 Gen. 25:2. Num. 25:17, 18. Hab. 3:7. c. Lev. 26:17. Deut. 28:47, 48. * Heb. *men strong*. d. Sam. 13:6. 14:11. Heb. 11:38. Rev. 6:15. e. Lev. 26:16. Deut. 20:30-33, 51. Job 31:1. Is. 65:21. Mic. 6:15. f. 13:7, 12. 8:10. 1 Kings 4:30. Job 3:13. g. Gen. 10:19. 13:10. h. Prov. 28:3. Jer. 49:9, 10. Ob. 5. 1 Or, goat.

"rejoice with trembling" in their dangerous pre-eminence: let them lower their diadems to the crown of "the King of kings;" and learn to embrace his salvation, and become his servants, or they will ere long perish like Jabin and Sisera. (Ps. 83:9, 10. Note, Ps. 2:10-12).—Those princes who desire to serve God, must trust in him, and not in chariots and horses, fleets, or armies; they must use their authority in advancing truth and righteousness, and account his worship to be their most honourable and delightful privilege and employment.—Every recent mercy calls upon us to renew our gratitude for former benefits: the works of the Most High can consistently be compared only with each other; and all combine in proclaiming, that nothing is too hard for his power, or too large for his love. Our praises in prosperity will be heightened and purified by the remembrance of preceding troubles, and by humiliation for those sins which occasioned them: for nothing but sin gives birth to misery, whether personal or public, temporal or eternal.—When men rebel against God, he withdraws his protection, and sets his face against them: then their weakest foes prevail, and his curse infuses bitterness into all their comforts; nor can any thing but repentance stop the speedy progress of advancing judgments. But if faithful and zealous persons are raised up, as magistrates or ministers, to attempt reformation; if others willingly offer themselves to concur in their pious designs; and if the people are suitably influenced by these endeavours; the affairs of nations and churches then begin to wear a more favourable aspect. And when in our personal afflictions we are brought to humble ourselves before God, to repent, to pray and seek forgiveness, deliverance and comfort are not far off. Happy are they who are thus "chastened of the Lord, that they should not be condemned with the world;" for the prosperity of the wicked increases pride, insolence, presumption, and sensuality, till they "suddenly perish, and that without remedy."—While we can go abroad, or rest at home, in security; while we can follow our employments, and attend on the ordinances of God, without any to make us afraid; let us join, to our thanksgivings for such distinguishing mercies, our sympathizing prayers for those who are groaning under the calamities of war, oppression, or persecution.—But, as a craving appetite will urge men to venture even their lives for its gratification; did we thirst again for the blessings of salvation, neither the persecutor's rage, nor the tempter's assaults, could keep us from the house of God, or the throne of grace.

V. 12-31. When we rehearse the righteous, faithful, and merciful acts of the Lord; we should also bear true respect and affection, and give due commendation, to those who have been his willing messengers of kindness to us, and should at least recompense them with our fervent prayers for his blessing on them; and while he needs no human help, he is pleased to employ and accept the services of those, who in their several stations improve their talents to advance his cause: nay, he *requires* every man to do this, and will call those to a severe account who neglect or evade his service.—The higher any man is advanced in Providence, the more forward ought he to be in promoting the public good, and in stirring up others, by his example, influence, and authority to do the same: not deeming the high praises of God unbecoming the bench, the senate, or the throne, or unseasonable in the most ordinary conversation with strangers, and even with the nobles of the earth.—They who would do good, must shake off sloth, renounce indulgence, and learn to be active and endure hardship. On some occasions they may be called to "jeopardy their lives in the high places of the field;" at all times, to sacrifice many personal interests for the public good; and by so doing, to incur the reproach and censure of a misjudging world. Most men will therefore excuse themselves: and while they are averse to the cross, and disaffect-

unto Gaza; and ¹left no sustenance for Israel, neither ²sheep, nor ox, nor ass.

5 For they came up with their cattle, and their tents, and they came ³as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and ⁴their camels were without number: and they entered into the land ⁵to destroy it.

6 And Israel was greatly ⁷impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel ⁸cried unto the LORD.

7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites,

8 That the LORD sent ⁹a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, ¹⁰Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage:

9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppress

i. Cant. 1:5. Is. 13:20. k. 7:12. 8:10. Jer. 46:23. 1:8, 21. 1 Sam. 30:17. Is. 60:6. Jer. 49:29, 32. m. Ps. 83:4-12. n. Ps. 106:43. *marz*. Jer. 5:17. Mal. 1:4. o. *Prophet*. Gen. 3:9, 15. Ps. 50:15. 78:34. 106:44. Is. 26:16. Hos. 5:15. * Heb. *a man, a prophet*. p. See on 2:1-3. Neh. 9:9-12. Ps. 136:10-16. Is. 63:9-14. Ez. 20:5, &c.

ed to the cause of God, they will find apologies for their conduct, from the variety of their secular engagements and avocations. But they who temporize in a matter which admits not of neutrality, are numbered among his enemies; and whilst they grieve and discourage the hearts of others, bring heavy wrath upon themselves. Indeed power and pre-eminence at present seem to be on their side, and the servants of God are poor, despised, and afflicted: but the tables will soon be turned; and the feeblest believer shall "tread down strength," and exercise dominion over the mightiest of the wicked.—When the Almighty "arises to judgment, to help all the meek upon earth," and to avenge the cause of his people, the whole creation wages war against his enemies; "the stars in their courses" the elements melting with fervent heat, and all the angels in heaven shall concur in their destruction: while the hosts of God shall sing with triumphant acclamations, "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD;" "and they who love the LORD" shall "shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." What will then become of the hopes of the sensual, the vain, the covetous, and the ambitious? The objects of their noblest wishes were degrading, and many of their desires base and brutish: yet even these wishes and desires will not be gratified, and eternal disappointment and black despair will complete their final misery. Where will then be their boasted wisdom? where their high-sounding titles and glittering distinctions? All, all are vanished, and gone for ever! But the righteous may look forward to that solemn scene with joyful expectation; may consider death and judgment as the coming of their Beloved to complete their felicity; and, though willing to wait his time, yet longing to behold his face, they may well say, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?" Though they meet delays, they shall not suffer disappointment; for yet a little space, and he will come and receive them to his glorious and eternal rest.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. The Israelites had executed vengeance on the Midianites, just before the death of Moses, and had almost extirpated them: (Notes, Num. 31:1-18.) but the remnant had increased and acquired power; and, probably instigated by resentment, they joined themselves to the Amalekites, the devoted enemies of Israel, in order to retaliate. (3.) As the tyranny of these enemies, though exceedingly grievous, was much shorter than that of their former oppressors; it is probable, that the help of Israel had not been so atrocious.

V. 2, 3. These caverns were well known to the Israelites, when this history was written; but it was proper that the original intent and use of them should be remembered, both to humble them, and to excite their gratitude.—The Midianites and their allies seem to have come rather as freebooters, than as a disciplined army of troops under experienced commanders: yet the courage of the Israelites was so sunk, that, instead of manfully resisting them, they dastardly concealed themselves under ground from their ravages. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. *Gaza*.] The country of Midian lay beyond the most eastern borders of the land, and Gaza was near the Mediterranean Sea on the west. So that the invaders went across the country, and occupied and desolated the whole of it, leaving "no sustenance." (*Note, Jer. 49:9-11.*)

V. 5. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 6-10. (*Notes, 3:9, 10, 14.*) The people having long suffered under their affliction, at length cried unto the Lord to deliver them from it; but it does not appear that they were deeply humbled for their sins. (*Notes, Is. 1:10-20.*) He therefore sent a prophet to call them to repentance, before he raised up a judge to deliver them from their enemies. The message itself was very plain and convincing, and probably was delivered from city to city throughout the land, and

ed you, and ¹drive them out from before you, and gave you their land :

10 And I said unto you, *I am* the LORD your God ; ²fear not the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell : but ye have not obeyed my voice.

[*Practical Observations.*]

11 ¶ And there came ¹an Angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the ²Abi-ezrite : and his son ³Gideon thrashed wheat by the winepress, to ⁴hide it from the Midianites.

12 And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, ¹*The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

13 And Gideon said unto him, O my LORD, ²if the LORD be with us, ³why then is all this befallen us ? and where *be* all his miracles which ⁴our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt ? but now ⁵the LORD hath ⁶forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And ¹the LORD looked upon him, and said, ²Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites : have not I sent thee ?

15 And he said unto him, O my LORD, ¹where-with shall I save Israel ? behold, ²my family is poor in Manasseh, and I *am* ³the least in my father's house.

16 And the LORD said unto him, ¹Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17 And he said unto him, ¹If now I have found grace in thy sight, then ²show me a sign that thou talkest with me.

18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and ¹bring forth my ²present, and set ³it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 And Gideon went in, and ¹made ready ²a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour : the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought ³it out unto him under the oak, and presented ⁴it.

20 And the Angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and ¹lay *them* upon this rock, and ²pour out the broth. And he did so.

21 Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh, and the unleavened cakes ; and there ¹rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon ¹perceived that he *was* an Angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O LORD God ! for ²because I have seen an Angel of the LORD face to face.

23 And the LORD said unto him, ¹Peace *be* unto thee ; fear not : thou shalt not die.

24 Then Gideon ¹built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it ²JEHOVAH-shalom : unto this day it is yet in ³Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

[*Practical Observations.*]

q See on Ps. 44:2,3. r See on Ex. 20:2,3. s 2 Kings 17:33,35,36. Jer. 10:2, 1:22. Prov. 5:13. Jer. 3:13,25. 9:13. 42:21. 43:4,7. Zeph. 3:2. Rom. 10:16. Heb. 5:9. a 14-16. 21-5. 5:23. 13:218-20. Gen. 48:16. Is. 63:9. v 8:2. Josh. 17:2. w Heb. 11:32. Gideon. * Heb. cause it to flee. x 2:18. Ex. 3:12. Josh. 1:5,9. Ruth 2:4. Matt. 1:23. 23:20. Luke 1:28. Acts 18:9,10. y Gen. 25:22. Ex. 33:14-16. Num. 14:14,15. Rom. 8:31. z Deut. 29:21. 30:17,18. Ps. 89:49. Is. 59:12. 63:15. a Ps. 44:1. 78:34. b Deut. 31:7,7. 2 Chr. 15:2. Ps. 27:9. Is. 41:7. Jer. 23:33. c See on 11. d 4:6. Josh. 1:5-9. 1 Sam. 12:11. 1 Chr. 14:9,10. e Ex. 3:11. 4:10. Jer. 1:6. Luke 1:34. f 1 Sam. 9:21. 18:23. z Heb. thousand is the meanness. Ex. 18:21-25. Mic. 5:2. g Gen. 32:10. Jer. 50:45.

and it seems to have had considerable effect, as it prepared the way for their deliverance.—It may be useful here to compare the language of this prophet. "Thus saith the LORD, &c." with that of the Angel before mentioned, (*Note*, 2:1-5.) and with the subsequent part of this chapter. (11-21.)

V. 11. (*Marg. Ref.*) The people contrived by various means to conceal a scanty portion of their harvest, just sufficient to keep them from starving. In the winepress Gideon beat out the wheat with a staff (Heb.) unsuspected : for either the vintage was not ripe, or the people could make no use of their winepresses.

V. 12. (*Marg. Ref. s.*) Perhaps Gideon, while at his work, was meditating on the miserable state of Israel, and conceiving bold designs against their invaders, which however he saw no possibility of accomplishing ; to which thoughts these words of the Angel might refer.

V. 13. The angel had said, "The LORD is with thee;" but Gideon's mind was occupied about his people, and he therefore answered, "If the LORD be with us," not conceiving that the LORD could be with him, when there was no evidence of his special presence with Israel. He judged right, when he concluded that they could not have been so distressed, if the almighty God, who had brought them out of Egypt, had not for the time forsaken them : but he did not suitably advert to those crimes which had provoked him to anger. (*Notes*, Deut. 32:28-31.)

Our fathers told us of, &c.] Language of this kind, frequently occurring in the subsequent historical books, shows how fully the conviction prevailed in the minds of the people, that all the wonderful works for Israel recorded in the books of Moses had assuredly taken place. And this conviction could never have been produced and perpetuated, from the days of Moses to all succeeding generations, had it not been certainly known by Moses's contemporaries, that this was indeed the case.

V. 14. We here learn who this Angel was ; even the LORD JEHOVAH, the only begotten Son of God, who has in all ages declared the Father to mankind.—These repeated evidences continually remind the attentive reader, that the Scriptures are calculated to lead us to conceive of the one living and true God, as subsisting in distinct persons.—The LORD looked upon Gideon, with some peculiar expression of majesty or of favour, giving energy to his words, while he said, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel." (*Marg. Ref.* on 11 p. *Notes*, Ex. 3:12. 4:1-12. Luke 21:14.)—Thus he was commissioned to execute the bold designs which he was revolving in his mind, or to attempt the deliverance of his people, in that strength of faith which he even then possessed.—If he believed that nothing was wanting to deliver them from the Midianites, but the presence of God who r-deemed

1 Cor. 15:9. Eph. 3:8. h See on 12. Ex. 3:12. Josh. 1:5. Is. 41:14-16. Matt. 28:20. Mark 16:20. Acts 11:21. i See on Ex. 33:16. k 36-40. Gen. 15:8-17. Ex. 4:1-9. 2 Kings 2:8-11. Ps. 88:17. Is. 7:11. l Gen. 18:5. 19:3. m Or, 13:15-19. n Gen. 18:6-8. o Heb. a kid of the goats. p Lev. 2:4. q 15:19. p 1 Kings 18:33, 34. q 13:20. Lev. 5:24. r Kings 18:38. 1 Chr. 21:26. 2 Chr. 7:1. s 13:21. s 13:32. Gen. 16:13. 32:30. Ex. 33:20. Deut. 5:5, 24:26. Is. 6:5. John 1:18. 12:41. t Gen. 43:23. Ps. 85:8. John 14:27. 20:19,28. Rom. 1:7. u 21:1. Gen. 33:20. Josh. 22:10,26-28. v That is, The LORD send peace. Gen. 22:14. Ex. 17:15. Jer. 23:6. 33:16. Ex. 48:35. v 8:32.

Israel from Egypt, let him go in this confidence, and he shall find that same power exerted to render him successful. "Have not I sent thee ?" saith the divine Speaker.

V. 15. Manasseh was not one of the leading tribes in Israel ; the thousand (*marg.*) to which Gideon belonged, was poor in that tribe ; and he was (as he humbly thought) the meanest person in the family, and utterly unfit to undertake such a service. (*Notes*, Ex. 4:13,14. Is. 6:5-8. Jer. 1:6-8.)

V. 16. As one man.] With great facility, and to their entire destruction. (*Num.* 14:15. *Note*, 7:16-22.)

V. 17. That thou talkest, &c.] Gideon seems to have desired some assurance, that the Person, now speaking with him, was He, who at the bush commissioned Moses to deliver Israel out of Egypt, and who had given him sensible tokens of his divine power and authority. (*Notes*, Ex. 3:2-12. 4:1-9. 33:17-19.)

V. 18. My present.] "Meat-offering." (*Marg.*) As a kid was part of the meat-offering, (19) the word cannot always be used exclusively for oblations of flour, &c. as some have thought.

V. 19. This preparation would serve, either for a hospitable meal, or for a sacred oblation. The quantity was far more than was necessary for one person at one time : and it shows that, even in his poverty, Gideon was ready to "use hospitality without grudging," according to the custom of those times. (*Gen.* 18:3-8.)

V. 20, 21. This command seems to have been intended as a trial of Gideon's faith and obedience, by which the LORD gave him the sign which he required. (17) With the staff in his hand, he "touched the flesh, and the unleavened cakes ;" and by fire, miraculously kindled, the whole was consumed as a sacrifice, and not as a hospitable meal ; for he was God, and not man. (*Notes*, 1 Kings 18:33-39. 2 Chr. 7:1-3.)

V. 22. The sight of a created angel, though it might have surprised Gideon, would not have thus terrified him : but it was a current opinion, that the vision of the divine glory was fatal ; and, except as seen in Jesus Christ, no doubt it would be so. (*Marg. Ref.* p.) From such places as this the ancient Christians rightly gathered, that the Son of God appeared, upon some great occasions, in old time : which is not incredible, but a matter of easy belief ; if we be persuaded, that he did really appear in our flesh, which he took of the virgin Mary, and dwelt among us a long time, and then ascended in it to heaven, where he lives for ever. For why should we think it strange, if for a short time he appear, it sometimes in human shape, as a prelude to what he intended in the fulness of time ?... It was indeed a greater thing which he did for us at last : but he that did the greater, may well be granted to have done the less, and there is no reason to doubt it. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 23. The LORD said.] Either at a second appear-

25 ¶ And it came to pass, the same night, that the LORD said unto him, ¶ Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it;

26 And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt-sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down.

27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.

28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built.

29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they inquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.

30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it.

31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.

¶ Gen. 35:2. Job 22:23. Ps. 101:2. * Or, and, w 1 Kings 19:21. Matt. 6:24. 2 Cor. 6:15-17. x Matt. 10:37. Acts 4:19, 5:29. y 3:7. Ez. 34:13. Deut. 7:5. z 2 Sam. 24:18. 1 Heb. strong place. 1 Or, an orderly manner. 1 Cor. 14:33, 40. a Deut. 4:1, 2. Matt. 15:24. John 2:5. 15:14. Gal. 1:16. 1 Thes. 2:4. b Ps. 112:5. John 3:2. c Jer. 36:11, 50:38. John 16:2. Acts 28:9. Phil. 3:6. d Ez. 23:2. Num. 14:6. Eph. 5:1. e Deut. 13:5, 8c. 17:2-7. 1 Kings 18:40. f 1 Kings 18:27, 29. Ps. 115:4-7. Is. 41:23. 46:1-7. Jer. 10:5, 11. 1 Cor. 8:4. g That is, Let Baal plead. 1 Sam. 12:11. 2 Sam. 11:21. Jerubesheth: that is, Let the shameful thing plead. Jer. 11:13. Hos. 9:10. g Ps. 3:1. 27:2, 3. 118:10-12. Is.

ance, or by an audible voice, or in a vision as afterwards. (25)

V. 24. Gideon does not seem to have intended this altar for sacrifices; but for a memorial of the Lord's appearance, and gracious words to him. (Marg. Ref. r, and on marg. reading.) It remained at the time when this history was written.

V. 25, 26. Our translation supposes, that only one bullock was sacrificed: yet the term, "the second bullock," may imply that two were appointed. It does not however appear, when or how the first bullock, if two were meant, was offered. This "second bullock of seven years old," (the same number as the years of Israel's oppression,) seems to have been fattened on purpose for a public sacrifice to Baal.—Before he offered the sacrifice, Gideon was directed to "throw down the altar which his father had" for the worship of Baal; and "to cut down the grove;" and thus to declare open war against idolatry, before he attacked the enemies of his people: regarding the honour and command of God, more than the authority or credit of his father; which probably had hitherto made him satisfy himself with silent disapprobation.—Some think that the word rendered grove, means an image of Ash-taroth, which was cut in pieces; and burnt as fuel in consuming the sacrifice offered to JEHOVAH. (Note, 2:11-13.)—Gideon was not a priest, or even a Levite; but he acted by extraordinary commission, as a prophet.—Sacrificing also was generally restricted to the altar at Shiloh: yet on this occasion the Lord was pleased to dispense with the ritual appointment; and even to command and accept a sacrifice offered with those things which had been employed in idolatry: for it was of great importance, that a protest against the worship of Baal, and an avowal of JEHOVAH, as the only true God, should introduce Israel's deliverance. (Notes, Lev. 1:5-9. 17:3-7. Deut. 12:2-9. 1 Sam. 7:9. 1 Kings 18:38, 39. 2 Kings 3:20.)

V. 27. The large family of Gideon's father was grievously infected with this idolatry; which the more magnifies the mercy of God in preserving him, and in selecting him to be Israel's deliverer. Some, however, even of his servants, were ready and willing to help in this perilous attempt.

V. 28-30. When the citizens arose betimes, (perhaps to pay their morning devotions to Baal) and saw what had taken place, they were speedily informed that Gideon had done it; and nothing but his blood could satisfy the persecuting rage of these infatuated idolaters! (Note, 1 Kings 19:2.)

V. 31, 32. Joash, though himself guilty of idolatry, was unwilling to have his son punished: and probably, by what had been done, he was convinced of the sin and folly of worshipping an idol which could not defend itself; and whi h

32 Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 ¶ Then call the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, were gathered together, and went over and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.

34 But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him.

35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

36 ¶ And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said,

37 Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl-full of water.

39 And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

8:9, 10. Rom. 8:35-39. h 3. 8:10, 11. 1 Chr. 5:19, 20. Job 1:3. 1:7, 24. Josh. 3:16, 17. k Josh. 17:16. 19:18. 1 Kings 18:45. 21:1. 1:3, 10. 13:25. 14:19. 15:14. 1 Sam. 10:8. 11:6. 16:14. 1 Chr. 12:16. 2 Chr. 24:20. Ps. 51:11. 1 Cor. 12:3-11. l Heb. clothed. Rom. 13:14. Gal. 3:27. m 3:27. Num. 10:3. n 11. 8:2. Josh. 17:2. ¶ Heb. was called after him. o 2 Chr. 30:8-12. p 14:17-20. Ez. 4:1-9. 2 Kings 20:8. Ps. 103:13, 14. Matt. 16:1. q Deut. 32:2. Ps. 72:6. Hos. 6:3, 4. 14:5. r Ps. 147:19, 20. Matt. 10:5, 6. 15:24. s Gen. 18:32. t Ps. 107:33-35. 14. 35:17. 45:19, 20. Matt. 8:12. 21:43. Acts 13:46. 22:21. 28:28. Rom. 11:12-22.

needed to be saved by its devotees, instead of being able to save them. If Baal were indeed a god, let him plead his own cause against Gideon: and if he were not a god, they who pleaded for him deserved immediate death. (Notes, 1 Sam. 5:6. Is. 46:1, 2.)—Probably Joash now recollected the law against idolaters. (Note, Deut. 13:1-5.) Some however think, that he spake merely as a magistrate, against any who should excite a tumult on account of these transactions.—On this occasion he gave his son a new name, and called him Jerubbaal; as if he had said, Let Baal plead against him if he be able. He was also called Jerubesheth, which signifies, let shame plead; (2 Sam. 11:21.) for what the people called Baal, or lord, was indeed their shame. (Notes, Jer. 11:13. Hos. 9:9, 10.)—Some fragments of Phœnician history evidently mention Gideon under the title of Jerombalus, and call him the priest of Jeva; doubtless from this sacrifice offered by him to JEHOVAH. The writer says he received some commentaries from him, which probably mean the books of Moses, the law of JEHOVAH.

V. 33, 34. It seems that a very great and surprising reformation took place on this occasion in Ophrah of the Abiezrites; for that city furnished Gideon with his first troops, when he prepared to attack the Midianites after they had crossed Jordan on their annual plundering invasion. (Note, 2:3.)

V. 36-40. The view of the very great multitudes of the enemy perhaps rather discouraged Gideon; who, for the confirmation of his own faith, and that of his troops, desired this miraculous sign of the Lord's presence as the seal of his commission. But, as it is the nature of wool to suck in the moisture, when there is any in the air, so the first token did not quite satisfy him; and, though conscious of his unbelief, he asked the reversal of the sign, joining with his petition an humble deprecation of the Lord's displeasure; and he obtained his request. (Note, 7:13-15. Ez. 4:1-7. Luke 1:18-20.)—According to this miracle, the nation of Israel was moistened by the dew of heavenly blessings, when the whole earth besides remained dry: and now that the nations of the earth enjoy the blessings of redemption, the Jews remain like the dry fleece.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The tendency of our fallen nature to apostasy from God is so strong, that no means can of themselves prevent its effect; and in all cases when divine grace is withheld, man as naturally does evil as the stone falls to the ground. The Scriptures every where teach us this humiliating truth: and in proportion as we effectually learn it, we shall in all things depend on the special assistance and blessing of God, with constant, earnest prayer; and answer to give him all

CHAPTER VII.

Gideon's army is tried by divine directions, and reduced to three hundred men, 1-8. He is sent into the enemy's camp by night, and encouraged by hearing a dream interpreted, 9-15. He divides his army into three companies, giving each man a trumpet, and a lamp in a pitcher, 16-18. The Midianites are thrown into confusion and put to flight, 19-22. The Israelites intercept their flight, and take their princes Oreb and Zeeb, whom they put to death, 23-25.

THEN Jerubbab (who is Gideon,) and all the people that were with him, arose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod; so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart early from mount Gilead: and there returned of the people twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people

a 6:32. b Gen. 22:3. Josh. 3:1. 6:12. Ec. 9:10. c Gen. 12:6. d 1 Sam. 14:6. e 2 Chr. 14:11. Zech. 4:6. 12:7. f 1 Cor. 1:27-29. 2:4,5. 2 Cor. 4:7. 10:4,5. g Deut. 32:27. Is. 2:11-17. Jer. 9:23. Rom. 3:27. Eph. 2:9. Jam. 4:6. h Deut. 8:17. Is. 10:13. Ez. 28:24,27. Dan. 4:30. Hab. 1:16. i Deut. 20:28. Matt. 13:21.

the glory, whatever good was brought in us, or done by us.—He has so constituted the world, that fear, shame, and misery, are the natural effects of sin, and will inevitably follow the commission of it; however impenitent sinners may endeavour to evade them, and for a time, succeed.—Conscious guilt appals the heart, and reduces men to the most degrading expedients for self-preservation: and plenty abused in excess must expose them, at least, to the merciful chastisement of pinching want. Heavy afflictions often extort from sinners cries of distress and prayers for relief; but if the Lord regard these cries and prayers, he will convince the sufferers of their guilt, and lead them to repentance; for without this no deliverance will eventually prove a blessing.—The ministers of God must declare to sinners his perfections and authority: the relations in which they stand to him, and their obligations to obedience; the reasonableness of his precepts, the advantages of his service, the evil of sin, and the number and heinousness of their transgressions. Hence it will appear, that they greatly need repentance and forgiveness; and that the message of the gospel is indeed worthy of their most cordial acceptance. And, having brought these things home to their consciences, they must leave the rest with God, earnestly praying to him to render his word successful. Yet, alas! numbers hear the word of God, and are convinced that their conduct is inexcusable, who notwithstanding proceed in their sinful courses, even while groaning under the painful effects of them!

V. 11-24. The Lord reserves to himself a remnant in the worst of times, to whom he manifests his gracious presence; and they are never more likely to be thus favoured, than when struggling with outward difficulties, employed in honest labour, and meditating upon heavenly things.—Talents, suited for peculiar services, may for a time be buried in obscurity; but in due season the Lord will take the candle from "under the bushel," and place it "on a candlestick" to give light to all around: and that time must be waited for by those who feel their hearts glow with desires of usefulness, which at present they have no opportunity of executing.—We are more disposed to muse on our troubles, than on our transgressions: and when we do not directly experience the same deliverances as have been afforded to others, we are apt to think that the Lord's "hand is shortened," or that "he hath forgotten to be gracious;" not considering that he worketh every thing in its appointed season, according to the determinations of his unfathomable wisdom, and as best answers the purposes of his own glory.—But "before honour is humility," and the delays and disappointments, by which he humbles those whom he delighteth to honour, often discourage their hearts, and induce distrust and reluctance to duty: so imperfect and so defiled with sin are our best graces! Yet he generally employs those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and insufficiency: at the same time teaching them to exercise the courage of faith, and to grow strong by simply expecting help from Him; and graciously assuring them of his direction and support.—When the Lord favours his servants with glimpses of his glory, and tastes of his love, they long for the continuance of his gracious presence: and when the sense of his pardoning love has banished the fear of wrath, they rise superior to discouragements, praise him for his mercies, and are ready to say, "Here am I, send me," though the service be dangerous and difficult, and require much self-denial. (Notes, Is. 6:6-8.)

V. 25-40. In attempting reformation, (which is the first step towards recovering prosperity,) no man must be known according to the flesh; nay, when the commands of God are concerned, even parental authority loses its obligation; and though the method of procedure should be regulated by wisdom, yet

are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there; and I shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals, in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of

Luke 14:25-33. Rev. 17:14. 21:8. h Matt. 20:16. i Gen. 22:1. 1 Sam. 16:7. Job 23:10. Ps. 79. 66:10. Jer. 6:27-30. Mal. 3:2,3. k Is. 22:1. 1 Sam. 14:6. Is. 41:14-16. 13:27. Lev. 23:24. 25:9. Num. 10:9. Josh. 6:4,20. Is. 27:13. 1 Cor. 15:52.

we must not be counselled by natural affection or the fear of man. (Notes, Matt. 10:37-39. P. O. 34-42. Luke 14:25-27. 2 Cor. 5:16.)—If we do any thing effectual against the cause of Satan, his servants will certainly be enraged, especially those who are zealous for any kind of false religion. But the Lord has all hearts in his hands, and can easily intimidate the enemies of his people, or convert them into friends and helpers; and persecution must always appear unreasonable and odious to a reflecting mind. **ЖЕГОВА** does not allow his servants to use carnal weapons: and his friends should leave them exclusively to idolaters, antichristians, and ungodly men.—Wicked men are frequently most furious, when destruction is just at hand: for "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifteth up a standard against him." Yet even they who have the Spirit of God, and by the trumpet of the gospel call others to the conflict, cannot always keep out disquieting fears, in circumstances of peculiar danger and difficulty. In this struggle against involuntary unbelief, the Lord himself, the Author and Finisher of his people's faith, is their refuge: to him they make application, and he will help them; and when they are encouraged, they will be enabled to strengthen their brethren. Yet the same inward enemy will repeatedly assail them: and conscious that their fears dishonour the power and faithfulness and love of God, they will deprecate his displeasure, and beseech him to strengthen their faith; and he will both pardon them, and condescend to their desires, while they endeavour to trust in him, but "cannot do the thing that they would."—What cause have we sinners of the Gentiles to thank the Lord, that the dew of heavenly blessings, once confined to Israel, now descends upon the inhabitants of the earth, without that limitation! Yet still the means of grace are dispensed in different measures according to the purposes of God; and even in the same congregations, one man's soul is like Gideon's moistened fleece, another's like the dry ground. Let us then continually pray for the divine blessing on the ordinances of God to ourselves and others: not at any time forgetting the nation of Israel, to which all other nations are so deeply indebted, and which has been so long a dry fleece, whilst the earth around has enjoyed the blessing.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 2, 3. Gideon either forgot the law, which ordained proclamation to be made before the battle, that the fearful with some others might return home; or he thought it might be dispensed with on so urgent an occasion. (Note, Deut. 20:5-9.) But the Lord knew, that pride and unbelief prevailed in the army. The people had readily enlisted at first; but when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites, their courage sunk; yet, had they prevailed, they would have vaunted, and ascribed the victory to their own valour, and not to the special help of God! Most of them were destitute of true faith, and many doubtless disheartened with a guilty conscience. They thought that instead of being too many, they were too few; and the greatest part of them availed themselves of the proclamation, and went home.—Mount Gilead, here mentioned, must have been some mountain of that name west of Jordan, of less note than mount Gilead which lay east of that river: for Gideon's army never crossed Jordan till after the victory. (84.)

V. 4-7. Some of the soldiers that still remained, were not so courageous as they would be thought: but Gideon had done his part in that respect; and it pleased the Lord himself to prove and purify the company by an extraordinary expedient. Perhaps they were led to the water after the fatigue of a long march, under the idea that they were going directly to attack the enemy. It seems to have been customary for them to drink as the cattle do, by putting their mouths down

CHAPTER VIII.

³ *The Ephraimites take offence, but are pacified by Gideon, 1-3. He pursues the Midianites: the men of Succoth and Penuel insolently refuse relief to his company: he threatens to chastise them; and he does, after he has taken Zebah and Zalmunna, 4-17. He punishes Zebah and Zalmunna to death, because they had slain his brethren, 18-21. He refuses the government offered him: but asks the earrings out of the spoil, and of these he makes an ephod, which proves an occasion of idolatry, 22-27. Midian is subdued, 28. Gideon's family and death; and Israel's idolatry and ingratitude, 29-35.*

AND the men of Ephraim said unto him, ¹Why hast thou served us thus, that thou caldest us not when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply.

² And he said unto them, ^bWhat have I done now in comparison of you? ^cis not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of ^dAbi-ezer?

³ God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? ^eThen their anger was abated toward him when he had said that.

^a 12:1-6. ² Sam. 19:41. Job 5:2. Ec. 4:4. Jam. 4:5,6. ^b Heb. *what thing is this that hast done unto us?* ^c Heb. *strongly*. ^d 1 Cor. 13:4-7. Gal. 5:14,15. ^e 1 Sam. 19:30. 3:19-18. e 6:11,34. d 7:21,25. Ps. 44:3. 115:1,18. 14:16. John 4:37. Rom. 12:3,6. 15:19. e Prov. 15:1. 16:32. 25:11,15.

diate prospect of danger; and some pretence will be found for deserting the cause, and escaping the cross. But though a religious society may thus be greatly diminished in numbers, and in external prosperity; yet it will be improved in purity, and may consequently expect an increasing blessing. —Many who have real faith and grace are unfit for special services, and unable to bear peculiar trials, from which therefore the Lord will exempt them; and to which he will appoint those to whom he has given superior hardness, boldness, and firmness of spirit; and very trivial incidents will sometimes make a discovery of men's capacities and dispositions, and show who are and who are not to be depended on in arduous undertakings. —But, while the Lord pursues his purposes of displaying his own glory, he will try to the uttermost the faith and courage of the strongest believers; and even when they are acting by his orders, and have the security of his promise for their support, appearances may be so very much against them, that they cannot keep out the misgivings and struggles of unbelief. This he perceives; and in the most seasonable hour, by some ^a token for good, he will make their faith victorious, and establish their hearts in confidence. (Notes, Acts 18:9-11. 23:11. 27:20-26. 28:15.) —Dreams generally savour of our waking thoughts or dispositions, and frequently discover the sin that dwells in us: we have therefore often cause to be humbled on recollecting our sleeping imaginations, or to feel thankful that they were not realities; and we should be reminded to pray against terrifying or polluting dreams. Sometimes, however, they may afford us a salutary hint; which, agreeing with the truth and precepts of God's word, may be made useful, without exactly ascertaining how it was brought into our mind: and if we can get any benefit from the dreams of others, we should readily and thankfully embrace it. —In discovering the disposition of those with whom we are concerned, faith may frequently discern the secret operation of God, and both take encouragement from it and point it out to others.

V. 16-25. The feeblest and most improbable methods, when divinely appointed and used in faith, produce the most decisive consequences. —The ministers of Christ are frail, sinful men, and seldom adorned with the embellishments of worldly wisdom, large capacities, or great eloquence; but are rather comparable to mean earthen pitchers: yet the light of divine truth and grace which resides in them, accompanied by the trumpet of the gospel preached by them in their several stations, is the power of God to the salvation of his people, and to the subversion of the kingdom of sin and Satan. Nor should they shrink from danger, or fear death: the earthen pitcher must be broken; and frequently the light of their testimony, set off by the recollection of their example, shines brightest after their decease; especially when they have been honoured, by being called to lay down their lives in so good a cause. —The same light and sound of heavenly truth, which save the Israel of God, confound and dismay his enemies; and if threatened vengeance so appals the sinner's alarmed conscience in this world; what will be the effect of the archangel's trumpet, the voice of the Judge, and the shout of the redeemed, at the great day of account! and of that full blaze of light, which will manifest all hearts, display every character, and show every impenitent sinner his deserved and inevitable doom! —In this world the wicked are often left, under the power of their own delusions and the fury of their mad passions, to avenge the cause of God upon each other: a period is approaching when we may expect that the persecuting foes of Christianity will destroy one another; whilst the host of Israel shall look on, and have nothing to do but to blow the trumpet of the gospel, and read the meaning of such singular events in the light of prophecy; and in the world to come, the wicked by mutual enmity, upbraidings, and contempt, will in-

⁴ And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them.

⁵ And he said unto the men of Succoth Give, I pray you, ^bloaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

⁶ And the princes of Succoth said, ^cAre the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army?

⁷ And Gideon said, Therefore when the Lord hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will ^dtear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briers.

⁸ And he went up thence to ^ePenuel, and spake unto them likewise; and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him.

⁹ And he spake also unto the men of Penuel,

^f Heb. *spirit*. ¹ 1 Sam. 14:28,29,31,32. 30:10. 2 Cor. 4:8,9,16. Gal. 6:9. Heb. 12:1-4. g Gen. 33:17. Ps. 69:6. h Gen. 14:18. Deut. 23:4. 1 Sam. 25:18. 2 Sam. 17:28,29. 3 John 6-8. 15:23. 1 Sam. 25:10,11. 1 Kings 20:11. 2 Kings 14:9. Prov. 15:23. Phil. 2:21. ^h Heb. *thrust*. 16. k Gen. 32:30,31. 1 Kings 12:25.

crease their own and each other's misery. What then have the people of God to fear, except unbelief and sin? what have they to do, but to believe his word, to trust his power and promise, to obey his orders, to wait his time, and to help one another, as occasions are afforded and circumstances require? For they, who are incapable of one service, may be useful in another. Their victory is sure, and will soon be complete over their most numerous and powerful opponents.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-3. Gideon was of the tribe of Manasseh, and the Ephraimites were perhaps jealous of him, as having the chief command in this war. It is probable that they were averse to take any part in the perilous and arduous attempt of delivering Israel: yet it served as a pretence for their anger, that they had not been called upon to assist, though Gideon acted expressly by divine command! But he modestly threw a veil over his own achievements, and spoke highly of theirs, and thus prevented the fatal effects of their resentment. He represented his own victory, by the three hundred men, who were chiefly of Abi-ezer, as little in comparison of their taking the princes of Midian; though the former might be called the *vintage*, and the other the *gleaning*; and he intimated that the whole glory belonged neither to them nor him, but to the Lord. ^a This is an argument of the singular modesty and prudence of Gideon, and no less conspicuous in him than his courage; which is a mixture that rarely meets together, but is absolutely necessary to make a truly great man; who never appears so great, as when he treats insolent men with humility, and angry men with meekness. *bp. Patrick.* (Notes, 12:1-7. Prov. 15:1. 16:32.)

V. 4. None, except Gideon and his three hundred chosen men, seem to have passed over Jordan in pursuit of the two kings of Midian, who with fifteen thousand men had got over before the fords were taken. (10) This small company, though deserted by some, and chidden and abused by others of Israel, and though the remaining Midianites so far exceeded them in number; yet, in the courage, self-denial, and patience of faith, pursued them, faint and hungry as they were, with long watching, fasting, and fatigue. —We do not find, that any one of them was either slain or missing. (Note, Num. 31:48-54.)

V. 5, 6. The services of Gideon and his men were very great, their necessity urgent, and their request moderate: the behaviour therefore of the men of Succoth and Penuel was extremely insolent and base, and proved them disaffected to Israel and the God of Israel. (Note, Prov. 18:23.) They despised Gideon's feeble army, depreciated his former success, attempted to weaken his confidence of completing their delivery, and would not afford him the least assistance in his patriotic and pious undertaking! (Note, 1 Sam. 25:10,11.) —Succoth. Note, Gen. 33:17.

V. 7. Gideon ^a deferred his indignation; and intimated to the princes or rulers of Succoth, that if the kings of Midian escaped him, they also might; but if the Lord enabled him to destroy the kings, as he was confident he would, this would make it plain, that he was appointed judge of Israel, and in that character he would punish their ill behaviour, and teach them to behave in future more consistently with the character of Israelites. —It is not agreed, in what manner he used these briers and thorns, in tearing the flesh of the men of Succoth; but though he doubtless put them to great pain, it is not at all probable that he slew them. (Note, 14-16.)

V. 8, 9. (Gen. 32:30,31.) The inhabitants of Penuel probably boasted of their tower, and confided in it, to secure them both from the Midianites, and from Gideon: he therefore destroyed it; and, as some at least of the men of Penuel were still more culpable than those of Succoth, he put them to death. (17. Notes, 5:23. Matt. 12:29,30.)

V. 10-12. Marg. Ref. Notes, 4-6.

saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east: for there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword.

11 And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents, on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host: for the host was secure.

12 And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host.

13 And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun was up,

14 And caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and inquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men.

15 And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary?

16 And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness, and briars, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.

17 And he beat down the tower of Peniel, and slew the men of the city. [Practical Observations.]

18 ¶ Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou art, so were they: each one resembled the children of a king.

19 And he said, They were my brethren, even the sons of my mother: as the Lord liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you.

20 And he said unto Jether his first-born, Up, and slay them: but the youth drew not his sword; for he feared, because he was yet a youth.

21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength. And Gideon arose; and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

22 ¶ Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you.

24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

25 And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.

26 And the weight of the golden earrings, that he requested, was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold, beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks.

27 And Gideon made man ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

28 Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more: and the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.

29 And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house.

30 And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives.

31 And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.

32 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

1 Kings 22:27, 28. m 17. n 7:12. o 7:22. 2 Chr. 13:17, 28 & 8. 1s. 37:36. * Or, an hundred and twenty thousand, every one drawing a sword. 30:2, 13, 17, 25, 33. v 2 Kings 3:25. p Num. 32:35, 42. q 18:37. 1 Sam. 15:32. 30:16. 1 Thes. 5:3. r Josh. 10:16—18, 23. Job 12:16—21. 34:19. Ps. 33:11. Amos 2:4. Rev. 6:15, 19:19—21. t Heb. terrified. s 24:25. 1 Sam. 30:11—15. u Heb. writ. t 6:7. u 7. Prov. 10:13. 19:29. Ez. 2:6. x Mic. 7:4. y Heb. made to know. y 1 Kings 12:25. z 4:6. Ps. 90:12. 1 Sam. 12:2. Jude 16. z Heb. according to the form of, &c. b Josh. 10:24. 1 Sam. 15:33. Ps. 149:9. c 9:54. 1 Sam. 31:5. Rev. 9:6. d Ps. 83:1. * Or, ornaments like the moon. 1s. 3:18. e 9:8—15. 1 Sam. 8:5. 12:12. John. 6:15. f 12:18. 10:16. 11:9—11. Luke 22:42—27. 2 Cor. 1:24. 1 Pet. 5:3. g 1 Sam. 8:6, 7. 10:19. 12:12. h Gen. 24:22, 53. Ex. 12:

35. 32:3. 1 Pet. 3:3—5. 1 Gen. 16:10, 11. 25:13. 37:25, 28. ** Or, sweet jewels. k Esch. 8:15. Jer. 10:9. Ez. 27:7. Luke 16:19. John 19:25. Rev. 17:4. 18:12, 16. 12:1. m 17:5. 18:14, 17. Kz. 23:8—12. 1 Sam. 32:8—10. 1s. 8:20. n 32:6. 6:11, 24. 1 ent. 12:5. o Ex. 23:33. Ps. 73:27. 106:19. Hos. 2:2. 4:12—14. p 33. Deut. 7:16. q Ps. 33:9—12. 1s. 8:4. 10:26. r 31:11, 50. 5:31. s 6:32. 1 Sam. 12:11. t Neh. 5:14, 15. u 9:2—5. 10:1. 12:9, 14. Gen. 40:26. Ex. 1:5. 2 Kings 10:1. t Heb. going out of his thigh. x Gen. 2:24. 7:7. Deut. 17:17. 2 Sam. 3:2—5. 5:13—16. y Kings 11:3. Mat. 2:15. Matt. 19:5—8. Eph. 5:31—33. y 9:1—3. Gen. 16:15. 22:24. z Heb. ed. z Gen. 20:2. a Gen. 15:15. 25:8. Josh. 24:29, 30. Job 5:28. 42:17. b 27. 6:24.

disinterested conduct of Moses, whose sons were left among the ordinary Levites.

V. 24—26. Marg. Ref.—Ishmaelites. (24) Notes, Gen. 25:1—4. 37:25.

V. 27. It is highly probable that Gideon requested the golden earrings, with a view to make some religious use of them, after the example of the officers in the time of Moses; as his small army seems to have been preserved in the same manner: (Note, Num. 31:48—54.) and that the want of accurate knowledge of the divine law led him thus to misapply them. The "ephod" seems to have been a very rich garment, like that worn by the high-priest; and some think, that Gideon also made "a breastplate of judgment," in order to inquire of God by it; (Notes, Ex. 28:6—30.) and even that other things requisite were added, and sacrifices offered at Ophrah. Indeed otherwise it is difficult to discover how so much treasure could have been expended. (Notes, 17:2—5.) Gideon had been commanded, in an extraordinary manner, to offer a sacrifice in the place where the Lord appeared to him: (Note, 6:25, 26.) and it is not improbable he might be led to conclude, that this authorized him to officiate as a priest occasionally at his own house, without going to the tabernacle: and perhaps the people's humour and love of ease were by this means gratified. (Notes, 18:30, 31. 1 Kings 12:26—31.) But whether this was the case, or whether he merely intended to form a memorial of his victory; his conduct was evidently improper, and proved a snare to him, the cause of his family's ruin, and an occasion of idolatry to Israel after his death. (Notes, 33. 9:1—20.)

V. 28. Forty years.] Probably from the time when he was constituted judge of Israel; (Note, 5:31.) except as interrupted by Abimelech's usurpation. (Notes, 9.)

V. 30. Many wives.] Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 2:24. Deut. 17:17. 2 Sam. 5:13—16. 1 Kings 11:1—8.

V. 31. Notes, 11:1, 2. Gen. 25:6.

V. 33. After the death of Gideon, the people proceeded, from an irregular worship, to renounce JEHOVAH entirely,

V. 14—16. This young man seems to have written down (Marg.) the names of the principal persons in Succoth, or of those chiefly concerned. By this information, Gideon was enabled to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent, and so to inflict punishment upon the offenders only.

V. 13, 19. In the troubles of Israel, these kings of Midian had slain the brethren of Gideon by the mother's side; and therefore he determined on this occasion to act as "the avenger of blood." They were not of the devoted nations of Canaan, so that he might otherwise have spared them, and he declared that he would.—It seems that Gideon, though little in his own eyes, was a man of a very majestic appearance; and that his brethren greatly resembled him. (Note, 6:15.) Perhaps this excited the jealousy of these kings against them, who slew them for their own security, though it eventually proved their ruin.

V. 20, 21. Gideon desired to inure his son to execute vengeance on the enemies of God and Israel: (Note, Josh. 10:24.) but the youth was timorous and declined the service; and the kings themselves entreated, that they might be slain, (if they must die,) by the hand of Gideon; who was in his full strength, and of great reputation: for their death would be ignominious and lingering, if a feeble, timid youth were their executioner.—The ornaments from the camels' necks, being in the shape of the moon, had probably been used for doloatous purposes. (Marg. 7:12.)

V. 22, 23. Gideon was willing to fight for his people, to administer justice, and reform religion, as the Lord's deputy, and so long as he pleased: but he would not accept of the perpetual government, or the hereditary succession to his children to which God had not called him. Let JEHOVAH the King of Israel appoint whom he pleased, either during his life or after his decease. This shows, how deeply the more reflecting persons in Israel were convinced, that the constitutions of the law of Moses were of divine authority, and ought implicitly to be complied with. (Notes, 9:1—6. Deut. 17:14, 15. 1 Sam. 8:6—9, 19—22.) In this respect Gideon imitated also the

33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god.

34 And the children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side :

35 Neither showed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, *namely*, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had showed unto Israel.

CHAPTER IX.

Abimelech, son of Gideon by a concubine, conspires with the Shechemites, murders his brethren, and is made king, 1-8. Jotham, by a parabole, exposes their ingratitude, and foretells their ruin, 7-21. The Shechemites conspire with Abal against Abimelech ; Zelul son is him word ; he overcomes them, and sows their city with salt, 22-45. They retire to the temple of Baal-berith, and are burnt in it, 46-49. Abimelech is slain at Thilber, by a woman, with the piece of a millstone, and Jotham's curse is fulfilled, 50-57.

AND Abimelech, the son of Jerubbaal, went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,

2 Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether is better for you,

e 2:7-10, 19. Josh. 21:31. 2 Kings 12:2. 2 Chr. 24:17, 18. d 27:2, 17. Ex. 34:15, 16. Jer. 9:2, 9:4. 1 Ps. 78:11, 108:13, 21. Ec. 12:1. Jer. 23:2. e 9:5, 16. Ec. 9:14, 15. s 3:1. b Gen. 33:18, 34:2. 1 Kings 12:1. c 2 Sam. 15:8. 1 Kings 12:3, 30. Ps. 53:2-4. Jer. 18:18. 1 Heb. what is good? whether, &c. d 3:30. e Gen. 29:14.

and to worship Baal as their God, under the name of "Baal-berith," or the lord of the covenant; having, as it seems, generally covenanted to be his people. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 9: 4-8, 46-49.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. It is one vanity incident to human affairs, that "for every right work a man is envied by his neighbour."—They who will not attempt or venture any thing in the cause of God, are commonly the most ready to censure such as are of a more zealous and enterprising spirit : and the charge of pride and ambition will be brought against the most unexceptionable undertakings. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 17:28, 9.*) When calumny is silenced in one respect by the event, it will assume another form : and they who were most reluctant to the peril and hardship of difficult services, will be the most exasperated if excluded from the credit of them. But, "only by pride cometh contention;" it is the wisdom of Christians to turn away wrath by a soft answer; and their most noble victory is the conquest of their own spirits. In those things which pertain to the truth, authority, and glory of God, they should be unmoved as the sturdy oak ; but in the little concerns of their own interest or reputation, they should resemble the pliant willow that yields to every gust. If by throwing a shade over what the Lord has done by them, and making honourable mention of what he has done by others,—if by giving obliging language in return for rough words, and commendations in lieu of bitter chidings,—envy may be avoided, anger abated, and contention prevented ; the common cause will be more advantaged, than by the most successful controversy, which always takes Christians off from their spiritual warfare.—The active servants of God frequently meet with more dangerous opposition from degenerate professors of the gospel than from open enemies : but they must not regard the unreasonable behaviour of those, who are Israelites in name, but Midianites in heart, or who vainly wish to observe a neutrality. Notwithstanding manifold tribulations, they must carry on their warfare, though ready to faint through inward conflicts and outward hardships. And they shall be enabled thus to persevere : for the less men help them, and the more they attempt to hinder them, the more effectually they be helped and prospered by God himself. It behooves magistrates to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent, and to punish those who injure their brethren ; yet this should be done with temper, and in order to teach them to behave better in future.—Ministers also must warn and severely rebuke such as discourage the hearts of their fellow-servants ; and the Lord himself will execute vengeance upon all who oppose his people in obeying his commands. In the mean time we must "defer our anger," and go on with our work, not attempting to avenge ourselves. (*Notes, Prov. 19:11. Rom. 12:17-21.*)

V. 18-35. Whatever earthly object men glory in, it will be torn from them : and sinners are never so exposed to danger as when they deem themselves most secure. Sins long forgotten must be accounted for to God ; and sinful methods of self-preservation only hasten and aggravate the transgressor's destruction, especially when innocent blood has been shed.—The execution of atrocious criminals is, in some circumstances, an honourable service ; yet we may well be thankful if employed in saving men's lives rather than in destroying them. What a miserable consolation in death is derived from the hope of suffering less pain, and dying with less disgrace than some others ! yet many are more anxious on these accounts, than concerning the future judgment and its eternal consequences !—No honour should be sought, or so much as accepted, but that which comes from God, and

either that all the sons of Jerubbaal (*which are* "threescore and ten persons,") reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh.

3 And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words : and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech ; for they said, He is our brother :

4 And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith ; wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him.

5 And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone : notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left ; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

7 And when they told it to Jotham, he went

2 Sam. 19:13. 1 Chr. 11:1. Eph. 5:30. Heb. 2:14. f Ps. 10:9. Prov. 1:11-14. 1 Heb. after. g Gen. 29:15. h 46-49. 8:33. 11:13. 1 Sam. 22:2. Job 30:3. Prov. 15:11. Acts 17:5. k 6:24. 12 Kings 10:17. 11:1, 2. 2 Chr. 21:4. Matt. 23, 16, 20. m 2 Sam. 5:9. 2 Kings 12:20. n Or, oak. Josh. 24:26. 1 Kings 12:1, 30, 25.

consists with his sole authority and glory ; nor is it allowable to seek for our children those things, which we may not desire for ourselves.—Whatever deputies are employed and whoever has the external precedence in the church, God is the only real Judge, Defender, and Ruler of his people.—How soon will those ornaments, which feed the lust of the eye and form the pride of life, as well as the indulgences of the flesh, become the shame of those who loved them !—The characters of mere men have generally a grievous and wonderful mixture ; nor may we follow any of them farther than they follow Christ. Things sanctioned by venerable names, and clothed with fair pretences, are often found, by the light of God's word, to be vile abominations ; and are proved by experience to be dangerous and fatal snares, to those especially who pay too much veneration to their fellow-creatures. Small deviations from our rule afford a dangerous precedent, and open the way for more flagrant enormities : and even in marriage, when once the original institution is disregarded, the sensual heart of man, like a humoured child, will bear no contradiction, and be confined by no limitations. But, as we all need so much mercy from our God, we should learn the more patiently to bear the ingratitude of our fellow-sinners, and the unsuitable returns we meet with for our poor services ; and to resolve, after the divine example, "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good."

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1-3. Gideon and his family had misled the people, through the ephod at Ophrah ; and the people grievously offended in joining themselves to Baal-berith. (*Notes, 8:27, 33.*) And the Lord manifested his displeasure, not by delivering them into the hand of foreign invaders, but by giving them up to their own base passions.—Gideon had very properly and disinterestedly, refused the proffered kingdom for himself and his sons : and it does not appear that his other sons aimed at dominion either before or after his death. (*Note, 8:22, 23.*) Abimelech's name, (which signifies *my father the king*), may however be supposed to have been given him by his mother from ambitious motives. The concubines, whose children did not inherit, would naturally set up an interest opposite to the rest of the family ; and as Abimelech's mother was a native of Shechem, a principal city of Ephraim, he conceived the idea of obtaining the kingdom by her means. In order to succeed in this project, he accused his brethren of intending to seize upon the government, and possess it with joint authority : and, assuming this as an undoubted fact, he pleaded that it would be better to be governed by one prince, than by so many petty tyrants ; and that if they, who were so nearly related to him, would raise him to the throne, he would be peculiarly attentive to their interests. In this manner, by the help of his mother's relations, he acquired the government, without either merit or capacity for such an important situation ; in a total disregard to the divine law ; (*Notes, Deut. 17:14, 15.*) and in direct opposition to the method which God the King of Israel had hitherto employed, of raising up rulers of his people, from time to time, as he saw good.

V. 4-6. The Israelites seem to have presented this money as an oblation to their new god ; (*Note, 8:33.*) and the men of Shechem borrowed it of him to supply their upstart king ! It does not appear of what value these pieces of silver were ; but probably of more value than shekels : and they sufficed for Abimelech's present purpose. Thus he became a pensioner of Baal, and seemed engaged to employ his authority to promote his worship ; as if determined to show himself as unlike as possible to his father, who had destroyed the altar and worship of Baal. (*Notes, 6:25-32.*)—With this supply he hired a set of unprincipled men to

and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, ^aHearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

8 ^aThe trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, ^bReign thou over us.

9 But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

10 And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, and reign over us.

11 But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us.

13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

14 Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us.

15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

16 Now therefore if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king; and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands:

17 (For my father fought for you, and adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian;

18 And ye have risen up against my father's

house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech the son of his maid-servant king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother.)

19 If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you:

20 But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

[Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,

23 Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech:

24 That the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.

25 And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech.

26 And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.

27 And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of

n Deut. 11:24, 27-12. J. 8:33. John 4:20. o Ps. 18:40, 41. 50:15-21. p 2 Kings 14:9. Ez. 17:3, 6c. Dan. 4:10, 18c. q 8:22, 23. r Ex. 29:27, 28:14. Lev. 24:1. 1 Kings 16:13-16. Ps. 89:20, 104:15. Acts 4:27, 10:38. 1 John 2:21. * Heb. up and d on for prov. 31:6. † Or, thistle. 2 Kings 14:9. u Is. 30:2. Dan. 4:12. Hos. 14:7. Matt. 13:32. x 20:49. Num. 21:28. Is. 1:31. Ez. 19:14. y 2 Kings 14:9. Ps. 104:16. Is. 2:13. 37:24. Ez. 31:3. z 8:35. a 2:20. 8:4-10. 1 Heb. cast. Esch. 4:16. Rom. 5:9. 16:4. Rev. 12:11. b 5:6. Ps. 109:4. c 6:14.

8:31. d Is. 8:6. Phil. 3:3. Jam. 4:16. e 15:23, 56, 57. 7:22. 2 Chr. 20:22, 23. Ps. 21:9, 10, 28:4. 52:1-5. 120:3, 4. 140:10. f Num. 21:16. Josh. 19:8. 2 Sam. 20:14. g 15:20. 1 Sam. 16:14-16. 18:9, 10. 1 Kings 12:15, 22, 22. 2 Chr. 10:15, 18:19-22. Is. 19:2, 14. 2 Thes. 2:11, 12. h 16. Is. 38:1. Matt. 7:2. i 1 Sam. 15:33. 1 Kings 2:32. Esch. 9:35. Ps. 7:16. Matt. 23:34-36. j Heb. strengthened his hands to kill. k Josh. 8:4, 12, 13. Prov. 1:11, 12. l Gen. 13:8, 15:7. i Or, songs. Is. 16:9, 10. 24:7-9. Jer. 25:30. Am. 6:3-6. m 4. 16:23. Ez. 32:5, 19. Dan. 5:1-4, 22.

for any villany; and with their assistance barbarously murdered all the numerous family of Gideon, except one son who escaped him! By such infamous measures and persons was this base born, but baser spirited man made king in Israel! being the first who expressly bore that title among the descendants of Jacob. (Notes, 2 Sam. 15:1-11. 16:20-23. 2 Chr. 21:12-19.)—House of Millo. (6) Notes, 16-20. 2 Sam. 5:9. 2 Kings 15:21.

V. 7. Mount Gerizim lay near to Shechem: and from it Jotham spake to the Shechemites, (who are supposed to have been assembled on some public occasion,) so that at least many of them would hear him, and report what he said to the rest. (Notes, Deut. 27:12, 13.) He solemnly called on them "to hearken to him, that God might hearken unto them:" for if they did not repent of their ungrateful treatment of his father's family, and desist from their malicious intentions against him, they could not expect that God would hear their cry, when anguish and distress came upon them. (Notes, Prov. 1:24-31. 21:13. Is. 1:10-15. 58:8-12. Mic. 3:1-4.)

V. 8-15. A parable, or fable, is a descriptive picture, which shows the similitude of an event, or action in lively colours; and conveys to the mind the perception of some important truth to which it was previously inattentive, or against which it was prejudiced. By this management those things are placed in a proper light, which before were misapprehended, and those made evident which before seemed doubtful; the subject is stripped of such circumstances as do not properly belong to it; the trouble of a long chain of arguments being spared, the cause is brought to a compendious decision; reason and conscience are induced to pass sentence, before self-love is consulted; and a man is for a moment, as it were, imposed on, in order to his being profitably undeceived; he is made judge in his own cause before he is aware, and decides against himself without ever intending it. (Note, 2 Sam. 12:1-6.) The truth of a parable lies in the instruction contained in it: and the feigned circumstances, being known to be such are no ways inconsistent with veracity, but greatly subserve the cause of truth; conveying it in an unsuspected and agreeable manner to the mind. Parables or fables have therefore been much used by wise men in all ages, as the most advantageous method of teaching mankind the salutary lessons of justice and prudence; and they were abundantly sanctioned by our Lord's own example.—In this parable of Jotham, the disinterested and unambitious conduct of Gideon and his other sons; the folly and ingratitude of the Shechemites, in making the basest of Gideon's

sons their king, and in murdering the rest; the presumption and arrogance of Abimelech in aspiring to such an honour; and the consequences of so unreasonable a procedure; are represented with great ingenuity and simplicity. The olive-tree, the fig-tree, and the vine, had excellency and usefulness, if the trees had indeed wanted a king: thus Gideon and his other sons were worthy of Israel's suffrage, if there had been any occasion to set a king over them; yet they had humbly and wisely declined the offer. But Abimelech, the son of a slave and a concubine, (18) a mean and worthless person, useless and troublesome as a bramble, had by insinuation induced them to offer him the kingdom, and had without hesitation accepted it. He had also foolishly promised them vast advantages from his protection, and terrible consequences from offending him: though indeed he was fit for nothing but to be a firebrand, to set them all at variance to their common destruction; as the bramble, being set on fire, may communicate the flame to the loftiest cedars, and consume them along with itself in one common conflagration.—The oil, from the olive-tree, was the chief ingredient in the ointment, with which the priests were anointed; it was used for the lamps in the sanctuary; and it formed a part of the meat-offering by which God was honoured. (Marg. Refr.) The wine was used in drink-offerings, which were acceptable to God, when properly presented. These trees better represented what a king ought to be, than the stately cedars; for piety to God and usefulness to man, are more essential to the character of a good prince, than external pomp and majesty.—It is observable that long before Israel had a king by the appointment of God, anointing is spoken of as a customary ceremony of inauguration.—This is the most ancient fable or parable extant; and it is very apposite and beautiful.

V. 16-20. (Notes, 1-6. 7: 8:)—Millo, (that is, fulness,) seems to have been the name of the senate-house, or town-hall: and by the house of Millo are meant all the chief persons of Shechem, who had combined to make Abimelech king; (6) and they were also intended by the cedars which the fire from the bramble would devour. (15) (Note, 50-57.)

V. 22-24. Abimelech was first made king over the men of Shechem; but he seems to have been tamely submitted to by the Israelites in general: at least they allowed him to retain that title, till it pleased God to permit an evil spirit to sow contention between him and the Shechemites, by stirring up the malignant passions of their hearts, that they might execute his vengeance on each other. (Notes, 1 Sam. 1:14. 18:10, 11. 1 Kings 22:19-23. 2 Thes. 2:9-12.)

V. 25. The Shechemites, being enraged against Abime-

their god, and ²⁸did eat and drink, and ²⁹cursed Abimelech.

28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, ²⁹Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem that we should serve him? Is not ³⁰he the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? Serve the men of ³¹Hamor the father of Shechem: for why should we serve him?

29 And ³²would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, ³³Increase thine army, and come out.

30 ¶ And when Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was ³¹kindled.

31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech ³²privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed, and his brethren, be come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee.

32 Now therefore up ³³by night, thou and the people that ³⁴is with thee, and lie in wait in the field:

33 And it shall be, ³⁵that in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city; and, behold, ³⁶when he and the people that ³⁷is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them ³⁸as thou shalt find occasion.

34 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that ³⁵were with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.

35 And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and ³⁶the people that ³⁷were with him, from lying in wait.

36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou ³⁷seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.

37 And Gaal spake again, and said, See, there come people down from the ³⁸middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of ³⁹Meonenim.

38 Then said Zebul unto him, ³⁹Where is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? Is not this the people that thou hast despised? go out, I pray now, and fight with them.

39 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

n Is. 22:12-14. Luke 12:19,20. 17:26-29. o Lev. 24:11. 1 Sam. 17:49. Ps. 109:17. p 1 Sam. 25:10. 2 Sam. 20:1. 1 Kings 12:16. q Gen. 34:2,6. r 2 Sam. 15:4. 1 Kings 20:11. Ps. 10:3. Rom. 1:30,31. s 2 Sam. 2:14-17. 2 Kings 14:8,19,23. Is. 36:8,9. * Or, Aut. † Heb. craftily, or, to Tormel. ‡ Job 24:14-17. Ps. 36:4 Prov. 1:11-16. 4:16. Rom. 3:15. § Heb. as thine hand shall find. Lev. 25:25. marg. 1 Sam. 10:7. 25:8. Ec. 9:10. u 44. x Ez.

lech, who was absent from the city and expected back again, employed assassins to meet and kill him; and they, while waiting for him, robbed the travellers, and thus helped to increase the misery of the people. (Notes, 5:6,7.)

V. 26-29. "Ebed" signifies a slave. Gaal's father seems to have been a slave sprung from the race of the Canaanites; who falsely boasted his descent from Hamor, the father of Shechem, after whom the city was called: (Gen. 34:2,4,8, 26.) yet the inhabitants basely made Gaal the head of their conspiracy against Abimelech! Under this self-confident protector, they ventured out into the field to gather in their harvest and vintage; and then kept a feast to the honour of Baal-berith, and in their revellings cursed Abimelech in his name; (Notes, Ez. 32:1. Hos. 2:8,9.) thus cleaving to the idol, while they rejected the usurper!—On this occasion Gaal, heated perhaps with wine, strongly expressed his disdain that Abimelech should reign over him, or the ancient city of Shechem. He reviled him as the son of Jerubbaal, who had destroyed the worship of Baal; and so it could not be right that Baal's worshippers should submit to him. (Notes, 6:25-32. Num. 22:6. 1 Sam. 17:42-44.) He also spoke contemptuously of Zebul, who had been left governor of the city. He invited them to restore the authority, in his person, to the descendants of Hamor; promised what great things he would do against Abimelech; and challenged him, as if present, to decide the contest by a battle.—(Marg. Ref. r, s.) The expression translated would to God, is only an earnest wish that it might be so.

V. 30-33. It is probable that Zebul was not present, when Gaal delivered his vain-glorious speech; but he heard of it; and being exasperated by his insulting language, he sent to inform Abimelech of his danger, and counselled him to come without delay and surprise his enemies.

40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him; and many were overthrown and wounded, ⁴¹even unto the entering of the gate.

41 And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and ⁴²Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.

42 And it came to pass on the morrow, ⁴³that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech.

43 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and behold, the people ⁴⁴were come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them.

44 And Abimelech, and the company that ⁴⁵was with him, rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city; and the two other companies ran upon all the people that ⁴⁶were in the fields, and slew them.

45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day: and he took the city, and slew the people that ⁴⁷was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

46 ¶ And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard ⁴⁸that, they entered into ⁴⁹an hold of the house of the god Berith.

47 And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

48 And Abimelech gat him up to mount ⁴⁹Zalmon, he and all the people that ⁵⁰were with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that ⁵¹were with him, ⁵²What ye have seen ⁵³me do, make haste, and do as I have done.

49 And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and ⁵⁰put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them: so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 ¶ Then went Abimelech to Thebez and encamped against Thebez, and took it.

51 But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut ⁵²it to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower.

52 And ⁵³Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

7:7. Mark 8:24. § Heb. navel. ¶ Or, the regarders of the times. Deut. 18:14. y 28,29. 2 Sam. 2:26,27. 2 Kings 14:8-14. Jer. 2:23. z 1 Kings 20:18-21,30. a 28,30. b 15:20. Gal. 5:15. c Deut. 29:23. 1 Kings 12:25. Ps. 107:34. marg. Ec. 4:7,11. Zeph. 2:9. Jer. 2:13. d 4:27. 8:33. 1 Kings 13:26. 2 Kings 13:24-4. Ps. 115:8. Is. 28:15-18. 37:38. e Ps. 68:14. f 17:13. Prov. 1:11,12. † Heb. I have done. g 15:20. Gal. 5:15. Jam. 3:16. h 48,49. 2 Kings 14:10. 15:16.

V. 36. *Thou seest, &c.* Zebul, who had not yet declared against Gaal, spake this either in derision, or to carry on the deception till Abimelech should surprise his party unawares.

V. 38-45. (Notes, 2 Kings 14:8-14.) As Gaal's conduct and success had not answered the people's expectations, they seem to have been willing to be rid of him and his company; and on the morrow they went forth, either to fight with Abimelech, or (supposing him to have retired,) about their business in the fields; but he, being instigated by revenge, by means of ambushments smote them, seized the city, and slew the inhabitants; and having reduced the place to ruins, he sowed it with salt, as expressing his hope that the desolations would be perpetual. (Marg. Ref. c.)—We are not informed what became of Zebul.

V. 46-49. The inhabitants of a place not connected with the city, called the tower of Shechem, took refuge in the temple of Baal-berith, hoping that Abimelech would respect the sacredness of the place: but, in deep revenge, he contrived to burn the temple and the whole company of them together. (Notes, 2 Kings 19:36,37. Gal. 5:13-15.)

V. 50-57. Thebez is supposed to have been a city, which confederated against Abimelech, and to which perhaps some Shechemites had fled: but this bloodthirsty tyrant, having taken the city, purposed to burn the inhabitants with the tower, as he had done at Shechem! Thus he exactly answered the character of the bramble, which may set fire to that which is nobler and better than itself. (Note, 8-15.) But his measure of iniquity was accomplished: he had been the executioner of the divine vengeance upon others, and he must now himself endure it. (Is. 10:12. Note, Jer. 25:12.) In his rage therefore coming too near the tower, he was mortally wounded by a piece of a millstone from the hand of a woman: and understanding this circumstance, in a vain

53 And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull.

54 Then he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, 'Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.

55 And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

56 ¶ Thus "God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren :

57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

115:20, 2 Sam. 20:31, Job 31:3, Jer. 49:20, 50:45. k 1 Sam. 21:4, 5. l 2 Sam. 18:16, 20:21, 22. 1 Kings 22:35, 36. Prov. 22:10. m 24. Pa. 9:12, 11:6. 59:10, 11. 94:23. Prov. 5:22. Acts 28:4. Rev. 19:20, 21. n 20. Josh. 6:26. 1 Kings 16:34.

attempt to avoid the disgrace of such a death, he ordered his armour-bearer to slay him; who obeyed his command. (Notes, 1 Sam. 31:3—6. 2 Sam. 11:21.) Thus the world and Israel were rid of a vile murderer, usurper, and tyrant, who came in with subtlety, ruled in cruelty, and died in infamy. In the midst of these bloody transactions, the justice of God, in punishing both Abimelech and the Shechemites, is noticed by the sacred writer; in which the application made by Jotham of his parable, was most wonderfully verified.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21. If parents could foresee their children's sufferings, their joy in them would be often turned into lamentations: we may therefore be thankful that we cannot penetrate futurity; and are reminded to commit those whom we most love into the hands of the Lord, and to attend to our present duty, casting our care upon him respecting ourselves and them. We should also be willing to leave this world when he pleases; for if we should live, we may behold such afflictions as would greatly distress our hearts. Above all, we ought to fear sin, and watch against it; for our misconduct may very probably produce the most fatal effects on our families and on society, even after we are laid in the grave.—No divine judgment is more terrible to individuals, than being given up to their own lusts; (Note, Rom. 1:24—27.) and none more dreadful to communities, than to be governed by wicked princes.—Able, upright men, who know the duties and difficulties of exalted stations, are diffident of themselves, and reluctant to quit the security, sweetness, and usefulness of private life, for the toils and dangers of pre-eminence. But men of sordid and selfish minds, destitute of the fear of God and benevolence to man, are often capable of an aspiring and daring ambition, and can form crafty projects to accomplish their designs. By insinuation they draw over such persons to their interests, as are of their own temper and character; and as they do not hesitate at the commission of the most horrid crimes, they will often for a season seem to prosper in their wickedness. Slanders, flatteries, bribery, perjuries, and even murders of the most atrocious kind, are the weapons which they use, as occasion requires, and as ambition or suspicion suggests. Their nearest relatives are not safe, if they stand in their way; the foundations of all government, civil and ecclesiastical, must be subverted for them, and distractions and public troubles are the element in which they delight. Such Abimelechs every age produces; and it is surprising how they impose upon thousands to concur in their base designs. (Notes, and P. O. 2 Sam. 15:1—12. Notes, 16:20—23. 17:1—14.)—But, when men are avowed infidels, profligates, and debauchees, what can be expected from them, if unrestrained by human laws? Indeed their wickedness is equalled by the folly of those who trust power into their hands. Yet, by such scourges of the human race, and such infatuated counsels, the righteous God chastises his offending people, and executes vengeance on his enemies: and he will preserve, in the most imminent dangers, those whom he intends to employ for the good of others. He seldom proceeds to extremities against wicked men, without giving them warning: and those who will not hearken to his call to repent, to the voice of the oppressed who demand justice, or to that of the afflicted who implore relief, will one day cry unto the Lord in extreme anguish, and he will not regard them.—All the works of the creation, in their several ways, honour their Creator, and subserve the comfort and benefit of man, who is the more inexcusable in neglecting and rebelling against his bounteous Benefactor.—In departing from God, men are necessitated to trust in creatures, which can only disappoint and ruin them: and one man of moderate talents may soon do more mischief, than many very wise and excellent persons can do good, by the most persevering exertions. (Notes, 1 Kings 12:1—15. Ec. 2:18—23. 9:13—18.)

V. 22—57. The wicked may flourish for a time, but they shall be rooted out at the last: in answer to the cries of the oppressed, God will give them up to their own mad passions; then suspicion, envy, and revenge will be kindled in them against each other; and the weapons with which they destroyed those who obstructed their iniquitous designs, will at

CHAPTER X.

Tola judges Israel, 1, 2; and Jair, whose thirty sons had thirty cities, 3—5. The Levites, rejecting idolatry, are oppressed by the Philistines and Ammonites, 6—9. They cry to God, who sends them for help to their idols, 10—14. They deeply repent, and he pities them, 15, 16. They consult about choosing a leader, 17, 18.

AND after Abimelech, there arose to defend Israel, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim.

2 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3 ¶ And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

4 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass-colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

a 2:16. 3:9. * Or, deliver. Heb. save. b Josh. 15:48. c Gen. 31:48. Num. 32:29. d 5:10. 12:14. e Num. 32:41. Deut. 3:14. † Or, the villages of Jair.

length destroy themselves.—The history of mankind, if stripped of the false colourings with which historians, orators, and poets, have often exhibited the most detestable actions, and if impartially given by a pious writer, would appear very like this chapter. Here, as in a glass, we may see what man is, when left to himself and instigated by Satan; and what we should have been, had that been our case. Hence we may learn thankfulness for being preserved from such enormities; for an obscure situation, by which we are less exposed to the danger of falling victims to the ambition and jealousy of others; and for the gospel of Jesus Christ, whose "kingdom is in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."—But it is most lamentable, when such outrages are committed by professed Christians, and disgrace the religion of Jesus in the eyes of multitudes, who cannot, or will not, distinguish between Christianity, and those who have no more than the name of it. "We be to the world because of offences: and we be to those, by whom such offences come!" (Note, Matt. 18:7—9.)—We may further note, that boasting generally terminates in disgrace; that dangers despised at a distance, terrify the more when they approach; that the courage which wine inspires is of short continuance; that a mean spirit and a proud heart harbour the most implacable revenge, whilst the truly generous and humble are slow to anger and ready to forgive; that every sinful refuge accelerates or ensures destruction; that more ingenuity and diligence have hitherto been employed in destroying than in saving men's lives; that daring crimes are often punished in kind, and the cruelty of murderers is retorted upon themselves by the meanest and least dreaded instruments; and that the most successful wickedness speedily ends in lasting misery and infamy.—Vain and foolish is the concern, and worthless are the expedients, of dying sinners to preserve their reputation, when everlasting contempt is inevitably reserved for them in a future state! God will likewise record their crimes and punishments in this world, notwithstanding all their endeavours to the contrary: as far as it is necessary for the instruction of others, and for his own glory: and how can those expect fidelity or mercy from men, who have been traitors to God, and cruel deceivers of their brethren?—But, how strong must be man's propensity to wickedness, when such general and horrible idolatry and unrighteousness prevailed even in Israel, after all the Lord had done for them, and notwithstanding all the advantages which they enjoyed! LORD, thou hast given us thy word of truth and righteousness: oh, pour out upon us thy Spirit of purity, peace, and love, and write thy holy law in our hearts, we beseech thee! else all our outward mercies will but enhance our guilt and increase our condemnation.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. After the death of the usurper, the Lord raised up Tola to judge Israel. We do not find that he waged any war; but he restored peace and the regular administration of justice, after the late distractions, and he reformed the state of religion: and thus he was as great a blessing, as those judges who performed more memorable exploits. His name signifies *g worm*; and he was no worse fitted for being the Lord's instrument of good to his people, if his opinion of himself accorded to so humble a name. Though of the tribe of Issachar, he came to live in mount Ephraim, probably that he might be in the centre of Israel, and near the tabernacle. (Notes, Josh. 18:1, 19:49, 50.)

V. 3—5. *Jair*. The next judge, *Jair*, probably was a descendant of *Jair*, the great-grandson of *Manasseh* the son of *Manasseh*. (Notes, Num. 32:41. 1 Chr. 2:22.) His numerous sons inherited some of the cities, which had fallen to the lot of their ancestors, and assisted their father as magistrates, riding from place to place to administer justice.—Some of these years, of which scarcely any thing is recorded, may be considered as the best times of Israel under the judges. We must, however, take some of the eighteen years of Israel's apostasy from the latter part of *Jair*'s government, (8) during which the people seem gradually to have corrupted themselves, and fallen under oppression; and when *Jair* could no longer restrain them from idolatry, he was not able to defend them from their enemies.

5 And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

6 ¶ And the children of Israel ^{did} evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served ^{baalim} and Ashteroth, and the gods of Syria, and ^{the} gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and ^{the} gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.

7 And the anger of the LORD ^{was} hot against Israel, and ^{he} sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

8 And ^{that} year they vexed and ^{oppressed} the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that ^{were} on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which ^{is} in Gilead.

9 Moreover, the children of Ammon ^{passed over} Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore ^{distressed}.

10 ¶ And the children of Israel ^{peried} unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

11 And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, ^{Did not I deliver you from} the Egyptians, and from ^{the} Amorites, from ^{the} children of Ammon, and from ^{the} Philistines?

12 ^{The} Zidonians also, and ^{the} Amalekites, and ^{the} Moabites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

13 ^{Yet} ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.

14 Go and ^{cry} unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

15 And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, ^{We have sinned}: ^{do thou} unto us what soever ^{seemeth} good unto thee; ^{deliver us} only, we pray thee, this day.

16 And ^{they} put away the ^{strange} gods from among them, and served the LORD: and ^{this} soul was ^{grieved} for the misery of Israel.

17 Then the children of Ammon were ^{gathered} together, and encamped in Gilead: and the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in ^{Mizpeh}.

18 And the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, ^{What man is he} that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? ^{he shall} be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

CHAPTER XI.

Jephthah, the base born son of Gilead, thrust out by his brethren, is chosen commander against the Ammonites, 1-11. He sends an embassy to their king, but in vain, 12-28. His rash vow, 29-31. He conquers the Ammonites, 32, 33. He is met by his only daughter, and is deeply distressed: she piously submits, and he performs his vow, 34-40.

NOW ^{Jephthah} the Gileadite ^{was} ^a mighty man of valour, and ^{he was} the son of ^a harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah.

2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons: and his

f 4:1, 6:1, 13:1. g 2:11-13, 3:7. 2 Chr. 28:23. Ps. 106:36. h 1 Kings 11:5, 7, 13, 16:31. 2 Kings 17:16, 28-31, 23:13. i 16:23. 1 Sam. 5:2. 2 Kings 1:2, 3. Jer. 2:13. Jer. 16:25, 26. k 2:14. Deut. 29:28. 3:16-18. 32:16-22. Josh. 23:15, 16. Ps. 141. Nah. 1:2, 6. 1:4, 2. 1 Sam. 12:9. Ps. 14:12. Is. 50:1. m 5. Is. 30:13. 1 Thes. 5:3. n Heb. crushed. o 3:12, 13. 5:3-5. 2 Chr. 14:9. 20:1, 2. c Deut. 28:65. 2 Chr. 15:5. p 3:9. 1 Sam. 12:10. Ps. 105:43, 44. 107:13, 19, 28. q 2:1-3. r Ex. 14:30. 1 Sam. 12:8. Neh. 9:9-11. Ps. 78:51-53. 105:8-11. Heb. 11:29. Num. 21:21-25, 35. Ps. 135:10, 11. 13:11-15. u 3:31. x 5:19, &c. y 6:3. z 2 Chr. 28:6, 7. a 2:12. Deut. 32:15. 1 Chr. 23:9. Jer. 2:13. Jon. 2:8. b Deut. 32:25-28. 1 Kings 13:27, 28. 2 Kings 3:13. Prov. 1:25-27. Is. 19:

Ass-colls. (4.) Note, 5:10—Horses are not once mentioned in this part of the history.

V. 6-9. (Notes, 2:11-14.) The Israelites, having cast off the worship of JEHOVAH, and multiplied their idols beyond the example of their ancestors, were delivered into the hands of the Philistines on the west, and of the Ammonites on the east; who between them crushed the people for a long time, but most terribly towards the close of eighteen years; for then the Ammonites invaded the country west of Jordan, and greatly distressed the inhabitants.

That year. (8.) 'The Ammonites vexed them in the east, ... while the Philistines vexed them in the west. ... Their invasion began in the same year, but did not end at the same time: for the Ammonites domineered over them only eighteen years; but the Philistines forty.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 13:1.)

V. 11, 12. Probably the Zidonians aided Jabin, king of Canaan. (Notes, 4:)—The Moabites might be a tribe of Arabians, which assisted Moab. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 13, 14. This is spoken after the manner of men; and shows most emphatically the deserving of Israel, the demands of divine justice, and the dreadful consequences of impotence: but threatenings always imply a reserve of mercy for the penitent. (Notes, Jer. 2:26-30. 18:7-10.)

V. 15, 16. The foregoing message was sent by a prophet, or was delivered by the high-priest, when the congregation were assembled before the Lord; but the people with one consent submitted themselves to the justice of God; (Note, Rom. 10:1-4.) yet hoping in his mercy, they left themselves in his hands, craved deliverance from their enemies, and were earnest and decided in reformation. This return to the worship of God seems to have been permanent: for we do not find that the people relapsed into idolatry under the subsequent judges. And compassion as effectually moved the Lord to relieve them, as a man is urged to assist a wretched fellow-creature, when he cannot otherwise help sharing his distress; or as a father is disposed to assist his suffering child. (Marg. Ref. g. Note, Jer. 31:18-20.)

V. 17, 18. Some think, that the penitent Israelites recovering their courage, the Ammonites had retired beyond Jordan to Gilead: but it is more probable that they were collected in this place, in order to a new invasion of the country west of Jordan. The inhabitants, however, of the country east of Jordan convened at Mizpeh, with a determination to oppose them.—God did not, as usual, expressly appoint them a deliverer: but he secretly directed, and openly confirmed, their choice of one for themselves.—Some indeed think that they consulted the Lord, and that he pointed out Jephthah. (1 Sam. 12:11. Notes, 11:1-11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The removal of hardened sinners, by a righteous God, often takes way for reformation and public tranquillity, and gives

3. Jer. 2:25. c 2 Sam. 12:13. 21:10. 1 Jo. 3:3, 27. Prov. 2:12, 1, 3, 9, 11, 18-10. 31:38. 9:26. 1 Sam. 3:13. 2 Sam. 10:10, 15:26. 7:2, 3, 7. d Heb. is good. e 2 Sam. 24:14. Job 34:31, 32. f 2 Chr. 7:11. 15:8, 33:15. Jer. 1:7, 8. Ps. 1:30-32. Hos. 14:1-3, 8. h Heb. gods of strangers. i Gen. 6:5. Ps. 105:11, 15. Is. 63:9. Jer. 31:20. Hos. 11:8. Luke 15:20. 19:41. John 11:24. 1 Jo. 1:32. Heb. 3:10, 4:15. Heb. shewn. j Heb. cried together. k 11:1. 12:2. 1 Sam. 31:49. 1:11. 11:5-8. Is. 34:1-8. 34:12. k 11:1. 1:7. 1 Sam. 17:25. a Heb. 11:32. Jephthah. b 6:12. 2 Kings 5:1. c Heb. a wife, 39, a harlot.

a great mercy to those who survive.—Man's carnal heart is prone to prefer the bondage of sin and Satan to the service of God; but present indulgence will certainly produce future misery; for every expectation and advantage from sin, the world, and the friendship of wicked men, must ensure a distressing disappointment. God is able to multiply men's punishments, according to the number of their iniquities and idols (Note, Lev. 26:24.) but there is hope, when, under temporal afflictions, sinners cry unto the Lord for help, and lament their ungodliness, as well as more scandalous transgressions. Yet the Lord might justly leave those who have forsaken him to their wretched choice; he might upbraid them with former mercies and their base returns; he might send them to their beloved idols and lusts; he might mock at their calamity, and absolutely refuse to help them. (Notes, 2 Kings 3:13, 14. Prov. 1:24-31.) This will be the dreadful condition of the wicked in another world; but here mercy can never be sought in vain: yet, for the deeper humiliation of those who are but superficially convinced, and to quicken those who are not duly in earnest; the Lord often seems to "shut up his loving-kindness in his displeasure," he upbraideth them with their sins, pursues them with his awful threatenings, and almost brings them to conclude that their case is hopeless. He will, however, keep them from desperation; and when their prayers are rendered more fervent, their confessions more ingenuous and humiliating, their self-examination more diligent, their submission to his justice and dependence on his mercy more entire, and their forsaking of sin more unreserved; it may be certainly concluded, that comfort and deliverance are at hand. Let then the trembling sinner, and the almost despairing backslider, cease from inquiring about God's secret purposes, or thinking to extract hope from former experiences: let them not sink into dependency, or yield to heartless indolence: let them cast themselves upon the mercy of God our Saviour; patiently submit to his severest chastisement; humble themselves more and more under his hand; seek deliverance on any terms from the dominion of sin, and from the powers of darkness; separate themselves as much as possible from all occasions of transgression; use all the means of grace diligently, and wait the Lord's time; and they shall certainly at length rejoice in his mercy. Finally, let all those "who think they stand, take heed lest they fall;" and may the Lord help us to "cleave to him with purpose of heart."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Jephthah seems evidently to have been the son of "a harlot" not of a concubine, or of a secondary wife; or of "a strange woman," either of an alien of bad character, or an Israelitess whose infamous conduct procured her that title. (Note, Prov. 21:6.) So that his birth seemed, according to the law, to exclude him "from the congregation of the LORD." (Note, Deut. 23:2.)—Gilead, the father of Jephthah, was probably a descendant of Gilead, the grandson of Manasseh.—Jephthah had no right to share with

wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son of a strange woman.

3 Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob; and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

4 And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel.

5 And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:

6 And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon:

7 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?

8 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

9 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head?

10 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be twixt between us, if we do not so according to thy words.

11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh.

12 ¶ And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?

13 And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, Be-

cause Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands again peaceably.

14 ¶ And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon,

15 And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon:

16 But when Israel came up from Egypt, and came through the wilderness unto the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh;

17 Then Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of Edom would not hearken thereto. And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab; but he would not consent: and Israel abode in Kadesh.

18 Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of Moab.

19 And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place.

20 But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel.

21 And the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon, and all his people, into the hand of Israel, and they smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country.

22 And they possessed all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan.

23 So now the Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldst thou possess it?

24 Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh

e Gen. 21:10. Deut. 32:2. d Prov. 2:16. 5:3,20. 6:24—25. * Heb. the face of his brethren. e 2 Sam. 10:6. f 9:4. 1 Sam. 22:2. 27:2. 30:22—24. Job 30:1—10. Acts 17:5. 1 Heb. after days. 10:8. g 10:9,17,18. h 1 Sam. 10:27. 11:6,7. 12. Ps. 118:22. Acts 7:35—39. 1 Cor. 1:27—29. 1 Gen. 26:27. 37:37. 45:4,5. Prov. 17:17. Is. 50:14. Acts 7:9—14. Rev. 3:9. k Ex. 8:26. 9:28. 10:17. 1 Kings 13:8. Luke 17:34. 110:18. m Num. 32:20—29. n Gen. 21:23. 31:50. 1 Sam. 12:5. Jer. 39:23. 42:5. Rom. 1:9. 2 Cor. 11:31. * Heb. the hearr. Gen. 16:5. 31:53. Deut. 1:16. 1 Sam. 24:12. o Ex. 20:7. Zech. 5:4. Mal. 3:5. j s. q 1 Sam. 23:9—12. 1 Kings 3:7—9. 2 Cor. 3:5. Jam. 1:5,17. 10:1. 1 Sam. 10:17. 11:5. e Num. 20:14. 21:21. Deut. 2:26. 20:10,11. Prov. 25:8,9.

Mat. 18:15,16. t 2 Kings 14:8—12. u Num. 21:24—26. Prov. 19:5,9. x Gen. 32:22. Deut. 2:37. 3:16. y Ps. 120:7. Rom. 12:18. Heb. 12:14. 1 Pet. 3:11 z Num. 21:13—15,27—30. Deut. 2:5,19. 2 Chr. 20:10. Acts 24:12,13. a Num. 14:25. Deut. 1:40. Josh. 5:6. b Gen. 14:7. Num. 13:26. 20:1. Deut. 1:46. c Num. 20:14—21. Deut. 2:4—8,29. d Deut. 2:9. e Num. 20:1,16. f Num. 20:22. 21:10—13. 33:37—41. Deut. 2:1—8. g Num. 21:4. h Num. 21:13. 22:36. i Num. 21:21—35. Deut. 2:27—34. 8:1—17. Josh. 13:8—12. k Neh. 9:22. l. 135:10—12. 136:17—21. 1 Josh. 13:15—32. m Num. 21:23. 1 Kings 11:7. Jer. 48:7,46.

his brethren in the inheritance; but he had not deserved to be turned out destitute, as if he had been a vagabond or a malefactor.

V. 3. A number of men of broken fortunes and unsettled dispositions joined themselves to Jephthah. It does not appear, however, that they attempted any depredations, or violence against their own countrymen, but rather that they made reprisals on those nations which oppressed them. In this course of life they learned hardness, boldness, and military skill; and thus Jephthah acquired that reputation which made way for his advancement, as commander in the war against Ammon.—It is not improbable, that he also reformed his followers, and gave them some instructions in religion, as David, in similar circumstances, evidently did in respect of his adherents. (Notes, 1 Sam. 22:1, 2. 24:4—7. 25:7,8. 30:22—25.)

V. 4—6. Jephthah, at the head of his company, had probably been this begun to fight against the Ammonites, by incursions and reprisals: and the elders of Gilead knowing him to be a man of approved courage and conduct, sent to offer him the chief command of their army. Perhaps they forgot the law before mentioned; or they supposed that in this emergency it might be dispensed with. Some indeed think, that they were directed by a divine admonition to send for him; at least the Lord confirmed their choice; perhaps in order that those who had rendered themselves vile by sin, might be rescued from their enemies by one who lay under a disgraceful stigma; and that he might be humbled by recollecting, that he was marked in the divine law with the same brand as the Ammonites whom he conquered. (Notes, Deut. 23:2—5.)

V. 7, 8. Either these elders of Gilead were Jephthah's brethren: or they had concurred with them in driving him away, instead of defending him from their injustice: for he ascribed the ill-usage which he had met with to their hatred; and they did not deny the charge, though urged as a reason why they ought not to apply to him in their distress. As he was of an enterprising spirit, they had perhaps suspected him of ambitious designs, like those of Abimelech. (9.) They now, however, felt their need of his talents; and pleaded that

they desired to appoint him their captain, that they might make him amends for their former injustice. (Note, 10:17,18.)

V. 9—11. Jephthah had no great reason to confide in the elders of Gilead; and, as he supposed that if the Lord gave him the victory over Ammon, this would entitle him to the authority of judge over the tribes east of Jordan; he required the elders to engage by a solemn oath, that they would submit to him, before he would accompany them to Mizpeh. And when he came thither, being about to enter on this important service, he "uttered all his words," or laid all his transactions, "before the Lord," seeking his direction, assistance, and blessing very particularly in fervent prayer, as one who would go forth in faith, and expected all his success from God. (Note, Heb. 11:32—34.)—Some think, that the high-priest, with the sacred breastplate was come on this occasion to Mizpeh; and that Jephthah inquired of him.—Mizpeh here mentioned was east of Jordan, and was called Mizpeh of Gilead, (29) in contradistinction from another place of the same name, which lay west of Jordan. (Josh. 15:38.) There was also another city, if not two, called Mizpeh, which were of less note.

V. 12—23. Jephthah, now constituted ruler in Israel, sent to treat of peace with the Ammonites before he declared war against them. This accorded to the law of Moses, and was done perhaps by divine direction. (Notes, Deut. 20:10—18.) The whole of these messages show that Jephthah had well studied the historical part of the books of Moses. His arguments likewise were very clear, and his demands reasonable; for he only required, that the Ammonites should cease to harass a people, who neither had injured them, nor intended to do so. (Notes, Num. 20:14—21. 21:21—35. Deut. 2:3—11.)—It is also evident that the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy were then extant in their present form.—Some of the country, at that time possessed by Israel, had once belonged to Ammon: but the Amorites had taken it from them; afterwards the Israelites had wrested it from the Amorites; and God, who gave the victory, expressly assigned to them the country of the vanquished for their inheritance.

38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

39 And it came to pass, at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel,

40 That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

CHAPTER XII.

The Ephraimites quarrel with Jephthah, are smitten by the Gileadites, and slain in very great numbers at the passage of Jordan, 1-4. Jephthah dies, 7. Jozabab, who had thirty sons and thirty daughters, judges Israel, 8-10: and after him Elon, 11, 12: and then Aidon, who had forty sons and thirty grandsons, 13-15.

AND the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto

n 31. Lev. 27:38, 39, Deut. 12:31. Is. 66:3. o 1 Sam. 1:11, 28. 2:18. * Or, ordinance. † Heb. from year to year. ‡ Or, to talk with. p 1 Kings 9:25. * Heb. were called. n 8:1. 2 Sam. 19:41-43. Ps. 109:4. Ec. 4:4. John 10:32. b 14:15. 15:6. Prov. 27:3, 4. Jam. 3:16. 4:1, 2. c 11:12, &c. d 9:17. 1 Sam. 19:

Old Testament or the New, for any person to be thus devoted to the Lord by perpetual celibacy, or the least hint of the kind. On the contrary, marriage and having children were so honourable in all, that to die unmarried or childless was deemed disgraceful, as well as a misfortune; which seems to have occasioned the expressions above mentioned. (*Luke 1:25*.) So pious a person, supposing her death to be for the glory of God, and the benefit of Israel, would not bewail on that account: but, according to the sentiment of all Israelitish women, she must naturally lament that she died unmarried and childless, especially as her father had no other child, nor any prospect of posterity. Whereas, had she been shut up in perpetual solitude, as a single example of that kind in the whole Scripture, and contrary to the whole tenor of it, she would have needed to request two months to bewail her virginity, for she would have had all her remaining life to do it in.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-28. As the sins of parents so often occasion disgrace and hardship to their children, this should unite with higher motives to induce men to govern their passions according to the law of God.—Activity, capacity, prudence, and piety, will often render a man superior to the disadvantages of his birth; and the hardships of his youth prepare him for the services of future life.—We should not despise the meanest person; for we know not how soon we may have reason to supplicate his assistance. It is especially dangerous to injure the servants of God; and many who do so in prosperity, are glad to seek the benefit of their protection, counsel, and prayers, in seasons of terror and distress: (*Notes, Is. 60:10-14. Rev. 3:8, 9.*) and in all ages they, whom God has most honoured and employed, have previously been treated with contempt and injustice, even by those to whom they afterwards were most useful. None ought therefore to be discouraged or surprised by it: as they are only dealt with in the same manner as Joseph, Moses, Jephthah, and David; nay, in this especially, are made like to the Son of God, “who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself,” before he was “exalted to be a Prince and Saviour.” Indeed, the Lord is continually thus treated: men neglect his service, despise his authority, and rob him of his glory; and yet in their distress they apply unto him for deliverance. But, as he forgives the penitent sinner without upbraiding him, so ought his people to behave to their enemies. It should be noted, however, that the Saviour himself will save none who do not consent that he should “reign over them,” and his disciples, after his example, should seek to reform them, whose temporal distresses they relieve.—Those undertakings are likely to prosper, and those public situations to be well filled, respecting which the Lord is consulted and trusted in simple faith, prayer, and conscientious obedience.—They, who possess the greatest genuine courage, will be the most disposed for peace, and to concede and yield the most for the sake of it; and when rapacity and ambition, concealed under the mask of equity, (for though few men love justice, most would be thought to do so,) render such endeavours unavailing; having shown that we would, “if possible, live peaceably with all men,” we may safely leave the matter with the Lord; who, as Judge of all the earth, will award to those that delight in contention, public or private, a recompense meet for their turbulent dispositions and evil deeds.

V. 29-40. As far as we are acquainted with the word of God, we shall find a clear light shine upon our paths, discovering to us the safe and happy way: but, even when we act uprightly, if ignorant of the Scriptures, we shall fall into lamentable mistakes, to the dishonour of God, and the great discomfort of our souls. This should excite us to a diligent study of the whole word of God, that we may be “completed in the knowledge of his will,” and it should remind ministers to be exact, copious, and frequent, in discoursing

Jephthah, “Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thy house upon thee with fire.”

2 And Jephthah said unto them, “I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands.”

3 And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into my hand: “wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day to fight against me?”

4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim, among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites.

5. 28:21. Job 1:14. Ps. 119:109. Rom. 16:4. Rev. 12:11. e 11:27. 2 Chr. 13:12. (11:10. Num. 32:39, 40. Deut. 3:12-17. g 1 Sam. 23:10. Neh. 4:4. Ps. 78:18. Prov. 12:13. 15:1.

practical subjects; that those who are disposed to perform their duty, may not be left to sin through ignorance or mistake, as very many professors of evangelical truth continually do.—How checkered are the scenes of this mortal life! Sorrow throws upon the heels of mirth; and our choicest comforts, often through our own unwatchfulness, become the occasions of our severest trials: but we need the less wonder at this, when we observe how defective the best characters are, and how the best actions are often connected with such as are utterly unwarrantable.—A cheerful mind, disposed to be grateful to God, and to endure any thing for his honour and out of love to his people, with a ready submission to parental authority, are such beautiful blossoms in young persons, and promise such fruit in ripier years, that we must regret to see them blasted by premature death; and lament that those, who have so well performed the inferior duties, are not spared to be useful in the more important relations of the married state. But, though their death is a loss to society, they are themselves no losers: for the preparation for a useful life will render death also comfortable, in whatever way they may be called hence.—In lawful vows, when we have “opened our mouth unto the Lord, we may not go back;” and on that account we should be very considerate in making vows, that we may not involve ourselves or others in distress, perplexity, or temptation: but nothing can oblige us to that which is in itself unlawful. With this single exception, we cannot do too much to express our gratitude for mercies received, or part with too much for the glory of God. Though we cannot approve of the conduct of Jephthah, we may well admire and imitate his resolution and self-denial, and still more those of his daughter.—Let us not then forget the love of the Father in giving his Son, or of the Son in giving himself, a real and acceptable sacrifice for the sins of rebellious man. Bought with such a price, let us present our bodies and souls as a living sacrifice unto God; and look forward with heartfelt satisfaction to that country, where ignorance, error, sin, and sorrow shall be known no more; where the believer’s victory will be complete, his triumphs unalloyed and unsullied, and his hallelujahs uninterrupted and eternal.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1-7. Jephthah was a Manassite, and the Ephraimites had the same pretence of quarrelling with him, as their ancestors had for chiding with Gideon: (*Note, 11:1, 2*.) but their resentment vented itself in a more outrageous and abusive manner. We find nothing to blame in Jephthah’s answer; but it was not so conciliating as that of Gideon had been. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 8:1-3.*) The Ephraimites had, it seems, been sent to, and would not come to help their brethren, and their anger was therefore extremely unreasonable: but instead of being satisfied with Jephthah’s arguments, they proceeded to assault him: and they likewise irritated the Gileadites by abusive language; as if they had been the refuse of the descendants of Joseph, who had fled from justice, and settled beyond Jordan! (*Note, Josh. 22:21-29.*)—The Gileadites, however, took a most severe revenge on them: for getting possession of the fords of Jordan, they slew great numbers of them; having artfully devised to distinguish them by their provincial pronunciation of the Hebrew word Shibboleth, which generally signifies a river, or stream of waters: (6 *marg. reading and ref. on it*.) though sometimes also used for an ear of corn. (*Job 24:24.*) How far Jephthah concurred in this cruel revenge cannot be determined; but it was entirely unjustifiable, and exceedingly weakened the common cause of Israel. (*Notes, 2 Chr. 13:4-22. Prov. 17:14. Matt. 12:25, 26.*) Indeed it is wonderful that the political importance of Ephraim was not ruined by this massacre. (*Notes, Gen. 49:22-26. Deut. 33:17.*) After this transaction, Israel quietly submitted to Jephthah as their judge: but he lived only a short time, and probably had little concert in his advance ment.

5 And the G adites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, *Art thou an Ephraimite?* If he said Nay;

6 Then said they unto him, 'Say now 'Shibboleth; and he said, Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.

p. c.] 7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years, then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

8 ¶ And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel.

9 And he had thirty sons and thirty daughters, whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons: and he judged Israel seven years.

p. c.] 10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.

11 ¶ And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel: and he judged Israel ten years.

12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon, in the country of Zebulun.

13 ¶ And after him, Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.

14 And he had forty sons, and thirty nephews, **p. c.]** that rode on threescore and ten ass-colts: and he judged Israel eight years.

15 And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite

died, and was buried in Pirathon, in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites.

CHAPTER XIII.

Israel offends G-d, and is reduced to serve the Philistines forty years. 1. An Angel appears to Manoah's wife, and promises her a son, who should be a perpetual Nazirite, 2-5. She informs her husband; who prays that the Angel may again appear to instruct them, 6-8. The Angel appears, and by his conduct, especially by ascending in the flame of Manoah's sacrifice, discovers who he is, 9-20. Manoah is greatly alarmed, as having seen God; but is encouraged by his wife, 21-22. Samson is born, and is moved by the Spirit of God, 24, 25.

AND the children of Israel 'did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

2 And there was a certain man of ^bZorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah: and his wife was barren, and bare not.

3 And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing:

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6 ¶ Then the woman came, and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name.

p. c.] 16 And after him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite

Gen. 16:7-13. Luke 1:11, 28. e Gen. 17:16. 18:10. 1 Sam. 1:20. 2 Kings 4:16. Luke 1:13, 31. f 14. Num. 6:3. Luke 1:15. g Lev. 11:27, 47. Acts 10:14. h Num. 6:5. 1 Sam. 1:11. i 1 Sam. 7:13. 2 Sam. 6:1. 1 Chr. 18:1. k Deut. 33:1. Josh. 14:6. 1 Sam. 2:27. 9:6. 1 Kings 7:18, 24. 2 Kings 4:16. 1 Tim. 6:11. 1 Matt. 28:3. Luke 2:29. Acts 6:15. m 22. Gen. 28:16, 17. Ex. 3:2-6. Dan. 8:17. 10:5-11. Matt. 9:24. Rev. 1:17. n 18. Gen. 22:28. Luke 1:18.

V. 9-15. "The mount of the Amalekites," (15) seems to have derived its name from some victory, gained over Amalek in that place by the Ephraimites. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many learned men suppose, that these last four judges ruled over the eastern and northern parts of the country; and that Samson and Eli were contemporary with them, judging the southern and western parts.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While pride prevails, there must be discord and contention: (*Note, Prov. 13:10.*) and when insolence escapes chastisement, it often grows more abusive. But the haughty and quarrelsome will at length meet with those, who are as ready to revenge their affronts, as others have been to endure them. —Nothing is more foolish than scurrility: without any advantage it rouses the most implacable resentment, and prepares the way for bloodshed. Thus "the tongue, that unruly evil, sets on fire the whole course of nature, and is set on fire of hell," (*Note, Jam. 3:3-6.*) But they, who are most ready to boast, menace, and revile, generally prove cowardly in real danger: and might have their own reproaches retorted upon them, but that Christians must not "render railing for railing." —In the origin or the event of dissension, all parties are commonly to blame; even good men cannot always bear with proper calmness the ingratitude and ill-treatment of those whom they have served; nor have all equally the talent of turning away wrath by a soft answer: and in a just cause we are apt to be hurried on by our passions to unwarrantable lengths; for "the beginning of strife is like the letting forth of water, therefore" let us "leave off contention before it be meddled with." —The splendour of men's exploits, and the excellence of their characters, often increase the number and rage of their enemies: nor need any man be surprised, if those who ought to thank, commend, and reward him, and to congratulate him on his success in dangerous attempts to promote the public welfare, should abuse and hate him, and threaten his destruction. No one is prepared to do good in such a world as this, who has not learned to expect and accept evil, as his recompense from man: and to persevere in hope of a better recompense from a gracious God. —But no contentions are so bitter, as those which arise between brethren, or between rivals for honour and precedence. What need have we then to watch and pray against envy, pride, ambition, and those evil tempers, which set the world as it were in flames from age to age; and which by horrid carnage gratify that first great murderer, the devil! —Alas! that so many *Shibboleths* should be invented to divide the church also; to be the watchwords of angry disputants, and the pretext for professed disciples of Christ abusing and persecuting each other! May the Lord incline all his people "to follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another." —Many renowned and envied persons die of broken hearts, on account of personal

and domestic afflictions: so that their inward anguish might soften their bitterest enemies into compassion, if they knew the whole. —The Lord is to be acknowledged in giving all our comforts, as well as submitted to when he withhold or withdraws them: but increasing families bring increasing cares and duties, which cannot be neglected without guilt and painful consequences. —In fine, the happiest life of individuals, and the happiest state of society, is that which affords the fewest remarkable events. To live in credit and quiet, to be peacefully useful in our circle, to possess a clear conscience, to enjoy communion with God our Saviour while we live, and to die at peace with God and man, form the substance of all that a wise man can desire as to this world.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1. These forty years are supposed to have begun when Jair judged Israel; about the same time as the oppression of Gilead by the Ammonites. (*Note, 10:3-5.*) These had been subdued, but the Philistines still harassed the Israelites, till Samson was arrived at maturity and began their deliverance. (*Note, 10:6-9.*)

V. 2-5. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Nazirite's vow was voluntary, and for a limited time; and by the touch of a dead body it was broken, and the specified time must be begun over again. (*Notes, Num. 6:2-21.*) But Samson was devoted by the Lord's express appointment, to be a Nazirite all the days of his life; and it seems probable that this kind of separation was not so strict, as the voluntary vow. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 1:9-11. Luke 1:11-17.*) —The infant in the womb, and at the breast, subsists on the same nourishment with the mother; and therefore the mother of Samson was required to observe the same rules as the Nazirite during that period. She would be led to expect something extraordinary, from a child whose birth was attended by such observance; but it was a great trial to the faith and patience of all concerned to be informed, that even the beginning of a deliverance from their oppressors must be so long waited for. —It is probable, that Samson was born about the time when the Philistines began to afflict Israel, as he did not live to complete their deliverance. (*Note, 1.*) —It seems, that the law concerning distinction of meats was not strictly observed at this time, or Manoah's wife would not have needed a caution to eat no unclean thing. (*4:7, 14.*)

V. 6. *A man of God.* (*Marg. Ref.*) —This supposed "man of God," or holy prophet, is said to have been like an angel; by which it is evident that angels, as they actually appeared to the people of God, were not distinguishable in general from prophets, except by a more venerable or majestic appearance: (*Note, Acts 6:15.*) though in the emblematic description of them, in some parts of Scripture, they are represented with wings.

V. 8. Manoah did not doubt the performance of the promise, which had been made to his wife in his absence; but only prayed that the same supposed prophet might be sent to

7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

[Practical Observations.]

8 Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

9 And God ^{hearkened} to the voice of Manoah; and the Angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her.

10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day.

11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am.

12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass: how shall we order the child? and how shall we do unto him?

13 And the Angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman, let her beware.

14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee until we shall have made ready a kid for thee.

16 And the Angel of the LORD said unto Ma-

noah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD: for Manoah knew not that he was an Angel of the LORD.

17 And Manoah said unto the Angel of the LORD, What is thy name, that, when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honour?

18 And the Angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?

19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the Angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground.

21 (But the Angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife.) Then Manoah knew that he was an Angel of the LORD.

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

23 But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands; neither would he have showed us all these things; nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these.

24 ¶ And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

25 And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

• Job 34:32. Prov. 3:5,6. Acts 9:6. p Ps. 65:2. Matt. 7:7-11. q John 1:41,42. 4:28,29. * Heb. what shall be the manner of the child? Gen. 18:19. Prov. 4:4. 22:6. Eph. 6:4. † Or, what shall he do? Heb. what shall be his work? ‡ Rev. 12:32. Matt. 28:20. John 25:15,14. 2 Thes. 3:4. s 6:18,19. Gen. 18:5-5. 1 Heb. before thee. † 23:6,26. u 6. Gen. 32:29. § Or, wonderful. Is. 9:5. x 6:19, 20. 1 Kings 18:30-38. y 6:21. 1 Kings 18:38. z 2 Kings 2:11. Ps. 47:5. Heb.

instruct them in their duty relative to it. This was a genuine exercise of faith. (Note, Luke 1:34-38.)

V. 10. As the word *other* is not in the original, some think that the Angel appeared in the morning and evening of the same day.

V. 11-14. Marg. Ref.

V. 15, 16. Manoah, not knowing who this messenger of God was, seems to have doubted whether he should prepare him a banquet, or a sacrifice. "For Manoah knew not that he was an Angel of the LORD." This implied, that had he known who it was, the thought of offering a burnt-offering, though irregular, would not have been in all respects improper: but as he took him only for a man, it was very wrong. The same would have been equally the case had he been the greatest created angel. (Note, Ex. 20:3.)

V. 18-22. The word (מַלְאָכִים), rendered *secret*, signifies *Wonderful*: and is the same name as is given to the Messiah by the prophet. (Is. 9:5.)—In consequence of this intimation Manoah, though no priest, offered a burnt-offering upon a rock, where perhaps some rude altar was hastily prepared; and he was accepted in so doing. Probably fire from the rock consumed the sacrifice.—He "offered it to JEHOVAH, and he did wondrously," (there is no word for the Angel in the original of v. 19,) according to the meaning of his name *Wonderful*; for in the presence of Manoah and his wife, he ascended towards heaven with the flame of fire from off the altar, and by that Manoah knew him to be the Angel JEHOVAH, and he was afraid, lest death should be the consequence of having "seen God."—From these circumstances the reader will easily collect, whom Manoah supposed the Angel to have been. (Notes, Gen. 16:10, 11, 13, 14. 32:30. 48:16. Ex. 32. 33:20-23. Josh. 5:13-15. Hos. 12:3-6. John 1:18.)

V. 23. Manoah's wife being, at that time, the stronger in faith, encouraged her husband, by the consideration, that the acceptance of their sacrifice, united with the promise of a son who should "begin to deliver Israel," assured them of the Lord's favour. Had he intended to slay them, he would neither, at such a time, have done these wondrous works, nor given them a promise which must in that case fail of being accomplished.

V. 25. In the camp of Dan.] The tribe of Dan lay next to the land of the Philistines; (Note, Josh. 19:40-48.) but it is uncertain, whether at that time any army of Danites were encamped to preserve the country from depredation, or whether the words should be read *Mahaneddan*, as in the margin; being the name of a place afterwards mentioned, but which was so called from events prior to the days of Samson. (Notes, 17:1. 18:1, 11, 12.) Here, however, he discovered at

1:3. a Gen. 17:3. Lev. 9:24. 1 Chr. 21:16. Ex. 1:28. Dan. 10:9. Matt. 17:6. h 6:22. Hos. 12:4,5. c Gen. 32:30. Ex. 33:20. Deut. 4:38. 5:26. Is. 6:5. d John 1:18. 5:37. e Eccl. 9:10. 1 Cor. 12:21. f Gen. 4:4,5. Ps. 86:17. g Ps. 25:14. Prov. 3:32. John 14:20-23. h Heb. 11:32. i 1 Sam. 3:19. Luke 1:80. 2:52. k 3:10. 6:34. 11:29. 1 Sam. 11:6. Matt. 4:1. John 3:34. j Heb. Mahaneddan 18:12. 11:11. Josh. 15:33.

times such extraordinary courage, strength, and activity, as evidently proceeded from the Spirit of the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. We ought to make haste to keep God's commandments, but to wait patiently for the performance of his promises: and we should be thankful that he has a remnant of servants in all ages. These indeed often have trials, which are unknown to their fellow-creatures, unpitied by them, or incapable of relief from them; but they have no sorrows which the Lord does not pity, and none which he will not remove in the best time and manner: and he has various methods of showing them the kind notice which he takes of them, till he sees good to relieve them.—Retirement is always friendly to communion with God, and his people are never less alone, than when alone as far as men are concerned.—Every promise implies a correspondent duty; in expecting the performance of the one, we must not neglect the other; and those who are peculiarly honoured of God, must be proportionably ready to deny themselves for his sake.—If parents desire that their children should be mortified to fleshly lusts, and devoted to God, they should be careful to be so themselves.—The parental duty commences even from the child's conception, and every thing should be attended to, which may conduce to its welfare of body and soul: especially prayer should be offered in its behalf. For an immortal creature is brought into existence, which will be happy or miserable for ever; and being conceived in sin, it cannot be holy or happy, without the regenerating grace of God, and an interest in the great Redeemer.—We need also divine direction in respect of the education of our children, lest any of the rules of Scripture should be forgotten, mistaken, or neglected; that, being trained up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," there may be a well-grounded hope of their becoming useful to the church and to the world.—Happy is it, when married persons possess unreserved confidence in each other, and can converse freely together concerning their spiritual experiences and duties, that they may have the benefit of each other's counsel and prayers. The one may suggest hints and encouragements, which did not occur to the other; and those, who at some times, or in some respects, are the weakest, may at others prove the strongest and the wisest.—When we desire to know the will of God that we may do it, we should pray for instruction with the most unshaken assurance of its being granted: (Note, Jam. 1:5-8.) but perhaps he may see good to teach us by means of our inferiors.

V. 8-25. True spiritual knowledge, grace, and consolation always excite desires, and dictate prayers, for further communications and displays of God's glory to our souls. Those, whom he honours as instruments of good to us, we

CHAPTER XIV.

Samson desires a woman of the Philistines to wife, 1-4. Going to see her he slays a lion; and afterwards he finds honey in its carcass, 5-9. At his marriage-feast he proposes a riddle, which the guests explain by means of his wife, 10-18. He kills thirty Philistines, gives their spoil to those who espoused the riddle, and departs in anger, 19. His wife is given to his companion, 20.

AND Samson went down to ^aTimnath, and ^bsaw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

2 And he came up and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore get her for me to wife.

3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of ^dthy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the ^cuncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for ^eshe pleaseth me well.

4 But his father and his mother knew not that ^fit was of the **LORD**, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5 ¶ Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath; and behold a young lion roared ^gagainst him.

6 And ^hthe Spirit of the **LORD** came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and *he had* nothing in his hand:

but ⁱhe told not his father or his mother what he had done.

7 And he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

8 And after a time he returned ^jto take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and behold *there* was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion.

9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them, that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

10 ¶ So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson ^kmade there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

11 And it came to pass, when they ^lsaw him, that they brought ^mthirty companions to be with him.

12 And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth ⁿa riddle unto you: if ye can certainly declare it me within ^othe seven days of the feast, and find ^pit out, then I will give you thirty ^qsheets and thirty ^rchange of garments:

13 But if ye cannot declare ^sit me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

14 And he said unto them, ^tOut of the eater

action 28. 1:13. Job 1:19. 14:13. b Gen. 6:2. 34:2. 2 Sam. 11:2. Job 31:1. Ps. 119:47. 1 Sam. 9:16. c Gen. 21:21. 24:2,3. 34:4. 39:6. 2 Kings 14:9. d Gen. 14:8. 24:2. e 15:18. Gen. 34:14. Ex. 34:13-16. Deut. 7:2,3. 1 Sam. 14:6, 17:25,35. 31:4. 2 Sam. 1:20. f Heb. she is right in mine eyes. g Josh. 11:20. i 1 Kings 12:15. 2 Kings 6:33. 2 Chr. 10:15. 22:7. 25:20. Ps. 115:3. g 13:1. 15:11. Deut. 28:48. h Heb. in meeting him. i 3:10. 11:29. 13:25. 1 Sam. 11:5. 11:5. 15:15. 3:15. 16:30. 17:34-37,46. Zech. 4:1. 1 John 3:8. k 15:42. Matt. 11:

29. 1 Gen. 29:21. Matt. 1:20. m Gen. 29:22. Matt. 22:2-4. John 9:9. Rev. 19:9. n 1 Sam. 10:23. 16:6. o Matt. 9:15. John 3:29. p 1 Kings 10:1. Ps. 49:4. Prov. 1:6. Ez. 17:2. 20:49. Matt. 13:13,34. Luke 14:7. John 16:29. 1 Cor. 13:12. 2 Cor. 9. q Gen. 29:27,28. 1 Or. shirts. Matt. 27:28. Mark 14:51,52. r Gen. 45:22. 2 Kings 3:22. Matt. 8:19. Jam. 5:2. s Gen. 3:15. Deut. 8:15,16. 1 Kings 17:6. 2 Chr. 20:25. t 53:10-12. Rom. 5:3-5. 8:37. 2 Cor. 4:17. 12:9,10. Phil. 1:12-20. Heb. 2:14,15. 12:10,11. Jam. 1:2-4. 1 Pet. 2:24.

should honour likewise; yet not in any way derogatory to the glory of the Lord himself.—“Hospitality without grudging” to those who love his name, and a readiness to devote our substance to his glory, are always ornamental to the profession of godliness.—In our best meant actions we are prone to forget or to mistake the truths and precepts of the sacred Scriptures, and need reminding of them.—A vain curiosity often supplants our proper attention to practical subjects, especially those which relate to our present duty; but we should be as willing to be ignorant of what the Lord is pleased to conceal, as to receive whatever he is pleased to teach us. (*Note*, Deut. 29:29).—The name of our Lord is *Wonderful and Secret*, because it is *incomprehensible*: (*Notes*, Matt. 11:25-27.) but by his wonderful works he makes himself known, as far as our instruction and encouragement require it, and further knowledge would only fill us with self-conceit. (*Note*, 1 Cor. 8:1-3.) His chief display of himself is in the person of Jesus Christ, his coequal Son; who, having offered on earth one sacrifice for our sins, and being risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, presents with acceptance our spiritual sacrifices, when offered through faith in his name. Happy are we, when our hearts and affections ascend after the Saviour: we may then, with pleasure and admiration, contemplate the wonders of redeeming love; and every discovery of his glory will awe our souls into deeper reverence and humiliation. This, however, Satan will sometimes attempt to convert into terror and discouragement, while we compare the holiness and majesty of our God with our meanness and pollution. (*Notes*, Is. 6:5. 57:15,16.) But he will not cast off those who are humbly determined, if they must perish, to perish supplicating his mercy: having spared them when enemies, and taught them to value his salvation, he will answer their prayers, dispel their fears, and fulfil his largest promises. The gospel itself and the means of grace afforded us, are hopeful tokens that the Lord favours us: but if we have been taught to love the gospel, and to fear nothing so much as coming short of the salvation of Christ; if we have learned to delight in his ordinances and commandments, and have received evident answers to our prayers; we may be sure that ^athe LORD has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.—When children possess health with the use of their limbs, senses, and understandings, parents have abundant cause for gratitude: but most of all, when they give early indications, that the Holy Spirit is working upon their tender minds, and preparing them for the service of God. This let us in the first place desire, seek, and pray for; and may this blessing be widely bestowed upon the rising generation.

NOTES.—**CHAP. XIV. V. 1-4.** Many think, that Samson was induced to contract this marriage by special direction from the Lord: such marriages not being *immoral* in themselves, but forbidden to the Israelites, to keep them separate from idolaters. (*Note*, Hos. 12:3.) In this manner he was directed to seek occasion against the Philistines: yet he showed his respect to his parents, by seeking their concurrence; who opposed his marriage as long as “they knew

not that it was of the **LORD**.” For the words translated “she pleaseth me well,” may be rendered “it is *right*,” and considered as an intimation that it was from God; upon which his parents consented and went with him.—But perhaps it is only meant, that it pleased God to leave Samson to follow his own inclinations, intending in his infinite wisdom to overrule his misconduct for good to Israel; and that his parents consented because he was fully bent upon it. (*Marg. Ref. f*).—*Uncircumcised*, &c. (3) *Marg. Ref. e*.

V. 5, 6. Samson, when at a distance from his parents, was assaulted by a young lion, which was come to its full strength and fierceness: yet, though unarmed, he rent it as a kid; because “the Spirit of the **LORD** came mightily upon him.” But he did not mention the extraordinary exploit to his parents, either restrained by modesty, or being afraid of exciting the jealousy of the Philistines. This was an earnest of his subsequent victories, not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. (*Note*, Zech. 4:4-7).—Thus David slew a lion and a bear, before he killed Goliath and subdued the enemies of Israel: (*Note*, 1 Sam. 17:34-37.) and Jesus Christ, ere he entered upon his public ministry, and on the cross before his ascension, overcame “the devil, that roaring lion, which walketh about seeking whom he may devour.”

V. 8, 9. A swarm of bees had settled in the carcass of the lion, and collected honey there, which was a most unlikely place for that purpose; being, as might have been supposed, both inconvenient, and offensive to that delicate insect, which draws honey from the most odiferous flowers and plants. This Samson found, when he turned aside to see the carcass, and perhaps again to thank God for his deliverance.—As every remains of a dead carcass of an unclean animal was polluting, it has been thought that Samson did not tell his parents where he found the honey, lest they should scruple to eat it; (*Note*, Lev. 11:31.) though the extraordinary circumstances of the transaction satisfied him, that it might properly be done.

V. 10-14. When Samson, in conformity to custom, celebrated his marriage-feast, the Philistines brought him thirty companions; professing respect, but probably placing them as a watch upon him, being in some degree aware of his great strength. To prevent perhaps a worse use of time, Samson proposed a *riddle* as a trial of ingenuity; and a wager with each of them, of a sheet, shirt, or other linen garment, and a change of raiment of all sorts, that they could not resolve it. The riddle, in its literal purport, meant no more, than that he had got honey, for food and pleasure, from the lion, which in its strength and fury, was prepared to devour him. Yet this *explanation* of the riddle may be interpreted, as containing an emblem of more importance, and more hard to be understood, except by the teaching of God.—The victory, which Christ obtained over Satan, by means of his agonies and death, and his subsequent exaltation; the glory that redounded to the Father; and the spiritual advantages thence accruing to his people, may be shadowed forth in it.—The entrance of sin, the fall of man, and the ruin of

came forth neat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, "Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to take that we have? is it not so?"

16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, "Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told it me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee?"

17 And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted; and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him; and she told the riddle to the children of her people.

18 And the men of the city said unto him, on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not

ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

19 And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle: and his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

20 But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

CHAPTER XV.

Samson, returning to visit his wife, finds her given to another, 1, 2. He sets fire, with force and indignation, to the corn of the Philistines; who burn his wife and her father, 3-6. Samson smites them, and retires to the rock Etam, 7, 8. The men of Judah, by his consent, deliver him bound to the Philistines; and he kills a thousand of them with the jaw-bone of an ass, 9-17. Being ready to perish by thirst, he cries to the Lord, who opens for him a fountain in Lehi, 18, 19. He judges Israel, 20.

BUT it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat-harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in.

2 And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave

t Prov. 24:7. Matt. 13:11. Acts 8:31. u 16:5. Gen. 3:1-6. Prov. 5:3. 6:26. Mic. 7:5. 12:1. 15:6. Heb. passes us, or, impoverishes us. y 16:15. z Gen. 2:24. 1 Or, the rest of the seven days. a 16:5, 17:18. Gen. 3:6. Job 29. Prov. 7:21. Luke 18:5. b Prov. 2:16, 17. c 6. 3:10. 15:14. 1 Sam. 11:6. 1 Or,

the human race through the malice of Satan, will issue in his deeper misery, in the greater glory of God, and in the increased felicity of the redeemed, and of all holy creatures to all eternity.—The persecutions of the church have promoted its purity and prosperity. The trials, conflicts, and temptations of the Lord's people are productive of holiness and comfort to their souls in this world, and work for them an exceeding weight of glory in the next. The remains of in-dwelling sin, and even the falls of real believers, become occasions to them of deeper humility, more simple dependence on the Saviour, more ardent love and admiring gratitude, more compassion for their fellow-sinners, more fitness for many kinds of service on earth, and greater meetness for the worship and occupations of the redeemed in glory. And if any abuse this truth, let them know, that they are not concerned in it; for upright souls are always rendered more watchful, humble, diligent, simple, compassionate, and fervent in prayer, by every false step which they make: at least no others give evidence that they are believers.—Even death, that devouring monster, that king of terrors, being robbed of his sting and stripped of his horror, transmits the believer's soul to the realms of bliss, and makes way for the body itself being restored incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, to partake of endless felicity. In these and many other senses, "Out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness." (Notes, Rom. 5:3-5. 8:35-39. 2 Cor. 4:13-18. Phil. 1:12-18. Jam. 1:2-4.)

V. 15-17. The barbarity, insolence, and selfishness of the conduct of these Philistines, illustrate the misery of Israel's bondage under such tyrants.—Mr. Henry notes, that 'they ought not to lay wagers, who cannot bear to lose with better temper;' and we may add, that such violent passions and implacable resentments are the common effects of affronted pride and disappointed covetousness, in every kind and degree of gaming: and that it should be entirely avoided.—The seventh day, first mentioned, (15) seems to have been the seventh day of the week, and the fourth of the feast; the remaining part of which Samson's wife, actuated by fear or attachment to her countrymen, spent in entreating him with tears to tell the riddle to her: and she at length prevailed. (Notes, 15:6. 16:6-21.)

V. 18. Ploughed, &c.) This is a proverbial expression. The Philistines could not have discovered the riddle of themselves, if they had not drawn it from Samson by tampering with his wife.

V. 19, 20. Samson found himself, by an immediate impulse of the Spirit of God, directed, emboldened, and assisted in this attack upon the enemies of Israel; which was fully justified by their public oppressions, without adverting to their treachery to him. (Notes, 15:1-5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In contracting marriage, the senses are dangerous counsellors: beauty and wit are very doubtful recommendations; and wisdom, piety, and holiness ought principally to be regarded.—Next to the word of God, the concurrence of parents is generally requisite to render that relation honourable and comfortable.—But they ought to act with consideration and kindness; and if constrained to refuse their concurrence, they should give such convincing and important reasons, as may prove that their refusal springs from wisdom and affection, not from caprice and severity; from an unwillingness that their children should make an imprudent choice, not from any disposition to bind them against their will to a single life.—In no ordinary circumstances can there be any necessity for a person that professes godliness, to marry one who is manifestly irreligious: but the Lord can overrule the best

of purposes those actions, which we must by no means imitate; his designs do not influence our conduct, unless he inform us of them; and his written word is our constant rule.—We are always exposed to danger of body and soul, both when alone and when in company; but nothing can hurt us except we wander from the path of duty. Even Satan, "that roaring lion," may be effectually resisted, and completely overcome, if, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Spirit of God communicates his strength to our souls. By no other means can we subdue this enemy; and thus all his temptations shall eventually conduce to our benefit.—We often lose the comfort and the real credit of our best disputed conflicts with our spiritual enemies, in consequence of ostentation: and the special favours, which God bestows upon us, can be mentioned only on some occasions, to particular persons, and in great modesty, without savouring of vainglory: and we obtain many secret victories over temptation, for which we need repeatedly to bless God, but of which we cannot speak particularly to our nearest earthly friend.—We should be always ready to increase the comforts of others, by imparting to them our temporal good things; especially to parents and benefactors.—We enjoy the most sweetness from God's goodness to us, when we most frequently turn aside to meditate, and to bless him on that account: and as one successful conflict prepares for another, so one season of peculiar mercy is an earnest of another.—It is almost impossible to associate with worldly people, without conforming to their vain customs: at best, even when evident evil is avoided in such company, we spend our time to no purpose; and are we not called to "redeem our time," and to do all to the glory of God?—We ought constantly to watch and pray against pride, anger, and covetousness, and to avoid every thing that gives force to these passions; for their effects are inconceivably dreadful when they acquire the ascendancy.—It is dangerous to be connected with those, who will not be satisfied with any measure of love or respect, except we will offend God or injure ourselves to oblige them. A worldly wife, or a worldly friend, is to a godly man as an enemy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray him; and, by assiduity and perseverance, will more or less overcome his resolutions, and prevail with him to make such compliances, as will greatly injure his credit and comfort. (Notes, 16:6-21.) Nor can those connexions be comfortable or durable, where important secrets cannot be trusted without the danger of being divulged. Indeed Satan's chief advantage against us arises from his correspondence with our deceitful hearts and inveterate lusts.—But the wisest counsels of wicked men are very foolishness, and eventually all their gain is loss: they secure some worldly interest, and for it lose their lives or their souls!—We are naturally far more prone to be angry with those who have injured us, than to repent of our sins against God.—Imprudent connexions commonly terminate in speedy separations; nor are any more likely to asperse a man's character, cheat him of his property, or defile his bed, than ungodly men who have been admitted to unmerited confidence. But happy are they who feast upon the fruits of Christ's conflicts and victories! all things shall work together for their good; and their sharpest trials on earth, yea, the severest agonies of death, shall prove the occasion of their loudest songs of triumphant joy and praise in heaven.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1, 2. (Notes, 19:3, 4. Eccl. 2:1.) The anger of Samson, after a time, subsiding, and his affection reviving; he went to see his wife, taking with him a kid, on which to feast with her and her friends, and not knowing that she had been given to another. (14:20.)—The Jewish

her to thy companion: *is* not her younger sister fairer than she? *Take* her, I pray thee, instead of her.

3 ¶ And Samson said concerning them, *Now* shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure.

4 And Samson went and caught *three* hundred foxes, and took *firebrands*, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails.

5 And when he had set the brands on fire, *he* let *them* go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards *and* olives.

6 Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? and they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, *and* burnt her and her father with fire.

7 And Samson said unto them, *Though* ye have done this, yet I will be avenged of you, and after that I will cease.

8 And he *smote* them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

9 ¶ Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in *Lehi*.

10 And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? and they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us.

11 Then three thousand men of Judah *went* to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the *Philistines are* rulers

over us? what *is* this *that* thou hast done unto us? and he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.

12 And they said unto him, We are come down *to* bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me that ye will not *fail* upon me yourselves.

13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

14 And when he came unto Lehi, *the* Philistines shouted against him: and *the* Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and *the* cords that *were* upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands *loosed* from off his hands.

15 And he found a *new* jaw-bone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it, and *slew* a thousand men therewith.

16 And Samson said, With the jaw-bone of an ass, *heaps* upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

17 And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jaw-bone out of his hand, and called that place *Lehi*.

18 And *he* was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, *Thou* hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now *shall* I die for thirst, *and* fall into the hand of *the* uncircumcised?

19 But God clave a hollow place *that was* in *the* jaw, and there came water therout: and

* Heb. let her be thine. † Or, now shall I be blameless from the Philistines, though, 14.45. e Ps. 63:10. Cant. 2:15. Lam. 5:18. ‡ Or, torches. § Ex. 22:6. 2 Sam. 14:30. ¶ 12:1. 14:15. Prov. 22:8. 1 Thes. 4:6. h 14:4, 19. Rom. 12:19. i 1a. 25:10. 63:3, 6. j 17. § Heb. went down. k 13:1. 14:4. l 2ett. 28:17, 18. m Mat. 27:2. Acta 7:25. n 3:21. 1 King 2:35, 34. o 5:30. 16:24. P. 13:3, 5. 1 Sam. 4:5. Job 20:5. Mic. 7:8. o 3:10. 14:6, 19. Zech. 4:6. p 16: 9, 12. 1 Sam. 17:35. q 1a. 118:11. Phil. 4:13. † Heb. were melted. ‡ Heb. moist.

writers relate, that she had become a proselyte before Samson married her; but the whole narrative militates against that opinion, especially the father's answer on this occasion.

V. 3-5. Samson, being conscious that he was to be, in part, the deliverer of Israel from the Philistines, only waited for a fair occasion to declare against them. This was afforded him by the injurious treatment which he had received, and that was also a specimen of their conduct towards the Israelites when most submissive.—In the means which he employed, and make advert to the power of God, both in supplying them, and making them successful; which he did to mortify the pride, and punish the wickedness of the Philistines. Foxes were doubtless very numerous in those parts, and the people very expert in taking them; and probably Samson engaged assistants in procuring and preparing them. Being thus let go, they would hinder each other from gaining their holes in the woods, and would take shelter in the neighbouring cornfields and vineyards; and the weather being dry, the corn ripe, and the fire kindled in many places at once, we may easily conceive that great destruction would very speedily be effected by this uncommon contrivance. (Note, 7:16-22.)

V. 6. Samson's wife betrayed him for fear of being burnt with fire; and thus brought that very death upon herself, for having by her treachery provoked Samson to this measure. (Note, 14:15-17.) In like manner the Jews crucified Christ, lest his claim to be their King should bring the Romans upon them; and by this conduct they brought that very calamity upon themselves. (Note, John 11:47, 43.)

V. 7. The Philistines had indeed avenged Samson on those who had injured him; but they were instigated by hatred and dread of him, and not by any desire of doing justice; he therefore purposed effectually to avenge himself and his people upon them; and then, unless excited by further injuries, he would desist from attacking them.

V. 8. The phrase, rendered "hip and thigh," has greatly perplexed critical expositors: but probably it means, that Samson, without any arms, attacked a great multitude of Philistines; and with his hips, or legs, and thighs, he threw them down, and then trode them to death. This he seems to have done on a mountain; and descending from it, he went and dwelt alone on the top of a rock: perhaps for retirement, that he might not be surprised by the Philistines, and because he did not choose to trust the Israelites.

V. 10, 11. The men of Judah had probably paid their stipulated tribute, and had given no cause of offence to their oppressors; and they wondered on what ground they came against them. They were sunk into an atfect frame of spirit, and quietly endured to be in bondage to the Philistines; despairing of deliverance, or basely fearing the trouble and peril of attempting it: otherwise they would not have

q 3:31. 4:21. 7:16. Lev. 26:8. Josh. 23:10. 1 Sam. 14:6, 14. 17:49, 50. 1 Cor. 11: 27, 28. * Heb. new heap, two heaps. † That is, the lifting up of the jaw-bone, or, the casting away of the jaw-bone. ‡ 8:4. Ps. 22:11, 15. John 19:28. 2 Cor. 4:8, 9. § Ps. 37:8. 13:31-40. ¶ Gen. 32:31. 2 Cor. 12:7, 8. u Gen. 12:12, 13. 20:11. 1 Sam. 27:1. 2 Cor. 1:8, 9. Heb. 11:32. x 1 Sam. 17:26, 36. 2 Sam. 1:20. † Or, Lehi.

thus yielded up their champion. (Notes, Ex. 2:13-15. 1 Sam. 13:3, 4.)

V. 12, 13. Samson quietly submitted to be bound by the men of Judah, (who were intentionally his murderers,) and to be delivered up to the Philistines; but he made an agreement with his countrymen, that they would not themselves fall upon him, lest he should be constrained to destroy them instead of their enemies; which he was unwilling to do, though so shamefully treated by them.—In all this he was a type of Christ, who in his retirement was rudely assaulted by the Jews, whom he could easily have destroyed, but would not; into their hands he surrendered himself, and they bound him, and delivered him up to the Romans to be crucified; though the bonds even of death could not hold him, or prevent his victories and triumphs. (Notes, John 18:1-9. Acts 2:22-24.)

V. 14-17. When "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samson," his bonds were soon broken; and then the jaw-bone of the contemptible ass (the only weapon which came in his way) became more formidable than sword or spear, and a thousand men fell before him, being alike unable to resist or to escape! (Note, 8.) Elated with this surprising victory, he seems to have celebrated his own praise, instead of giving glory to God.—The original word for an ass, signifies also a heap: and this circumstance gives a propriety and animation to the passage, which cannot be preserved in a translation. "Ramath-lehi" signifies the lifting up of the jaw-bone. The name Lehi, before used, referred to this event by an anticipation of the historian. (9:14.)

V. 18, 19. Samson at this moment felt his weakness in himself, as before he had shown his strength when assisted by the Lord. But his urgent distress reminded him of his danger; and led him to thank God for his deliverance, and to pray unto him for present relief: and then in the place where the jaw lay, or in Lehi, (margin,) a spring was supernaturally opened, by which he was relieved and preserved: so that he called the place "En-hakkore," or the well of him that cried. (Marginal reading, and Marg. Ref.)—Christ too in his grand conflict with our enemies, thirsted, but he had no well opened for his relief: for he not only "trode the winepress alone," as Samson did on this occasion; but he also drank the cup of the wrath of God for us, which Samson could not have done. (Notes, Ps. 69:21. John 19:28-30.)

V. 20. After this event Samson was submitted to as judge by the people.—From this we may suppose that he acted as a magistrate in civil concerns, and not merely as Israel's defender against the Philistines. (Preface to Judges.) If Samson was not born before the forty years of oppression by the Philistines began, his death must have occurred much nearer to the end of them, than some learned men suppose. Yet the twenty years during which he judged Israel, are said

when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived. Wherefore he called the name thereof 'En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

20 And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

CHAPTER XVI.

Samson, ennobled by a harlot at Gaza, is in imminent danger, but escapes by carrying off the gates of the city, 1—3. He loves Delilah; who bribed by the Philistines, repeatedly, but in vain, tries to discover in what his strength lay, 4—15. Overcome by her, he discloses the secret; and the Philistines, shaving his head while asleep, bind and imprison him, having put out his eyes, 16—21. His hair grows again, and his strength returns, 22. The Philistines, at the feast of Dagon, make sport of him; he pulls down the house, and dies with great multitudes of his enemies, 23—30. He is buried by his friends, 31.

B.C. 1120. **T**HEN went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her.

2 And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning when it is day we shall kill him.

*y Gen. 45:27. 1 Sam. 30:12. Is. 40:29. * That is, the well of him that called, or, cried. Gen. 16:13, 22:14, 28:19, 32:30. Ex. 17:15. Ps. 34:16, 129:1. e 13:1, 5, 16:31. a Gen. 10:19, Josh. 15:47. * Heb. a woman an harlot. b Gen. 38:16—18. Ezra 9:1, 2. c 1 Sam. 19:11. 23:25. Ps. 118:10—12. Acts 9:24. 2 Cor. 11:32, 33. f Heb. g 1:2. d 15:18. Matt. 21:38. 27:1. Acts 23:15. e Ps. 107:16. Is. 63:1—3. Mic. 2:13. Acts 2:24. 1 Heb. with the bar. f 1 Kings 1:11. Neh. 13:25. Prov. 22:14.*

to have been "in the days of the Philistines," which intimated that Israel's deliverance was incomplete, and their enemies very formidable; no doubt because they had not duly repented, and returned to the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In every contest he who first proposes reconciliation gains the noblest victory; especially when this is done by the offended party and the superior relation: nay, such concessions adorn the characters even of those who are most renowned for courage. (*Note, 8:1—3.*)—Where the knowledge of God and of his law are wanting, the most ordinary transactions of life will be conducted on such principles as tend to confusion and licentiousness.—Wicked men, conscious of their own base intentions, suspect the worst concerning others, or pretend to do so to cover their own injustice; and their proposals, made under the guise of peace, are no less to be dreaded than their open enmity. It is therefore best to avoid all fellowship with them. (*Notes, 2 Cor. 6:14—18. Eph. 5:8—14.*)—We should endeavour to live at peace with all men; and in case that be impracticable, to avoid every thing which may render us justly chargeable with the consequences of contention; and before the Lord proceeds to execute vengeance, he often manifests the inexorable wickedness of his enemies.—When plenty is acquired by rapine, and abused by the possessors in sensual indulgence, they may reasonably expect to have it taken from them: nor does it require much ability to be an incendiary, and to kindle the fire of discord in families, churches, and nations. Indeed, such scourges are generally instigated by one more subtle and malicious than themselves; and they may expect to be consumed in the fires which they kindle. But in the hands of those whom God employs, the most contemptible instruments are rendered successful. They who sin to avoid suffering will bring troubles upon themselves, against which they can have no protector.—Heartless professors of religion, who value the friendship and fear the frown of the world, and who are the slaves of sin and Satan, censure, hate, and betray those, who call them to liberty in the service of God: to save themselves in times of persecution, they often apostatize and turn betrayers and accusers of their brethren; (*Matt. 24:9, 10.*) and in their opinion, the best services, and most hazardous endeavours to do good, deserve reproach, condemnation, and punishment. But we shall not be discouraged by these things, when we consider how the Saviour was treated; we shall see how we ought to act, when we observe his meekness, patience, and dying prayers for his crucifiers; and we shall discard our fears, when we consider his triumphs, his ascension, his glory, and his promise that they who "suffer with him shall also be glorified together."—Whenever we are peculiarly favoured of God, pride will lead us to rob him of his glory, unless we be very watchful; hence every comfort must be counterbalanced with a cross; and the more any man is made useful to others, the more he generally needs mortifying experiences of his own weakness, folly, and unworthiness. (*Notes, 2 Kings 20:12—19. 2 Chr. 32:24—26. 2 Cor. 12:7—10.*) By such painful discipline we are taught to know our own place, and to feel our entire dependence on the Lord, and our continual obligations to him. When, however, our trials have produced the proper effect, they shall be removed, and become sources of gratitude and comfort, and excite us to raise fresh monuments of the goodness of God.—But in this world our enemies will continue powerful, and our victories incomplete: ere long we shall be made more than conquerors, and render perfect and eternal hallelujahs.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Hitherto Samson's character, though uncommon, has appeared illustrious; and considering him as raised up to deliver Israel, and instructed

3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, and bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

4 ¶ And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

5 And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

6 And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and where with thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

7 And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never

23:27. 26:11. 27:22. 1 Cor. 10:6. § Or, by the brook. g 9:3. Josh. 13:3. 1 Sam. 29:6. h 14:15. Num. 2:16—19. 5:3—11, 20. 6:24—26. 7:21—23. i Or, humble. j 17:2. Gen. 38:16. Num. 22:17, 18. Mic. 7:3. Matt. 26:15. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. k Ps. 12:2. Prov. 6:26. 7:21. 22:14. 26:29. Jer. 9:2—5. Mic. 7:2, 5. 110. 1 Sam. 19:17. 21:2, 3. 27:10. Prov. 12:19. 17:7. Rom. 3:8. Gal. 6:7. Col. 3:9. § Or, new cords. Heb. moist.

as well as assisted, to do it in that unprecedented manner, which best tended to mortify the Philistines, and to manifest the mighty power of God; we may fairly vindicate most of his past conduct, and safely imitate much of it: and notwithstanding many infirmities, we have hitherto met with nothing inconsistent with his character as a perpetual Nazirite. (*Note, 13:4, 5.*) But in this chapter we find him behaving in so wicked and infatuated a manner, that many have been led to question whether he were indeed a really pious man. The apostle however numbers him among those, "who obtained a good report through faith;" (*Heb. 11:32, 33, 39.*) and by duly considering the doctrines and examples of Scripture, the deceitfulness of the human heart, the artifices of Satan, and the methods in which the Lord frequently deals with his people; we may interpret this "riddle of a man," as some have called him, and may learn useful lessons from his history, which perplexes some, and imbodens many to evil and object.—Confiding in his great strength and the dread of him with which the Philistines had been seized, he boldly entered Gaza, one of their chief cities, (on what account we know not,) and there he went in unto a harlot. This disgraceful circumstance was soon made known to the inhabitants; who fearful of attacking him, laid wait for him all night and were probably forming some stratagem, or sending for some reinforcements, that in the morning they might assault and kill him. But at midnight (perhaps awakened by remorse of conscience), he arose; and the Lord, though greatly offended, was pleased "to work for his own name's sake;" and by his assistance, in contempt of the guards, he seized on the gate, with the posts, which he violently dragged out of the ground, and the bar also, and carried them several miles to the top of a hill, no one venturing to interrupt or seize him.—Thus our Lord, when in the likeness of sinful flesh, after his crucifixion between two thieves, arose as a conqueror over death and every foe; and as it were, broke open and carried away with him the very gates of the grave, while he ascended into heaven as the first fruits of the resurrection.

V. 4. It is not certain whether Delilah was a Philistine, or a licentious Israelite; but Samson indulged a base affection for her, and most shamefully wasted his time in her company, perhaps imboldened by his impunity in the foregoing instance.—Some think he had married her; but this is not intimated, nor is it probable. Her name implies a consumer, or wasting, which is very apposite.

V. 5. The princes of the five chief cities in Philistia soon heard of Samson's conduct, and formed a plan for his ruin. By promising Delilah about six hundred pounds sterling, to be made up by equal sums from each of them, they induced her to employ all her insinuation to find out the cause of his supernatural strength; which they supposed to depend on some observance, that he might be induced to neglect; and when in consequence his strength should fail him, they purposed to avenge themselves on him. They seem to have intimated to Delilah, that they only meant to afflict him, that he might not continue formidable; but not to kill him. Yet their dread of him was so great, that they durst not, on any advantage, attempt to seize him, till satisfied that his great strength was departed!

V. 6—8. This artful woman would no doubt propose the question, as a matter of mere curiosity; and would couch it in such terms, accompany it with such blandishments, and urge it at such times, as were most likely to prevail. (*14:16, 17.*) Samson however seems to have had some suspicion, that she desired to pry into this important secret with no good design; yet instead of leaving her, or giving her a direct refusal, he endeavoured to amuse her by an evasive answer, or rather by a direct falsehood! He now had his strength

dried, then shall I be weak, and be as ^{another} man.

8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

9 Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, the Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, behold thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

11 And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

12 Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, the Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers-in-wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

14 And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam and with the web.

15 And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou

hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.

[Practical Observations.]

16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him so that his soul was vexed unto death;

17 That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once; for he hath showed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

19 And she made him sleep upon her knees: and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

20 And she said, The Philistines be upon thee Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.

21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison-house.

22 Howbeit, the hair of his head began to grow again, after he was shaven.

* Heb. one. m Ec. 7:26. † Heb. smelteth. Ps. 58:9. n 7:13, 15-17. Prov. 23:7-8, 24:29. Ez. 33:31. Luke 22:48. o Prov. 13:3-5, 29:25. Eph. 4:25. ‡ Heb. wherewith work hath not been done. p Ezra 9:13, 14. 1a, 106:43. q 14:16. Prov. 2:16, 5:3-14. r Gen. 29:20. Deut. 6:5. 1 Sam. 15:13, 14. 2 Sam. 16:17. Prov. 23:29. Cant. 8:6, 7. John 14:15, 21-24, 15:10. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. 1 John 2:13, 16, 5:3. 1 Pet. 2:13, 26, 27. Luke 11:8. 18:5. § Heb. shortened. Job 21:4. marg. Jon. 4:21. Mark 14:34. † Prov. 29:11. Mic. 7:5. u 13:5. Num. 6:

5. Acts 18:18. x Ps. 62:9. Prov. 18:8. Jer. 9:4-6, y 5. Num. 22:7. 1 Kings 21:20. Matt. 26:15. Eph. 5:5. 1 Tim. 6:10. z Prov. 7:11-23, 23:33, 34. Ec. 7:26. a 9:14. Deut. 32:30. 1a, 42:25. Hos. 7:9. b Num. 14:9, 42:43. Josh. 7:12. 1 Sam. 16:14. 18:12. 28:14-16. 2 Chr. 15:2. Is. 59:1, 2. Jer. 9:23, 24. Matt. 17:16, 20. 2 Cor. 3:5. c Prov. 5:22. 14:14. Jer. 2:19. † Heb. bored. d 2 Kings 25:7. 2 Chr. 35:1. Ps. 107:12-12. 149:8. e Ex. 11:5. 1a, 47:2. Matt. 24:41. 1 Lev. 26:44. Deut. 32:36. Ps. 106:44, 45. 107:13, 14. † Or, as when he was shaven.

was immediately from God, who had constituted him a perpetual Nazarite, of which his hair was the token: but if he renounced his Nazarite's character by shaving his head, the Lord would depart from him, and he would become as other men. He was not at first so infatuated, as to disclose the secret: but he was taken in Satan's net, and was sure to be every moment more and more entangled. (Notes, Prov. 2:19. 5:4-9. 7:26. P. O. Prov. 2:10-22. 5:1-14.)

V. 9. Samson's infatuation was very great: but it cannot be conceived, that he would afterwards have fallen asleep in Delilah's lap, if he had at this time seen the Philistines in the chamber prepared to seize him. We may suppose therefore that they waited every time in some adjacent room, or closet, to see whether he was able to break his bonds: and when they found his strength was not departed, they kept close; while Delilah artfully turned the matter off as a jest, which she put on him to discover whether he had told her the truth or not.

V. 10-14. These repeated attempts of Delilah must have satisfied Samson that she intended his ruin, had not "whoredom taken away his heart," and made him senseless and brutish.—It is probable, that some time intervened between each attempt; and that she took the most favourable opportunities for making them; but those who say, she made him drink wine, that he might be heavy with sleep, forget that this would have forfeited the privilege of his being a perpetual Nazarite, as really as shaving his head did. (Notes, 13:4, 5. Num. 6:3-5.) Doubtless he supposed himself entirely alone with her; and each attempt seems to have been made when he was asleep. (Notes, 2 Sam. 11:5. Matt. 26:40, 41.)—It is not certain how his hair was fastened in the web; but this evasion came nearer the discovery of the important secret, than any of the others.

V. 15. Delilah pretended to discredit all Samson's professions of love for her, so long as he refused to give her this peculiar proof of it. He had sacrificed his honour, conscience, interest, and every other valuable object to his passion for her: but while he had one reserve, she would not be satisfied. Such absolute affection cannot be placed on any creature without idolatry; but it is that very love, which the Lord justly requires of us, when he commands us to give him our heart. (Notes, Ex. 20:3. Prov. 23:26.) nor will he accept of us while there is one reserve, and while we deliberately refuse to part with any worldly object for his sake, or to yield him any service to which he calls us. Had Abraham peremptorily refused to sacrifice his beloved Isaac, the Lord might have said, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me?" For the true love of the infinitely glorious God subdues, regulates, or subordinates every other affection; and is alone absolute and unreserved. (Notes, Deut. 6:5. Matt. 10:37-39.)

V. 16. Vexed unto death.] He was weary of life, . . . and

unconcerned what became of him. Ep. Patrik. What an infatuation was this, that when Samson was incessantly and intolerably teased to do what he knew to be not only wicked, but foolish in the extreme, he had not resolution to depart from his seducer! (Notes, Gen. 39:8-10. 1 Kings 11:1-8. Prov. 7:6-23. P. O.)

V. 17-21. To rebuke and severely correct Samson for his heinous offences, the Lord was pleased to leave him to be infatuated almost beyond conception; and thus he was prevailed upon to disclose the secret to his infamous paramour. Probably his manner of speaking, as well as the plain and satisfactory account which he gave of his supernatural strength, convinced Delilah, that he had now told the whole truth; and she sent an earnest message to the lords of the Philistines, as one that feared lest, after the previous disappointments, they should not credit her, and she should lose the stipulated reward. (5. Notes, Matt. 26:14-16. 1 Tim. 6:6-10.)—It seems, that after Samson had been shaven, she made trial of his strength by putting him to pain; as it is said that "she began to afflict him." For the Philistines, till satisfied that his strength was actually departed, dared no more approach him even when asleep, than they would have approached a sleeping lion. But it is wonderful, that the man who shaved him was restrained from attempting his life; and his preservation can be ascribed to nothing but the immediate power of God.—At length, however, his enemies ventured upon their concealment, seized on their prey, and having put out his eyes, and bound him in strong fetters, preserved him as a monument of their victory, and made him endure in hard labour. (Marg. Ref. d, e. Note, 2 Kings 25:6, 7.) To all this he could make no effectual resistance, for he found that "the Lord was departed from him."—What a change was this! To what a wretched and disgraceful situation had sin reduced this mighty judge of Israel, who before was himself as an army! Had his head been shaven without his fault, the case would have been different: but his whole conduct had been as great a contempt of the favour, glory, and authority of God, as if he had in disdain cut off his Nazarite's hair with his own hands: and therefore he was constrained to endure the dreadful effects of his folly. (Note, Prov. 23:27, 28.)

V. 22. Samson's afflictions seem to have been the means of bringing him to deep repentance; (Notes, 2 Chr. 33:1-13.) so that, through the loss of his bodily sight, the eyes of his understanding were opened to perceive his own madness and wickedness; and, by depriving him of his bodily strength, the Lord was pleased to renew his spiritual strength. Then, it must be supposed, he would humble himself before God, and seek his merciful forgiveness, and not seek in vain. In the mean while his hair grew, perhaps faster than usual; as an indication that the Spirit of the Lord was returning to him, and that he would soon recover his extraordinary

23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together, for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made them sport. And they set him between the pillars.

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand

g 1 Sam. 5:2-5. Jer. 2:11. Mic. 4:5. Rom. 1:23-25. 1 Cor. 8:4,5. 10:20. h Deut. 32:27. Is. 37:30. Ez. 20:14. Dan. 5:4,23. Heb. 1:18. Rev. 11:10. i Heb. and who multiplied our slain, 15:8,16. j 9:27. 18:20. 19:9,9. 2 Sam. 13:28. k 1 Kings 12:21. Esth. 8:15. Dan. 5:2,3. Matt. 14:6,7. l Heb. before them. k Job 30:9-10. Ps. 35:15,16. 69:12,26. Prov. 24:17,18. Mic. 7:8-10. Matt. 26:67,68. 27:29,39-44. Heb. 11:36. 19:1. Pent. 2:8. Josh. 2:8 Sam.

strength. But the Philistines, having blinded, fettered, and imprisoned him, were under no further apprehensions on that account.

V. 23, 24. This was either some occasional festival, appointed by the lords of the Philistines in order to celebrate their victory over Samson, or an annual festival in honour of Dagon, observed on that account with the greater solemnity: and when they had offered the sacrifice, they met together to feast and to divert themselves, either in the temple of Dagon, or as some think in a theatre erected for such uses. On this occasion the Philistines renewed their triumph over Samson, who probably had been preserved for that purpose, and was exposed to public view: and they also presumed to celebrate the triumph of Dagon their god, over JEHOVAH the God of Israel; as if by the help of their idol they had prevailed against the judge of Israel, who formerly by the help of JEHOVAH had been victorious over them. But the very language of their joy shows how very much they had dreaded him. (Notes, 1 Sam. 5: Dan. 5:1-9,18-28.)

V. 25. Samson had been shown to the people before: (24) but now he was brought before the rulers of the nation, who diverted themselves amidst their feasting, by mocking his abject misery, and cruelly endeavouring to render him contemptible.—Thus Christ, being apprehended and bound by his enemies, was insulted by the council and rulers, as well as by the servants and people and soldiers. (Notes, Ps. 69:10-12. Matt. 26:63-68. 27:39-44.)

V. 26. The main weight of this building rested upon two pillars in the centre, very near together, according to the method of building in some parts of the world; and against these Samson, as if wearied, desired leave to lean and rest himself.

V. 27. All the principal persons of the nation were assembled within this building, whether temple or theatre; while about three thousand others were mounted upon the flat roof, looking through apertures perhaps made for that purpose, to enjoy the cruel pleasure of insulting over their fallen enemy! (Note, Prov. 17:5.)

V. 28, 29. The triumph of the Philistines was that of Dagon; but the cause of Samson was that of Israel and of JEHOVAH. (Notes, 1 Kings 18:18-20,36-39.) As the judge of Israel, he was divinely appointed to be an avenger of their enemies: but for his transgression he had been justly delivered into their hands; and they had not only cruelly treated him, but impiously blasphemed the Lord himself. In ordinary cases we may hope for the conversion and salvation of our fellow-sinners; and therefore we are commanded to forgive them, and do good to and pray for every one of them. But for the same reason that Satan and his angels, being the incurable enemies of God, are the objects of our allowed abhorrence; we should be required to detest any individual on earth, whom we certainly knew to be the object of God's final hatred: and in a future state, when sinners will no longer be under a dispensation of mercy, we shall rejoice in the destruction of all his enemies. (Notes, 2 Tim. 4:14,15. Rev. 6:9-11. 19:1-6.) Samson's prayer was both dictated and answered by God himself; nor does it appear that it could have been known, except by immediate revelation. He knew that, in this extraordinary case, it was right he should avenge the cause of God and of Israel; and also that he should desire to execute the vengeance of God upon them for their despotic cruelty to him.—If this had proceeded from a spirit of personal revenge, God would not have heard it; (for he doth not love to gratify men's passions;) but that is a proof, that this desire proceeded from God, (as St. Austin understands it,) who intended to punish the Philistines for oppressing Israel,

men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto the Lord and said, O Lord God! remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death, were more than they which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren, and all the house of his father, came down and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaoi, in the burying-place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

11:2. m 2 Chr. 20:12. Ps. 50:15. 91:15. 116:4. Heb. 11:32. n Ps. 74:18,22. Jer. 15:15. o 5:51. Ps. 58:10,11. 143:12. 2 Tim. 4:14. Rev. 6:10. i Or he leaned on them. s Heb. my soul. p Matt. 16:25. Acts 20:21. 21:3. Phil. 2:17,30. Heb. 12:1-4. q Job 31:3. Ec. 9:12. Matt. 24:38,39. 1 Thes. 5:2. r 14:19. 15:8,15. Gen. 8:15. Phil. 2:8. Col. 2:15. Heb. 2:14,15. s John 19:39-42. t 13:2. 25. Josh. 19:41. u 15:20.

as well as abusing Samson, and depriving him of his eyes.

Bp. Patrick.—Nor is Samson to be accused of self-murder, with which some have charged him; for he did not seek his own death, but Israel's deliverance, and the destruction of their enemies: and there is not the least intimation, that he was impatient under his sufferings; though in accomplishing his purpose, he was willing to lay down his life with the Philistines. There is a very great difference between rushing uncalled into the presence of God, out of proud impatience, rebellion, and contempt of life, when it is made miserable by a person's own misconduct, and infidel disregard of future and eternal consequences; and being willing to lay down life for the honour of God, and the welfare of his people: though the circumstances, into which one adventures, be as certainly fatal, as the means by which another murders himself. For a man is no more deemed a self-murderer, who sacrifices his life for the good of his country in the field of battle, than he is deemed a murderer of others, who in a just war slays the enemies of his country.

V. 30, 31. The numbers, who were within and upon the house when it fell, of course would occasion great slaughter; but we must ascribe to the same power, as enabled Samson to throw down the building, the decisive destruction which it caused.—Thus Samson died in bonds and among the Philistines, as an awful rebuke for his sins; but no doubt he died penitent, and had not his future portion with them; and the effects of his death typified those of the death of Christ, who, by voluntarily laying down his life among transgressors, subverted the foundations of Satan's kingdom, and provided for the deliverance of his people.—By this blow the princes of the Philistines were destroyed, their government was unhinged, their power crushed, and their courage daunted; so that they made no opposition to Samson's relations, when they went to fetch his body to be buried among his people.—Thus the body of Christ also was, without opposition, given to his friends, that it might be honourably interred. (Note, Matt. 27:57-61.)—The name Samson seems to signify a little sun: and according to this allusion, he arose upon Israel after a suitable pre-intimation to his parents. During the morning of his life he shone very bright; but towards the evening he was greatly obscured by clouds: yet when setting, he burst through the gloom, and shone with more splendour than ever. So Jesus, our long expected "Sun of righteousness," arose upon Israel and upon the earth: after shining with glorious and benign lustre during his life, he was obscured by the thickest clouds just before his setting; but when he cried out "It is finished, . . . and gave up the ghost," he shone forth with mild, but most glorious splendour, and died a triumphant conqueror. In very many respects, however, he differed from Samson; especially, as he died praying for his murderers, and arose again to complete the redemption of his people.—Samson seems to have died young, not much above forty years of age, and to have left no family.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. Nothing, but evident duty should prevail with us to venture into those places, where bad examples and licentious characters abound. And even then, we should go with fear and trembling; earnestly beseeching God to "turn away our eyes from beholding vanity," to preserve our hearts from every sinful desire, and to strengthen us to resist every temptation.—Whenever we become unwatchful and self-confident, we are near some humiliating fall: the roving eye readily admits the licentious desire into the heedless heart; and "just being conceived, sin is brought forth," and misery ensues.—The blandishments of beautiful women have often proved

CHAPTER XVII.

Micah an Ephraimite steals money from his mother, which he restores; and she makes him one of it, 1-4. Micah's idolatry, 5, 6. He hires a Levite to be his priest, 7-13.

AND there was a man of "mount Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

2 And he said unto his mother. The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver, that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears; behold, the silver is with me;

a 10:1. Josh. 15:9. 17:15, 18. b 5:23. 1 Pet. 27:16. 1 Sam. 14:24, 28. 26:19. Neh. 13:25 Jer. 48:10. Matt. 26:74. Rom. 9:3. 1 Cor. 16:22. c Prov. 23:24. d Gen. 14:19. 24:30, 31. Ex. 20:7. Ruth 3:10. 1 Sam. 23:21. Ps. 10:3. e 13. 18:5. 1s.

most dangerous temptations, even to pious men: (*Notes, Neh. 13:23-30. Prov. 7:26.*) and Satan would rather see the active and useful servant of God yielding to the enticements of a harlot, and sleeping in Deliah's lap, than boldly venturing the tyrant's rage, and enduring the fiery furnace. Those, who are captivated in this manner, must speedily be exposed to the deepest shame and the most imminent danger. Their reputation, strength, and usefulness will be torn from them; they will betray the cause which they should have served; and their enemies will insult and triumph, and be hardened in prejudices and revilings against religion. The outward peril, which attends such forbidden intercourse, is generally so great, that nothing but blind infatuation can induce men to venture upon it: but who can tell the machinations of the powers of darkness against those, who are stupidly indulging their lusts, and sleeping in the very jaws of destruction?—How lamentable is it to consider, that the goodness of God which preserves men from the immediate effects of their folly, is generally abused into an encouragement to future crimes! for every sinful propensity is strengthened by indulgence. So that even believers are seldom duly humbled for their sins, till they taste the bitter effects of them; and therefore it is eventually better to be chastened with sharpness when they first offend, than to escape with impunity.—Those who have not resolution to give a decided and explicit denial to improper requests, or to flee from their tempters, will soon be induced to equivocate and even to speak direct lies, with which they will afterwards be reproached; and if it be so very difficult, in some instances, to deny others, who have frequent access to us, and great influence over us, what must self-denial in many cases be? (*Notes, Matt. 16:24-28. Tit. 2:11, 12.*)—Companions in iniquity can have no good reasons for trusting one another; and they who betray the cause of God, have no ground to expect any thing else, than to be betrayed by their fellow-creatures: for such as are enslaved to one lust, must not wonder to find their companions under the dominion of another.—Unworthy of a man, and still more of a believer, is that love, which is placed on a worthless object on account of external embellishments, and for the sake of animal gratification; while conscience, honour, and every noble purpose of the soul, are sacrificed to it. When a man is thus "bound in the chain of his own sins," he seems to lose even common sense; and no wickedness in the object of his idolatrous affections can make him sensible of his folly and danger, or willing to renounce the base attachment. This is indeed a "deep ditch," into which many great men, and even some good men, have fallen, but from which few have escaped; and those by a miracle of mercy, and with the loss of almost every thing, except their souls. Whatever a man has already sacrificed to such a criminal passion, still more will be required; no denial will be taken, no bounds assigned to artful and interested importunity, until he has ruined himself and all those who are or ought to be dear to him: for assiduity, dissimulation, and incessant blandishment will overcome the strongest resolutions, and induce compliance with the most unreasonable and ruinous demands; and all counsels, warnings, and past experiences are in this case ineffectual. On this Deliah's lap thousands are lulled into so sound a sleep, that nothing but the flames of hell can awake them!

V. 16-31. Repeated deliverances, if men are not by them made sensible of their folly, and brought to repentance, only increase guilt and make way for more aggravated misery: and if the Lord be provoked to leave sinners to themselves, and to give them up to the lusts of their own hearts; Satan will soon blind and enslave them, and employ them in his basest drudgery.—Every expectation of deliverance or assistance from God, while men are committing known sins, must be vain and presumptuous. They may think to "go forth as at other times;" but they will find their locks shorn, and their strength lost, because "the Lord is departed from them." Nay, if ministers, with the guilt of unrepented sin upon their consciences, continue to preach and administer ordinances with the greatest regularity, their exertions will generally fail of the wonted efficacy, and Satan will disregard their feeble efforts. But it is most lamentable, when this is observable to others, while they themselves seem not at all sensible of the awful change. What in that case can be expected, but that the enemy should blind and enslave them more and more?—Indeed, though the Lord again and again deliver his offending people, in the most extreme danger, yet if they presume upon his goodness, he will severely punish them, and even make them the contempt and reproach of the

"I took it. And his mother said, 'Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son.

3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, 'I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image, and a molten image; now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred *shekels* of

66:3. f Ex. 20:4, 23. Lev. 19:4. Deut. 12:3. Ps. 115:4-8. Is. 40:18-25. 44:9-20. Jer. 10:5-8. 11ab. 2:15, 19. John 16:2. g Is. 46:6, 7. Jer. 10:9, 10.

foolish: he will tear from them all their earthly comforts, and fill their souls with the most exquisite anguish; and, without sending them to hell, he can make their sufferings ten thousand times greater than all the pleasures of sin. Nay, he can cloud their characters with so dark a veil, that his people shall be ready to consider them as hypocrites and apostates. (*Notes, 1 Kings 11:42, 43. P. O. Heb. 4:1-11.*) Thus he will set them up as beacons, to warn others of the rocks on which they split. And though many, by their falls and miseries, will be taught to watch and pray against temptation; yet they will be oppressed by the painful reflection, that multitudes by their crimes will be prejudiced, and hardened in infidelity and ungodliness, to their everlasting destruction. Out of this horrible pit none can escape, but by deep humiliation, earnest cries for mercy, patient submission to correction, and renewed conversion unto God through Jesus Christ. (*Notes, Ps. 51:*) The heaviest sorrows, when they have these effects, will prove most precious favours: the comfort and strength of such humble penitents shall in due time be renewed, and their cruel enemies finally disappointed. Yet even in this case the chastening rod may pursue them to the grave. But having obtained pardon, and the hope of dying in peace and going to glory, they can desire to live for no other purpose, than to wipe off, if possible, the blot which they have cast upon the gospel, and to take vengeance, so to speak, upon Satan and his cause, for the injury which they have sustained; and with their dying lips, or in their dying moments, to render some service to the church of God. And indeed, some who have disgraced the gospel, and rejoiced the hearts of his enemies, have afterwards been so deeply humbled, and have closed their lives in such a manner, as hath more than counterbalanced all, and turned the triumphings of wicked men into confusion. (*Notes, and P. O. 1 Chr. 29:*)—Successful villany will soon be punished: and not only the prayers of the church, but the intercession of Christ himself, will eventually ensure the destruction of those, who treacherously, cruelly, and impenitently hate and persecute his servants. How then can they escape destruction? May God help us to walk humbly and watchfully; to abstain from fleshly lusts, and avoid the beginnings of evil; and to beware of the subtlety of Satan and his agents, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts: and may our unreserved love and entire dependence be placed on the divine Saviour. He conquered by dying, and rose to triumph; and by his power all his true people shall conquer and triumph also. Here they must live mingled with the wicked, and die outwardly in the same manner: but they have a Friend to receive their departing souls, and a place in heaven prepared for them. (*Note, John 14:2, 3. P. O. 1-6.*) Their bodies may or may not be buried together with those of the wicked; but they shall certainly be separated at the resurrection of the dead: the one "shall go away into everlasting punishment," the other "into life eternal."

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1. The sacred historian had, in the preceding chapters, brought down the narrative to the times of Eli, who is thought to have been contemporary with Samson: but in the subsequent chapters he records some transactions, which seem to have taken place not many years after the death of Joshua. It is thought by many, that they occurred before Othniel was raised up to judge Israel; (*Note, 3:9, 10.*) and Phinehas is mentioned, as still living, towards the close of them. (20:28.) "Israel served the Lord... all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua." (27. *Josh. 24:31.*) but it does not appear how many years were intended in this general statement. Joshua died B. C. 1426, or 1427. Eleazar seems to have survived him. (*Josh. 24:33.*) Phinehas is supposed by some to have continued high-priest twenty-five years. The defection after the death of the elders, who survived Joshua, may be supposed to have been gradual; yet the following chapters give the reader an idea of a very general and deep contamination. Perhaps twenty or twenty-two years had elapsed before the beginning of them. Othniel is supposed to have been raised up to be judge some years after this term. The dates affixed at the head of these chapters will be regulated according to these remarks: though this will place them somewhat later than many learned men do.—The annotations on the three last chapters imply, that the author assumes it as clear, that the events recorded were subsequent to those related in this and the following chapter; as the Jews do, or some of them at least. (*Note, 20:20-25.*) Yet many date them at an earlier period, probably because Phinehas is mentioned. The dates will

silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image, and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

5 And the man Micah had ^aan house of gods, and made an ^bephod, and ^cteraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

6 In those days *there was* ^ano king in Israel, but every man did that *which was* ^aright in his own eyes.

7 ¶ And there was a young man out of ^aBeth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there.

8 And the man ^adeparted out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah, to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, ^aas he journeyed.

9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, *I am* a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place.

10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me ^aa father and a priest, and ^aI will give thee ten *shekels* of silver by the year, and ^aa suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

12 And Micah ^aconsecrated the Levite; and

the young man became ^ahis priest, and was in the house of Micah.

13 Then said Micah, ^aNow know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Danites send five men to seek an inheritance for them, 1, 2. Meeting with Micah's Levite, they consult him, and are encouraged to proceed, 3-6. They search Laish, and bring back an encouraging report, 7-10. Six hundred men are sent to surprise the place, 11, 12. They rob Micah of his idols, and entice away his priest, 13-21. Micah pursues them, but is frightened back by threats, 22-28. They take a nish, and call it Dan, 27-29. They set up idolatry; and a Micah's Levite, who was called Jonathan, and his sons after him, become the priests, 30, 31.

IN those days *there was* ^ano king in Israel: and in those days ^athe tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; ^afor unto that day *all their inheritance* had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

2 And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, ^amen of valour, from ^aZorah, and from Eshtaol, ^ato spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who, when they came to ^amount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there.

3 When they were by the house of Micah, ^athey knew the voice of the young man the Levite; and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this place? ^aand what hast thou here?

4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus

a 18:24. Gen. 31:30. *Erra* 1:7. Hos. 8:14. 18:27. 18:14. Ex. 28:4, 15. 1 Sam. 24: 1. 1 Gen. 31:12. *margin*. Hos. 2:4. * Heb. *all the land*. Ex. 29:9. 1 Kings 12: 31. 13:33. 34. Heb. 54. 1 Kx. 24:5. m 18:1. 19:1. 21:25. *con* 36 31. Deut. 33:5. n Deut. 12:8. Ps. 124. Prov. 12:15. 14:12. 16:2. Ec. 11:9. Jer. 11:16, 17. o 19: 12. Gen. 35:19. Ruth 1:1, 2. Mic. 5:2. Matt. 21:5, 6. p 11. Neh. 13:10, 11. q Heb. *in making his sons*. q 11. 18:19. Gen. 45:8. 2 Kings 6:31. 8:9, 9. 13:14. J. 29:16. Is. 22:21. r 18:20. 1 Sam. 2:36. Ez. 13:19. Matt. 28:15. John 12:6.

here, however, be placed according to the former supposition.—But the chronology of this book is peculiarly difficult and uncertain.

V. 2-4. Micah's mother, enraged by the loss of her money, openly imprecated the divine vengeance upon the thief, if he did not restore it, declaring that it was devoted to God by a solemn vow for the benefit of her son: (*Marg. Ref.* b, c, f) and he, having stolen it, was afflicted by this curse, disclosed the theft, and restored the money. (*Note, Prov. 28:24.*) Thus he obtained her blessing, such as it was. In consequence two hundred shekels were expended in making two images; and perhaps the remaining nine hundred shekels, in preparation for the idolatrous worship.

V. 5. *An house of gods.* Or, of God. It is probable, that Micah purposed to worship the God of Israel; but he ignorantly imagined, that, having appointed his son to be a priest, he might in this manner serve God as *acceptably*, as by going up to the tabernacle, and more *conveniently*. (*Note, 8:27.*) Thus idolatry seems to have been first openly set up in Israel, by Micah and his mother. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 20:4, 5. 32:2-6. 1 Kings 12:26-33. Hos. 8:14.*)

V. 6. Either there was no judge at that time, or he did not possess sufficient authority to repress idolatry, as a king might have done. (*Note, 1.*) This seems to intimate, that there were kings when the history was written; and implies, that nothing can be more pernicious to a people, than to be left without coercive authority. (*Notes, 18:7-10. 19:1. Rom. 13:1-5.*)—It is probable also, that the law for appointing judges in every city was not duly attended to. (*Notes, 2:1-5. Deut. 16:18, 19. 17:9-13.*)

V. 7, 8. This man's father was a Levite, but by marriage he was allied to the tribe of Judah, and so had been a sojourner at Bethlehem. But he left that place to seek some other situation. Perhaps, in those quiet times, the tithes were not paid very regularly: yet it can hardly be supposed that a Levite of good character was constrained from mere want, to ramble like a vagabond. He seems to have been a man of an unsettled disposition, who did not choose to be under the control of the priests.

V. 10-13. The terms proposed by Micah do not seem to have been very advantageous: but the Levite thought the situation honourable, and a kind of preferment; especially as Micah spoke of his being a father and a priest. Thus he was induced to intrude into the sacerdotal office; and Micah presumed to consecrate him. (*Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.*) And so satisfied was Micah with what he had done, that he deemed himself sure of the Lord's blessing on that account; for it seems he deemed the priesthood of his son *informal*. (5.) But instead of having now done better, he had added to all his other crimes, that of tempting a Levite to act as a priest, and to commit idolatry. (*Notes, John 16:1-3. Acts 26:9-11.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Old age will not wean the heart from love to worldly objects; and when men have lost their relish for other sinful indul-

gences, avarice frequently acquires double force: but every idol is liable to be torn from them, and their inordinate love increases their grief and resentment for the loss of it.—The curse causeless hurts only the person who vents it; yet when children rob their parents, they may expect from them a curse instead of a blessing, and in consequence the displeasure of God.—Confession and restitution, though attendants on true repentance, do not always imply it. (*Note, Matt. 27:3-5.*)—Those parents who have not by their instructions or examples, taught their children their duty to God, but have been their tempters to ungodliness, cannot reasonably expect that they should perform their duty to them.—Riches are seldom made a good use of: indeed they are commonly idolized, either in themselves, or in those things which the proud and sensual purchase with them.—Men naturally love their own inventions in religion, being more flattering to pride, and more indulgent to their sloth and lusts, than the appointments of God are; and the liberality of superstitious people often shames the niggardliness of the professors of true religion.—They who once deviate from the rule of the sacred Scriptures, will in general wander more and more widely, and bewilder themselves more entirely; and will presumptuously expect a reward for the very practices which God abhors!—When pride, an unsettled temper, ignorance, and sloth, in those appointed to the ministry, meet with poverty or extravagance; by the prospect of secular advantage they may be induced to patronise crimes, and become ringleaders in transgression; while their example and concurrence serve to quiet every remaining scruple in the consciences of others.—Many wealthy people love to have such “*Levites for their priests,*” because instead of reproving their sins, they imbolden them in the commission of them; and induce them to conclude, that there is no reality in religion, as its ministers are so mercenary and ungodly.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. (*Note, 17:6.*) The tribe of Dan had its lot within that at first assigned to Judah, and near to the Philistines: so that, through their own neglect or cowardice, and concurrent causes, they had been in part kept out of possession of it, and were therefore greatly straitened at this time. (*Notes, 1:34, 35. Josh. 19:40-48.*)

V. 2-4. *Hath hired me.* (4) *Marg. Ref. Note, 17: 10-13.*

V. 5, 6. It does not appear that the Danites had consulted the Lord by his high-priest, about their intended enterprise: but when the spies met with this Levite, whom they had known in his former rambles, and were informed by him that he was become a priest, they bethought themselves of inquiring by him; in which their ignorance and inattention were lamentably exposed.—The Levite, it is probable, having gone through his form, answered them according to their inclinations, in the language of piety: (*Notes, 1 Kings 22: 6, 13, 14.*) and his words being verified by the event, raised the reputation of the oracle, and sanctioned the idolatry.—Thus all the mistakes and lies of fortune-tellers monthly prognosticators, and other pretended prophets, are averloshed on

dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest.

5 And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.

6 And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before the Lord is your way wherein ye go.

7 Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing: and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man.

8 And they came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What say ye?

9 And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land.

10 When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth. [Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war.

12 And they went up, and pitched in Kirjath-jearim in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan unto this day; behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.

13 And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

14 Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do.

15 And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him.

16 And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

17 And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war.

18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

21 So they turned and departed, and put the little ones, and the cattle, and the carriage, before them.

22 And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan.

23 And they cried unto the children of Dan: and they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?

24 And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?

25 And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.

26 And the children of Dan turned their way: and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.

27 ¶ And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burnt the city with fire.

28 And there was no deliverer, because it was

17:10. Prov. 28:21. Is. 55:11. Ez. 13:19. Hos. 4:8,9. Mal. 1:10. John 10:12,13. Acts:18—21. 20:33. 1 Tim. 3:3. Tit. 1:1. 2 Pet. 2:3,14,15. 1 Kings 22:5. 2 Kings 16:15. Is. 9:1. Ez. 21:21. Hos. 4:12. Acts 8:10. 1 Th. 1:75,13. 1 Kings 22:12,13. Job 23:8. 1 Deut. 11:12. Ps. 33:13. 1 Kings 19:7. 1 Sam. 1:27,28. Rev. 18:7. 1 Heb. 9:1. 1 Heb. 9:2. 1 Heb. 9:3. 1 Heb. 9:4. 1 Heb. 9:5. 1 Heb. 9:6. 1 Heb. 9:7. 1 Heb. 9:8. 1 Heb. 9:9. 1 Heb. 9:10. 1 Heb. 9:11. 1 Heb. 9:12. 1 Heb. 9:13. 1 Heb. 9:14. 1 Heb. 9:15. 1 Heb. 9:16. 1 Heb. 9:17. 1 Heb. 9:18. 1 Heb. 9:19. 1 Heb. 9:20. 1 Heb. 9:21. 1 Heb. 9:22. 1 Heb. 9:23. 1 Heb. 9:24. 1 Heb. 9:25. 1 Heb. 9:26. 1 Heb. 9:27. 1 Heb. 9:28. 1 Heb. 9:29. 1 Heb. 9:30. 1 Heb. 9:31. 1 Heb. 9:32. 1 Heb. 9:33. 1 Heb. 9:34. 1 Heb. 9:35. 1 Heb. 9:36. 1 Heb. 9:37. 1 Heb. 9:38. 1 Heb. 9:39. 1 Heb. 9:40. 1 Heb. 9:41. 1 Heb. 9:42. 1 Heb. 9:43. 1 Heb. 9:44. 1 Heb. 9:45. 1 Heb. 9:46. 1 Heb. 9:47. 1 Heb. 9:48. 1 Heb. 9:49. 1 Heb. 9:50. 1 Heb. 9:51. 1 Heb. 9:52. 1 Heb. 9:53. 1 Heb. 9:54. 1 Heb. 9:55. 1 Heb. 9:56. 1 Heb. 9:57. 1 Heb. 9:58. 1 Heb. 9:59. 1 Heb. 9:60. 1 Heb. 9:61. 1 Heb. 9:62. 1 Heb. 9:63. 1 Heb. 9:64. 1 Heb. 9:65. 1 Heb. 9:66. 1 Heb. 9:67. 1 Heb. 9:68. 1 Heb. 9:69. 1 Heb. 9:70. 1 Heb. 9:71. 1 Heb. 9:72. 1 Heb. 9:73. 1 Heb. 9:74. 1 Heb. 9:75. 1 Heb. 9:76. 1 Heb. 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*far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that *lieth by* Beth-rehob: and they built a city, and dwelt therein.

29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

30 And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manassch, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan, until the day of the captivity of the land.

31 And they sat them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Levite's concubine commits adultery, and returns to her father, 1, 2. The Levite goes to take her back, and is kindly entertained, 3-9. They depart, a. late hour, and lodge at Gibeah, being entertained by an old man of Ephraim, who returned there, 10-21. The men of the city beat the house, and a wife; the Levite yields up his concubine, who is abused till she dies, 22-28. He divides her body into twelve parts, and sends one to each tribe, 29, 30.

AND it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah.

2 And his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there four whole months.

n7. Josh. 11:8. Ja. 23:4, 12. e Num. 13:21. Rehob. 2 Sam. 10:6. p 20:1. Gen. 14:14. Josh. 19:47. 2 Sam. 17:11. 1 Kings 12:29, 30. 15:20. q Gen. 30:6. 32:28. r Ex. 20:4. Lev. 25:1. Deut. 17:2-7. 27:15. 31:16, 29. s 13:1. 1 Sam. 4:2, 3, 10, 11. 13:7, 8, 10-12. 19:13. 21:12. Josh. 18:1. 1 Sam. 1:3. 4:4. Jer. 7:12. a 17:18. 18:1. 21:25. b 17:1, 8. Josh. 21:30, 33. c Heb. *as soon as a concubine, or a wife, or concubine.* Gen. 22:21. 24:6. 2 Sam. 3:7. 5:13. 16:22. 19:5, 20:3. 1 Kings 11:3. 2 Chr. 11:21. Esth. 2:14. Cant. 6:8, 9. Dan. 5:3. Mal. 2:15. c 17:

Jews, that he was the grandson of Moses, is in all respects highly improbable.—As Dan lay on the northern extremity of the land, none of the judges were able to destroy this idolatry, which continued “all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.” This proves that the captivity here mentioned was that of the ark, by the Philistines, in the time of Eli. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 4: 5*.) It may be supposed that Samuel or David put an end to it.—Jeroboam set up the worship of one of the golden calves in this very city. (*1 Kings, 12:28-30.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. If men were as sensibly affected with the wants of the soul as with those of the body, the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, though distant and future, would not be neglected; and the labour, danger, and self-denial, which lie in the way, would no longer affright or deter them from seeking it.—Whatever valour, wisdom, or diligence we employ in any undertaking, we shall not be successful in a comfortable and profitable way, if we neglect to consult the Lord, and to seek his assistance and blessing.—Ungodly men generally find out those of their own character in every place. And they, who along with a worldly heart, and much ignorance or error, have yet convictions of conscience, that they ought to worship and serve some superior power, often meet with a superstition, or false religion, apparently devised and framed on purpose for them: as indeed it is; for Satan, who works in the children of disobedience, and prompts the devisers of every species of delusion, knows well what will suit the taste, and state of heart, and convenience, of those whom he aims to delude; and he forms his plans accordingly.—Success does not prove our undertakings pleasing to God, any more than a fortunate conjecture proves a man a prophet: for the former is sometimes sent as a curse; and the latter is permitted, in order to punish those who despise and hate the truth. (*Notes, Deut. 13:1-5. 2 Thes. 2:8-12.*)—We ought to be very thankful for good government, and for magistrates who put men to shame for their crimes; without which they can scarcely be prevented from destroying each other. The blessings also of liberty and prosperity call for gratitude: yet when they produce sloth, self-indulgence, and carnal security, they indicate approaching destruction.—Worldly men, finding “no want of any thing that is in the earth,” do not consider the disadvantages which they lie under with respect to their souls; for if their situations or occupations are not consistent with true religion, they can either do without any religion, or adopt one more suited to their convenience.

V. 11-31. Those who are destitute of the fear of God, will seize on whatever they covet, when they possess power, and can do it with impunity: for justice, gratitude, and the rights of hospitality form but feeble barriers in their way. Indeed, injustice and idolatry consist well with each other; for Satan loves “robbery for burnt-offering,” though God “abhors it.”—They who do wrong are commonly much offended, if the injured party dares to complain or remonstrate; and thus theft is frequently an introduction to murder, through

3 And her husband arose, and went after her to speak friendly unto her, and to bring her again, having his servant with him, and a couple of asses; and she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

4 And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there.

5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way.

6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee and tarry all night, and let thine heart be merry.

7 And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.

8 And he rose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried until afternoon, and they did eat both of them.

9 And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant; his father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold now, the day draweth towards evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to

8. Gen. 35:19. Matt. 2:6. d Lev. 21:9. Deut. 22:21. Ex. 16:28. † Or, a year and four months. Heb. days, four months. e 15:1. f Gen. 50:21. Lev. 19:17. 20:10. Hos. 2:14. Matt. 1:19. John 8:4, 5, 11. Gal. 6:1. ‡ Heb. to her heart. Gen. 34:3. g Num. 22:22. § Heb. strengthen. Gen. 1:5. 1 Sam. 14:27-29. 30:12. 1 Kings 13:7. 14:10, 15. John 4:34. Acts 9:19. 19:21. 9:27. 16:25. Ruth 3:7. 1 Sam. 25:36. Esth. 1:10. Luke 12:19. 1 Thes. 5:3. Rev. 11:10, 13. || Heb. till the day declined. ¶ Heb. is weak. ** Heb. it is the pitching time of the day.

the combined influence of avarice, pride, and malignity. But those who rob God of his glory, and tempt others to iniquity, deserve to be plundered by their fellow-creatures; and they who trust in unprincipled persons, need not wonder if they are deceived.—Mercenary priests in every age are ready to go the most disgraceful lengths to obtain preferment, and even to put up their services for sale to the highest bidder: while however they eagerly seize upon the proposed advantage, let them remember that they are increasing guilt, shame, mischief, and condemnation.—When the removal of idols weans the heart from idolatry, the anguish of parting will be made up by the consequent advantage: but wretched are they, who are deprived of their idols, and left under the power of the idolatrous affection! Thus death will rend men from all those worldly objects, on which they have placed their hearts: their gods will be for ever gone, and “what will they have more?” But the case of self-confident hypocrites, when disappointed of all their towering hopes, will be peculiarly dreadful.—Happy they, who renounce all for Christ, and in him have the Lord for their God! no enemies or changes can take away their portion, or their comfort. But if we would have this felicity, we must carefully attend to the word and ordinances of God and be afraid of every deviation from our perfect rule: “for behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1. The events recorded in this and the following chapters, occurred while Phinehas the son of Eleazar was high-priest, and therefore could not take place very long after the death of Joshua. (20:28.) Eleazar seems to have survived Joshua. (*Josh. 24:33.*) Phinehas might continue high-priest for twenty-five or thirty years. I suppose the events of these chapters subsequent to those in the preceding.—There was then no king in Israel, nor any judge who exercised authority over the people in general: and the want of a regular civil government produced many fatal effects, notwithstanding the advantages enjoyed by the Israelites in all other things. (*Note, 17:6.*)

V. 2. This woman seems to have been the Levite's only wife; who was called his concubine, because not admitted to all the privileges of the conjugal relation: (*Note, Gen. 25:5, 6.*) but her father is called his father-in-law, and he is called her husband. (3:4.)—Having been guilty of adultery, she fled from him to escape punishment, or from dread of his resentment.—It is remarkable, that no mention is made of any other Levites in this whole book, except of him who established idolatry at Dan; and of this man, whose concubine proved the occasion almost of extirpation to the tribe of Benjamin, and of great slaughter in the other tribes! Phinehas, the high-priest, is also named.—This both implies a censure on the regular ministers of religion; and confirms the opinion that the regular appointment of judges was neglected, as the Levites were chiefly called to that office.

V. 3, 4. Perhaps the Levite heard, that his wife repented, and was detected under conscious guilt, and alarmed lest she should be made a public example. He therefore went and

an ~~and~~, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry: and ~~to-morrow~~ get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home.

10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus, (which is Jerusalem;) and there were with him two asses saddled; his concubine also was with him. [Practical Observations.]

11 And when they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it.

12 And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the children of Israel; we will pass over to Gibeah.

13 And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah.

14 And they passed on, and went their way, and the sun went down upon them when they were by Gibeah which belongeth to Benjamin.

15 And they turned aside thither to go in, and to lodge in Gibeah: and, when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city; for there was no man that took them into his house to lodging.

16 ¶ And, behold, there came an old man from this work out of the field at even, which was also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah, but the men of the place were Benjamites.

17 And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a wayfaring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?

18 And he said unto him, We are passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward the side of mount Ephraim; from thence am I: and I went to Beth-lehem-judah, but I am now going to the house of the Lord: and there is no man that receiveth me to house.

19 Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servants: there is no want of any thing.

20 And the old man said, Peace be with thee:

howsoever, let all thy wants lie upon me; only lodge not in the street.

21 So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.

23 And the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, do not this folly.

24 Behold, here is my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine, them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you; but unto this man do not so vile a thing.

25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring they let her go.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her lord was, till it was light.

27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold.

28 And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going: but none answered. Then the man took her up upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

29 And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel.

30 And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen, from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.

k Prov. 27:1. Job. 1:13-14. * How to thy tent, I'll be to thee against. 11:8. Josh. 18:28. 2 Sam. 5:5. m 10:1-21. Gen. 10:16. Josh. 13:63. n Josh. 18:25. 25:1. 1 Sam. 10:25. 15:10. 21:1. Hos. 5:8. o 13. Gen. 19:2-8. 19:23. Matt. 23:35. 43. Heb. 13:2. p Gen. 3:19. Ps. 104:23. 124:2. Prov. 13:11. 14:23. 24:27. Ec. 1:13. 5:12. Eph. 4:28. 1 Thes. 4:11-12. 2 Thes. 3:10. q Gen. 16:3. 23:17. r 18. 31:1. 30:18. Josh. 13:1. 1 Sam. 13:7. s Heb. gathered. 15. Ps. 26:8. e 23. 43. 43:23. 1 Sam. 25:8. 1 Chr. 12:19. Luke 10:3,6. John 14:27. 1 Cor. 13. t Rom. 12:13. Gal. 6:6. Heb. 13:2. Jam. 2:15,16. 1 Pet. 4:9. 1 John 3:18. u Gen.

19:23. 24:21-23. x Gen. 18:4. 1 Sam. 25:41. 2 Sam. 11:6. Luke 7:44. John 13:1. 14:15. 1 Tim. 5:10. y 20:5. Gen. 19:4. Hos. 9:9. 10:9. z Deut. 13:13. 1 Sam. 11:5. 2:12. 10:27. 25:25. 2 Cor. 6:15. a Gen. 19:5. Rom. 1:26. 27. 1 Cor. 6:9. Jude 7. b Gen. 19:6-7. c 20:6. Gen. 34:7. Josh. 7:15. 2 Sam. 13:12. d Gen. 19:8. Rom. 13:9. e Gen. 34:2. marg. Deut. 22:24. f Heb. the matter of the day. Gen. 4:1. g Jer. 7:8. Hos. 7:1. 7:9. 10:9. Eph. 4:19. h 3. 27. Gen. 13:12. 1 Pet. 3:6. 190:7. 1 Kings 1:29. 1:2-6. 1 Sam. 11:7. Rom. 10:2. 1 Deut. 21:22,23. m 20:7. Prov. 11:14. 13:10. 15:22. 24:15. 24:6.

spoke friendly and affectionately to her, and a reconciliation was speedily effected, at which his father-in-law rejoiced.—The Levite's choice seems to have been imprudent, and his affection inordinate; but in other respects his character appears consistent with his profession. (Note, 15:1,2.)

V. 12. This conduct of the Levite, in refusing to seek a lodging among idolaters, shows that he was very unlike the Levite of whom we read in the foregoing chapters; and it was proper that he should by his example protest against the disobedience of his people, in associating with the idolaters, and even contracting marriages with them.—Jerusalem appears to have been at this time almost wholly occupied by the Jebusites; and if any of Judah or Benjamin dwelt there, their number and influence must have been inconsiderable.

V. 13-17. Marg. Ref.

V. 18. Shiloh lay near to the Levite's habitation in mount Ephraim. Either his employment required his attendance at the sanctuary; or he purposed to offer sacrifices, suited to the circumstances of his family, before he returned home.

V. 19-21. Marg. Ref. Job 31:32. Notes, Gen. 18:3-8. 19:1-3.

V. 22-25. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 19:4-9.) It seems the men finally refused the Ephraimite's daughter; but at length, attracted by the beauty of the Levite's concubine, they went off with her. They thought also of murdering the Levite; perhaps because he would not at first give up his concubine, and because he resisted their brutal violence. (20:5.)

V. 26-30. The justice of God was displayed even by the enormous wickedness of these men.—Adultery was punishable by death; this woman having committed adultery was about to escape; but in this dreadful manner her iniquity found her out, and she was punished in kind: (Lev. 20:10. Notes, Num. 32:23.) yet this by no means implies, that she did not repent and find mercy. (2 Sam. 18:5.)—It had an

inhuman appearance, thus to mangle the dead corpse of this unhappy woman: but it was intended to excite a more general attention, and a keener resentment against so horrible a crime, which called for a punishment proportionably severe. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. Men are seldom fully aware of the consequences of yielding to temptation; and few sins are followed with such fatal and durable effects as adultery. But it becomes ministers, and indeed all Christians, to show a readiness to forgive and be reconciled, without upbraiding those who have most inexcusably injured them; and to speak comfortably to the penitent, especially when in danger of "being swallowed up of over much sorrow." (Note, 2 Cor. 2:5-11.)—External attractions are very deceitful, and often prove an occasion to the possessors, as well as to others, of much sin and misery, nay of final destruction: those therefore who are thus distinguished, instead of being vain, have peculiar cause to tremble; and should be doubly watchful against temptation, and instant in prayer for the preserving grace of God. (Notes, Gen. 39:7-10.)—So much depends on the character and behaviour of the ministers of religion, that if they marry with improper persons from corrupt motives, they will be sure to find either a snare or an affliction.—Kindness is due to those who behave with affection in the several relations of life; but every man has his proper place and duty which require his attendance: pressing importunities may therefore be carried too far; and they very frequently are, and induce imprudent and prejudicial concessions. For it is always advisable to set about our work early; and what we call time enough, generally proves too little.

V. 11-30. How changeable are human affairs! Our brightest prospects are often unexpectedly clouded, and the deepest calamities suddenly overtake us. We should therefore learn to moderate our affections, to lower our hopes as to

CHAPTER XX.

Israel assembles at Mizpeh, and the Levite states his wrong, 1-7. The assembly resolves to punish the men of Gilead, 8-11. The Benjamites, when restrained, refuse to deliver them up, and prepare for war, 12-17. By dint of direction Judah goes first to fight with them; yet the Israelites are defeated twice with great loss, 18-23. They humble themselves before God, with fasting and sacrifices, and are promised success, 24-28. They employ a stratagem, and destroy all the tribes of Benjamin, except six hundred men, who flee to the rock Rimmon, 29-48.

THEN all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD ⁱⁿ Mizpeh.

2 And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword.

3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.) Then said the children of Israel, Tell us, how was this wickedness?

4 And the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, I came unto Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge:

5 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night,

a 2,8,11,21:5. Deut. 13:12, &c. Josh. 2:12. b 1 Sam. 11:7,9. 2 Sam. 19:14. Ezra 3:1. Neh. 8:1. c 18:23. 1 Sam. 3:20. 2 Sam. 10:23:2. 1 Chr. 21:2. 2 Chr. 30:5. d Num. 32:1,40. Josh. 17:1. 2 Sam. 2:9. e 18:26, 11:14. Josh. 15:38, 18:26. 1 Sam. 7:10, 11. 2 Kings 25:21. e 15:17. 8:10. 2 Sam. 24:9. 2 Kings 9:36. h Prov. 22:3. Matt. 5:25. Luke 12:58,59. 14:31,32. i Heb. the men the Levite. j 19:13-23. k Gen. 19:4-8. i Heb. humbled. Rev. 22:21. Ez. 22:10,11. 11:29,29. n 10:19,23.

this world, and to stand prepared for the worst.—They who teach others, should put themselves to any inconvenience to enforce their precepts by their own example.—More inhumanity and villany may be found among degenerate professors of Christianity, than among infidels: and in general, where we expect the most kindness, we meet with the greatest injuries, that we may learn to “cease from man.”—An unfeeling disregard to the wants of others generally accompanies sensuality and ungoverned lusts; and there are numbers who imitate the example of those, whose shameful crimes have been recorded in their punishment; to one who copies the examples of hospitality, integrity, and piety, mentioned with commendation in the Scriptures. (*P. O. Gen. 19:1-14.*)—When men have cast off the fear of God, they are frequently given up to their own vile lusts, even to disgrace human nature, and to exceed the very beasts in brutishness. (*Note, Rom. 1:24-27.*) and Israelites especially, who rebel against the light, and grow hardened under the means of grace, will become as abandoned as the inhabitants of Sodom, and far more inexorable.—When iniquity becomes generally triumphant, few will dare to protest against it; and it is safer to venture into a den of lions than into such recesses of iniquity. Yet in the worst of times, there are some who venture scorn and reproach, in being kind to the servants of God for his sake; and who do not grudge the expense of hospitality: for while idleness and sensual lusts waste a man’s substance, honest labour and frugality afford the means of being liberal. But such persons live as strangers in this world, and must expect to be abused by their wicked neighbours, except when an equitable government affords them benign protection.—In imitating the good actions of God’s people, men are very liable to be betrayed into their faults, against which they need be doubly circumspect: and an unbelieving policy often induces them to make unwarrantable concessions; but committing sin to avoid danger will generally involve them in still greater difficulties.—The righteous Lord permits transgressors to execute his just vengeance on one another: and if the scene described in this chapter appears exceedingly horrible, what will be the discoveries of the day of judgment! Yet such is human nature! And though few believe the humbling truth, the seeds of all this wickedness are in every human heart! and if we have not committed such abominations in our lives, we owe the more gratitude to the Lord, for the restraints of his providence, or the influences of his grace. While therefore it behoves those in authority to “consider, take advice, and speak their minds,” by what means crimes may best be prevented, or so punished that others may “hear, and fear, and do no more such wickedness;” we may each of us consider, how to escape from the wrath to come, to mortify the sins of our own hearts, to resist Satan’s temptations, and to avoid the pollutions that are in the world; and how we may best be prepared for meeting temporal calamities, and enabled to extract benefit from them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. No mention is here made of any judge, or great council of the nation; though it is generally thought that the council of seventy elders subsisted at this time. Each tribe also appears to have had some kind of internal government, to which the Levite sent his message; (19:29.) yet independent of the supreme court, which was or ought to have been held statelly at the place of the sanctuary: (*Notes, Deut. 16:18,19. 17:9-13.*) and by their united determination, the principal persons and the

and thought to have slain me; and my concubine have they forced, that she is dead.

6 And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel.

7 Behold ye are all children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel.

8 And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house.

9 But now this shall be the thing which we will do to Gibeah, we will go up by lot against it:

10 And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man.

12 And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you?

13 Now therefore deliver us the men, the child

Gen. 31:7. Josh. 7:15. 2 Sam. 13:12. 3. 6. Ex. 19:16. Deut. 1:9. 11:1,2. 1 Cor. 5:1,6,10-12. 15:9. 16:9. 18:1. 19:11. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 164:1. 165:1. 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upon Gibeah; and the liers-in-wait ¹drew themselves along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword.

38 Now there was an appointed ¹sign between the men of Israel ²and the liers-in-wait, that they should make a great ³flame with smoke to rise up out of the city.

39 And when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began to ⁴smite and kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as ⁵in the first battle.

40 But when the flame began to arise up out of the city with ⁶a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites ⁷looked behind them, and behold, the ⁸flame of the city ascended up to heaven.

41 And when the men of Israel turned again, the men of Benjamin ⁹were amazed: for they saw that evil ¹⁰was come upon them.

42 Therefore they turned ¹¹their backs before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but ¹²the battle overtook them: and them which ¹³came out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them.

43 Thus they ¹⁴enclosed the Benjaminites round about, and ¹⁵chased them, and trode them down ¹⁶with ease, ¹⁷over against Gibeah toward the sun-rising.

* Or, made a long sound with the trumpets. Ex. 19:13. Josh. 6:5. † Or, time. ‡ Heb. with. § Heb. elevation. || 131. ¶ Heb. smite the wounded. 32. k Gen. 19:28. Cant. 3:6. Joel 2:30. Rev. 19:3. †† Josh. 8:20. ††† Heb. whole consumption. 15:9,10. Is. 13:8,9. 33:14. Luke 17:27,28. 21:26. 1 Thes. 5:3. 2 Pet. 2:12. Rev. 6:13-17. 18:8-10. ** Heb. I smote them. †††† Hos. 9:9. 10:9. ††††† Josh. 8:20. 22. †††††† Or, from Menuchah. ††††††† Heb. unto over against. †††††††† Josh. 15:32. q 15.

smote Benjamin. (35) Though the numbers of the Israelites were immensely superior to those of Benjamin: though their stratagem was well laid and executed, and the battle bravely fought; yet the inspired historian ascribes the victory to the Lord as entirely as if he had smitten the Benjamites by miracle. (Notes, 4:15. Josh. 10:9,10.)

V. 43-48. It is stated before that the armed men of Benjamin were 26,700: (15) only 25,100 on any computation are mentioned as slain in this battle: (35,44,45.) yet no more than 600 survived. (47) The rest, amounting to 1000 men, must therefore have been slain in the former engagements, or in the destruction of their cities: for it does not appear that any escaped except the 600 men. After this the Israelites proceeded to destroy the unarmed Benjamites, with all their women and children, and cattle, and houses, and cities. This indiscriminate slaughter and devastation cannot be vindicated; for none but Canaanites, and idolatrous cities in Israel, were to be thus punished. But the people being actuated by vehement indignation, had hastily devoted the whole tribe, by a solemn curse, to utter destruction: and the Lord was pleased to permit these dire transactions, as an awful example to future ages of his vengeance against those who commit such abominations, and those who countenance and protect others in them.—But yet it did not prevent the growth of ungodliness in Israel; so that “the battle in Gibeah against the workers of iniquity did not overtake them.” (Note, Hos. 10:9-11.)—It does not, however, appear that the Israelites attempted to appropriate any of the spoil: so that they were not actuated by mercenary motives. (Note, 21:16-18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-25. We are again called to contemplate the fatal effects of indulged lusts, and taught to mortify every sinful inclination.—Indignation against sin, zeal, promptitude, self-denial, unanimity, and resolution in bringing criminals to justice, are very commendable, when united with a careful investigation of facts and circumstances, that the innocent may not be involved with the guilty: yet repentance of sins, personal and national, with fruits meet for repentance, a dependence on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and grace, and an application to him for direction and success, are indispensably necessary to ensure his acceptance and assistance.—Nature can abhor the crimes of others, some of them at least; but grace teaches us to loathe our own. Nature prompts to punish others with severity: grace inclines us to exercise severity against our own sinful propensities, and tenderness toward the persons of others.—If we attempt, however, to execute wrath upon offenders, or even to reprove and reform them, while we are under the guilt of unrepented and allowed sin in our hearts and lives: it is merciful in God to rebuke us sharply for our hypocrisy, and not leave us to be hardened through impunity: nor can we reasonably hope to be useful to others unless our own sins are pardoned. (Notes, Matt. 7:1-5. Rom. 2:1-3,17-24.)—We should not judge of the final event of things, unless we can determine it by the divine law. And if we are baffled in our endeavours, though honestly meant and zealously persisted in, to serve the cause of God; we ought not to infer that we should desist, or content ourselves in our ill success: but we are reminded to inquire, whether we have begun our work in the proper manner and

44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men: all these ¹were men of valour.

45 And they turned, and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of ²Phimmon: and they gleaned of them in the high-ways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them.

46 So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were ³twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword: all these ⁴were men of valour.

47 But ⁵six hundred men turned, and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

48 And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and ⁶smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of ⁷every city, as the beast, and all that ⁸came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that ⁹they came to.

CHAPTER XXI.

The people lament over Benjamin; are in difficulty, having sworn not to give a wife to any of that tribe; and inquire after such as had not joined them, having sworn also to put them to death, 1-7. On that account they destroy the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, except four damsels, whom they give to that number of the remaining Benjamites, 8-15. The elders consult, how to find wives for the rest consistently with their oath; and by their advice they carry off the virgins who danced at Shiloh, 16-23. The people separate and return home, 24, 25.

NOW the men of Israel ¹had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, ²There shall not any of us give ³his daughter unto Benjamin to wife.

2 And the people came to ⁴the house of God,

35. † 21:13. Ps. 103:9,10. Is. 1:9. Jer. 14:7. Lam. 3:32. Hab. 3:2. †† Deut. 13:15-17. 2 Chr. 25:13. 28:6-9. Prov. 18:19. ††† Heb. was found. †††† Heb. were found. ††††† 2 Sam. 9:4. 2 Chr. 4:2. 5. 11:30,31. 1 Sam. 14:24. Ec. 9:2. Mark 6:23. Acts 23:12. Rom. 10:2. c Ex. 34:12-16. Deut. 7:2,3. d 12. 20:18,23,26. Josh. 18:1.

spirit; whether our private conduct do not blight our public endeavours: whether we have not been precipitate in our measures; whether we have duly adverted to our own character as sinners, and are habitually exercising “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” whether we have not failed of humility and tenderness towards others; and, by self-preference and self-confidence, provoked the Lord to leave us experimentally to learn what we are in our selves, and what we can do without him. Many an honest and zealous endeavour, in a good cause, has attained but little success, for such reasons as these. We should therefore strictly examine ourselves, and be deeply humbled for our sins; praying earnestly, that God “would not condemn us, but show us wherefore he contendeth with us.”

V. 26-48. Solemn times set apart for fasting and prayer are never more seasonable, than when we are constrained to lament the ill success, which has attended our labours to glorify God and promote his cause, whether as ministers or private Christians. When our failures have this effect, they will promote our success; our very mistakes will be overruled to teach us wisdom, and our weakness will prove an occasion of increasing our spiritual strength: Satan, and his most formidable agents, will in due time be constrained to give ground; and whatsoever we attempt shall prosper. In the mean time we should thankfully accept of chastisement, and not despair of that success which we at first prematurely expected.—But it is very difficult to temper zeal with tenderness, and boldness with meekness and wisdom: impetuosity hurries us into unwarrantable excesses, or timidity stops short of proper decision. We ought therefore to watch carefully over our own spirits, and to pray continually to be preserved from this “strange fire” in the work of God: and the same considerations should induce us to make candid allowances for those, who are betrayed into similar or contrary mistakes.—But “evil pursueth sinners:” their triumphing is short, and increases their hardness and presumption, and how dreadful will be their case, when they shall see destruction coming upon them, without any possibility of escape. Hitherto there is space given for repentance, a refuge provided, mercy proclaimed, and a throne of grace erected: thither let sinners come, and plead the Saviour’s name, and they shall yet be safe and happy. But “how will they escape, who neglect so great salvation?” All things will combine to hasten and enhance their condemnation; especially that of men who live under the light of the gospel. And all, who patronise and delight in the workers of iniquity, will as accomplices share their awful doom. (Note, Rom. 1:32.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1. The vehement indignation excited by the brutal conduct of the men of Gibeah, and the support given them by the tribe of Benjamin, induced the Israelites, without due consideration, to bind themselves by a solemn oath and awful curse, that none of them would give his daughter to wife to any Benjamite. (Notes, 19-21. 11:30,31. 1 Sam. 14:24-46. 25:21,22,39-42. Matt. 14:8-11.) They deemed those, who were capable of such atrocious conduct towards, the wife of another man, or of vindicating it in others, unworthy to be married to any of the daughters of Israel; and thus they ranked them with the Canaanites, and other idolaters! Had this oath been

and abode there till even before God, and "lifted up their voices, and wept sore ;

3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?

4 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early, and "built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.

5 And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel, that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? for they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death.

6 And the children of Israel "repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day :

7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have "sworn by the LORD, that we will not give them of our daughters to wives?

8 And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from "Jabesh-gilead to the assembly.

9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there.

10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, "Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children.

11 And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man.

12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young "virgins, that

had known no man by lying with any male : and they brought them unto the camp to "Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin that were in the rock Rimmon, and to "call peaceably unto them.

14 And Benjamin came again at that time ; and they gave them wives, which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead : and yet so they sufficed them not.

15 And the people "repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. [Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?

17 And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.

18 Howbeit, we may not give them wives of our daughters : for the children of Israel have "sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

19 Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly, in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, "on the east side "of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.

20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards ;

21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to "dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch ye every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.

24. Gen. 27:38, 1 Sam. 30:4. ¶ Deut. 29:24, Josh. 7:9-9, Ps. 74:1, 90:12, Prov. 19:3, Is. 63:17, Jer. 12:1, g Ps. 78:34, 35. Hos. 5:15, h 6:36, Ex. 20:21, 25, 2 Sam. 24:18, 25, 1 Kings 8:64, Heb. 13:10, i 1:18, 5:23, Lev. 27:28, 29, 1 Sam. 11:7, Jer. 45:10, k 15: 20-23, 2 Sam. 2:25, Hos. 11:8, Luke 19:41, 42, 11:18, 1 Sam. 14:28, 29, 45, m 1 Sam. 11:1, 3, 31:11-13, 2 Sam. 2:56, n 5, Deut. 19:13, 1 Sam. 13:1, Josh. 1:5, 1 Sam. 15:3, o Num. 31:17, 18, Deut. 2:34, p Heb. knoweth the lying with man, q Heb. women, virgins, r 20:18, 23, Josh. 18:1, Ps. 78:50.

Jer. 7:12, s Heb. and spake and called, q 20:47, Josh. 15:32, s Or, proclaim peace, Deut. 20:10, Is. 57:19, Luke 10:5, Eph. 2:17, r 12: 20:47, 1 Cor. 7:2, s See on 6:17, t Num. 26:55, 36:7, u See on 1: 11:35, x Ex. 32:14-16, Lev. 23:24, 6:10, 34, Num. 10:10, 28:16, 26, 28, 12, Deut. 16:1, 10:13, Ps. 81:3, John 5:1, 7:2, j Heb. from year to year, k Or, toward the sun-rising, l Or, on, y 11:34, Ex. 15:20, 1 Sam. 18:6, 2 Sam. 6:14, 21, Ps. 149:3, 150:4, Ec. 3:4, Jer. 31:13, Matt. 10:17, Luke 15:25.

rigidly adhered to, either the whole tribe must have been extirpated, or the survivors must have violated the law by marrying heathen wives. (Note, Acts 23:12-22.)

V. 2, 3. When the anger and resentment of the people began to subside, and they had time for cool reflection, they bewailed the consequences of their victory, with every expression of vehement sorrow ; and they seemed even to have kept a day of fasting and prayer : yet it is evident that they did not properly repent of their own misconduct, or they would not have acted, as they afterwards did, to the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead. (Note, 9-12.) If it was likely, that "a tribe should be lacking in Israel," it might be justly imputed to their un-commanded and most unreasonable and cruel slaughter of the women, who could not be supposed to approve the conduct of the men of Gibeah, or refuse to give them up to be punished ; and of the children who had committed no fault, and ought not to have been put to death for the crimes of their parents. (Notes, 20:43-48. Num. 31:14-18. Deut. 24:16.) In respect to the devoted Canaanites, and cities in Israel wholly given up to idolatry, the Lord himself had commanded the women, (who were as prone to idolatry as the men,) and the children also, to be slain ; but the case of Benjamin was of a very different nature.

V. 4. As so great a multitude was assembled, and there were so many occasions for burnt-offerings, thank-offerings, and vows : it is probable that the brazen altar was found insufficient, and that this was erected at Shiloh as a temporary addition to it for the present occasion. (Note, 1 Kings 8:63-65.)

V. 5. They who, when summoned, refused to join on this occasion, were doubtless blame-worthy, and deserved punishment : but this did not warrant their brethren to devote them to destruction by "a great oath." (Note, Lev. 27:28, 29.) They were far too backward in attempting to extirpate the Canaanites, the devoted enemies of God ; and they neglected to punish the idolatrous Danites : yet without hesitation they consigned to utter destruction, as accursed of God, all such of their brethren as should slight their authority ! (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Sam. 14:24-34.)

V. 9-12. Jabesh-gilead lay at a distance, beyond Jordan, on the borders of Ammon, and perhaps the inhabitants had not heard of the vow which Israel had made. (Note, 1 Sam. 11:1-3.) But if they had been guilty of neglect or disaffection to the common cause, they had not assisted the Benjaminites : and yet when the people were lamenting the desolations of that tribe, they proceeded to treat those, who were comparably less criminal, with equal rigour ! They seem,

however, to have considered themselves as engaged by their oath to destroy them utterly : yet they directed the detachment sent on this service, to spare the virgins, or unmarried women, of good character ; probably with reference to the orders given concerning the Midianitish women. (Note, Num. 31:14-18.) But if the vow would admit of this limitation, why could they not spare the other women and children, and innocent persons, and only punish the criminals ? The women and children were not required to join the army, and were in no degree accessory to the crime of the men. It does not appear that they asked counsel of the Lord before they proceeded to action : and the habit of military executions, contracted in the wars of Canaan, in obeying the express command of God, had no doubt too great influence on them in this transaction, which was entirely of a different nature. Indeed convenience, rather than justice or piety, seems to have induced them to spare the virgins, that they might extricate themselves from the difficulties in which their other rash oath had involved them ; hoping, perhaps, that a sufficient number would be found.—The four hundred, here mentioned, seem to have been marriageable : and it is not certain, whether the female children were spared or not.—"The land of Canaan" (12) here denotes the country west of Jordan.

V. 16-18. The whole inheritance allotted to the tribe belonged to the survivors, and therefore wives must be procured them, that they might be replenished to occupy it. Thus the remnant of the Benjaminites were unexpectedly advanced to great affluence, by the miserable destruction of their relations ; and had it not been for the oath, many in the other tribes would no doubt have readily contracted affinity with them. Hence it appears that the people acted conscientiously, as reverencing an oath, though they erred in judgment concerning it ; being only bound to repent of having rashly entered into such a perplexing and unwarrantable engagement. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1.)

V. 19-21. (Marg. Ref.) Sacred dances formed a part of the religious solemnities under the Mosaic dispensation : and as this feast was observed at Shiloh, it may be supposed that it was a religious festival, perhaps the feast of tabernacles. These dances, however, were of young women alone, without either men or married women.—The counsel and implied permission given to the Benjaminites, were a mere evasion of the vow ; and also gave a direct license to fraud, violence, and the marriage of children without the consent of their parents : and if that might have been despised with, the Benjaminites could have found themselves wives without the others giving them their daughters

22 And *it shall be*, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, 'Be favourable unto them for our sakes; because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not ^agive unto them at this time, *that ye should be guilty*.

23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took *them* wives according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they

^a Or, *Gratify us in them*. Philom. 9-12. z 14. Gen. 1:27. 7:13. Mark 10:6-8. 1 Cor. 7:2. a 1:7, 18. Prov. 20:25. b 20:48. c 17:6. 18:1. 19:1. d 18:7.

V. 22. *To each man his wife.*] In this diminished state of the tribe, when every Benjamite could have maintained several wives, and when the restoration of it seemed to require this measure, the elders only devised how to procure one for each man; whence it appears, that polygamy, though connived at, was not generally practised or countenanced. (*Note, Gen. 7:1.*) Neither did any one propose sending them to the neighbouring nations to procure wives; by which it is probable, that marriages with them were seldom contracted at that time.

V. 23. Thus the remains of the tribe began to increase; and it is thought by many, that Ehud was raised up from this tribe to be the judge of Israel, after it had been thus diminished.

V. 25. *Notes, 17:6. 18:7-10.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. When the passions are vehemently excited, those measures appear needful, which are afterwards perceived to be unreasonable and unlawful; and therefore, when we at all suspect this to be our case, we should be sure to proceed with great caution and deliberation, if we would not make work for bitter repentance. This danger attends all contests, public and private; and a good cause often becomes the occasion of great crimes, as the excess of zeal carries men beyond all the bounds of equity and humanity.—Well might the politic Romans refuse a triumph to the commander who conquered in civil war; in which the common interest is weakened, and the common enemies exult, whatever party acquires the ascendancy. Such unauthorised contentions are generally conducted with the most pertinacious fury, and envenomed resentment, through the depravity of the human heart and the subtlety of Satan. (*Note, Prov. 18:19.*)—But this enemy is most of all gratified, when he can excite divisions and contentions in the church, by which the truth is disgraced, the weak and prejudiced are stumbled, and the enemies of religion alone rejoiced. Yet many persons of apparent godliness use greater asperity against their brethren, who are not exactly of their mind, than against the avowed opposers of all religion! But contests thus managed end in bitterness; and the combatants will ere long weep over the effects of their own success.—Nothing can be more absurd, than solemn oaths and vows made in the heat of passion: many have by them entangled themselves in inextricable perplexity; and been thus induced to add one crime to another, or to use the most disingenuous evasions and equivocations. Of all things,

went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them.

24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 In those days *there was* no king in Israel, every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.

Deut. 12:8. Ps. 12:4. Prov. 3:5. 14:12. Ec. 11:9. Mic. 2:1, 2.

such solemn and important engagements require the most cautious reflection on future probable consequences.—Our penitent confessions, and devotional exercises, are too often succeeded by relapses into sin, for want of simply seeking direction from God, and depending on him to uphold us.—Ever necessary justice should be executed with deep concern and men would not be forward in inflicting vengeance on the less guilty, while more atrocious criminals were spared, were they not more ambitious of dominion for themselves than zealous for the glory of God.—Even lawful employments may induce habits, which will be apt to influence the conduct in concerns of another nature, and with very bad effect: we should therefore seek for self-knowledge, keep a strict watch over our hearts, and daily consult the word of God as the rule of our duty.

V. 16-25. When even great offenders are exceedingly cast down, they should be treated with gentleness, and preserved, if possible, from temptations to despair and total apostasy: (*Note, 2 Cor. 2:5-11.*) and every act of apparent severity should be connected with evident disinterestedness.—Too often the very ordinances of God degenerate into a mere form, and carnal mirth supplants holy rejoicing; but those scenes, which the dissipated and sensual most delight in, expose them to unthought-of consequences, and give Satan and designing men their utmost advantage against them: all our cheerfulness should therefore be tempered with reflection and watchfulness.—Children, who marry without the consent of their parents, are in general very culpable; and those are still more deeply criminal who enice them to do so; yet when the matter cannot be remedied, it is commonly the parent's duty and wisdom to be favourable, and to make the best of it.—That men can be so absurd, as to counsel others to acts of treachery or violence, and to countenance them in such evils, from a sense of duty, forms a striking proof of the blindness of the human mind when left to itself, and of the fatal effects of an ignorant or erroneous conscience.—Our troubles in this world may be succeeded by seasons of comfort, and end in our advantage: but they who are cut off in their sins, sink into evil, only evil, and that for ever.—Finally, we should be thankful for good magistrates, to restrain the violence of wicked men: but the fear and love of God, if we are Christians, will deter us from "doing what is right in our own eyes," except as they are opened to behold the excellency of his most holy law, and as our hearts are so renewed as to delight in obeying it.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

THIS book is a kind of appendix to that of Judges, and an introduction to the subsequent history: and it is most probable, that it was written by Samuel, after he had anointed David to be king.—Ruth, a Moabitess, having been married to the Son of Elimelech, of the tribe of Judah; after the death of her husband and father-in-law, accompanied Naomi, her mother-in-law, into the land of Israel, from love to her, and to true religion: there she was married to Boaz, a near kinsman, and thus brought into the line of David, and consequently of Christ the Son of David. The chief events occurred at Beth-lehem, the city of David; whose genealogy from Pharez, the son of Judah, concludes the book, and is attested by the Evangelists Matthew and Luke.—It is not easy to fix the Chronology of these events: they occurred in the days when the judges ruled; but there is no evidence to determine exactly under which of them.—The narrative itself is very interesting and instructive. It shows the condescending providential care of God to the minutest concerns of his people: and the circumstance of a Moabitess becoming an ancestor of Christ, seems to have been a pre-intimation of the calling of the Gentiles into his church.

B. C. 1322.

CHAPTER I.

Elimelech induced by famine to sojourn in Moab dies there, 1-3. His two sons, having married women of Moab, die without children; and Naomi, Elimelech's widow, prepares to return to Israel, 4-6. Orpah and Ruth, her daughters-in-law, propose to accompany her: she dissuades them, and Orpah returns back, 7-14. Ruth determines to go with her, 15-18. They arrive at Beth-lehem, and Naomi answers the inquiries of her neighbours, 19-22.

NOW it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the

a Judg. 2:16. * Heb. *judged*. b Gen. 12:10. 26:1. 43:1. Lev. 26:19. 1 Pet. 28: 23, 24, 38. 2 Sam. 21:1. 1 Kings 17:1-12. 18:2. 2 Kings 8:1, 2. Ps. 105:16. 107: 34.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Elimelech seems to have been blameable, in removing from the ordinances and people

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land: and a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

2 And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

a Jer. 14:1. Ez. 14:13, 21. Joel 1:10, 11, 16-20. Am. 4:6. c Judg. 17:8. 19:1, 2. d 20. e Gen. 35:19. 1 Sam. 1:1. 17:12. Mic. 5:2. * Heb. *were*.

of God. The famine was not so extreme but that others could endure it; and he evidently was a person of property

3 And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died ; and she was left, and her two sons.

4 And they took them ^awives of the women of Moab; the name of the one *was* Orpah, and the name of the other ^bRuth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

B. C.] 5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both
1912.] of them; and the woman was left of her two
sons and her husband.

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab, how that the LORD had ¹visited his people ²in giving them bread.

7 Wherefore ^ashe went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her: and ^athey went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, ¹Go, return each to her mother's house : ²the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with ³the dead, and with me.

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find ^{rest,}
each of *you* in the house of her husband. Then
^{she}kissed them: and they lifted up their voice,
and wept.

10 And they said unto her, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? *are* there yet *any more* sons in my womb, ^{*}that they may be your husbands?

12 Turn again, my daughters, go *your way*; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, *if* I should have an husband also to-night, and should also bear sons;

13 Would ye ^ttarry for them till they were

2 Kings 1:1, Ps. 34:19, Heb. 12:16-10, 11, Jer. 2:3, 23:3, Kings 11:1-2,
 b Matt. 1:5, 1, Gen. 32:39, Ps. 49:30-31, Jer. 2:19, k Is. 49:21, Matt. 22:23-
 27, Luke 7:12, 1 Gen. 21:1, Ex. 3:6, 4:31, 1 Sam. 2:24, Luke 1:88, 194:5
 1 Pet. 2:12, m Gen. 28:30, 48:15, Ex. 16:4-6, 10, 14:15, 11:15, 13:25, 14:5,
 15:14, 17:30, 30:8, Is. 55:10, Matt. 1:10, 13:12, 13:17, 13:23, 13:30, 10:14, Ex.
 16:13, 17:30, 30:8, 13:12, 13:17, 13:23, 13:30, 10:14, Ex. 16:13, 17:30, 30:8,
 r 5:2, 20, Eph. 4:12, 6:23, Col. 3:19-24, a 3:1, 1 Tim. 2:7, 29:11, 4:15,
 Acts 20:37, u Ps. 116:8, 138:3, Zech. 5:23, x Gen. 38:1, Heb. 2:55, y
 1 Pet. 1:7, 1 Tim. 5:9, * Or, *I were with an husband, 1 Heb. hope, 3 Heb. I have*
been deceived, 4 Gen. 28:12, 1 Kings 2:28, 2:37, 2:42, 2:43, 2:44, 2:45,
 b 2:48, 3:9-10, 3:11, 3:12, 3:13, 3:14, 3:15, 3:16, 3:17, 3:18, 3:19, 3:20, 3:21,
 b 4:4, 10:30, Prov. 17:17, 18:24, Is. 1:11, Zech. 8:23, Matt. 16:24, John

and not likely to want the necessities of life, though Jewish traditions of his rank and dignity are entitled to little credit. (*Note*, 19—21.) Probably, he thought that he could live better and at less expense in the land of Moab, than in Canaan; but it terminated in the empoverishing and wasting of his family.—*Elimelech* signifies *my God a king*, and "*Mahlon*" and "*Chilion*" seem to denote *sickness and consumption*; they having perhaps been children of a weakly constitution.

4, 5. There is no reason to think, that either Orpah or Ruth was proselyted to the religion of Israel before marriage; and consequently Mahlon and Chilion directly violated the divine law; for which some think their premature death without children was a punishment. (*Lev. 20:20,21.*) But their marriage with Moabitish women was the natural effect of Elimelech's conduct, in bringing them acquainted with the women of Moab, and removing them to a distance from the worshippers of God. Thus they settled among idolaters; and had they left children, there would have been great danger of their being incorporated among them. (*Notes, Gen. 3:10—12. 14:12. 19:1,14,26,31—38.*) Probably Elimelech died soon after he came into the land of Moab, and his two sons followed him before ten years were expired; but it does not appear, how long after their marriage this took place.

V. 6—10. Perhaps Naomi had staid in Moab contrary to her inclination, from regard to her husband while he lived, and afterwards to her sons: and she was now encouraged to return into Canaan, by hearing that the Lord had visited the land with plenty; for it would have been very discouraging for a destitute widow to return home in a time of great scarcity. (*Note*, 19—21.) She seems to have been a person of eminent faith and piety; and to have diligently instructed her daughters-in-law in true religion, which she recommended by her example. They both had a great affection for her, and at first purposed to go with her, notwithstanding her afflicted condition; though Orpah's resolution failed upon the trial. Their good behaviour to their husbands, and to Naomi, likewise endeared them to her, and excited her affectionate wishes and fervent prayers for them; and they were all greatly distressed at the thoughts of parting.

V. 11-14. The custom of the surviving brother marrying the widow of the deceased, who had left no children, seems to have prevailed in other countries besides Israel; but no prospect of a settlement according to it, could possibly be held out by Naomi to her daughters-in-law. She therefore

grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters: for 't grieueth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her. [Practical Observations.]

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law ^{is} gone back unto her people, and unto ^{her} gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, ¶Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

17 Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: ^kthe LORD do so to me, and more also, *if aught* ^lbut death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them; and they said, ¹⁹Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not [†]Naomi, call me ^{††}Mara: for [†]the Almighty hath [†]dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley-havest.

6:66–69. *Acas* 17:34. Heb. 10:39. *c* Ps. 36:9. 125:5. Zeph. 1:6. Matt. 13:20,21. Heb. 10:38. 1 John 2:24. *d* Jdg. 1:24. *e* Josh. 24:25. 2 Sam. 15:19,20. Luke 11:22. 17:20. 22:26. 24:49. *f* 1 Kings 22:35. *g* Acts 21:15. *h* 1 Cor. 15:22. 15:45. 15:52. Matt. 8:19. John 13:37. Rev. 14:4. *i* 2 Ti. 1:12. *j* 2 Sam. 15:45. *k* 1 Th. 1:1. *l* Josh. 24:18. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 4:37. Hos. 13:4. 2 Cor. 6:16–18. 1 Thes. 1:9. *m* Gal. 3:1. 3:12. 2 Sam. 3:39. 19:13. 1 Kings 23:23. 19:2. 20:10. 2 Kings 6:8. 1 Sam. 11:23. 2:24. *n* *He* *is* *strengthened* *herself*. Acts 2:42. Eph. 6:10. *o* Matt. 17:14. *p* Ps. 23:7. *q* 1 Cor. 15:52. *r* 1 Cor. 15:52. *s* 1 Cor. 15:52. *t* *is* *uttered*. *g* Gen. 17:1. *u* 1 Cor. 15:52. *v* 1 Th. 1:7. Rev. 21:22. *w* 1 Cor. 6:4. 19:12. *x* 1 Cor. 15:52. *y* 1 Cor. 15:52. *z* 1 Cor. 15:52. *aa* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ab* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ac* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ad* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ae* 1 Cor. 15:52. *af* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ag* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ah* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ai* 1 Cor. 15:52. *aj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ak* 1 Cor. 15:52. *al* 1 Cor. 15:52. *am* 1 Cor. 15:52. *an* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ao* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ap* 1 Cor. 15:52. *aq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ar* 1 Cor. 15:52. *as* 1 Cor. 15:52. *at* 1 Cor. 15:52. *au* 1 Cor. 15:52. *av* 1 Cor. 15:52. *aw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ax* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ay* 1 Cor. 15:52. *az* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ba* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *be* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bf* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bh* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bi* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bk* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bl* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bm* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bn* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bo* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bp* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *br* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bs* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bt* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bu* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bv* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bx* 1 Cor. 15:52. *by* 1 Cor. 15:52. *bz* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ca* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ce* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cf* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ch* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ci* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ck* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cl* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cm* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cn* 1 Cor. 15:52. *co* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cp* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cr* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cs* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ct* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cu* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cv* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cx* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cy* 1 Cor. 15:52. *cz* 1 Cor. 15:52. *da* 1 Cor. 15:52. *db* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *de* 1 Cor. 15:52. *df* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dh* 1 Cor. 15:52. *di* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dk* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dl* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dm* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dn* 1 Cor. 15:52. *do* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dp* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dr* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ds* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dt* 1 Cor. 15:52. *du* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dv* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dx* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dy* 1 Cor. 15:52. *dz* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ea* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ec* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ed* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ee* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ef* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eh* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ei* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ej* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ek* 1 Cor. 15:52. *el* 1 Cor. 15:52. *em* 1 Cor. 15:52. *en* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eo* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ep* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *er* 1 Cor. 15:52. *es* 1 Cor. 15:52. *et* 1 Cor. 15:52. *eu* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ev* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ew* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ex* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ey* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ez* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fa* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fe* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ff* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fh* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fi* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fk* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fl* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fm* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fn* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fo* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fp* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fr* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fs* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ft* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fu* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fv* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fx* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fy* 1 Cor. 15:52. *fz* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ga* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ge* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gf* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gg* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gh* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gi* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gj* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gk* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gl* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gm* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gn* 1 Cor. 15:52. *go* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gp* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gq* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gr* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gs* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gt* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gu* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gv* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gw* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gx* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gy* 1 Cor. 15:52. *gz* 1 Cor. 15:52. *ha* 1 Cor. 15:52. *hb* 1 Cor. 15:52. *hc* 1 Cor. 15:52. *hd* 1 Cor. 15:52. *he*

expressed great concern at the afflictions with which God had visited her, because she was deprived of all power to help them; and she intimated that if they were not disposed to accompany her out of disinterested love to God, and to the people of Israel, she could hold out no other inducement. Upon this Orpah, not being prepared to venture all consequences, and renounce all her worldly prospects for the sake of religion, returned back to her country, her relations, and her gods, though with reluctance and tokens of affection for Naomi. (*Marg. Ref. a—c.*)

27.15. Naomi was doubtless very far from desiring that Ruth should return; but she intended to make trial of her sincerity, and to lead her to consider how she could bear poverty and hardship, for the sake of the God of Israel; that if she were not in earnest, and only induced by affection for her, and some general convictions, it might now be discovered, or that she might set out with steady determination of mind, and entire dependence on the grace of God. (18. *Notes*, Josh. 24:15—19. Luke 14:25—33.)

V. 16, 17. The example and instructions of Naomi seem to have given Ruth the most favourable opinion of the character and religion of the Israelites, so that she desired to have her lot with them at any rate: and for the sake of this she was willing to renounce all her connexions and prospects in the land of Moab, and to embrace hardship and penury in a strange country. (*Notes, Josh. 2:4—6,8—11.*) She was, also determined to cleave to Naomi, however destitute and afflicted, until death separated them. For her sincerity in this profession she called the LORD to witness, and to multiply her troubles if she did not fulfil this solemn engagement. Thus she renounced idolatry, and became a worshipper and servant of the living God, and “counted all but loss” for the sake of his favour and salvation; and her subsequent conduct proved that her faith was genuine and her profession sincere. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 15:18—22, 1 Chr. 12:16—18, John 6:66—71.*)

V. 19–21. Naomi had probably lived in affluence, and been much respected: her neighbours were therefore greatly surprised to see her so turn things, so altered in her circumstances and appearance, for she and Ruth seemed to have travelled about, without any attendants, all the property which Elimelech had taken with him, having been spent.—“Naomi” signifies *pleasant*, and “Mora,” *litter*. She humbly considered her afflictions as coming from the Lord’s hand upon her and her family, for sin. For thus “the LORD testified against her, and the Almighty afflicted her.” Perhaps

CHAPTER II.

Ruth is ad, witho^t design, to glean in the field of Boaz, 1-8. He comes to see his reapers and piously salutes them, and is saluted by them, 4. He shows kindness to Ruth; who behaves respectfully towards him, 5-10. He states what he had heard of her, prays for her, and shows her further kindness, 11-17. She returns to Naomi, and informs her of what had passed, 18-23.

AND Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi,

a 3,2,12. b Deut. 8:17,18. Job 1:3. 31:25. c 1 Chr. 2:10-12. Matt. 1:5. Luke 3:32. Boaz. d Lev. 19:9,10. 23:22. Deut. 24:19-21. e 1 Thes. 4:11,12. 2 Thes.

she considered herself as guilty, in not having left Moab immediately on the death of her husband.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. No judgment can be formed from mere outward circumstances, whether we have, or have not, "found favour with God;" for whom he loves he often chastens for their profit, and leaves his enemies to be hardened in prosperity.—Afflictions should be submitted to as the Lord's rebuke, and they call on us as by the voice of the Lord, to exercise repentance, and seek forgiveness: (*Notes, Am. 4:6-13. Mic. 6:9.*) for every endeavour, by carnal policy, to evade correction, will eventually entangle us in greater difficulties.—Those who, by inconveniences or hardships, are easily induced to change their situations, seldom prosper in this world; and prove that they do not understand the real causes of their uneasiness. For the displeasure of God, and the pride and impatience of our hearts, cannot be avoided by change of place or situation; and while these remain, they will produce misery whithersoever we remove. But when we are tempted to quit the ordinances of God, and the communion of his people, out of secular motives, we should remember Lot and Sodom. In such measures our children and families are deeply concerned; for if they are estranged from the servants and house of God, and brought acquainted with persons of no religion, or of a false religion, it cannot be expected, but that they will conform to their ways, and have their portion with them living and dying. Better would it be to be pinched with poverty, and worn down with labour in the Lord's land, than to live in luxury and ease by hazarding such consequences. (*Notes, Ps. 37:3,16,17.*) For our earthly trials or enjoyments are of short continuance; death is continually removing those of every age and situation, suddenly breaking in upon the most endeared unions, and marring all our outward comforts: we cannot therefore too decidedly prefer those advantages which shall endure for ever, that we may be ready for every separating stroke. If, however, we be constrained to dwell for a season in places of temptation, we should retire when the necessity ceases; and consider every rebuke in Providence, as a call to us, to "come out and be separate" from the workers of iniquity.—When "the Lord visits his people in giving them bread," they ought to be content and thankful, though they have not abundance of silver and gold; and the assurance that he will supply the real necessities of his true servants, should encourage us cheerfully to cast our lot among them. In every situation and relation in life, especially among such as are strangers to the truths of the gospel, believers should aim to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (*Note, Tit. 2:9,10.*) And when they behave with prudence, integrity, meekness, and kindness; when they well perform the duties of relative life, and show attention to the temporal comfort, and compassion for the sufferings of those around them; and when they commend what is right in the moral and relative conduct of those who are not acquainted with spiritual things; they win much upon them, and render them more disposed to take in good part any endeavours made to do good to their souls. And thus (beside the comfort of domestic harmony, which cannot easily be valued too highly,) the Lord often blesses such conduct as the means of bringing those who were ignorant, careless, or prejudiced, to inquire after his truth and salvation; while the contrary behaviour of too many professors of the gospel, forms a grand objection against it in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands.—Many feel an affection for such believers as have been kind to them, and entertain favourable sentiments of religion, who are not decided in renouncing all their worldly pleasures, connexions, and prospects, and joining themselves to the poor and despised people of God, for the sake of Christ and his salvation. They more desire "rest in the house of a husband," or in some worldly settlement or satisfaction, than that rest to which Jesus invites our souls; and therefore when fully tried, they depart from him, though sorrowful and reluctant. (*Note, Matt. 11:28-30. 19:16-22.*)

V. 15-22. Nothing but a deep sense of the importance of eternal things, and a conviction of our guilt, and need of a Saviour; nothing but that faith, which is inseparably connected with true repentance and hatred of sin, and which works by love of Christ and his people, his truth, ordinances, and precepts, will, in such a world as this, carry a man through all possible temptations. And therefore the Lord proves those who profess themselves his disciples, by setting the consequences before them in his word, and by some experience of them in his providence; by which they, who have not faith, are discouraged, and go back to their own

Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him, in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

4 And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with

3,12. * Heb. hap, happened. 2 Kings 8:5. Esth. 6:1,2. Matt. 10:29. Luke 10:31. f Ps. 118:26. 129:8. Luke 1:28. 2 Thes. 3:16. 2 Tim. 4:22. 2 John 10,11.

people and idols: and this, though lamentable, is principally their own loss. We ought indeed greatly to desire the increase of true Christians; yet we should be cautious in our endeavours to multiply professors, lest we engage those who will betray the cause which they are expected to defend. (*Notes, Deut. 20:5-9. Judg. 7:2-7.*) Especially we ought to examine, whether we ourselves are thus steadfastly minded, and determined to cast in our lot with the people of God, however poor, despised, or persecuted; and that living and dying, and for ever. We should inquire, whether this be our aim and prayer; whether the prospect of secular advantage have not some influence upon our minds; and whether, if that were withdrawn, or changed for the prospect of poverty and suffering, we should not be tempted to draw back. But if we are thus decided in our judgment for the Lord and his service and salvation, he will assuredly accept and provide for us; he will make up all our losses, support us under all our trials, and communicate unspeakable consolations; and while many "draw back unto perdition, we shall believe unto the saving of our souls:" nay, we shall even grow more determined by their apostasy, and by our own difficulties and temptations. If reduced in our circumstances, we shall often be more grieved for the sake of others, than for ourselves; the consciousness of our sins will teach us to submit to our trials without murmuring; and our mourning will be mingled with heavenly sweetness.—While we remark, with compassion, the sad changes which numbers suffer, we should be reminded to prepare for changes ourselves, especially for our last great change; when the true believer will certainly find that all things have worked together for his everlasting good. (*Note, Rom. 8:28-31.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. *Marg. Ref. Job. 1:2,3.*

V. 2. When Naomi and Ruth were settled in some homely lodging at Beth-lehem; the latter expecting nothing in Canaan but a life of hard labour and mean fare, proposed to go and glean in some field, where she might obtain permission, for her own subsistence, and that of her mother-in-law, who probably was unable to endure the fatigue and heat of such an employment. The Lord indeed intended other things for Ruth: but he was pleased thus to prove her sincerity, humility, industry, and patience; and her dutiful affection to Naomi for his sake. Orpah could not have stood this trial but had she been assured of a settlement in Israel, as desirable as that which Ruth at length obtained, she would have come also, and have made a hypocritical profession of religion for the sake of secular advantage. (*Note, Matt. 8:18-20.*)

V. 3. *Her hap.* This circumstance was with Ruth merely accidental, and not the result of choice or contrivance; but it was the effect of the Lord's secret direction, in whose providence great events depend upon apparently trivial incidents. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ec. 9:11,12. Luke 10:30-37, conclusion.*)

V. 4. *The LORD be with you.* *Note, Ps. 129:6-8.*—This emphatical expression occurs here for the first time in Scripture.—(*Marg. Ref. c.*) The name of Boaz signifies, *Strength is in him*, (*Note, 1 Kings 7:15-22.*) and he was a "mighty man of wealth;" yet he personally superintended his own reapers.—The pious and affectionate language interchanged between him and his reapers, and which appears to have been familiar to them, shows that there were many godly persons in Israel, notwithstanding national defections: and it beautifully illustrates the genuine effect of true religion, in producing affability in superiors, and respect and affection in inferiors, and mutual unaffected good will in all.—It is lamentably true, that such language as this is seldom heard in our fields, while the bounty of Providence is gathering in: but frequently the reverse; yea, whatever can inflame the passions, and corrupt the morals. So that a stranger, who should be occasionally present, would be apt to form a very different opinion respecting the religion of England, than Ruth did concerning that of Israel, from the conversation and conduct of Boaz and his reapers.

V. 5-10. There is a beautiful simplicity in this narrative. The servant's account of Ruth was suited to give Boaz a high opinion of her modesty, humility, and industry; and the discourse of Boaz with Ruth exhibits genuine humanity, kindness, and consideration for the stranger and destitute.—It seems evident, that the same language was understood by all parties, whether Moab, as descended from Lot and Heber, retained the language of their ancestors, or a dialect of it, or whether Ruth had learned the language of Israel, in Elimelech's family. (*Notes, Gen. 11:6-9. Neh. 13:23-30.*)—"Seeing I am a stranger." "I am not of Israel, but a heathen, born and brought up; a Moabitess, unworthy the regard

you. ^aAnd they answered him, The **LORD** bless thee.

5 Then said ^bBoaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, **Whose damsel is this?**

6 And ^cthe servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, ^d**It is the Moabitish damsel** that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab;

7 And she said, ^eI pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath ^fcontinued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

8 Then said Boaz unto Ruth, **Heardest thou not, ^gmy daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but ^habide here fast by my maidens.**

9 **Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not ⁱtouch thee? and when thou art athirst, ^jgo unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.**

10 Then she ^kfell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, **^lWhy have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, ^mseeing I am a stranger?**

[Practical Observations.]

11 And Boaz answered and said unto her, **It hath fully been showed me, ⁿall that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and ^ohow ^pthou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.**

12 **The **LORD** ^qrecompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the **LORD** God of Israel, under whose ^rwings thou art come to trust.**

13 Then she said, **^sLet me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken ^tfriendly unto thine**

handmaid, though I be ^unot like unto one of thine handmaidens.

14 And Boaz said unto her, ^v**At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her ^wparched corn, and ^xshe did eat, and was sufficed, and left.**

15 And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, **Let her glean even among the sheaves, and ^yreproach her not:**

16 And ^zlet fall also *some* of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave *them*, that she may glean *them*, and rebuke her not.

17 So ^ashe gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

18 And she took ^bit up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that ^cshe had reserved, after she was sufficed.

19 And her mother-in-law said unto her, **Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? ^dblessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is ^eBoaz.**

20 And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, **^fBlessed be he of the **LORD**, who ^ghath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, ^hone of our next kinsmen.**

21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, **He said unto me also, ⁱThou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.**

22 And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law, **^jIt is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they ^kmeet thee not in any other field.**

23 So she ^lkept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley-harvest and of wheat-harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

g 4:11. Gen. 19:19. Josh. 24:15. Ps. 133:1-3. 1 Tim. 6:2. h 4:21. 1 Chr. 2:11. 12. i Gen. 15:2. 24:2. 39:4. Matt. 20:8. 24:45. k 1:16. 19:22. l Prov. 15:33. 18:23. Matt. 5:3. Eph. 5:21. 1 Pet. 5:5. m Prov. 13:4. 22:29. Ec. 9:10. Rom. 12:11. Gal. 6:9. n 1 Sam. 3:6. 18. 2 Kings 5:13. Matt. 9:22. o Matt. 10:7-11. Phil. 4:8. p Gen. 28:6. Job 19:21. Ps. 105:15. Prov. 6:22. 1 Cor. 7:1. q John 5:18. q Gen. 24:18-20. Matt. 10:42. John 4:7-11. r Gen. 18:2. 1 Sam. 25:23. e 2:13. 2 Sam. 9:8. 19:28. Ruth 1:43. 4:8. Rom. 12:10. t 1:5. 8:6-8. Matt. 15:22-28. 23:35. Luke 7:6-7. 17:16-18. u 1:11. 16:17. Ps. 37:5. x Ps. 45:10. John 5:11. 23. 14:33. 18:29. 30. Heb. 11:8. 9:24-26. y 1 Sam. 24:19. Ps. 19:11. 85:11. Prov. 11:18. 23:18. marg. Matt. 5:12. 6:1. 10:41. 42. Luke 6:25. 14:19-20. Col. 2:13. 2 Tim. 1:18. 4:8. Heb. 6:10. 11:26. z 1:16. Ps. 17:8. 36:7. 57:1. 61:4. 63:7. 91:4. Matt. 23:37. * Or, I find favour. Rom. 3:8. 10. 15. 43:

and unmeet for the society of the people of God, even for that of the handmaidens, (13) the poorest of them; much less of the attention of one so eminent in Israel as thou art.' (Note, Matt. 8:8, 9.)

V. 11, 12. Ruth had renounced the idols of Moab, and become the worshipper and servant of the God of Israel. In proof of her sincerity, she had left "the land of her nativity," where she might have expected a comfortable settlement; and her parents, (who it seems were still living,) as well as her other relations and friends, to come to a people, with whom she had had no previous acquaintance, but against whom she had been educated in prejudice and enmity; and to attach herself to a poor widow, whom by her industry she must help to maintain. This she had done, because she believed that **JEHOVAH** was the only true God, and Israel his people: and therefore she desired to be associated with them, and to have the benefit of the ordinances and instructions with which they were favoured. (Note, Josh. 2:8-11. P. O. Zech. 8:16-23.) Thus she came "to trust under the wings of the **LORD** God of Israel;" depending on his power, care, and love, both for the blessings of salvation, and for the things which were needful for the body; and seeking protection in every danger and alarm, as the chickens shelter themselves under the wings of the hen from, whatever incommodes or affrights them. (Marg. Ref. Note, Matt. 23:37-39.) This conduct of a Moabitess had been greatly noticed; and Boaz had thence formed a very favourable opinion of her faith and piety. He therefore showed her much kindness, encouraging her industry and affording her protection; and praying for her, "that the **LORD** would recompense her work, and give her a full reward."—In all ages and nations, conversion is substantially the same: irreligion or false religion is exchanged for the spiritual worship of the true God, through the appointed Mediator, and in his instituted ordinances; the practice of sin, for the pursuit of true holiness; self-dependence, for reliance in every thing on the mercy, grace, and providence of God; the expectation of felicity from the world, for his favour as our portion; and the company of the workers of iniquity, for the society of those who love and

serve him. But many circumstances depend upon men's outward situation. Such as have godly parents and relations, are engaged in lawful and useful employments, and live in peaceable times, will not be immediately required to make the same sacrifices, as those who are called out of the families of imbibed opposers, from occupations inconsistent with the precepts of Scripture, or in times of furious persecution. The more, however, men venture, renounce, or suffer for the Lord's sake, the clearer evidence they have, that their faith is genuine, and that they shall "receive a full reward." The principle and the precept are in all cases alike; but the application varies, according as different trials are allotted in the providence of God. (Notes, Heb. 11:8-10:24-26.)

V. 14. (Marg. Ref.) 'The *Midrash*, (an ancient Jewish book), 'makes these words, "Come thou hither," to signify as much as *Come to thy kingdom*; and the morsel dipped in vinegar, to denote the *reproaches and torments of the Messiah*. Which is an argument, that they expected such a King as should be exposed to such sufferings, as our blessed Saviour endured; who saith in the Psalmist, "They gave me vinegar to drink." *Bp. Patrick*. The interpretation is indeed most absurd; yet it is remarkable as tending to prove that point.

V. 15-17. *Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 19:9, 10.*

V. 18, 19. (Marg. Ref.) The quantity of barley which Ruth had gleaned, and the residue of her plentiful meal, which she brought to Naomi, showed that she had met with uncommonly kind usage.

V. 20. Boaz had been kind to Elimelech's family, before his removal to the land of Moab: and Naomi rejoiced that his care of her had revived after the death of her husband, when she so much needed his assistance; and she besought the Lord to repay him with his blessing. (Notes, 2 Sam. 9:1-3. Psal. 41:10-13.)

V. 22. If Ruth had gone into any other field to glean, it would have seemed a slight put upon the kindness shown her as well as an evidence of an inconstant temper of mind, which might have given Boaz and his family an unfavourable opinion

CHAPTER III.

By Naomi's instruction Ruth lies down in the night at the feet of Boaz, 1-7. He acknowledges that he owes the duty of a kinsman, but shows that ano her has a prior claim, 8-13. He sends her away in the morning with six measures of barley, and she confers with Naomi, 14-18.

THEN Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, 'shall I not seek rest for thee, that it 'may be well with thee?

2 And now 'is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor.

3 Wash thyself therefore, and 'anoint thee, and 'put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

4 And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and 'uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

5 And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

a 1:9. 1 Cor. 7:36. 1 Tim. 5:9, 14. b Gen. 40:14. Deut. 4:40. Ps. 128:2. Jer. 22:15, 16. e 2:20-23. Deut. 23:5, 6. Heb. 2:11-14. d 3 Sam. 14:2. Ps. 104:15. Matt. 6:17. e Esth. 5:1. 1 Tim. 2:9, 10. f Or, lift up the clothes that are on his feet. 1 Thes. 5:22. f Ex. 20:12. Prov. 1:5. John 2:5, 15, 14. g Gen. 43:34.

of her. (Note, Matt. 10:11-15.) Ruth persevered in her labour, and endeavoured to maintain herself and Naomi, by her industry for a considerable time; and was evidently prepared to do it permanently; before a favourable turn, as to her wholly unexpected, was given to her affairs.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The distinctions which we are apt to form concerning the persons and affairs of men, do not comport with the judgment of the Lord: and the gleanings of a poor Moabitess, who trusted in him, was deemed more worthy of his condescending notice, than the transactions of the greatest princes then living, which are now almost entirely consigned to oblivion! We ought not therefore to "mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate."—Honest industry, humble patience in poverty and hardship, and a willingness to labour for aged parents, relations, or benefactors, who are unable to provide for themselves, if these spring from faith, are both honourable and acceptable to God.—True religion will teach men to behave with propriety in every circumstance and relation of life: it will form kind masters, faithful servants, and harmonious families: it will produce mutual love among persons of different ranks; and while it engages the rich to condescension, it will teach the poor to be humble and respectful in their behaviour to their superiors and benefactors: above all it will naturally express itself in prayer and praise.—This return the poorest may render for favours bestowed; and for the neglect of it, to liberality can excuse the affluent.—The good examples of those placed in eminent stations, and who employ many in their service, are most extensively beneficial.—With what gratitude to God and liberality to the poor, should the bounty of a kind Providence be received by us unworthy sinners! and how inexcusable are those who abuse plenty in intemperance, or covetously neglect the indigent, or allow themselves in wickedness, when they are thus experiencing the goodness of the Lord!—In showing kindness to the destitute, we ought ourselves to avoid, and try to prevent in others, every thing that may appear like reproaching them: for a generous mind in distress has very exquisite sensibilities.

V. 11-23. All persons should be careful what connexions they form, and what places they frequent; but especially young women, both for conscience and credit's sake: and parents, and other superior relations should have a watchful eye over them, and require an account, where, and with whom, they have spent their time.—In the path of duty is safety; and we should keep close to those employments and situations, in which the Lord has blessed us, without being desirous of change. He will not suffer those who trust in him to want the necessities of life, and will often far exceed their expectations; and an abundant recompense for every loss, and of every really good work, yea a full but gracious reward shall surely be given to all those, "who come to trust under the wings of the LORD our God."—A tender concern for each other's welfare, affectionate and edifying conversation, with true piety and contentment, will render the lowest circumstances and the meanest fare comfortable.—The Lord will prove those, who enter upon a religious profession, whether they are sound hearted, and willing to stoop and suffer for his sake; and then he will stir up the minds of his more experienced servants to speak comfortably to them, and deal kindly with them. This is a good work, which all Christians should embrace every opportunity of performing; especially to those who are cheerfully industrious, and willing to endure hardship for conscience' sake.—But to accommodate this subject, ought not parents to ask their children what they have gleaned from the sermons which they have heard,

6 And she went down unto the floor, 'and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her.

7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and 'his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

8 And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and 'turned himself; and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

9 And he said, Who art thou? and she answered, I am 'Ruth thine handmaid: 'spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art 'a near kinsman.

10 And he said, 'Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter; for thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than 'at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

11 And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for 'all the 'city of my people doth know that thou art 'a virtuous woman.

Judg. 16:25. 19:6, 9, 22. 2 Sam. 13:28. Esth. 1:10. Ps. 104:15. Ec. 2:24. 3:12, 13. 1 Cor. 10:31. Eph. 5:18, 19. f Or, took hold on. h 2:10-13. 1 Sam. 25:41. Luke 14:11. 1 Ez. 16:8. i Or, one that has right to redeem. 12. 2:20. k 2:4, 20. 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. 11:8. m Prov. 12:4. 31:10, 28-31. s Heb. gene.

the books which they have read, and the conversation that they have joined in? May we not also ask ourselves the same question? He that would increase in wisdom must be always thus *gleaning*, and call himself frequently to account respecting it; determining if possible, to get some profitable hint from every person and occurrence. And those, who thus daily collect knowledge from others, and keep close to the word and ordinances of God, will become "thoroughly furnished for every good work."—Finally let us, in the kindness of Boaz to Ruth, contemplate the kindness of Jesus to poor sinners; to whose meanness he most freely condescends; on whom, though most unworthy, he liberally confers his benefits; and whom he neither upbraids himself, nor suffers others to upbraid, with their former transgressions.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1-6. If the measure, here proposed by Naomi, had been of as ill appearance in those days, as it would be at present, it can hardly be supposed that she would have advised it, or that Ruth would have complied with it.—The law, concerning a man's marrying his brother's widow when he died childless, was by custom extended, as it seems, to the other near relations, when there were no brethren: and it required the woman to do several things, widely different from modern usages. (Note, Deut. 25:5-10.) This law gave Ruth, now proselyted to the true religion, a legal claim upon Boaz, as Naomi supposed; who either did not know of another nearer kinsman, or was aware that it would be in vain to apply to him. (Note, 4:1-8.) It was customary for widows to assert this claim; and considering Boaz's character and superiority of station, she supposed that this was best done in a private manner. She deemed herself bound to promote this desirable settlement for Ruth, and had an entire confidence both in her and Boaz; whose character in all respects appears to have been very excellent, and who seems to have been advanced in life. And as Ruth supposed Naomi to be well acquainted with the laws and customs of Israel, she implicitly followed her counsel. Yet, when all allowances are made, perhaps neither party can be entirely excuplated. At least, though their plan was graciously rendered successful, it was not recorded for imitation in the present state of society; nor must it be judged of by modern customs and maxims. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 7. When the work of the day was finished, it seems that Boaz feasted with his labourers; and according to the simplicity and hardness of the times, afterwards lay down to sleep on some couch prepared for him in the barn, or in an adjoining tent. It is said "his heart was merry," but it may be translated, "his heart was good;" and may be used to mark his cheerfulness, and thankfulness for the plenty which the Lord had sent after the famine; and his subsequent conduct shows that his feast was consistent with temperance and piety. In the mean time Ruth concealed herself, till he was left alone; and then lay down at his feet, waiting her opportunity of speaking to him; and by that very action she implicitly preferred a claim to be received by him into the marriage relation.

V. 9. Spread...thy skirt.] This is supposed to have been a customary ceremony in contracting marriage, and implied the woman's being taken under the protection of her husband, and admitted to share all his comforts. (Note, Ex. 16:6-8.) It was therefore a direct claim upon Boaz to marry her; which she grounded on the law of God, and on his being the nearest relation of her deceased husband.

V. 10-13. The conduct of Boaz in this transaction is worthy of the highest encomiums. He neither attempted to take advantage of Ruth's exposed situation, nor reproached

12 And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman; howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I.

13 Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth: lie down until the morning.

14 And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

15 Also he said, bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

17 And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.

18 Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

n 4:1. Matt. 7:12. 1 Thes. 4:6. o 2:20. 4:5. Deut. 25:9. Matt. 22:21-27. p Judg. 8:19. Jer. 4:2. 2 Cor. 1:23. Heb. 6:16. q Eccl. 7:1. Rom. 12:17. 14:16. 1 Cor. 10:32. 2 Cor. 8:21. 1 Thes. 5:22. 1 Pet. 2:12. * Or, sheet, or, apron. r Is. 32:8. Gal. 6:10. s Ps. 37:3-5. Is. 28:16. 30:7. t Deut. 16:18. 17:5. 21:9. 25:7. Job 29:7. 31:21. Am. 5:10-12, 15. b 3:12. c Is. 55:1. Zech.

her with impropriety of conduct, nor disdained her as a poor destitute stranger, nor suggested that she was swayed by interested motives in preferring her claim. On the contrary, instead of suspecting her of any ill intentions, he imputed her whole conduct to her affection to the family of Elimelech, and to Naomi; as if she had thus shown her greater kindness, than in coming with her into the land of Israel; and he commended her, for giving him, an elder man, the preference to younger persons, whether rich or poor, Moabites or Israelites; and for her regard to the law of God. Perceiving her confused, as it is probable, upon the recollection of her situation, he also obviated her fears, applauded her as a woman of known and approved virtue, and made her a promise of marriage, in case a still nearer kinsman who had a prior claim, would waive it, as it might be supposed he would. This he confirmed, for her fuller satisfaction, with a solemn oath; and in the morning he sent her away with a present to her mother-in-law (15.)

V. 14. *Let it not be known, &c.* We may consider these words as containing his reasons for dismissing her so early; for he said within himself, "Let it not be known, that a woman came into the floor;" or as his caution to Ruth not to speak of it to any one. For it does not appear that there was any servant privy to the interview.

V. 15. This present was a token of the favourable construction which Boaz put upon the transaction, and of his affectionate regard for Ruth and Naomi. It is not known of what quantity these measures consisted.

V. 16. *Who art thou?* Or, "What hast thou done?" *What has passed?* For so the words may be interpreted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It behooves aged persons to recollect their younger days, and not to exclude young persons from those lawful satisfactions, of which themselves have given up all thoughts. (1:12.) Indeed we ought not to make our own conduct a standard for that of others, in any matter which the law of God leaves to our choice; but should, without censure allow them in many things which we deem inexpedient for ourselves.—The word of God has pronounced "marriage honourable in all;" and therefore those who from inclination, prudential regard to the interests of their families, a pious desire of being more at leisure, and having more in their power for the service of God, and preparation for the eternal world, choose to abide in a single state, should not condemn those, who may have as good reasons for preferring a married life. If they are imprudent, they "will have trouble in the flesh: but their brethren should spare them," and not censure what the divine law does not condemn. (Notes, 1 Cor. 7:25-28. 1 Tim. 5:13-15.)—The married state, when properly entered into, is a rest, as much as any thing on earth can be so called; seeing it ought to fix the affections, and form a connexion for life: it therefore should be engaged in with great seriousness, and with earnest prayers for the direction and blessing of God upon it, and with an eye to his precept and providence: and parents should carefully advise their children in this important concern, "that it may be well with them," especially as to the interests of their souls.—The more willing any one is, for 'conscience' sake, to renounce worldly interests, the greater care should others employ in promoting his advantage.—But good intentions will not justify improper means, and it is well

CHAPTER IV.

Boaz proposes to the kinsman of whom he had spoken to redeem Elimelech's land, and to marry Ruth; which he declines to do, 1-8. Boaz buys the inheritance and marries Ruth, 9-12. She bears the grandfather of David, 13-17. The genealogy from Pharez to David, 18-22.

THEN went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one, turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down.

2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

3 And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land which was our brother Elimelech's:

4 And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.

5 Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the land of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

2:6. d Ex. 18:21. Deut. 29:10. 31:28. 1 Kings 21:8. Prov. 31:23. Lam. 5:14. Acts 6:12. e Is. 11:25. Prov. 13:10. * Heb. I said I will reveal in thine ear. f Jer. 32:7-9. Rom. 12:17. 2 Cor. 8:21. Phil. 4:8. g Gen. 23:18. Jer. 32:10-12. h Lev. 25:23-29. 13:13. Gen. 38:8. Deut. 25:5, 6. Matt. 22:24. Luke 20:28.

for us, that we have to do with a God of mercy, who takes better care of our interest, purity, credit, and peace, than we often do of our own and of each other's.—Parents should be very cautious what injunctions they lay upon their children; lest filial affection and deference should ensnare their consciences, and lead them into temptation: for the authority even of a parent will not justify a sinful action.—Few men have such command of their passions, and candour of mind, as to injure neither the virtue nor the reputation of females, who indiscreetly put themselves in their way: and yet to take advantage of a woman's affection and confidence, for her irreparable detriment, is much baser than defrauding those who implicitly trust in us. They, however, who value either their chastity or their character, should flee from such situations; in which they can only be preserved by the same power, that preserved the young men in the fiery furnace.—All our piety should be shared with the poor and industrious; and all our feasting should be so moderated, that it may neither unfit us for our ordinary employments, nor for the exercises of devotion. When in such circumstances, men can retain the dominion over their passions, and conduct themselves with tenderness, prudence, piety, justice, and regard to the law of God, their wealth may be pronounced blessed, and their use of it honourable.—We must not, however, rest satisfied even with a clear conscience in the sight of God; but should endeavour to preserve a clear character, and to avoid whatever may occasion slander or excite suspicion: (2 Cor. 8:20, 21. 1 Thes. 5:22.) and we ought to be as tender of the reputation of others as of our own.—In every undertaking we should be diligent in using proper means, and then calmly leave the whole to the Lord's decision.—But without any impropriety, we poor polluted sinners may apply to Jesus Christ, our nearest Kinsman and Brother, as dwelling in human nature, to spread his skirt over us, and to espouse our souls to himself: to take us under his almighty care, and to admit us to share in all his unsearchable riches. If we truly desire to be his, though many defects and mistakes attend our application to him, he will not reject us; we cannot do it unseasonably; he will condescend to encourage and assist us; and graciously accept all our endeavours to serve him; and most kindly notice our love to him, and our desire of his salvation. When we have applied to him, he will not rest till he has accomplished our desires; and in the mean time he will communicate blessings to us and ours, in answer to our prayers: nor can we too earnestly desire and seek this same rest for our children and friends, that it may be well with them also. (Note, Matt. 11:28-30.)

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1-8. Considerable difficulties arise, in explaining this transaction consistently with the laws before given; and indeed it does not appear in whose possession the estate of Elimelech was at this time. It is however probable, that it had been sold till the year of Jubilee. (Notes, Lev. 25:14-17, 25-28.) and as Elimelech had no male issue surviving, and it could not be alienated from his family, the nearest relation would have a right to redeem it, by repaying the proportion of the purchase-money; except as Ruth, Elimelech's daughter-in-law, was entitled to his inheritance, according to the law given in the case of those who left daughters only. (Notes, Num. 27:1-11.)—To obviate therefore all doubt and difficulty in this matter, Boaz pro-

6 And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem *it* for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem *it*.

7 Now this *was the manner* in former time in Israel, concerning redeeming, and concerning changing for to confirm all things; ^aa man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this *was a testimony* in Israel.

8 Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy *it* for thee: so he drew off his shoe.

9 And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, ^bYe are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that *was* Elimelech's, and all that *was* Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

10 Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, ^chave I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that ^dthe name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ^eye are witnesses this day.

11 And all the people that *were* in the gate, and the elders, said, *We are witnesses*. ^fThe Lord *made* the woman that is come into thine house like ^gRachel and like Leah, which two did

^hbuild the house of Israel: and ⁱdo thou worthily in ^jEphrathah, and ^kbe famous in Beth-lehem:

12 And let thy house be like ^lthe house of Pharez, (^mwhom Tamar bare unto Judah,) of ⁿthe seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman.

13 ^o¶ So Boaz took Ruth, and she *was* his wife: and when he went in unto her ^pthe Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son.

14 And ^qthe women said unto Naomi, ^rBlessed be the Lord, ^swhich hath not ^tleft thee this day without a ^ukinsman, ^vthat his name may be famous in Israel.

15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of ^wthy life, and ^xa nourisher of thine old age: ^yfor thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is ^zbetter to thee than seven sons, hath borne him.

16 And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

17 And ^athe women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he *is* the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 ^b¶ Now these are the generations of Pharez: ^cPharez begat Hezron,

k Deut. 25:7-10. l Gen. 23:16-18. Jer. 32:10-12. m Gen. 29:18, 19, 27. Prov. 13:2, 19, 14:15, 16, 17. Ps. 3:2, 12:12. Eph. 5:25. n Josh. 7:9. Ps. 54:16, 109:15. k Jos. 19:26. 1 Sam. 13:2. o Is. 6:2, 3. Mal. 2:14. Heb. 13:4. p Gen. 31:60. Ps. 127:3-5. 128:6. q Gen. 29:32-35. 30:1-24. 35:16-20. 46:8-27. Num. 25:19. r Deut. 25:9. Prov. 14:1. s Or, get thee riches, or, power. t 12. Gen. 31:9. Ps. 132:5. Mic. 5:2. Matt. 2:6. u Heb. proclaim thy name. l Gen. 45:12. Num. 26:20-22. u Gen. 38:29. 1 Chr. 2:4. Matt. 1:3. x 1 Sam. 2:20.

posed to this kinsman of Elimelech, that he should both redeem the estate and marry Ruth; in which case the estate would certainly belong to his eldest son by her: but if he was unwilling to do it, he desired him to renounce his claim, and he would marry her, and redeem the land for himself. The kinsman however was not willing to marry the poor widow, lest he should injure his circumstances, or create himself disturbance; for perhaps he had at this time a wife and family: he therefore resigned all claim to the estate also. This transaction respects all the several laws above referred to; and doubtless the whole was settled in the most regular, legal, and customary manner: and as the pulling off the shoe was not done by Ruth with the prescribed ceremonies, but, as it appears, by the kinsman himself: it seems not to refer merely to the law about refusing to marry a brother's widow, but to have been the custom in transferring inheritances. (*Note, Deut. 25:5-10.*)—The manner in which Boaz brought forward this business, evinced a strict regard to openness, fairness, and equity; and also an affection for Ruth, whom it is evident he was desirous of marrying, provided the kinsman was willing to relinquish his prior claim.

V. 9, 10. As Orpah had preferred her connexions in Moab to her prospects in Israel, she was not considered in this transaction; and Naomi transferred all her claim to Ruth. Consequently, when the nearest kinsman, before the elders of his city, by legal process, gave up his claim; Boaz, by marrying Ruth, possessed the whole right of Elimelech. Yet according to the law of God, and the custom in Israel, the eldest son of this marriage must be considered as the heir of Elimelech, and of Mahlon the former husband of Ruth; so that the land would be called by the name of one of them, and not by that of Boaz, that the family might not be considered as extinct.

V. 11, 12. *Gate.* (*Marg. Ref. on v. 1. a.—Note, Job 29:7-11.*) The public recognition of Boaz's taking Ruth to wife, by the elders of his city, accompanied by benedictions and prayers, may be considered as the customary method of distinguishing honourable marriage from illicit connexions.—It is observable, that only Rachel and Leah are mentioned, as having "built the house of Israel;" and that Bilhah and Zilpah, Jacob's concubines, are not named.—The law, forbidding the admission of Moabites into the congregation of Israel, seems not to have related to marriages with such as embraced the true religion; especially in such peculiar circumstances: for there is no intimation in Scripture that Boaz acted improperly on this occasion. (*Note, Deut. 23:3-5.*)

V. 13-15. Naomi was congratulated on this occasion, more than either Boaz or Ruth; as she had the ruins of her family thus providentially repaired, and her old age solaced after the death of her husband and sons, through her daughter-in-law, who had loved her, and been a greater blessing to her than seven sons. The piety of the language, and the conduct of all parties on this occasion, should not pass unnoticed.—The term *kinsman* or *redeemer*, seems here applied to Naomi's grandson, as inheriting the rights of the whole family. (14, 15.)

V. 17. The women named the child, doubtless by the approbation of all parties. "Obed" signifies a *servant*, or *serviceable*; probably intimating a confidence that Obed would be very useful to his family and people. From him Christ descended: and thus peculiar blessings and honour redounded

y 3:11. z 12. Gen. 21:1-3. 25:21. 29:31. 30:2, 22, 23. 33:5. 1 Sam. 1:27. 2:5. Ps. 113:9, 127:3. a Luke 1:58. b Rom. 12:15. 1 Cor. 12:26. c Gen. 29:35. Ps. 34:1-3. 103:12. 1 Thes. 5:13. 2 Thes. 1:3. d Gen. 24:27. e Heb. ceased to cease unto thee. f Or, redeemer. g 21, 22. Gen. 12:2. Is. 11:1-4. Matt. 1:5-10. h Heb. to nourish thy gray hairs. Gen. 45:11. 47:12. Ps. 55:22. Is. 46:4. e 1:16-18. f 1 Sam. 1:8. Prov. 18:24. g Luke 1:58-63. h 1 Chr. 4:1. Matt. 1:3. Luke 3:33. Pharez, Esrom.

to Boaz, who had not disdained the low estate of Ruth, but had paid due honour to his deceased relations, and their decayed family; while the kinsman, who refused so to do, is not allowed a name in the book of God, but is disgracefully consigned to oblivion.

V. 18-22. Pharez was born about 1714 years before Christ, and David was born about 630 years after, and ten generations seem too few for such a length of time. But the difficulty is very greatly increased, when it is recollected, that Salmon married Rachab, (doubtless the same as Rahab, *Matt. 1:5.*) about 1450 B. C. leaving 365 years or more, to only four generations! Some learned men have attempted to show, that *possibly* Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, were remarkably long-lived; and that Boaz, Obed, Jesse, and David were born in the extreme old age of their respective fathers: but this at least is not *probable*, and it is certain that Jesse lived till David arrived at full manhood. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 17:12, 13. 22:3, 4.*) It is therefore much more natural to suppose, that some names are omitted in the genealogy; as we know the case to have been in the genealogies given by the evangelists. (*Note, Matt. 12:1-17.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Diligence in business, punctuality to engagements, integrity, and fair dealing in the affairs of common life, not only adorn a profession of godliness, but tend to prosperity in the ordinary course of Providence.—Men are generally ready to embrace opportunities of increasing their estates, but few know the value of godliness: nor can it be expected, that those, who supremely value carnal things, will make a due estimate of spiritual excellency in the character of others. Such are frequently the wise men of this world; they do not attend to the concerns of their souls, and they reject the salvation of Christ, for fear of "marring their inheritance!" Indeed, selfishness not only obliterates all charity and justice, but extinguishes natural affection; and causes men to treat with disdain their nearest relatives, however excellent, if poor and in need of their assistance. But the loss, in the final event of things, will be entirely their own; as the Lord will raise up other friends for such as love and trust in him, and especially for those who have shown themselves willing to bear hardship for his sake. Nay, such persons, however poor, are a blessing to all connected with them. Especially they are to be valued in the marriage relation: "A prudent wife is from the Lord," and "the price of a virtuous woman is above rubies." (*Notes, Prov. 19:14. 31:10.*)—As marriage is honourable in the sight of God, it ought to be publicly contracted and recognized, that it may be distinguished from those deeds of darkness which require concealment: and it is likely to be comfortable when the law of God is regarded, and his blessing supplicated. In this important concern, (as in all others,) pious people should pray for each other, that the parties may live together in peace, be good examples, do worthily in the church and in the world, and train up families for future usefulness, when they have served their generation, and are fallen asleep.—The birth of children also calls for united prayers, that they may be indeed a comfort to their parents, blessings to society, and blessed themselves: for without the blessing of God, none of these things can be expected; and the general disuse of this pious language and behaviour, by professing Christians, too plainly evinces that true religion is at a low ebb among us.—We should never promise ourselves

19 And Heron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20 And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

11 Chr. 2:9-10. Matt. 1:4. Luke 3:33. *Aram. Aminadab. kNm. 1:7. Matt. 1:4. Luke 3:32. Naasson. * Or, Salmon. 1 Chr. 2:11. Salmon. Matt.*

much comfort from any earthly object; for our heaviest trials often arise from those quarters whence we expected most satisfaction, and our greatest solace from those whence we expected none: indeed one truly Christian friend may be better to us, than all our children and relations.—But if these streams are so refreshing, what may we not expect from the Fountain? Let us then look to Jesus, our Redeemer, who “though he was rich, for our sakes became poor,” and at the price of his sufferings, both ransomed our inheritance, and purchased us to be espoused unto him in truth and right-

21 And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

22 And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

1:5. Luke 3:32. m 1 Chr. 2:12. Matt. 1:5. Luke 3:32. *Booz. n 1 Sam. 16:1. Is. 11:1. o 1 Chr. 2:15. Matt. 1:6. Luke 3:31.*

teousness; not induced by our worthiness or excellence, but by his own unfathomable love to our polluted souls. To this union he invites the perishing sinner: this relation to the poor despised believer, he avows and glories in. May we therefore joyfully accept of his salvation, expect all our felicity from him, and devote ourselves to his service; and, being “bought with a price, let us glorify him with our bodies and spirits, which are his;” obeying his commandments, imitating his example, and recommending him and his salvation by word and deed to all around us!

THE

FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL,

OTHERWISE CALLED

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book and the following form but one in the Hebrew canon, and derive their name from Samuel; though he could not write more than the former part (perhaps twenty-four chapters) of the first book.—The remainder of them is, with great probability, ascribed to the prophets Nathan and Gad: for we read in Chronicles, “Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.” (1 Chr. 29:29.) It is therefore very reasonable to conclude, that Samuel wrote the *first acts* of David; and Nathan and Gad, continuing the history after Samuel’s death, wrote his *last acts*, or the records of his reign till near his death; and that the whole was formed into one book which was ascribed to Samuel, as the more eminent person, and as the latter part formed a sort of appendix to the history which he had begun.—It may also be observed, that in the time of Samuel a new epoch commenced: the government by judges was changed for that of kings: and Samuel anointed both those kings whose history is here given, and was himself a principal person in all these transactions.—From the Vulgate Latin translation, these books are also called “The first and the second books of Kings; and consequently the two following are “The third and fourth books of Kings.”—When Eli was judge and high-priest of Israel, Samuel was born: and while Eli’s indulged sons were bringing destruction on themselves and their family, and almost on the nation, Samuel was growing up in wisdom and piety, to be an illustrious prophet, and the reformer, deliverer, and judge of Israel. Yet the people, at length ungratefully weary of his mild government, desired a king; and Saul having been placed over them, his family was soon set aside for his disobedience to God; and David was anointed as his successor. The rest of the book is taken up with an account of David’s illustrious actions, and the harassing persecutions which he endured, till the death of Saul opened his way to mount the throne. It is not agreed how many years elapsed during these events; some confining them within eighty years, and others extending them to a hundred and fifteen.—It is evident that this book was extant, when the first book of Kings was written. (Compare 2:35, 36. with 1 Kings 2:27.) Almost every subsequent part of Scripture refers, to the events recorded in it, as of undoubted certainty; especially very many of the Psalms are poems made on occasion of one or other of them.—Our Lord and his apostles quote it as a part of the sacred Oracles: (Matt. 12:3, 4. Acts 7:45, 46. 13:21, 22.)—The history of David, the son of Jesse, forms a sort of introduction to all the prophecies concerning his family; and especially concerning Christ, who sprang from the root of Jesse, was distinguished as the Son of David, and inherited the throne of David. (Ps. 2: 72: 89:19–37. Is. 9:6, 7. 11:1–10. Acts 2:25–31.) The narrative itself may in some sense be considered as *prophetical*, recording many typical events, which had their accomplishment in Christ. The book likewise contains several direct prophecies concerning the families of Eli and Saul, which were speedily fulfilled: and the song of Hannah concludes with a prophecy of our Lord, in which he is, for the first time, predicted expressly as the Messiah, the anointed of God. (2:10.)

B. C. 1140.

CHAPTER I.

Elkanah a Levite has two wives, 1, 2. He goes yearly to worship at Shiloh, 3. He favours and comforts Hannah, when insulted by Peninnah on account of her barrenness, 4–8. Hannah in grief prays for a son, and vows to devote him to God as a perpetual Nazarite, 9–11. Eli through mistake at first rebukes, but afterwards blesses her, 12–18. She bears Samuel, stays till he is weaned, and then presents him to God, according to their vow, 19–28.

NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of

19. Matt. 27:57. *Arimathea.* b Judg. 17:1. 19:1. c 1 Chr. 6:25–27, 34. d 17:12. Ruth 1:2. 1 Kings 11:26. e Gen. 4:19. 29:23–29. Judg. 8:30. Matt. 19:8. f Gen. 16:1, 2. 25:21. 29:31. Judg. 13:2. Luke 1:7. * Heb. From year to

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1. Elkanah appears to have been a Levite of the family of Kohath. (*Marg. Ref. Notes.* 1 Chr. 6:16–38.)—Ramathaim-zophim was the place which is afterwards called Ramah; (19) and from the dual number here used, it is supposed to have been divided into two parts, upon distinct hills. The word “Zophim” signifies *watchmen*, perhaps because some watch-towers and watchmen were stationed there; for “Ramah” signifies *exaltation*; or it might be so called from Zuph, Elkanah’s ancestor.—Ephrath is the same as Beth-lehem; and probably Elkanah, or his ancestor Zuph, was called an Ephrathite, from being allied in the female line to a family of the tribe of Judah, whose inheritance lay there; or because he was born at Ephrath. (Gen. 48:7.)

V. 2. Hannah seems to have been the first wife of Elkanah: but as she was barren, he probably took Peninnah, (as Abraham took Hagar,) from an impatient desire of children: (Note, Gen. 16:1–3.) but the event showed, that in deviating from the original law of marriage, though in a manner

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Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:

2 And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship, and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni

year. Ex. 23:14, 17. 34:23. Deut. 16:16. Luke 2:41. g Deut. 12:5–7, 11–14. h Josh. 18:1. Judg. 18:31. Pa. 78:60. Jer. 7:12–14. i 9. 2:12–17, 84. 3:13. 4:4. 11, 17, 18.

then tolerated, he little consulted his own peace and comfort.

V. 3. The stated worship at Shiloh was observed, but probably in an irregular manner; otherwise Elkanah, a Levite, would have had employment at the sanctuary. In those times of apostasy and idolatry, when “men abhorred the offering of the Lord,” through the wickedness of Eli’s sons, (2:17.) it was commendable in Elkanah to go up, though but once a year, perhaps at the Passover, to worship the Lord; the original words, however, may mean, that he went up at *stated times*, probably at the three great feasts. The Israelites were confined to one place, one altar, and one priesthood; and therefore Elkanah could not go elsewhere. But, though the wickedness of ministers does not deprive the pious Christian of the ordinances of God; yet we, not being under a similar limitation, should certainly prefer attending on the ministry of those, who appear at least

and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there.

4 And when the time was that Elkanah offered her, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions.

5 But unto Hannah, he gave, a 'worthy portion: for the loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.

6 And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.

7 And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her: therefore she wept, and did not eat.

8 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? [Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk: (now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD:)

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.

13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

k Lev. 3:4, 5, 7, 15. Deut. 12:17, 18, 16:11. * Or, double. Gen. 43:34, 45:22. l Gen. 29:30, 31. Deut. 21:15. m Gen. 20:18, 30:2. n Lev. 18:18. Job 6:14. 1 Heb. angered. a. 2:19. 1 Or, from the time that she, &c. Heb. from her going up. p 2 Sam. 12:16, 17. 2 Kings 8:12. Job 6:14. John 20:13, 15. 1 Heb. 5:14. q Ruth 4:15. Ps. 43:4. Is. 55:5, 6. r 3:15. 2 Sam. 7:2. s Heb. bitter of soul. Ruth 1:20. t 2 Sam. 17:8. 1:7. h 9:18. 1:1. Is. 38:15. 3:6. 1 Cor. 8:15. a Ps. 50:15, 91:15. Luke 22:44. Heb. 5:7. 1 Gen. 50:10. Judg. 21:2. 2 Sam. 13:36. 2 Kings 20:3. Jer. 13:17. 22:10. u Gen. 29:20. Num. 21:2. 30:3. s Judg. 11:30. Ec. 5:4. x Gen. 29:32. Ex. 4:31. 2 Sam. 16:12. Ps. 25:16. 19 Gen. 31:1, 30:22. Ps. 132:2. 1 Heb. seed of men. a Num. 6:5. Judg. 13:5. 1 Heb. multiplied to pray. Luke 11:8-10. 18:1. Eph. 6:18. Col. 4:2. 1 Thes. 5:17. Jam. 5:16. a Gen. 24:42-45. Neh. 2:4. Ps. 25:1. Rom. 8:26. b Zech. 9:15. Acts 2:13. 1 Cor. 13:7. c Josh. 22:12-20. Job 8:2. Is. 62:3. Prov.

to be walking heaven-ward themselves, as well as teaching others the true way thither; and not countenance either heretical teachers, or ungently men. (Notes, Prov. 19:27. 1 John 4:1-3. 2 John 7-11.)

V. 4-7. After the other appointed sacrifices had been brought, the peace-offerings were presented, on part of which the offerer feasted with his family, having given to each a portion. On these occasions Elkanah showed his peculiar attention to Hannah, by the customary indications; which probably excited the envy and jealousy of Peninnah, as well as her proud contempt of Hannah's barrenness; and thus great uneasiness was occasioned. (Notes, Gen. 16:4-6. 37:3.) For Hannah laid it far more to heart than she ought; and her perpetual sorrow distressed Elkanah, and greatly interrupted the comfort and benefit of their religious ordinances; and this might be one reason why Hannah refused to partake of the sacrifices, lest the Lord should be displeased with her for eating them mourning. (Deut. 26:14. Hos. 9:4. Mal. 2:13. Notes, Neh. 8:9-12.)

V. 8. Elkanah seems to have endured Peninnah's angry and malevolent tempers and conduct with great patience; and he most tenderly remonstrated with Hannah concerning her immoderate grief; and reminded her, that, though she had no children, she possessed his affection, which would conduce more to her real comfort than ten sons would without it; and that therefore her situation was more desirable than that of Peninnah.—This gentle rebuke prevailed with her to repress her grief, and perhaps to partake of the sacrifice: but that did not comfort her heart till she had poured it out in prayer. (18. Note, 9-11.)

V. 9-11. The tabernacle, now become stationary, was sometimes called "the temple." (33. Ps. 27:4. 29:9.)—Hannah, with great earnestness and importunity, entreated the Lord to grant her a son, and vowed that he should be a perpetual Nazarite; devoted to the service of God alone, all his days. (Notes, Judg. 13:4, 5. 16:17-21.) Some learned men compute that Samuel was born before Samson, whom God thus separated to himself, and for a special purpose, before his birth; but others think he was born about the same time, or a few years after him. The chronology of this part of the history, however, is extremely obscure, and the attempts of learned men to elucidate it are peculiarly unsatisfactory, and often widely different from each other.

14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.

15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.

16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial; for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace; and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. [Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever.

23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good: tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

6:9. Matt. 7:1-3. d Job 11:14. 22:33. Prov. 4:24. Eph. 4:25-31. e Prov. 15:1. 25:15. f Heb. hard of spirit. f Ps. 42:4. 62:8. 122:3. 135:6. Lam. 2:19. g 2:12. 10:27. 25:25. Deut. 13:13. h Job 6:2, 3. 10:1, 2. Matt. 12:34, 35. i Or, meditation. 1 25:35. 29:7. Judg. 18:6. 2 Kings 5:19. Mark 5:34. Luke 7:50. h 48. k 1 Chr. 4:1. Ps. 20:4, 5. 1 Gen. 29:5. 33:8, 15. Ruth 2:13. m Ec. 9:7. John 16:24. Rom. 15:13. Phil. 4:6, 7. n 2:26. Ps. 5:3. 55:17. 119:147. Mark 11:35. o 11 Gen. 8:1. 21:1. Ps. 35:7. 136:23. Luke 23:42. 1 Heb. in revolution of days. s That is, asked of God. p Gen. 4:25. 5:29. 16:11. 29:32-35. 30:6. -21. 41:51. 52. Ex. 21:22. Matt. 1:21. q 2 Gen. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. Ps. 104:2. r 1 Pet. 16:16. Luke 22:41, 42. s 11:28. 2:11, 13. 3:1. Ps. 23:6. 27:4. t Ex. 21:6. Lev. 25:23. Josh. 4:7. Ps. 110:4. Is. 9:7. u Num. 30:7-11. x 2 Sam. 7:25. Is. 44:26. y Gen. 21:7, 8. Ps. 22:9. Matt. 24:19. Luke 11:27.

V. 12-16. Probably Eli had many times seen instances of such intemperance as he here charged upon Hannah; and perhaps he sat near the tabernacle to repress these enormities, though he did not adopt the only effectual method. (Note, 2:23-25.) Perceiving her great discomposure, and observing that her lips moved, he too hastily attributed it to drunkenness. But Hannah had now obtained such inward consolation, that this severe reflection neither distressed her, nor excited her anger: so that she intimated her abhorrence of the crime with which she had been charged, and calmly and respectfully explained to him the real cause of her agitation. In doing this, she emphatically described the nature of fervent prayer: "I have poured out my soul before the LORD." (Marg. Ref.) For poured out does not consist merely in using good words, but in opening before the Lord the inmost soul, and in unreserved confidence, pouring out before him all our fears, sorrows, desires, and purposes; as a child would before a loving father, from whom alone he had expectations of relief, and who, he was satisfied, was able and disposed to help him.

V. 17, 18. The character of Eli was very defective; yet there are several traces in it of true piety, and this answer is one. He was open to conviction, and willing to acknowledge himself mistaken, and by his commendation, blessing, and prayers, to make Hannah amends for the injury which he had done her. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 19-22. It is probable that Elkanah established Hannah's vow, in a solemn act of worship, before he left Shiloh. (Note, Num. 30:3-8.) Samuel's name would remind his mother, every time it was mentioned, of the Lord's kindness in remembering her affliction, and in answering her prayer.—The women were not commanded to go up to the sanctuary: and Hannah, after Samuel's birth, had a sufficient engagement at home.

V. 23. Establish his word.] As no promise of God respecting Samuel is recorded, it is thought that the clause may be rendered, "Only the LORD complete his work;" namely, in accepting of the child given in answer to prayer, as his devoted servant all his days. (Note, 9-11.)

V. 24, 25. One of these bullocks might be intended for a burnt-offering; and the other two for thank-offerings or peace-offerings, on part of which, and of the flour and wine, Elkanah with his family and friends, and with the Levites, might

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young.

25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, O my lord! as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

27 For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

z Num. 15:9, 10. 12ent. 12:5, 6, 11, 16:16. a 4:3, 4. Josh. 18:1. b Luke 2:22, 18:15, 16. c 17:55, 20:3. Gen. 42:15. 2 Sam. 11:11, 14:19. 2 Kings. 2:2, 3, 6, 4:30. d 11—13. Matt. 7:7. e Ps. 66:19, 116:1—5. 118:5. 1 John 5:15. f Or, returned. i In, whom I have obtained by petition, to the LORD. 1 Or, he whom I have obtained by petition shall be returned. f Gen. 24:25, 48. 2 Tim. 3:15.

feast before the Lord. (Notes, Lev. 3: 7:12—18. Deut. 12: 5—7.) After the burnt-offering had been sacrificed, they seem to have presented Samuel to Eli, before the other offerings were slain.—The original words rendered, "The child was young," seem to imply that he was exceedingly dear to his parents; who exercised great self-denial, in leaving him at the sanctuary at so early an age. (Note, 2:18, 19.)—Some think he was about three years old; others that he was seven. (Note, Gen. 21:8—12.)

V. 26, 27. Hannah's heart was too full of joy and gratitude upon this occasion, to notice the injurious reflection Eli had cast upon her: but she well remembered her prayer and vow, and the Lord's gracious answer.—The words rendered, "as thy soul liveth," are supposed by some to have been intended merely as an expression of good will; *May thy soul live.* (Marg. Ref. c.)

V. 28. The word rendered "lent," is nearly similar to that translated *asked*: and refers to the name of Samuel.—Hannah had asked him of God, and now she returned him to him. (Marg. Notes, Ex. 3:21, 22. 11:2, 3. 12:35, 36.) It was her intention, that, as a Levite and a Nazirite, he should spend all his life in the immediate service of the sanctuary; but the Lord was pleased afterwards to employ him as a prophet, and a judge in the public affairs of Israel.—Some think that Elkanah is meant, when it is said, "He worshipped the Lord:" but others understand it of Samuel, who thus gave some early indications of piety.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. Experience universally evinces the kindness, as well as equity, of the original institution of marriage, and the divine law concerning it: for every deviation makes way for domestic contention, envy, malice, impatience, and every evil work, to the interruption of the worship of God, and the ruin of family religion.—None of our troubles, however, should be allowed to interfere with our attendance on the ordinances of God: for if Satan can induce us to yield to discouragement in one respect, he will attempt it in another, and never cease to harass us, when engaged in the duties of religion, till he has driven us from every means of grace, and solemn act of holy worship: so that resolute resistance and perseverance with earnest cries to the Lord for his assistance, are our only successful weapons: and we should not in the least degree "give place to the devil."—The human heart can neither bear prosperity without insolence, nor adversity without impatience. Instead of being contented and thankful in our appointed situation, and rejoicing in the happiness of others, we are prone to murmur and to vex ourselves, because others are more favoured or prospered, than we suppose ourselves to be: yet could we change conditions in every respect with them, we should generally increase our uneasiness; whereas impartial reflection upon our own situation in life, compared with our unworthiness, and with the condition of others, would silence our complaints, or convert them into thankful praises.—All inordinate passions are irrational, as well as inimical to our comfort; and even pious Christians, who are shocked at the thought of yielding to other temptations often rebelliously and ungratefully indulge excessive grief, against which they ought especially to watch and pray. But if our earthly comforts, when duly estimated, being greater than our sorrows, should console us under our trials; surely the favour of God is better to his people, than all beloved relations or outward satisfactions, and sufficient to compensate for the loss or the want of them all.—Every one should comfort those who are in bitterness of soul: yet a mild and tender rebuke is frequently the greatest kindness, when we see our friends forgetting their mercies, or their duty.

V. 9—18. Nothing can give solid comfort to those who are in anguish of spirit, but the assurance and experience of the love of God in their hearts: nor will that cordial in general be communicated, till they have "poured out their souls" repeatedly in earnest secret prayer. This must bring down the blessings, which flow from the atoning blood of Christ, and are vouchsafed through his intercession; and it is necessary to render public ordinances profitable and joyful; nor can a concurrence of all possible distresses and temptations render that man miserable, or long uncomfortable, who rightly improves the precious privilege of access to the mercy-seat of a reconciled God in Christ Jesus. Yet, through Satan's

28 Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord as long as he liveth: he shall be lent to the Lord And he worshipped the Lord there.

CHAPTER II.

Hannah's thankful song of praise, 1—10. The sin of Eli's sons, 11—17. Samuel ministers before God, 18, 19. Eli blessed Elkanah; and Hannah, who bears more children, 20, 21. Eli reproves his sons, but far too gently, 22—26. A prophet foretells the ruin of Eli's house, 27—36.

AND Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; mine horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies: because I rejoice in thy salvation.

a Neh. 11:17. Hab. 9:1. Phil. 4:6. b Luke 1:46, 47. Rom. 5:11. Phil. 3:3, 4, 4, 1 Pet. 1:8. c Ps. 18:2. 89:17. 92:10. 112:9. Luke 1:69. d Ex. 15:1, 21. Judg. 6:1, 2. Ps. 51:15. 71:8. Rev. 18:20. e Ps. 9:14. 13:5. 20:5. 35:9. 118:14. Is. 12, 2, 3. Hab. 3:18.

temptations, and the evil of our hearts, we are often reluctant to begin, slight in presenting, and hasty in concluding our petitions! Hence it is that we go mourning all the day long, instead of "casting our burden upon the Lord;" and our miseries will increase upon us, till we take this course (Notes, Phil. 4:5—7. 1 Pet. 5:5—7.)—The more we experience the sweet consolations which are communicated while the soul is poured out before the Lord, the more we shall determine "to call upon him as long as we live." (Note, Ps. 116:2.)

We ought to be very cautious how we condemn those, who are uncommonly earnest in religion, as if guilty of hypocrisy, enthusiasm, or some other iniquity; and ministers especially, in their zeal against sin, ought to be careful, that they do not grieve such as are "in bitterness of spirit;" but if we have rashly censured those who are not faulty, we should be ready to hear their plea, to retract our decision, to give them encouragement, and to assist them with our prayers.—Among the various trials, to which we are exposed, none is in general more bitter, than the suspicions and censures of those whom we love and esteem. But while "the God of all grace" hears our prayers, we may bear even this with patience, and answer it with meekness: for though it is painful to be counted "children of Belial" by our brethren; yet if our loving Father sees that correction needful, and favours us with the assurance of his acceptance and the light of his countenance, we may thankfully submit to his will.—Even before those blessings which we have asked in prayer are vouchsafed, or expected with certainty, he sometimes communicates such supports to the soul, as exceed every temporal advantage, can be destroyed by no outward trouble, and give a relish for those mercies which before we undervalued or overlooked.—We are also most likely to obtain all our warranted desires, when we are rendered most willing to submit them to the will of God.

V. 19—24. No temporal satisfaction can be durably comfortable, which we cannot name, "Asked of the Lord;" and which we do not receive from him with gratitude as an answer to our prayers, and uprightly desire to use to his glory and in his service. If he give us children, we shall have the most comfort in them, when they are most entirely his; and therefore we should devote them to him from the first; bring them up for him, and pray continually that we may see early proofs of his having received them into his family, and made them his to serve him all their days.—The vows that we have mingled with the prayers made in our distress, must be performed with gratitude, when our desires have been granted; that others may praise our God along with us, and be encouraged to trust and call upon him.—It does not become the worshippers of God to be soon weary of his ordinances; but to leave them reluctantly, when called to attend on other duties: and when men are in such haste to set out on journeys, or to engage in business, that they have not time to worship God, they are likely to proceed without his presence and blessing.—There are times, when domestic employments may render it a duty, to be occasionally absent from public ordinances: but those seasons should abound the more in the exercises of secret devotion; and when special blessings have been conferred, and restraints are removed, the true believer will go with more longing desires to the courts of the Lord, to pay his vows, and render his grateful praises. With what transport then will he at last leave this distant land below, to ascend to the courts above, to receive the full answer of all his prayers, and to offer everlasting praises, with an uninterrupted flow of holy affections and ineffable delight!

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. The word *prayer* is sometimes used for any act of devotion, whether it be confined to petition, or include thanksgiving and praise, or chiefly consist of the latter. (Marg. Ref. a.)—When Hannah requested a son, she spake in her heart, and "her voice was not heard;" but when, according to her vow, she presented Samuel to God, his glory and the edification of his people required, a public acknowledgment. Whilst her heart was enlarged with love and gratitude, she was led on, by the Holy Spirit, to speak with great enlargement and fervency, and with clear discernment of divine things, on the gracious dealings of God towards Israel, and of his dispensations towards men in general in every age.—"Her heart rejoiced," not in Samuel, but

2 *There is* ¹ none holy as the LORD; *for there is* ² none beside thee; neither *is there* ³ any ⁴ rock like our God.

3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; ¹ let not ² arrogance come out of your mouth: for the LORD ³ is ⁴ a God of knowledge, and ⁵ by him actions are weighed.

4 The ¹ bows of the mighty men *are* broken, and they that ² stumbled *are* girded with strength.

5 *They that were* ¹ full, have hired out themselves for bread; and *they that were* ² hungry ceased: so that ³ the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is ⁴ waxed feeble.

6 The LORD ¹ killeth, and maketh alive: ² he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

7 The LORD ¹ maketh poor, and maketh rich: ² he bringeth low, and lifteth up.

8 He raiseth up ¹ the poor out of the dust, and

lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to ² set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for ³ the pillars of the earth ⁴ are the LORD's, and he hath ⁵ set the world upon them.

9 He ¹ will keep the feet of ² his saints, and the wicked shall ³ be silent in darkness; for ⁴ by strength shall no man prevail.

10 The ¹ adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; ² out of heaven shall ³ he thunder upon them: the LORD shall ⁴ judge the ends of the earth; and ⁵ he shall give strength unto his King, and ⁶ exalt the horn of his ⁷ Anointed. [Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house; and the child did ¹ minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

12 Now ¹ the sons of Eli *were* ² sons of Belial; they ³ knew not the LORD.

Ex. 15:11. Deut. 32:4. Ps. 99:5, 9, 111:9. Is. 6:3. 57:15. 1 Pet. 1:16. Rev. 4:8. 15:4. Gen. 4:23. 2 Sam. 22:32. Ps. 73:25. Is. 43:10, 11. 44:6, 8. Deut. 3:24. 32:30, 31, 39. Ps. 13:2. 71:19. 86:8. 89:5. Is. 40:18. Jer. 10:6. 1 Ps. 94:4. Prov. 8:13. Is. 37:32. Dan. 4:30, 31, 37. Mal. 3:13. Jude 15, 16. Heb. 1:3. 1 Kings 6:39. Ps. 41:21. 24:7—10. 147:3. Jer. 17:10. Heb. 1:12, 13. Rev. 2:23. 1 Job 31:6. Is. 26:7. Dan. 5:27. m. Ps. 37:13, 17. 45:9. 76:3. n. Is. 10:4. Jer. 37:10. 2 Cor. 4:9. 10:12, 19. Eph. 4:14. Phil. 4:13. Heb. 11:34. o. Ps. 34:10. Luke 13:16, 25. p. 1 Ps. 113:9. q. Is. 54:1. Jer. 15:9. Gal. 4:27. r. Deut. 32:39. 2 Kings 5:7. Job 5:18. Ps. 86:20. Hos. 6:1, 2. John 5:25—29. 11:25. Rev. 1:8. s. 2 Ps. 116:8. Is. 25:19. Jon. 2:2—6. Matt. 12:40. 2 Cor. 1:9, 10. 1 Pet. 8:17, 18. Luke 1:21. 6:11. Ps. 102:10. u. Ps. 75:7. v. 2:12. Jam. 1:9, 10. 4:10. x. Job 28. 42:10—12. Ps. 113:7, 8. Dan. 4:17. Luke 1:51, 52. y. 15:17. Gen. 41:14, 40. 2 Sam. 7:8. Job 36:7, 7. Ec. 4:14. Dan. 2:48. 6:3. Jam. 2:5. Rev. 1:6. 3:21. 5:10. 22:5. z. Job 38:

4—6. Ps. 24:2. 102:25. 104:5. Heb. 1:3. a. Job 5:24. Ps. 37:23, 24. 91:11, 12. 94:18. 121:3. 5:8. Prov. 16:9. 1 Pet. 1:5. b. Deut. 33:3. Ps. 37:28. 97:10. Prov. 2:8. Jude 1:3. c. Job 5:16. Ec. 5:17. Jer. 41:14. Zeph. 1:15. Matt. 12:22, 12:13. Rom. 3:19. 2 Pet. 2:17. Jude 13. d. 17:49, 50. Ps. 33:16, 17. Ec. 9:11. Jer. 9:23. Zech. 4:6. e. Ec. 15:6. Job. 5:31. Ps. 2:9. 21:8, 9. 68:1, 2. 92:9. Luke 19:27. 7:16. 12:18. Job 40:9. Ps. 18:15, 14. e. Ps. 50:1—6. 96:13. 96:9. Ec. 11:9. 12:14. Matt. 25:31, 32. John 5:21, 22. Rom. 14:10—12. 2 Cor. 5:10. Rev. 20:11—15. h. 12:13. 15:28. 16:1. 2 Sam. 7:8, 13. Ps. 2:6. 21:1, 7. k. 32:1. 45:24. Matt. 25:34. 28:18. 1 Ps. 89:17, 24. 92:10. 148:14. Luke 1:69. k. 12:3. Ps. 2:2. 20:6. 28:8. 45:7. Acts 4:27. 10:38. 11:8. 1:23. 3:1, 15. m. Hos. 4:6—9. Mal. 2:1—2. n. 10:37. 25:17. Deut. 13:13. Jude 19, 22. 1 Kings 21:10, 13. 2 Cor. 6:15. o. 3:7. Jude. 2:10. Jer. 2:8. 22:16. John 8:55. 16:3. 17:3. Rom. 1:28—30.

"in the LORD," in his power, faithfulness, and love.—"Her horn" (the weapon for defence and annoyance in some animals), "was exalted in the LORD, and her mouth was enlarged over her enemies," being delivered from the taunts and reproaches of her rival, she took that as an earnest of more important victories, and rejoiced in the hope of triumphing over the adversaries of her soul; for she "rejoiced in the salvation of the LORD," and in looking for the coming of Him, who is the Salvation of his people. (Notes, Hab. 3:17—19. Luke 1:46—55. Phil. 4:4.)

V. 2. From personal mercies, Hannah proceeded to contemplate the perfections of God. Holiness, which comprises perfect wisdom, purity, justice, truth, goodness, and mercy, is in him alone undivided, immutable, and complete. "There is none holy as the LORD," all created holiness is derived, dependent, mutable, and scanty; all human holiness mixed with impurity; and all the idols of the nations are abominable demons. Nay, says she, "there is none beside thee," no other God; and all creatures are "less than nothing, and vanity" in the comparison with him: "neither is there any rock, like our God;" he is our only Protector, Refuge, and Support; and they only are safe and strong, who trust entirely in him. (Notes, Ex. 15:11. Deut. 32:4. Is. 43:8—13. 44:6—8. 45:1—7.)

V. 3. With allusion to Peninnah's misconduct, Hannah seems here to address the enemies of true religion; who, confiding in numbers, courage, or ability, glory in themselves and insultingly despise believers. But let them cease from such proud boastings, arrogance, and reproaches; remembering that "the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." (Note, Is. 30:18, 19.) He distinguishes men's characters, and weighs their actions in the balance, and knows when to interpose in behalf of his people: he also knows those, who despise and hate him, and will in due time effectually punish them, though for a season they may seem to prosper.—The last clause may be rendered, "By him works are regulated;" he orders every thing in perfect wisdom and power, and none can defeat his purposes. Or, still more exactly according to the text, *Are not works by him regulated?* (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4—8. The events which these verses speak of, are often called the caprices of blind fortune: but they in fact are the settled purposes of God, thus manifesting his own perfections by saving those who trust in him; and pouring contempt upon all the distinctions, in which ungodly men confide and glory. Are they proud of valour, military skill, or strength? their bows shall be broken, and themselves crushed by an inferior and despised company. Do they glory in riches, and riot in ease and luxury, while they despise and oppress the poor? they are often impoverished, and reduced to the necessity of hiring themselves out for bread, whilst the poor and hungry are surprisingly advanced to affluence. Do any glory, as Peninnah did, in the increase of their families, and despise the childless? Providence may soon by unexpected death reduce their numbers; whilst the desolate are as wonderfully increased. The Lord gives life, and takes it away: the most vigorous are by the stroke of his hand brought down to the gates of the grave; and the feeble are unexpectedly restored to health and strength. Such vicissitudes may likewise be often observed in men's circumstances and families; in which capacity and industry prove utterly unavailing to prevent the adversity of some; while others are wonderfully prospered, and rise even from the lowest and most abject condition to the throne of glory. (Notes, Ps. 107:33—43. 113:—9. Ec. 9:11, 12.) Events of this kind occasion surprise,

and many attempt to account for them: but "the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them;" and the same power, which first created and established the earth in its settled course, without human help, and in such a manner as no human power can change; by his secret overruling providence does every thing, and should be acknowledged in every thing. (Notes, Job. 34:20—30. Dan. 4:34—37. Rom. 11:33—36.)—These things are equally applicable to the dispensations of his kingdom of grace; in which he respects, not men's wisdom, learning, greatness, or imagined excellency, but selects the base, the poor, the foolish of the world, having taught them to feel their guilt and misery, and to value his free and precious salvation. Thus he "taketh the poor out of the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory;" and all this "according to the eternal purpose, which he hath purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Notes, Matt. 19:29, 30. 1 Cor. 1:26—31. Eph. 1:3—12.)

V. 9. The saints are those, whom the grace of God has separated from a sinful world, and sanctified unto himself: and "he will keep their feet," so that they shall be directed and upheld in his ways; they shall not so stumble as utterly to be cast down, nor be so snared as finally to be taken captive by their enemies. (Notes, Ps. 37:23, 24. 1 Pet. 2:2—5.) But, however sinners may now boast, and fill the world with disturbance and confusion, they will ere long be put to silence, and sink speechless, under the divine sentence of condemnation, into everlasting darkness and despair. (Notes, Matt. 22:11—14. Rom. 3:19, 20.) "For by strength shall no man prevail," either to injure and overturn the interest of true religion, or to secure themselves from merited destruction. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 10. While the adversaries of God shall be destroyed for ever, his church shall prosper, not only as it did under the government of David, his king, whom Samuel by his command anointed; but under the government of his Son, the Messiah, who hath "all power given him in heaven and earth," who shall go on conquering, till all the ends of the earth submit to his mediatorial sway, and till he come "to judge the quick and dead at his appearing." Then shall all enemies finally be put under his feet, and his glory be displayed in their destruction, and in the complete salvation of his people. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Cor. 15:20—28. Rev. 6:1, 2. 11:15—18. 19:11—21. 20:11—15.)—When Hannah spake this song, there was no king over Israel, so that her words here must be prophetic, both of David the type, and Christ the Anti-type.—"Who doth not see that the spirit of this woman (whose name was Anna, which signifies grace), prophesied of the Christian religion, the city of God, whose King and Founder is Christ; and of the grace of God, from which the proud are estranged, that they may fall; but the humble are filled with it that they may rise?" Augustine.—"Indeed this is the first time that the name of Messiah, or Anointed, is found in Scripture. With this song, that of the blessed Virgin hath such a perfect resemblance, that one cannot but think Hannah had a respect to something higher than the quarrel between her and Peninnah, &c." Bp. Patrick.—This indeed is expressly saying very little: but it shows what the mind of the writer had in contemplation.—As to Peninnah, on any interpretation, she can be considered no further, than merely as having given an occasion for this most sublime and sacred song, which may bear a comparison, or even competition, with the most beautiful and magnificent productions of any other inspired writer.

V. 11. The Levites were not called to any of their pecu-

CHAPTER III.

The Lord reveals himself to the child Samuel, and informs him of his purpose against the house of Eli, 1-14. Samuel, advised by Eli, tells him the vision; and Eli answers submissively, 15-18. Samuel is established to be a prophet of the Lord, 19-21.

AND the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the

15, 2:11, 18. h 21. Ps. 74:9. Is. 13:12. Am. 8:11, 12. c 2:22, 4:15. Gen. 27:1.

till the captivity; (Notes, 1 Chr. 6:4-15. 24:1-4, 6.) and concurred with the pious princes in promoting true religion: while the descendants of Eli, being excluded from the more honourable and lucrative parts of their office, would abjectly petition the priests for the lowest services, in order to obtain the meanest maintenance.—The concurrence of the priests of Aaron's line with the kings of David's family, while they thus walked before the anointed of the Lord, typified the union of the kingly and priestly offices in Jesus Christ: which seems also to have been predicted. No mention had been made of anointing a king over Israel, when this prophecy was delivered. (Notes, 10. Deut. 17:14, 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The mercies which we receive in answer to our prayers, should not only be acknowledged with thankful praise, but should lead us to rejoice in the Lord as the Fountain of felicity and the God of Salvation; and to anticipate with cheerful hope our complete deliverance, and victory over all the enemies of our souls. From what the Lord has done for us, we should be led to meditate upon his glorious perfections, as displayed in all his works, but especially in his dealings with sinners who hope in his mercy.—An established judgment, concerning his perfect wisdom, power, love, and faithfulness, as exercised with sovereign authority, in the whole administration of his kingdom of providence and grace; and an habitual regard to his operations in all those events, which take place through the instrumentality of second causes, or rational agents, of whatever kind or character; will confirm our belief, that they, and they only, are safe and happy, who trust in him and enjoy his favour; and that the present success, boastings, and confidence of the wicked, will shortly terminate in disappointment, misery, and despair; and the troubles of every humble believer, in triumph and exultation.—Vain and transitory are all distinctions, except that between the godly and the ungodly, which will swallow up the rest, and endure to all eternity.—“The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed.” He knows and approves his people, and he marks with abhorrence the presumptuous offender: with uncontrollable authority he dispenses to every man, as he pleases; and in his own most wise and gracious time and manner he will terminate the afflictions of his people, advance their comforts, and overrule every event for their good. Let us then wait his time, and submissively trust him; and we shall acknowledge at last that “he hath done all things well.” Every circumstance of our life and death is already appointed in the secret purpose of our God: we shall live, however exposed, till he pleases to take away our breath; and then we must die, whatever efforts be made to prolong our lives. As this period, unknown to us, cannot be far distant, it is our wisdom and duty to prepare for it: making it our one great business to obtain the favour of God and do his will; in assured hope that, however abject our condition in this world, we shall at length “inherit the throne of glory.”—Though our path be dark and slippery, and beset with snares and enemies, the Lord will keep our feet, and uphold our goings, by the same power which established the earth; nor can any power prevail against his saints, or prevent the destruction of his enemies. May the Lord hasten that day, when his anointed Priest and King shall establish his authority throughout the earth, upon the ruins of all opposition!

V. 11-26. Our gracious God accepts thanks for mercies received, as prayers for further benefits; and when we offer him his own, he considers the service as a loan, and as such will recompense it. (Note, Prov. 19:17.) Out of the mouth of babes he can perfect his praise, and by their example expose the shame of those sons of Belial who, with every advantage, know him not and rebel against him. (Notes, Matt. 11:25, 26. 21:14-16.)—We have great encouragement to devote our children to the Lord in prayer from their birth, yea from their conception, to bring them early to his courts, and to train them up in his ways; for in this manner he generally takes them into his service, and gives them that spiritual and experimental knowledge of himself, which fortifies the heart against temptation, and is the source of all godliness. (Note, 1 Chr. 28:9.)—The feeble attempts of children to serve God are noticed with condescending regard, as peculiarly pleasing to him; for in all cases “where there is a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not;” and the grace of God is sufficient for his feeblest servants, when in their proper place, though in the midst of the worst examples, and struggling with the most powerful temptations. (Notes, Gen. 39:—) The neglect of properly educating children, and the indulgence of their wayward inclinations, is a sin which God severely chastises in his own people: because it seems to imply a contempt of his authority and special favour, and a disregard to his glory, as well as to their immortal souls; and because it tends to the most fatal crimes and apostasies, and

Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in

48:10. Ps. 90:10. Ec. 12:3. d Ex. 27:20, 21. 30:7, 8. Lev. 24:2-4. 2 Chr. 13:11.

to the utter decay of true religion. None are generally more abandoned than the degenerate offspring of pious persons, when they have broken through all the restraints of shame, conscience, and regard to character; and thus the cause of religion suffers, both in losing those families which were its support, and in the prejudice which their base conduct excites in the minds of beholders. And when such children of Belial have been admitted into the sacred ministry, and are allowed to go on with the forms of godliness, for the sake of emolument or authority; they prove the most fatal enemies to the cause of God, and the most destructive murderers of the souls of men. Many they mislead, but more they set against all religion; they furnish infidels and scoffers with their most formidable weapons; they supply excuses to the careless and slothful; they discourage the hearts, and damp the zeal, of those who are seriously disposed, and “cause even the Lord's people to transgress;” they buoy up the confidence of hypocrites, and by their enticements and examples tempt many to those sins, which they would otherwise have trembled to think of.—We ought not, however, on account of such men, to neglect the ordinances, truths, or precepts of God's word; but by persevering in a contrary conduct, we should enter our protest against them, and evince the difference between the name and the reality of religion.—Abuses, when once introduced, are soon sanctioned by custom, and conformed to without hesitation. Thus customs and precedents acquire authority in the church, which it is deemed by a great majority very sinful to dissent from or object to, even in the most peaceful manner.—Yet when wicked men have thus gained one point for their own lucre or ambition, they will attempt another, and not shrink from the basest crimes to serve their selfish purposes. And is it not evident, that the whole system of papal anti-christianity grew up in this manner, to its full stature of spiritual domination and iniquity?—The beginnings should therefore be steadily resisted; and in such a case mild arguments and gentle rebukes are feeble weapons; the coercive arm of authority should impartially and decisively interpose: for, though the magistrate must not use his sword in matters simply of conscience towards God; yet he ought to use it in punishing atrocious immorality in persons of every description; and the rulers of the church are bound, by the strongest responsibility, to exercise their spiritual authority, in excluding them from the sacred office. If, however, they escape with impunity, through the false tenderness or partial negligence of those who ought to execute condign punishment upon them, they will not escape the vengeance of God; and wretched indeed is the case of those, who, by their contempt of the sacrifice of Christ, are excluded from the benefit of his intercession; and who have so long hardened themselves, as to be left to judicial hardness, in the righteous judgment of God, because he has determined to destroy them! (Note, 2 Thes. 2:8-12.)

V. 27-36. If the servants of God yield to temptation, and repeatedly commit iniquity; he will persevere in his rebukes and chastenings, till he has brought them to repentance: and in this process the offenders will suffer unspeakable anguish. The dishonour which they have occasioned to the name of the Lord, shall redound in disgrace upon themselves and their families; the crimes which they have connived at in others, through self-indulgence or partial affection, will be corrected in themselves; their expectations will be blasted, their distinctions withered, their usefulness precluded, and their honour laid in the dust, or rather transferred to those who honour God: and perhaps the repeated and severest strokes of the Lord's chastising rod, shall pursue them down to the grave.—That improper regard to the interests of his family, which induces a man to offend God, often proves the immediate cause of its ruin; whilst a disregard shown by any one, to all personal or relative interests, when the glory of God is concerned, forms the best method of promoting the welfare of his posterity.—Many of the Lord's offending people live to witness terrible effects of their misconduct; but how would it grieve their hearts, if they could foresee all the future consequences of every kind, to their families, and to the church, and in hardening sinners to their destruction! Let us endeavour to conceive of them, that we may be led to greater abhorrence and dread of sin, and to more constant watchfulness and prayer: for these things were written for our warning, that we might the more earnestly resist temptation, and strive against the beginnings of iniquity, and train up our families “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”—But whosoever misbehaves, or is degraded, the work of the Lord shall not be stayed for want of instruments: and though others have been and are useful and faithful as servants, in their several generations; yet the Son of God is the faithful and merciful High Priest, who doeth according to all that is in the heart of his heavenly Father, and whose priesthood shall be unchangeable and eternal. The meanest office under him is great

*the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou caldest me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose, and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went, and lay down in his place.

10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth.

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I

will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD: and Samuel feared to show Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I.

17 And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.

18 And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with

e 1:9. Ps. 5:7. 27:4. 29:9. f Gen. 22:1. Ex. 3:4. Ps. 99:6. Acts 9:4. 1 Cor. 12:6. 11:28. Gal. 1:15,16. g 4:16. Gen. 43:29. 2 Sam. 18:22. Matt. 9:2. * Or, thus did Samuel before he knew the LORD, and before the word of the LORD was revealed unto him. h Jer. 9:24. Acts 19:2. 1 Job 33:14,15. 1 Ex. 20:19. Ps. 95:2. Is. 63:1. Dan. 10:19. Acts 8:5. 1 Jo. 20:14. Am. 3:6,7. Hab. 1:5. Acts 13:41. 2 Kings 21:12. Is. 28:19. Jer. 19:3. Luke 21:35. n 2:27-36. Num. 23:19. Josh. 23:15. Zech. 1:6. Luke 21:33. 1 Heb. beginning and ending. 1 Or, and I will tell, &c. 2:27, &c. o 2 Chr. 20:12. Ex. 7:13. 18:30. Joel 3:12. p 1 Kings 2:44. Ec. 7:22. 1 John 3:20. q 2:12-20, 22. s Or, according. 1 Heb.

frowned not upon them. 2:23-25. 1 Kings 1:6. Prov. 19:18. 23:13,14. 29:15. Matt. 10:37. r 2:25. Num. 15:30,31. Is. 22:14. Jer. 7:16. 15:1. Ez. 24:13. 10:26-31. a 1:9. Mal. 1:10. 1 Jer. 1:8-8. 1 Cor. 16:10,11. u Ps. 141:5. Dan. 4:19. Mic. 2:7. x 20:13. Ruth 1:17. 2 Sam. 3:35. 19:13. 1 Kings 22:16. Matt. 26:63. 1 Heb. so add. * Or, word. 1 Heb. all the things, or, words. y Gen. 19:25. Judg. 10:15. 2 Sam. 16:10-12. Job 1:21. 2:10. Ps. 39:9. Is. 30:31. Lam. 3:39. 1 Pet. 5:6. 2:21. Judg. 13:24. Luke 1:80. 2:40,52. a 18:14. Gen. 39:2,21-23. Is. 43:2. Matt. 1:23. Luke 1:28. 2 Cor. 13:11,14. 2 Tim. 4:22.

preference; his pleasant service is perfect freedom: he will here feed, and hereafter glorify, all who disinterestedly serve him; but the hirelings he will utterly exclude.—May he furnish and send forth many faithful ministers, who may seek his glory, and follow his example; and never henceforth suffer any, who resemble Hophni and Phinehas, to prostitute the sacred ministry to their avarice and ambition, or to disgrace it by their crimes!

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. Samuel, under the direction of Eli, diligently performed such services at the tabernacle as he was capable of. (Notes, 2:11,18,19.) He is supposed at this time to have been about twelve years of age; and he was early prepared to enter on the prophetic office, for which the LORD intended him. (Note, Jer. 1:5.)—From the death of Moses, no more than two prophets have been mentioned; (except Deborah, who is called a prophetess;) and these only delivered an occasional message, and then retired; so that their names are not recorded. (2:27. Judg. 6:8-10.) Samuel was therefore the first eminent prophet after Moses, and with him prophecy was openly established: so that for several ages prophets were raised up in Israel by a regular succession. But before this time there had been "no open vision;" whatever revelation might be made to individuals, or occasional messages publicly delivered, there was no acknowledged prophet, to whom the people might resort, to know the mind and will of God: and therefore such intimations, as were then given, were more highly valued, than when the gift of prophecy became more common. (Note, Am. 8:11-14.)

V. 2, 3. The lamp in the sanctuary, ought to have been constantly kept burning. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 27:20,21. 30:7,8.)—Eli being old and infirm had lain down before; but Samuel was just retired to rest, in some room adjoining that of Eli, and near to the sanctuary.

V. 4-6. The Lord called Samuel by name, in an audible voice: (Marg. Ref. f:) which he mistook for the call of Eli, who probably often disturbed him in the night through the infirmities of old age. But when Eli assured him, that he did not call him, he went again to his bed, and concluded that he had been mistaken.—His respectful and affectionate assiduity, in waiting on the aged high-priest, is well worthy of our notice. For he came and even ran, at the first call, and that repeatedly: and Eli's language to him is expressive of affection.

V. 7. Samuel was not destitute of the knowledge of God, in that sense which implies the total absence of true piety, as Eli's sons were: (Note, 2:12.) but he did not know his manner of making his will known to the prophets, and therefore was not sensible that this was the voice of God. (Marg.) The LORD, however, overruled his mistake, to make Eli acquainted with his purpose of revealing himself to Samuel, and to excite his enquiry about it.

V. 8, 9. Eli could not but consider the preference, which the LORD thus showed to a child, before himself and amily, as a severe and humiliating rebuke: especially as he had reason to forbode that the message which he was about to receive, would be a denunciation of judgments on him and his family: yet, without envy, resentment, or impatience, he gave Samuel proper directions how to behave on the occasion.

Speak, LORD. (9) Or, "Speak, O JEHOVAH."

V. 10. And stood, &c.] This seems to imply a visible appearance, as well as an audible voice.—It is also mentioned that the name Samuel was twice repeated; and we may observe that Samuel omitted the word LORD, or JEHOVAH, in answering as Eli had instructed him, probably, through uncertainty, timidity, or profound awe and reverence.

V. 11. Shall tingle.] The very report would exceedingly affect the hearer, and would seem to thrill in his ears long after; as very loud and stupendous noises are used to do. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 4:13-22. Is. 28:17-19.)

V. 12. (Notes, 2:27-36.) It is probable, that this message was sent to Eli some years before his death; and this forbearance of God tended to harden the hearts of Eli's sons, in presumptuous expectations of impunity: but when he had once begun to execute the threatened vengeance, he repeated his strokes till the whole had been accomplished.

V. 13. Eli did not use coercive measures to restrain his sons, as he ought to have done; and by this omission he brought ruin on his family. (See marg. readings. Notes, 2:12,22-25,29,30.)

V. 14. The sins of pious individuals among Eli's posterity would be pardoned, through the Sacrifice of Christ, for their eternal salvation: but the Lord had irrevocably determined, that no number of sin-offerings or oblations should prevail with him, to continue that family in the high priesthood, or to deliver them from the awful temporal judgments which had been denounced; as perhaps both Eli and his sons hoped would be the case. (Notes, Num. 15:30,31. Is. 22:8-14.)

V. 15. In the morning, Samuel opened the gates of the court of the tabernacle, into which the people came to worship, as if nothing had occurred; neither elated with the distinction, nor neglecting his business, nor mentioning the matter, nor showing the least disrespect to Eli; but rather through his great deference and affection for him, being reluctant to inform him of the distressing message.

V. 16-18. Eli was solicitous to know the revelation which God had made to Samuel, and afraid that he would not fully inform him of it: but he must no doubt have been greatly alarmed and distressed, when he heard the awful message, from the mouth of a child, who was so respectfully affectionate to him, and dependent on him; and whom he could not possibly suspect of artifice, or corrupt motives, or harshness of language. Yet his answer is very remarkable. He reflected on the wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness of God, as well as on his sovereignty. He acknowledged that he had a right to do as he saw good, and was assured that he would do nothing wrong. He was conscious that he deserved the terrible sentence, and acquiesced in the will of God, casting himself entirely on his mercy.—The meekness, patience, and humility of these words are very admirable, and prove that Eli was truly penitent and pious: (Marg. Ref. y. Notes, Lev. 10:3. Job. 1:20,22. Ps. 39:9,10.) though in his old and infirm age, he had not sufficient courage, vigour, or even authority, to execute punishment upon his sons. Who would now set him at defiance. (Notes, 2 Sam. 3:36,39. 2 Chr. 33:15-17.)

V. 19-21. Samuel, it seems, was after this frequently favoured with revelations from God, which he delivered to

him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.

21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the word of the LORD.

CHAPTER IV.

The Israelites, smitten by the Philistines, send for the ark, 1-4. The Philistines are frightened on account of it; but encourage one another, 5-8. Israel is again smitten, with great slaughter, the ark is taken, and Eli's two sons are slain, 10, 11. On hearing these things Eli falls and breaks his neck, 12-18. The wife of Pinchas travails, names the child Ichabod, and dies, 19-22.

AND the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.

2 And the Philistines put themselves in array

*1 Kings 8:56. Is. 44:28. e. Jude 20. 1. 2 Sam. 3:10. 17:11. * Or, faithful. 1 Tim. 12:7. 13:1. Num. 12:8. Am. 3:7. Heb. 1:1. e. 1. 4. Or, came to pass. Heb. use. 3:11. a. 5:1. 7:12. b. 29:1. Josh. 19:30. 1 Kings 20:80. c. 17:8. 21. f. Heb. the battle was read. d. Josh. 7:5-8. 12. Ps. 44:9. 10. e. Ps. 79:8. 104:40. 1 Lam. 3:40. f. Heb. the army. f. Deut. 29:24. Ps. 74:1, 11. Is. 30:12. 53:3. g. 14:18. Num. 31:6. Josh. 6:4, 5. 2 Sam. 15:25. Is. 1:*

the people: and as these were punctually accomplished, his appointment to be "a prophet of the LORD" was known and acknowledged, throughout the land. (*Marg. Ref.*) "The word of the LORD," may either mean an audible voice from God: or the appearance of him, "whose name is called the Word of God."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Men are seldom duly sensible of the value of their mercies, till they are deprived of them; and this perversity operates even in matters pertaining to religion. We who are favoured with the written word, and the public preaching of the gospel by ministers of varied talents and endowments, can scarcely conceive how greatly our forefathers, in days of ignorance and persecution, valued a Bible, or the opportunity of hearing a faithful sermon; and how much numbers still value them in different parts of the world. (*Note, Deut. 31:10-13.*) This should teach us to be thankful, and to improve our privileges, lest the Lord should show us their preciousness by the loss of them.—He disposes of his special favours in wise and holy sovereignty, without confining himself to age, station, or office in his church; but he orders every thing so as to correct or punish such as offend him, and to honour those who honour him.—Docility, diligence, and a humble self-denying disposition in youth, are happy indications of an honourable and useful life.—They, who reduce to practice what they have been already taught, shall be favoured with further discoveries concerning the truth and will of God: and where the heart is upright mistakes and infirmities will be pardoned, rectified, and over ruled for good.—Young persons ought to behave with assiduous and attentive kindness to the aged; and to show a submissive respect to their superiors, even when faulty and under divine rebukes. But no deference to men, because every way superior to themselves, must influence those, whom the Lord employs as his messengers, to conceal or mutilate their message: and they are most unwise in their spiritual concerns, who wish to be flattered; nay, who do not desire above all things to know the whole of the revealed will of God, and the worst of their own state and case. For though temporal punishment may be unalterably determined; yet, blessed be God, the blood of Jesus cleanses the penitent believer from all sin, and assuredly delivers him from eternal misery; and this most gracious Saviour casts out none that come to him however guilty, vile, or accursed they have made themselves.—Presumptuous hopes of impunity, because the Lord is long-suffering, ruin multitudes who postpone repentance till God hath "sworn in his wrath that they shall not enter into his rest:" and when he begins to take vengeance, he will also fully execute his most tremendous threatenings.—If temporal sufferings may be so terrible, as to "cause the ears of all who hear them to tingle," what will be the everlasting punishment of the wicked! Let us then humble ourselves before God, ere the door of mercy be for ever shut: let us accept of his chastisement, nowever sharp: let us submit to him, because he is a mighty Sovereign, and because he is perfectly wise, righteous, and merciful: let us cast ourselves upon his mercy and seek his salvation; and study to show our repentance, not only by good words, but by good works; by restraining others from sin and frowning upon them, however otherwise near and dear to us, as well as by avoiding it ourselves, and by faithfully improving every talent committed to us. Then, though the infirmities of age disable us for usefulness, and we meet with many humiliating dispensations, we may rejoice to see others likely to be useful when we are gone; and should willingly impart to them the best counsel we can, though their rising reputation be attended with our dishonour. In this case, should the prospect for our families, our country, or the church of God, be gloomy; we may encourage ourselves in the hope of that state, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." (*Note, 2 Sam. 23:5.*)

against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines; and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.

3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

4 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 And when the ark of the covenant of the

11-15. Jer. 7:4-8. 16. Matt. 3:9, 10. \$ Heb. take unto us. h Num. 10:33 Deut. 31:26. Josh. 4:7. 1 Chr. 17:1. Jer. 3:16. Heb. 9:4. 1 Jer. 7:8-11. Am. 5:21, 22. Matt. 23:25-28. Rom. 2:28, 29. 1 Cor. 10:1-5. 2 Tim. 3:5. 1 Pet. 3:21. Jude 6. k 2 Sam. 6:2. 2 Kings 19:15. Ps. 80:1. 99:1. 1 Ex. 25:18-22. Num. 7:59. m 12:1-17, 22. Ps. 50:16, 17. Mal. 1:9. Acts 18:15, 16. n Num. 4:15, 16

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. The word, which the Lord had spoken to Samuel, concerning Eli's family; or the word which from time to time the Lord sent by him to the people, declaring his will and calling them to repentance; was heard throughout the land, and excited great attention. (*Note, 3:19-21.*)—Some learned men suppose, that the events recorded in this chapter occurred immediately after the death of Samson; and that the slaughter at that time made of the Philistines encouraged the Israelites to attack them. If so, Eli judged Israel during the whole life of Samson, who lived about forty years; as he too judged Israel twenty years. (*18. Notes, Judg. 15:20. 16:30, 31.*) Again, some are of opinion, that these events happened about the middle of the forty years, during which the Philistines oppressed Israel: but on that supposition, Samson must have been born at least twenty years before that oppression began, which does not accord with the narrative: (*Notes, Judg. 13:1, 4, 5.*) and if his exploits only made way for the defeats recorded in this chapter; how could it be said that he began to deliver Israel?—Others, however, think that the forty years, during which the Philistines oppressed Israel, ended about seven months after Eli's death, when the ark of God was restored: and in that case the subsequent oppression by the Philistines must be considered, as distinct from that mentioned in the book of Judges. The chronology of these times is, in fact, to us abstruse and uncertain. (*Notes, Judg. 3:11. 11:26.*)—Perhaps Samuel was at this time about twenty years of age; but it does not appear that he was consulted on this occasion.—*Eben-ezer.* (*Note, 7:12.*)

V. 3. These elders seem to have been miserably sunk in ignorance and formality, which was the genuine consequence of the impiety of the priests. Though the nation was ripe for dreadful judgments, they had no idea that the defeat which they had received was intended as a warning to repent; and they proposed a very ignorant and presumptuous expedient to secure the assistance of JEHOVAH. They had heard what wonders had formerly been wrought for Israel, when the ark, the symbol of the Lord's presence, was by his command carried before the people under the care of holy men, who trusted and glorified him; and when Israel was comparatively an obedient people, fighting under his banner: and they did not make the obvious distinction, between the outward sign or token, and the invisible presence of the Almighty, as assisting his servants: a distinction little noticed, by formalists, either in ancient or modern times, but of the highest importance in all respects, and under every dispensation. In fact they made an idol of the ark, as numbers have done, and do, in respect of the New Testament sacraments; and not only papists, by worshipping the bread, but protestants, by trusting in the outward and visible sign, to the neglect of the inward and spiritual grace; and they imagined that, (without humiliation before God or repentance of their sins,) by fetching the ark into the army, carried by two sons of Belial, who were doomed to destruction, and whose presence brought a curse into the camp, they could induce God to fight for them, though he was evidently contending against them! (*Notes, 2:12, 31-34. Josh. 7:10-12. 23:20. P. O. Josh. 7:10-15.*) Nay, they spake, as if the ark itself could deliver them! (*Marg. Ref. 1.*)

V. 4, 5. It is probable, that Hophni and Phinehas did not so much as ask the consent of their aged father on this occasion. Being hardened to their destruction, they were left to venture presumptuously into the holy of holies, and to carry the ark into the army; and thus, without any proper call, they were found within the reach of the sword of the Philistines, by which they were destined to be slain. (*2:25. Notes, 2:31-34. Lev. 16:2. Num. 4:5. 31:8.*) Doubtless they were much pleased with the service, and proud of coming as the supposed deliverers of Israel, bearing the ark of the covenant. (*Notes, Lev. 10:1-3.*) And when they entered the camp, the whole army was infatuated with the same groundless

LORD came into the camp, 'all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

6 And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, 'What *meaneth* the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp.

7 And the Philistines were afraid; for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.

8 Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these *are* the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

9 Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, 'as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight.

10 And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent; and there was a very great slaughter: for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And the ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.

13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the way-side, watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told it, all the city cried out.

14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, 'What *meaneth* the noise of this

tumult? and the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.

16 And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, 'What is there done, my son?

17 And the messenger answered and said, 'Israel is fled before the Philistines: and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people; and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward, by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy: and he had judged Israel forty years.

19 And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her.

20 And about the time of her death, the women that stood by her, said unto her, 'Fear not, for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it.

21 And she named the child I-chabod, saying, 'The glory is departed from Israel: (because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband.)

22 And she said, 'The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.

e Judg. 15:14, 16 Judg. 20:5. Jer. 7:4. Am. 6:3. Mic. 2:11. p Ex. 32:17,18. q Ex. 14:23. 15:14-16. Deut. 32:30. ' Heb. yesterday, or the third day. r Ex. 7:3. 9:14. Ps. 7:13-15. s 2 Sam. 10:12. 1 Cor. 16:13. Eph. 6:10,11. t Deut. 27:48. Judg. 10:7. 13:1. Is. 14:2. 33:1. 1 Heb. been. u 2. Lev. 26:17. Deut. 28:25. Ps. 78:9,62. v 2 Sam. 20:1. 1 Kings 12:16. 22:36. 2 Kings 14:12. y 2 Sam. 13:7. 2 Chr. 13:17. 23:5,6. Is. 10:3-5. z 2:33. Ps. 78:61. a 2:34. Ps. 78:64. Is. 3:11. 1 Heb. died. b 2 Sam. 1:2. c Josh. 7:6. 2 Sam. 13:19. 15:32. Neh. 9:1. Job 2:12. d 1:9. e Josh. 7:9. Neh. 1:3,4. Ps. 79:1-8. 137:4-6. f 6. g 3:

2. Ps. 80:10. h See on Gen. 27:1. i Heb. stood. 12 Sam. 1:4. j Heb. is the thing? k See on 3:6. Josh. 7:19. 11:11. 3:11. m 2:34. Ps. 26:8. 42:3,10. 68:9. Lam. 5:15-19. n 2:31. 32. 3:12,13. Lev. 10:3. 1 Cor. 11:30-32. 1 Pet. 4:17,18. ' Or, cry out. ** Heb. were turned. o Gen. 35:17,18. John 16:21. t Heb. and set not her heart. Ps. 77:2. u That is, where is the glory? Or, There is no glory. 14:3. p Ps. 26:8. 78:64. 106:20. Jer. 2:11. Hos. 9:12. q Ps. 137:5,6. John 2:17.

presumption, and shouted for joy as if already triumphant!—It is very doubtful, whether it was ever lawful to carry the ark into the army, without the express command of God. (Notes, 14:16-23. 2 Sam. 11:10,11.)

V. 7-9. It is no wonder that the Philistines made no distinction between the ark, and that invisible God, whose presence with his believing people this symbol denoted, when the Israelites themselves entirely overlooked it. (Notes, 3-5.) The Philistines probably thought, that JEHOVAH was indeed a God, the God of Israel; but then so was Dagon a god, the god of Philistia. (Notes, 5:1,2. Judg. 16:23,24.) This therefore did not destroy their hope of gaining the mastery by the help of their god; and it tended on this occasion to increase their intrepidity and resolution.—They spake of the works of JEHOVAH in Egypt and in the wilderness, in language very expressive of their partial information, and confused apprehensions concerning them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 10, 11. On the former defeat the Israelites returned to the camp; (3) but this was so entire, that the survivors were totally dispersed. Probably Hophni and Phinehas fell fighting in defence of the ark. (Note, 4, 5.)

V. 13-18. Though Eli had been most criminally indulgent to his sons, and had abundant reason to expect to hear of their death, as well as of the defeat of Israel, yet his chief anxiety appears to have been about the ark of God. Accordingly he bore the tidings of Israel's calamity, and of the death of his sons, in the midst of their unrepented crimes, with fortitude and resignation. (Notes, 3:16-18. 2 Sam. 18:23-33.) But when he heard that "the ark of God was taken," his reflections on the dishonour to God and to religion, and the dreadful loss to his people, which his sins and negligence had occasioned, were more than he could support; and falling down in a swoon, his neck brake and he died. Thus his death, under a divine rebuke for his sins, has been a salutary warning to others, even to this present day: yet, in the circumstances of it he testified his supreme regard to the honour of God, and the interests of religion, above all personal and relative considerations; and notwithstanding all his faults, he died in a lively exercise of love to God and his ordinances, and even by occasion of it.

V. 19-22. (Notes, Gen. 35:17,18.) The wife of Phinehas, (though married to so wicked a priest,) appears to have been a person of eminent piety. The death of her father-in-law and of her husband contributed to hasten her death; but her dying regret was for the captivity of the ark, and the departure of the glory from Israel; for with her parting breath she named her son I-chabod, or inglorious. In this her judgment was right: the presence and ordinances of God were the chief glory of Israel; and the loss of them was the

departure of that glory. 'This chiefly lay at her heart, as the concerns of religion do on all pious spirits.' Ep. Patrick. But if she supposed that the Lord had finally departed from Israel, she was under a great mistake. From Shiloh indeed the ark, the glory of Israel, was finally removed; for probably the inhabitants of that city had too much resembled the abandoned priests; as is generally the case, when such examples of sacerdotal impiety and profligacy are exhibited: but it was restored to Israel, and established in another place. (Notes, Ps. 78:61-64,67-69. Jer. 7:12-15.) Neither was the ruin of Eli's family the destruction of the Aaronic priesthood. (Note, 2:35,36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the judgments denounced in the word of God do not bring sinners to repentance, the speedy execution of them may be expected. The nearer any persons are to the Lord in profession, and the greater privileges they are favoured with, the more certain and dreadful will be their punishment, if they thence take encouragement to commit iniquity.—Unhumbled professors of true religion, especially if observant of forms, whether of divine appointment or human invention, are apt to think, that they are entitled to help from God, because they are called by his name, though they disgrace it with their crimes; and to murmur at those rebukes, by which they are warned to repent and to amend their lives. As their dependence is placed upon external signs and symbols, the increase of their hypocrisies buoy up their presumptuous hopes; and they often take the name of the Lord in vain, and dishonour him more in attending on his ordinances, than they could do by neglecting them; so that he abhors those services, for which they expect his favour and think themselves entitled to it, or even deserving of it. (Notes, Ps. 50:16-21. Is. 1:10-20. 48:12. 58:1-4. Jer. 7:5-7,21-23. Ez. 20:39. Am. 5:21-24. Matt. 23:14.) But he will rather let his avowed enemies triumph for a season, than encourage hypocrites, whose crimes still more dishonour his holy name.—The most avowed infidels and Atheists, and the most atrocious and desperate offenders, have their pangs of conviction and disquietude of mind: with all their efforts, they cannot utterly exclude forebodings of fatal effects from their rebellion against the God of heaven; and though they conceal and quiet this apprehension for a time, and even prosper in their ungodliness; yet their fear will come upon them, and even far worse than they ever forebode. (Note, Prov. 10:24.)—Whilst the impenitent are consigned to final ruin, the offending servants of God, who tremble at his judgments, and for the dishonour which they have occasioned to his name, may die in an awful manner, for a warning to those who are left behind. (Notes, 1

CHAPTER V.

The Philistines place the ark in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod, 1, 2. Dagon falls down before it, and is broken in pieces, 3-5. The Philistines are smitten with emerods at Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, when the ark is brought to those cities, 6-12.

AND the Philistines ^atook the ark of God, and brought it from ^bEbenezer unto ^cAshdod.

2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of ^dDagon, and set it by Dagon.

3 And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, ^eDagon was fallen upon his face to the earth, before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

4 And when they arose early on the morrow-morning, behold Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and ^fthe head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, were cut off upon the threshold; only ^gthe stump of Dagon was left to him.

5 Therefore ^hneither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

6 ¶ But ⁱthe hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with ^jemerods, even Ashdod, and the coasts thereof.

7 And when the men of Ashdod saw that it

a 4:11, 17, 19, 22. Ps. 78:61. b 4:1. 7:12. c Josh. 11:22. Acts 8:40. ^dAsotus. J. Judg. 16:23. 1 Chr. 10:10. Dan. 5:2, 23. Hab. 1:11, 16. e Ex. 12:12. Ps. 97:7. Is. 19:1. 46:1, 2. Zeph. 2:11. Mark 3:11. Luke 10:18-20. 2 Cor. 6:14-16. 1 Ts. 4:9, 20. 4:17. 4:20. 4:6:7. 20. 4:6:7. 1 Cor. 8:12. g Is. 2:18, 19. 27:9. Jer. 10:11. 50:2. Ez. 6:4-6. Dan. 11:8. Mic. 1:7. h Or, the holy part. i Ps. 115:4-7. 135:15-18. j Josh. 5:15. Zech. 1:9. k Ex. 9:3. Ps. 32:4. Acts 13:11. 19:11. 6:5.

Kings 13:20-32.) Yet, when death in its most formidable shape finds men humbled for their sins, crying for mercy, and more anxious for the cause of God and truth, than for the most valued earthly comforts, it will eventually prove a blessing; yea, every dispensation is mercy, which rescues the immortal soul from hell. (*P. O. Dan. 4:28-37.*)—What miseries do some ungodly men entail upon all connected with them! And what an awful lesson is here for parents, who are tempted to connive at the first appearances of vice in their children! Let them reflect on Eli's death, on the far more dreadful condition of his sons, on the dying agonies and sorrows of Phinehas's wife, on the slaughter of Israel, the ark taken captive, "the glory departed," and Shiloh forsaken; and let them tremble to think "how great a matter a little fire kindeth." (*Notes, 2 Kings 11:1, 2. 2 Chr. 18:1. 19:2. 21:3, 4.*)—In the midst of life we are in death; some situations however peculiarly remind those placed in them to be ready for a sudden call; and few more than pregnancy.—But those who belong to the Lord, need not desire to survive, when the ordinances of God are withdrawn, and his cause is run down: little comfort can they take in their children, or in life itself, under such circumstances. Yet even these trials will prove blessings, where the ark and cause of God are thus dear to the heart.—Though the glory may successively be withdrawn from sinful nations, cities, or villages; yet it shall never depart from Israel, but shall shine forth in one place, when it has been eclipsed in another: for Jesus, our High Priest, ever liveth to maintain his own cause, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church; whatever may be the triumphant boasts of his enemies, or the desponding fears of his people.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Besides the other wickedness of Israel, the idolatry of the Danites yet remained unpunished and unrepessed: and this might be one reason why the Lord was pleased to deliver his ark into the hand of these idolaters. (*Notes, Judg. 18:30, 31. 20:8-11, 20-25.*) The Philistines concluded that they had overcome the God of Israel, by the help of Dagon, and placed the ark in his temple, as a trophy of their victory. (*Note, Judg. 16:23, 24.*) But they did not attempt to destroy it, as Israel destroyed the images of the Canaanites. (*Note, 2 Sam. 5:21.*) It has indeed been conjectured, that they intended to worship it, in conjunction with their former idol, though in subordination to him.

V. 3-5. The image of Dagon is supposed to have been framed in the upper part like a man, and below like a fish: when therefore the head and hands were broken off, a deformed trunk alone remained. Thus the helplessness and inability of the dumb idol were made apparent: yet the Philistines, in this respect as senseless as their idol, instead of despising so contemptible a stock, revered as sacred the very threshold on which the idol had been disgraced and broken; and thus perpetuated the memory of JEHONAH's triumph, by their own foolish superstition! They likewise either continued to worship the stump of Dagon; or got a new image of him formed as soon as possible. (*Notes, Ps. 115:3-8. Is. 41:5-7. 44:12-20.*)

V. 6-12. As the Philistines were not convinced by this defeat of Dagon, that their attempt to keep the ark in cap-

was so, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god."

8 They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto ^aGath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about ^bthither.

9 And it was so, that after they had thrived it about, ^cthe hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.

10 Therefore they sent the ark of God to ^dEkron. And it came to pass as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to ^eus, to slay us and our people.

11 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay ^fus not, and our people: for there was ^ga deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

12 And the men that ^hdied not were smitten with the emerods; and ⁱthe cry of the city went up to heaven.

Deut. 28:27. Job 31:13. Ps. 78:66. m 4:8. Ex. 8:8, 28. 9:28. 10:7, 12, 33. n 6:20. 2 Sam. 6:9. 1 Chr. 13:11-13. 15:13. o See on 3:4. Jer. 46:25, 48:7. Zech. 12:3. q 1:4. Amos 6:2. r 6:7, 13. 12:15. Deut. 2:15. Am. 5:19. 9:1-4. s 6:4, 5. 11. Ps. 78:66. t Josh. 15:15. Judg. 1:18. 2 Kings 1:2. Am. 1:8. j Heb. me, to slay me and my people. i Heb. me not, and my people u Is. 13:7-9. Jer. 48:42-44. x 1 Kings 19:17. Am. 5:19. y Ex. 12:30. Is. 15:3-6. Jer. 25:34. 48:3.

tivity was foolish and ruinous: they were visited with some fatal judgment, probably a pestilence, which swept away multitudes: while the rest were afflicted very generally with emerods, which put them to excruciating pain, and extorted the most doleful lamentations. The emerods are supposed to have been the worst sort of the disease now called the piles.—Under this terrible visitation, they sent the ark of God from city to city, probably in hopes of thus obtaining deliverance: but the same calamities attended the inhabitants wherever they carried it. (*Notes, Ps. 78:65, 66. Zech. 12:2-5.*)—Thus, while the Israelites were so degenerate, as to make no attempt for the recovery of this sacred symbol of JEHONAH's gracious presence, and indeed were utterly unworthy of being honoured in such a service; he himself rendered the Philistines willing to send back the ark; and so overruled these events, as to expose idolatry to the deepest contempt, and to convince the obstinate idolaters, that they could not profane his sacred institutions with impunity. (*Notes, Josh. 7:6-9. Ps. 115:1, 2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord may for a season permit his cause to be run down, in order to expose the hypocrisy, to undermine the vain confidence, or to chastise the wickedness, of his professed people: for he knows how, without any human help, and in defiance of all enemies, to recover it from the ruins, and to establish it in greater splendour; and this may account for the successes of Infidels and Atheists, through so many countries, which have long professed Christianity, but have corrupted and disgraced it. But the short-lived triumphs of the wicked, on such occasions, will terminate in their deeper disgrace and more dreadful punishment.—Men may be convinced by the judgments of God, that he is a terrible enemy, and that it is in vain to contend with him: and they may be constrained to render him a feigned submission: (*Notes, Ps. 66:1-3. 81:14, 15.*) but nothing except his renewing grace, will produce genuine repentance, faith, and love, and conversion from every idol to his worship and service. Yet those confessions which are extorted by torment or terror, (*Mark 5:7.*) are honourable to God, though useless to the impenitent; and he will glorify his name in the punishment of his enemies, as well as in the salvation of his people. When he contends he will overcome; and all endeavours to evade or escape his wrath, will only increase the sinner's misery, till he is either brought to true repentance, or sinks under final condemnation.

—When the Lord's appointed time shall arrive, all attempts to uphold the falling kingdom of idolatry, superstition, infidelity, or profaneness, will be utterly unavailing; and destruction will overtake all those, who are not led to repentance. It is equally dangerous to oppose those partial revivals of true religion, which take place from age to age: for the ark of God will cause every Dagon to fall down before it, till all of them be broken in pieces.—The zeal and pertinacity, with which the grossest idolatries and most stupid superstitions have been supported against the cause of God and truth, display the blindness of fallen man's understanding, as much as the depravity of his affections.—Thus, convinced sinners also, with perverse assiduity, set up again those false confidences and worldly idols, which seemed to be thrown down under the preaching of the gospel: or when the old delusion will no

CHAPTER VI.

At the end of seven months the Philistines consult about sending back the ark. They bring it on a new cart with oxen, to Beth-shemesh. The Beth-shemites a smile, for looking into it, 19, 20. They send to the men of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it, 21.

AND the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

2 And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place.

3 And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him a trespass-offering; then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you, why his hand is not removed from you.

4 Then said they, What shall be the trespass-offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords.

5 Wherefore, ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.

6 Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?

7 Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch-kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

8 And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass-offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.

9 And see, if it goeth up by the way of his

own coast to Beth-shemesh, then shall he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us.

10 And the men did so; and took two milch-kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home:

11 And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods.

12 And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat-harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.

14 And the cart came into the field of Joshua a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

15 And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

16 And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day.

17 And these are the golden emerods, which the Philistines returned for a trespass-offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one.

18 And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and of country-villages, even unto the great stone of

e 5:1, 3, 10, 11. f 9: 78, 61. g Gen. 41:8. Ex. 7:11. Is. 47:12. Dan. 2:2, 5, 7. Matt. 2:4. e 9: 23, 25. 34:20. Deut. 16:18. d Lev. 5:5-15-19. 6, 7, 11-7. e 9: 5. 7, 9, 11. f 5:17, 18. 5:6, 9. Ex. 13:35. Josh. 13:3. Judg. 3:3. g Heb. them. g Ex. 8:5, 17, 24. 10:14, 15. Joel 1:4-7. 2:25. h Josh. 7:19. Ps. 18:41. 66:3. marg. Is. 42:12. Jer. 3:13. 13:18. Mal. 2:2. John 9:24. Rev. 11:13. 15:6. 11:1. Ps. 32:4. 39:10. h 5:3, 4, 7. Ex. 12:12. Num. 33:4. Is. 19:1. 1 Job. 3:4. 14. 35:3. Rom. 2:5. Heb. 3:13. m Ex. 7:13. 8:15. 9:16, 17, 34, 35. 10:3. 14:17. 15:14-16. 1 Cor.

longer sooth their consciences, they exchange it for another equally absurd, as long as they continue to love sin, and to hate the spiritual service and humbling truth of God. But when Christ, the true Ark of the covenant, really enters the heart of fallen man, (which is indeed Satan's temple,) all idols will fall before his presence and power; every endeavour to set them up again will be in vain; all iniquity will be forsaken; all unrighteous gain restored; and the Lord will claim and possess the throne. Yet pride, self-love, and worldly lusts, though dethroned and crucified, still remain within us. Let us then watch and pray against their prevalence; let us seek to have them more entirely destroyed; and let us consider death, through the mercy of God, and the grace of the gospel, as attended by the final destruction of our worst enemy "the sin that dwelleth in us."

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. *Seven months.*] During so long a time the Philistines endured the judgments of God, before they so far yielded as to restore the ark; and the Israelites neglected all endeavours to recover it! But was far more honourable to the Lord, to constrain the Philistines to send it back of their own accord, than that war should wrest it, or that money should ransom it, out of their hands. (Note, 5:6-12.)

V. 2-9. It has been conjectured, that when the emerods and pestilence exceedingly afflicted the inhabitants of each city, to which the ark was carried, the Philistines placed it in the open field: and that then great numbers of mice began to destroy their crops and spoil the land. It is evident that there was a plague of destroying mice sent among them: (Note, Ez. 8:15-17.) but it is not said that the ark was placed in the fields of any city. At length, however, being no longer able to endure their complicated distresses, they determined to send back the ark, and consulted their priests and diviners about it; whose answer contains such an assemblage of inconsistencies, as clearly develops the workings of the human heart in difficult circumstances. From the tradition of Pharaoh's rebellion, and the destruction of him and his subjects, they seriously exhorted the people not to harden their hearts, but to let the ark go (6): but they did not advise them to repent, to renounce idolatry, or to worship JEHOVAH. Nay, they were reluctant to conclude that their afflictions were

reproachfully. m Ex. 12:31-33. n Heb. them. o 2 Sam. 6:3. 1 Chr. 13:7. p Num. 19:2. q 4:5. r Josh. 15:10. 21:16. s Or, it. a 16:11. t 2 Sam. 1:1. 6. Ec. 9:11. Luke 10:31. u 2 Sam. 6:3. 1 Chr. 13:7. 15:13-15. v 7:9, 17. 11:15. 20:29. Ex. 20:24. Judg. 6:26. 21:4. 2 Sam. 24:18, 25. 1 Kings 18:30-38. x 4:12. Judg. 3:3. 15:5, 23-30. y 5:1. 2 Chr. 26:8. Jer. 25:30. Zech. 9:8. z Judg. 16:1, 21. a Judg. 1:7. 2 Chr. 8:5. b 5:3. 2 Sam. 1:30. 21:22. Am. 6:2. c 5:10. 2 Kings 1:2. Am. 1:8. d Or, great stone.

from him, and framed an artful device for putting it to the trial: and, if not convinced by another complicated miracle, they seemed determined to keep the ark, and ascribe their sufferings to chance. (Notes, Is. 26:10, 11. Matt. 16:1-4.) Some trespass-offerings they supposed to be necessary, if the ark must be restored, in order that "the LORD might lighten his hand from off them," or that they "might know wherefore he did not." This opinion, that trespass-offerings must be sent with the ark, was probably derived from some slight acquaintance with the ritual law of Moses; or from usages among themselves, originally derived from it. The oblations, however, were altogether different from those which God required for his worshippers: (Notes, Lev. 5: 6:1-7.) but well suited to be monuments of their shame, and of the Lord's triumph over them. In short, they evinced how unwilling they were to yield, and how unable to resist.—As the Egyptians hired Israel with jewels of gold to depart from them, yet were unwilling to let them go quite away; (Note, Ex. 12:35, 36.) so did the Philistines respecting the ark, in taking which they had so greatly triumphed.

V. 10-16. That two kine, which had never before been yoked and whose calves were left at home, should draw quietly, and keep the road without a driver, for several miles, neither stopping, nor turning aside, nor attempting to return; and that, while they showed the force of instinct in lowing for their calves, they should be urged forward with a stronger impulse to the very place, which the Philistines had mentioned (9), and stop there!—these circumstances constituted in all respects a most astonishing miracle, or rather complication of miracles: and the obedience of the animals, in carrying back the ark, reproached the negligence of Israel.—The presumption of the Philistines, in requiring this additional proof of JEHOVAH's power, was very great; but it was overruled for the manifestation of his glory, and to their deeper condemnation in still cleaving to idolatry. The triumph of the ark was completed, when it was thus miraculously restored, with oblations, and the distant attendance of the lords of the Philistines.—Beth-shemesh was a city of the priests out of the lot of Judah, in the border of the land nearest the country of the Philistines; (Josh. 21:16.) and no doubt some of that order, very properly, offered the kine in

Abel, whereon they sat down the ark of the LORD; which stone remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite.

19 And he smote the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men. And the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter.

20 And the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us?"

21 And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.

d Ex. 19:11, 12; 1 Sam. 1:1, 15, 17, 20; Deut. 2:29; 2 Sam. 6:7; Col. 2:18; 1 Pet. 4:17; e Num. 17:12, 13; 2 Sam. 6:9; 1 Chr. 13:11-13; Mid. 3:3; Luke 5:8, 37; 15:8-12; g Josh. 18:14; Judg. 18:12; 1 Chr. 13:5, 6; Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:13-14; a e 27; Josh. 18:14; 2 Sam. 6:2; 1 Chr. 13:5, 6; Ps. 132:6;

sacrifice before the ark, though kine in ordinary circumstances were not appointed for burnt-offerings; (*Notes, Lev. 1:1-4, 3:1.*) but nothing, which had been used in this sacred service, could lawfully be employed for any common use. Their other sacrifices also were suitable expressions of joy and gratitude: but placing the ark upon a great stone, rather than taking it into their houses, or preparing a tent for it, seems to have been improper. The inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim gave it a different reception, and were accepted in so doing. (7:1, 2.)

V. 18. It seems evident that no more than five golden mice were sent (4); but the inhabitants of the villages, as well as of the cities, contributed to the expense.—The great stone of Abel, or weeping, being so called probably on account of the mourning of the people over those who were smitten (19), seems to have been the boundary, at that time, between the land of the Philistines and that of Israel.

V. 19-21. The Beth-shemites availed themselves of the opportunity thus given them, to gratify their curiosity, by presumptuously looking into the ark; even the outside of which was not to be seen uncovered by the Levites who were appointed to carry it. (*Num. 4:5, 6, 15.*) Perhaps they professed a purpose of examining whether the Philistines had taken away the tables of the law; but it does not appear, that any of the Philistines had so much as looked into it. Some of them might encourage themselves in this presumptuous conduct, by reason of their office as priests, which in fact aggravated their offence; and others, on the circumstance, that the ark had been brought back to them in the first instance, and on their having welcomed it, and offered sacrifices before it. But the Lord was provoked by their irreverent intrusion, to punish many of them with sudden death. (*Notes, Lev. 10:1-3, 2 Sam. 6:7.*)—The number, as it stands in our version, is so very large to be found in one small city, and the expression in the original is so uncommon, that it is generally allowed some mistake is made: Josephus mentions only seventy. The passage may be rendered, "He smote... seventy men, even fifty out of a thousand men," which supposes that about 1400 persons were present, and that a twentieth part was slain: and this appears to be the genuine meaning of the passage. The Beth-shemites were not duly humbled for their offence; but they were so terrified, that, like the Philistines, they wanted to have the ark removed from them, and solicited the men of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it; though that was not a city of the priests. (*Marg. Ref. e. Notes, Num. 17:12, 13, 2 Sam. 6:8-11.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When transgressors, under divine rebukes, harden themselves in sin, they are sure to prolong and multiply their own miseries; and it is so much more pleasant to learn wisdom by the experience of others, than by our own, that it would be deemed madness to do otherwise, were it not so general.—Those convictions, which spring from terror without humiliation, never produce more than a reluctant and submissive obedience; and the indignant hearts of proud rebels avail themselves of every pretence to ascribe afflictions to chance, rather than to the hand of God, and to infer that it is not absolutely necessary to part with every sin.—If correction be withdrawn, while the heart is thus disposed, the respite proves an encouragement to proceed in transgression; if the affliction be continued after a partial amendment, this is deemed an argument that repentance and reformation are useless. Thus every dispensation of Providence eventually occasions increasing guilt and condemnation.—Natural reason and conscience, with the fragments of traditional revelation, may convince men that some method should be used to appease the anger of God, and may enable them, as priests or diviners, to give plausible advice on the subject; and when sinners are suffering under afflictions, and the terrors of an awakened conscience, they are ready to put themselves to much expense and self-denial, in order to purchase peace with God. But faith alone, appropriating the information of the sacred Scriptures, can discover what oblation he will accept, or in what way he will be approached by his sinful creatures. (*Note, Mic. 6:6-8.*)—The inconsistencies and

CHAPTER VII.

The ark is removed to Kirjath-jearim, and remains there a long time, 1, 2. At Samuel's exhortation the Israelites repent, and humble themselves before God at Mizpeh, 3-6. The Philistines prepare to assault them: but, while Samuel prays and sacrifices, the Lord discomfits them with thunder before Jizreel, 7-11. Samuel calls the place Ebenezer, and sets up a stone for a memorial, 12. The Philistines are rebuked and Samuel judges Israel, 13-17.

AND the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD.

2 And it came to pass while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD

b 2 Sam. 6:3, 4. 1 Chr. 13:7. c Judg. 2:4. Jer. 8:13, 22-25, 31, 9. Zech. 12:10, 11. Matt. 6:4. 2 Cor. 7:10, 11. d Deut. 30:2-10. 1 Kings 8:48. Is. 55:7. Hos. 6:1, 2. 14:1. Joel 2:13.

superstitions of idolaters, and the lukewarmness of his professing people, will in due season combine to display his glory to greater advantage. The very brute creation, when he pleases, shall shame man's ingratitude and disobedience; his enemies shall furnish memorials of their own disgrace, and all shall be constrained to say, "This hath God wrought!"—Many appear joyful at the revival of religion, and favourable to its truths and ordinances, who are too busy about the world to be at much trouble or expense about them; and numbers unite in external observances, who have no inward reverence for the divine majesty.—The true glory of religion consists in its spiritual excellency: and that simplicity, which the carnal mind despises, forms its highest ornament. But presumptuous intrusion into "the secret things, which belong to God," forms a heinous provocation, and springs from a careless and impenitent heart: and the nearer to the Lord such an intruder is in profession and in office, the greater is his guilt, and the more terrible will be his punishment: for though we are not under the same dispensation as Israel was; yet "our God is still a consuming fire," and must be "worshiped with reverence and godly fear." (*Note, Heb. 12:26-29.*) Instead of this reverence, the carnal heart substitutes a slavish fear; and when rebuked for presumption and contempt, or alarmed with discoveries of the justice and holiness of God, it will, with the Gadarenes or these Beth-shemites, request the Saviour to depart, and vainly seek to escape the Lord's displeasure by an entire forgetfulness of him. (*Note, Matt. 8:33, 34.*) In like manner, numbers, alarmed by the danger of "eating and drinking unworthily" in the Lord's supper, vainly expect security, by habitual and wilful disobedience to the dying command of him, whom they still continue to call their Lord and their Saviour. (*Notes, 1 Cor. 11:23-34.*) In these ways, many smother up and silence their convictions, and put away salvation from them; and by running into one extreme or another, the very truths and ordinances of God, which are the means of life and salvation to some, become the occasion of deeper condemnation to others. Let us always consider what a holy LORD God he is, with whom we have to do; and may he give us a spirit of humble fear, filial love, and heavenly hope, that we may be preserved from fatal mistakes, and profit by the salvation of the gospel, and the sacred ordinances with which we are favoured in his providence!

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1, 2. Kirjath-jearim lay in the road between Beth-shemesh and Shiloh. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) The inhabitants, being convinced that the ark was indeed the pledge of Israel's prosperity, and only dangerous when treated with irreverence, were ready to entertain it. It does not appear that Abinadab, and Eleazar his son, were either priests or Levites; though some expositors take it for granted that they were. But it may be questioned, whether an intended neglect of that tribe, for their ungodliness and wickedness, was not shown on this occasion; so that no notice was taken of them in a matter which otherwise peculiarly and entirely belonged to them. It is not so much as said, whether any of them were employed to fetch the ark to Kirjath-jearim, or whether the Lord dispensed with the irregularity of the inhabitants of that city, in carrying it themselves.—Here, however, the ark remained, till David removed it in the beginning of his reign over all Israel: (*Notes, 2 Sam. 6:2, 3.*) but it is not agreed how many years intervened, certainly many more than twenty; so that the expression twenty years, clearly refers to the time that passed previously to the events recorded in the rest of this chapter.—The Israelites continued in subjection to the Philistines; and generally in the beginning of these twenty years, they remained ignorant and inattentive to religion, and careless about the ark or the worship of the Lord; but we may suppose that Samuel was labouring, incessantly and successfully, from town to town, and from village to village, throughout the whole land, to bring them to repentance, and to revive true religion among them; and at length his success was so great that "all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD."—Some learned men think that the tabernacle had before this been removed from Shilo, perhaps to Nob. (21:1.)

with all your hearts, *then* [†]put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and [†]prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and [†]serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away [†]Baalim and Ashtaroth and served the LORD only.

5 And Samuel said, [†]Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and [†]I will pray for you unto the LORD.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and [†]drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and [†]fasted on that day, and said there, [†]We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel [†]judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

[Practical Observations.]

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were [†]afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, [†]Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 And Samuel took [†]a sucking lamb, and offered *it* for a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel [†]cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD [†]heard him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-

a Gen. 35:2. Josh. 24:14, 23. Judg. 2:13, 10:6. f Deut. 30:6. 1 Chr. 22:19, 28:9. 2 Chr. 30:19. Prov. 16:1. Jer. 4:3, 4. Ez. 18:31. Matt. 15:8. g Deut. 6:13. 10:20. 13:4. Matt. 4:10. 6:24. Luke 4:8. h 3. Judg. 2:11, 13. 10:15, 16. 1 Kings 11:33. Hos. 14:3, 8. 1 Neb. 9:1. Joel 2:16. j 12:16. 10:17. Josh. 15:38. Judg. 20:1. 2 Kings 25:28. k 12:23. l 1:15. Job 16:20. Pa. 6:6. 42:3. 119:136. Jer. 9:1. Lam. 2:11, 18. 3:49. m 2 Chr. 20:3. Ezra 8:21—23. Neh. 9:1—3. Dan. 9:3. Joel 2:12. Jon. 3. a Lev. 26:40. Judg. 10:10. 1 Kings 8:47. Ezra 9:5—10. Job 33:27. 40:4. 42:6. Pa. 38:3—8. 106:6. Jer. 31:19. Luke 15:18. o Judg. 3:10. Neh. 9:27. Ez. 40:2. p 13:6. 17:11. Ez. 14:10. 2 Chr. 20:3. q Heb. *he not silent from us from crying.* 12:19—24. Is. 37:4. 62:1, 6, 7. Jam. 5:16. q 17. a 16:15.

V. 3, 4. When Samuel, by the divine blessing, had brought large numbers of the people to a sense of their sin and of their duty, he urged the heads of their several tribes to concur in a public and avowed reformation, and re-establishment of the worship of JEHOVAH, attended by putting away and destroying all their idols and images, of whatever kind: and to this proposal they readily and practically consented. (*Note, Judg. 2:11—13.*) Few words are indeed used; but they are so expressive, that we cannot hesitate in pronouncing this to have been one of the most general and effectual revivals of religion, which ever took place in the church of Israel.

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Judg. 20:1, 2.*) The ceremony of "drawing water, and pouring it out before the LORD," might be an emblem of the effects of divine grace upon the heart; which disposes it to pour forth itself as water before the Lord, in penitential confessions, with tears of godly sorrow, and in fervent prayers and thanksgivings. (*Marg. Ref. l.*)—Some indeed think, that the water was used in a kind of baptismal ablution or purification; others, that it was an expression of their holy joy in God; and others, that it was intended to purify the ground on which the altar was built.—On this occasion Samuel began publicly to act as judge, or chief magistrate, in settling differences; and perhaps in punishing criminals and obstinate idolaters: though he seems to have previously exercised authority in a more private manner.—*Fasted.* (6) *Notes, Judg. 20:26—28. 2 Chr. 20:3, 4.*

V. 7. The Philistines considered this general convention of Israel, as the signal of war; and therefore determined immediately to attack them, before they were prepared for resistance; in consequence of which the Israelites were at first alarmed: but deep repentance of sin, attended by fruits meet for repentance, and earnestness in serving the Lord, formed their best preparation; and the event showed their enemies the difference, between attacking them while thus employed, and when impenitent and buoyed up with presumption. (*Notes, 4: 2 Chr. 19:2—11. 20:1—25.*)

V. 9. Samuel was not a priest; but he acted by an extraordinary authority in this and in many other instances, as a prophet of the Lord, and under his immediate direction. (*Marg. Ref. a. Notes, 17. 10:8. Judg. 6:25, 26.*) This single lamb, offered in humble faith, was immensely more acceptable, than the most costly sacrifices offered in pride and hypocrisy.

V. 10, 11. It does not appear, that the people came armed to Mizpeh: and it is probable, that they smote the Philistines with the swords of those, who had been killed by the lightning. (*Notes, 2:10. Ez. 14:26—30. Josh. 10:11. 2 Sam. 22:7—16. Rev. 16:17—21.*)

V. 12. The transgressions and chastisements of Israel had been many; they had repeatedly humbled themselves before God and obtained deliverance; and they had again relapsed into sin, and fallen into distress; but they had not [†]been given up to total apostasy, or to utter ruin; and they had

offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD [†]thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and [†]discomfited them; and they were [†]smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel [†]took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it [†]Eben-ezer, saying, [†]Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

13 [†]So the Philistines were [†]subdued, and they [†]came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was [†]against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the [†]coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines: and there was [†]peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15 [†]And Samuel [†]judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 And he went from year to year [†]in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

17 And [†]his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there [†]he built an altar unto the LORD.

9:12. 10:8. 16:2. Judg. 6:25, 28. 1 Kings 18:30—38. r Pa. 50:15. 99:6. Jer. 15:1. 1 Or, *answered.* a 2:10. 12:17. Ez. 9:23—25. Judg. 5:8, 20. Pa. 18:11—14. 77:16—18. 97:3, 4. Rev. 16:18—21. t Deut. 20:3, 4. Josh. 10:10. Judg. 4:15. 5:20. Zeck. 4:6. u Gen. 28:18. 31:45—52. 35:14. Josh. 4:9, 20—24. 24:29, 27. Is. 19:20. v That is, *the stone of help.* 4:1. 5:1. Gen. 22:14. Ez. 17:15. z Pa. 71:6, 17. Is. 46:3, 4. Acts 25:32. 2 Cor. 1:10. y Judg. 13:1. z 13:1—5. a 14:6—16, 20—23. 17:49—53. 28:3—5. 31:1—7. b Deut. 7:2, 16. Judg. 4:17. Pa. 106:34. c 6. 12:1. 25:1. Judg. 2:16. 3:10, 11. Acts 13:20, 21. 6 Heb. *and he circumsized.* Judg. 10:10. 14:2. 12:14. Pa. 75:12. 82:3, 4. d 1:19. 8:4. 19:18—23. e 11:15. Gen. 19:7, 8. 38:20. 35:7. Judg. 21:4. 1 Kings 18:30—36.

now once more been brought to repentance, and made partakers of a singular deliverance, by the immediate interposition of the Almighty. This Samuel and the people acknowledged with gratitude; and set up this stone to be a monument of the Lord's goodness, for his glory, and the encouragement of their descendants, to future ages. (*Notes, Josh. 4:3—9, 20—24. P. O.*) The word *Eben-ezer*, signifies the *stone of help*.

—The same place was before mentioned by anticipation, with reference to the name given it on this occasion. (4:1, 5:1.) V. 13, 14. After this success, the Philistines were constrained to restore such cities of Israel as they had seized, even those which were situated in the neighbourhood of Ekron and Gath.—It is not probable that the Israelites entered into treaty with the Amorites who dwelt among them; but they also were so kept under as to create them no disturbance. This peaceful state, *within the land*, was preserved till the people rejected Samuel, and Saul was made king; and the Philistines were constantly defeated by Israel, till after the death of Samuel. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 13:14: 28:3. 3:1.*)

V. 15. Probably Samuel retained considerable influence as a magistrate, as well as a prophet, during the reign of Saul, especially in the neighbourhood of Ramah. Some, however, understand the passage as meaning, that Samuel was so diligent in the discharge of his office, that he sat to judge causes every day. (16. *Notes, 12:23. Ez. 18:23.*)

V. 17. It is very remarkable, that in this great revival of religion, the ark was neither removed to Shiloh, nor placed with the tabernacle in any other situation.—It is uncertain whether or not the sanctuary-service was carried on at Shiloh, or Nob, or elsewhere, during all this period: but probably it was either neglected, or very improperly conducted. As the ark, the glory even of the tabernacle, was departed, the more pious Israelites seem to have disregarded it; and to have preferred joining with Samuel in the sacrifices and worship, which, doubtless by divine direction, he performed near his own house. This disregard to the Levitical institutions clearly intimated, that the typical meaning formed their chief use; and, when this was overlooked, they became a lifeless carcass, by no means to be compared with repentance, faith, and love to God and man. (*Notes, 9:12—14. 2 Kings 3:20 Ps. 50:7—15.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6. When the stated ministers of God's word neglect their duty and disgrace their profession, he will render them contemptible in the eyes of the people. (*Mal. 2:8, 9.*) and employ others to reform religion, and uphold his worship: for it is better that external institutions should be dispensed with, than that irreligion should be permitted to diffuse its baneful influence.—The truths and ordinances of God are dangerous to those alone, who despise and abuse them, and are always profitable to the humble believer: the threatenings therefore of his word, and the judgments, which he has executed on such as profaned his sacred institutions, should not induce us

unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for ¹they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8 According ¹to all the works which they have done, since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods; so do they also unto thee.

9 Now therefore, ¹hearken unto their voice; ²howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them ³the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 ¹And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people, that asked of him a king.

11 And he said, ²"This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: ³He will take your sons, and appoint ⁴them for himself, for his chariots, and ⁵to be his horsemen; and ⁶some shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will ¹appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, ²and ³will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters ¹to be concubines, and ²to be cooks, and ³to be bakers.

k 10:19, 12:17-19. Ex. 16:8. Matt. 10:24,25. Luke 10:16, 19:14,27. John 13:16, 15:20,21. 1 Ex. 14:11,12, 16:3, 17:2, 32:1. Num. 14:2-4, 16:2,3,41. 1 Sam. 9:21. Jude. 2:2,3,30. 4:1, 6:1, 13:1. Ps. 78:56-59, 106:14-21,34-40. Acts 7:51-53. ²Or, obey. 1 Or, notwithstanding when thou hast solemnly protested, against them, then thou shalt show. Ke. Ps. 3:18. m 11:18, 2:13. Ex. 45:7,8, 46:18. n 1 Sam. 17:14-20. o 14:52. 1 Kings 9:22,23, 10:26, 12:4,10. 2 Chr. 26:10-15. p 2 Sam. 15:1. 1 Kings 1:5, 18:46. q 1 Chr. 27:1-22.

vernment like that of the nations, could not possibly be thus supported. "The manner of the king" does not, however, mean, "the way in which kings ought to rule;" but "the way in which the monarchs of the east actually governed." (*Note, Deut. 17:16*.) In general, they supported their luxury and magnificence, and performed their ostentatious works, and kept up their military force, by burdensome exactions and cruel oppressions; perverting authority into tyranny, and changing subjection into slavery. (*Marg. Ref.*) And as these are the natural effects of absolute authority intrusted with a fallen creature prone to selfishness and folly; we ought consequently to prefer those limitations and restrictions, which are equally beneficial to the governors and the governed.—*Run before his chariots.* (11.) *Notes, 2 Sam. 15:1-6. 1 Kings 1:5,6.*

Tenth. (15,17.) A second, or rather third, tithe out of the clear produce of their lands. (*Notes, Gen. 47:23-26. Num. 18:21. Deut. 14:22-29.*)

V. 19-22. The elders of Israel were so resolutely bent on their own measures, that even this solemn protestation from their aged prophet, by the command of God himself, produced no effect! Not perceiving that it was their peculiar privilege to be *unlike* other nations, especially in this respect; they were bent on having a king, in order to become like them. (*Note, Num. 23:9. Rom. 12:2.*)—Amidst the sin and folly of this conduct, it should however be noted to their commendation, that they showed great respect to Samuel. They did not attempt to set up a king of their own choosing, but sought his counsel and concurrence: and on an intimation from him, that their request would be granted, they put such entire confidence in him, that they departed quietly to their own houses. The history of the world cannot produce another instance, in which a public determination was formed to appoint a king; and yet no one proposed either himself or any other person to be king, but referred the determination entirely to God. (*Note, Deut. 17:15.*) Ambition of royal authority certainly was not the motive, in the leading men who supported this measure. The whole of their proceedings, even in this highly improper determination, showed, how fully they were convinced, that the law of Moses was from God; and that, even in appointing a king, his directions must be observed, or rather that the decision must be referred implicitly to God himself.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our lives are so short, and our faculties so soon impaired, that we ought to be active in the service of God, while we possess health of body and vigour of mind; and then, under disqualifying infirmities, it will be our comfort to reflect, that our youth and strength were spent to some useful purpose.—No instructions or examples can overcome the bias of our fallen nature to evil; and the Lord communicates his sanctifying grace by wise and righteous rules, of which he does not deign ¹to inform us; duty is our part, and consequences must be left with him.—External restraints may produce appearances which impose on the most discerning; yet when they are withdrawn, and temptations occur, the evil heart will discover itself; and prosperity has a natural tendency to increase bad propensities. Parents should therefore prepare to bear with resignation disappointments in their children; and not be anxious to prefer or enrich them, lest they should

14 And he will ¹take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, ²even the best of them, and ³give them to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his ¹officers, and to his servants.

16 And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put ¹them to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

18 And ye shall ¹cry out in that day, because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD ²will not hear you in that day.

19 Nevertheless, the people ¹refused to obey the voice of Samuel: and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us;

20 That ¹we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may ²judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and ¹he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

22 And the LORD said to Samuel, ¹Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

r 1 Kings. 4:7,22,23,27,28. 2 Chr. 32:28,29. s 1 Kings 21:7,19. Ex. 46:18. 1 Job. 7. t Heb. *zumucha*. Gen. 37:36. Is. 39:7. Dan. 1:3,7—10,18. n 16. 8:21. s 1 Job. 27:9. Ps. 18:41. Prov. 1:27,28, 21:13. Is. 1:15. Mic. 3:1,11. s 13:25. y Ps. 31:11. Jer. 2:13. 11:16. Ex. 23:31. z 5. Ex. 3:16. Lev. 2:14-26. Num. 28:9. 1 Sam. 7:6,18, 10:6,55. John 15:19. Rom. 14:2. 2 Cor. 6:17. Phil. 3:20. 1 Pet. 2:9. s 1 Joab. 11:11. b 7. Hos. 13:11.

assist in inflaming their passions.—"The love of money is the root of all evil," and peculiarly odious and mischievous in magistrates and ministers. (*Note, 1 Tim. 6:10—10. P. O. 6—12.*)—Those who have been most active, disinterested, and useful, must expect to meet with ingratitude and neglect, as their recompense from man for their services; but every loss and injury will prove a real gain to those, who expect their gracious recompense from God alone. And surely we may cheerfully submit to be rejected, despised, and hated by those who reject, despise, and hate the Lord; nay, we should consider it as an honourable testimony, that we are acknowledged to stand on his part. (*Note, 1 Pet. 4:12—16.*)—Grace subdues and mortifies, and convictions restrain, human depravity; but in itself it is the same from generation to generation. Discontent, fondness of change, a desire of conformity to the world and of outward splendour, are natural to man, and follow him from the cradle to the grave, unless regenerated and new created by the Holy Spirit. No change of circumstances can cure these diseases; the dissatisfaction of the present situation is impatiently felt, the comfort of some other is eagerly and ignorantly conceived; and neither the counsels of wise men, nor the testimony of God, will suppress these inordinate desires. When the mind is thus disposed, the slightest circumstance serves as a pretext for rushing upon gratification; yet a pious man would grieve to give others by his conduct even an occasion of sin.—The Lord requires his servants rather to yield to the unjust and unreasonable desires of men, than to seem attached to earthly objects. And he frequently gives men their wishes in anger, to chastise their iniquity, and convince them of their folly.—When our grief or displeasure leads us to more fervent prayer and intercession in behalf of those who grieve us, nothing can injure or even long distress us, for the consolation of God will richly repay the injuries of men.—Under the troubles which Providence has allotted us, we may expect the supports of grace; but if we resolutely persist in choosing for ourselves; when we have exchanged slight inconveniences for real grievances, we shall have the aggravation of an accusing conscience and the divine rebuke. And this will often be the case; for those things which at a distance look *pleasant*, are generally most *bitter* when in actual possession.—*The law of God, and the manner of men*, are widely different; the former should be the *rule of our conduct* in the several relations of life; the latter the *measure of our expectations* from others.—As magistracy is the appointment of God and a great blessing, and as every form is liable to abuses; it is our wisdom to be thankful for the advantages, and patient under the inconveniences, of that government under which we live: and it is our duty to pray continually for our rulers, that they may govern us in the fear of God, and that we may live in all godliness and honesty; thus "honouring God and the king, and not meddling with them that are given to change," or disposed, upon every imaginary grievance, or indeed on any account, to speak evil of the ruler of the people. (*Notes, Rom. 13:1—6. Tit. 3:1,2. 1 Pet. 2:13—17. 2 Pet. 2:10,11.*)—But the Lord's servants should behave so unexceptionably, that even those who injure them may not be able to impeach their integrity, or to withhold from them respect and confidence. And it is a *hopeful*

CHAPTER IX.

The ancestry and personal qualifications of Saul, 1, 2. He is sent to seek his father's asses; but not finding them, he, by the counsel of his servants, purloins going to Samuel, 3-10. He is directed by young maidens where to find him, 11-14. Samuel, prepared by a revelation from God, expects him, and entertains with him great respect, 15-24. On the morrow he privately discovers to him, and brings him on his way, 25-27.

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

2 And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

3 And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost; and Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

4 And he passed through mount Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalisha, but they found them not: then they passed through the land of Shalim, and there they were not; and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not.

5 And when they were come to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant that was with him, Come, and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.

6 And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith, cometh surely to pass: now, let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go.

7 Then said Saul to his servant, But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God: what shall we?

8 And the servant answered Saul again, and said, Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver; that will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way.

9 (Before-time in Israel, when a man went to

inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet, was before-time called a Seer.)

10 Then said Saul to his servant, Well said, come let us go: so they went unto the city where the man of God was.

11 And as they went up to the hill to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here?

12 And they answered them, and said, He is; behold he is before you: make haste now, for he came to-day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place,

13 As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him.

14 And they went up into the city: and when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them, for to go up to the high place.

15 Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came, saying,

16 To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me.

17 And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of: this same shall reign over my people.

18 Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is.

19 And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer; go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart.

20 And as for thine asses that were lost, three

a 14:51. 1 Chr. 8:30-33. 9:36-39. Acts 13:21. *Cis.* * Or, the son of a man of Benjamin. † Or, substance. 35:2. 2 Sam. 19:32. Job 1:3. b 16:7. Gen. 6:2. 2 Sam. A:25-26. Jer. 9:23. 10:22. 17:4. Num. 13:33. d 10:2. Judg. 5:10. 10:4. Judg. 17:1. 19:1. f 2 Kings 4:42. g Gen. 33:18. John 3:33. *Salim.* h 1:1. 10:2. Matt. 6:23-28. 34. Luke 12:11, 22. k 2:27. Deut. 33:1. 1 Kings 13:1. 2 Kings 6:6. 1 Tim. 6:11. 11 Thes. 2:10. 5:13. m 3:19-20. Is. 44:26. Zech. 1:6. Matt. 24:35. n Judg. 5:18. 13:15-16. 1 Kings 14:5. 2 Kings 4:42. 6:5. 8:9. Heb. gone out of. s Heb. is with us. † Heb. there is found in my hand. g Gen. 2:22. Judg. 1:1. p 2 Sam. 24:11. 2 Kings 17:13. 1 Chr. 26:28. 29:29.

symptom even in the evidently distempered state of individuals or collective bodies, when their desires of worldly objects can brook delay; and they can refer the time and manner of their being granted to the determination of Providence.

NOTES. -CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) It is wonderful, that some chief of the tribe of Judah did not now advance a claim to the kingdom, in virtue of Jacob's blessing: (*Notes*, Gen. 49:3-10,) but "it was of the Lord," that he might first give the Israelites such a king as they had set their hearts on, before he raised up for them a king after his own heart. (13:14. *Note*, 8:19-22.) The tribe of Benjamin, by the fatal catastrophe of Gibeah's wickedness, was reduced to be the least in Israel; but the individuals were enriched in proportion. (*Judg.* 20:21. *Note*, 21:16-18.) Even, if Kish was of an inferior family in this tribe (21), he might be very wealthy; and his son was possessed of all external accomplishments, suited to that carnal principle which had dictated Israel's request.—The words translated "a choice young man, and a goodly," may literally be rendered, a chosen and goodly person, there being nothing in the original for *young*: and Saul had sons grown up to man's estate at this time. (13:1, 2.)

V. 3-5. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 6-10. The servant of Saul seems to have known more of Samuel than Saul himself did; and he spoke very respectfully of him: yet both Saul and he looked on him rather as a *diviner*, or *fortune-teller*, than as a prophet, whose office it was to instruct them in the truth and will of God. It was no doubt customary in those days, to show respect to prophets, and even to princes, by a present; but when they concluded, that Samuel would not be approached without some gift, they appeared to have judged of him by the mercenary diviners or magicians. (*Num.* 22:7.)—The ninth verse was evidently inserted, as a comment, in after ages, perhaps by Ezra, who is supposed to have set forth a correct edition of the Scriptures then extant, under the superintendence of the Spirit of prophecy. In the days of

Samuel, prophets were emphatically styled *Seers*, or men who are enabled to see divine things, that they may show them to others. The word *prophet* had been used of Abraham: (*Gen.* 20:7.) but in the time of Samuel, in common conversation, the word *Seer* was more used: for the men of God were also called prophets. (3:20.) And at length, the name *Seer* sunk into disuse.

V. 12-14. (*Note*, 7:17.) Shiloh, the place which God first chose to place his name there, had forfeited that distinction: no other place was appointed: the tabernacle, wherever it was at this time situated, did not contain the ark; and there was no tabernacle or altar at Kirjath-jearim, where the ark remained. (*Note* 7:1, 2.) These circumstances occasioned a kind of temporary suspension of the law against sacrificing in any other place, than that which the Lord had chosen: (*Notes*, Lev. 17:3-7. *Deut.* 12:5-7.) and the cities of the priests and Levites, where the people resorted for instruction, seemed the most proper for that purpose. The highest parts of these cities were generally selected: and from this circumstance, the subsequent pertinacious attachment of the Israelites to the "high places" seems to have been derived.—Samuel, having burned upon the altar the appointed portion of the peace-offerings, previously to the sacred feast upon the remainder, poured out fervent prayers to the Lord for acceptance, and for his blessing on the service, as a religious ordinance to the good of the souls, as well as on the food for the refreshment of the bodies of those present. The simple manner, in which these circumstances are stated to strangers by the young maidens, implies that this was Samuel's constant practice on these occasions, and doubtless it was the general observance, in all the sacrifices at the tabernacle and temple, when true religion flourished; though at other times it would degenerate into a mere ceremony.

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Save, &c.* When Israel grew slack in serving God, the Philistines recovered their authority: and though Saul did not reform the religion of Israel, yet in many instances he successfully fought their battles. (14: 17.)

V. 17-21. (*Marg. Ref.*) Samuel, as superintending the

days ago, 'set not thy mind on them, for they are found. And 'on whom is all the desire of Israel? is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house.

21 And Saul answered and said, *Am* not I 'a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and 'my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou 'so to me?

22 And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour, and made them sit 'in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, which *were* about thirty persons.

23 And Samuel said unto the cook, 'Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee, Set it by thee.

24 And the cook took up 'the shoulder, and *that* which *was* upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is 'left, set it before thee, and eat; for unto this time hath it been kept for thee, *since* I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

25 And when they were come down from the high place into the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon 'the top of the house.

a 4:20. marg. 1 Chr. 29:3. Ps. 62:10. Col. 3:2. b 5:19. 12:15. c Jdg. 20:46. 18:1. Ps. 68:27. d 10:27. 15:17. 16:18. 23. Jdg. 6:14, 15. Hos. 13:1. Luke 14: 11. Eub. 3:8. * Heb. according to this word. † Gen. 43:32. Luke 14:10. f 1:5. Gen. 43:34. g Lev. 7:33. 33. Ez. 24:4. † Or, reserved. h Deut. 22:8. 2 Sam. 11:2. Neh. 8:16. Jer. 19:13. Matt. 10:27. Acts 10:9. 1 Gen. 19:14. 44:4. Josh. 7:13. Jdg. 19:28. k 20:38, 39. John 15:14, 15. ‡ Heb. to-day. 11:16.

sacred feast, seems to have allotted to each guest his portion; but he expected, according to the divine monition, other guests besides those who had been previously invited. He had therefore given orders that the *left* shoulder as the prime portion, (for the *right* belonged to the priest,) should be reserved, in case these guests should not come in time.

V. 25—27. Samuel conferred with Saul, and showed him the intentions of God concerning him, *privately*, on the top of the house, (*Marg. Ref. h*), to prepare him for the time, when he would be *publicly*, by lot, appointed to the kingdom. (*Note*, 10:17—22.)—All the circumstances of these transactions were calculated to prepare Saul's mind for what followed, and to show him the interposition of God in it. (*Notes*, 2 Kings 9:1—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are never more likely to be unhappy, than when we have our outward portion or connexions, according to the choice of our own hearts: we ought therefore to beg of God in every thing to choose for us, and to teach us to acquiesce in his appointment.—True excellence of character does not result from external accomplishments; nor true felicity, from prosperous circumstances and outward splendour: and inattention to these obvious truths occasions the most fatal mistakes.—Diligence in business, and good behaviour in relative life, are commendable, but no sure tokens of genuine piety, or acceptance with God.—We sensibly feel our temporal losses, and bestow much pains to retrieve them: but how little do we attempt the salvation of our souls, and how speedily are we weary in seeking it! Nay, if ministers could inform men how to secure their property, or recover it when lost, or to acquire wealth, they would be much more respected and consulted than they now are, when employed in teaching them how to escape eternal misery and to obtain eternal life! Indeed we all are naturally far more desirous to learn our *fortune*, than our *duty*: so that curiosity and worldly motives are frequently the *first* means of bringing men acquainted with the ministers and the word of God.—And poor servants and mechanics are often better acquainted, than the rich and great are, with *Seers*, the holy men of God, who teach the way of eternal salvation: nay, in general, they have more respect for them as they have not so many things to occupy their thoughts, or prejudice their hearts against the truth. But many will speak of ministers as men of God, and honourable men whose words will certainly come to pass, who neither comply with their exhortations, nor imitate their examples: and being conscious that they do not choose to be at any expense in religion, they suspect that the servants of God teach for hire, and will do nothing without pay. Indeed there have always been so great a majority of this character, that inattentive observers cannot readily understand the difference between *mercenary diviners*, and those who "seek not theirs but them;" or between blind watchmen and guides, and those who are *Seers* indeed. But the *seeing eye* and the hearing ear are, in this sense also, from the Lord; and to those that wait on him he will communicate the truths, which he would have them communicate to the people. But how shall those who are *blind* themselves, be *seers* for other men; or point out to them that Saviour, of whom they have no knowledge? (*Notes*, Is. 56:9—12. Matt. 15:12—14.)—True grace teaches us to honour those whom God has honoured, though their advancement be attended by our degradation; but that respect should be shown in such a way, as may best tend to

26 And they arose early: and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, 'Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad.

27 And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, 'Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) but stand thou still 'a while, 'that I may show thee the word of God.

CHAPTER X.

Samuel anoints Saul, and dismisses him with directions, and with tokens which came to pass accordingly, 1—13. Saul answers the inquiries of his uncle, but conceals the matter of the kingdom, 14—16. Samuel convenges the people at Mizpeh, where Saul is chosen king by lot, 17—25. A few honourably treat him, but others despise him, 26, 27.

THEN Samuel took 'a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and 'kissed him, and said, *Is it not* because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over 'his inheritance?

2 When thou art departed from me to-day, then thou shalt find two men by 'Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at 'Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, 'The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the 'care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?

2 Kings 9:5, 6. a 2:10. 9:16. 16:13. 24:6. 26:11. 2 Kings 9:3—6. Acts 13:21. Rev 5:8. b 1 Kings 19:18. Ps. 21:2. Hos. 13:2. c 8:9. 19:13. 14. Josh. 5:14, 15. 2 Sam. 5:2. 2 Kings 20:5. Heb. 2:10. d Ex. 19:5, 6. Deut. 32:9. Ps. 78:71. 135:4. Jer. 10:16. † Gen. 35:19, 20. Jer. 31:15. g Josh. 18:28. h 16. 9:8—5. * Heb. business.

bring them acquainted with the truths and worship of God.—Without fervent prayer and praise, springing from a penitent believing heart, a solemn sacrifice would have degenerated into a profane meal; and with them an ordinary meal becomes a spiritual sacrifice: but those who eat their food without thanking the Lord for it, or seeking his blessing on it, are scarcely distinguishable from brutes, or from Atheists; and the examples of eminent persons, in such matters as these, may have a salutary effect on those around them.—"Before honour is humility," and they who have well learned to obey, are most likely to be advanced to command, and to rule properly.—But how different are the Lord's purposes concerning us, from our intentions for ourselves! Perhaps Saul was the only man of the whole human race, who set out to seek asses, and literally found a kingdom: but many have taken long voyages and journeys, or moved their habitations, to seek riches and pleasures, who have been guided to places, where they have found the salvation of their souls; having met with those who addressed them, as if informed of the secrets of their lives and hearts; and having been thus led seriously to regard the message of the Lord delivered by them. If this has been our case, though our worldly projects have all been frustrated, let us cease caring about it; for the Lord has given us that which is infinitely better.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1. In the conversation of the preceding evening and of that morning, Samuel had doubtless given Saul all needful information, preparatory to this significant ceremony; and he probably joined with it exhortations, counsels, and prayers. (*Marg. Ref. a. Notes*, 2:35, 36. 16:13.)—The priests were appointed to their office as types of Christ, and as implying their need of the communication of the Holy Spirit, to furnish them for their sacred work; and for the same reason the kings also were anointed. (*Note*, Ex. 29:1—7.) In performing this sacred rite, Samuel assured Saul of the Lord's choice of him to be king of Israel, and of his own hearty concurrence; and the *kiss* denoted affection and subjection, and loyalty to him, as the LORD's anointed. (*Notes*, Ps. 2:10—12.)—The law of Moses is silent as to the anointing of kings: but it seems to have been an ancient custom; (*Jdg.* 9:8.) and when prophets conformed to it by divine command, it obtained the force of a law.—It does not appear, that Samuel used the holy oil of the sanctuary on this occasion, or even when he anointed David, but rather common olive-oil: for he was at a distance from the tabernacle. (16:13.)

V. 2. We may suppose, that Saul was exceedingly surprised, and scarcely able to believe what Samuel had said to him: to convince him therefore that the matter was from the Lord, Samuel prophetically, and very particularly, informed him of some incidents which he would meet with in his return. (*Notes*, Mark 11:1—11. 14:12—16.)

V. 3, 4. (*Notes*, 9:12—14.) There seems to have been a high place at Beth-el, where priests attended to receive oblations, and to minister in their office: and these three men were going thither, in order to present peace-offerings; but, meeting Saul, they were secretly disposed by the Lord, to give him two loaves of bread, as a present, or tribute paid him after he had been anointed king.

Plain of Tabor. (3.) Tabor, in the lot of Zebulun, or Issachar, (*Marg. Ref. i*), in the northern part of the land, lay so remote from Saul's journey from Ramah to Gibeath, (26. 1:1. 9:5.) that it is most likely some plain in the neigh-

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after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the **LORD** fell on the people, and they came out with one consent.

8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

9 And they said unto the messengers that came, Thus shall ye say unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, To-morrow, by that time the sun be hot, ye shall have help. And the messengers came and showed it to the men of Jabesh; and they were glad.

10 Therefore the men of Jabesh said, To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you.

11 And it was so on the morrow, that Saul put the people in three companies, and they came into the midst of the host in the morning-watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.

12 ¶ And the people said unto Samuel, Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death.

13 And Saul said, There shall not a man be put to death this day: for to-day the **LORD** hath wrought salvation in Israel.

14 Then said Samuel to the people, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there.

15 And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the **LORD** in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the **LORD**; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

o Gen. 35:5. 2 Chr. 14:14. 17:10. * Heb. as one man. Judg. 20:1. p Judg. 14:5. q 13:15. 15:4. 2 Sam. 24:9. 2 Chr. 17:12-18. † Or, d liverance. Ps. 137. r 2. s Gen. 22:14. Ps. 46:1. t Judg. 7:16. 9:43. u Ex. 14:24. x 2. Judg. 17. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. y 9:50. 17:18. Judg. 4:16. z 10:27. Ps. 21:8. Luke 19:27. a 2 Sam. 19:22. b 19:5. Ex. 14:13,30. Ps. 44:4-8. 1 Cor. 15:10. c 7:16. 10:8. 4:10,24. 2 Sam. 5:3. 1 Chr. 12:38,39. c 10:17. f Ex. 24:5. 1 Chr. 23:21-24. g 19:15. 12:13-15:17. Hse. 13:10,11. Jam. 4:16. h 8:5-8,19-22. b 10:1-24. i 11:14,15. c 8:20. Num. 27:17. d 8:1,5. Ps. 71:18. Is. 46:3,4. 2 Tim. 4:6. 2 Pet. 1:14. e 2:22,29. 3:13. 8:3. f 3:19,20. g 5. 10:1. 24:6. 2 Sam. 1:14

in a very spirited, yet modest and clement manner, summoned the attendance of the people; assuming regal authority, yet adding the name of Samuel, doubtless to avoid needless offence: and, through the immediate influence of God upon their hearts, a very great multitude assembled with surprising celerity. Upon this they undertook and performed a march, perhaps of forty or fifty miles, within the space of about twenty-four hours; and by this despatch arrived in time to rescue their trembling brethren at Jabesh, and unexpectedly to destroy or totally scatter their insulting enemies. In this public service, it is said, that "the Spirit of God came upon Saul," and in this alone. (Notes, 10:5-7. 16:13,14.)

V. 12-15. Saul's extraordinary success went further with the people than either the Lord's appointment, or Samuel's anointing of him, or his personal accomplishments; so that they received him as their king, with sacrifices and great joy. And now "the sons of Belial" were saved from death, as well as Israel from the Ammonites, by him whom they despised as unable to save them. (Note, 10:26,27.) Saul's answer likewise gave the glory of the victory to God, who alone had saved his people. In all this, his conduct was unexceptionable; and the whole concludes with such humanity and apparent piety, as promised far better effects than those which followed. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ps. 36:3,4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Hasty settlements among bad neighbours often produce multiplied calamities: (Note, Num. 32:29.) and when professed Christians act inconsistently with the covenant of God, they will probably be forced to the basest subjection to man; for God will disgrace those who dishonour him, and make them a reproach to their enemies.—To save their lives men often part with their liberty, and will even consent to lose their eyes: how much more then is it our wisdom, to part with our right eye, rather than to be cast into hell-fire! (Notes, Matt. 5:29,30. Mark. 9:43-50. P. O. 30-50.) Indulgences or interstices most dear to our carnal hearts, must be crucified, if we would covenant with God for the life of our souls; and, whatever respite he may give, none can save us out of his hand: we must consent to his proposals or perish for ever. But tender mercy is couched under this apparently severe requisition: the dreaded operation will not be so painful as men suppose, the advantages are immense, and the service of God is perfect freedom.—The Lord, in providence, will make way for those, whom he has designed and prepared for usefulness: nor shall any repent of humbly waiting in obscurity and honest industry, till he is pleased to call them forth; for pride and impatience alone can conclude, that the only

CHAPTER XII.

Samuel, before Israel, avows his integrity, and the people fully justify him, 1-5. He expostulates with them, for their ingratitude, in rejecting the government of God, and warns them against disobedience, 6-15. To show their guilt in asking a king, he calls for thunder and rain in time of harvest, which greatly dismay them, 16-18. He promises to instruct and pray for them, and encourages them to cleave to the service of God, and to trust in his mercy, 20-25.

AND Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grey-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the **LORD**, and before this anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, The **LORD** is witness against you, and this anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they answered, He is witness.

6 And Samuel said unto the people, It is the **LORD** that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

7 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the **LORD**, of all the righteous acts of the **LORD**, which he did to you and to your fathers.

8 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and

—16. Matt. 22:21. Rom. 13:1-7. h Num. 16:15. Acts 20:33. i 1 Thes. 2:5,10. 1 Pet. 5:2. * Heb. ransom. † Or, that I should hide mine eyes of him. Ex. 23:8. Deut. 16:19. 1 Lev. 6:4. Luke 19:8. k Ps. 37:5,6. Dan. 6:4. 3 John 12. l Job 31:35-40. 42:7. m 26:9. n John 18:38. Acts 23:9. † 1 Cor. 4:4. 2 Cor. 1:12. o Ex. 22:4. Ps. 17:3. p Ex. 6:26. Neh. 9:9-14. Ps. 77:19,20. 78:12, &c. 99:6. 105:26,41. Is. 63:7-14. Hos. 12:13. 1 Cor. made. q Is. 1:18. 53:3. Jer. 18:25-30. Mic. 6:2-4. Acts 17:3. s Heb. righteousnesses, or, benefits. Judg. 5:11. g Heb. with. r Gen. 46:5-7. Num. 20:15. Acts 7:15.

wise God has lighted a candle to leave it under a bushel.—The reproach of the gospel, the distresses of the Lord's people, and the insulting triumphs of their enemies, should not only excite our sympathizing sorrows, but our most decisive exertions in our several stations, yea, our warm and generous indignation. But magistrates in all cases should be sparing of the lives of their subjects, and only punish them in their property, where that can be made effectual.—When zeal for the glory of God, and love for their brethren, prompt men to earnest and vigorous efforts, and when he is pleased to concur, great effects are speedily produced; but in critical junctures ordinary measures of despatch are insufficient.—Deliverance in extreme distress is doubly welcome, and it is often vouchsafed to the true Christian: but the destruction, which commonly overtakes the wicked in the height of their triumphs and security, is inexpressibly dreadful.—Humility and clemency add superior lustre to the most splendid actions; he who forgives his enemies, when he has them in his power, obtains the noblest victory: (Note, Prov. 16:32.) and by giving the praise of illustrious exploits to God, a man acquires the most solid honour.—The Lord delights to plead the cause of those, who are dumb under injuries, and who do not plead for themselves; to put to silence those who contend with his servants; and to work by instruments which man contemns.—Thus the despised Saviour will at length be universally acknowledged as the Lord's anointed King, with songs of triumph and praise: at present, before the mercy-seat, he receives the submissions and pleads the cause of rebels, who are willing that he should reign over and save them; but shortly from his righteous tribunal he will condemn to everlasting ruin all those, who persist in contempt of him and opposition to him.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1. The elders of Israel, being convened at Gilgal, where they had celebrated the late victory with sacrifices, and confirmed the kingdom to Saul; (Notes, 11:12-15.) Samuel embraced the opportunity of appealing to the people, and to their king, concerning his integrity and disinterested conduct, as their judge, when about to divest himself of his authority. By this he doubtless means not only to clear his own character, but likewise to set before Saul an instructive example; and especially to convince the people of their ingratitude to God, as well as to him. (Notes, Acts 20:18-35.)

V. 2-7. Samuel might be about eighteen years of age when Eli was slain, and thirty-eight when he assembled the people at Mizpeh, (Notes, 7:1-12,) and perhaps sixty at this time.—From a child he had been labouring assiduously for

your fathers ¹cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which ²brought forth your fathers out of Egypt and ³made them dwell in this place.

9 And when they ¹forgot the LORD their God, ²he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand ³of the Philistines, and ⁴into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.

10 And ¹they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served ²Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now ³deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

11 And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and ²Bedan, and ³Jephthah, and ⁴Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

12 And when ye saw that ¹Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon, came against you, ye said unto me, ²Nay, but a king shall reign over us; ³when the LORD your God was your King.

13 Now therefore ¹behold the king ²whom ye have have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the ²commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye, and also the king that reigneth over you, ³continue following the LORD your God.

15 But if ¹ye will not obey the voice of the

r Ex. 2:23-24. 3 Joh. 1:2. s Gen. 6:10. Ex. 3:10. 4:14-16. 27-31. 6:95. u Ex. 12:51. 14:30-31. x Jer. 1:2-3. y Jer. 1:2-3. z Jer. 1:2-3. 78:54-55. 105:41. r Deut. 32:18. Judg. 3:7. Ps. 106:21. Jer. 2:2. s Deut. 32:30. Judg. 2:14. 3:3. 4:2. 5:1. 50:1-2. a Judg. 10:7. 13:1. b Judg. 3:12. 5:3. 6:31. 10. c Jer. 3:9-15. 4:3. 7:7. 10:10-15. Ps. 78:34-35. 105:44. 1:23-25. d Judg. 2:13. 3:7. e Jer. 10:15-16. Is. 33:22. Luke 1:74-75. f 2 Cor. 9:14-15. g Judg. 6:14-32. s Jer. 3:29. 5:2. 13:18. h Judg. 11:1. &c. i Jer. 17:13. k Jer. 18:5. 19:20. Judg. 9:18. 56:57. m Jer. 10:19. Jer. 17:7. Ex. 19:5-6. Num. 23:21. Ps. 74:12. Is. 53:92. Hos. 13:10. n Jer. 11:15. o Jer. 5:1. p Ps. 78:29-31. Hos. 13:11. Acts 13:21. q Lev. 25:1-3. Deut. 28:1-14. Josh. 24:14. Ps. 81:13-14. Is. 3:10. Rom. 2:7. r Heb. mouth. t Heb. be after. s Lev. 26:39. Deut. 28:15-68. Josh. 24:20. Is. 1:20. 3:11. Rom. 2:8, 9. s See on 9. 17:15-16. Ex. 14:13-31. u Prov. 26:1. x 7:9-10. Josh. 10:12. Ps. 99:6. Jer. 15:1. Jam. 5:16-18. y See on 8:7.

the good of his people, and was grown grey in their service; yet they had at last rejected him! His sons had indeed misbehaved; and, having been reduced to a private station, they were there present, if the people chose to call them to an account: but for himself he could appeal to the Lord, and to their consciences, and was even willing that their anointed king should decide, whether he had not acted with entire equity, impartiality, and disinterestedness, during his whole administration. (Notes, Num. 16:15. 2 Cor. 1:12-14. 12:14-21. 1 Thes. 2:1-8.) When they had in consequence fully attested his integrity, he expostulated no further with them concerning their conduct towards him; but endeavoured to convince them of their wickedness in the sight of God; who had brought their fathers out of Egypt by a prophet and a priest, and not by a king like those of the surrounding nations. (Notes, 8:1-5. Deut. 17:14. Hos. 12:12-14. 13:10, 11. Acts 7:30-36.)

V. 8-10. Jacob, by going down into Egypt, made way for that oppression, which caused his posterity to cry unto the Lord: and the deliverance from Egypt by Moses and Aaron, made way for the settlement of Israel in Canaan; and their subsequent rebellions, and chastisements prepared the way for renewed deliverances, not by kings, but by judges, raised up by the Lord for that gracious purpose, as Samuel himself had been. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 3:7-45. Judg. 2:11-14. 3:12-30. 4:5.)

V. 11-13. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Judg. 6:1-11.) Bedan may be considered as a contraction of Ben-dan, or the son of Dan; and it is probable that Samson is intended. (Notes, Judg. 13:1-16.) The Septuagint has Barak.—Samuel joins himself to the number of those, by whom the Lord had delivered the people; to, impress more deeply on their minds the conviction, that in rejecting him, they had refused to continue any longer under the immediate government of God, by judges of his appointment, which had been their honour and happiness.—When Nahash prepared to war against them, it seems Samuel gave them some intimations that God would raise them up a deliverer, or he offered to lead them to battle; but they refused his proposals, saying, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us;" and accordingly God had appointed a king over them. (Notes, 8:10:17-27:11.)

V. 14, 15. The Israelites might perhaps suppose, that under a king, who would always be at hand to succour them, and fight against their enemies, their affairs would not be exposed to such vicissitudes as before. But Samuel assured them, that there would be no difference in that respect: for their privileges as the Lord's peculiar people would still be continued to them, while they adhered to his service, and withdrawn, if they forsook it, even as in times past. (Marg. Ref.

LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD; then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was ²against your fathers.

16 Now therefore ¹stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

17 Is it ¹not wheat-harvest to-day? ²I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that ³your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

18 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day and all the people greatly ²fear the LORD and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, ²Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins ³this evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, ²Fear not: (ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And ²turn ye not aside: for ³then should ye go after ⁴vain things, which ⁵cannot profit nor deliver: for they are vain:)

22 For ²the LORD will not forsake his people ³for his great name's sake; because ⁴it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover, as for me, ²God forbid that I should sin against the LORD ³in ceasing to pray for you: but ⁴I will teach you ⁵the good and the right way.

24 Only ¹fear the LORD, and serve him ²in truth

x Ex. 9:23-25. Rev. 11:5-6. a Ex. 14:31. Fara 10:9. Ps. 106:12, 13. b 7:5. Gen. 20:7. Ex. 9:28. 10:17. Job 42:8. Ps. 78:34, 35. Mal. 1:9. Acts 8:24. 1 John 5:16. c Ex. 20:19, 20. 1 Pet. 3:6. d Deut. 11:16. 31:29. Josh. 23:6. Ps. 40:4. 101:3. 125:5. e Deut. 32:21. Jer. 2:5, 13. 10:8, 15. 14:22. 16:19. Jon. 2:8. Hab. 2:18. 1 Cor. 3:4. 1 Pt. 1:15-16. Is. 41:23-24. 44:9, 10. 45:20. 46:7. Jer. 10:5. g Rom. 1:21. 2:17. 2 Kings 21:11. 1 Chr. 29:2. 2 Chr. 15:2. Ps. 54:14. Is. 41:17. 42:14. Jer. 35:24. 26:16. Lam. 5:20. Heb. 14:5. h Ex. 22:12. Num. 14:13-19. Deut. 32:26-27. Josh. 7:5. Is. 37:35. 45:25. 48:11. Jer. 14:21. Ex. 2:2-11. Eph. 1:6, 12. 1 Cor. 13:16. Deut. 7:7. i Jer. 1:12. Mal. 1:2. Matt. 11:28. John 15:16. Rom. 9:12-18. 11:29. 1 Cor. 4:7. Phil. 1:6. k Acts 12:5. Rom. 1:9. Col. 1:9. l 1 Thes. 3:2. 2 Tim. 1:3. m Heb. from ceasing. 1 Ps. 34:11. Prov. 4:11. Ec. 12:10. Acts 20:20. Col. 1:28. m 1 Kings 8:36. 2 Chr. 6:27. Jer. 6:16. n Job 28:28. Ps. 111:10. Prov. 1:7. Ec. 12:13. Heb. 12:29. o Ps. 119:80. John 1:47.

Following, &c. (14.) Depending on God, adhering to his worship and service, and protected by him: and so, a holy and happy people. (Notes, 15:11. Num. 14:24. Hos. 6:1-3.)

V. 16-19. Even rain was uncommon during the wheat-harvest, and doubtless this thunder-storm was very violent. Having likewise been predicted and called for, it formed a useful attestation of Samuel's word, and was entirely suited to produce conviction and alarm in the consciences of the people.—Being, therefore, terrified with the displays of the divine power, which were made in answer to Samuel's prayer, and perceiving how much he was honoured by God, they were afraid of some immediate judgments, such as were inflicted on their forefathers for rebelling against Moses and Aaron; and they earnestly begged of him to pray for them. (Notes, Num. 11:1-3. 16:28-35, 41-50. 21:4-9.) They likewise acknowledged that, in addition to all their other rebellions, they had heinously sinned in desiring a king.—It should here be observed, that their guilt did not consist in preferring the authority of kings to any other kind of government: but in rebelliously and ungratefully determining to be governed in a different manner, from that which God himself had chosen for them. And if afterwards, when God had expressly appointed David to rule over them, the people had required a change of government, and wanted again to be ruled by judges as their fathers had been, they would have been guilty of a similar rebellion. (Note, 1 Kings 12:16.)

V. 20. Fear not, &c.] Samuel repeatedly exhorted the people to "fear the LORD;" (14, 24.) yet here he exhorted them not to fear: that is, not to be dismayed by the dread of immediate destruction. (Note, Ex. 20:18-20.)—Reverence of the majesty and authority of God, and fear of his displeasure, when counterpoised by the hope of his favour, quicken men in seeking and serving him: but such a fear of wrath, as occasions despondency and hard thoughts of him, drives men from their duty, and exposes them to manifold temptations. (Notes, Gen. 45:5. Ps. 130:3, 4. 2 Tim. 1:6-8. 1 John 4:18.)

V. 22. In preferring the seed of Jacob to other families, to be his people, the Lord acted as a Sovereign, who is not bound, and does not deign, to assign his reasons: but having made them his people, the honour of his perfections required, that he should not entirely forsake them till the promised Seed arose, however severely he corrected them; nor even then, finally and absolutely: and this consideration was suited to excite and encourage their obedience. (Marg. Ref. —Notes, Ps. 94:12-14. Is. 41:8, 9. Jer. 33:23-26. Rom. 11:1-10, 25-32.)

with all your heart: for reconsider 'how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

CHAPTER XIII.

Saul chooses a select band, and dismisses the people, 1, 2. Jonathan, his son, smites a garrison of the Philistines, and Saul summons the people to Gilgal, 3, 4. The Philistines gather a great army; and Israel is distressed and scattered, 5-7. Saul, weary of waiting for Samuel, sacrifices, 8, 9. Samuel comes and reproves him, and shows that God has rejected him; while Saul in vain excuses himself, 10-14. A small company attend Saul, and three bands of Philistines waste the land, 15-18. The policy of the Philistines, who suffer no smith in Israel, 19-23.

SAUL reigned one year: and when he had reigned two years over Israel,

2 Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel, whereof two thousand were with Saul in Michmash, and in mount Beth-el, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin:

p Ezra 9:13-14. Is. 5:12. Rom. 12:1. "Or, what a great thing, &c. Deut. 10:21. Ps. 126:2,3. q Deut. 32:15, &c. Josh. 24:20. Is. 3:11. r 31:1-3. Deut. 28:36. Hos. 10:3. "Heb. the son of one year in his reigning. Jer. 12:5. Mic. 6:6. marg. a 11:14-32. b 5:23. 14:31. Is. 10:29. c 10:25. 15:34. Jer. 13:28. Judg. 19:12. 2 Sam. 21:6. Is. 10:29. d 10:5. 14:1-6. 2 Sam. 23:14. f Or, the hill. Josh.

V. 23. The people had no occasion to fear Samuel's resentment: for he deemed himself bound in duty to persevere in praying for them, notwithstanding the affront which they had put upon him. And though he was no longer their chief magistrate; yet he promised still to devote the remnant of his life to their service, as their instructor in religion, and in promoting their peace and happiness. In these respects he judged them all the days of his life. (Note, 7:15.)—Nothing can be well imagined, more expressive of genuine excellency of character, and a right state of heart, than this simple but solemn declaration. Though ungratefully rejected by Israel, and degraded from his high station; he would yet think himself most criminal before God, should he decline any service, which he was in his inferior station capable of rendering them. This entirely coincides with St. Paul's avowal to the Corinthians. (Note, 2 Cor. 12:14,15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The favoured few, who have walked before God from childhood to old age, while they look back on their past lives with gratitude, as the sure evidence of acceptance, and as confirming their expectation of eternal glory; may receive this satisfaction, and the "rejoicing in the testimony of their consciences," as a gracious recompense from the Lord; and may speak of them, in order to induce young persons to seek and serve him without delay.—There are seasons, when we are called on to vindicate our own characters and conduct before men, and to show them how conscientiously we have acted towards them: but it should be always done in submissiveness to their conviction and edification. We may very properly touch on this subject, when we can thus convey useful instructions to our juniors or successors: and men may recede from public stations with comfort, when they can extort even from their opposers and despisers a testimony to their integrity.—The honour, rendered to those who are concluding their course, differs widely from the applause and congratulation which many receive, when they first step forth before the public eye. This indeed often terminates in disgrace and contempt: it is therefore unworthy of our wishes, and ought surely never to move a wise man's envy or discontent, though rendered to others at his expense. (Notes, 2 Sam. 15:1-6, 18:9-18. 1 Chr. 29:20,26-28.)—Prosperity in sin is no proof of impunity; and sinners never more need to be warned, than when successful in their undertakings.—But the servants of God, though ill treated, should be careful not to expostulate too much with those by whom they have been injured; but to "reason with them of the righteous acts of the LORD," of his truth and mercy, and of their conduct towards him, for their humiliation.—Our safe and happy state consists in a willing dependence on God, and subjection to him: but we are apt to affect independence, and to refuse obedience, by which we exchange substantial good for an empty shadow: for the greatest outward prosperity contributes nothing to our felicity, except when it induces us to fear and serve God, and to obey his voice; and is improved as a talent in doing good to men.—Disobedience ensures misery from generation to generation, whatever be our station or circumstances in life: and to continue "following the LORD," as his accepted servants, is the highest privilege we can enjoy.—The most useful benefactors of mankind, who have spent their lives, and worn out their constitutions, in unceasing labours for the good of others, must not be surprised, if they are at length cast off with neglect and ingratitude: but when the perverseness of their brethren prevents them from doing all that good which they desired to do, they should still do all the good they can. This is a general rule for all: those who cannot rule may teach, and those who cannot teach may pray, and set an edifying example; and no provocations should tempt us to sin against God in ceasing to pray for our children, relations, friends, people, fellow-sinners, or even our inveterate enemies. Yet the prayers of the church, and the intercession of Christ, will in the event appear to have been united

and the rest of the people he sent every man to his tent.

3 And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba: and the Philistines heard of it: and Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let the Hebrews hear.

4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in abomination with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

5 And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea-shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Beth-aven.

6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in

18:24. Gaba. 21:17. Is. 10:29. Zech. 14:10. e Judg. 3:27. 6:34. 2 Sam. 2:23. 20:1. f Heb. did strike. Gen. 34:30. 46:34. Ex. 5:21. Zech. 11:8. f 10:8. 11:14. 15:10. 5:9. g Gen. 22:17. Josh. 11:4. Judg. 7:12. 2 Chr. 1:9. Is. 48:19. Jer. 15:8. Rom. 9:27. h 14:32. Josh. 7:18. 12:12. Hos. 4:15. 5:8. 10:5. 1 Ex. 14:10. 12. Josh. 8:20. Judg. 10:9. 2 Sam. 24:14. Phil. 1:123.

against impenitent sinners; yea, the elements and the whole creation will shortly be armed against them to their destruction. The belief of this alarming truth should "warn them to flee from the wrath to come," to confess their sins, to obey the gospel, and to desire the prayers and counsels of its ministers. But when sinners are deeply convinced of their guilt and danger, they need encouragement, lest their fear should lead to despondency. (Note, 2 Cor. 2:5-11.)—In the day of judgment all those things which men have inordinately loved, and for which they have forsaken God, will be found "vain, and such as cannot profit or deliver," even though they were "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." Happy then are they, whom the Lord has pleased to make his people! "he will never leave nor forsake them," but will glorify his great name in their eternal salvation. None, however, can know assuredly, that these blessings belong to them, except they attend to "the good and the right way, and fear the LORD, and serve him with all their heart." (Notes, Jer. 32:38-41. John 10:26-31. 1 Pet. 1:3-5.) and if "we consider what great things he hath done for us," especially in the work of our redemption and regeneration, we cannot want motive, or encouragement, or assistance for so doing.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. The language in the original, "Saul was the son of one year in his reigning; and when he had reigned two years over Israel," (marg.) is differently interpreted: but probably it only means, according to the Hebrew idiom, that during the first year nothing remarkable occurred; but after two years, (or in the second year of his reign,) the subsequent events took place. The passage seems to refer to the transactions at Gilgal recorded in the former chapters. Perhaps those events did not take place, till the second year after he had been first appointed by the Lord to be king over Israel. (Notes, 10:1,17-27. 11:6-15. 12:1.) When he dismissed the rest of the multitude, he retained three thousand chosen men, for his own defence and that of his country; which he divided between himself and his son Jonathan.

V. 3, 4. After Saul had defeated Nahash, and had been confirmed in the kingdom; and after he had joined with Samuel in offering sacrifices, and had obtained the benefit of his prayers; it must be concluded that he ought to have marched directly with his victorious army against the Philistines, who possessed strong-holds in the land, and had become very formidable; and that true policy required this of him. (Notes, 9:16. 11:12-15.) But it is probable, that he was elated with success, pleased with the show of royalty, and disposed to ease and indulgence. Thus the favourable opportunity was lost, the ardour of his followers was suffered to abate, and perhaps some of them were disgusted: and the Philistines, doubtless learning that a king had been chosen, with a view to deliver Israel from their power assiduously employed the time given them, in preparing for war, and in weakening and disarming the Israelites. In the mean while Jonathan, probably by Saul's command, smote a garrison of the Philistines; so that "Israel was had in abomination by the Philistines," who resented it as an indignity, and probably regarded it as an act of rebellion against their authority: thus they were exceedingly exasperated; and when Saul at length sounded the alarm, the people either did not come to him, or they speedily deserted him.—In all these measures Saul seems to have been very impolitic: (Note, 11:12-15.) but the Lord intended to chastise the people for their sins, to expose their folly in expecting that a king could save them, and to prepare the way for a glorious deliverance which he intended to effect for them. (Notes, 12:1,15. 14:11-23.)

V. 5. *Thirty thousand chariots.* The Philistines had doubtless collected troops on this emergency from all the surrounding nations; but the number of chariots of war here stated is immensely large beyond all example, (Ex. 14:7. Judg. 4:3. 2 Sam. 10:18. 1 Kings 10:26. Ps. 68:17.) and

a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves ⁱⁿ caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

7 And some of ^{the} Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of ^{the} Gad and Gilead: as for Saul, he ^{was} yet in Gilgal, and all the people ^{followed} him trembling.

8 And he ^{tarried} seven days according to the set time that Samuel ^{had appointed}: but Samuel came not to Gilgal, and the people were scattered from him.

9 And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt-offering to me, and peace-offerings. And ^{he} offered the burnt-offering.

10 And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came; and ^{Saul} went out to meet him, that he might ^{salute} him.

11 And Samuel said, ^{What} hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and ^{that} thou camest not within the days appointed, and ^{that} the Philistines gathered themselves together at ^{Michmash};

12 Therefore ^{said} I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not ^{made} supplication unto the LORD: ^I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering.

13 And Samuel said to Saul, ^{Thou} hast done foolishly: ^{thou} hast not kept the commandment

of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.

14 But ^{now} thy kingdom shall not continue; ^{the} LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him ^{to be} captain over his people, because thou hast not kept ^{that} which the LORD commanded thee.

15 And Samuel arose, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul numbered the people ^{that were} present with him, ^{about} six hundred men.

16 And Saul, and Jonathan his son, and the people ^{that were} present with them, abode in ^{Gibeah} of Benjamin: but the Philistines encamped in Michmash.

17 ^{And} the spoilers came out of the camp of the Philistines, ⁱⁿ three companies; one company turned unto the way ^{that leadeth} to ^{Ophrah}, unto the land of ^{Shual}:

18 And another company turned the way to ^{Beth-horon}: and another company turned to the way of the border, that looketh to the valley of ^{Zebaim}, toward the wilderness.

19 Now ^{there was} no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make ^{them} swords or spears:

20 But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

k 14:11. 23:19. 24:3. Judg. 6:2. Is. 42:22. Heb. 11:38. 1 Lev. 26:17, 36:37. Deut. 25:23. m Num. 32:1-53. 42. Deut. 3:12. Josh. 13:24-31. * Heb. 1:1. 2:1. 3:1. 4:1. 5:1. 6:1. 7:1. 8:1. 9:1. 10:1. 11:1. 12:1. 13:1. 14:1. 15:1. 16:1. 17:1. 18:1. 19:1. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 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wholly disproportioned to the number of their horsemen. Commentators therefore conjecture, that their carriages for baggage and all other uses are included.

V. 6, 7. The numerous and well appointed army of the Philistines so terrified the people, that most of them deserted, and either hid themselves, or passed over Jordan, to be out of the reach of the enemy; while the few who remained with Saul, trembled as they followed him. (Notes, Deut. 20:5-9. Judg. 6:2, 3. 7:2, 3. Is. 42:22-25.)

V. 8, 9. (Note, 10:3.) According to the direction before given, and perhaps since repeated, Saul waited for Samuel till the close of the seventh day: but, being impatient of his situation; displeased perhaps with Samuel for not coming sooner, and attributing the people's terror and desertion to his absence, and the want of some token of the Lord's presence; and fearing lest the others also should leave him, he proceeded to offer sacrifices. This was contrary to the express injunctions, which had been laid upon him to wait for Samuel; who, having presented burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, with solemn prayers and supplications, would have shown him how he ought to proceed, in the present difficult emergency, that he might ensure success.—As no priest is mentioned, it has been thought that Saul, presuming on his kingly authority, usurped the priesthood also: but this is doubtful. It is certain, however, that he took too much upon him, and thought it was fit the prophet should wait for the king, rather than the king for the prophet.—He entrenched upon the priest's office, or upon the prophet's, or upon both. *Ep. Patrick.*

V. 10-12. When Samuel came, Saul went out to "salute" or bless him, as one well satisfied with what he had done. (Notes, 15:13, 14. Ps. 36:2.) But when he perceived by Samuel's pointed question, that he disapproved of his conduct, (Marg. Ref. q. Notes, Gen. 3:9-13. 4:10-12.) he attempted to excuse himself by the plea of necessity; and stated that being in such circumstances of extreme peril and distress, he had, with much reluctance proceeded to offer sacrifice, lest the Philistines should attack him before he had performed his devotions.—He might, however, without blame and with great propriety, have poured out his prayers to God, and thus have waited for Samuel.

V. 13-15. This commandment of the Lord by Samuel, was probably intended as a test of Saul's disposition: and his transgression proved, that he did not regard the word of God, when it greatly interfered with his own inclinations or sentiments; by which appeared that he was unfit to rule as the vicegerent of the Lord over his people. He was "weighed in this balance, and found wanting." Had he behaved properly, the kingdom would have been permanently confirmed in his family; and it is probable that Samuel came to Gilgal, expecting to make this settlement of the kingdom by divine authority: but now Saul was sentenced to be removed, to make way for one of a more obedient disposition. This the omniscient God foresaw; but his secret purpose was not

the motive of Saul's conduct; which to the Searcher of hearts doubtless appeared much more aggravated than it does to us. (Notes, Gen. 2:16, 17. 3:6.)—Samuel on this occasion departed from Saul; yet, as he went to Gibeah of Saul and not to Ramah, and as he came to him afterwards, (15:13, 34, 35.) it is conjectured that the sentence was not irreversible; but that, if Saul had repented of this sin, and been more obedient in future, he might notwithstanding have been continued in the kingdom.—When no more than six hundred men remained with Saul, and even these "followed him trembling," he must have been greatly affected with the alteration which had taken place, since he was followed by three hundred thousand men of Israel, and thirty thousand of Judah, in warring against Nahash. (Note, 11:6-11.)—*A man after his own heart.* (14) Marg. Ref. z.

V. 17, 18. (Marg. Ref.) These invaders and plunderers, going in three different directions, would exceedingly harass and distress all the towns and villages of Israel, now left open to their incursions, without the least defence; so that the miseries, which the people endured, must have been much greater than at first glance it may appear.

V. 19-21. During all the forty years' oppression by the Philistines, they seem to have used the policy of forbidding the Israelites to practise the trade of smiths; (Note, Judg. 5:8.) as the Chaldeans afterwards carried the smiths captive out of the land. (2 Kings 24:14. Jer. 24:1.) And after the termination of that entire slavery, the Israelites did not readily re-assume the trade; but, as the Philistines had garisons in many parts of the land, they were accustomed to go to the smiths resident in them, for such work as needed to be done; and these would doubtless exact an exorbitant price for their labour, and also exert themselves in preventing the Israelites, from learning or practising their trade. Thus the Philistines had artfully obtained a most important advantage: and, it is probable, they had been more assiduous than common, while they expected that Saul would make war on them; so that at the important crisis, the Israelites were almost destitute of armour.—The impolicy of Saul, and the abject spirit of the people, were thus manifested: but the Lord overruled it, to show the greatness of his power in the deliverance and victory of his people, when thus circumstanced.—Many parts of the land were too distant from Philistia for the Israelites to go thither on every occasion, and the Philistines had garisons in the land: so that the interpretation above given is most natural, as well as generally adopted.

V. 22. The Israelites used bows, slings, and javelins in war, and with these it is probable the people were armed. Perhaps the Philistines had seized the armour which they had used against Nahash, after they were dispersed: (Notes, 11:6-11.) and it is probable, that many who had armour had deserted. However, it was so ordered in providence, that none in the remaining little company, except Saul and Jonathan had either sword or spear.—Thus the Israelites who

21 Yet they had 'a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.

22 So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

23 And the [†]garrison of the Philistines went out to the [†]passage of Michmash.

CHAPTER XIV.

Jonathan, attended only by his armour-bearer, smites the garrison of the Philistines, 1-14; who are seized with terror, and destroy one another, 15, 16. Saul, seeing the tumult, inquires of God: but without waiting for an answer, he assaults the Philistines; being joined by the Hebrews who had deserted, or hid themselves, 17-23. His rash courage, against such odds that day, hinders the completion of the victory; and Jonathan, not knowing what had passed, violates it, 24-30. The people fly upon the spoil, and are hardly restrained from eating with the blood, 31-34. Saul builds an altar; and asks counsel of God, but is not answered, 35-37. Jonathan, taken by lot and sentenced to die, is rescued by the people, 38-46. Saul's victories end, finally, 47-52.

NOW it came to pass upon a day, that ^aJonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on the other side: but ^bhe told not his father.

2 And Saul tarried ^cin the uttermost part of Gibeah, under a pomegranate-tree, which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men;

* Heb. a file with mouths. † Heb. set. 1:17,47,50. Judg. 5:8. Zech. 4:6. 1 Cor. 1:27-28. 2 Cor. 4:7. ‡ Or, standing camp. 3:14, 4:2, 5:14, 14:5. Or, there was a day. 4:39-45. 13:22, 18:1-4. 2 Sam. 1:4, 5:25, 26; 3:25, 19: Judg. 6:27, 14:6. Mic. 7:5. c 13:15, 16. Is. 10:23, 29. 12:29-12:30. Ahimelech. e 4:21. f 2:28. Ex. 28:36-32. g 13:23. † Heb. tooth. h 17:25, 36. Gen. 17:7

expected to look formidable under kingly government, were made to appear very contemptible: (Notes, 8:1-5.) not that the Lord had forsaken his people; but because he would humble them, and show them, that the victory did not depend upon swords and spears, but upon the favour and assistance of the Almighty. (Notes, 14:1-15. Judg. 7:2-22.)

V. 23. It is supposed, that between Michmash and Gibeah, each situated on a hill, there was a valley, called "the passage of Michmash;" into which the garrison of the Philistines "went out," either to challenge the Israelites to battle, or in order to make an assault upon Gibeah. (15, 16. 14:4, 5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our sanguine expectations from creatures are sure to end in disappointment; and when we resolve to choose for ourselves, we shall certainly have cause to repent of our choice: indeed, when men are lifted up in self-sufficiency, they are often left to the most unaccountable infatuation.—The chief advantages of the enemies of the church are derived from the misconduct of its professed friends: for when these act inconsistently with justice and fidelity, religious people, without discrimination, are lured upon with abhorrence and contempt. Yet, while sinners are meditating revenge, the Lord often restrains their malice by invisible hindrances, and uses their machinations for the chastisement of his people.—Deep resentment and great power united, occasion much consternation; and men thus terrified, flee or hide themselves from their fellow creatures, and for a time, and on some occasions, with success. How then will the terror of the Almighty appal the wicked, in the approaching day of his inevitable and intolerable wrath, when no way of concealment or escape will remain for them! (Notes, Rev. 6:15-17.)—Those who in trouble are actuated by pride and impatience, involve themselves in still deeper guilt and misery, by their foolish expedients to extricate themselves.—Our observance of the Lord's directions, will always be proportioned to our simplicity of dependence on his promises, and submission to his will: and those who are most dilatory in doing their duty, are commonly the most impatient of delay in waiting his time of deliverance.—Our disposition to obey or disobey will often be decisively proved by our behaviour in apparently small things; (Note, Gen. 3:6.) and such as most neglect the duties of their own station, are most forward to censure the supposed negligence of others. Men destitute of inward piety, are frequently most scrupulously attached to the forms of godliness: nay, they fancy that the Lord will accept them, because they force themselves to act contrary to their own inclinations, or even to the dictates of their natural conscience!—We are commanded not to "speak evil of rulers:" yet those who are called to address them in the name of God, must point out very plainly the folly and evil of their conduct, and remind them of his anger against the workers of iniquity, without respect of persons: for though a prince may not in this life forfeit his throne or his dignity, by his offences against God; yet if he die impenitent, he will certainly lose his soul in the world to come. How empty then are those distinctions, from which so many are hurried into everlasting misery!—We have, by sin, forfeited felicity; but unbelief and impatience ratify that forfeiture: and those who have undeniably broken the commandments of God, and yet persist in excusing and justifying themselves are evidently both impenitent and

3 And ^aAhiah, the son of Ahitub, ^bIchabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh, ^cwearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.

4 And between ^dthe passages by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.

5 The ^efore-front of the one was situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.

6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these ^funcircumcised: ^git may be that the Lord will work for us; ^hfor there is no restraint to the Lord, to save by many or by few.

7 And his armour-bearer said unto him, ^kDo all that is in thine heart: turn thee; behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.

8 Then said Jonathan, Behold, ⁱwe will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them.

9 If ^mthey say thus unto us, [†]Tarry until we come to you; then we will stand still in our place, and will not go up unto them.

—11. Judg. 15:18. 2 Sam. 1:20. Jer. 9:23-26. Eph. 2:11, 12. Phil. 3:13. 12 Sam. 16:12. 2 Kings 19:4. Am. 5:15. Zeph. 2:3. † Deut. 32:30. Judg. 7:4-7. 2 Chr. 14:11. Ps. 104:1-3. Zech. 4:6. Matt. 18:26. Rom. 8:31. k 10:7. 2 Sam. 7:3. Ps. 46:7. Zech. 8:23. † Judg. 7:9-14. m Gen. 24:13, 14. Gen. 6:36-40. † Heb. be still.

unbelieving. The trouble of all such as continue in this spirit, must certainly increase; and as they refuse to submit to God, they must be reduced to the most abject misery in the slavery of sin. But, while the Lord "pours contempt upon princes, and brings to nought all the honourable of the earth," he will deliver his people by his own power: and while he shames such as trust in man, and aspire to greatness and pre-eminence in outward things: he will honour those who humbly and in faith expect help from him alone.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1. No doubt, Jonathan in this critical state of affairs in Israel was excited, by an immediate divine impulse, to assault the formidable oppressors of his people: and by the same admonition he was kept from informing the soldiers; and even from consulting his father, who might have opposed his design. Indeed Saul's transgression excluded him from sharing the honour of that deliverance, which God intended to vouchsafe to his afflicted people. (Notes, 13:13-15, 22.)

V. 2, 3. (13:15, 16. Note, 22.) After Samuel had left Saul, it seems that the latter sent for Ahiah, or Ahimelech, the great grandson of Eli, the Lord's priest at Shiloh. Ahitub was the elder brother of Ichabod; (Note, 4:19-22.) and his son was at this time high-priest, and so wore the ephod, and the breast-plate of judgment with Urim and Thummim. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 28:30. Num. 27:21.) Saul therefore having him in the camp, with his priestly garments; and as it is probable, having fetched the ark thither also; (18) appeared to himself and to the people, to have abundant tokens of God's presence with him: and he could now inquire of the Lord, without being liable to Samuel's sharp reproofs; hoping perhaps, that Ahiah would be more compliant to his inclinations. (Notes, 22:13-16.)—The fate of Eli's sons, and the total defeat of Israel, when presumptuous measures of the same kind were resorted to, should have convinced him that this confidence of the favour of God was foolish and delusory. (Notes, 4:3-11.)

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref.) The hand of God was very visible, in restraining the very numerous army of the Philistines from assaulting the small company of the Israelites: (13:5.) so that they generally kept themselves entrenched in a fortified camp, in an almost inaccessible situation, as still fearing their enfeebled enemies.

V. 6-10. The faith of Jonathan was doubtless in general very strong, and his armour-bearer was a man of the same spirit as himself: but the thought of thus attacking this immense army was doubtless suggested to Jonathan's mind immediately from God, and his faith and expectation increased in proportion. He was enabled, with reference to his own conduct, to view the almighty power of God, as sufficient for his safeguard in the midst of the Philistines; and also to save Israel by him and his armour-bearer, as well as by the most numerous and powerful army. (Deut. 32:30, 31. Notes, Judg. 3:31. 15:14-17. Is. 30:15-17.)—Considering the Israelites as the covenant people of God, who were oppressed by the uncircumcised Philistines; he expected that the Lord would appear for them in the same wonderful manner, as he had done for their fathers in former times. (Note, 17:27, 26.) But, for fuller satisfaction in this matter, he and his armour-bearer agreed upon a token, according to which their proceedings

10 But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and *this shall be a sign unto us.*

11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes, where they had hid themselves.

12 And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, *“Come up to us, and we will show you a thing.”* And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, *“Come up after me, for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.”*

13 And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they *“fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.”*

14 And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were *“an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plough.”*

15 And *“there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled; and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling.”*

16 ¶ And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked: and behold the multitude *“melted away, and they went on beating down one another.”*

17 Then said Saul unto the people that *“were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us.”* And when they had numbered, behold Jonathan and his armour-bearer *“were not there.”*

18 And Saul said unto Ahiah, *“Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was at that time with the children of Israel.”*

19 And it came to pass, while Saul talked unto the priest, that the *“noise that was in the host of the Philistines went on and increased; and Saul said unto the priest, “Withdraw thine hand.”*

20 And Saul and all the people that *“were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and behold every man’s sword was*

against his fellow, *and there was a very great discomfiture.*

21 Moreover, *“the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp, from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.”*

22 Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, *“when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle.”*

23 So *“the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Beth-even.”*

[Practical Observations.]

24 ¶ And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, *“Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.”*

25 And *“all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.”*

26 And when the people were come into the wood, behold the honey dropped: but no man put his hand to his mouth; for *“the people feared the oath.”*

27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that *“was in his hand, and dipped it in an honey-comb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.”*

28 Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, *“Cursed be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint.”*

29 Then said Jonathan, *“My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.”*

30 How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to-day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for *“had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?”*

31 And they smote the Philistines that day from Michmash to Ajalon: and the people were very faint.

n 10:7. Ia. 7:11-14. c 22. 13:6. Judg. 6:2. p 10. 17:19,44. 2 Sam. 2:14-17. 2 Kings 14:8. q Gen. 24:26,27,42,48. Judg. 4:14. 7:15. 2 Sam. 5:24. r Ps. 18:29. Heb. 11:34. s Lev. 26:7,8. Tent. 28:7. 32:30. Josh. 23:10. Rom. 8:31. ¶ Or, half a furrow of an acre. t Josh. 2:9. Judg. 7:21. 2 Kings 7:6,7. Job 18:11. Ps. 14:5. u 13:17,23. x Ex. 19:18. Matt. 24:7. 27:50,51. † Heb. trembling of God. Gen. 35:5. Lev. 26:36,37. 2 Sam. 5:24. Dan. 5:6. ‡ Ps. 58:7. 68:2. 220. Judg. 7:22. 2 Chr. 30:22-25. Is. 19:2. a 4:3-5. 30:8. Num. 27:21. Judg. 20:18,23,27,28. 2 Sam. 11:11. 15:24-28. b 5:2. 7:1. † Or,

tumult. c 24. 13:11. Josh. 9:14. Ps. 105:13. Is. 23:18. e Heb. were cried together. d 16. Judg. 7:22. Is. 9:19-21. e 29:4. Judg. 7:23. f 13:6. 31:7. g Ex. 14:30. Judg. 9:18. 2 Kings 11:37. Ps. 44:6-8. Hos. 1:7. h 13:5. 127-30. Lev. 27:29. Num. 21:2. Deut. 27:15-26. Josh. 6:17-19,26. Jude. 11:30,31. 21. i-5. Prov. 11:9. Rom. 10:2. 1 Cor. 16:22. k Judg. 5:2. 16:2. Ps. 18:47. 119:28. Matt. 3:5. m Ex. 3:8. Num. 13:27. Matt. 3:4. n Ec. 9:2. o 28. 30:12. p See on 24:43. ¶ Or, weary. q 1 Kings 18:18. r Ec. 9:18. s Josh. 10:12. 12:19,42.

were to be determined: if warned by the Philistines to wait till they were attacked, they would consider it as a divine monition, to act only upon the defensive; but if they called to them to come up, they would take it as a signal to climb the steep rock and attack them. (Notes, Gen. 24:11-14. Judg. 7:13-15.)—Such extraordinary attempts and triumphs of faith, directed by immediate divine monition, are recorded for our admiration, and our encouragement in more ordinary services; and not for our imitation.

V. 11-15. It is probable, that Jonathan and his armour-bearer left the camp of Saul, unobserved, during the night; (3) and that early in the morning, they placed themselves in the view of the Philistines, who in contempt challenged them to “come up, and they would show them a thing,” meaning that they would cause them to repent of their audacity. This being the expected token from God, Jonathan assured his armour-bearer, that the Lord would deliver the Philistines by their means into the hands of Israel. Thus they both, without hesitation, climbed up the rock into the enemy’s camp, apparently rushing into the jaws of destruction. “Not in the view of the Philistines, but by some difficult way, which none was ever known to go. And so perhaps they came behind them and surprised them.” *Bp. Patrick.* This might be the case; but the sacred historian does not mention it. However, by the immediate interposition of God, the Philistines were so confounded at the daring assault, that they fell down before Jonathan, and were killed by his armour-bearer: till twenty were slain in a small space, as it seems, without attempting either to fight or to flee. Upon which the whole army was seized with trembling and consternation; and an earthquake which took place at the same moment, increased their terror: so that it was “a trembling of God,” (*marg.*) the whole being, not only very great, but altogether miraculous. In consequence of this terror, they supposed the Israelites to be in the midst of the camp, and began to kill one another in every part of it. The army being constituted, as it is supposed, of different nations; (20. Note, 13:5.) the confusion might excite mutual

jealousies and suspicions, which proved the occasion of their common destruction. (Notes, Judg. 7:16-22. 1 Kings 20:14-21. 2 Chr. 14:9-15. 20:20-25.)

V. 16-22. This confusion in the camp of the Philistines being observed by the sentinels of Saul’s army; and it being found on inquiry that none were absent from the camp of Israel, but Jonathan and his armour-bearer: the people were no doubt greatly astonished: and Saul prepared to consult the Lord, whether he ought to attack the Philistines or no. His impatient spirit, however, could no more wait for Ahiah’s answer, than for Samuel’s arrival: (Note, 13:8,9.) and perceiving the commotion still increasing, he hastily determined to march against the enemy; though he might justly have questioned whether the Lord, who had begun the work without him, would accept of his assistance. At least there could be no need of such haste. (Note, 30:7-10.) It pleased the Lord indeed to employ Saul’s army, as well as the deserters and fugitives, who joined in crushing the Philistines: (Note, Judg. 7:23-25.) yet Saul himself met with a very humiliating proof, that the divine interposition was not vouchsafed on his account. (Notes, 30-46.)—Probably the ark of the covenant was brought into the field on this occasion. Yet some think, that the coffer, or chest, in which the ephod and breast-plate were kept, is meant. (Notes, 44:5. 2 Sam. 11:10,11.)

V. 23. *The battle passed, &c.* “The fight continued till they came to this place, which lay westward from Michmash;” (and nearer to Philistia: “and there the Philistines threw down their arms, and fled as fast as they could towards their own country.” *Bp. Patrick.*—Thus the Israelites would at once be supplied with arms in abundance. (Note, 13:22.)

V. 24-34. “The people were distressed,” when they should have been full of joy and triumph. The absolute prohibition of all food to the soldiers, for the whole day, was very impolitic; though Saul might properly have cautioned them not to waste their time about food, on penalty of his displeasure. But to accompany this prohibition with that awful curse, by which the enemies of God were devoted to utter

32 And the people 'flew upon the spoil, and took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew *them* on the ground: and the people 'did eat *them* with the blood.

33 Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have 'transgressed: roll a great stone unto me this day.

34 And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay *them* here, and eat; and sin not against the Lord in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox 'with him that night, and slew *them* there.

35 And Saul 'built an altar unto the Lord: 'the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.

36 ¶ And Saul said, 'Let us go down after the Philistines by night, and spoil them until the morning-light, and 'let us not leave a man of them. And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee. Then 'said the priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.

37 And Saul asked counsel of God, 'Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But 'he answered him not that day.

38 And Saul said, 'Draw ye near hither all the 'chief of the people; and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day

39 For as 'the Lord liveth, which saveth Is-

rael, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But *there* was not a man among all the people *that* answered him.

40 Then said he unto all Israel, Be ye on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side. And the people said unto Saul, 'Do what seemeth good unto thee.

41 Therefore Saul said unto the Lord God of Israel, 'Give a perfect lot. 'And Saul and Jonathan were taken: but the people 'escaped.

42 And Saul said, Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, 'Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, 'I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in mine hand, *and*, lo, I must die.

44 And Saul answered, 'God do so, and more also: for 'thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.

45 And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, 'who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: *as* the Lord liveth, 'there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for 'he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

46 Then Saul went up from following the Philistines: and the Philistines went to their own place.

47 ¶ So Saul 'took the kingdom over Israel, and 'fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, and against the children of 'Ammon,

15:19. u Gen. 9:4. Lev. 3:17. 7:26, 27. 17:10-14. 19:26. Deut. 12:16, 23, 24. Acts 15:20, 23. Or, *dealt treacherously*. Matt. 7:5. Rom. 2:1. 'Heb. *in his hand*. 7:9, 17. Judg. 21:4. Hos. 8:14. 2 Tim. 3:5. 'Heb. *that after he began to build*. x Josh. 10:9-14, 19. Jer. 6:5. y 11:11. Josh. 11:14. z Num. 27:21. Ps. 73:23. Is. 48:1, 2. 59:2. Mal. 2:7. Jam. 4:8. a 23:4, 9-12. 30:7, 8. Judg. 1:1. 20:18, 22. 2 Sam. 5:19, 23. 1 Kings 22:5, 6, 16. b 28:6. Ez. 14:2-5. 20:3. c 10:19, 20. Josh. 7:14. 'd Heb. *conspire*. 25:17. Judg. 20:2. 2 Sam. 18:3. Ps. 47:9. Zech. 10:4. Matt. 21:42. Eph. 2:20. e 24:44. 15:2. 20:

destruction, was profane and rash in the extreme, (*Marg. Ref. i. Note, Lev. 27:28, 29.*) and it was the more inexcusable, in that he did not say, 'that the Lord may avenge Israel on his enemies,' but 'that I may be avenged on mine enemies.'—The people, fearing the curse, abstained, not only from the spoil of the Philistines, but likewise from the honey which was abundantly laid in their way, and with which they might have refreshed themselves without loss of time, and thus have been enabled to make a much greater slaughter of the Philistines: and in the evening, being almost fainting with labour and hunger, some were induced hastily to kill the cattle which they had taken, and to eat the flesh with the blood, directly contrary to the law; until they were restrained by Saul's authority. As Saul's precaution could do nothing to prevent the people eating the flesh raw, or only half roasted, as some explain it; "eating with the blood," must refer to the manner of slaughtering the cattle, without properly separating the blood. (*Marg. Ref. u.*) In the mean while, Jonathan, being ignorant of the curse, and almost ready to faint with fatigue, had eaten a little honey, by which he was sensibly and visibly revived; so that his eyes, which had been dim and languishing, were enlightened and looked lively. He, however, thus found himself caught in a snare, and exposed to the most imminent danger of being put to death. He had therefore reason to complain, that his "father had troubled the land," (*Notes, 1 Kings 18:17-20.*) as his conduct in every way obstructed the complete success of Israel.

V. 35. It is probable that Saul converted the great stone, on which the cattle had been slaughtered, into an altar on which sacrifices were offered, before the people attempted to proceed any further.—He built this his first altar, when disregarding Samuel, he had begun to apostatize from God. (*Notes, Num. 23:1, 2. 2 Kings 18:22. Hos. 8:13, 14.*)

V. 36-44. When the people had refreshed themselves, Saul proposed to them to pursue the army of the Philistines, in order to destroy it entirely; to which they readily consented. But Abiah, having been before interrupted by Saul's impatience, very properly counselled them to inquire of the Lord; and when no answer was returned, Saul justly concluded that the Lord was offended, and desired to discover the cause. (*Marg. Ref. x-b.*) But if he had been humbly sensible of the evil of his own past conduct, he would have concluded himself to be the culprit. (*Notes, 28:6. Ez. 14:1-3.*) The Lord, however, was pleased, that the conduct of Jonathan, who had unwarily exposed himself to the curse denounced by his father, should be discovered, as the cause why he did not answer the high-priest's inquiries: that the people might understand how much they were interested in the conduct of their king; and be convinced of their folly 'n rejecting the government of a pious prophet whose prayers brought down blessings, for that of a king whose curses brought down wrath upon them. (*Notes 7:8.*) In the same rash and profane spirit as in the former instance, Saul, before the lots were cast, swore by the Lord, that even if Jonathan were the

offender, he should surely die; without knowing whether the crime committed deserved death, or whether it might not be expiated by a sin-offering. And after the lots had been cast, (with prayer, as probably was the constant practice,) and Jonathan was taken; Saul with affected sternness, without any humiliation for his own sin in thus rashly troubling Israel; as one who appeared zealous for the glory of God, and the obligation of an oath, while in reality tenacious of his own will and authority; and with execrations on himself, proceeded to denounce the sentence of death upon his own pious son! (*Notes 15:15. Gen. 38:24-26. 2 Sam. 12:26-31.*)

Give a perfect lot. (41) "Show the innocent." (*Marg. V. 45, 46.*) The people judged rightly, that the guilt was contracted by Saul, and that the rebuke was intended for him, and not for Jonathan; and therefore they rescued him, by whom God had given them this extraordinary deliverance, from the hands of his severe father. Saul could not but desire the life of his son: yet considering him as decidedly preferred before himself, both by the Lord and by Israel; knowing that Jonathan's deliverance was a severe reproof of his rashness; and perhaps apprehending as he had abundant cause to do, that his repeated curses would light on his own head; he returned home apparently dissatisfied and displeased. (*Notes, 1 Kings 20:38-43.*) Thus the opportunity of completing the destruction of the Philistines was lost; nor could it be expected, that an expedition, which was begun and conducted so very ill, should terminate without some evident tokens of the divine displeasure against Saul; though the Lord's love to Israel was displayed in an unparalleled manner, by means of the faith and courage of his pious son Jonathan.—Through Saul's misconduct, and as if in answer to his imprecations, Jonathan was excluded from the kingdom, and slain with him by the Philistines, when "the Lord did unto him," as he intended to do to his son, "and more also;" having indeed devoted him to utter destruction. (44. *Notes, 31:2-6.*)

V. 47-52. After the decided victory gained over the Philistines, Saul's authority as king of Israel was re-established: and though the Lord was displeased with him, and purposed to set aside his family; yet he prospered him in the wars which he carried on against the several nations which oppressed Israel.—It is evident that many important transactions of his reign are passed over in silence; and that in general it was more active and successful, (in the former part of it especially,) than it appears at first sight to have been. But, to the end of his life, Saul was unable to prevail against the Philistines, having missed the opportunity which 'God had afforded him; so that, after having had sore war with him all his days, the three sons here mentioned fell at last by their hands, and he was driven to murder himself. (*Marg. Ref.*) Saul seems to have had only one wife, and Rizpah his concubine. (2 Sam. 21:8-10.)

The sons of Saul. (49) Jonathan, Ishui, (called Abinadab, 31:2.) and Melchi-shua, the sons of Saul, 'were... fit to accompany him in his wars, and up to this account are only

and against Edon, and against the kings of ²Zobah, and against the Philistines, and whithersoever he turned himself he vexed *them*.

48 And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, and Ishui, and Melchi-shua: and the names of his two daughters were these; the name of the first-born Merab, and the name of the younger Michal:

50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz; and the name of the captain of his host was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle.

51 And Kish was the father of Saul; and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

52 And there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul: and when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him.

CHAPTER XV.

Saul is sent to destroy Amalek, 1-3. He gathers a large army, favours the Kenites, and smites the Amalekites, 4-7. He spares Agag and the best of the spoil, 8, 9. Samuel is sent to declare unto him, that God has rejected him for his disobedience; and Saul in vain attempts to excuse himself, 10-21. He is convicted of rebellion; and partially humbles himself, but cannot get the sentence reversed, 22-31. Samuel kills Agag, and finally leaves Saul, 32-35.

SAMUEL also said unto Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people,

r 2 Sam. 10:6. 1 Kings 11:23. * Or, wrought mightily. s 15:3-7. Ex. 17:14. Deut. 25:10. 13:2. 1 Chr. 8:33. 9:39. + 18:17-21. 25:44. 2 Sam. 9:13-16. 20-22. x 17:52. 2 Sam. 28: 3:27. + Heb. *Almer*. y 9:1. z 8:1. + 17:18. 9:16. 10:1. h 16. 12:14. 13:13. 2 Sam. 22:3. 3. 1 Chr. 12:12, 13. Ps. 2:10, 11. c Jer. 31:34. Hos. 7:2. Am. 9:7. d Ex. 17:8-16. Num. 24:20. Deut. 25:17, 10. e Lev. 27:28, 29. Deut. 13:15, 16. 20:16-18. Josh. 6:17-21. f Ex. 20:5. Num. 31:17. Is. 14:21, 22. g Gen. 3:17, 18. Rom. 8:20-22. h Josh. 15:24.

mentioned here; . . . though he had another son (Ish-bosheth) who is mentioned 1 Chr. 8:33, under the name of Eth-baal.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-23. The same principle, as induces men to seek relief from the accusations of conscience, by abounding in the externals of religion, will lead them to seek refuge from the warnings and reproofs of faithful ministers, by paying court to others, who, either out of mistake, timidity, or unfaithfulness, give them less disturbance in sin: but God will show a marked disapprobation of such attendance on his own ordinances, or profession of his truths, as is intended to quiet the conscience, or support the credit of sinners, who persist in disobeying the plain precepts of his holy word.—Hypocrites often detect their indifference, even about the Religion which they professedly choose; for as it has no practical energy upon them, a small matter induces them to dispense with the useless form.—No warnings nor examples are sufficient to convince men of the folly and danger of trusting in the forms of godliness, while they neglect the power of it; but from age to age multitudes proceed in the same destructive path. (*Note*, 2 Tim. 3:1-5.) Yet, blessed be God, every age also produces illustrious instances of those, who being strong in faith give glory to God; and its triumphs are proportioned to its strength.—While we are obeying the commands of God, trusting his protection, and seeking his glory, neither the sense of our own weakness, nor the power of our enemies should dismay us: "for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few." We are not indeed warranted at present to expect *miraculous* interpositions; yet the feeblest instrument, who sincerely and in faith uses the appointed means, in order to subvert Satan's kingdom of ignorance, error, and wickedness, is authorised to expect considerable success; for "it may be that the LORD will work with him;" and then the weapons of his warfare will prove mighty, and no force of the enemies of our God and his Christ can stand before him. (*Notes*, 1 Cor. 1:20-25. 2 Cor. 4:7, 10:1-6.) At his frown the mightiest armies melt away, or prove instruments of each other's destruction: what then will be the consternation and horror, when the whole world shall be assembled before his tribunal, and the wicked shall be cast into hell, and all the nations that forgot God!

V. 24-52. In the midst of the most glorious success, "one sinner" often "destroyeth much good;" and rash zeal is as hurtful as timid inaction. It indeed becomes an Israelite to be superior to the cravings of his appetites; but there is neither prudence nor piety in restraining men from partaking of the bounty of Providence, when placed honestly within their reach; and when it is so used as to prepare them for his service, and encourage rather than hinder them in it. They are indeed "troublers of Israel," who prohibit such use of those good things which "God giveth us richly to enjoy;" the curses, with which they sanction their antichristian mandates, will fall on their own heads; and they will be answerable for all the consequences: for restraints from things lawful generally prove temptations to forbidden indulgences, and a superstitious zeal about externals has often hindered men from

over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way when he came up from Egypt.

3 Now go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and laid wait in the valley.

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for mye showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of

*Tlem. 1:11, 8. 13:15. * Or, fought. k 27:10. Num. 24:21, 22. Judg. 1:16. 4:11. 5:24. 1 Chr. 2:35. 1 Gen. 18:25. 19:12-16. Num. 16:26, 27, 34. Prov. 9:8. Acta 2:40. 2 Cor. 6:17. Rev. 18:4. m Ex. 18:9, 10, 19. Num. 10:29-32. n 14:48. Job 21:30. Ec. 8:13. o Gen. 2:11. 25:18. p 27:8. Gen. 16:7. q 8. Num. 24:7. 1 Kings 10:24-42. Esth. 8:4. r 27:8. 30:1. Josh. 10:39. 11:12. s 3:15, 19. Josh. 7:21.*

performing essential services to the church. (*Note*, 1 Tim. 4:1-5.)—When rulers, by authority, would withhold men from transgression, while they set them an example of disobedience to God, they cannot reasonably expect success.—We are too much in haste in our most important employments, if we do not allow ourselves time to consult the Lord and seek his blessing; and ministers should plainly remind those, who are running into this common mistake.—When our prayers are not answered, we may safely conclude that iniquity withholds good from us, and we should make diligent search for it; but we should always first suspect and examine ourselves; whereas an unhumbed heart suspects every other person, and looks every where but to himself, for the sinful cause of calamity!—Those who are indulgent to their own sins, are generally severe in animadverting on the faults of others: and such as most disregard God's authority, are most impatient when their own commands appear to be slighted, or their reputation eclipsed; and by severity against minute deviations, real or supposed, they frequently endeavour to varnish over their own enormous transgressions.—Those who delight in cursing, are in extreme danger of falling under the awful curse of God: (*Note*, Ps. 109:6-20.) and the habit of swearing will certainly involve a man in the guilt of perjury, as well as of profaneness; for though now concealed, his iniquity will be "sure to find him out."—No oath can bind us to commit injustice: but the rash swearer should repent of his iniquity, and add one crime to another; and all men should join to rescue the innocent from punishment.—In this world, if they who have "wrought with God," and have been remarkably useful to his people, escape persecution and death as their recompense; they are more favoured than those who have gone before them; and need not expect much advantage to themselves from their usefulness, till they get to heaven.—In the midst of mercy the Lord will rebuke his people for their sins: and by mismanagement men lose the comfort of their successes, and are discontented, and filled with vexation, in the midst of blessings.—But the Lord employs even wicked men as instruments of providential good to his people: in temporal prosperity they forget their sins and the threatened wrath of God: and thus they blaze for a moment like a meteor, and then are put out in utter darkness. O Lord, let us rather be chastened here than thus prosper and be condemned with the world!

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1-3. It is probable, that for some years Saul scarcely took any notice of Samuel, in his wars and successes; perhaps resenting the sharp rebuke which he had before given him: and Samuel did not intrude himself. But now, he was sent to Saul with an express command, to go and utterly destroy the Amalekites. (14:48.) In delivering his message the prophet reminded him, that he had been commissioned by the Lord to anoint him king, and that now he spake by the same authority: he seemed also to intimate, that unless Saul "hearkened to the voice of the words of the LORD," he should be authorized to denounce the sentence of rejection against him; and he gave him his instructions in the most explicit and particular manner. The Amalekites had long before been condemned; (*Notes*, Ex. 17:8-

*the fatlings, and the lambs, and all *that was* good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing *that was* vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

10 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I

will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

[Practical Observations.]

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,

* Or, the second sort. 2 Sam. 6:13. † 15. Gen. 6:6. 2 Sam. 24:16. Ps. 110:4. Jer. 18:7-10. Am. 7:3. Jon. 3:10. 4:2. a Josh. 22:16. 1 Kings 9:6. Ps. 36:3. Jer. 74:1-7. 125:5. Zeph. 1:6. Matt. 24:13. Heb. 10:38. x 3:9. 13:13. y 35. 16:1. Ps. 119:136. Jer. 9:17. 18: 13:17. Luke 19:41-44. Rom. 9:1-3. z 12:23. Ps. 109:4. Matt. 5:44. Luke 6:12. a 25:2. Josh. 13:55. b 7:12. Josh. 4:8-9. 2 Sam. 18:18. c 3:13. Gen. 14:19. Judg. 17:2. Ruth. 3:10. d 9:11. Prov. 27:2. 31:31. Luke 17:10. 18:11. e Ps. 36:2. 50:16-21. Jer. 2:18. 19:22. 23:34-37. Mal. 3:13-15. Luke 19:22. Rom. 3:19. 1 Cor. 4:5. f 9:21. Gen. 3:12-13. Ex. 32:22, 23. Job 31:33. Prov. 25:13. g Matt. 2:8. Luke 10:29. h 9:27. 12:7. 1 Kings 22:16. 19:21. 10:22. Judg. 6:15. Hos. 13:1. Matt. 18:4. j 1-3. 10:1. k Gen. 13:

18. Deut. 25:17-19.) but the nation had been spared, till it had filled up the measure of its iniquities.—The righteous Lord certainly did no injustice to individuals; and the example was of a salutary tendency, to deter others in future ages from “meddling to their hurt” with the servants of the living God. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Num. 31:2. Josh. 6:21.)

V. 4. The large army, which was collected when Samuel directed the enterprise, shows that the people had much more confidence in their rejected prophet, than in the king whom they had so inordinately desired. (13:5-15.) The disproportionate number of Judah, might perhaps be the effect of their dissatisfaction with a king of another tribe.—The armies of Israel at that time had no cavalry.

V. 6. Marg. Ref. Notes, Num. 10:29-32. Judg. 1:16. 4:11.

V. 7. The region occupied by the Amalekites, lay between Havilah on the north-east, and Shur on the south-west: and Saul carried his victorious arms through the whole extent of this district. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8, 9. The Lord had devoted all the Amalekites, together with their substance, to utter destruction, as a solemn sacrifice to his justice; and the commandment given to Saul, concerning the execution of this sentence, was express and particular; (3) and probably intended as a test of his disposition to obey or disobey God. (Notes, 13:13-15. Deut. 7:25, 26. Josh. 6:17-19. 7:1, 10-26.)—But, while neither he nor his soldiers were induced to mitigate the severity of the injunction, by sparing any of the women or children; he, perhaps in condescension to royalty, or to grace his victory, spared the king of Amalek; (Notes, 1 Kings 20:28-43.) and the people, doubtless by his concurrence, covetously reserved the best of the cattle and substance, destroying only the refuse which was of little value. Saul's conduct was evidently the effect of a proud rebellious spirit.—Many Amalekites escaped at this time, probably without his fault; and we read of them afterwards as a numerous people. (Notes, 27:8-12. 30:1-3.)

V. 11. (Note, Gen. 6:6, 7.) The Lord's change of conduct towards Saul was similar to that change in our conduct, which springs from repentance; though by means of all he accomplished his own wise and righteous purposes.—Samuel had been soon reconciled to the people's rejection of him and his family, and had cheerfully anointed Saul: (Notes, 8:—10:) and from his first actions he had framed a favourable opinion of him. When he therefore was rejected, Samuel was exceedingly grieved; and he interceded all night for the reversal of the sentence. (Notes, Jer. 13:15-17. 18:19, 20. Luke 19: 41-44. Rom. 9:1-3.)

V. 12. Set him up a place.] Probably this was a trophy, or monument of the victory. The whole implies, that Saul took great state upon himself, and was not a little elated with his success. (Note, 2 Sam. 18:17, 18.)

V. 13, 14. Perhaps Saul was in some degree conscious of having done wrong; and he therefore addressed Samuel in this respectful language, in order to conciliate his good will, and to ward off the rebuke which he feared. Some however think he was so insensible of having committed any fault, that

he was disposed to boast of his obedience, and expected to be congratulated and commended by the prophet. But Samuel's answer showed him at once that the very herds and flocks, which were driven along with him, fully convicted him of inexcusable disobedience. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15. It is not probable, that either Saul or the people had fully purposed to sacrifice all the cattle which they had reserved: but even in that case, they opposed their own will and wisdom to the express command of God; and no doubt they intended to save their own cattle by means of them.—Saul took the merit of his obedience to himself; but he threw the blame of the disobedience on the people. Yet had he exerted his authority, with as much decision, in support of God's command, as he had done before in enforcing his own prohibition; and had he been as determined in the execution of Agag, as he was disposed to be in putting his son to death; it is not likely that any opposition would have been made to his orders. (Note, 14:36-44.)

V. 16-18. Marg. Ref. A journey. (18) The expedition had been so prosperous, that it was more like a safe and easy journey, than a laborious and perilous warfare.

V. 19. Fly, &c.] With great greediness, as a hungry bird or beast upon his prey? Ep. Patrick.

V. 20, 21. Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 3:12, 13. Ex. 32:21-24. Luke 10:25-29.

V. 22. Submission to the authority of God, must be essential to true religion under every dispensation: but there is a great difference between the submission of a holy, and that of a sinful creature. External obedience, even to moral precepts, is good in the sight of God, only when it springs from a willing submission of the soul to the divine authority. To profess a belief of the gospel is good, only when it arises from submission to the divine teaching, to the justice of the condemnation under which sinners are concluded, and to the wisdom, suitableness, and grace of the method of salvation there revealed. All instituted worship derives its obligation from the express appointment of God, from the honour which it renders to his name, from the disposition of the worshipper, and from the grace and spiritual blessings which are communicated by it. Sacrifices especially declared the desert of the offender, and typified the sufferings of the Saviour; their value resulted entirely from the appointment of God; and they were not acceptable, except offered in obedience to him, and with a penitent, believing, and pious mind. (Note, Jer. 7:21-23.) When therefore they were substituted in the place of true piety, or trusted in as meritorious; when the means were used to compensate for the neglect of the end, and the sign was exalted into the place of the thing signified; they became an abomination, however costly and numerous they were.—Had Saul offered thousands of bullocks and rams, not of the spoils of Amalek, but from his own herds and flocks, exactly according to the divine ritual, in an impenitent and self-confident disposition, God would have abhorred them: how much more then, when the animals to be sacrificed were spared, in direct disobedience to his express command!—Samuel did not therefore mean to exalt one part of external religion by depreciating an-

and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry: because 'thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, 'I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and 'hy words; because 'I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, 'pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, 'I will not return with thee: for 'thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, 'The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and 'hath given it to 'a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

29 And also 'the 'Strength of Israel 'will not

† 2:30, 13:14, 16:1. 2 Kings 17:15–20. 1 Chr. 28:9. u 30. Ex. 9:27. 10:16. Num. 22:34. 2 Sam. 12:13. Matt. 27:4. x 9:15. 18:23. 2 J. 31. 34. Ps. 30. 55. Is. 51:12, 13. Luke 22:20–25. Rev. 21:8. y 2:29. Gen. 3:14, 17. Jer. 8:7–5. Ex. 10:17. z 31. Gen. 42:38. 43:11–14. Luke 24:28, 29. b Se on 22. 13:14. 16:1. Jer. 6:19. Hos. 4:6. c 25:17, 18. 1 Kings 11:30, 31. d 2:7, 8. Jer. 27:5, 6. Dan. 4:17, 32. John 19:11. Rom. 13:1. e 13:14. 16:12. Acts 13:22. f Ps. 29:11. 68:35. Is. 45:24. Joel 3:16. 2 Cor. 12:9, 10. Phil. 4:13. *Or, eternity, or, victory.

other, as many seem to suppose; but to show that a right state of the heart is essential to the acceptable performance of every service. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ps. 50:7–15. Prov. 15:8, 9. Is. 1:10–15. Am. 5:21–24.*)

V. 23. The heinousness of any sin is not to be judged of, by the magnitude of the object about which it is committed, or the grossness of the outward action: but from the deliberate and determined disobedience of the will, whence it arises. (*Note, Gen. 3:4.*) When the Lord expressly says, 'Thou shalt,' and his rational creature dares to persist in saying, 'I will not,' whether the contest be about an apple or a kingdom, it is stubbornness and rebellion, a contempt of the commandment of God, and a daring insult to his majesty and authority; and has in it all the essential malignity, which constitutes idolatry or witchcraft, or crimes punishable by death according to the divine law. Therefore Saul for this rebellion was condemned to lose his kingdom. (*Note, 13:13–15.*)

Witchcraft. Probably Saul had before this shown much zeal against those who practised witchcraft; (*Note, 28:3.*) and this circumstance would add poignancy to Samuel's reproof.

V. 24, 25. Saul could no longer deny his offence, or entirely excuse it; and therefore he confessed it, yet in such a manner as detected an unhumiliated heart. He persisted in transferring the blame to the people; 'for he feared them, and obeyed their voice.' yet he was not so timid, or obedient to them, when his own interest or authority were concerned. (*Notes, Ex. 32:21–24. Matt. 14:8–11.*) He seems to have been more disquieted because Samuel was offended, than because the Lord was angry with him; and he entreated Samuel to pardon his sin, as if he had possessed authority to reverse the sentence which God had denounced. (*23. Note, Ex. 10:16, 17.*)

V. 26–28. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 28:12–19.*) It does not appear that Saul had any real attachment to Samuel; but he doubtless respected his character; and, aware of his influence with the people, he perhaps feared, lest departing in displeasure, and anointing another king, he should stir up the people to revolt, and thus immediately execute the sentence against him. He therefore earnestly opposed his departure; and, by rending Samuel's mantle, afforded a significant token of the kingdom being rent from him, and given to a more worthy person. (*Notes, 1 Kings 11:9–13, 29–31.*)

V. 29. *The Strength of Israel.* Or, 'The victory of Israel.' (*Marg.*) Saul took the honour of the victory and of Israel's protection to himself, and raised a trophy of it (12): but Samuel seems to have indirectly rebuked his vanity, and reminded him that the eternal God, was indeed 'Israel's Strength and Victory.'—'The LORD repented of having set up Saul to be king;' (*Note, 11.*) for not having confirmed his promise of the kingdom to him by an oath, an opening was left for the change of measures intended by this expression. But Saul had now provoked him to pass sentence against him, and as with a solemn oath to declare that it was irrevocable. In that case God is never said to repent; nay, it is spoken of as an impossibility that he should. (*Notes, Num. 14:27–30. Ps. 95:9–11. 110:4. Heb. 3:14–19. 6:13–20. 7:20–22.*)

V. 30, 31. When Saul ought to have publicly confessed his sin, and taken shame to himself; he was very solicitous, that Samuel should honour him before the elders and people, probably for fear of an insurrection. (*Note, Ps. 51: title.*) Perhaps he also thought that God would accept his worship, if Samuel was present, but not otherwise.—Samuel however, perhaps by divine direction, changed his mind and delayed

lie, nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.

30 Then he said, I have sinned; yet 'honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again for Saul, and Saul worshipped the LORD.

32 ¶ Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag, the king of the Amalekites: and Agag came unto him delicately. And 'Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

33 And Samuel said, 'As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel 'hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to 'Gibeah of Saul.

35 And 'Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; nevertheless, 'Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD 'repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Dent. 33:27. g Num. 14:28, 29. 23:19. Ps. 95:11. Ex. 24:14. 2 Tim. 2:13. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:18. h Hab. 2:4. John 5:44. 12:43. 1 J. 29:13. Luke 18:9–14. 2 Tim. 3:5. k Jer. 48:44. 1 Thes. 5:3. Rev. 18:7. 1 Gen. 9:6. Judg. 1:7. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. Rev. 16:6. 18:6. m Num. 25:7, 8. 1 Kings 18:49. Is. 34:6. Jer. 48:10. n 14:4. o 19:24. p 11. 15:1. Ps. 119:136, 158. Jer. 9:1, 2. Rom. 9:2, 3. Phil. 3:18. q See on 11. Gen. 6:6.

his departure; that he might not occasion any disturbance among the people, and that he might execute the justice of God upon Agag. Thus he was present at Saul's worship, but it does not appear that he took any part in it.

V. 32, 33. Agag affected the stateliness and dignity of a monarch even in his degraded and perilous circumstances, as if he would over-awe the aged prophet: and he spake, either as one who deemed himself in no danger of death, seeing he had escaped the sword of a conquering king, and could have nothing to fear from Samuel; or, as having got over the fear of death, and as determined to meet it with intrepidity. He was indeed the chief person who ought to have been slain, both as the head of the devoted nation, and for his own cruelties; and therefore "Samuel hewed him to pieces before the LORD," as a sacrifice to his justice. (*Notes, Josh. 8:29. Judg. 8:18–21.*) Thus the prophet, who was of a lenient spirit, and prayed all night for Saul, did not hesitate to execute that sentence of God upon this condemned criminal, which Saul, who afterwards proved himself exceedingly cruel, had not done.

V. 34, 35. From this time, Samuel withdrew entirely from Saul, as one rejected by God; and though Saul once came to him, (19:23, 24.) he never went to Saul any more, yet he continued to mourn over him. (*Notes, 11. 16:1, 2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1–21. Those who have not learned to obey God, are not well qualified to rule over others, especially over the Lord's people.—The righteous vengeance of God may be long delayed; but it will certainly be executed, according to his most tremendous threatenings, upon all impenitent sinners; yet with the most marked severity upon the ringleaders in persecution, and on such as endeavour to hinder those who are setting out in the ways of piety.—When he calls us to our work, and his time is come, he will provide us helpers and give us success; but he will at the same time make trial of our spirits. We must not *avenge* ourselves without express command; but we may at any time *requite* the kindness of our benefactors: and those who do good to the worshippers and servants of God for his sake, treasure up blessings for their posterity.—It is dangerous to live among wicked people; and if we would not perish with them, we must keep separate from them, as far as consists with our various duties.—The pride of man's heart can admit the blasphemous idea of being *more merciful than God*, and of censuring the threatened punishment of sinners as too severe! while covetousness deems the "vile and refuse" good enough to be spent wholly in religion; (*Note, Mal. 1:12–14.*) and hypocrisy is detected by partiality in obedience, and paying more honour to wicked great men, than to the command of God.—Many go far in the external appearance of religion, who turn back from following the Lord, and are given up to be hardened, and to perish. Over such persons faithful ministers are often constrained to grieve. They must and will, however, deliver the message of God to them, though their hearts be pained by so doing; and if sinners knew their secret sorrow, and fervent and multiplied prayers for them, and considered that they speak no more than God has required them to say, they could hardly so much resent their most faithful reproofs.—When men are solicitous to publish and perpetuate the memory of their religious services, they show that they only sought human applause; and "verily they have their reward." (*Notes, Matt. 6:1–4. 23:5–7.*) and when they boast of their obedience, and by fair speeches would extort commendation from the servants of God, we may be sure their conduct will not endure a strict scrutiny.—Many observable circum-

CHAPTER XVI.

God sends Samuel to Beth-le'-em, to anoint a king out of Jesse's sons, and directs him to conceal his business as a sacrifice, 1-6. Seven of Jesse's sons pass by, and are not approved, 7-10. David is called from his flock, and anointed, 11-13. An evil spirit troubles Saul; who, counselled by his servants, sends for David, and is relieved by his music, 14-23.

AND the LORD said unto Samuel, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Samuel said, "How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, "I am come to sacrifice to the LORD;

3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice," and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth-lehem: and the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Comest thou peaceably?"

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD; sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sancti-

fied Jesse and his sons and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him.

7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by: and he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

15-11:35. h 13:13, 14. 15-23:26. Jer. 6:20. 14-11:12. 15:1. 1 John 5:16. c 9:16. 10:1. 2 Kings 9:1, 3, 5. d 13:14. Gen. 49:8-10. Ruth. 4:18-22. 1 Chr. 2:10-15. Ps. 78:68-71. 89:19, 20. Is. 11:1, 10. Acts 13:21, 22. Rom. 15:12. e Ex. 3:11. 1 Kings 18:9-14. Matt. 10:16. Luke 1:34. "Heb. in his hand, 9:12. f Jer. 38:26, 27. g 12:13. 2 Sam. 15:11. Matt. 22:4. h Ex. 4:15. Acts 9:6. i 19, 13. 9:16. j 21:1. 2 Sam. 6:9. 1 Kings 17:18. Hos. 6:5. 11:10. Luke 5:8. 8:27. k Heb. meeting. l 1 Kings 2:13. 2 Kings 2:22. 1 Chr. 12:17, 18. 1 Ex. 19:10, 14. 15. Lev. 20:7, 8. Num. 11:18. Josh. 3:5. 7:13. 2 Chr. 30:17-20. Job. 1:5. Ps. 26:

2-6. Joel 2:16. 1 Cor. 11:28. m 17:13, 28. 1 Chr. 2:13. 27:18. Elihu. n Judg. 8:18. o 9:2. 10:23, 34. 2 Sam. 14:25. Ps. 147:10, 11. Prov. 31:30. p Job. 10:4. Is. 55:8. Luke 16:15. 1 Pet. 2:4, 34. q John 7:24. 2 Cor. 10:7, 10. r Heb. eyes. r 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 16:9. Ps. 7:9. 139:2. Prov. 15:11. 16:2. Jer. 17:10. 17:10. 20:12. Acts 1:24. Heb. 4:13. Rev. 2:23. s 17:13. 1 Chr. 2:13. t 17:13. 2 Sam. 13:3. Shimea. 1 Chr. 2:13. Shimea. u 1 Chr. 2:13-15. x 17:12-15, 28. 2 Sam. 7:8. 1 Chr. 17:12. Ps. 78:70, 71. y Heb. round.

stances betray the hypocrisy of some confident professors of godliness. If indeed you are true disciples of Christ; what mean these evil tempers, this covetousness, this luxury and pride of life, this conformity to the world, this contempt and neglect of the poor? Was this the mind and life of Christ? Is this the scriptural character of a Christian? "The bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen," did not more fully detect Saul's disobedience, than things of this kind do the hypocrisy of numbers, who seem to be religious. But, by self-examination and circumspection, men should render it unnecessary for ministers to press home upon their consciences such convincing questions. The unhumiliated heart, however, will never be at a loss to excuse or palliate the most evident criminality; and it will always be necessary for preachers to drive sinners from their subtleties, to show them the malignity and aggravation of their offences, to silence their objections and excuses, and to urge conviction upon their hearts: though the convincing Spirit of God alone can render the means effectual. (Note, John 16:8-11.)

V. 22-35. In exercising the sacred ministry, nothing is of more importance, than an accurate knowledge of the relative and comparative value of the truths, precepts and ordinances of religion; about which hypocrites greatly mistake, and thus impose upon themselves. An obedient heart is essential to all religion; and, in a sinner, implies a ready obedience to the command given to all men to repent, an obedient reliance on the Saviour's merits; an obedient attendance on all instituted ordinances as means of grace; and a cheerful obedience to the commands of Christ, from love to his name, and a desire to adorn his gospel. The expression of this temper even in the most minute concerns, and with much infirmity and many mistakes, is accepted by a merciful God: but a proud, stubborn, rebellious will renders the most splendid services, and the most specious profession, abominable in his sight, and ranks them with the most atrocious crimes.—The impenitent sinner may be detected even in his confessions and the behaviour which accompanies them. He has always some reserve; he throws the blame off from himself; he shows an anxiety about the esteem of man, and a fear of temporal loss, shame, and suffering, more than of the future wrath of an offended God; and he attempts to quiet his conscience with external forms and a partial reformation. In vain do such men endeavour to prevail with the faithful ministers of Christ to countenance them. The more they attempt it, the more awful warnings will they receive of approaching ruin: and when the servants of God despair of doing them good, they will withdraw, and leave them to themselves, whatever be their rank in life, that they may interpret their silence and absence into a constant reproof.—The fear of men is no excuse for disobeying God; and moreover it is often a mere pretence; for many will plead it for neglecting self-denying duties, who dread no man's displeasure in gratifying their own passions!—When the sentence of final rejection is irreversibly denounced, repentance will be unavailing; and though our God is now ready to forgive, he will neither repent nor change his purposes of vengeance hereafter; for the "Strength of Israel" will be eternally engaged to punish his stoutest and proudest foes.—If those who were regarded when little in their own eyes, are elated by prosperity and forget the Lord, he will condemn them: and when one instrument is rejected, another more suitable shall

be sought out.—The mighty of the earth are so accustomed to flattery and distinction, that they can scarcely suppose any will dare to withhold it from them: but "with God there is no respect of persons;" and, while he requires his servants to honour those who are in authority, he teaches them to be of his judgment concerning comparative excellency. Neither dignity nor delicacy, nor vain confidence, gives sinners any security: "the bitterness of death" may meet them when and where they least expect it; but the bitterness of future misery is the most to be feared.—Our warfare indeed is of a different nature from Saul's: but if we spare one domineering lust, or profitable iniquity, we shall forfeit the promised kingdom with deep disgrace; as our sincerity must be approved by devoting every sin to utter destruction, by the power of God's grace, and for the glory of his name. For this, in all ages and nations, is the line of distinction between Samuel and Saul, between the Christian and the hypocrite; that the one levels his whole force against Agag, against that sinful propensity, which, by constitution and custom, has the greatest ascendancy, that he may hew it in pieces before the Lord; while the other is anxious to preserve his master-sin, however willing he may appear to mortify or refrain from those sins, to which he has been less addicted, and to which he feels less temptation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-3. It is probable, that the events recorded in this chapter happened some time after those before related; yet Samuel still continued to mourn for Saul: but at length God expostulated with him, and ordered him to go and anoint one to succeed Saul.—It may be supposed, that in the mean while Saul had become very suspicious and tyrannical, and enraged against Samuel. The question, therefore, which he proposed, might not result from unbelief, but from a desire of instruction, for the prudent management of the affair. (Notes, Judg. 13:8. Luke 1:34-38.) Accordingly, he was directed to go to Beth-lehem to sacrifice, as he probably did from time to time in many different places: (Notes, 7:9, 17. 9:12-14.) and the answer, which he was instructed to return, was the truth; nor was he bound to divulge all his intentions. (Note, Jer. 38:24-28.)

V. 4. It is probable, that these elders were conscious of iniquity committed among them, and feared lest Samuel was sent to denounce the wrath of God upon them. (Marg. Ref. i. Note, Matt. 8:33, 34.) Some however think that they feared the anger of Saul, in case they entertained Samuel. (Notes, 21:2. 22:13-19.)

V. 5. He sanctified, &c.] Samuel instructed Jesse and his sons in the nature of the sacred ordinance, and, by his counsels and prayers, assisted them in preparing to attend on it acceptably and profitably. (Notes, Ex. 19:10-15. Josh. 6:5. Job 1:5.)

V. 6, 7. Samuel had, it is probable, informed none except Jesse of his principal object in coming to Beth-lehem; and he and Jesse alone were present, while the sons of Jesse, one after another, passed before them.—It is evident, that the Lord revealed himself to Samuel, on this and other occasions, by direct and immediate suggestion.—Samuel did not yet fully understand, that the Lord in anger gave Israel their first king, after "their own heart;" but that he now intended in mercy to give them one after "his own heart," being chiefly remarkable for his strong faith and fervent piety. I

12 And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

14 But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.

16 Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.

17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me.

y 17:42. Cant. 5:10. Lam. 4:7. Acts 7:20. Heb. 11:23. * Heb. fair of eyes. 7. e Ps. 2:6. 59:19. 20. Acts 4:27. a 10:1. 2 Kings 9:6. b 18:10, 10. Num. 11:17. 27:18. Judg. 3:10. 11:23. 13:25. 14:6. 1s. 11:1-3. John 3:34. Heb. 1:9. c 18:12. 28:15. Judg. 16:29. Ps. 51:11. Hos. 9:12. d 18:10. 19:9, 10. Judg. 9:23. 1 Kings 22:22. Acts 19:15, 16. f Or, terrified. e 21:22. Gen. 41:46. 1 Kings 10:6. f 23. 10:5. 2 Kings 9:15. g 17:32-35. 2 Sam. 17:8. j Or, speech. h 8:19.

is however wonderful, that the aged prophet should regard the height of Eliab's stature: when Saul who was "taller than all the people from his shoulders and upwards," had proved so worthless a king! (Notes, 9:1, 17:28.) The Lord seeth not, &c. (7) Marg. Ref. o, p, q.

V. 10, 11. Jesse's sons were seven in all. (Note, 1 Chr. 2:15.)—David being young, (not more than eighteen or twenty years of age,) and being of a contemplative disposition, was perhaps thought by Jesse to be less capable of public business than his other sons, and so was not kept at home on this occasion. (Marg. Ref.)—His name signifies *Beloved*, and he was an eminent type of the beloved Son of God. (Notes, Jer. 30:5-9. Ez. 34:23-31. 37:25. Hos. 3:4, 5.)—These transactions seem to have occurred, between the offering of the sacrifice, and the feast on it which followed.

V. 12. Marg. Ref.

V. 13. The original words seem to denote, that David was anointed in the presence of his brethren, though the transaction was kept secret from others. If this were the case, it is worthy of notice, that none of them rivalled or opposed him; though it appears that they were not free from envy and prejudice.—Some expositors however think the words only imply, that David was selected from among his brethren; but that he was anointed *privately*.—This anointing did not invest him with kingly authority, but merely marked him out as Saul's successor: and thus David himself understood it.—From this time he was evidently endowed with the Spirit of the Lord, qualifying him for great things, and inspiring him with noble purposes: yet he was satisfied in his humble and laborious occupation, waiting the Lord's time for being called to action. (Notes, 10:10-16. 11:6-15.)

V. 14. When the Spirit of God came on David, it became evident that he had departed from Saul, and that he was deprived of his capacity for public business, and performed nothing prudently or successfully: nay, that an evil spirit was *judicially* permitted to impel him to the most furious sallies of rage or jealousy; to oppress his spirits with a deep melancholy; to excite distressing terrors, alarms and suspicions; and to render him at times distracted. (Marg. Ref. d.)

V. 15-23. Saul's courtiers evidently perceived the change which had taken place, and ascribed it to the right cause: though their language seems less accurate than that of the historian; the original words being, "an evil spirit of God," meaning one whom God permitted to trouble Saul.—The device proposed by them might be very proper for soothing the melancholy of Saul, and calming his passions: (Note, 2 Kings 3:15.) but the cause of his malady lay much deeper; and it would have been better counsel, if they had persuaded him to send for Samuel to converse with him and pray for him.—However, the hand of the Lord was manifest in thus bringing David to court. After his anointing he had in a little time by various ways signalized himself, so that he was much noticed: (Note, 17:34-37.) and especially his peculiar skill in playing on the harp, was remarked by some person who attended on Saul. Thus he was introduced to him, and his solemn sacred music was far more suitable to the case, than more amusing strains would have been. He came to Saul with a very high character, which he did not disgrace: he was useful to him, and for a time beloved by him: and yet, when Saul no longer wanted him, he returned back to his flocks as contented as ever, and was soon forgotten at court. (Notes 17:15, 55-58.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our most reasonable and disinterested sorrow may be so excessive, as to imply rebellion against the righteous will of

18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him.

19 Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep.

20 And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul.

21 And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armour-bearer.

22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me: for he hath found favour in my sight.

23 And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

10:7. 18:12-14. Gen. 39:2, 23. Matt. 1:23. 28:20. 111. 17:15, 33, 34. Ex. 3:1-10. 1 Kings 19:19. Ps. 78:70-72. 113:3. Am. 1:7. 14:15. Matt. 4:18-22. 10:27. 17:18. 26:18. Gen. 43:11. 2 Sam. 16:12. Prov. 16:18. 1 Gen. 41:46. Deut. 1:38. 10:8. Prov. 22:22. m Ps. 63:9. 118:9. 146:3. n See on 14:16. o 18:10, 11. Matt. 12:43-45. Luke 11:24-26.

God; and he will then rebuke us, as well as encourage us under our distresses.—We ought not inconsolably to mourn for such as the Lord has rejected; but should rather rejoice in those whom he is calling forth to usefulness: and no partial affection should interfere with present duty.—The most eminent believers are not entirely superior to the fear of a man, when dangerous services are assigned them. But the Lord will inwardly strengthen and outwardly protect them; and without immediate revelation, he can, by his word and Spirit, show them step by step what they ought to do.—The guilty conscience trembles at a message from heaven: yet the ministers of Christ come peaceably, proposing salvation through the sacrifice of a Redeemer, and speaking terror to none, except to those who neglect so great salvation. (Note, Matt. 10:11-15. P. O. 7-15.)—There is a preparation of heart required for receiving this atonement and reconciliation, as well as for attending on divine ordinances; the instruction, converse, and prayers of faithful ministers are very useful in both cases, to those who desire to profit by them; and parents ought not needlessly to permit their children to be absent on such favourable opportunities.—It is difficult wholly to divest ourselves of partiality for those, who are recommended by external accomplishments; and we often frame an erroneous judgment of characters: but the Lord values nothing, in comparison with that holy faith, fear, and love, which are implanted in the heart beyond the reach of human penetration. Nor does he favour our children according to our fond partialities; but often most honours and blesses those who have been the least regarded.—His method of educating men for important stations of usefulness, differs much from those which human wisdom has devised. For humble industry and obedient attention to obscure duties, contemplation, retired devotion, and a patient self-denying assiduity, constitute the best preparation for serving the cause of God and his church.—When sinners, by resisting the Holy Spirit, have provoked him finally to depart, they are exposed to every incursion of Satan, and are likely to become tormentors of themselves and of others; nay, their friends may perceive, that they are given up by God in his righteous displeasure, without taking warning by their awful case. Indeed we none of us have the least security, either for our bodies or souls, against the malignity of evil spirits, except in the protection of that God, whom, alas! we are continually provoking. (P. O. Job 1:6-12.)—When conscious guilt, and fears of divine vengeance, disorder the minds of men, those who perceive their distress, but understand neither the cause nor the cure, are apt to propose very fatal methods of relief: and music, diversion, company, or business, have for a season been frequently employed, as a successful quietus for a wounded conscience. Yet nothing can effect a real cure, except the blood of Christ applied in faith, and the sanctifying Spirit sealing the pardon by his holy comforts: all other expedients to dispel religious melancholy, are sure methods of increasing distress, either in this world or in the next, and perhaps in both.—Every endowment, which may be usefully exercised in subserviency to godliness, is to be ascribed to the energy of the divine Spirit: opportunities will be afforded for its being displayed; and if the Lord be graciously with us, they will be suitably improved: while good behaviour in inferior stations is the best introduction to higher advancement.—Thus Jesus was obedient unto death, before he was exalted to his glorious throne: and thus he trains up his people, by obedience, in the midst of temptation and trouble, for their future inheritance in the regions of purity and felicity.

CHAPTER XVII.

The armies of Israel and of the Philistines are drawn out to battle, 1-3. Goliath challenges, defies, and dares the Israelites, 4-11. David is sent to the army to visit his brethren, 12-19. He hears the challenge of Goliath and expresses indignation at it, 20-27. Eliab rebukes him, and he answers mildly, 28-30. He is brought before Saul, accepts the challenge, and states the grounds of his confidence, 31-37. He girds on Saul's armour; and takes off his staff, a sling, and stones, 38-40. Goliath disdains and curses him, 41-44. David answers, expressing his assured confidence in God, 45-47. He kills Goliath and cuts off his head, 48-51. The Philistines are routed, 52, 53. David returns with Goliath's head in his hand; and answers Saul's inquiries concerning him, 54-58.

NOW the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and were gathered together at Shochoh, which *belongeth* to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.

2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.

3 And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and *there was a valley* between them.

4 And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

5 And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail: and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass.

6 And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders.

7 And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

8 And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

9 If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.

*a 7:7. 13:5. 14:40, 52. Judg. 3:3. b Josh. 15:35. Socoh, 2 Chr. 11:7. Shoch, 28:19. Socoh, c Josh. 10:11. Jer. 34:7. * Or, the coat of Dammin. 1 Chr. 11:13. Eph-dammim. d 19:2. 21:9. 1 Heb. ranged the battle. e 23: 21, 21, 10. 2 Sam. 21:19. 1 Chr. 20:5. f 27:4. Josh. 11:22. 2 Sam. 21:16-22. 1 Chr. 20:4-6. g Deut. 3:11. 1 Chr. 11:23. Am. 2:9. 1 Heb. clothed. 5 Or, garter. 1 Kings 10:16. 2 Chr. 9:15. h 2 Sam. 21:19. 1 Chr. 11:23. 20:5. i 25: 5, 17. 2 Sam. 11: 11. 1 Chr. 21:3. k 11:11. 13:5, 25, 35, 45. Num. 23:7-8. 2 Sam. 21:21. 23:9. Neh. 2:19. m Josh. 40:9-12. Ps. 4:5. Prov. 16:19. Jer. 23:23. Dan. 4:37. n Deut. 21:8. 19. 19. 27:1. Prov. 28:1. Is. 51:12, 13. 57:11. o 68: 16, 17, 18. Ruth*

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (*Marg. Ref.*) Saul had repeatedly allowed the Philistines time to recover strength and courage; and probably the report of the disordered state of his mind emboldened them to this invasion: yet the Lord so ordered it, that he was in some measure recovered before the war began. It is uncertain how long this was after the transactions before recorded; but probably three or four years had elapsed.—To suppose, as many have done, that this invasion preceded David's first appearance at court, gives a needless and inadmissible disturbance to the narrative. (*Notes*, 15, 55-58.)

V. 4-7. (*Marg. Ref.*) A champion. (4) Or, a dueller; one who came between the two armies, as wishing to distinguish himself in single combat. (*Notes*, Ps. 9: title.)—Goliath was of the race of Anak. (*Notes*, Josh. 11:21-23. 15:14. Judg. 1:10-15. 2 Sam. 21:15-22.) On the most moderate computation he was above ten feet high: and the weight of his armour shows that his bulk and strength were proportionable. For his coat of mail weighed above 200 pounds troy weight, and his spear's head in proportion. (*Tables*).—Some indeed suppose, that the price or value was meant: but the value of any thing is generally, if not always, computed by shekels of silver or gold, not of brass. Probably, men in general were about the same size as at present; for such giants then caused as much surprise as they would now. (*Note*, Num. 13:33.)

V. 8-10. This challenge of Goliath greatly increased the consternation of the Israelites; as if they must needs become slaves to the Philistines, unless some one of them could overcome the champion: but no nation ever did, or ever will, suffer its liberties and interests to be disposed of in such a manner.—It is probable that Goliath was one of the lords of the Philistines; and that he deemed it a kind of condescension in him, to fight with one of Saul's servants.

V. 11. When the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, he lost much of his former courage; otherwise, depending on the God of Israel, he might have assaulted the army of the Philistines, and at once have silenced the proud boasts of Goliath. (*Notes*, 11:6-15. 16:14.) His timidity disheartened the army likewise for faith and piety were

10 And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.

11 When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

12 ¶ Now David was the son of that Ephraimite of Beth-lehem-judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons: and the man went among men for an old man in the days of Saul.

13 And the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the first born, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.

14 And David was the youngest: and the three eldest followed Saul.

15 But David went, and returned from Saul, to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.

16 And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

17 And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren:

18 And carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of thy thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

20 ¶ And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him: and he came to the trench as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

21 For Israel and the Philistines had put the battle in array, army against army.

22 And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren.

*4:22. Matt. 1:6. Luke 3:31, 32. p Gen. 35:19. Ps. 132:6. Mic. 5:2. Matt. 2:1, 6. q 16:10, 11. 1 Chr. 2:13-16. r 23: 16, 6-9. s 2 Sam. 15:3, 33. 21:21. Shimeah. t 16:11, 12. Gen. 25:23. u 16:15-23. v Matt. 4:2. Luke 4:2. z Matt. 7:11. Luke 11:13. y 23:15. Ruth 2:14. 2 Sam. 17:28. z 16:20. 1 Heb. cheeses of milk. 2 Sam. 17:29. Job 10:10. 1 Heb. a thousand. a Gen. 37:14. Acts 15:6. 1 Thees. 3:5, 6. b 28. Eph. 6:12. ** Or, place of the carriage. 26:15. Luke 12:43. 11 Or, battle-array, or, place of J. A. b. 1 Heb. the vessels from upon him. 55 Heb. asked his brethren of peace. Gen. 37:14. Judg. 18:15. Matt. 10:12, 13. Luke 10:5, 6.*

evidently at a low ebb among them. Nor had Jonathan the same inward intimation to engage in this service, as he formerly had to undertake one at least equally perilous; the Lord having reserved it for David. (*Notes*, 14:1-15.)

V. 12, 13. Jesse, being far advanced in years, was himself exempted from war; but he sent three of his sons with Saul.—Eight sons. (12) 16: 10. *Note*, 1 Chr. 2:15.

V. 15. Saul's disorder having been relieved, and his mind engaged in public business, David's music was not wanted; and he "returned from Saul" to his former laborious and obscure occupation. Probably he had been appointed Saul's armour-bearer, merely as an honorary distinction, and had never been employed in actual service. (*Note*, 16:15-23.)

—Josephus says, that Saul sent David home in the beginning of this war, being contented with the three sons of Jesse who followed him; but it seems more probable, that he had returned home some time before the war began: and Josephus had no other authentic information, as to the history of Israel, than we at present possess; so that neither his opinions, nor the traditions which he had received from those who lived before him, are of any authority, except when they accord with the sacred Scriptures.

V. 16. Had the Philistines thought themselves able to force the camp of Israel, they would not have spent so much time in this manner.—Forty days. *Note*, Matt. 4:1, 2.

V. 17. As Jesse had several other sons, it must be ascribed to a special interposition of Providence, that David was sent on this occasion. (*Note*, 16:10, 11.)

V. 18. *Pledge*.] This, it is probable, was some concerted token of welfare, according to the custom of those times, while epistolary correspondence was infrequent.

V. 19. *Fighting*.] There might be frequent skirmishes between the two armies, though they did not come to a general engagement.

V. 22. *His carriage*.] Or, the provisions which he carried, or had brought, for his brethren and their captain. (*Marg.*—Acts 21:15.)—"The keeper of the carriage" seems to mean the person, who was appointed over those, who guarded the baggage: and who would take the charge of what David had brought, till he returned.—'With his servant.' *Bp. Patrick*.

23 And as he talked with them, behold there came up the champion, (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name,) out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them.

24 And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

25 And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.

26 And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

27 And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

28 And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why comest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down, that thou mightest see the battle.

29 And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

30 And he turned from him towards another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner. [Practical Observations.]

31 ¶ And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him.

32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him: thy servant will go, and fight with this Philistine.

c 4-10. * Heb. his face. 13:6, 7. d See on 11. Lev. 26:36. Num. 13:33. Deut. 32:30. Is. 7:2. 30:17. e 18:17-27. Josh. 15:16. Rev. 2:17. 3:5, 12. 21. f Ezra 7:24. Matt. 17:28. g 11:2. Josh. 7:8, 9. 2 Kings 19:4. Neh. 5:9. Is. 44:13. 74:19. 79:12. Dan. 9:16. Joel 2:19. h 35. 14:6. 110. Deut. 5:25. Jer. 10:1. 17:18. i 1. 1 Kings 1:24. j 25. 116:13. Gen. 37:4, 8, 11. Prov. 18:19. 27:4. Ps. 4:1. Matt. 10:36. 27:18. Mark 3:21. m 30. n 16:7. P. 39:11. Jude 10. o 17:32. Prov. 15:1. Acts 11:2-4. 1 Cor. 2:15. 1 Pet. 3:1. Heb. word. 26:27. 1 Heb. to *ok him*. Prov. 22:29. P. Num. 13:30. 14:9. Deut. 20:1-3. Is. 35:3. Heb. 12:12. q 14:6. 16:15. Josh. 14:12. Ps. 3:5. 27:1-3. r Num. 13:3. Deut. 9:2. Ps. 11:1. Rev. 13:4. 4:2, 56. \$ Or, *kid*. t Judg. 14:5, 6. 2 Sam. 23:

It does not however appear, that David was attended by a servant.

V. 23, 24. (Note, 4-7.) When the two armies were on the point of engaging, Goliath's renewed challenge strangely disconcerted the Israelites. They could face the whole army of the Philistines, though they knew Goliath was among them; and yet were dismayed by the sight of him alone! (Notes, Num. 13:30, 31. 14:2-9.)

V. 25, 26. It does not appear, that Saul consulted the Lord, or offered sacrifice, or even made supplications, on this occasion: but he offered great rewards to him, who should kill Goliath. (Notes, Josh. 15:16, 17. 1 Chr. 11:4-8.)—To this conduct, David's speech, glowing with confidence in God, zeal for his glory, and indignant resentment of Israel's disgrace, formed a noble contrast. However terrible the gigantic Goliath might appear, he was "an uncircumcised Philistine;" and those whom he defied were not merely "servants to Saul." (8) but "the armies of the living God." (Note, Num. 23:7, 8.) And in this view, who was Goliath, that any Israelite should fear him? The very inquiry implied the most pointed reproof of the unbelief and cowardice of Saul, and indeed of the whole army.—Free in Israel. (25) Note, Ezra 7:24—26.

V. 28. It can hardly be supposed, that Eliab was entirely ignorant of David's having been anointed by Samuel; and he must have understood this transaction, as at least an indication of his future superiority. (Note, 16:13.) No doubt, therefore, he was in part excited by envy on this occasion: but he might also consider the spirit of his younger and neglected brother, as a tacit reproach of his own timidity. He therefore rashly and falsely accused him of leaving his flock without a keeper, and of coming without being sent, out of curiosity or ambition: (17-20) and intimated that he was notoriously of a proud, aspiring, and even wicked disposition. These insinuations tended both to discourage David, and to prejudice those who heard them against him, in order that he might be disregarded. (Notes, Gen. 37:2-10. John 7:3-10.)

V. 29. This answer was as admirable for the "meekness of wisdom," as the former question was for the "courage of faith." David took no notice of the reproach cast on his

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock;

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion, and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee.

38 ¶ And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

39 And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip, and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

42 And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

20. Pa. 91:13. Dan. 6:22. Am. 3:12. Acts 9:6, 4-6. 2 Tim. 4:17, 18. n 26. E. 32: 19, 27-32. Rom. 2:28, 29. x See on 10. Is. 10:15. 36:8-10, 15, 18. 37:22, 23, 28. 29. Zech. 2:8. 12:5. Acts 5:38, 39. 9:4, 5. 12:1, 2, 23, 25. y 7:12. Ps. 63:7. 138:3. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 1:9, 10. 2 Tim. 4:17, 18. z 20:13. 24:19. 26:25. 2 Sam. 10:12. ¶ Heb. clothed David with his clothes 5. a Hos. 1:7. Zech. 4:5. 2 Cor. 10:4, 5. b Judg. 2:31. 7:18-20. 15:15, 16. 20:16. 1 Cor. 12:27-29. ¶ Or, valley. ¶ Heb. vessel. Matt. 10:10. c 1 Kings 20:18. 2 Kings 18:23, 34. Neh. 4:2-4. d 33. 16:12. e 24:14. 2 Sam. 3:8. 9:8. 16:9. 2 Kings 8:13. f Gen. 27:29. Num. 22:8, 11, 12. Judg. 9:27. Prov. 26:2.

character; nor of the false accusation laid against him; nor of the selfish motives, to which his coming to the army was ascribed. But he merely replied, by asking, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Ought not every Israelite to feel a holy indignation, when he hears an uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God? And ought not some Israelite to step forward and venture his life, to take away this reproach? Yet no Israelite had hitherto appeared who would attempt it. (Notes, Judg. 8, 1-3. Prov. 15:1.)

V. 31, 32. Marg. Ref. p. q.

V. 34-37. In defence of his flock, David had been enabled, at different times, to slay a lion and a bear: and he looked upon this as an earnest of victory over the "uncircumcised Philistine," whom he meant to attack out of zeal for the glory of God, and the interests of Israel. Goliath could not be more terrible to any Israelitish soldier, than a lion or a bear, bereaved of its prey, would be to an unarmed shepherd; and David's deliverance from these savage beasts was the effect of the Lord's special favour, who would also deliver him from the Philistine. (Note, 2 Cor. 1:8-11.)—Thus, when the Spirit of the Lord was upon Samson, he rent the lion before he destroyed the Philistines. (Note, Judg. 14:5, 6.)—Several extraordinary actions of this kind, no doubt, obtained David that great character, with which he had first been introduced to Saul. (16:18.)—Go, &c. (37) Notes, 24:16-22. 26:21-25.

V. 38-40. David had not been accustomed to such armour as Saul put upon him, and he was not satisfied to go forth in that manner.—This was likewise from the Lord, who would have it made manifest that his servant fought and conquered by faith, and that the victory was from him, who works by the most despised means and instruments. (Notes, Josh. 6:3-5. Judg. 3:31. 7:16-22. 15:14-17. Zech. 4:4-7. 1 Cor. 1:20-31. 2 Cor. 4:7.)

V. 42-44. Perhaps David might at this time be twenty-two or twenty-three years of age; (33. Note, 16:10, 11.) and his unwarlike appearance in all respects excited contempt and disdain in Goliath's breast; nay, he was greatly affronted to be opposed by a stripling, accounted in so unwarlike a manner

44 And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."

45 Then said David to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."

46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with the sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hands.

48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

1 Kings 20:10, 11. Prov. 18:12. Ec. 9:11, 12. Jer. 9:23. Es. 28:2, 9, 10. 39:17—20. 4 Ps. 44:6. 1 Sam. 22:33—35. 2 Chr. 32:8. Ps. 3:8. 18:2. 20:1—7. 118:10, 11. 24:8. Prov. 15:10. Phil. 4:13. Heb. 11:33, 34. 1 Cor. 13:3. 1 Pet. 7:23. 9:23. Josh. 10:8. "Heb. *what there up*. Ps. 31:5. m 44. Dent. 28:26. In 59:9. Rev. 19:17, 18. n Ex. 9:16. 15:14, 15. Josh. 4:24. 1 Kings 8:43. 18:36, 37. 2 Kings 19:19. Is. 52:10. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 6:26, 27. o Ps. 33:16, 17. 44:6, 7. Prov.

But though he cursed David by his gods, he evidently trusted not in them but in the might of his own arm. The Romans used thus to curse their enemies: "All the gods and goddesses destroy thee!" (Note, Num. 22:6.)

V. 45—47. Nothing can exceed the modesty, the faith, the piety, and the zeal for the glory of God, and the cause of Israel and of true religion, which glow in this most beautiful speech. David expressed, with peculiar animation, his assured expectation of success, of which doubtless some immediate intimations had been communicated to him; satisfying him, that the zeal of the Lord for his own glory would engage him in the cause; he even gloried in his own contemptible appearance and armour, that the victory might the more unquestionably be ascribed to JEHOVAH; and he anticipated the effects of this transaction. He even conceived a hope of its producing a salutary conviction in the minds of the Philistines, that the God of Israel was the only true God; and he predicted that his power and glory would by means of it be made known to all the earth. (Notes, 1 Kings 18:36, 37. 2 Kings 19:14—19.)

V. 48, 49. The courage of David appears illustrious in the whole narrative. Goliath understood that his challenge was accepted, by David's boldly marching out to meet him; and at this crisis, David with great activity at once struck the fatal blow. Either Goliath, in fearless presumption and contempt of his opponent, had neglected to fasten on his helmet; or the stone, directed and impelled by the power of the Almighty, penetrated both the helmet and his skull, and sunk into his forehead, as a stone sinks into the water. (Note, 1 Kings 22:32—35.)

V. 50—53. Perhaps the sword of Goliath was not so large and unwieldy in proportion, as the other parts of his armour; for we find that David afterwards used it, as well as on this occasion. (Notes, 21:8, 9.)—When the Philistines saw that their champion or mighty man, was dead; they were so convinced of the power and presence of the God of Israel, that they had no courage to fight, but yielded Israel a complete victory; and the Israelites pursued them even to their own cities, and plundered their camp. (Marg. Ref.)

Champion. (51) The original word is not the same here as in the fourth verse.

V. 54. Either David, after a time, carried the head of Goliath to Jerusalem, as a terror to the Jebusites; and put his armour in his own tent, until it was removed to the tabernacle of God; (21:8, 9.) or this is spoken by anticipation; and means, that afterwards Goliath's skull and armour were preserved at Jerusalem, as a monument of the victory, and to the glory of God, in the tent which David there formed for the ark. (Note, 2 Sam. 6:17.)

V. 55—58. It has been argued, from the circumstance of Saul's not recollecting David, that the history is inconsistent: and to answer this objection many learned men, by a very unnatural transposition, place this chapter, in order of time, before the preceding. But it should be considered that David was young when he went to the court of Saul: and a few

51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

52 And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron: and the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron.

53 And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents.

54 ¶ And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem: but he put his armour in his tent.

55 And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, "Whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell."

56 And the king said, Inquire thou whose son the stripling is.

57 And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

58 And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse, the Bethlehemithe."

21:30, 31. Hos. 1:7. p 14:6. 2 Chr. 20:15—17. Ps. 46:11. Is. 9:7. Zech. 4:6. Rom. 8:31, 37. q Ps. 27:1. Prov. 28:1. r 1 Kings 22:34. 2 Kings 9:24. 1 Cor. 1:27, 28. a 39. 13:22. c 21:9. 2 Sam. 23:21. Esth. 7:10. Ps. 7:15, 16. Heb. 2:14. a Heb. 11:34. x 14:21, 22. Judg. 7:23. 2 Sam. 23:10. y Josh. 13:33—36. 45:46. z 2 Kings 7:7—16. Jer. 4:20. E. 16:33. Josh. 4:7, 8. b 59. 16:21, 22. c 64. d 12. 16:13, 19.

years, with change of dress, (from that of a courtier, to that of a shepherd,) make a very great alteration in the appearance of young persons. Abner had no acquaintance with David, that we know of. Saul's mind was disordered, and his affairs in perplexity. Kings, especially such kings as Saul, are served by so many fresh faces, that they often literally forget their old acquaintance. Yet it is evident, that Saul had some confused and imperfect recollection of David; though he could not certainly remember whose son he was. (Notes, 1, 15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—30. When those, to whom it officially belongs to defend the cause of God and his church, are destitute of his Spirit, and given up to ambition, covetousness, envy, malice, or lust; no wonder if open enemies are encouraged, and friends dispirited: and as the fear of God declines, the fear of man, in one form or other, will gather strength. But when one instrument is thrown aside, another is prepared, and produced for the work of the Lord: and though Israel be cast down, and his enemies for a season triumph; yet shall he be raised up again, and their success terminate in deeper disgrace and ruin.—Every gift of God to fallen man, instead of inspiring gratitude, naturally increases proud self-admiration and confidence, and a disposition to despise and insult over others. But what are human wisdom, strength and courage, unless preserved and prospered by him who gave them? When confidence in these endowments withdraws men from their dependence on God, and when they are employed in rebellion against him; the haughty possessor becomes more expressly the enemy and rival of the Almighty, and is prepared to be a more distinguished monument of his righteous vengeance. (Notes, Job 40:9—14. Jer. 9:23, 24. Dan. 4:34—37. 5:18—24.)—Degenerate professors of religion often receive just rebukes from most decided enemies; and indeed no persecutor or heresiarch needs fear defying the disciples of man, any more than Goliath feared defying "the servants of Saul," were they only such, as the names which they assume, as well as their conduct on some occasions, seem to imply. For in human accomplishments the opposers of the truth of God have frequently possessed an undisputed superiority: (Note, Ec. 15:6—8. P. O.) confiding in this, they have defied, and still do defy, the advocates of spiritual truth to engage with them; and they dream of a total and decided victory. But they have "the armies of the living God," and their invincible Captain himself, to contend with; and "who are these uncircumcised Philistines," that a true Israelite should fear them? Any believer in the divine Saviour may predict that their triumphing will be short: and if fairly called to it, we need not fear to go forth with the despised sling and stone, with plain testimonies of holy Scripture, unaltered by eloquence, and unsupported by human learning, against the most formidable of them; trusting in him who has all power in heaven and earth.—Those who would serve God must be endued with patience, meekness, and self-denial; and they must learn to

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jonathan loves David, and covenants with him, 1-4. David gains favour with the people and the servants of Saul, 5. The prizes bestowed on David excite Saul's envy, 6-9. Saul attempts to kill him, 10-11. David's prudence and success make Saul afraid of him, 12-14. He offers to give him his elder daughter, hoping to ensure him; but gives her to another, 15-18. He promises him Michal, his younger daughter, finding that she loved him; and David brings two hundred foreskins of the Philistines, being double the stipulated dowry, and marries her, 20-27. Saul's hatred and David's reputation increase, 28-30.

AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

2 And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

4 And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war; and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

14:1-14, 45. 44:30. Judg. 20:11. 1 Chr. 12:17. Ps. 66:11. Col. 2:2. b 19: 2. 20:17. Deut. 13:6. 2 Sam. 1:25. Prov. 18:34. c 16:21-23. 17:15. d 20:8. 17:42. 23:15. 2 Sam. 9:1-3. 21:7. e Gen. 41:42. Ezech. 8:8, 9. Is. 61:10. Luke 15: 22. 2 Cor. 5:21. Phil. 2:7, 8. * Or, *prospered*. 14, 15, 30. Gen. 39:23, 23. Ps. 1:3. Act. 7:10. f Matt. 10:16. Eph. 4:7. Col. 4:5. g 13:2. 14:92. 1 Chr. Philistines. h Ex. 15:20. Judg. 11:34. Ps. 68:25. Jer. 31:11-13. i Heb. *three-stringed instruments*. 1 Ex. 15:21. Ps. 34:7-10. k 21:11. 25:5. l Ezech. 35:

bear neglect, contempt and ingratitude; to be laborious, faithful, and obedient; to shun observation and ostentation; to walk by faith, and to wait the Lord's time for every promised or expected mercy; not putting themselves forward, till it be undeniably evident that there is a cause.—In times of general formality and lukewarmness, every degree of zeal, which implies a readiness to go further, or venture more in the cause of God, than others do, will be censured as pride and ambition; and by none more than near relations and negligent superiors: and such censures will seldom be unmingled with unjust insinuations, slanders, and attempts to blacken a man's character. But conscious integrity, and confidence in God, united with meekness, wisdom and perseverance, will carry the believer through such discouraging opposition, and raise him above them: and those who would do good, should not multiply words in defence of their own characters; but avoid whatever may needlessly exasperate, prolong contention, or foment envy; and be satisfied with appealing to the consciences and common sense of impartial persons, that time and circumstances require their exertions. The hope of being an instrument of good, and of being accepted by the Lord, will animate the faithful servant of God in every undertaking; and the expectation of a reward from man, or the fear of human censure, will be with him a very inferior consideration.

V. 31-58. If we improve our experience of the Lord's faithfulness, love, and power, in former seasons of danger and difficulty, it will inspire confidence in the prospect of future conflicts; and on some occasions it may be referred to for the satisfaction of others; and to be engaged against the avowed and haughty enemies of God and his church, is in all cases a proper ground of encouragement.—In the service of our common Lord we are not all qualified to handle the same weapons, or to fill up the same stations: none should therefore be set up in all things as models, nor ought any of us indiscriminately to imitate the most approved characters. Rules and methods, which are useful and natural to one man, may prove encumbrances to another: and we do best, when we cultivate our own peculiar talent, taking hints from every body, and not attempting exact conformity to any. But faith, and prayer, and truth, and righteousness, "the whole armour of God," and "the mind which was in Christ," are equally needful for all his servants.—The curses of wicked men are no more to be feared, than their power or menaces; as they will at length rebound upon themselves, and their proud self-confidence will surely be confounded. But those who trust in the Lord and simply seek his glory, shall never be ashamed: in their hands the feeblest means shall be successful, and before them the most formidable opposition shall come to nothing. The event of every conflict of the church of God against her enemies, will undeniably evince, "that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give it into our hands:" and this shall tend to make known his glory throughout the earth.—Human favour is of small value, for men soon forget those who have been most useful to them; and they alone are happy, who enjoy the favour of him, who never forgets or forsakes the meaneast of his true people.—Finally, in David's victory over the champion of the Philistines, we may see a faint shadow of the Redeemer's victory over Satan, who for ages had defied the armies of the living God, and, from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, found no one able in his own strength to stand against him; but Jesus overcame him on his own ground and foiled him with his own weapons, and still goes

6 ¶ And it came to pass, as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music.

7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, 'Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.'

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

9 And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

10 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house; and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

11 And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

Prov. 13:10. 27:4. Ec. 4:4. Jam. 4:5. § Heb. *was evil in his eyes*. Num. 11:1. 22:34. *margin*. m 13:14. 15:28. 16:18. 20:31. 1 Kings 2:22. n Gen. 4:5, 6, 31: 2. Matt. 20:15. Mark 7:22. Eph. 4:27. Jam. 5:9. o 16:14, 15. 19:9. 26:19. 19:24. 1 Kings 18:26. 22:19, 20-23. Jer. 28:28-31. 11. Zech. 13:2-5. Act. 18: 16. 2 Thess. 2:11. k 16:16, 23. r 19:19, 10, 20, 33. Prov. 27:4. Is. 54:17. l Luke 4:30. John 8:59. 10:39.

on by his despised gospel to pursue the victory; while all the hosts of the true Israel join in his conquests, and share the benefits; and they shall ere long meet in heaven to celebrate his triumphs with everlasting songs of praise.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. The modesty, piety, and courageous faith of David were so congenial to the character of Jonathan, that they attracted his most cordial esteem and affection, (Notes, 14:6-15.) so that the most endeared friendship subsisted between them, from that time, without the least interruption, notwithstanding Saul's envy and malice; and though Jonathan knew that David was appointed to be king, and that he himself was excluded! (Notes, 19:1-7, 20:14-17, 32-42. 23:17, 18. 2 Sam. 1:19-27.) This disinterested friendship was the effect of that grace of God, which produces in all true believers "one heart and soul," and causes them to delight in each other's converse and comfort; (Notes, 1 Pet. 1:22-25. 1 John 3:13-15.) yet similarity of disposition, and the coincidence of the extraordinary services which in the courage of faith they had performed, served to render their reciprocal affection peculiarly fervent and intimate. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2. Saul did not at first know David, but he soon recollected him. It is manifest from this, that he had before returned from Saul to his pastoral employments, but from this time he went back no more to them. (Note, 17:55-58.)

V. 3, 4. Jonathan, by stripping off his own clothes and armour, and giving them to David, intended avowedly to ratify the covenant between them, as well as to testify his affection, and equip him according to his character and station. So that David then put off the shepherd, and put on the courtier and soldier.

V. 5. Abner continued commander in chief; but David had some high military station, and perhaps he was made captain of Saul's guards.

V. 6-9. After the death of Goliath, and the consequent victory over the Philistines; Saul, and David with him, went to several of the cities of Israel. 'I suppose, Saul and the whole court thought fit to honour David, by accompanying him to Jerusalem when he carried Goliath's head thither.' *Bp Patrick*. However this might be, in all places to which they came, the women, according to the custom of the times, went forth to meet them with instruments of music, and singing an ode composed on the occasion. (Judg. 11:34. Notes, Ex. 15:1, 20, 21. Judg. 5:1. Ps. 68:24, 25.) In this ode, composed in poetical language, no injustice was done to Saul, nor any affront intended him; yet the language employed might have given umbrage to a mind less propense to envy and suspicion, than that of Saul. Accordingly, he was greatly displeased; and, perceiving how David increased in popularity, he concluded that God was about "to rend the kingdom from him, and to give it to a neighbour of his, who was better than he." (15:28.) Probably he had been also informed, that Samuel anointed David, and favoured his interest; so that he began to look upon him with a jealous and malignant eye.

V. 10, 11. When Saul indulged malevolence, he "gave place to the devil," and provoked God to permit the evil spirit again to trouble him. (Note, 16:14. Ps. 51:11.) Being thus under a supernatural though malignant influence, he behaved in some respects as the prophets did, when the Spirit of inspiration came upon them; yet from a contrary cause. It is not indeed certain whether he assumed this appearance to cloak his attempting to murder David, or whether Satan really wrought upon him till he seemed to prophesy. He *was*,

12 And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.

13 Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

14 And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him.

15 Wherefore when Saul said that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.

16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

17 ¶ And Saul said to David, Behold, my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife; only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD's battles: for Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

18 And David said to Saul, Who am I? and what is my life, or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?

19 But it came to pass, at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given unto Adriel the Meholahite to wife.

20 And Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David; and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.

21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in the one of the twain.

22 And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold

the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son-in-law.

23 And Saul's servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

24 And the servants of Saul told him, saying, On this manner spake David.

25 And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

26 And when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to be the king's son-in-law; and the days were not expired.

27 Wherefore David arose, and went, he and his men, and slew of the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full tale to the king, that he might be the king's son-in-law. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter to wife.

28 And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him.

29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually.

30 Then the princes of the Philistines went forth: and it came to pass, after they went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by.

† 15:20, 16:4. Ps. 48:3-6, 53:5. Mark 6:20. Luke 9:37. Acts 24:25. u 16:13, 18. 22:13. Acts 7:9. v 16:14, 28:15. Ps. 51:11. Hos. 9:12. Matt. 25:41. x 17:25, 8. 17:22, 7, 15. Num. 35:16, 17. 2 Sam. 5:3. Ps. 121:8. * Heb. *according to these words*. q Gen. 29:18, 34:12. Ec. 22:16, 17. r 17:26, 36. Gen. 17:11-14. Jo 8:5:3. a 14:24. t 17. 2 Sam. 17:8-11. u 21. ¶ Heb. *fulfilled*. v 13. x Judg. 14:19. 2 Sam. 3:14. y 24:20. 26:25. Gen. 30:27. 37:8-11. 39:3. Rev. 3:9. x 12, 15. Ps. 37:12, 13. Ec. 4:4. Jam. 2:19. a Gen. 4:4-9. John 11:53. 1 John 3:12-15. b 2 Sam. 11:1. c 5. Dnn. 1:20. Luke 21:15. Eph. 5:15. ¶ Heb. *precious*. 2:30. 26:21. 2 Kings 1:13. Ps. 116:15. 1 Pet. 2:4, 7.

however, influenced by deliberate malice when he threw the javelin at David. Though David, conscious of his innocence, and satisfied that he was doing his duty under God's protection, would not leave his place, yet he evidently suspected some mischief from the javelin in Saul's hand; and was enabled to avoid the blow, both at this time and on another occasion. (Note, 19:8-10.)

V. 12-16. Saul was sensible that the Lord was departed from him, and that his former capacity for public business was diminished: at the same time he perceived, that the Lord had given David peculiar wisdom, and was with him to prosper all his undertakings; and this increased the disquietude of his malevolent mind, and his dread of David as a prevailing rival. He therefore removed him from his presence, changing the command which he had before given him, for that of a thousand men, who made war at a distance. (Note, 5.) But this served the more to ingratiate him with the people, by affording him the opportunity of leading them forth to victory over their enemies.

V. 17-19. Saul appears to have been influenced, in his purpose, by fear of exciting a revolt among the people, rather than by the fear of God, or reluctance to commit murder with his own hand. (Note, 2 Sam. 11:14-17.) He was engaged by promise to give his daughter to David: (17:25.) but he had delayed the performance, and David was willing to dispense with it. Malice, however, at length prompted him to propose it, that he might excite David to venture his life more freely, in order to be counted worthy of such an honour; and that he might thus be cut off, without Saul's direct interposition. And though David humbly owned himself unworthy of such an alliance, and his services of such a reward, he did not decline the stipulated conditions. But when Saul's design proved abortive, he affronted him in the grossest manner, by giving his daughter to another man.

V. 23-27. David would doubtless suspect some invidious design in this proposal also: but he cautiously avoided mentioning the slight which had been put upon him; and waved the matter upon the ground of his own poverty and inferiority; though his original was not much if at all inferior to that of Saul. But when, instead of dowry according to the custom of those times, (Marg. Ref. q.) a hundred foreskins of the Philistines were required, he would not seem backward to any perilous service; and therefore he promptly went forth, and returned with twice as many as had been prescribed.

V. 28-30. Michal's affection for David, his prudent conduct in another incursion of the Philistines, and his increasing reputation, appeared to Saul's distempered mind to forebode David's advancement to the kingdom by dethroning him; nay,

the full conviction that God favoured David, rendered Saul, not only more afraid of him, but also more malignant against him! (Notes, Gen. 4:3-8. Matt. 2:3-18. John 15:22-23. 1 John 3:11-15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

True religion teaches us to love real excellency; to rejoice in it, though it eclipse our own reputation; and to delight in the society of those whom the Lord loves and honours, who bear his image and are zealous for his glory, regardless of inferiority of station or selfish considerations. This union of souls, resulting from participation of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, prepares men for filling up their several stations in the church of God, in harmony, sympathy, and love, as the several members do in the natural body; and which, being perfected in heaven, will for ever exclude envy and discontent, and render the felicity of each favoured inhabitant an accession to the joy of all the rest. (Notes, 1 Cor. 12:12-31.) But how different is the nature of fallen man! When the Lord is provoked to leave us, and Satan is permitted to excite our evil propensities, we become capable of envying and hating those especially who are most amiable, and who have done the most to serve us, with malignity proportioned to their meekness and wisdom; the commendations bestowed upon them are considered as an injury and reproach to us; and even the peculiar favour of God for them will greatly aggravate malice and envy, and incite to revenge. Thus men imitate and gratify Satan's malevolence; while they themselves are tortured with continued terrors and suspicions, and urged by temptations to every horrid crime, by which they bring upon themselves swift destruction. If we would not be given up to such dreadful excesses, let us watch and pray against the first risings of these dire passions: and we should also be prepared for the effects of them, as they prevail in the minds of others.—For every great and good work a man must expect to be envied by his neighbour: no distinction or pre-eminence can be so unexpectedly obtained, but it will expose the possessor to slander and malice, and perhaps to the most fatal consequences. But such trials are very useful to those who love God: they serve as a counterpoise to the honour put upon them, and check the growth of pride and attachment to the world; they exercise them to faith, patience, meekness, and communion with God; they give them a fair opportunity of exemplifying the amiable nature and tendency of true godliness, by acting with wisdom and propriety in the most difficult circumstances; they make way for increasing experience of the Lord's faithfulness, in restraining their enemies, raising them up friends, and affording them his gracious protection: and they both prepare them for those stations in which they are to be employed, and open

CHAPTER XIX.

Saul orders David to be slain. Jonathan informs David; and, pleading for him with Saul, effects a reconciliation. 1-7. David's success in war against Saul again jealous; he seeks to kill David, who escapes by night. 8-10. Saul sends to kill him in his house; but Michal favours his escape, and deceives Saul by an image in the bed, 11-17. David goes to Samuel, 18. Saul sends messengers after him to Naioth; and then goes himself; but first his messengers are seized by the Spirit of prophecy, and afterwards he also, 18-21.

AND "Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David.

2 But Jonathan, Saul's son, ^bdelighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret *place*, and hide thyself:

3 And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou *art*, and I will commune with my father of thee; and ^cwhat I see, that I will tell thee.

4 And Jonathan ^dspake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king ^esin against his servant, against David: because he hath not sinned against thee, and ^fbecause his works *have been* to thee-ward very good.

5 For he did ^gput his life in his hand, and ^hslew the Philistine, and the Lord ⁱwrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou savest *it*, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou ^jsin against innocent blood, to slay David ^kwithout a cause?

6 And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul ^lswore, *As the Lord liveth*, he shall not be slain.

7 And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan showed him all those things: and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence ^mas *in* times past.

8 ⁿAnd there was war again: and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled from him.

a 19:5,9. Prov. 27:4. ^b Jer. 9:3. 2 Tim. 9:13. ^c b 18:1-3. Ps. 16:3. John 13:17. 19:11. ^d 12:4. ^e 20:2. Prov. 17:17. Acts 9:24. 23:16. d 20:9,13. ^f 2:2. ^g 2:2. ^h 2:2. ⁱ 2:2. ^j 2:2. ^k 2:2. ^l 2:2. ^m 2:2. ⁿ 2:2. ^o 2:2. ^p 2:2. ^q 2:2. ^r 2:2. ^s 2:2. ^t 2:2. ^u 2:2. ^v 2:2. ^w 2:2. ^x 2:2. ^y 2:2. ^z 2:2. ^{aa} 2:2. ^{ab} 2:2. ^{ac} 2:2. ^{ad} 2:2. ^{ae} 2:2. ^{af} 2:2. ^{ag} 2:2. ^{ah} 2:2. ^{ai} 2:2. ^{aj} 2:2. ^{ak} 2:2. ^{al} 2:2. ^{am} 2:2. ^{an} 2:2. ^{ao} 2:2. ^{ap} 2:2. ^{aq} 2:2. ^{ar} 2:2. ^{as} 2:2. ^{at} 2:2. ^{au} 2:2. ^{av} 2:2. ^{aw} 2:2. ^{ax} 2:2. ^{ay} 2:2. ^{az} 2:2. ^{ba} 2:2. ^{bb} 2:2. ^{bc} 2:2. ^{bd} 2:2. ^{be} 2:2. ^{bf} 2:2. ^{bg} 2:2. ^{bh} 2:2. ^{bi} 2:2. ^{bj} 2:2. ^{bk} 2:2. ^{bl} 2:2. ^{bm} 2:2. ^{bn} 2:2. ^{bo} 2:2. ^{bp} 2:2. ^{bq} 2:2. ^{br} 2:2. ^{bs} 2:2. ^{bt} 2:2. ^{bu} 2:2. ^{bv} 2:2. ^{bw} 2:2. ^{bx} 2:2. ^{by} 2:2. ^{bz} 2:2. ^{ca} 2:2. ^{cb} 2:2. ^{cc} 2:2. ^{cd} 2:2. ^{ce} 2:2. ^{cf} 2:2. ^{cg} 2:2. ^{ch} 2:2. ^{ci} 2:2. ^{cj} 2:2. ^{ck} 2:2. ^{cl} 2:2. ^{cm} 2:2. ^{cn} 2:2. ^{co} 2:2. ^{cp} 2:2. ^{cq} 2:2. ^{cr} 2:2. ^{cs} 2:2. ^{ct} 2:2. ^{cu} 2:2. ^{cv} 2:2. ^{cw} 2:2. ^{cx} 2:2. ^{cy} 2:2. ^{cz} 2:2. ^{da} 2:2. ^{db} 2:2. ^{dc} 2:2. ^{dd} 2:2. ^{de} 2:2. ^{df} 2:2. ^{dg} 2:2. ^{dh} 2:2. ^{di} 2:2. ^{dj} 2:2. ^{dk} 2:2. ^{dl} 2:2. ^{dm} 2:2. ^{dn} 2:2. ^{do} 2:2. ^{dp} 2:2. ^{dq} 2:2. ^{dr} 2:2. ^{ds} 2:2. ^{dt} 2:2. ^{du} 2:2. ^{dv} 2:2. ^{dw} 2:2. ^{dx} 2:2. ^{dy} 2:2. ^{dz} 2:2. ^{ea} 2:2. ^{eb} 2:2. ^{ec} 2:2. ^{ed} 2:2. ^{ee} 2:2. ^{ef} 2:2. ^{eg} 2:2. ^{eh} 2:2. ^{ei} 2:2. ^{ej} 2:2. ^{ek} 2:2. ^{el} 2:2. ^{em} 2:2. ^{en} 2:2. ^{eo} 2:2. ^{ep} 2:2. ^{eq} 2:2. ^{er} 2:2. ^{es} 2:2. ^{et} 2:2. ^{eu} 2:2. ^{ev} 2:2. ^{ew} 2:2. ^{ex} 2:2. ^{ey} 2:2. ^{ez} 2:2. ^{fa} 2:2. ^{fb} 2:2. ^{fc} 2:2. ^{fd} 2:2. ^{fe} 2:2. ^{ff} 2:2. ^{fg} 2:2. ^{fh} 2:2. ^{fi} 2:2. ^{fj} 2:2. ^{fk} 2:2. ^{fl} 2:2. ^{fm} 2:2. ^{fn} 2:2. ^{fo} 2:2. ^{fp} 2:2. ^{fq} 2:2. ^{fr} 2:2. ^{fs} 2:2. ^{ft} 2:2. ^{fu} 2:2. ^{fv} 2:2. ^{fw} 2:2. ^{fx} 2:2. ^{fy} 2:2. ^{fz} 2:2. ^{ga} 2:2. ^{gb} 2:2. ^{gc} 2:2. ^{gd} 2:2. ^{ge} 2:2. ^{gf} 2:2. ^{gg} 2:2. ^{gh} 2:2. ^{gi} 2:2. ^{gj} 2:2. ^{gk} 2:2. ^{gl} 2:2. ^{gm} 2:2. ^{gn} 2:2. ^{go} 2:2. ^{gp} 2:2. ^{gq} 2:2. ^{gr} 2:2. ^{gs} 2:2. ^{gt} 2:2. ^{gu} 2:2. ^{gv} 2:2. ^{gw} 2:2. ^{gx} 2:2. ^{gy} 2:2. ^{gz} 2:2. ^{ha} 2:2. ^{hb} 2:2. ^{hc} 2:2. ^{hd} 2:2. ^{he} 2:2. ^{hf} 2:2. ^{hg} 2:2. ^{hh} 2:2. ^{hi} 2:2. ^{hj} 2:2. ^{hk} 2:2. ^{hl} 2:2. ^{hm} 2:2. ^{hn} 2:2. ^{ho} 2:2. ^{hp} 2:2. ^{hq} 2:2. ^{hr} 2:2. ^{hs} 2:2. ^{ht} 2:2. ^{hu} 2:2. ^{hv} 2:2. ^{hw} 2:2. ^{hx} 2:2. ^{hy} 2:2. ^{hz} 2:2. ^{ia} 2:2. ^{ib} 2:2. ^{ic} 2:2. ^{id} 2:2. ^{ie} 2:2. ^{if} 2:2. ^{ig} 2:2. ^{ih} 2:2. ⁱⁱ 2:2. ^{ij} 2:2. ^{ik} 2:2. ^{il} 2:2. ^{im} 2:2. ⁱⁿ 2:2. ^{io} 2:2. ^{ip} 2:2. ^{iq} 2:2. ^{ir} 2:2. ^{is} 2:2. ^{it} 2:2. ^{iu} 2:2. ^{iv} 2:2. ^{iw} 2:2. ^{ix} 2:2. ^{iy} 2:2. ^{iz} 2:2. ^{ja} 2:2. ^{jb} 2:2. ^{jc} 2:2. ^{jd} 2:2. ^{je} 2:2. ^{jf} 2:2. ^{jj} 2:2. ^{jk} 2:2. ^{jl} 2:2. ^{jm} 2:2. ^{jn} 2:2. ^{jo} 2:2. ^{jp} 2:2. ^{jq} 2:2. ^{jr} 2:2. ^{js} 2:2. ^{jt} 2:2. ^{ju} 2:2. ^{jv} 2:2. ^{jw} 2:2. ^{jx} 2:2. ^{ky} 2:2. ^{kz} 2:2. ^{la} 2:2. ^{lb} 2:2. ^{lc} 2:2. ^{ld} 2:2. ^{le} 2:2. ^{lf} 2:2. ^{lg} 2:2. ^{lh} 2:2. ^{li} 2:2. ^{lj} 2:2. ^{lk} 2:2. ^{ll} 2:2. ^{lm} 2:2. ^{ln} 2:2. ^{lo} 2:2. ^{lp} 2:2. ^{lq} 2:2. ^{lr} 2:2. ^{ls} 2:2. ^{lt} 2:2. ^{lu} 2:2. ^{lv} 2:2. ^{lw} 2:2. ^{lx} 2:2. ^{ly} 2:2. ^{lz} 2:2. ^{ma} 2:2. ^{mb} 2:2. ^{mc} 2:2. ^{md} 2:2. ^{me} 2:2. ^{mf} 2:2. ^{mg} 2:2. ^{mh} 2:2. ^{mi} 2:2. ^{mj} 2:2. ^{mk} 2:2. ^{ml} 2:2. ^{mn} 2:2. ^{mo} 2:2. ^{mp} 2:2. ^{mq} 2:2. ^{mr} 2:2. ^{ms} 2:2. ^{mt} 2:2. ^{mu} 2:2. ^{mv} 2:2. ^{mw} 2:2. ^{mx} 2:2. ^{my} 2:2. ^{mz} 2:2. ^{na} 2:2. ^{nb} 2:2. ^{nc} 2:2. nd 2:2. ^{ne} 2:2. ^{nf} 2:2. ^{ng} 2:2. ^{nh} 2:2. ⁿⁱ 2:2. ^{nj} 2:2. ^{nk} 2:2. ^{nl} 2:2. ^{nm} 2:2. ⁿⁿ 2:2. ^{no} 2:2. ^{np} 2:2. ^{nq} 2:2. ^{nr} 2:2. ^{ns} 2:2. ^{nt} 2:2. ^{nu} 2:2. ^{nv} 2:2. ^{nw} 2:2. ^{nx} 2:2. ^{ny} 2:2. ^{nz} 2:2. ^{oa} 2:2. ^{ob} 2:2. ^{oc} 2:2. ^{od} 2:2. ^{oe} 2:2. ^{of} 2:2. ^{og} 2:2. ^{oh} 2:2. ^{oi} 2:2. ^{oj} 2:2. ^{ok} 2:2. ^{ol} 2:2. ^{om} 2:2. ^{on} 2:2. ^{oo} 2:2. ^{op} 2:2. ^{oq} 2:2. ^{or} 2:2. ^{os} 2:2. ^{ot} 2:2. ^{ou} 2:2. ^{ov} 2:2. ^{ow} 2:2. ^{ox} 2:2. ^{oy} 2:2. ^{oz} 2:2. ^{pa} 2:2. ^{pb} 2:2. ^{pc} 2:2. ^{pd} 2:2. ^{pe} 2:2. ^{pf} 2:2. ^{pg} 2:2. ^{ph} 2:2. ^{pi} 2:2. ^{pj} 2:2. ^{pk} 2:2. ^{pl} 2:2. ^{pm} 2:2. ^{pn} 2:2. ^{po} 2:2. ^{pp} 2:2. ^{pq} 2:2. ^{pr} 2:2. ^{ps} 2:2. ^{pt} 2:2. ^{pu} 2:2. ^{pv} 2:2. ^{pw} 2:2. ^{px} 2:2. ^{py} 2:2. ^{pz} 2:2. ^{qa} 2:2. ^{qb} 2:2. ^{qc} 2:2. ^{qd} 2:2. ^{qe} 2:2. ^{qf} 2:2. ^{qg} 2:2. ^{qh} 2:2. ^{qi} 2:2. ^{qj} 2:2. ^{qk} 2:2. ^{ql} 2:2. ^{qm} 2:2. ^{qn} 2:2. ^{qo} 2:2. ^{qp} 2:2. ^{qq} 2:2. ^{qr} 2:2. ^{qs} 2:2. ^{qt} 2:2. ^{qu} 2:2. ^{qv} 2:2. ^{qw} 2:2. ^{qx} 2:2. ^{qy} 2:2. ^{qz} 2:2. ^{ra} 2:2. ^{rb} 2:2. ^{rc} 2:2. rd 2:2. ^{re} 2:2. ^{rf} 2:2. ^{rg} 2:2. ^{rh} 2:2. ^{ri} 2:2. ^{rj} 2:2. ^{rk} 2:2. ^{rl} 2:2. ^{rm} 2:2. ^{rn} 2:2. ^{ro} 2:2. ^{rp} 2:2. ^{rq} 2:2. ^{rr} 2:2. ^{rs} 2:2. ^{rt} 2:2. ^{ru} 2:2. ^{rv} 2:2. ^{rw} 2:2. ^{rx} 2:2. ^{ry} 2:2. ^{rz} 2:2. ^{sa} 2:2. ^{sb} 2:2. ^{sc} 2:2. ^{sd} 2:2. ^{se} 2:2. ^{sf} 2:2. ^{sg} 2:2. ^{sh} 2:2. ^{si} 2:2. ^{sj} 2:2. ^{sk} 2:2. ^{sl} 2:2. sm 2:2. ^{sn} 2:2. ^{so} 2:2. ^{sp} 2:2. ^{sq} 2:2. ^{sr} 2:2. ^{ss} 2:2. st 2:2. ^{su} 2:2. ^{sv} 2:2. ^{sw} 2:2. ^{sx} 2:2. ^{sy} 2:2. ^{sz} 2:2. ^{ta} 2:2. ^{tb} 2:2. ^{tc} 2:2. ^{td} 2:2. ^{te} 2:2. ^{tf} 2:2. ^{tg} 2:2. th 2:2. ^{ti} 2:2. ^{tj} 2:2. ^{tk} 2:2. ^{tl} 2:2. tm 2:2. ^{tn} 2:2. ^{to} 2:2. ^{tp} 2:2. ^{tq} 2:2. ^{tr} 2:2. ^{ts} 2:2. ^{tt} 2:2. ^{tu} 2:2. ^{tv} 2:2. ^{tw} 2:2. ^{tx} 2:2. ^{ty} 2:2. ^{tz} 2:2. ^{ua} 2:2. ^{ub} 2:2. ^{uc} 2:2. ^{ud} 2:2. ^{ue} 2:2. ^{uf} 2:2. ^{ug} 2:2. ^{uh} 2:2. ^{ui} 2:2. ^{uj} 2:2. ^{uk} 2:2. ^{ul} 2:2. ^{um} 2:2. ^{un} 2:2. ^{uo} 2:2. ^{up} 2:2. ^{uq} 2:2. ^{ur} 2:2. ^{us} 2:2. ^{ut} 2:2. ^{uu} 2:2. ^{uv} 2:2. ^{uw} 2:2. ^{ux} 2:2. ^{uy} 2:2. ^{uz} 2:2. ^{va} 2:2. ^{vb} 2:2. ^{vc} 2:2. ^{vd} 2:2. ^{ve} 2:2. ^{vf} 2:2. ^{vg} 2:2. ^{vh} 2:2. ^{vi} 2:2. ^{vj} 2:2. ^{vk} 2:2. ^{vl} 2:2. ^{vm} 2:2. ^{vn} 2:2. ^{vo} 2:2. ^{vp} 2:2. ^{vq} 2:2. ^{vr} 2:2. ^{vs} 2:2. ^{vt} 2:2. ^{vu} 2:2. ^{vv} 2:2. ^{vw} 2:2. ^{vx} 2:2. ^{vy} 2:2. ^{vz} 2:2. ^{wa} 2:2. ^{wb} 2:2. ^{wc} 2:2. ^{wd} 2:2. ^{we} 2:2. ^{wf} 2:2. ^{wg} 2:2. ^{wh} 2:2. ^{wi} 2:2. ^{wj} 2:2. ^{wk} 2:2. ^{wl} 2:2. ^{wm} 2:2. ^{wn} 2:2. ^{wo} 2:2. ^{wp} 2:2. ^{wq} 2:2. ^{wr} 2:2. ^{ws} 2:2. ^{wt} 2:2. ^{wu} 2:2. ^{wv} 2:2. ^{ww} 2:2. ^{wx} 2:2. ^{wy} 2:2. ^{wz} 2:2. ^{xa} 2:2. ^{xb} 2:2. ^{xc} 2:2. ^{xd} 2:2. ^{xe} 2:2. ^{xf} 2:2. ^{yg} 2:2. ^{yh} 2:2. ^{yi} 2:2. ^{yj} 2:2. ^{yk} 2:2. ^{yl} 2:2. ^{ym} 2:2. ^{yn} 2:2. ^{yo} 2:2. ^{yp} 2:2. ^{yq} 2:2. ^{yr} 2:2. ^{ys} 2:2. ^{yt} 2:2. ^{yu} 2:2. ^{yv} 2:2. ^{yw} 2:2. ^{yx} 2:2. ^{yz} 2:2. ^{za} 2:2. ^{zb} 2:2. ^{zc} 2:2. ^{zd} 2:2. ^{ze} 2:2. ^{zf} 2:2. ^{zg} 2:2. ^{zh} 2:2. ^{zi} 2:2. ^{zj} 2:2. ^{zk} 2:2. ^{zl} 2:2. ^{zm} 2:2. ^{zn} 2:2. ^{zo} 2:2. ^{zp} 2:2. ^{zq} 2:2. ^{zr} 2:2. ^{zs} 2:2. ^{zt} 2:2. ^{zu} 2:2. ^{zv} 2:2. ^{zw} 2:2. ^{zx} 2:2. ^{zy} 2:2. ^{zz} 2:2.

their way to them: for in due time modest merit will shine forth with double lustre. But humility, industry, faithfulness, silence under injuries, and a backwardness to seek great things for ourselves, are requisite to safety and comfort in the public scenes of life: and retired stations are far more favourable to our own inward peace. Lavish commendations of those whom we love and admire, in such a world as this, often prove a real injury; and in all cases every thing should be avoided, which can excite envy or opposition: except the performance of our duty to God and man. But if "the Lord be with us," and we have the consolations of his Spirit, we shall be happy in any situation: committing our souls and bodies, our characters and interests, our families and connexions, our way and our work, into his almighty hands: he will bring all that to pass which is good for us, and carry us safely through to that blessed world, where treachery, envy, and malice find no admission, but perfect love will prevail for evermore.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1-3. (Notes, 18:1,3,4,28-30.) At length Saul's envy and enmity burst forth in the avowed purpose of putting David to death, and he required all his servants, and even Jonathan his son, to join with him in this design. Yet, as he doubtless knew, that Jonathan delighted much in David, it must be ascribed to a peculiar interposition of Providence, that he did not attempt to conceal it from him. (Note, 20:3.)—Some field, where Saul commonly walked, was pit-ched upon by Jonathan for this conference; that David being there concealed, might have the fullest evidence of Jonathan's fidelity and affection, and all the information which he could procure him. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4-7. (Marg. Ref.)—Notes, 17:42-53. Ps. 25:2,3. John 15:22-25. Probably, Saul was for the present impressed by Jonathan's calm and forcible arguments, and was sincere when he swore that David should not be slain: but when his convictions wore off, his malice revived, and he was too much accustomed to swear, duty to reverence an oath. (14:21,33,41.) David could not indeed greatly confide in Saul's assurances; but he was willing to keep in the way of his duty, and to put his trust in God.

V. 8-10. Though David's valour and success were the known causes of Saul's enmity; yet he was willing again to fight against the Philistines, and to expose himself to their swords, and to Saul's increased envy on that account; nor

9 And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand: and David played with his hand.

10 And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall: and David fled, and escaped that night.

11 Saul also sent messengers unto David's house to watch him, and to slay him in the morning: and Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain.

12 So Michal let David down through a window: and he went, and fled, and escaped.

13 And Michal took an image, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster, and covered it with a cloth.

14 And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, He is sick.

15 And Saul sent the messengers again to see David, saying, Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.

16 And when the messengers were come in, behold, there was an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for his bolster.

17 And Saul said unto Michal, Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped? And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?

18 So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him: and he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

19 And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.

20 And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed

† Heb. his face. r 16:14. 18:10,11. s 6. Hos. 6:4. Matt. 12:43-45. Luke 11:24-26. 2 Pet. 2:20-22. t 20:33. Job 5:14,15. Ps. 18:17. 34:19. Prov. 21:30. Is. 54:17. Luke 4:30. John 10:39. n Ps. 59: title, 3:6,15,16. v Judg. 16:2. x Josh. 2:15. Act. 9:31,35. 2 Cor. 11:32,33. y 1 Heb. teraphim. Gen. 31:19. marg. Judg. 17:5. 18:14,17. Hos. 3:4. y Josh. 2:5. 2 Sam. 16:17-19. 17:30. z 6. Job 31:31. P. 37:12. Prov. 27:3,4. Rom. 3:15. a 22:17. 28:12. Matt. 2:16. b 1 Kings 21:20. Gal. 4:16. c 14. Ex. 1:17-19. d 2 Sam. 2:22. e 7:17. 15:34. 28:7. Ps. 116:11. Jam. 5:16. f 22:9,10. 23:19. 26:1. Prov. 29:12. g 11. 14. h 10:5,6,10. Num. 11:23,25. John 7:35,45.

did he ever decline playing upon the harp before Saul when required, though he saw the javelin in his hand, and had before so narrowly escaped! (Notes, 18:10,11,23-27.)

V. 11, 12. Lest David should elude the messengers if they entered the house in the night, they were ordered to watch till the morning that he might not go out; and then to apprehend him that Saul might slay him. Thus an opportunity was afforded David of escaping. (Marg. Ref. Note, Judg. 16:1-3.) Michal had either received some information concerning Saul's intentions, or made some observations which served to convince her of them. (Notes, Ps. 59: title, 3:4,6-15.)

V. 13-17. Michal's fidelity to her husband was commendable: nay, if the cause had been more doubtful, it would have been her duty to unite with him, while no harm was intended to Saul, and David merely aimed to preserve his life. (Note, Gen. 31:15,16.) Her stratagem also to gain time, was allowable: but her direct falsehood in vindicating her conduct to Saul, had not even the excuse of necessity; (Note, Ex. 1:19.) and it was highly injurious to David's reputation. The whole account illustrates the savage cruelty of Saul, who, it seems, could not be satisfied with the death of his faithful servant, unless he had the satisfaction of slaying him with his own hands: and it shows likewise the extreme danger to which David's life was exposed.—Mine enemy. (17) 18:29. 24:19. Note, 1 Kings 2:20.

An image.] Teraphim. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.)—It can hardly be thought that teraphim, for idolatrous purposes, were permitted in David's family: and it is therefore supposed, that this image was merely a statue for ornament.

V. 18. As the aged prophet had anointed David to be king, he fled to him on this emergency, rather than to his father's house: that he might have the solace of his counsel, instructions, and prayers.—Naioth is supposed to have been the place of a seminary of prophets, near Ramah. (19:22. Note, 10:5,6.)

V. 19-24. (Notes, 2 Kings 1:9-14. John 7:31-36,40-53.)—Saul being seized by the prophetic Spirit before he came to Naioth, stripped off his armour, and royal robes, or upper garments; as it is probable the other prophets laid aside their upper garments, and Saul's messengers along with them. (Marg. Ref.) and in an ecstasy, during the whole

over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.

21 And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise: and Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.

22 Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? and one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah.

23 And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

24 And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?

CHAPTER XX.

David consults with Jonathan how to provide for his safety. 1-10. They renew the covenant of friendship, and confirm it by oath, 11-17. They agree on a token, 18-23. David absents himself from the king's table, and is excused by Jonathan, whom Saul abuses and attempts to kill, 24-34. Jonathan excuses David's absence, and most affectionately takes leave of him, 35-42.

AND David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?

2 And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold my father will do nothing, either great or small, but that he will show it me:

1 Kings 1:9-13. Prov. 27:22. Jer. 13:36. k Joel 2:28. 130. 10:10. Num. 23: 5:21. Matt. 7:22. John 11:51. 1 Cor. 13:2. m Prov. 16:20. 21. n 2 Sam. 6:14. 18:20. 22. Mic. 1:8. * Heb. fell. Num. 24:4. o 10:11. 12. Acts 9:21. a 19:19-24. 2 Cor. 2:3. Ps. 124:6-8. 2 Pet. 2:9. b 12:3. 24:11. 17. Ps. 7:3-5. 18:20-24. 2 Cor. 1:12. 1 John 3:21. c 14:45. See on Gen. 4:7. Josh. 22:29. 24:16. Luke 20:15. * Heb. uncover mine ear. 12:9. 15. marg. Ps. 40:6. 1a. 50: 5. John 15:15. 17:8. d Deut. 6:13. Jer. 4:2. Heb. 6:16. e 25:29. 2 Sam. 15:31. 2 Kings 2:4, 6. f 1:26. 17:55. Jer. 39:16. g 27:1. Deut. 28:66. Ps. 116:3.

day and night, he involuntarily joined in speaking of divine things, or in singing hymns of praise, without any power of executing the base purpose of his journey. After which, finding himself baffled, he probably returned home extremely chagrined, without taking any notice of Samuel.—This second time of Saul being among the prophets was noted, as being indeed more wonderful than the former. (Note, 10:10-13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most vehement anger, when excited by real or supposed injuries, may be pacified by concessions, kindness, and continued good behaviour: but envious rage is exasperated by excellency of character and conduct, and generally is implacable.—When rooted malice possesses the heart, murder is speedily conceived; and the prospect of impunity, especially when men are armed with power and authority, emboldens them to avow the most shameful purposes.—Absolute princes are so seldom opposed in their designs, and so few venture to plead in behalf of those whom they envy and hate, that they often conclude all men to be alike selfish, and ready to execute any lucrative schemes of villany. But that friendship, which is cemented by mutual faith and piety, will influence those, who feel its sacred energy, to renounce their highest temporal interests, and venture the displeasure of their superiors, in pleading the cause of injured worth.—The evil of causeless malice, of ingratitude, and of persecuting those, whose conduct has been irreproachable, and whose services have been eminently useful, is so manifest, that a plain statement of truth and fact, with meek and serious expostulations, will often for the time impress the minds of such as are most deeply guilty. But resolutions, made in consequence of hasty convictions, and without any inward change of disposition, or dependence on the grace of God, seldom produce any durable good effect: and ungovernable passions easily break through the most solemn oaths, when the fear of God does not possess the heart. A fresh temptation soon rouses the dormant corruption; and, by indulging malignant passions, men give Satan his full advantage, and may be answerable for multiplied murders, without actually perpetrating any.—The servants of God however should keep to their place and duty, though hated for so doing; give honour to their earthly superiors, however they behave; and persevere in their endeavours to “overcome evil with good.” The Almighty has innumerable methods of protecting them in the most imminent dangers: he can preserve them by the kindness even of those persons, whose conduct deserves marked disapprobation; he can change the hearts, or bind the hands of their enemies, or shame them for a season out of their malicious purposes.—In some instances, a persecutor, by coming among the people of God, has been apprehended, as it were, by converting grace; and, like Saul of Tarsus, has professed and “preached the faith, that once he sought to destroy.” (Notes, Gal. 1:15-24. Phil. 3:12-14. 1 Tim. 1:12-16.) but far more, like king Saul, have for a time been apparently changed, have exercised spiritual gifts, and been

and why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so.

3 And David sware moreover and said; Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly, as the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.

4 Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.

5 And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at ever.

6 If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me, that he might run to Beth-lehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.

7 If he say thus, It is well; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him.

8 Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the Lord with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

9 And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would I not tell it thee?

1 Cor. 15:30, 31. 2 Cor. 1:9. † Or, Say what is thy mind, and I will do. 2 Heb. speaketh, or, thinketh. h Num. 10:10. 26:11. 2 Kings 4:23. Ps. 81:3. Col. 2:16. i 19. 19:49. Ps. 55:12. Prov. 22:3. John 8:50. Acts 17:14. m 9. 25:17. John 7:42. § Or, feast. 1:22. 16:2-5. j Deut. 1:23. 2 Sam. 17:4. n 9. 25:17. Ruth 7:7. o Gen. 49:47-52. Josh. 2:14. Ruth 1:8. Prov. 3:5. p 16. 18:3. 23:18. q Josh. 22:22. 2 Sam. 14:32. Ps. 74:5. Acts 25:11. r 1 Chr. 12:17. Ps. 116:11. a 38:42. 19:2.

numbered among the prophets, whose malice has remained unsubdued, and whose “last state has been worse than the first.” Let us then daily seek for renewing grace, which shall be “in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life;” let us cleave to truth and holiness with purpose of heart; and in every danger and trouble seek protection, comfort, and direction, in the ordinances of God, and in the society of his ministers and people. For these things will do far more towards making us happy, than all the splendour and luxury of a court, or the most absolute and extensive dominion, and royal or imperial dignity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. David, having been in so great danger at Naioth, and wonderfully rescued, fled from thence, and hastily repaired to Jonathan, to confer with him on the state of his affairs: but Jonathan was disposed to attribute his father's attempts against David to distemper, or to sudden sallies of passion, rather than to a fixed purpose of murdering him. After Saul had sworn not to slay David, (Note, 19:4-7.) it may be supposed he had said no more to Jonathan on that subject, though he confided all his other affairs to him; and therefore Jonathan could scarcely believe that he harboured such base designs: and perhaps, he had not heard of Saul's late violent attempts against David (Notes, 19:11-24.)

V. 3. David solemnly called God to witness, that in criminalizing Saul he did not go upon doubtful surmises: and that it was as certain in itself as that “the Lord lived,” and that he was as sure as Jonathan could be of his own existence, that a design was formed against his life; which constrained him to renounce the service of Saul, and consult his own safety. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5-7. David suggested this expedient, to convince Jonathan of Saul's intentions, and to show that he was forced into the measures which he afterwards adopted.—Saul still observed the externals of religion; and at the new moons entertained his family and chief officers, at a feast upon a sacrifice. Hitherto David had filled his place there: but on this occasion he purposed to be absent, to make trial of Saul: for, as he was evidently destitute of affection for him, if he were very angry, it must arise from his being deprived of an opportunity to do him mischief. It may be supposed, that David was invited to an annual family-sacrifice at Bethlehem: (Notes, 9:12-14. 16:1-5.) the excuse was sufficient; Jonathan was competent to grant David permission to be absent; and he engaged to return on the third day before even, to learn the result. In the meanwhile he purposed to conceal him in the fields about Gibeah. (Notes, 19:25. 19:19-21.)

V. 8. At Jonathan's instance, he and David had entered into a covenant in the name of JEHOVAH, being ratified by a solemn appeal to him, for their mutual encouragement in worshipping him and promoting his glory. (Note, 18:34.)—Yet David seems to have had some jealousy, lest Jonathan should warp from his constancy; especially lest the er renom-

10 Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer thee roughly?

11 And Jonathan said unto David, Come, and let us go out into the field. And they went out both of them into the field.

12 And Jonathan said unto David, ^o Lord God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about to-morrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and show it thee;

13 ^v The Lord do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace; and ^a the Lord be with thee, as he hath been with my father.

14 And thou shalt not only, while yet I live, show me ^a the kindness of the Lord, that I die not;

15 But also ^a thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the earth.

16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, ^b Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies.

17 And Jonathan caused David to swear again, ^c because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

18 Then Jonathan said to David, To-morrow is ^d the new moon; and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be ^e empty.

19 And when thou hast stayed three days, then thou shalt go down ^f quickly, and come to the place where thou didst ^g hide thyself ^h when the business was in hand, and shalt remain by the stone ⁱ Ezel.

20 And I will shoot three arrows on the side thereof, as though I shot at a mark.

21 And, behold, I will send a lad, saying, Go, find out the arrows. If I expressly say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee,

take them; then come thou; for there is peace to thee, and no hurt, as ^j the Lord liveth.

22 But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way ^k for the Lord hath sent thee away.

23 And as touching ^l the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold ^m the Lord be between thee and me for ever. [Practical Observations.]

24 ⁿ So David hid himself in the field: and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

25 And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.

26 Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something hath befallen him, ^o he is not clean; surely he is not clean.

27 And it came to pass on the morrow, which was the second day of the month, that David's place was empty; and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not ^p the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?

28 And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-lehem:

29 And he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and ^q my brother, he hath commanded me to be there: and now, if I have found favour in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren: therefore he cometh not unto the king's table.

30 Then ^r Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, ^s Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?

31 For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he ^t shall surely die.

32 And Jonathan answered Saul his father,

19-30. 24, 25, 10, 14, 17. Gen. 42:30. ¹ Kings 12:13. Prov. 18:23. ² Josh. 22:22. Job 31:4. Ps. 17:3, 139:1-4. ³ Heb. anointed. Prov. 20:5. 25:23. ⁴ Heb. uncover thine ear. 2. ⁵ 3:17. 25:22. Ruth. 1:17. 2 Sam. 3:35. 19:14. ⁶ 1 Kings 19:2. 20:10. ⁷ x 17:37. 1 Sam. 1:5. 1 Chr. 22:11, 16. Matt. 28:20. 19:13. ⁸ y 10:7. 11:6-13. 14:47. 2 Sam. 7:5. ⁹ 2 Sam. 9:3. Eph. 5:1, 2. ¹⁰ 24:21. ¹¹ 2 Sam. 9:1-7. 21:7. ¹² 1 Heb. cut. 19:3. Gen. 15:9. b 25:22. 31:2. 2 Sam. 4:7. ¹³ & 21:8. ¹⁴ Or, by his love toward him. c 18:13. Dent. 13:6. 2 Sam. 1:25. ¹⁵ Prov. 18:24. d See on 5. ¹⁶ Heb. missed. ¹⁷ Or, diligently. Heb. greatly. e 5:5. 19:2. ¹⁸ Heb. in the day of the business. ¹⁹ Or, that sheweth the way. ²⁰ Heb.

not any thing. f Jer. 4:2. 5:2. 12:16. Am. 8:14. g 14:15. h 42. Gen. 16:5. 31:50. i Ps. 50:18-21. Prov. 4:17. 15:17. 17:1. 21:3, 27. Ia. 1:11-15. Zech. 7:6. John 18:23. j Indig. 16:20. k Lev. 7:21. 11:24, 27, 31, 40. 16:5. 16, 17, 19-21. Num. 19:16. 1:11. 19:3-10, 15. m 22:7-9. 13:14. 25:10. Ia. 11:1, 2. Matt. 13:35. 1 Pet. 2:4. n 8. o 17:28. p Job 5:2. Prov. 14:29. 19:1, 24. 25:28. 27:3. Jam. 1:19, 20. q Or, thou perverse rebel. Heb. son of perverse rebellion. Prov. 15:2. 21:24. Matt. 5:22. Eph. 4:31. 6:4. q 8. 19:6, 12-15. ²¹ Heb. is the son of death. 25:16. 2 Sam. 19:23. Ps. 79:11. marg.

ed tongue of slander should injure him in his friend's esteem. 'If,' says he, 'I am guilty of any great offence which violates our covenant, such as treason against Saul; slay me thyself, but betray me not to thy father.' This was finely conceived to touch the tenderest feelings of Jonathan's heart.

V. 12, 13. In order to satisfy David, Jonathan appealed to God for his sincerity, and called on him to avenge his perfidy, if he betrayed his friend. Jonathan knew that Samuel had anointed David, and believed that he would certainly be king; and he had no thoughts of opposing the purpose of God, but rejoiced that so pious and able a person was chosen to reign over Israel; and prayed that the Lord might be with him, as he had been with Saul. For, as it became a dutiful son, he drew a veil over his father's misconduct, and only adverted to his former good management and success. (Notes, 11:1-15.)—The whole is emphatically the language of strong affection and emotion; and this appears in the broken and interrupted language employed.

V. 14-17. It has been very common in disputed successions, for the reigning prince to clear the title of his own family, by cutting off all competitors: Jonathan therefore prudently proposed to extend the personal covenant, before made with David, to their posterity also. He readily renounced all pretensions to the kingdom for himself and his children; and only desired, that he and they might be numbered among the friends of David and his family, when all his enemies had been destroyed.—When we consider David's distress, Saul's enmity, and Jonathan's prospects, we can never sufficiently admire the strength of his faith, and the force of his disinterested love. (Notes, 18:1. John 15:12-16.) It is observable that Jonathan did not desire, that the Lord should require it of David or his posterity, if any failure took place, but "at the hand of David's enemies."

V. 19. It must be supposed, that David went to Beth-lehem: but the original words seem to intimate, that he should come three days successively, from the place of his retirement to the spot where he and Jonathan had discoursed on the business, in order to learn whether any thing had been discovered. Perhaps he stayed but one day at Beth-lehem.

V. 20-22 In case Jonathan could not speak with David,

because he was watched, or because of persons passing by these signals were agreed on: and in case the last should be made, David must conclude, that his death was determined; and that the Lord required him to provide for his safety by concealing himself.

V. 25. When Saul entered the room, Jonathan arose, and took his seat next to him; and Abner probably, as a near relation of Saul and commander of his forces, sat next to Jonathan.—It must be supposed, that Saul had before this returned to Gibeah, and that the incidents here recorded took place there.

V. 26. Saul did not ascribe David's absence to a criminal cause: but he might have suspected that fear of his murderous rage, rather than any ceremonial uncleanness inadvertently contracted, had induced him to absent himself. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 27. As the exact time when the new moon appeared was uncertain, it seems to have been customary to observe two days as festivals; so that those, who were unclean on the first day, might observe the second. (Note, Num. 28:11-15.) For many of these ceremonial uncleannesses lasted only till the evening. (Marg. Ref. Lev. 15:1)—Saul, in calling David "the son of Jesse," when he was his own son-in-law, expressed the contemptuous enmity of his heart. (Notes, 22:9, 10, 25:10, 11.)

V. 30. The terms used by Saul seem to contain the most scurrilous abuse, which the language afforded; especially implying, that Jonathan proved himself not to be his son, and that he disgraced his mother by taking David's part against him. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.)—Considering Saul's rank, and Jonathan's relation to him, his eminent services and excellent character, and the public and sacred occasion at which it occurred, this speech may give some idea of the furious passions which Saul indulged. (Notes, 27. 16:14. Jam. 3:3-6.)

V. 31. For as long, &c.] Saul doubtless knew that David had been anointed to be king, by the same authority as he himself had been: yet he opposed him with all his might, and vainly hoped to prevent the purpose of God by putting him to death! (Note, Mt. 4. 2:7-18.)

and said unto him, "Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?"

33 And Saul ^{cast a javelin at him to smite him:} "whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to slay David.

34 So Jonathan arose from the table ^{in fierce anger}, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for ^{he was grieved for David}, because his father had done him shame.

35 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field ^{at the time appointed with David}, and a little lad with him.

36 And he said unto his lad, "Run, find out now the arrows which I shoot." And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow ^{beyond him}.

37 And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is not the arrow beyond thee?*

38 And Jonathan cried after the lad, "Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

¶ 19:5. Prov. 24:11, 12. 31:8, 9. John 7:51. s. Matt. 27:23. Luke 23:22. t. 18:11. 19:10, 11. Prov. 22:24. Ec. 9:3. Jer. 17:9. u. 7. Ec. 7:9. v. Ec. 7:20. Eph. 4:26. x. Mark 3:5. y. 19. 2 Sam. 20:5. z. 20:21. * Heb. to press over him. a. Ps. 55:6-9. Prov. 6:4, 5. Matt. 24:16-18. Mark 13:14-16. Luke 17:31, 32. † Heb. instruments. ‡ Heb. the lad that was his. b. 23:23. Gen. 43:28. 2 Sam. 9:8.

V. 32-34. (Marg. Ref.) When Jonathan had before reasoned with Saul, he was reduced to a better temper; but now he would not hearken to a word: and though, in order to induce Jonathan's concurrence in killing David, he professed a great zeal for his establishment in the kingdom; yet when his purposes were opposed, he madly attempted to kill Jonathan also!—He seems to have used a javelin instead of a sceptre; for he had it always ready at hand.

It has been suggested, that the words of these verses do not mean, that Saul cast a javelin at Jonathan; but only that "he had cast a javelin" at David, which Jonathan at this crisis recollected. It must, however, be admitted, that this is by no means an obvious construction of the original. Nor can it be readily thought, that merely a recollection of a fact which formerly had taken place, could induce Jonathan to leave his place "in fierce anger" when he had, at this time, borne the most provoking language of his father, without expressing any indignant perturbation; and had also, subsequent to some of Saul's attempts on David's life, calmly expostulated with Saul, and induced him to engage, by a solemn oath, that he would not slay David. (Notes, 19:4-7.)—But the atrocity of such an attempt on the life of his own son, seems to some persons totally incredible. Yet Saul's stern and rigorous conduct, respecting Jonathan, after he had miraculously prevailed to rescue him and Israel from the greatest straits and disgrace, shows that the self-will and severity of his mind, had overcome, even at that favourable crisis, his natural affection. (Notes, 14:36-44.) And the transient attempt of his furious rage, in attempting to murder his son, on the occasion recorded in these verses, bears no proportion to his subsequent deliberate, impious, and most barbarous murder of the priests, and their wives, and children; because they were supposed to favour David. (Notes, 22:11-19.) Nor can anything be deemed too atrocious for a man to commit, whom God had given up, and left, in a kind of desperate madness, under the power of Satan, and of his own passions, till he plunged himself into destruction with his own hands. (Notes, 28:5-25. 31:3-6.)

V. 35-40. Marg. Ref.

V. 41, 42. Finding no one near, Jonathan seized the opportunity of one more interview with his beloved friend; who, in his conduct on this occasion, united all the respect and honour due to Jonathan's rank, with the most endeared affection and glowing gratitude: so that his sorrow even exceeded that of Jonathan's; as considering himself exiled from his country, separated from his wife and his friend, and excluded from the ordinances of God, and the society of his people. Nothing can be conceived more pathetic than this parting; and we do not find, that they met more than once afterwards in this world. (Notes, 23:16-18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-23. Next to the consolations of true religion, nothing so more supporting to an afflicted mind than the converse of a pious friend: and it is highly desirable to avoid misconstructions of our conduct, by those whom we love and esteem; lest we should lose the comfort of their friendship, and throw temptations in their way.—Though it is painful to suffer for well doing, yet it is far better than to suffer for evil doing: for a clear conscience, an unblemished reputation, and the favour of God, are unspeakable advantages in trying circumstances. (Notes, 1 Pet. 3:13-18. 4:12-16.)—Friendly and pious persons are always backward to suspect others of deep malignity, but wish to impute their misconduct, where undeniable, to other causes: and pious children will veil the faults of their parents as far as consists with other duties, and speak so favourably of them as truth permits. But it is shameful when parents deliberately devise wickedness, which they

39 But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

40 And Jonathan gave his 'artillery unto 'his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41 And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

42 And Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

CHAPTER XXI.

David comes to Nob, and obtains from Ahimelech hallowed bread, 1-6. Does, an Edomite, is present, 7. David takes also Goliath's sword, 8, 9. He flees to Gath, and feigns himself mad, and is sent away, 10-15.

THEN came David to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the

e. 10:1. Gen. 29:11, 13. 45:15. 2 Sam. 19:39. Acts 20:37. d. 19:3. 2 Sam. 1:26. e. 22:1, 7. Num. 6:25. Luke 7:50. Acts 16:36. § Or, the LORD be witness of that which, &c. 23. † 23:18. a. 22:19. Neh. 11:52. Is. 10:32. b. 14:3. Ahiah. 22:9-19. Mark 2:25. c. 16:4.

must studiously conceal from their children, lest they should in them meet with obstacles to their criminal designs.—Evident danger, from the malice of men, renders it allowable for us to quit those places where we were employed, and to take proper measures for self-preservation: yet this ought, if possible, to be so conducted, that all impartial persons may perceive the necessity, and that "the LORD hath sent us away."—At some times it appears to us, that "there is but a step between us and death:" at all times we are sensible that it may be so, and should be expecting and preparing for that event; "for, as sure as the LORD liveth, and as our souls now live" in the body, we shall ere long remove into the eternal world.—But let dangers appear ever so imminent, we cannot die, till the purpose of God concerning us be accomplished: and, if we are believers, till "we have served our generation according to his will." Note, Acts 13:24-37, conclusion.)—Every expedient should be tried to prevent open quarrels, and every appearance of evil guarded against: and by little things a certain judgment may often be formed of men's dispositions and intentions.—True friendship, grounded on the covenant of the Lord, will require nothing unreasonable, and refuse nothing equitable: yet it is apt to be jealous, when fidelity is put to severe trials, and there is danger lest slander and prejudice should interrupt its course. But, in reality, it rests on an immovable basis, and possesses inconceivable force: it is stronger than death, and able to silence the voice of emulation, ambition, self-love, and even relative affection. Who then can comprehend the love of Jesus, who gave himself a sacrifice unto God for us rebellious and polluted sinners! And what ought to be the force and effects of our love to him!—The believer, being acquainted with the purpose of the Father respecting him, willingly submits to his authority, and rejoices in the prospect of his glory. Loving him as his own soul, he asks and receives repeated confirmations of his covenant of peace; readily performs whatever Jesus his Friend commands; and for his sake feels and expresses a cordial love for those who seek his glory and bear his image. Assured that all his enemies will perish, he desires the blessing of his love and his covenant of peace and friendship for his posterity and his relations: but while he prays for and weeps over such of them, as "reject the counsel of God against themselves;" he must separate from them, and join interests with those whom they despise and hate.

V. 24-42. The formal professor is sometimes more constant at divine ordinances, than even the zealous believer, for discomposure of mind will occasionally prevent the attendance of a believer; while the purpose or the practice of the vilest crimes does not interrupt those, who trust in the mere external observance. When envious and angry passions are indulged, men are pushed on by Satan into the most indecent excesses, without respect even to character, or the most sacred obligations: nor are they, at one moment, aware of the outrages, which they shall commit the next. Let us then fear giving place to the devil in the smallest degree.—Under great provocations the meekest cannot always refrain from anger; but when its emotions are felt, it is our wisdom to withdraw in silence: and it is generous to be more grieved for our insulted friends than for ourselves.—Every comfort on earth is counterpoised with some sorrow; and the dearest friends must experience the most painful separations. But Christians need not, and should not, "sorrow as men without hope;" for, being one with Christ, they are one with each other; and will soon meet in his presence to part no more, where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. Some think Ahimelech is only another name for Ahiah; (14:3.) others, that Ahiah

meeting of David and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?

2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.

3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present.

4 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.

5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

6 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shew-bread, that was taken from before the Lord, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord; and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul.

8 And David said unto Ahimelech, And is

there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.

9 And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it: for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none like that; give it me.

10 And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

11 And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David, the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

12 And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

13 And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me?

15 Have I need of madmen, that ye have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?

d 19:17. 22:22. Gen. 27:20, 21. 1 Kings 13:18. Ps. 119:29. Gal. 2:12, 13. Col. 3:9. e 4. Judg. 9:29. Is. 3:6. f Heb. Judg. f. 6. Ex. 25:30. Lev. 24:5-9. Matt. 12:34. g Ex. 19:15. Zech. 7:3. 1 Cor. 7:5. h Acts 9:15. 1 Thes. 4:3, 4. 2 Tim. 2:20, 21. 1 Pet. 3:7. 1 Lev. 24:9. i Or, especially when this day there is other sanctified in the vessel. k Matt. 12:34. Mark 2:25-27. Luke 6:34. 1 Lev. 24:5-9. m Jer. 7:9-11. Ex. 33:31. Am. 8:5. Matt. 15:8. Acts 21:23, 27. n 22:

9. Ps. 52: title. o 11:5. Gen. 13:7, 8. 25:20. 1 Chr. 27:29. 2 Chr. 28:10. p 17:51-54. q 17:2, 50. r Ex. 28:6, 8. s 27:1. 1 Kings 18:3. Jer. 26:21. t 27:2. 1 Or, Ahimelech. Ps. 34: title. u Ps. 56: title. v 16:1. 18:7, 8. 29:5. x Ps. 119:11. Luke 2:19, 51. y 10. Gen. 12:11-13. 26:7. Ps. 34:4. 56:3. z Ps. 34: title. Prov. 29:25. 30 Or, made marks. 11 Or, pineth the madman. Ec. 7:7.

was dead, and that Ahimelech was his younger brother and successor in the priesthood. (Note, 14:2, 3.)—The tabernacle, on some account, had been removed from Shiloh to Nob, a city of Benjamin, which was not originally allotted to the priests, but, as it seems, had afterwards been given to them. (Marg. Ref.) The ark, however, still remained at Kirjath-jearim. (Note, 7:1, 2.)—David went to Nob to inquire of the Lord by the high-priest, as he had before been accustomed to do; and to take farewell of him and of the sanctuary, as he had of Samuel and of Jonathan. But as he went without his accustomed retinue, and in apparent distress, Ahimelech probably suspected a breach between him and Saul, and was afraid to entertain him. This proved a snare to David; and lest he should be betrayed to Saul, or sent away destitute, he immediately framed a gross falsehood, which can by no means be excused, and which had most fatal consequences. (Notes, 22:9-19.)

V. 3-6. It seems wonderful, that David should not be able to procure bread for himself and his few attendants: but when Saul's rooted malice was made known, every one would be afraid or unwilling to entertain him. The necessity, however, was real and urgent: and Ahimelech supposed that in such a case they might eat the shew-bread, provided they were prepared in the same manner as the Israelites had been, for receiving the law from mount Sinai. (Ex. 19:15.) David having therefore satisfied him in this respect, and assured him that the young men were ceremonially clean, as well as holy in their general character, (as the words seem to imply;) and having pleaded, that the bread was now in a manner common, as other loaves had been placed upon the table in their stead; he gave them some of it, and they did eat. (Marg. Note, Lev. 24:5-9.)—Jesus Christ in vindicating his disciples from the charge of breaking the sabbath, has also vindicated David in this matter; which proves that the positive institutions of religion may be dispensed with, when the preservation of life, or any other urgent necessity requires it. (Notes, Hos. 6:6. Matt. 12:3, 4.)

V. 7. Doeg had become a proselyte to the religion of Israel, perhaps to obtain preferment from Saul: (Notes, Ps. 52: title. 2-4.) and he was at this time performing some vow, which constrained his attendance at the sanctuary; but the word detained seems to imply, that he submitted to it as a painful restraint. (Note, Am. 8:4-10.) Thus, however, he was acquainted with what passed between David and Ahimelech. (Notes, 22:9, 10, 22.)

V. 8, 9. Either David fled with such precipitation that he had not time to take his armour; or he left it, in order the better to conceal himself.—It seems that Goliath's sword was not so large, but that David could readily use it; and every time he drew it, it would remind him to bless God for his victory over the Philistines, and to trust in him to turn the arms of all his enemies against themselves. (Note, 17: 50-53.)

V. 10-15. David expected that Saul would pursue him into every part of the land of Israel, and he was not disposed to form a party against him. Perhaps Achish deemed it po-

litic to draw off so able a commander from the service of Saul, and had given him some intimations that he would protect him. But his officers judged otherwise; and, remembering his victory over Goliath, and the lavish commendations bestowed on him; (Note, 18:6-9.) and having heard, that he had been appointed to be "the king of the land;" they judged it impossible to fix him in their interest, and perhaps intimated that he should be put to death. (Note, 29:4-6.) This so alarmed David, that he feigned himself mad, and mimicked the actions of lunatics; which gave Achish the opportunity of sending him away, without either employing or hurting him; but it is not certain, whether he really thought him mad, or was willing to avail himself of appearances, to get out of the difficulty.—David's conduct was, in some respects, degrading to his character, and discovered a wavering in his faith and courage. He soon, however, recovered his confidence and composure; for on this occasion he composed the thirty-fourth and fifty-sixth Psalms, which are remarkable for strength of faith and fervour of piety. (Notes, Ps. 34: title. 4-6. 56: title. 1-4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When in the courts of kings a favourite falls, in general it is very rapidly: for out of fickleness, envy, malice, ambition, or fear, almost every one deserts or opposes him; disregarding the most unsullied reputation, eminent services, or personal obligations. It is therefore "better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes." (Note, Ps. 118:8, 9.) "Oppression maketh even a wise man mad:" (Note, Ec. 7:7.) and few conduct themselves in extreme difficulties, without taking some manifestly false step: we should therefore "watch and pray, that we may not enter into temptation;" and especially seek that strength of faith in God, which may overcome the fear of man.—Ingenious falsehoods often promise present security; but they ensure future disgrace and disquietude; and no impositions are more foolish, and prejudicial, than those, which some men practice, in seeking counsel and comfort from the ministers of Christ.—Urgent necessity will justify us in neglecting, in particular instances, the rituals of religion; but we ought always to attend on holy things, in holiness of body and soul, and with a mind as abstracted from all earthly objects as possible.—The true believer is glad to go to the courts of the Lord, is reluctant to quit them, and mourns when confined from them: but the time-serving hypocrite is dragged to them, and detained in God's service from secular motives, and is often forming schemes of wickedness when he seems to be worshipping. What wonder then, that "his sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord?" (Notes, Ps. 26:6-8. 27:1-6. 42:1-3. 63:1-4. 84:1-4, 10. Prov. 15:8, 9.)—The remembrance of former mercies not only revives gratitude, but inspires confidence and courage: and the word of God is that "sword of the Spirit," concerning which, in all temptations and conflicts, we may well say, "There is none like it."—In this world we must pass from one danger to another, and often meet with terror where we seek security; and those very honours, of which men are ambitious, and which are most gratifying at the time, expose them

CHAPTER XXII.

David escapes to Adullam, whither his kindred and others resort to him; 1, 2. At Mizpeh he commends his parents to the protection of the king of Moab; 3, 4. Admonished by the prophet Gad, he returns to the land of Judah; 5. Saul complains that his servants are unfaithful; 6-8. Doeg accuses Ahimelech, who is sent for with the priests, and answers the charge; 9-16. Saul's soldiers refusing to slay the priests at his command, Doeg executes it; and destroys their city with their wives and children; 17-19. Abimelech escapes to David, who blames himself, and assures him of protection; 20-23.

DAVID therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him.

2 And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

3 And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab: and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me.

4 And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.

5 And the prophet Gad said unto David, Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah. Then David departed, and came into the forest of Hareth.

6 ¶ When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;)

7 Then Saul said unto his servants that stood about him, Hear now, ye Benjamites; Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds;

a 21:10-15. Ps. 34: title. b Josh. 12:15, 15:35, 2 Sam. 23:13, 14. 1 Chr. 11:15, Ps. 142: title, Mic. 1:15, Heb. 11:38. c Jer. 11:12, 28. * Heb. had a creditor, Matt. 18:23-34. † Heb. bitter of soul. 1:10, 30:6, Judg. 18:25, 2 Sam. 17:8. Prov. 31:6. margins. d 9:16, 25:15, 16. 30:22-24, 2 Sam. 5:2, 2 Kings 10:1. 1 Chr. 11:15-19, Ps. 72:12, Heb. 2:10. e Judg. 11:29. f 14:47. Ruth 1:1-4, 4:10, 17. g Gen. 47:11. Ps. 20:12, Matt. 15:4-5. 1 Tim. 3:4. h 3:18. 2 Sam. 15:23, 25. Phil. 2:23, 24. i 2 Sam. 23:13, 14. 1 Chr. 12:16, 12 Sam. 24:11. 1 Chr. 21:9, 29:29, 2 Chr. 29:25. k 23:1-5, Neh. 6:11, Ps. 11:1. l 1:8, 8:12-14. 1 Or, grove in a high place. 11:10, 19:9, 20:33. m 9:13, 20:27, 30, 25-10. 2 Sam. 30:1. 1 Kings 12:16. 11:1, 1:10. n 8:14, 15. o 8:11, 12.

to manifold disadvantages and perils: nor can we expect our situation to be better, while the best of characters are so inconsistent and defective. But we may "trust the LORD at all times;" he will supply our wants, and never forsake us notwithstanding our lamented infirmities: he will not leave the lives of his people in the hands of their enemies, nor their souls in disconsolation: and the more simply we depend on him and obey him, the more comfortably and surely we shall walk through this troublesome world, to that "rest which is reserved for the people of God."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1, 2. David, being unable to secure himself by flight, and finding that none would venture to harbour him, hid himself in a cave. (Note, Ps. 142: title.) Thither his relations resorted to him for protection from the rage of Saul, and to afford him assistance: along with them also came a number of persons of broken fortunes and unsettled minds, of whom he formed a small army. But they acted entirely upon the defensive, and indeed became protectors of the country: and probably David's instructions, devotions, and example, produced a great change in the temper and behaviour of the larger part of them. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 25:7, 8, 14-17, 30:22-25, Judg. 11:3.)

V. 3, 4. The king of Moab, being at variance with Saul, was favourable to David; perhaps the more so, as David was descended from a Moabitess. (Ruth 4:13-17.) With him, however, he procured a retreat for his aged parents. (Note, 2 Sam. 8:2.)

V. 5. It is probable that Gad had been educated in the schools of the prophets under Samuel's tuition; (Marg. Ref. j. Note, 10:5, 6.) and knowing that David was anointed to be king, he seems to have attended him in his distresses. By him the Lord commanded David not to abide at Mizpeh, which bordered on Moab; (Note, Judg. 11:9-11.) or in any distant fortified place: but to return into the land of Judah, that he might not be alienated from his brethren, or his men enticed to idolatry; that his faith might be exercised and increased; and that he still might perform some service to his country. (Note, 23:1-6.)

V. 6. Saul had pitched his tent, or set up his standard, near Gibeah, upon some eminence; (for so the word Ramah signifies;) and with a spear in his hand he seemed to menace vengeance against all who did not join him in persecuting David. (Note, 20:32, 33.)

V. 7, 8. This language of Saul is very expressive of rage and jealousy. He took it for granted that David had con-

spired against him. That all of you have conspired against me and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or sheweth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

9 Then answered Doeg the Edomite, (which was set over the servants of Saul,) and said, I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub.

10 And he inquired of the LORD for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

11 Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

12 And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I am, my lord.

13 And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

15 Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.

16 And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and all thy father's house.

§ 11:1, underneath mine ear. 20:2, Job 33:16. marg. p 18:3. 20:8, 13-17, 30-31, 33:15-17. q 21:7, Ps. 53: title. 1-5. Prov. 19:5, 20:12, Ec. 22:9, Matt. 26:74-81. r 13:15, 23:2, 4:12, 30:18. Num. 27:21. s 21:5-9. * Rom. 3:15. u 7:13. † Heb. behold me. 2 Sam. 9:6. Is. 65:1. v 8. Ps. 119:69. Am. 7:10. Luke 23:2-5. x 19:4, 5, 20:32, 21:11, 26:23, 2 Sam. 22:23-25. Prov. 24:11, 12, 21:8, 9. y 13, 17:25, 18:27. z 18:13, 21:2. a Gen. 20:5, 6. 2 Sam. 15:11, 22:6, 1:12. 1 Pet. 3:16, 17. ** Heb. little or great. 25:36. b 14:44, 20:31. 1 Kings 18:4, 19:2, 23:16, 25:15. Dan. 2:5, 12, 3:12, 20. Acts 12:19. c Deut. 24:16, Eccl. 3:6. Matt. 2:16.

spired against him. His pious, amiable, and dutiful son also was accused of being the ringleader in the conspiracy; because he would not assist in the murder of an excellent man, whom he greatly loved! Nay, the people in general, and his own tribe in particular, had conspired against him, and had no compassion on him, and were blind to their own interests; merely because they were not so furious against David as he was! (Notes, 16:14. 20:30-33.)—It is probable that Saul had heard that Jonathan had made a covenant with David; and, not being able to learn the particulars, he suspected that treason was implied in it. Perhaps Jonathan kept at a greater distance, and was more reserved than before.

V. 9, 10. There was no good reason why Doeg should at all mention Ahimelech's conduct, which he knew did not proceed from malice; but if he must report it, he should have declared, how Ahimelech was imposed upon by David, and that he intended to show respect to Saul in that very action. (Notes, 21:1-9.) But on the contrary, he spoke as if David came to take Ahimelech's advice about his subsequent proceedings, and as if Ahimelech was joined in a conspiracy with David against Saul; though nothing could be more contrary to the truth than this insinuation! Doeg therefore slandered Ahimelech, and bare false witness against him, though the general charges adduced accorded with facts. (Notes, Ec. 20:16. Matt. 26:57-62.)—It is observable, that Doeg, after Saul's example, did not deign to call David by his name, but contemptuously spoke of him, as "the son of Jesse." (8:13. 20:27, 30, 31.)

V. 13. Inquired of God, &c.] Saul, by this language, almost in direct terms, charged God himself with counselling a traitor by his high-priest, who to prevail against his sovereign! (Notes, Ec. 9:1-3. John 12:9-11.)—As Ahimelech did not deny this part of the charge, it may be concluded to be true, though not mentioned in the narrative.

V. 14-16. In Ahimelech's ready attendance, with all his brethren, and in his answer to Saul, we have the conduct and language of conscious innocence. David's reputation for fidelity and capacity was established: his near relation to Saul, as having married his daughter, his prompt obedience to him, and his honourable services to Israel, were well known: Ahimelech had been used to inquire of the Lord for him, as a public character: he meant no harm, knew nothing of what had passed, and abhorred the thought of conspiring against his prince: and therefore trusted he should be honourably acquitted.—It is observable that he generously concealed

17 And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not show it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD.

18 And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod.

19 And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword; both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

20 ¶ And one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

21 And Abiathar showed David, that Saul had slain the LORD's priests.

22 And David said unto Abiathar, I know it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there; that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house.

23 Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.

CHAPTER XXIII.

David, inquiring of God by Abiathar, defends Keilah and smites the Philistines, 1-6. Saul purposes to besiege him in Keilah; but the Lord showing David the treachery of the men of Keilah, he flees to Ziph, where Jonathan meets and comforts him, 7-18. The Philistines inform Saul concerning him, who closely pursues him to Mas; but is called off by an invasion of the Philistines, 19-28. David dwells at Engedi, 29.

THEN they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshing-floors.

2 Therefore David inquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.

1 Or, guard. Heb. runners. 8:11. 2 Sam. 15:1. 1 Kings 1:5. d. 13. 20:33. 25:17. 1 Kings 13:4. 14:45. Ex. 1:17. 2 Kings 1:13, 14. Acts 4:13. f. See on 9. 2 Chr. 24:21. Hos. 5:11. 7:3. Mic. 6:16. Zeph. 3:3. Acts 26:10, 11. h. 2:30—33, 36. 3:12—14. 1:28. Ex. 28:40. j. 9. 21:1. Neh. 11:32. Is. 10:32. k. 16:3, 9. Josh. 6:17, 21. Hos. 10:14. Jam. 2:13. 123:6. 30:7. 2 Sam. 20:25. 1 Kings 2:26.

David's imposition, though the mention of it would have greatly tended to exculpate himself.—But Saul was forsaken by God, and given up to Satan and his own malignant passions, and would hearken to nothing but the suggestions of revenge and jealousy.

V. 17. Saul madly and impiously resolved to slay all the priests of the line of Eli; because he supposed, contrary to proof, that one had been guilty; and he seems to have sent for the whole company, with this malignant intention; (11) He scorned to lay hands on an individual; (*Note, Esth. 3:6.*) and he apparently exerted in revenging himself on "the priests of the LORD." Yet his guards, or running footmen, (*Marg. Ref.*) so revered the sacerdotal character, and were so convinced that the priests were innocent, that, though they might themselves expect to feel the weight of their enraged prince's furious resentment, they expressly refused to execute his cruel command. A singular instance of obedience to God, rather than to man! (*Note, Acts 4:13—22.*)

V. 18. The priests did not generally wear the linen ephod, except when actually officiating: but perhaps the whole company was arrayed in sacerdotal garments, as appearing before the king, and as intending thus to show their respect to him.—Thus an Edomite, of base character in other respects, without provocation or opposition, with his own hands, slew eighty-five priests of the Lord at one time; and both he and Saul gloried in the bloody execution!—This horrid massacre, however, accomplished the sentence denounced against the house of Eli. (*Notes, 2:31—36. 3:12—14.*)

V. 19. Doeg, doubtless by Saul's authority, not satisfied with the blood of the priests, treated the inhabitants of Nob as the devoted enemies of God, and with more severity than Saul had exercised towards the Amalekites; nay, to the full import of the command which he had received in that respect! (*Notes, 15:1—3, 8, 9.*) No doubt they meant to intimidate all the Israelites from showing the least favour to David. (*Notes, Ps. 52: title. 1—4.*) "It was excellently said by Justin Martyr, Let us pray that kings and rulers, together with the royal power, may be found having a sober mind." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22. Upon recollection David had feared these consequences from Doeg's known character. (*Notes, 21:1—9.*) His feelings must have been exceedingly painful, when he considered the lie which he had told, as one occasion of this fatal catastrophe.—By this event, however, so terrible to the priests, and so lamentable to Israel, David obtained the presence of the high priest, which afterwards proved a great comfort and benefit to him. (*Notes, 23:1—6, 9—13. 28:6. 30:7—10.*)

PRactical OBSERVATIONS.

Oppression often forces men into measures, to which they were entirely averse, and deprives the community of the services of its most useful members; yet the Lord amidst all dangers preserves his people for their appointed services. He can promote their good by the most contemptible and the meanest instruments; and the son of David receives all who come to him, however sinful and miserable: he changes them all into a holy people, and employs them in his service; (*Note, Is. 11:6—9.*) and those who would reign with him, must be contented first to suffer with him.—True piety increases and purifies natural affection; and teaches men, however occupied or distressed, to be tender of their aged parents; and to be more ready to meet hardship or danger themselves, than to expose them to it.—In all our difficulties we should wait till we know what "God will do for us;" seeing none of our enemies can go further than he is pleased to permit them: we should therefore guard against excessive fear, venture readily into any place whither duty calls us, and, with-

27. m. 9:33. 4:12. Job 1:15—17, 19. n. 21:1—9. Ps. 44:20. o. 1 Kings 2:26. Matt. 24:9. John 15:20, 21. 16:3, 3. John 12:1—3. p. John 10:28—30, 17:12. 18:9. a. Josh. 15:44. Neh. 3:17, 18. b. Lev. 26:16. c. Deut. 28:33, 51. Judg. 6:4, 11. Mic. 6:15. e. 4:6, 9—12. 30:8. Num. 27:21. Josh. 9:14. Judg. 1:1. 2 Sam. 5:19, 23. 1 Chr. 14:10. Ps. 32:8. Prov. 3:5, 6. Jer. 10:23.

out yielding to resentment or despondency, persevere in looking out for opportunities of usefulness.—The progress of human nature, instigated by Satan's temptations, is from bad to worse with increasing rapidity. Conscience, fear, and shame give less and less resistance, and every passion grows more and more exorbitant. Envy, malice, and jealousy torment the soul with real miseries, though arising from unreal causes, or groundless apprehensions: the wretch who is under the dominion of these diabolical passions, suspects every one of enmity and treachery, breaks through all the bonds of honour and conscience, and is hurried on to the most furious and bloody revenge. Unhappy is it for mankind when such persons possess absolute authority; as the most sacred character, unshaken fidelity, conscious innocence, convincing arguments, and respectful assurances, form no security to any one, who is become obnoxious to them! The most harmless and friendly actions become constructive treason, and "Thou shalt surely die," silences every plea. Nay, the death of one, or of a few, sends a paltry revenge to a proud tyrant! Sacrifices large as his rage and power may be expected, for nothing else can appease his fury. And if some be found willing to venture his indignation, rather than abet his cruelty and impiety; others will be glad to purchase preferment at any price.—Let us then bless God for a mild, equitable, and limited government, and study to fill up our places in society consistently with our peculiar advantages: and may the Lord continue them to our remotest posterity, and extend the same to all the nations of the earth!—He often employs companions in distress, to comfort and protect each other; and, being exposed to the same dangers and enemies, they should combine for their mutual defence. Thus believers, being hated for Christ's sake, find safety under his protection; and ought to lay aside all personal animosities and useless controversies, to unite against their common enemies.—We may also learn from this narration, that needlessly to report the truth to the disadvantage of others, often springs from malice, and produces mischief; that a partial statement of facts is effectually bearing false witness; and that a generous mind is unwilling to repeat the faults of others; even for his own vindication. We should likewise consider, that it is very painful to a feeling heart to occasion evil to others, especially by misconduct: and as unexpected bad consequences may arise from our actions, we should learn to walk the more circumspectly; and always to be ready for that stroke, which hurries men into eternity before they are aware. For "the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—6. David was at this time an inspired writer of the Holy Scriptures; yet the Lord spoke to him by his prophet, and then by the high-priest, for the honour of his own institutions. David, having been anointed to be king, considered himself as the protector of Israel, and was ready to employ his men in any service, to which the Lord should please to appoint him: and Saul, occupied almost exclusively in persecuting David, so neglected the protection of Israel, that the depredations of the Philistines were exceedingly distressing, and met with no effectual resistance. (*Marg. Ref. b.*)—It is doubtful, whether David, at this time inquired of God by the prophet Gad, or by Abiathar. It seems from the text, that Abiathar did not come to him, till he came to Keilah; yet perhaps this only means the neighbourhood of that city. No doubt, Abiathar brought the high-priest's sacred ephod with Urim and Thummim along with him. (22:20—23. *Notes, Ex. 28:15—30.*)—It seems that David and his men having vanquished the Philistines, pursued them into their own country, and drove them away the cattle.

15 And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life : and David *was* in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

27 But ^{there} came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for ^{the} Philistines have ^{invaded} the land.

Luke 12, 32; 19, 21; Acts 28:16, Rom. 15:24, 1 Th 20:31, 24:20. Acts 5:39; 18:3; 20:19-17, 42; 2 Sam. 9:1, 21:7; 2 Sam. 17:26, 26:1; 1 Th 5:4; title: Rasc. Prov. 29:2, 26:1, 3; 1 Heb., *on the right hand*, 1 Or, the wilderness; f deut. 18:6, 2 Sam. 9:1, 21:7. Prov. 11:23, 1 Kgs 21:11-14, 2 Kings 10:5-7, 7: 54-3; Prov. 29:25, 22:1; 1 Jm 3:15, 3:16; 5: 5, 6; 5: 31. 1 Heb., *not shall be* Job 3:14, 1 Mark 14:11-13, 1 Jm 18:23, 3; 2 Sam. 17:19, 19:13; Prov. 1:18, Rom. 1:15, 1 Jm 1:15, 3:16, 3:2, 3; 4: 3, 3; Rev. 15:55; 17:19, 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:1; 22:1; 23:1; 24:1; 25:1; 26:1; 27:1; 28:1; 29:1; 30:1; 31:1; 32:1; 33:1; 34:1; 35:1; 36:1; 37:1; 38:1; 39:1; 40:1; 41:1; 42:1; 43:1; 44:1; 45:1; 46:1; 47:1; 48:1; 49:1; 50:1; 51:1; 52:1; 53:1; 54:1; 55:1; 56:1; 57:1; 58:1; 59:1; 60:1; 61:1; 62:1; 63:1; 64:1; 65:1; 66:1; 67:1; 68:1; 69:1; 70:1; 71:1; 72:1; 73:1; 74:1; 75:1; 76:1; 77:1; 78:1; 79:1; 80:1; 81:1; 82:1; 83:1; 84:1; 85:1; 86:1; 87:1; 88:1; 89:1; 90:1; 91:1; 92:1; 93:1; 94:1; 95:1; 96:1; 97:1; 98:1; 99:1; 100:1; 101:1; 102:1; 103:1; 104:1; 105:1; 106:1; 107:1; 108:1; 109:1; 110:1; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 114:1; 115:1; 116:1; 117:1; 118:1; 119:1; 120:1; 121:1; 122:1; 123:1; 124:1; 125:1; 126:1; 127:1; 128:1; 129:1; 130:1; 131:1; 132:1; 133:1; 134:1; 135:1; 136:1; 137:1; 138:1; 139:1; 140:1; 141:1; 142:1; 143:1; 144:1; 145:1; 146:1; 147:1; 148:1; 149:1; 150:1; 151:1; 152:1; 153:1; 154:1; 155:1; 156:1; 157:1; 158:1; 159:1; 160:1; 161:1; 162:1; 163:1; 164:1; 165:1; 166:1; 167:1; 168:1; 169:1; 170:1; 171:1; 172:1; 173:1; 174:1; 175:1; 176:1; 177:1; 178:1; 179:1; 180:1; 181:1; 182:1; 183:1; 184:1; 185:1; 186:1; 187:1; 188:1; 189:1; 190:1; 191:1; 192:1; 193:1; 194:1; 195:1; 196:1; 197:1; 198:1; 199:1; 200:1; 201:1; 202:1; 203:1; 204:1; 205:1; 206:1; 207:1; 208:1; 209:1; 210:1; 211:1; 212:1; 213:1; 214:1; 215:1; 216:1; 217:1; 218:1; 219:1; 220:1; 221:1; 222:1; 223:1; 224:1; 225:1; 226:1; 227:1; 228:1; 229:1; 230:1; 231:1; 232:1; 233:1; 234:1; 235:1; 236:1; 237:1; 238:1; 239:1; 240:1; 241:1; 242:1; 243:1; 244:1; 245:1; 246:1; 247:1; 248:1; 249:1; 250:1; 251:1; 252:1; 253:1; 254:1; 255:1; 256:1; 257:1; 258:1; 259:1; 260:1; 261:1; 262:1; 263:1; 264:1; 265:1; 266:1; 267:1; 268:1; 269:1; 270:1; 271:1; 272:1; 273:1; 274:1; 275:1; 276:1; 277:1; 278:1; 279:1; 280:1; 281:1; 282:1; 283:1; 284:1; 285:1; 286:1; 287:1; 288:1; 289:1; 290:1; 291:1; 292:1; 293:1; 294:1; 295:1; 296:1; 297:1; 298:1; 299:1; 300:1; 301:1; 302:1; 303:1; 304:1; 305:1; 306:1; 307:1; 308:1; 309:1; 310:1; 311:1; 312:1; 313:1; 314:1; 315:1; 316:1; 317:1; 318:1; 319:1; 320:1; 321:1; 322:1; 323:1; 324:1; 325:1; 326:1; 327:1; 328:1; 329:1; 330:1; 331:1; 332:1; 333:1; 334:1; 335:1; 336:1; 337:1; 338:1; 339:1; 340:1; 341:1; 342:1; 343:1; 344:1; 345:1; 346:1; 347:1; 348:1; 349:1; 350:1; 351:1; 352:1; 353:1; 354:1; 355:1; 356:1; 357:1; 358:1; 359:1; 360:1; 361:1; 362:1; 363:1; 364:1; 365:1; 366:1; 367:1; 368:1; 369:1; 370:1; 371:1; 372:1; 373:1; 374:1; 375:1; 376:1; 377:1; 378:1; 379:1; 380:1; 381:1; 382:1; 383:1; 384:1; 385:1; 386:1; 387:1; 388:1; 389:1; 390:1; 391:1; 392:1; 393:1; 394:1; 395:1; 396:1; 397:1; 398:1; 399:1; 400:1; 401:1; 402:1; 403:1; 404:1; 405:1; 406:1; 407:1; 408:1; 409:1; 410:1; 411:1; 412:1; 413:1; 414:1; 415:1; 416:1; 417:1; 418:1; 419:1; 420:1; 421:1; 422:1; 423:1; 424:1; 425:1; 426:1; 427:1; 428:1; 429:1; 430:1; 431:1; 432:1; 433:1; 434:1; 435:1; 436:1; 437:1; 438:1; 439:1; 440:1; 441:1; 442:1; 443:1; 444:1; 445:1; 446:1; 447:1; 448:1; 449:1; 450:1; 451:1; 452:1; 453:1; 454:1; 455:1; 456:1; 457:1; 458:1; 459:1; 460:1; 461:1; 462:1; 463:1; 464:1; 465:1; 466:1; 467:1; 468:1; 469:1; 470:1; 471:1; 472:1; 473:1; 474:1; 475:1; 476:1; 477:1; 478:1; 479:1; 480:1; 481:1; 482:1; 483:1; 484:1; 485:1; 486:1; 487:1; 488:1; 489:1; 490:1; 491:1; 492:1; 493:1; 494:1; 495:1; 496:1; 497:1; 498:1; 499:1; 500:1; 501:1; 502:1; 503:1; 504:1; 505:1; 506:1; 507:1; 508:1; 509:1; 510:1; 511:1; 512:1; 513:1; 514:1; 515:1; 516:1; 517:1; 518:1; 519:1; 520:1; 521:1; 522:1; 523:1; 524:1; 525:1; 526:1; 527:1; 528:1; 529:1; 530:1; 531:1; 532:1; 533:1; 534:1; 535:1; 536:1; 537:1; 538:1; 539:1; 540:1; 541:1; 542:1; 543:1; 544:1; 545:1; 546:1; 547:1; 548:1; 549:1; 550:1; 551:1; 552:1; 553:1; 554:1; 555:1; 556:

V. 22-25. Had Saul marched directly along with the Ziphites, he probably would have come on David before he was aware: but Saul's delay, while he sought to make the more sure of him, gave David an opportunity of retreating.—*Thousands of Judah.* (23.) *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 18:24*
—26 *Judg.* 6:15. *Mic.* 5:2.

V. 26—28. When Saul's army had nearly surrounded David's little company, tidings were brought that the Philis-

28 Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place 'Sela-hammahlekoth.

29 And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strong holds at 'En-gedi.

CHAPTER XXIV.

David in a cave, having Saul entirely in his power, cuts off his skirt, but spares his life, 1-7. He proves his innocence to Saul 8-15. Saul owns his fault, requires an oath of David, and departs, 16-22.

AND it came to pass, *when Saul was returned from 'following the Philistines, that 'it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in 'the wilderness of Engedi.

2 Then Saul took 'three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and 'went to seek David and his men upon 'the rocks of the wild goats.

3 And he came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in 'to cover his feet: and 'David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

4 And 'the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of 'Saul's robe privily.

5 And it came to pass afterward, that, *David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

6 And he said unto his men, 'The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

7 So David 'stayed his servants with these words, and 'suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. [Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, 'My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, 'David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

9 And David said to Saul, 'Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

10 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen, how that the LORD had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave: and some 'bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is 'the LORD's anointed.

* That is, *The rock of divisions.* c 24:1. Josh. 15:62. 2 Chr. 20:2. Cant. 1:14. Ec. 47:10. a 33:25. * Heb. after. b 23:19. Prov. 25:5. 29:12. Ez. 32:9. Hos. 7:3. c 23:20. d 13:2. e Ps. 37:32. 33:12. f 1 Sa. 104:18. g Judge. 3:24. h Ps. 57: title. 142: title. i 26:8. 2 Sam. 4:8. Job 31:31. j 10:18. 33:7. 36:23. k Heb. the robe which was Saul's. k 2 Sam. 12:9. 24:10. 2 Kings 22:19. l 26:9-

11. 2 Sam. 1:14. 1 Kings 21:3. Job 31:29-30. Matt. 5:44. Rom. 12:14-21. 13:1, 2. 1 Thes. 5:15. † Heb. cut off. Ps. 7:4. m 25:33. n 36:17. o 20:41. 25:33, 24. Gen. 17:3. Ez. 30:12. Rom. 13:7. 1 Pet. 2:17. p 26:19. Ps. 101:5. Prov. 16: 28. 17:4. 18:8. 25:23. 26:28. Ec. 7:21, 22. Jam. 3:6. q 4:26:8. r 26:9. Ps. 105: 15.

times had invaded the land: (margin.) and either their invasion was very formidable, and the case extremely urgent; or Saul feared the people's resentment, if the Philistines ravaged the country, while he was destroying its defender. He therefore retired, doubtless full of rage and vexation, and David "escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler;" the Philistines being the instruments of God in his preservation.—He was also preserved from the painful necessity of fighting in his own defence, against his persecutors. (Notes, 26:1, 2. Ps. 54: title. 1-3.) The place was called the rock of divisions, as separating between David and Saul, on this emergency. (Margin.)

V. 29. *Marg. Ref. t.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-18. The prayers of true believers are a barrier against hostile invasions; but persecution brings down the judgments of God upon guilty nations. No ill usage, however, should prompt us to revenge ourselves, or prevent us from doing good as we have an opportunity and ability; even when we are sure to meet with ingratitude, and to be exposed to further trouble, by so doing. Thus Jesus lived and died, "and left us an example that we should follow his steps."—The more particularly we seek direction from God in fervent prayer, and the more carefully we consult the sacred Scriptures, the safer will be our path.—In difficult circumstances we shall often find the unbelief of our professed helpers a very discouraging hindrance; but the most effectual way of answering their objections, and securing their assistance, is to refer them to the precepts and promises of God.—No ties of honour, gratitude, or affection, can secure the heart, under powerful temptations: nay, we none of us know how we should act, if assailed by the terrors of impending death, and left without the immediate supports of divine grace. He, who made the human heart, can alone estimate its deceitfulness: we ought not therefore to confide in our own resolutions, or in the assurances of others; but depend on the Lord to guide and keep us; and if we meet with evil treatment, we need not wonder, and ought not to revile or murmur.—The kindness of those friends, whom he raises up where we could least expect them, may well countervail the malice of our enemies, and the ingratitude and fickleness of those whom we have served. And if the converse of one friend can, at one interview, give so much comfort and strength to our hearts; (Note, 2 Cor. 7:5-7.) what may not be expected from the continual supports, and daily visits, and powerful love, of the sinner's Saviour, the believer's covenanted Friend? And what will heaven be, where perfect and universal friendship reigns, without interruption, separation or alloy? Let us then continually seek the renewed ratification of the covenant of grace, and cultivate the friendship of the Lord and of his people. Our most rational and pleasing expectations of another kind may be frustrated; all other unions must be dissolved; but here disappointment and disunion can have no place for ever.

V. 19-29. The influence of wickedness, in those who fill exalted stations, widely and fatally diffuses itself among their inferiors, even throughout whole nations: many will pay court to them, by aiding their sinful purposes; nay, some will pride themselves in resembling them in their vices! and those only will be treated as friends, who in fact are their most destructive enemies. Those therefore who are distinguished by this dangerous pre-eminence, have additional

reasons for bridling their passions, and exercising themselves unto godliness; lest they should by their crimes occasion the ruin of multitudes, and thus aggravate their own condemnation.—The language of piety, separate from its substantial effects, can only amuse and deceive those who hear, and those who use it.—Malice is ever restless and tormenting; and though disappointed, it still hopes for success; but numbers, power, rage, and subtlety, can never destroy those whom God protects. His methods of preserving his people are unnumbered. (Note, Acts 9:3-6.) He sometimes leads them into the most imminent danger, to endure their deliverance, and to increase the torment of their persecuting foes. And he can employ one enemy, contrary to his intention, to deliver us from another still more formidable; or he can fill the hands of persecutors with other work, so that they are constrained to postpone their malicious purposes. But we must not expect much comfort in this evil world, which uses the best of men in so base a manner, and which once "crucified the Lord of glory." We should therefore study to pass through it as pilgrims; and to leave it, as those who are departing to a better country, that is, a heavenly.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1-3. When Saul had repelled the invasion of the Philistines, he selected three thousand of his troops, and resumed his pursuit of David, who had taken refuge among some uncultivated rocks, inhabited only by wild goats: and Saul, supposing him at a distance, retired into a cave, while his men were absent. But in this very cave, David and his company lay concealed. Thus God delivered Saul into David's hand: (Note, 23:8,) he was absolutely in his power, and could have made no resistance; nay, the manner of his death might have been concealed, till David had taken proper measures to secure himself and to seize the throne. (Notes, Ps. 57: 142: titles.)

V. 4-7. David's men urged very plausibly, that God had brought his enemy into his power, in order to fulfil his promises to him: yet they were greatly mistaken; as in reality the Lord intended to give David an opportunity of exercising faith, patience, and generous kindness; of showing the tendency and efficacy of his religious principles, the tenderness of his conscience, and the steadfastness of his loyalty; for the confutation of his accusers, a rebuke to Saul, and an example to all who read it.—David had a promise of the kingdom, but no command to slay the reigning king, or promise that God would deliver Saul into his hand. (2 Sam. 1 Kings 11:37, 40.)—Saul had been anointed by God's command, as well as made king over Israel in his providence: he had indeed been rejected; and David had been greatly injured, but he was not his own avenger. David's peculiar circumstances constrained him to defend himself, but not to slay Saul; whom he looked upon as his sovereign, and the LORD's anointed, and not as his rival and persecutor. (Note, 26:8-12.) He was satisfied with performing his present duty; he left his protection and future advancement to God; and he deemed it an atrocious offence to "stretch forth his hand," to hurt even so wicked a prince as Saul, and in defence of his own life. Nay, when he had privily cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, as a demonstration of what he could have done, his heart smote him, lest in this action he had failed of due respect to the LORD's anointed! (Note, 2 Sam. 24:10.) Neither would he allow his men to injure him, though they seem to have been so impatient for security and preferment, that he had much difficulty in restraining and appeasing them.

11 Moreover, 'my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see, that *there is* neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee: yet 'thou huntest my soul to take it.

12 The **LORD** judge between me and thee, and the **LORD** avenge me of thee; but 'mine hand shall not be upon thee.

13 As saith the proverb of the ancients, 'Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

14 After whom is 'the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? 'after a dead dog, 'after a flea?

15 The **LORD** therefore 'be Judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and 'deliver me out of thine hand.

16 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, 'Is this thy voice, my son David? and 'Saul lifted up his voice and wept.

a 16:27, 2 Kings 5:13. Prov. 15:1. t 26:18. Ps. 7:3, 4, 35:7. John 15:25, u 23:14, 23, 26, 20. Job 10:16. Ps. 140:11. Lam. 4:18. Ez. 13:18. Mic. 7:2. x 26:23. Gen. 16:5. Judg. 11:27. Ps. 7:9, 35:1, 43:1. 94:1. Rom. 12:19. 1 Pet. 2:23. Rev. 6:10. y 23:11. z Matt. 7:16-18. 12:33, 34. 15:19. a 2 Sam. 6:30. 1 Kings 21:7. b 17:43. 2 Sam. 3:8, 9, 16-19. c 26:20. Judg. 8:1-3. d See on 12, 2 Chr. 24:22. Mic. 1:2. * Heb. judge e 26:17. Job 6:25. 'Prov. 15:1.

V. 8-15. It may be supposed, that David remained at so great a distance from Saul and his army, that he was in no danger of being immediately seized on by them; though Saul could both hear and see him. Yet, if Saul's heart should not be affected by his address, he would be more likely to crush him than before. But this, and all consequences, David trusted with God.—Nothing can be imagined more respectful, pathetic, and forcible, than his conduct and address on this occasion. He showed all reverence to Saul as his prince, bowing himself before him to the earth: he called him respectfully, "My lord the king," and in token of affection, "My father," being his son-in-law: he avoided all reproaches, and sharp expostulations: he intimated that Saul's prejudice against him arose from slanderous reports; and reminded him, that he himself had been counselled to take away Saul's life, but would not do it. He adduced the most decisive evidence that he did not mean to injure him; while he repeatedly assured him that his hand should never be upon him. He mildly expostulated with him, on the injustice and unreasonableness of his conduct; and humbly represented himself as beneath the notice of so great a prince, who degraded himself in coming out "after a dead dog, a single flea," an imagined enemy equally insignificant. In illustration of his own conduct he quoted "the proverb of the ancients," that "wickedness proceedeth from the wicked," that men's actions manifest their dispositions; and if he had been a wicked person, his actions that day would have shown it. At the same time he plainly and repeatedly warned Saul, that the **LORD** would judge between them, and both deliver him out of his hand, and avenge his cause upon him. (Notes, 26:13-20.)

The imperative or optative mood, employed in these verses, might perhaps, with more strict conformity to the Hebrew, be changed for the future tense indicative:—"The **LORD** will judge . . . will avenge, . . . will be Judge," &c.

V. 16-22. These forcible words, and this generous behaviour, produced a temporary conviction in Saul's mind, of David's excellency, the righteousness of his cause, and the certainty of his advancement; and consequently, that himself was deeply criminal, and in a ruinous path. Probably, he was in some measure convinced of these things at other times, but they now more deeply affected him; nor could he suppress his emotion, or refuse to acknowledge his convictions. Instead therefore of attempting to destroy David as he intended, his malice was arrested, and he both spoke well of him, foretold his establishment on the throne, and begged of the **LORD** to reward him for sparing his life; and he owned that he should not have behaved thus, if David had been in his power. Under this conviction Saul desired of David the security of an oath, that he would not, when king, extirpate his posterity; and David was willing thus to bind himself to his duty. (Note, 2 Sam. 21:4-7.) But he did not ask Saul to swear to him, that he would no more seek his life; probably knowing that he did not duly regard the obligation of an oath: nor would he trust himself with him, being aware how 'such transient appearances could be depended on.—Saul's conduct in persecuting David, even when convinced of his excellency, and that he would be advanced to the throne, illustrates the behaviour of the scribes and priests in their determined enmity to Christ, notwithstanding they could not resist the wisdom of his words, deny the reality of his miracles, or at all impeach his character. (Notes, Matt. 23-6. John 11:47, 48. 12:9-11. Acts 5:33-39.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. Wicked men are often interrupted in their evil courses; yet they return to them when the restraint is removed, as if delivered from trouble that they might commit more

17 And he said to David, 'Thou art more righteous than I: for 'thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.

18 And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when 'the **LORD** had 'delivered me into thine hand, thou kildest me not.

19 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore, 'the **LORD** reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.

20 And now, behold, 'I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

21 'Swear now therefore unto me by the **LORD**, that 'thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house.

22 And David sware unto Saul, and Saul went home; but 'David and his men gat them up unto 'the hold.

25:11, Luke 21:15. Acts 6:10. f Gen. 33:4. g 26:21. Gen. 38:26. Ex. 9:27. Ps. 37:6. Matt. 27:4. h Matt. 5:44. Rom. 12:20, 21. i 10, 23:7, 26:23. j Heb. thou me up. 23:12, 26:8. margins, Ps. 31:8. j 23:21, 26:25. Judg. 17:2. k 20:30, 31, 32, 17. 2 Sam. 3:17, 18. Job 15:33. Matt. 2:3-6, 13, 16. l 20:14-17. Gen. 21:23, 31:45, 53. Heb. 6:16. m 2 Sam. 21:6-8. n Prov. 26:24, 25. Matt. 10:16, 17. John 2:24. o 23:29.

sins. (Note, Jer. 7:3-11.) But the **LORD** disappoints their malice; and by bringing them into danger, gives them manifest proof of their folly and wickedness. We should be very careful what interpretation we put upon events in Providence, and what conclusions we deduce from them; lest we mistake the opportunity of following our own inclinations, for an approbation of our conduct in so doing; and in doubtful cases we must neither judge by appearance, nor be determined by plausible arguments.—An accurate knowledge of the divine law, an established judgment, and a holy state of heart, are requisite to mark out the path of duty, in many important cases. But it is always safe to deny the suggestions of revenge, covetousness, ambition, impatience, or other selfish principles: it savours more of piety to interpret a providential dispensation as a trial of faith and patience, and an exercise of self-denial, than to consider it as a license for self-indulgence; and a tender conscience will be peculiarly afraid of specious temptations, and induce a man to "abstain from all appearance of evil."—We should perform all our relative duties from regard to the authority of God; when others violate his law in their conduct towards us, we must not do the same towards them; and in waiting for the performance of his promises we must use lawful means alone. Under the deepest injuries we are not allowed, and ought not to be incited, to avenge ourselves; but after the example of David, and of David's **LORD**, we should "commit our cause to him that judgeth righteously." (Note, 1 Pet. 2:18-25.) Magistracy is the ordinance of God, and confers dignity on those advanced to it, who, in all ordinary cases and lawful things, should be honoured and obeyed: and if they abuse their trust, the **LORD** will execute vengeance upon them; and provided we have the opportunity, we should, along with the most loyal and unreserved submission in all things lawful, plainly warn them of their danger in this respect. If persecuted in one city we may flee to another, and use necessary means of self-preservation; but we must not lift up our hands, or adopt offensive measures, against those whom God has placed over us, though like even Saul or Nero. (Notes, Rom. 13:1-7.)

V. 8-22. It is not enough that we avoid evil ourselves; we should use our influence to restrain others also, or we shall be chargeable before God for it.—Mild language and respectful behaviour, even to wicked and injurious superiors, are ornamental to piety. We must not indeed flatter any one with the hope of impunity in sin; yet we may put the most candid construction on men's actions, and satisfy ourselves with manifesting our own innocence, modestly complaining of hard usage, and employing forcible arguments and pathetic expostulations. It is also more prudent to abate envy by seeking to appear inconsiderable, than to excite it by boasting of dignity, or excellence, or of our past services.—While we are thankful for having been hitherto preserved from open crimes, we cannot bind ourselves too strongly, in dependence on the grace of God, to avoid them for the time to come: for our conduct as Christians should form a contrast to that of the enemies of true religion; in order to convince all men on what principles we act, and that our cause is worthy of God. The noblest of all victories consists in "overcoming evil with good."—If men in eminent stations had a proper sense of the importance attached to their characters and conduct, it would keep them from debasing themselves by such mean pursuits, as they are often engaged in; and a due reflection on our rational powers, and the unspeakable value of our immortal souls, would have a similar effect upon us all.—Those who act conscientiously will find opportunities of confuting their revilers, and of being manifested in the consciences of **thou**

CHAPTER XXV.

Samuel dies, and is lamented and buried by all Israel; and David goes to Paran, 1. The character of Nabal, and of his wife Abigail, 2, 3. David sends to Nabal most respectfully requesting some provisions; but provoked by his answer, sets out to destroy him, 4—13. A servant warns Abigail, 14—17. She meets David with a present, and wisely pacifies him, 18—31. David blesses God for her interposition, and courteously dismisses her, 32—35. Nabal, knowing of the danger to which he had been exposed, is terrified, and dies, 36—38. David marries Abigail and also Ahinoam, 39—43. Michal is given to Phalti, 44.

AND Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

2 ¶ And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings: and he was of the house of Caleb.

4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get ye up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, ¶ Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.

7 And now I have heard that thou hast

shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

8 Ask thy young men, and they will show thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: (for we come in a good day:) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.

10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.

11 Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?

12 So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

13 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword, and David also girded on his sword, and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

14 ¶ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

a 23.3. 1 Gen. 50:11. Num. 20:29. 1 Esdr. 3:4. Acts 8:2. c 7.17. 1 Kings 2:4. 2 Chr. 33:21. Is. 14:13. d Gen. 14:6. 21:21. Num. 12:16. Ps. 120:5. e 23:24. * Or, business was. f Gen. 26:13. 2 Sam. 19:32. Ps. 17:14. 73:3—7. Luke 16:19—25. g Gen. 13:2. Job 1:3. 42:12. h Gen. 38:13. 2 Sam. 13:23, 24. 1 Sam. 15:19—25. i Gen. 14:1. 1 Sam. 30:31. k 10:11, 17. Ps. 10:3. Is. 32:5—7. 1 Heb. ask him in my name of peace, 17:22. Gen. 43:23. 1 1 Thes. 3:8. 1 Tim. 5:6. 2 Sam. 13:23. marg. 1 Chr. 12:18. Matt. 10:12, 13. Luke 10:5. John 14:27. 2 Thes. 3:16. n 15:16, 21. 22:2. Is. 11:6—9. Luke 3:14. Phil. 4:15.

4.8. f Heb. asked. o Neh. 8:10. Esth. 9:10. Luke 11:14. 14:12—14. p See on 3:6. 24:11. q Heb. rested. q 20:30. 22:7, 8. Ex. 5:2. Judg. 9:28. 2 Sam. 20:1. 1 Kings 12:16. Ps. 123:3, 4. r 22:2. Ec. 7:10. s 3. 24:13. Deut. 8:17. Judg. 8:6. Job 31:7. Ps. 73:7, 8. 1 Pet. 4:9. ¶ Heb. slaughter. t Ec. 11:1, 2. Gal. 6:10. u 14:15. John 9:23, 30. 2 Cor. 6:9. x 2 Sam. 24:13. Is. 36:21, 22. Heb. 13:17. y Josh. 9:14. Prov. 14:29. 16:32. 19:2. 11:25:8. Jam. 1:19, 20. 2 Gal. 6:6. Rom. 12:19—21. a 30:9, 10, 21—24. ¶ Heb. flew upon them. Mark 15:29.

most determined enemies: and at length the Lord will plead and avenge their cause. (Notes, Ps. 37:5—8. Is. 54:15—17. Mic. 7:3—10.)—Flattering and slanderous favourites are the base of princes: by hearing their words, they advance their enemies, and persecute their friends; because the clamour of their passions silences the whisper of their consciences.—But the most atrocious sinners have seasons of remorse, when they perceive and are affected with their situation: they are almost persuaded to renounce their sins; they are convinced of the excellency of true Christians, as acting from principles superior, and even contrary, to those which influence their own conduct: they cannot withhold from them a good word, and wish or prayer; and at once forbode their felicity, and their own misery. Yet, as they are not truly humbled or changed, sin and the world reign in their hearts: they acknowledge that they are not so good as some men, but will not confess how very criminal they are; they are more careful about their credit and interests in the world, than the forgiveness of their sins; and while they confess their own injustice, and their obligations to others, they leave it to the Lord to repay them.—Those who are experimentally acquainted with the grace of God, will place little dependence on these appearances, especially in those, who have long sinned against the light of their own consciences: for there is great reason to fear that these transient affections also will subside, and leave the heart still harder than before.—The grace of God will teach us to forgive and be kind to our enemies, but not to trust those who have repeatedly deceived us: for malice often seems dead, when it is only dormant, and will ere long revive with double force. Yet, whether the Lord employ men, bind their hands, or awe and affect their hearts, so that they lose for a season their inclination to hurt us; the deliverance is from him, an evidence of his love, and an earnest of our final salvation.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1. If Samuel was eighteen years of age at the death of Eli, he must have been at least thirty-eight, when he vanquished the Philistines at Ebenezer. (Notes, 7:1, 2.) But how many years elapsed, from that time, to his anointing Saul; how long he lived after Saul was made king; how long Saul survived him; or how long Saul reigned in all, are matters of conjecture or calculation, without any certain data to proceed upon. (Note, Acts 13:1.) Perhaps Saul survived Samuel three or four years.—Doubtless Samuel, to the end of his days, presided over the seminary of prophets, and, by his prayers, instructions, and example, was very useful in private; though he did not much intermeddle in public business. When he died, the people in general were deeply sensible of their loss, and of their sin and folly in rejecting him; which conviction the disastrous events of Saul's reign, and his capricious and tyrannical conduct, would enhance: so that collecting themselves to-

gether, they made general lamentations for him and honourably buried him.—Upon this event David removed into the wilderness of Paran, in part of which Israel wandered before they entered Canaan; (Marg. Ref. d.) perhaps concluding that Saul's malice would be now more unrestrained than ever.

V. 2. (Note, Job 1:3.)—Carmel.] Not mount Carmel in the north of Canaan in the lot of Asher, (Josh. 19:26. 1 Kings 18:19, 42.) but another place of the same name belonging to Judah. (Josh. 15:55.)

V. 3—6. (Marg. Ref.) Of the house of Caleb. (3) כלב (lege כלב.) The LXX render it ἀνθρωπος κυνικός, A man like a dog; as if derived from כלב a dog.—That liveth, &c. (6) The words, in prosperity, are not in the original.—In this friendly, and respectful, and highly benevolent salutation, David seems to have spoken unadvisedly, in calling a sottish and luxurious wicked man, "him that liveth;" as if his own indigence scarcely deserved the name of life. (Note, 1 Thes. 3:6—10, v. 8.)

V. 7, 8. David had not only restrained his men from molesting Nabal's flocks, but had protected them against the depredations of their invaders. (Notes, 14—17. 22:1, 2.) He might, therefore justly have demanded a reward for his services: but he was rather desirous of becoming Nabal's supplicant, for whatever came to hand in a season of festivity; as he was in great distress, and unwilling to subsist by plunder. (Note, Philen. 8—11.) Nothing could be more modest, respectful, and friendly, than this message was.

V. 10, 11. Nabal doubtless knew that David had slain Goliath, and often smitten the Philistines; and that he was a man of eminent valour and capacity, and of unblemished reputation; that he was the son-in-law of Saul, and unjustly persecuted; and that in his present necessity he behaved in an unexceptionable manner. But to vindicate his selfish refusal, he abused him and his men as runaway slaves; and thus he foolishly rendered his answer as exasperating as he could! (Judg. 12:4.)—It is observable, that Nabal copied Saul's contemptuous way of calling David the son of Jesse, though he pretended he knew not whence he was! (Notes, 20:30. 22:9, 10.)

V. 13. (Note, Judg. 12:1—7.) David had been upon his guard against anger and revenge, when most basely used by Saul; (Notes, 2:1—15.) but he did not expect such reproachful language and insolent treatment from Nabal: he was therefore wholly put off his guard; and in great indignation he determined to avenge himself. It was also far more humiliating to be insulted by such a man as Nabal, than to be persecuted by the king. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 14—17. This servant not only confirmed what David had said, concerning his conduct and that of his men, but stated that they had been very useful to them. (Notes, 7, 8. 22:1, 2.) It does not appear, whether he had received

15 But the men *were* very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:

16 They were *a* wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for *evil* is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is *such* *a* son of Belial, *that a man cannot speak to him.* [Practical Observations.]

18 Then Abigail *made* haste, and *took* two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses.

19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal:

20 And it was *so*, as she *rode* on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her: and she met them.

21 Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fellow* hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *pertained* unto him: and *the* hath required me evil for good.

22 *So* and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that *pertain* to him, by the morning-light, *any* that pisseth against the wall.

23 And when Abigail saw David, she hastened, and *glighted* off the ass, and *fell* before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

24 And *fell* at his feet, and said, Upon me, my

lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

26 Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

27 And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.

28 I pray thee forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.

29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God, and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling.

30 And it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

b 7:21, Phil. 2:15. * Heb. *shemed*. c Ex. 14:22, Job 1:10, Zech. 2:5, d 20:7, 28:2, e 1:1, f 7:7, g 35:12, f 13:13, Judg. 19:22, 1 Kings 21:10, 14, 2 Sam. 14:7, h 2:32, 2 Kings 5:13, 14, g 34, Num. 16:46-48, Prov. 6:4, 5, Matt. 23, h Gen. 32:13-20, 43:11-14, 2 Sam. 17:28-29, Prov. 15:16, 21:14, i Heb. *seems*, j 2 Sam. 16:1, k Prov. 31:11, 12, 17, l 2 Kings 6:24, 1 Sam. 26:1, m Ps. 97, 98, 143:26-31, 1 Thes. 5:15, 1 Pet. 2:1-3, 8:9, n Gen. 44:4, Ps. 35:12, 38:20, 108:3-5, Prov. 17:13, Jer. 18:20, Rom. 12:21, 1 Pet. 2:20, 3:17, n 3:17, 14:44, 20:13, 16, Ruth 1:17, o 34, p 1 Kings 14:10, 16:11, 21:21, 2 Kings 9:8, q Josh. 15:18, Judg. 1:14, r 20:41, 24:8, s 2 Kings 4:37, f 3:3, Matt. 18:29, t 28, Gen. 44:53-54, 2 Sam. 14:9, Philim. 15:19, u Gen. 44:18, 2 Sam. 14:12, v Heb. *carre*, g 11th, *lay* to his heart, 2 Sam. 13:33, 14:42, 25, t See on 17:26, i That is,

fool, v 34:20, 2 Kings 2:4, 6, z See on 1:26, a 23, Gen. 20:6, b Rom. 12:19, 30, i Heb. *saying* thyself, Ps. 10:43, 44:3, c 2 Sam. 18:32, Jer. 39:22, Dan. 4:19, * Or, *present* 30:5, 31:5, 2 Sam. 5:13, 2 Cor. 8:5, 11, Heb. *walk* at the foot of, 42, marg. Judg. 1:12, 1 Sam. 11:2, d 24, e 15:25, 2 Sam. 7:11, 16, 27, 1 Kings 9:5, 1 Chr. 17:1, f 1:14, 17:17, 18:17, 2 Sam. 5:2, g 2 Chr. 20:15, Eph. 6:10, 11, h 21, 7:11, 17:17, i Luke 23:41, 47, h 29, Gen. 15:1, Deut. 33:29, Ps. 66:11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 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any intelligence of David's determination, or had only formed a shrewd conjecture from circumstances. But, anxious for his own safety, as well as for that of the family, and not daring to mention his apprehensions to Nabal, who would probably have grossly abused him for his impertinence; he applied to Abigail, complaining of his master, as "such a son of Belial, that a man could not speak unto him;" words not proper to be used by a servant concerning his master, if the urgency of the case had not required them. (Notes, Eph. 6:5-9. 1 Tim. 6:1-5. Tit. 2:3, 10. 1 Pet. 2:18-25.)

V. 18, 19. Abigail was about to dispose largely of Nabal's property without his consent; but this was necessary for the preservation of him and his family. She was fully satisfied that his obstinacy would ruin them all, if he were made acquainted with her design: the peculiarity of her situation therefore fully justified her conduct. (Notes, Prov. 31:10-12.)

V. 21, 22. David, in his sober judgment, knew better than to repent of his good deeds; or to think them done in vain, because requited with ingratitude: his determination to destroy or carry off every male at least of Nabal's family, for his fault, was unjust and cruel in the extreme: and his confirming this with a kind of oath, (though he turned off the imprecation from himself unto his enemies,) was rash, and savoured of profaneness.—If he had been permitted to execute his purpose of revenge, it would have occasioned him much bitter reflection, greatly tarnished his character, and given his enemies an immense advantage against him. (Note, 32:33.)—It is probable, that his officers and men generally approved of his designs against Nabal, as expressive of a proper spirit on the occasion, and necessary to deter others from insulting them.

Any that pisseth, &c. (22.) This seems to have been a proverbial expression in common use among the Israelites; and it may, with the utmost propriety, be read, "every male." (Marg. Ref. p.)

V. 23-31. The conduct and address of Abigail, on this emergency, are worthy of high admiration. Nabal had insulted David as a runaway slave: (Note, 10:11,) but in order to pacify him, Abigail showed him the reverence due to a superior, and to her sovereign in the purpose of God. Though he was evidently in a very angry spirit, wholly unbefitting his character, she took no notice of it; but only en-

treated him to allow her, as if she had been the criminal, to plead her cause, and that he would give her a candid hearing. She could not excuse her husband's conduct, and the case did not allow her to veil his infirmities: but she attempted to turn his well known character for rashness and insolence into an argument with David, why he should lay aside his resentment. She intimated that Nabal, (whose very name signified *folly*,) intended no peculiar affront to him; but only spoke according to his usual way of treating those who applied to him; and it was beneath a person of David's reputation and eminence, to notice the rudeness of such a man: but had she been present, the young men would have met with better treatment. With consummate address, she expressed a full confidence, that the Lord had sent her to keep his servant David "from avenging himself with his own hand;" and she solemnly desired, that "as sure as the Lord lived, and as David's soul lived," (Note, 20:3,) all that sought evil to him might be as weak and infatuated in their counsels as Nabal: and then he would have nothing to fear from them, for they would effectually ruin themselves. The liberal present, which she called a *blessing*, being an expression of her good will, (Marg. Ref. on marg. reading,) she represented as unworthy of his notice, but begged that it might be given to his followers. She professed her firm belief that he and his family would be established in the kingdom: she made honourable mention of his great services to Israel, and of his unblameable conduct; and advorced to the injustice of Saul's persecution, whom in honour of his authority she did not mention by name. She declared her assurance of David's preservation by a remarkable expression, "that his soul would be bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord his God," as men bind up those things which they are afraid of losing. (Notes, Acts 23:11, 27:20-26.) He was irreversibly appointed to the kingdom, and in consequence was numbered with those who are upheld in life and protected against all possible dangers, by the almighty power of the everlasting God: while his enemies would be driven into destruction, as a stone is violently thrown from a sling. In pleading for forgiveness, she intimated that it would be far more honourable to his character, and comfortable to his mind, when the promises of God should be performed, to reflect that he had conquered his anger, than that he had avenged himself and shed blood

32 And David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me :

33 And "blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

34 For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that pisseth against the wall.

35 So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, "Go up in peace to thine house ; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

36 ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal ; and, behold, he held a feast in his house like the feast of a king ; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken : wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning-light.

37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone.

g Gen. 24:27. Ex. 18:10. Ezra 7:27. Ps. 141:13. Luke 1:68. 2 Cor. 8:16. a Ps. 4:5. Prov. 9:9, 17:10. Eccl. 12:21. Job 34:19. 1 Sam. 2:26. q 8:9 on 26:31. 24:15, 28:9, 10. r 18:11, 11. Job. 10:8, 9. s See on p. 22. (2):12. 2 Sam. 15:9. 2 Kings 5:19. Luke 7:50. 8:45. u Gen. 19:21. Job 34:19. x 2 Sam. 13:23. Esth. 1:3-7. Luke 14:12. y 2 Sam. 13:24. 1 Kings 20:16. Prov. 20:1, 23:29-35. Eccl. 2:2, 3. Is. 28:3, 7, 8. 1 Tim. 3:1-5. Nah. 1:10. Hab. 2:15, 16. Luke 21:34. Rom. 13:13. 1 Cor. 14:34. 1 Pet. 5:7, 8. 19. Ps. 112:5. Matt. 10:16. Eph. 5:15. a 22:34. b 2:23. Job 15:21, 22. c 33: 6, 9. Ex. 12:29. 2 Kings 19:35.

without cause : (Note, Prov. 16:32.) and she concluded with begging of him to think of her, and what she had said, when these things were come to pass. (Notes, Luke 23:39-43.)—Nothing seems to have been omitted in this address which suited the occasion ; nothing unsuitable added ; all was expressed in the most persuasive manner ; and the whole manifests Abigail to have been a woman of strong faith and great piety, as well as of singular prudence and ingenuity.

V. 32, 33. Abigail's speech brought David to view the whole transaction, and his own spirit and purposes in the true light ; and to bless God for sending her, to pray for her and to thank her for coming so speedily with advice so seasonable and suitable, by which very much mischief and guilt had been prevented. (Note, Prov. 25:11, 12.) David repented of his rash oath, and did not think himself bound by it to destroy Nabal and his family. (Notes, 21:22, Matt. 11:8-11.)

V. 34. Though David only intended the death of the men : yet if Abigail and the other women had escaped the massacre, they must have been most deeply injured ; therefore "the LORD had kept him back from hurting her," as well as Nabal and his men servants, or other assistants.

V. 35. Marg. Ref. Note, Gen. 33:10.

V. 36-38. (Marg. Ref. y.) When Nabal heard of the imminent danger, to which his own folly had exposed him, at the very time when he was stupefied with drunkenness and surrounded with those whom he had tempted to the same excess, his terror and vexation were so great that they sunk his spirits ; and in ten days, by the just judgment of God, he ended his life either by the effect of his intoxication and subsequent horror and anguish of mind, or by some more immediate stroke of the power and indignation of God ; and he left his wealth to others. (Notes, 2 Sam. 13:22-29. Dan. 5:5-9. Luke 12:15-21. 21:34-36.)—It seems his provisions were so large, his attendants so numerous, and his mind so dissipated or swallowed up in sensual gratification, that he did not miss either Abigail, or her liberal present to David, or the servants who went with her.

V. 39-42. David blessed God that he had been kept from avenging himself ; and he considered the death of Nabal, as a proof of the Lord's special regard to him, in pleading his cause against his enemies ; as an earnest of further favours ; and as far more suited to awe others from injuring him than any vengeance which he could himself have inflicted. (Notes, 26:8-12. Rom. 12:17-21.)—The prudence, ingenuity, and piety of Abigail, as well as her beauty, made a deep impression on David ; and therefore, according to the custom of those times, he sent messengers with proposals of marriage to her. On the other hand, Abigail firmly believed that David would be king over Israel, and highly esteemed his pious and excellent character ; she therefore deemed his proposals very honourable and advantageous, notwithstanding his present difficulties ; and with great humility acceded to them ; being willing to share his trials, and to submit to any services for his sake. (Note, Gen. 24:58.)

V. 43, 44. It is probable that David had married Ahinoam, as soon as Michal was married to Phalti, and that he afterwards married Abigail also. (Note, 2 Sam. 3:13-16.) In this he was carried away with the custom of the times, and was connived at in having more than one wife.

38 And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died :

39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil : for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail, to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, "David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

41 And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

42 And "Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her ; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel ; and they were also both of them his wives.

44 But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which was of Gath.

35. 2 Chr. 10:15. Acts 12:23. d 32. Judg. 5:2. 2 Sam. 22:47-49. Ps. 58:10, 11. Rev. 18:1-4. e Prov. 22:23. Lam. 3:36-60. Mic. 7:9. f 26:34. Hos. 2:6, 7. 2 Cor. 13:7. 1 Thes. 5:23. 2 Tim. 4:18. g 2 Sam. 3:28, 29. 1 Kings 2:44. Esth. 7:10. Ps. 7:16. h Prov. 18:22. 19:14. 31:10, 30. i Gen. 24:37, 38, 51. k Ruth 2:10, 13. Prov. 15:18. 18:12. 1 Gen. 18:4. John 13:5-8. 1 Tim. 5:10. m Gen. 24:61-67. Ps. 45:11, 12. Heb. at her feet. n Josh. 15:56. 2 Sam. 3:2. o Gen. 2:24. Matt. 19:5, 6. p 27:3. 30:5. 2 Sam. 5:13-16. q 18:20, 27. r 2 Sam. 3:14, 15. Phaltiel. s 18:10, 30.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. The most honoured servants of God have the measure and period of their usefulness appointed them ; but those who persevere unto the end, walking with God, and living consistently with their profession, are happy, though rejected by men, and driven into retired and obscure situations. Their unblemished characters, their good examples, and their testimony to the truth, will produce salutary effects ; and their unceasing prayers will be answered in behalf of numbers after they are removed by death. Indeed whole nations have cause to lament, when faithful instructors, holy men of God, and public intercessors, are taken away. But Jesus, our Prophet, Priest, Intercessor, and Judge, ever lives to take care of those who trust in him.—Riches make men look great in their own eyes, and in the eyes of other worldly people ; but they are often lavished on those, who have neither wisdom nor grace ; and who so pervert them, as to ruin themselves, and to render very many wicked or wretched. To be descended from honourable ancestors forms another branch of man's foolish vanity (3) ; yet it frequently is a most severe reproach to the character and conduct of those who value themselves upon it.—Women of virtue, good sense, and amiable qualifications, are often married, for the sake of wealth, to persons so entirely unsuitable for them, that it renders their whole lives wretched and exposed to manifold temptations. It is therefore incumbent on parents, in respect of their children, and on young persons in their own case, to resist all temptations to a conduct, which is likely to be so fatal in its consequences. But prudent and pious relations are an invaluable treasure, and often retard the ruin of those, who have not sense to know their worth ;—and especially, "a prudent wife is from the LORD." (Note, Prov. 19:14.) Those, whom the Lord most honours, are frequently very destitute for a season ; and, as they will not have recourse to fraud or violence, like others in similar circumstances, they are sometimes constrained to become supplicants to ingodly persons. On such occasions it is proper to speak with modesty of themselves, and with decent respect and hearty good will to those whose assistance they request, wishing them the continuance, increase, or accession of every blessing ; but they should be careful, lest they verge towards flattery, and pass such compliments as do not consist with truth, and as tend to confirm sinners in a favourable opinion of themselves.—Worldly men deem riches their own ; but God declares they are another's, and that they must shortly give an account of their stewardship. (Luke 16:12.) When they are determined not to relieve the necessitous, they often excuse themselves by railing ; by charging the vices of some poor persons upon all ; and by representing alms-giving as an encouragement to idleness, impertinence, and extravagance ; nor are the most excellent characters any defence against such undistinguishing invectives, which betray the pride, ignorance, malice, and avarice of the heart, from which they proceed.—In imitation of the Lord's example, we are commanded to do good to the evil and ungrateful ; and wretched should we all be, if he dealt with us by those rules, which we are often disposed to adopt in our behaviour to our poor brethren.—While we enjoy abundance, we should be liberal to the indigent ; but many will lavish as much upon one unnecessary, proud, and luxurious feast, or upon the excessive indulgence

CHAPTER XXVI.

Saul, informed by the Ziphites, pursues David to Hachilah, 1-4. David by night comes to Saul's tent, with Abishai, whom he kills from slaying Saul; but he takes away his spear and cruse, 5-12. David at a distance reproves Abner's negligence, protests his own innocence, and expostulates with Saul, 13-20. Saul owns his sin, and returns home, 21-25.

AND the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, "Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?"

2 Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.

3 And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.

4 David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.

5 And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the Son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.

6 Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, "Who will go down with

me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.

7 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.

8 Then said Abishai to David, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him" the second time,

9 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for "who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"

10 David said furthermore, "As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or this day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish."

11 The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

12 So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither

a Josh. 15:21,55. b 3. 23:19. Ps. 54: title. c 23:23-25. 24:17. Ps. 38:12, 140: 4-9. d 2:12. e 1. 23:19. f Josh. 2:1. Matt. 10:16. g 9:1. 14:50,51. 17:55. 2 Sam. 2:8, &c. 3:7, 23:33-38. 1 Chr. 9:39. * Or, midst of his coverings. b Gen. 10:13, 15:20. 2 Sam. 11:6, 21:34, 12:9. 23:39. 12 Sam. 2:18. 16:9, 10, 19:3. 23:19. 1 Chr. 2:16. k 1 Chr. 2:15, 16. 114:8. 7:10, 11. m 1 Thes.

5:2,3. n 23. 23:14. 24:4,18,19. Josh. 21:44. Judg. 1:4. f Heb. shut up. 24:18. Deut. 32:30. Ps. 31:8. Rom. 11:32. marg. Gal. 3:22,23. Gr. o Nah. 1:9. p 24: 6,7. 2 Sam. 1:14,16. Ps. 105:15. q 24:15. 25:26,38. Ps. 94:1,2,23. Luke 18:7. Rom. 12:19. Rev. 18:8. r Gen. 47:29. Dent. 31:14. Job 7:1. 14:5,14. Ps. 37:10, 13. s 31:6. Dent. 32:35. t 24:6,12. 2 Sam. 1:14,16. u 7. 24:4.

of their own appetites or vanity, as would be deemed an exorbitant sum to expend in acts of charity. (Note, Luke 14: 12-14.)—Silence is generally our wisdom, when assaulted by provoking language; otherwise we shall be betrayed into folly and sin: and when the messengers of the Son of David meet with abuse and railing for his sake, they must hold their peace, and report it to their Lord, who will surely and justly resent it.—How changeable are the best of men! how contrary their conduct in one instance, to what might have been expected from another! A small temptation frequently prevails over them, after a greater has been resisted: for, when off their guard, they are driven away "as a rolling thing before the whirlwind!"—Passionate resolutions, formed without time for reflection or prayer, are the result of Satan's counsel; and under this influence we are capable of imitating the worst actions of the worst of men, and of di-regarding all consequences to our own character and peace, to the church of God, or to those who rejoice in being thus emboldened in impiety!—Many servants have more wisdom and grace than their masters, and could suggest to them useful hints: but those who are such sons of Belial, that a man cannot speak to them, will lose this advantage, and will not permit any one to extricate them from the dangers, to which they are exposed by their own imprudence. (Note, 2 Kings 5:13,14.)—General rules of submission to superior relations must be interpreted according to circumstances. In great emergencies the form may be dispensed with: and the preservation of a man's life or fortune will justify a failure in exterior indications of respect.—It is honourable when others commend us for those services, of which we say nothing: and when it appears, that we had a right to demand more than we petitioned for.

V. 18-44. In urgent cases, despatch is as requisite as prudence: inferior interests should always be sacrificed to preserve the greater; our property to preserve our lives; our very lives for the salvation of our souls.—Respect and liberal kindness are proper means of averting wrath: but, with wise and gently-mannered words are most forcible. When, in mild language, matters are fairly stated, and proper topics adduced, their judgments, affections, and consciences are appealed to; and they cannot but be overcome, if they can be prevailed upon to listen.—It is beneath a wise man to resent the affronts of those, who are notoriously foolish and abusive.—Every servant of God should duly estimate his own situation; what his obligations, professions, and prospects are; what his station in the church; what his former conduct and present character; that he may with great circumspection avoid every inconsistent word and action; for according to these things, will be men's expectations from him and censures of him. (Notes, Ec. 10:1. Matt. 5:14-16.)—Patience and forgiveness of injuries will never occasion uneasy reflections; but revenge must in every case be recoiled with grief of heart: and if we could but listen to our prudent and faithful counsellors at present, with the same candour that we shall reflect upon their advice in future, we might avoid much sorrow and many offences: we should indeed always earnestly endeavour to realize, under temptation, all the consequences of compliance, as they will afterwards appear to us.—Happy is the true believer! "his soul is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord his God." In the midst of dangers and enemies, his natural life is perfectly safe till the appointed hour: the life of his soul "is hid with Christ in God." (Note, Col. 3:4.)—and because the Saviour liveth, he shall live also; whilst all his foes shall be driven to destruction.—Our gratitude to God

should precede, but not exclude, our gratitude to the instruments of his goodness. We have peculiar cause to be thankful, when we have been restrained from those sins which we were ready to commit: and real penitents will not be backward to take shame to themselves, and to retract their rash expressions; for they will tremble to reflect, what the consequences would have been, had they been left to themselves.—The people of God need not avenge their own cause, for he will surely do it for them; and sometimes more awfully than they could have desired: yet when his purpose is known, they will adore his justice, and bless him for his kindness to them.—Whilst divine vengeance hovers over the head of sinners, they are often given up to foolish mirth and mad intoxication.—If the danger of a violent death be so terrifying as to overwhelm the spirits in dismay and anguish, how should sinners tremble at the thoughts of eternal damnation, and flee without delay from the wrath to come!—Worldly sorrow, mortified pride, and an affrighted conscience, sometimes suffice to end the sensualist's joys, and separate the covetous man from all his wealth: but whatever be the weapon, the Lord smites men with death whenever it pleases him.—Modesty, prudence, and humility, are preparations to advancement: and a wise man will always know the value of a pious and virtuous wife. (Notes, Prov. 18:22. 19:14.) But some deviations from the divine law, and some alloy to our comforts, must be expected in every character, and every situation, on this side of heaven.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. It is probable, that Saul had desisted from the pursuit of David, till excited again by the officious information of the Ziphites, who perhaps despised of David's pardon for their former malice and perfidy. (Notes, 23:19-28.) Upon this, Saul's envy and malice revived; like Pharaoh, he again hardened his heart: and he determined to make another effort to destroy his rival. (Note, Ex. 14:5-9.)

V. 3, 4. David neither fled, nor went out to meet Saul, when he was fully certified that he was actually come forth to destroy him! Had a much greater army of uncircumcised Philistines marched against him, he would doubtless have faced them with his small company, and trusted in God for the event: but he would not fight against the "Lord's anointed." (Notes, 24:8-15. 28:1,2.)

V. 5-7. It is probable, that David was directed to this measure by the prophetic Spirit, in order that all Israel might be convinced how injuriously he was slandered by his enemies. Having, therefore, in the day-time made every requisite observation, he proposed the matter to two of his attendants: but Ahimelech, who was a proselyted Hittite, seems not to have had that strength of faith in the God of Israel, which so bold an adventure required; and Abishai, the son of David's sister, alone accompanied David. (Marg. Ref. i. Note, 14:6-10.)

V. 8-12. Perhaps Abishai thought, that David, though he scrupled to kill Saul with his own hands, would allow one of his officers to terminate the dangers and difficulties of him and his adherents, by cutting off at one blow their inveterate persecutor, whom Providence had now put in their power, apparently for this very purpose: but David would by no means admit of this evasive distinction.—It has been suggested, that David spared Saul, the Lord's anointed, out of policy, that he might not teach the people a bad lesson against himself; but it is evident, that he acted from higher motives. The Lord forbade him to do it; (Note, 1 Kings 21:3.) and "no man could

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CHAPTER XXVII.

David escapes to Gath, and is received by Achish, 1-3. Saul seeks him no more. He asks Ziklag of Achish, 5-7. He invades the adjacent countries; and disingenuously leads Achish to suppose that he worried against Judah, 8-12.

AND David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: ^{where}there is nothing better for me, than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

2 And David arose, and he passed over, with the six hundred men that were with him, unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.

3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

6 Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

7 And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

8 ¶ And David and his men went up and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the

inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said Whither have ye made a road to-day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Letesth should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner, all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Achish, preparing war against Israel, places confidence in David, 1, 2. Saul, after having destroyed those who had familiar spirits; at length, fearing the Philistines and being forsaken by God, goes to the witch of Endor and engages to indemnify her, 3-10. She, by his desire, calls up Samuel, who predicts his ruin, 11-19. Saul falls down in despair; but, being prevailed on to take food, he returns to his army, 20-25.

AND it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

15:1, 13, 23:17, 25:39, Ps. 116:11, Prov. 13:12, Matt. 14:34, Mark 4:11, 2 Peter, 7:5. * Heb. he conceived. 15:23, Ex. 14:12, Num. 14:11, 3 Sam. 3:8, 5, 15:16, Lam. 3:21, 27, c. 10:11, 1 Sam. 14:2, 24:2-11, c. 21:1-3, 4:25, 13, 20:8, c. 21:10, 1 Kings 2:44, 2:33, 12:13, 30:5, c. 2:21, 1 Sam. 30:8, 2 Cor. 6:17, 13:9, 14, Josh. 15:31, 19:5, 2 Sam. 1:1, 1 Chr. 4:30, 12:13, Neh. 11:28, 1 Heb. the number of days. 2 Heb. a year of days. 23:3, c. Josh. 13:2, 2 Sam. 13:37, 39, 14:23, 32, 15:8. 1 Chr. 2:23, 1 Josh. 16:10, Judg. 1:29,

1 Kings 9:15-17, 5 Or, Gezrites. m 15:7, 8, 20:1, Ex. 17:14-16, n 15:7, Gen. 16:7, 25:18, Ex. 15:22, c. 15:2, Dent. 32:17-19, Josh. 6:21, ¶ Or, did ye not make a road, &c. p 21:2, Gen. 27:19, 20:24, Josh. 2:4-6, 2 Sam. 17:20, Ps. 119:29, 163, Prov. 29:25, Gal. 2:11-13, Rph. 4:25, c. 1 Chr. 2:9, 25, r 15:6, Num. 24:21, Judg. 1:16, 4:11, 5:24, c. 22:32, Prov. 12:19, 29:25, 1 Heb. to print, 13:4, Gen. 31:30, a 7:7, 13:5, 17:1, 29:1, b Judg. 3:1-4, c 27:12, 29:2, 3, d 27:10, 2 Sam. 16:16-19, Rom. 12:9.

their own madness, in silencing their convictions as much as possible, and in every way they could devise, and by holding fast their iniquities.—No good words or fair professions, entitle those to our confidence, who have long sinned against the light; yet the confessions of obstinate sinners may be useful, in satisfying us that we are in the right way, and shall prevail; and in encouraging us to persevere, expecting our recompense from God alone.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1, 2: David, while reflecting on the inveterate malice of Saul, and the neglect, cowardice, and treachery of his countrymen, lost sight of his having been anointed to be king of Israel, with the annexed promises of God, and the manifold deliverances which he had experienced: so that, being weak in faith, he despaired of safety in the land of Judah; and he went to Gath, perhaps invited by Achish, but evidently without inquiring of the Lord. (Note, 21:10-15.) This measure was calculated to alienate the affections of the Israelites, and to give credit to the slanders of his accusers; he thus ran himself and his men into temptations to idolatry; and he laid himself under obligations to those whom he could never favour, without betraying the cause of God. (26:19. Notes, 28:1, 2. 29:2, 8-11. Ps. 141:1-5.)

V. 3. (Note, 25:13, 44.) Achish probably hoped that he should be able to fix David in his interests, and employ him against the Israelites; or, that he should thus secure an advantageous alliance with him, if ever he came to be king of Israel.

V. 4. It does not appear that Saul's malice was permanently abated; but the object of it was out of his reach. (Note, 26:21-25.)

V. 5, 6. It may be supposed that David desired to avoid ostentation, and to escape the effects of envy; and perhaps to be out of the way of temptation, more at leisure for the exercises of religion, and more unembarrassed in his whole conduct, than he could be near the court and among the nobles of Achish. (Note, Gen. 46:32-34.) Ziklag was first allotted to Judah. Josh. 15:31. Afterwards it was given to Simeon: (Josh. 19:5.) but the Philistines had got possession of it; and it was regarded as one of their cities, till on this occasion it came again into the possession of Judah. (Marg. Ref. i.)

V. 8-12. Probably the Geshurites and Gezrites were tribes of the Amalekites, or of Canaanites who were in alliance with them. (Marg. Ref. k, l.) We may therefore commend David for attempting to complete the work which Saul had begun, and should not censure the severity with which he conducted the war. (Notes, 15:1-9.) These nations lived to the south of Judah: and David used such equivocal terms in speaking to Achish, as induced him to conclude, that he had been fighting against his own countrymen. Intelligence was not then readily conveyed, and no

one undecieved Achish: he therefore concluded, that David had so widened the breach between himself and his people, that it could not be healed. (Note, 2 Sam. 16:20-23.) Had he, however, known the truth of the case, he would have been convinced that David could not be detached from Israel, or united to their enemies. David's situation powerfully tempted him to this deceit; but it can be by no means be justified, or even excused. (Note, 19:12-17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The strongest believers cannot wholly exclude the incursions of unbelief, during tedious trials, and when sense and reason bring in no report of deliverance. Many, under sharp temptations, have overlooked former mercies and experiences; have forgotten the power and promise of the Lord; and have feared that sin and Satan would finally prevail against them. When faith thus staggers, obedience wavers, and sinful expedients frequently are employed; which involve men more and more in difficulties and temptations.—If at any time we "lean to our own understanding," and do not ask counsel of God, we are sure to do wrong. (Note, Prov. 3:5, 6.)—We ought not to quit the path of duty, or to join interests with the enemies of religion, even for self-preservation, or out of care for our families: nor should we willingly contract obligations, where we cannot consistently make requitals of kindness.—It is our wisdom to shun notoriety, and to shelter ourselves from envy; for obscurity is commonly more safe and comfortable, and no less advantageous. Yet we must in no situation be wholly inactive, but attempt something in the cause of God and his people, even though ungratefully requited by those whom we would serve.—The fear of man is so ensnaring, that we should, if possible, keep out of those places where doing our duty will expose us to danger or reproach.—An equivocation, which serves the purpose of a lie, bears the same relation to it, as a hypocrite does to a profane person: it is only apparently better, and therefore a more dangerous cheat. But though believers often betray their imperfections, they can never be prevailed upon deliberately to renounce the service of God, and to unite interests with his enemies, or to become the servants of sin and Satan.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. Achish, when determined to make war against Israel, required David's assistance; and David could not have refused it without the greatest danger. Yet if he had directly promised it, and had then either stood neuter, or gone over to the Israelites, he must have behaved with great ingratitude and treachery; and if he had fought against Israel, he would have been guilty of a very great sin, he would have alienated the affections of his people, and perhaps have exposed himself to the reproach of having murdered Saul. It seemed therefore impossible that he should extricate himself with a good conscience and a clear reputation. He, however, returned an insincere and

3 ¶ Now ¹Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in ²Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in ³Gilboa.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul ⁴inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither ⁵by dreams, nor ⁶by Urim, nor ⁷by prophets.

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, ⁸Seek me a woman that hath ⁹a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, *there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.*

8 And Saul ¹disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, ²I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and ³bring me *him* up whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, ⁴how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: ⁵wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

10 And Saul ⁶swore to her by the LORD, saying, *As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.*

[Practical Observations.]

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? and he said, Bring me up Samuel.

e 25:1. Is. 57:1, 2. f 9. Ex. 9:9-18. Lev. 19:31. 20:27. Deut. 18:10, 11. Acts 16:16-19. g Josh. 19:18. 2 Kings 4:8. h 31:1. 2 Sam. 1:6, 21. 21:12. 1 Job 15:1. 18:11. Ps. 49:7, 9. 73:19. Prov. 10:9. Is. 7:2. 21:3, 4. 57:20, 21. Dan. 5:6. e 14:37. 1 Chr. 10:14. Prov. 1:27, 28. Ex. 20:1-3. John 9:31. Jam. 4:8. 1 Pet. 2:15-17. 4:2-4. Num. 12:6. Job 33:14-16. Jer. 23:28. Matt. 1:20. m Ex. 23:30. Num. 27:21. Deut. 33:8. n Ps. 74:9. Lam. 2:9. Ex. 20:2. o 2 Kings 1:2, 3. 6:33. Is. 8:19, 20. Lam. 3:25, 26. Hab. 2:3. p 3. Deut. 18:11. Is. 19:3. Acts 16:16. q Josh. 17:11. Ps. 63:10. r 1 Kings 14:2, 3. 22:30. 94. Job 24:13-15. Jer. 23:24. John 3:19, 20. s 1 Chr. 10:13. 15. u See on e 5:2 Sam. 18:13. 2 Kings 5:7. x 17:19. 19:6. Gen. 3:6. 15. Ex. 20:7. Deut. 18:

evasive answer, which was intended to gain time, but which Achish understood as a promise of effectual assistance; (Notes, 27:8-12. 29:3-11.) and on that account promised to make him captain of his guard, or some great officer about his person.

V. 3. (Note, 25:1.) Perhaps the death of Samuel, and David's apparent desertion of his people, concurred with Saul's disordered state of mind, to encourage the Philistines to this war.—Saul had filled up his measure of iniquity, and "the day was come when he should descend into battle and perish." (26:10.)—He "had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land," probably before "the Spirit of the LORD departed from him." (Note, 16:14.) Or perhaps, when troubled with an evil spirit, he charged some of them as the cause of it; or by his zeal in this respect he aimed to atone for his other sins, that the kingdom might not be taken from him; and to show the people that he had a regard to religion. Whatever was his motive, the measure 'tself was right. (Marg. Ref. e, f.)

V. 4, 5. As Shunem lay far north in the land, in the lot of Issachar, (Josh. 19:18.) either this invasion was very formidable, or Saul had been very negligent; otherwise the enemy could not have marched thither without being opposed.—Saul's excessive terror arose chiefly from a guilty conscience. It is probable, that his contempt of Samuel, his murder of the priests, and his malicious persecution of David, dismayed his heart upon every recollection; and that he foreboded his own approaching doom. (Note, 24:16-22.)

V. 6. "Saul inquired of the LORD," under urgent terror, but without humiliation for sin, or purposes of repentance; and therefore God would not vouchsafe him any answer. He did not *inquire* till his doom was sealed; and then only in a hypocritical manner: therefore it was nearly the same as "not inquiring." (Note, 1 Chr. 10:13, 14.) After Abiathar had fled to David, probably Saul appointed another high priest: yet neither by him, nor by any prophet, nor in any way, could he obtain an answer. (15:14, 17.) This showed, that God was greatly displeased with him, and warned him to repent, and to cry for mercy with humble faith and perseverance. (Note, Judg. 10:13-16.) It also proved, that God no longer regarded him as chief-magistrate in Israel. (Notes, 23:9-13. Ex. 28:30. Num. 27:21.)

V. 7, 8. Saul was aware that some persons still secretly practised these diabolical arts: but nothing could exceed the presumption of consulting those whom he had, according to

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for *thou art Saul.*

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw ¹gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, ²What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up: and he is covered with ³a mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself.

15 And Samuel said to Saul, ⁴Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, ⁵I am sore distressed: for ⁶the Philistines make war against me, and ⁷God is departed from me, and ⁸answereth me no more, neither by ⁹prophets, nor by dreams: ¹⁰therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

16 Then said Samuel, ¹¹Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

17 And the LORD hath done ¹²to him *as he* spake by ¹³me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to ¹⁴thy neighbour, *even to David:*

18 Because thou ¹⁵obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

19 Moreover, ¹⁶the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and ¹⁷to-morrow *shalt* thou and thy sons *be with* me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul ¹⁸fell straightway all along on the earth, and was ¹⁹sore afraid, because of the words

10-12. 2 Sam. 14:11. Matt. 26:72. Mark 6:23. y 3. 1 Kings 14:5. z Ex. 4:16. 22:28. Ps. 82:6. John 10:34, 35. * Heb. *what is his form?* a 15:27. 2 Kings 2:8, 13, 14. b 8:11. c Prov. 5:11-13. 14:14. d 4. e 16:13, 14. 18:12. Judg. 16:20. Ps. 51:11. Hos. 2:12. Matt. 23:41. f 6. g 23:2, 4, 5, 10. h Heb. *the hand of prophete*. i Luke 16:23-26. h Judg. 5:31. 2 Kings 6:27. Ps. 63:1, 2. Jer. 18:20, 24. 19:1-6. j Or, *for himself*. Prov. 16:4. 113:13, 14. 15:27-29. k Heb. *mine hand*. k 15:25. 16:13. 24:20. 115:9, 23-25. l 1 Kings 20:42. Jer. 48:10. m 12:25. 1 Kings 22:30, 28. n Ex. 9:18. Jer. 28:16, 17. l 1 Sam. 5:23-28. Matt. 26:24. Acts 5:5, 9, 10. o Heb. *made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature*. p 5, 23, 37. Job 15:20. 24: 26, 2. Ps. 50:21, 22.

the law of God endeavoured to extirpate. (Note, 3.)—He disguised himself, not only lest the woman should fear to use her incantations if she knew him; but perhaps likewise lest the people should be exasperated against him, if acquainted with his infatuated conduct.

V. 9, 10. Instead of being cut to the heart by the woman's suspicions, which implied the most severe reproof; Saul most profanely swore by the LORD, that the woman should not be punished for violating the divine law! She would understand this merely as an engagement not to inform against her: but Saul expressly swore, that he would not perform his duty. Indeed both parties acted almost *atheistically*; when one engaged, and the other was satisfied with the engagement, that no punishment should happen to her!

V. 11. Samuel had anointed Saul, and often counselled him for his good: and though Saul had neglected him during the latter part of his life, yet he now was convinced, that it was better with him when he regarded his advice. Nothing therefore could now satisfy him, but a conference with the departed prophet: and he being forsaken of God was so infatuated, as to suppose, that the woman, by means of her familiar spirit, could bring Samuel up for that purpose, even without the Lord's permission!—It is probable that she expected to impose on Saul by some Satanical apparition.

V. 12-19. It is much disputed, who it was that appeared on this occasion; for the whole narrative manifests that it was no human imposture. Many expositors, ancient and modern, have maintained, that it was Satan personating Samuel; though the text does not give the least intimation of it. It is however, by no means advisable, to give those men any countenance, who, to support a favourite system, put a forced construction upon the words of holy writ, very different from their obvious meaning; and scarcely any of their interpretations can sound harsher, than the insertion in every place, where Samuel is mentioned, 'that it was Satan personating Samuel.'—It is indeed argued, that the woman's incantations could have 'no power over a glorified saint'; but to this it may fairly be answered, that neither could an *evil* spirit appear at her call, without the Lord's permission. Though the woman was not the cause of Samuel's being sent, Saul's inquiry might be the occasion of it. The word *disquieted*, seems to be used merely in accommodation to the general notions of mankind on that subject; and the woman's surprise and terror proved, that it was an unusual and unexpected appearance, and not the ordinary effect of her art—

of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that

thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat: but his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:

25 And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

p 19:5. Jude. 12:3. Job 13:14. q 1 Kings 21:4. Prov. 25:20. r 2 Kings 4:

It is, however, further urged, that the apparition's discourse tended to drive Saul to despair, which is one of Satan's temptations; and that it contained no exhortations to repentance, which were usual with the prophets. But to this it may be replied, that Elijah's message to Ahaziah, Daniel's address to Belshazzar, and even Christ's discourse in the presence of Judas, were equally calculated to drive each of them to despair; and equally void of exhortations to repent, and proposals of mercy. (Notes, 2 Kings 1:15, 16. Dan. 5:18—28. Matt. 26:21—24.)—Saul had despised Samuel's solemn warnings in his life-time; yet now he hoped, as it were, in defiance of God, to obtain some counsel and encouragement from him: and why might not God permit the soul of his departed prophet to appear and confirm his former sentence, and denounce Saul's irrevocable doom? It was not beyond the power of God, nor, that I can see, at all unworthy of him; but rather a declaration of his immutable and irreversible truth and justice.—Satan could not have predicted the several events, which came to pass accordingly, as far as we know, (Note, 30:1—3.) without being inspired by God to do so: and it would give far more countenance to consulting witches, to suppose that he inspired Satan to prophesy by them, than to conclude that Samuel was sent with this tremendous message from God, when Saul consulted one of them. Indeed this would most powerfully discourage such attempts; as the request of the rich man in hell to Abraham, being entirely vain, is calculated to discourage praying to departed saints. (Note, Luke 16:24—26.) The local situation of departed spirits is so concealed from us, that the circumstance of the spirit apparently "arising out of the earth," forms no real objection against its being the soul of Samuel; and the expression, "shalt thou and thy sons be with me," means no more, than that they should be in the eternal world. The transaction was suited to impress the idea of a future state on the mind of all who should ever hear or read of it; and it determined nothing about the different conditions of the righteous and the wicked.—Upon the whole, there appears much solemnity in God's for once permitting the soul of a departed prophet to make his appearance, as a witness from heaven, and in sending him to confirm the word which he spoke on earth, (evinced that the words of the prophets would surely take effect); and to sit in judgment upon a proud enemy of God, who foolishly sought encouragement in his impenitency, by the most atrocious crimes.—This interpretation is certainly obvious, and suited to the apprehensions of the unlearned reader, and according to the general simplicity of the Scriptures: and nothing short of unanswerable arguments and objections, should constrain us to suppose, that when the Holy Spirit said Samuel, he meant Satan, not speaking by Samuel, as he did by the serpent and by the demons; but actually counterfeiting his shape, and speaking with his voice, though Samuel himself was in every sense absent from the place.—The venerable appearance of Samuel, or something which he spoke, convinced the woman, that it was Saul who consulted her (12).—She perceived, by the reverence the spectre paid him, who he was: for so Abarnahel interprets it, he bowed with his face to the ground, in honour of Saul, whereby the woman concluded that it was the king.' Ep. Patrick. Thus then if the devil personated Samuel, he worshipped Saul, not Saul him! A likely thing, truly, that either Samuel, or Satan personating him, should thus reverence Saul! It shows to what difficulties the supporters of the latter opinion are reduced. Saul's bowing down before Samuel, was not indeed an act of religious worship, any more than Abigail's bowing down before David. The answer of Samuel was in every respect suitable to his character, and to the occasion. It was entirely in vain for Saul to consult the servant, when the Lord was become his enemy: the Lord was only doing to him, or for himself, (17. marg.) as he declared he would: and as Samuel knew him to be finally given up, he neither gave him counsel nor comfort. (Notes, 2 Tim. 4:14, 15. Heb. 6:4—6. 1 John 5:16—18.)—The woman first saw the appearance; but afterwards Saul seems to have seen it, as well as to have heard the words spoken.—Some think, that neither Saul's servants, nor the woman, heard what passed.—God's. (13) Elohim. (Marg. Ref. z.)

V. 20—25. Saul, though terrified even to desperation, was not humbled. A miserable state he was indeed reduced to, when the witch was his only comfort! But he did not confess his sins: and, as far as we can learn, he offered no sa-

crifices, and presented no supplications: nor does he seem to have expressed any concern about his sons, or his people, or to have attempted any escape; but in sullen despair to have rushed upon his doom.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10. When we in the least deviate from the plain path of duty, every circumstance tends to draw us further aside, and to increase our perplexity and temptation.—Needless intimacies with the avowed enemies of true religion, or obligations to them, will reduce us, ere we are aware, to the necessity of being unfaithful to God, or treacherous and ungrateful to our benefactors: and we shall scarcely ever be able to speak with that candour and simplicity which become Christians. (Note, 1 Kings 22:4.)—When death has removed the ministers and servants of God, or persecution has banished them, a land is deprived of its best defence, and its enemies have their best opportunity of preparing war against it.—Hypocrites are frequently very zealous against those crimes, to which they are not tempted at the time, or from which they may suffer detriment; and apostates frequently commit those sins, which they once were most earnest in opposing.—Ungodly persons fear the reproach of man, or the punishments denounced by human laws, more than the wrath of God: they do not therefore forsake their sins, but dissemble their real characters, and conceal their conduct; and deem all well if they can escape detection: but frequently they are employed to rebuke or correct each other, either for their present conviction, or their future deeper condemnation.—When habits of perjury, or profane swearing, have been contracted, the sacred name of God, and the most solemn oaths, are often introduced in the midst of the most horrible wickedness, and made the obligations and encouragements to the most enormous crimes! But the atrocious guilt of such impiety cannot be expressed.—Consulting witches, or diviners of any kind, real or pretended, is a malignant and ignorant attempt to gain intelligence or assistance from some creature, when it cannot be had, or is not sought, from the Lord in the path of duty; and is therefore essentially idolatry, and virtually the worship of the devil. (Notes, Ex. 22:18. 1 Chr. 10:13, 14.)

V. 11—25. Many, who despise the servants of God while they live, are so far convinced of their wisdom and fidelity, that they vainly wish for their counsel and instruction, in distressing circumstances, after their death. But in that blessed world, to which they are removed, they have done with fear, favour, and affection, and are become far more determined than ever in the service and cause of God: and were they to appear, they would denounce the doom of impenitent sinners, with more awful decision than before.—Wretched indeed are they, from whom God is for ever departed! What can they expect either from good or evil men, from holy or unholy spirits? Neither the servants nor the enemies of the Lord can do them any service, and every thing combines to drive them to desperation. This Satan labours to effect, and he is sometimes permitted to succeed: nay, the very testimony of God's word and ministers concurs in convincing the unhappy wretches "that there remains nothing, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation!" (Note, Heb. 10:26, 27.) while the remembrance of former crimes, convictions, warnings, and relapses into sin, combine to assure them of the certainty and justice of their doom. Yet all these things do not humble or soften them; for it is "impossible to renew them to repentance;" and not having "believed Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead;" (Note, Luke 16:27—31.) but either in sullen or in furious despair they await and meet their doom!—In every age God sets up a few such beacons for a tremendous warning to their fellow-sinners, not to listen to temptations, to sin against conviction, or despise the word of God; and to beware of hypocrisy, apostasy, procrastination, and other great wickedness, for none are thus given up of God, who have not provoked him to it by their previous crimes. (Note, 2 Thes. 2:8—12.) But while one relenting thought remains let no sinner ever suppose himself in this awful case. God will not indeed hear the prayer of the unhumiliated and impenitent; and many inquire of him in vain, because they are not decidedly in earnest: when therefore they do not meet with encouragement, they detect their own hypocrisy, by giving up their religious duties, plunging again into sin, and seeking help from the world, and "the God of this world." Let the discouraged, but sincere and earnest inquirer persevere in

CHAPTER XXIX.

David attends Achish, which offends the lords of the Philistines, 1-5. Achish dismisses him with commendations, 6-11.

NOW the Philistines gathered together all their armies to ^bAphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

2 And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rear-ward with Achish.

3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?

4 And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?

5 Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

6 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host, is good in my sight; for I have not found evil in thee, since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.

7 Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

a 28:1. b 4:1. Josh. 19:30. 1 Kings 20:30. c 28:4. Josh. 19:18. Judg. 6:33. 1 Kings 18:45, 46. 21:1, 23. 2 Kings 9:36. Hos. 1:4-11. d 6:7, 5:8-11. 6:4. Josh. 13:3. Judg. 16:5, 30. e 28:2. f 27:7. g Dan. 6:5. John 19:6. Rom. 12:17. 1 Pet. 3:16. h 14:21. 1 Chr. 12:19. Luke 16:8. i 13:6, 7. 21:1. 1 Prov. 27:14. k 20:3. 28:10. Deut. 10:20. Is. 65:16. Jer. 12:16. l Matt. 5:16. 1 Pet. 2:12. 3:16. m Num. 27:17. 2 Sam. 3:25. Ps. 121:8. n Heb. thou art not good in

knocking at myr's gate, until it be opened: let him humble himself more and more before God, and determine to live and die supplicating his favour; and he will be sure at length to succeed. Let us all learn "to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near." (Note, Is. 55:6, 7.) and without reserve to obey his voice and do his will.—Finally, though subjects suffer with their wicked governors, and children with their parents; either it is for their own sins, or else their sufferings "will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref.) It may be reasonably supposed, that David was undetermined how to act on this occasion, and waited with a secret hope that the Lord would help him out of this very great difficulty; as indeed he did in a wonderful manner. (Note, 28:1, 2.) He was far too much influenced by fear of man, in so readily consenting to attend Achish, when he might have framed very plausible excuses for declining that service. (Note, Prov. 29:25, 26.)

V. 4-6. These lords, or princes, possessed so much authority in their own cities, and in the camp at the head of their troops, and were so decided against employing David, that Achish would not venture their displeasure in retaining him. The high opinion which he had of David, the confidence which he reposed in him, and his commendations of him both before his face, (9) and to the lords, would have been very honorable to David, if they had not been in part the effect of deception. (Note, 27:3-12.) When Achish swore by JEHOVAH, (6) that he did not send David away for any suspicion which he entertained of him, he showed that he had collected some notions at least concerning the true God and his worship. (9)

Saul slew, &c. (5) Note, 18:6-9. They 'reasoned wisely, according to the common practice of mankind; and it was well for David, that they were such politicians; for hereby God delivered him out of a very great strait, either of being an enemy to his country, or false to his friends, and to his trust. And by the same good Providence he was sent back to rescue his wives, and the wives and children of his men, who were taken captive.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 30:1-19.)

V. 8-11. (Marg. Ref.) David could not but inwardly rejoice at this occurrence: yet he was unwilling that Achish should think he did; and therefore he professed a desire "to fight with the enemies of his lord the king." (Note, 2 Sam. 16:15-19.) Achish would understand these words to mean the Israelites; but they were ambiguous, as several of his speeches were on this occasion: so hard is it in such circum-

8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant, so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go to fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

9 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

10 Wherefore now rise up early in the morning, with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

11 So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

CHAPTER XXX.

David on his return finds that the Amalekites had burnt Ziklag, and carried captive the women and children, 1-3. David and his men are greatly distressed, 4, 5; but inquiring of God, he is encouraged to pursue them, 6-10. He obtains intelligence of them from an Egyptian slave, 11-15. He smites them, recovers all, and takes much spoil, 16-20. His law for dividing it, 21-25. He sends presents to his friends, 26-31.

AND it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

2 And had taken the woman captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

the eyes of the lords, 1 Heb. do not evil in the eyes of, &c. n 12:3. 17:29. 20:8. 26:18. 1 Heb. before, o 28:3. 2 Sam. 16:18, 19. Ps. 34:13, 14. Matt. 6:13. p 2 Sam. 14:17, 20. 19:27. Gal. 4:14. q 30:1, 2. Gen. 22:14. Ps. 37:23, 24. 1 Cor. 10:13. 2 Pet. 2:9. r See on 1. Josh. 19:18. 2 Sam. 4:4. a 29:11. 2 Sam. 1:2. b 15:7. 27:8-10. Gen. 24:62. Josh. 11:16. c 19. 27:11. Job 38:11. Ps. 76:10. Is. 27:9, 8. d Ps. 34:19. Heb. 12:5. 1 Pet. 1:6, 7. Rev. 9:8.

stances to avoid all insincerity and dissimulation, either from fear or courtesy!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While presumptuous sinners are given up to the effects of their own counsels, and driven headlong to destruction, the sins of the upright are repented of and pardoned; and the Lord takes care both of their peace and reputation. He has various methods of extricating us out of difficulties, when we can perceive no way of escaping; and while ungodly men pursue their own purposes, and follow their own judgments, he secretly influences them to such determinations, as subserve the good of his people.—Reputation, esteem, and affection, frequently become snares to us; whilst reproaches, contempt, and injurious suspicions prove beneficial: and the ill usage of the wicked, by which we are driven from them, is much better for us, than that friendship which draws us among them.—When worldly people have no evil thing to say of us, but will bear testimony to our uprightness, we need desire no more from them: and this we should aim to acquire by prudence, meekness, and a blameless life. But their flattering commendations are almost always purchased by improper compliances, or some measure of deception, and commonly may cover us with confusion.—It is seldom prudent to place great confidence in one who has changed sides; except as the fear of God influences a true convert to conscientious fidelity.—Obscurity, or the company of those who are of one heart with us, is generally more safe, comfortable, and honourable, than high stations in the palaces of the ungodly. Thus David in the cave was far more worthy of our admiration and imitation, than when a favourite in the camp of king Achish; and he never had a greater deliverance, than when he was dismissed from that ensnaring service.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1-3. Ziklag was distant from the camp of the Philistines, about three days' march, and David did not receive an authentic account of the battle at Gibeon, till two days after his return thither. (2 Sam. 1:1.) But it does not thence follow, that the battle was not fought on the morrow after Saul consulted the witch of Endor, as some have thought; (28:19.) for the narrative of Saul's conduct is perfectly distinct, from that which relates to David and to the Philistines: and it is not said, at what time Saul went to Endor.—The Lord had extricated David reputably from his ensnaring connexion with Achish; but he severely rebuked him for his misconduct, by the calamity that came upon Ziklag in his absence. (Notes, 2 Chr. 18:30-34. 19:1, 2.)—He might reasonably have expected that the Amalekites would watch their opportunity of retaliating; and his fear of offending Achish made him very imprudent, in

4 Then David and the people that *were* with him, ^{lifted up} their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

6 And David ^{was} greatly distressed; for ^{the} people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was ^{grieved}, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but ^{David} encouraged himself in the ^{LORD} his God.

7 And David said to ^{Abiathar} the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

8 And David ^{inquired} at the ^{LORD}, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And ^{he} answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

9 So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.

10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were ^{so} faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

11 And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and ^{gave} him bread and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, ^{this} spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, ^{three} days and three nights.

13 And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? and he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and ^{my} master left me, because three days agoe I fell sick.

4:13, 11:4. Gen. 37:33-35. Num. 14:139. Judg. 2:4, 21:2. Ex. 10:1. 1:2, 23:43, 27:3. 2 Sam. 2:2, 2:3. 2 Cor. 1:8, 9, 4:8, 7:5. h Ex. 17:4. Num. 14:10. Ps. 62:9. Matt. 21:9, 27:2. * Heb. bitter. 1:10. Judg. 18:25. 2 Sam. 17:8. 2 Kings 4:27. *margine*. Job 13:15. Ps. 27:1-3. 42:5, 11, 59:3, 4, 11, 62:1, 5, 8. 118:13. Prov. 18:10. Is. 7:11-20. Hab. 3:17, 18. Rom. 4:18, 8:31. 2 Cor. 1:9, 10. Heb. 13:6. 1:22, 20. 1:23, 5, 1 Kings 2:36. Mark 2:36. 123:4, 10-12. Judg. 20:18, 28:28. 2 Sam. 1:13, 23. Prov. 3:5, 6. m 14:27, 28, 6, 15, 16. Num. 27:12. Ps. 50:15, 91:15. n 14:50, 31. Judg. 8:4, 5. o Deut. 15:7-11, 23:7. Prov. 25:21. Matt. 25:35. Luke 10:53, 37. Rom. 12:20, 21. p 14:27. Judg. 15:19. Is. 40:29-31. q 13. Euth. 4:16.

leaving the city and the women and children in it, without any proper guard.—But the Amalekites were wonderfully and mercifully restrained from slaying any of them, after the example which David had set them; (*Note*, 27:8—12.) preferring the profit of enslaving them, to the pleasure of revenge: for God intended to rebuke his servant, but not to permit his family and friends to be destroyed. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 6. The loss of his wives, the desolations of the city, and the bitterness of his followers, (*marg.*) who, not entirely without reason, were enraged against him for thus exposing their families, all combined to enhance David's distress: at the same time he could not but consider his calamities as resulting from unbelief, in leaving the land of Judah, in being so much afraid of Achish, and in neglecting to consult the Lord. Yet in the midst of all these complicated troubles, his spirit was soon calmed and encouraged: he neither murmured against God, nor resented the rage of his soldiers, nor despaired of redress, nor confided in his own valour or conduct; "but he encouraged himself in the ^{LORD} his God." (*Notes*, Gen. 32:6—12.) He meditated upon his perfections, upon his promises in general to believers, and the particular promises made to him; on his own experience of the faithfulness of God, as well as his wonderful works of old in behalf of his worshippers; and on the relations in which the Lord stood to those, who had been enabled to choose him as their Salvation and Portion. Thus he was encouraged to expect forgiveness, protection, help, and a favourable event, notwithstanding external appearances. (*Note*, 17:34—37.)

V. 7—10. Circumstanced as David was, no time was to be lost; and as his troubles originated from neglecting to inquire of the Lord, he immediately consulted him by the high priest. (*Notes*, 14:16—23, 23:9—13.) The answer vouchsafed him quieted the minds of his followers; so that after their long march they were willing to go in pursuit of the ravagers, without taking rest, or regular refreshment. But the fatigue of the former march, increased by this new expedition, together with the anguish of their spirits, rendered a part of the company so faint, that they could proceed no further. David however, though his small troop was thus reduced, and he might fear that the others would be unable to proceed, still "encouraged himself in the ^{LORD} his God." (*Note*, Judg. 8:4.)

14 We made an invasion *upon* the south of ^{the} Cherethites, and upon ^{the} coast which *belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of ^{the} Caleb; and ^{we} burned Ziklag with fire.

15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, ^I Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

[Practical Observations.]

16 And ^{when} he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, ^{eating} and drinking, and dancing, ^{because} of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of ^{the} next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men which rode upon camels, and fled.

18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

19 And ^{there} was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all.

20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drove before those *other* cattle, and said, ^{This} is David's spoil.

21 And David came to the ^{two} hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David ^{came} near to the people, he ^{saluted} them.

22 Then answered all the ^{wicked} men and

Jon. 1:17. Matt. 27:63. 1 Job 31:13—15. Prov. 12:10. Jam. 2:13. a 16, 9 Sam. 8:15. 1 Kings 1:36, 44. 1 Chr. 18:17. Ez. 25:16. 2eph. 9:5. 1 Josh. 14:13, 15:13. u 1-3. * 29:6. Josh. 2:12. 9:15, 19, 20. Ez. 17:13, 16, 19. 1 Deut. 23:15, 16. 2 Judg. 4:24, 25. a 25:36—38. Ez. 32:17—19, 27:28. Jude 1:23—30. 2 Sam. 13:28. Is. 22:13. Dan. 5:1—4, 30. Luke 12:19, 20, 17:27—29, 21:34, 35. 1 Thea. 5:3. Rev. 11:10—13. h Job 20:5. 1 Heb. *their marrow*. o 11:11. Judg. 4:16. 1 Kings 20:29, 30. Is. 18:42. d 8. Gen. 14:14—16. Num. 31:49. Job 1:10. Ps. 34:9, 10, 91:19, 10. Matt. 6:33. e 26. Num. 31:9—12. 2 Chr. 20:25. Is. 53:12. Rom. 8:37. 10. h Heb. 13:1. 1 Pet. 3:8. 1 Heb. *asked them how they did*. Judg. 18:15. 1 22:2. 25:17, 25. Deut. 13:13. Judg. 19:22. 1 Kings 21:10, 13.

V. 11—15. This sick slave was considered as of small value to his master, and was likely to be an encumbrance; the life of a fellow creature was rated at nothing; and so he was inhumanly left to perish, though he might have been carried on one of the camels: but in the righteous providence of God this cruelty of his master occasioned the destruction of the invading army; whilst David's kindness to a perishing stranger and slave was the means of his signal success, and proved true policy! (*Marg. Ref.*) This slave "fell sick on the *third day*" before; (13. Heb.) yet it is said that he had been without meat and drink, *three days and three nights*. (12. *Note*, Matt. 12:38—40.)

V. 16—19. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Amalekites probably knew, that the Israelites and the Philistines were engaged in war at a great distance, and that David and his men were in the army of the Philistines, and therefore, deeming themselves secure, they very imprudently began to riot on the abundance which they had taken, without even placing guards to give notice of an enemy's approach. So that David and his little troop came on them unawares, and made a dreadful and long continued slaughter of them, and recovered all their spoil. (8) Perhaps, coming near to the Amalekites in the evening, and witnessing their riotous conduct, they took some refreshment and rest, till the morning; and then at the twilight assaulted the Amalekites, when oppressed with drunkenness and sleep: or else David's company was supernaturally strengthened for these great exertions after all their preceding fatigue.

V. 20. Besides the cattle, which had been taken from the several countries which the Amalekites had ravaged, it is probable that David entered their lands, and fetched away some of their cattle also.

V. 22—25. (*Marg. Ref.*) No doubt many of David's men had profited by his example and instructions: yet there were also wicked men, even "men of Belial," among them; who proposed not only to take all the other spoil, and share it among those who aided in destroying the Amalekites; but likewise to seize the property of their fellow-soldiers, because they had not been able to go with them. David's answer however was full of piety, equity, and meekness, and well worthy of careful notice; and it prevailed against their unjust demands. Had he hearkened to these "men of Belial," the others would have gone away disgusted, and the consequences might have been permanently evil: but by thus mildly

men of Belial, of 'those that went with David, and said "Because they went not with us, we will not give *them* aught of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart."

23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, 'my brethren, with that "which the LORD hath given us, 'who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? 'but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part be that 'tarrieth by the staff: they shall part alike.

25 And it was so from that day 'forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

26 ¶ And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* 'to his friends, saying, Behold a 'present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD;

27 To *them* which were in 'Beth-el, and to *them* which were in 'south Ramoth, and to *them* which were in 'Jattir,

* Heb. *the men*. k Matt. 7:12. 1 Gen. 19:7. Judg. 19:23. Acts 7:2, 22:1. m 8:27. Num. 31:49-54. Deut. 8:10, 18. 1 Chr. 29:12-14. Hab. 1:16. n Ps. 44:2-7, 121:7-8. o Num. 31:27. Josh. 22:8. Ps. 68:12. p 3:13. 1 Heb. and forward. q 1 Chr. 12:1, &c. Ps. 35:27, 68:18. Prov. 18:15, 24. Is. 32:8. 2 Heb. blessing. 25:27. Gen. 33:11. 2 Kings 5:15. 2 Cor. 9:5. r Gen. 28:19. Josh. 16:2. Judg. 1:22, 23. 1 Kings 12:29. s Josh. 19:8. Ramoth. t Josh. 15:39. u Josh.

taking up the affair, he conciliated the minds of the well-disposed, and silenced the injurious party.—This edict was different from that, by which the spoil of the Midianites had been divided: (*Notes*, Num. 31:25-47,) but that related to the whole people; this only to the soldiers, some of whom went to battle, and others guarded the baggage; and in this *peculiar case* it became a permanent law in Israel.

V. 26—31. It is evident from this that some law or custom was established, which, in dividing the spoil, allotted a certain portion of it to the commander in the war, and that David sent these presents out of his own share of the booty. (20) No doubt he considered those who secretly favoured and assisted him during Saul's persecutions, as his steady friends; but, sending a blessing to them at this crisis, from the spoil of the enemies of God and his people, was the result of genuine policy, and served to remove obstructions to his advancement to the throne. (*Notes*, 1 Chr. 12:1—8.) He sent no presents to the Ziphites, or to the men of Keilah: (*Notes*, 23:1—13, 19—25, 26:1, 2.) for, though enemies should be helped, *when in distress*; friends alone are entitled to our confidence, gratitude, and liberality.—It is evident, that some of the places, here mentioned, were not situated in the lot of Judah; and David had passed over Jordan, to place his parents under the protection of the king of Moab, whose kingdom was near to Aroer. (*Marg. Ref.* 28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15. When we leave our families, we cannot foresee what may befall them, or ourselves, ere we return: we ought therefore to commit each other to the protection of God; and to render him unfeigned thanks when we meet, from time to time, in peace and safety.—It is wisdom on all occasions to moderate our expectation of earthly comfort; lest we should, by being too sanguine, meet with the more distressing disappointments.—Many of our troubles may be traced back to our imprudence; of all of them in one way or other originate from our sins.—Inordinate passions blind men's minds: excessive fear of one danger often causes them to overlook those which are still more formidable; and they who give offence to others, may expect to be used by them in like manner. But the Lord restrains the rage of the most barbarous and revengeful; while one selfish principle counteracts another, wicked men proceed as far as his purposes require, and no further; and by various instruments he rebukes and chastens his offending people, but restrains even the most successful from doing them essential detriment. (*Note*, Ps. 76:10.)—Generous minds are most susceptible of rational affections; and the bravest are not disgraced by mourning the loss or the sufferings of beloved relations: but all our passions are prone to excess; and unless the fear of God possess the heart, men fret against him under afflictions, and vent their impatience against the guilty or innocent occasions of them: and thus our helpers may become our terror, or our destroyers.—Conscious guilt, and a sense of the divine displeasure, form the keenest aggravations of a believer's distress: yet the very reflection which pains and humbles his heart, silences the tempest of his passions, and induces hope in God, who chastens that he may not condemn.—"The LORD is rich in mercy, and ready to forgive;" so that the greatest sinner, when first he approaches the mercy-seat in the Redeemer's name, with penitent confessions and fervent prayers, may be encouraged to expect salvation for his soul, and assistance in all his troubles. But the believer, who has long trusted in his mercy, chosen him for his Portion, walked with him in his ordinances, sought

28 And to *them* which were in 'Aroer, and to *them* which were in Siphmoth, and to *them* which were in 'Eshtemoa,

29 And to *them* which were in Rachal, and to *them* which were in the cities of the 'Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which were in the cities of the 'Kenites,

30 And to *them* which were in 'Hormah, and to *them* which were in Chorashan, and to *them* which were in Athach,

31 And to *them* which were in 'Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Saul's army being defeated, and his sons slain, he and his armour-bearer kill themselves, 1-6. The Philistines seize the towns which the Israelites forsake; and insult over the dead bodies of Saul and his sons, 7-10. The men of Jabesh-gilead rescue and burn them, and bury the bones, 11-13.

NOW the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and 'fell down 'slain in mount 'Giboa.

2 And the Philistines 'followed hard upon Saul, and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew 'Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, 'Saul's sons.

13:16. v Josh. 15:50. Eshtemoa. w 27:10. x Judg. 1:16. y Josh. 19:4. Judg. 1:17. z Josh. 14:13, 14. 2 Sam. 4:1, 15:10. a 28:1, 15:29:1. b 12:23. c 1 Chr. 10:1-3. * Heb. wounded. c 23:4. 2 Sam. 1:21. d 14:22. 2 Sam. 1:6. e 13:16, 14:11-14, 19. 18:1-4. 23:17. 1 Chr. 8:33. 9:39. f Ex. 20:5. 2 Kings 25:7.

his glory, and experienced his faithfulness, power, and love; notwithstanding failures and conscious unworthiness, may with confidence "encourage himself in the LORD his God," amidst the most extreme danger and distress.—Bitter complaints and mutual recriminations are of no use in the hour of trouble: we are then called to perform the present duty; and to inquire the will of God by searching the Scriptures, and prayer. When our sins are forgiven, and we act by the Lord's direction, we shall soon recover all, and be enriched by our very losses and trials; and even if our companions cannot or will not help us, "the LORD of hosts will be for us, the God of Jacob will be our Refuge."—Some of those, who are cordially attached to the cause of God, are less capable of hard services than others: but he mercifully accepts them, and so should their brethren.—It is good policy, as well as charity, to relieve the meanest in their distresses; for in some great emergency God may enable them to render us the most important services: but he will certainly punish inhumanity to the poor and the sick; especially that of masters to their sick and afflicted servants, and oppressed slaves. (*Jam.* 2:13.)

V. 16—31. The success and abundance of ungodly men, increasing their presumption, and being spent on their lusts, frequently accelerate their destruction: and sensual indulgence is a common introduction to "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth." (*P. O. C. Sam.* 13:15—39. *Notes*, Luke 16:19—23.)—In the most favoured companies selfish men will be found, who, being ungrateful to God for his kindness, will enrich or pamper themselves, while they leave their more deserving, though less prosperous brethren to starve. But those who consider the Lord as the Giver of their abundance, will dispose of it with equity and in liberality: they will employ their influence to restrain the injustice of others; and take occasions from evil suggestions to establish useful precedents: and instead of spending their wealth on their lusts, will share it with their friends, and with the poor; thus subserving their most important future interests, with the very "mammon of unrighteousness!" (*Note*, Luke 16:9—13.)—Yet how far do they all come short of the Saviour, who divides the spoil of his victories with the meanest of his followers! (*Notes*, Ps. 68:18. Eph. 4:11—13.) But, though the rebellious are now invited to accept of mercy and participate his favour; if they will not have him to reign over them, they shall receive no benefit from his redemption, the blessings of which will be confined to his friends who trust and love him, and keep his commandments.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXI. V. 2. Probably Saul never informed his sons, of what he had been told concerning his own and their approaching death: (28:19.) so that they were in the army, and slain before his eyes. Thus David's way to the throne was cleared: for if a large proportion of Israel stood up for the rights of Ish-bosheth, who was a very insignificant person; (2 Sam. 2:—4:) doubtless far more would have been strenuous for Jonathan. And, though he would readily have given place; yet his brethren and the people in general would no doubt have made much opposition to David's succession to the kingdom. (*Note*, 23:17, 18.)

V. 3-6. Saul, when grievously wounded, and unable to resist or to flee, expressed no concern about his immortal soul; but only desired to be speedily despatched, that the Philistines might not insult over him, and put him to pain! (*Note*, Judg. 9:50—57.) His armour-bearer seems neither to have feared death, nor the guilt of murder, nor the wrath

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

4 Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, "Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid: therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

7 ¶ And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan, saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour; and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth; and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

11 And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.

13 And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

g 2 Sam. 1:4-10. Am. 2:14. * Heb. *sh-ot-ter*, men with bows, found him. Gen. 49:23. 1 Kings 22:34. b Judg. 9:54. 1 Chr. 10:4. 1 14:6. 17:26. 36. 2 Sam. 1:20. Jer. 9:25, 26. Ex. 44:7-9. † Or, mock. j 2 Sam. 1:14. k 2 Sam. 1:9. 10. 17:23. 1 Kings 15:13. 1 Chr. 10:13-14. Matt. 27:4, 5. Acts 1:18. 16:27. 1 1 Chr. 10:5. m 4:10, 11. 11:15. 12:17, 25. 1 Chr. 10:6. Ec. 9:1, 2. Hos. 13:10, 11. n 13:

6. Lev. 25:32, 35. Deut. 23:33. Judg. 6:2. o 1 Chr. 10:8. 2 Chr. 20:25. p 4. 17:51, 54. 1 Chr. 10:9, 10. q Judg. 16:23, 24. r 21:9. a Judg. 2:13. t Judg. 1:27. 2 Sam. 21:12-14. u 11:1-11. 2 Sam. 2:4-7. ‡ Or, concerning him, that which, &c. x 2 Chr. 16:14. Jer. 34:5. Am. 6:10. y Gen. 35:8. 2 Sam. 2:4, 5. 21:12-14. z Gen. 50:10.

of God; but he had such reverence for the person of his prince, that he was incapable of lifting up his hand against him. Thus Saul became his own murderer; and his armour-bearer, in a mad expression of respect, imitated his example. Ahithophel and Judas the traitor likewise murdered themselves. (Notes, 2 Sam. 17:23. Matt. 27:3-5.) and I do not recollect any other instances in Scripture of this practice; unless Abimelech be added, who, when mortally wounded, ordered his armour-bearer to despatch him; and Zimri, who burnt his palace and himself in it. (Marg. Ref.) For suicide, whether from real or supposed insanity, or otherwise, seems to have very rarely occurred in Israel; while suicide among the Greeks and Romans, and other Gentiles, was considered as virtue, and never ascribed to insanity. So that the very numerous instances of self-murder, in this and other Christian countries, and generally considered as lunacy, have, in fact, no parallel, either in Israel, or among idolaters; and seem to be occasioned in this peculiar form, by an association of the Christian sentiment, that suicide is crime and murder, with a vain attempt in all parties to extenuate it, by ascribing it to madness. But when the character of the suicides mentioned in Scripture is considered, it confirms the opinion, which has been advanced, of the enormous guilt and direful consequences of this crime. (Note, Ex. 20:13.) Men, either madly presuming on the mercy of God, or despairing of it, in order to escape temporal sufferings or disgrace, despise his gift of life, and thus rush uncalled unto his tribunal, by an act of direct rebellion against his authority, and in proud defiance of his justice, with the guilt of all their unrepented crimes upon their heads! Yet so exceedingly has Satan blinded men's minds, that this worst of murders has been held honourable in very many ages, places, and situations, and has often been committed out of vainglory, in imitation of, or from affection to, those who have obtained renown among their fellow-sinners.—The Jews say, that Doeg was Saul's armour-bearer, having been preferred for slaying the priests of the Lord; and if so, his death was worthy of his life. (Notes, 22:9-19.)—Saul's sons and servants died in the performance of their duty to him and to their country; but he and his armour-bearer died in direct violation of God's commandment.

V. 7. The inhabitants of the cities, near the valley of Jezreel, and of the cities near "the passage of Jordan," or the place where men passed over that river, (בְּצֵרַת הַיַּרְדֵּן) were so frightened at these events, that they fled, and left their habitations to the conquerors.—These were the effects of rejecting the Lord and his prophet, and demanding a king! (Notes, 8:1-9. 12:16-19. Hos. 13:10, 11.)

V. 8-10. The Philistines sent the head of Saul to be placed in the temple of Dagon, and his armour in that of Ashtaroth, as memorials of their victory, and in honour of their idols. (Notes, 5:1-5. Judg. 16:23, 24. Dan. 5:1-9.) But his body, and the bodies of his sons, they fastened to the wall of Beth-shan a city near to the field of battle. Thus Saul

indeed escaped being tortured by them, but no dead body could be more inhumanly abused.—As the death of Saul made way for David to ascend the throne, the Philistines had no great cause to triumph on that account. (Notes, 2 Sam. 5:17-25. 21:15-22. Is. 14:28-32.)

V. 11-13. This conduct of the men of Jabesh-gilead was a becoming expression of gratitude to Saul, as their deliverer in the beginning of his reign, and a proper rebuke to the barbarity of the Philistines. (Notes, 11: 2 Sam. 2:5-7. 21: 9-14.) It is probable that they burned the bodies, lest the Philistines should recover and further abuse them: for though burning the dead was not customary in Israel, it was not prohibited. They fasted seven days, each day until the evening, as a token of their sorrow and humiliation under the divine rebuke. But there was no general lamentation in Israel made for Saul, as there had been for the prophet Samuel. (Notes, 25:1. 2 Chr. 21:18-20. Ec. 6:3-5. 8:9-10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The objects of the divine displeasure are not only wretched themselves, but likewise the cause of calamities to all around them: yet, while the righteous are often involved with them in temporal troubles and death; they will be separated in the other world, and possess eternal happiness, when the wicked sink into everlasting misery: and frequently men's behaviour, in the closing scene of life, strongly indicates their state beyond the grave.—How should we watch and pray, that we may not be given up to presumption or despair; but enabled patiently to bear the evils of life, and quietly to hope for the salvation of the Lord, that Satan may not tempt us to the horrible sin of self-murder!—It is comparatively of little consequence in what manner, or with what circumstances, we die, or what is done with our dead bodies; if our souls be but saved, our bodies likewise will be raised at last, incorruptible and glorious. But to be anxious to avoid pain or disgrace from men, and not to "fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell," is the extreme of infatuation and impiety: yet even here also, ungodly men are often disappointed. Indeed, every worldly object which is inordinately craved, will become our trouble; and the desire, the possession, and the loss of it will all be sources of uneasiness to us.—When inhumanity and impiety attend prosperity, it will be transient; and the successes of ungodly men are commonly introductions to their misfortunes.—It behooves us to show gratitude to our benefactors, even though they be wicked men; and to venture danger and trouble in doing so; yet how ineffectual is the kindness and respect of fellow-creatures to those who are enduring the wrath of God!—While pompous funerals, magnificent monuments, and flattering eulogiums, combine to honour the memory of some illustrious deceased impenitent sinner, his poor soul is suffering the extremest misery and disgrace, in the regions of darkness and despair: "This also is a sore vanity." (Note, Luke 16:22, 23.) May we seek and find that honour which cometh from God only.

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL, OTHERWISE CALLED THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book derives the name by which it is generally called, from the prophet Samuel, though he had been dead some time when the history contained in it commences. Perhaps it was so named, because he anointed that king whose actions it records; or because the prophets by whom it was written were raised up, as in those seminaries which he instituted. The names, however, of the books, are no part of divine revelation; and its authority, and its authority, namely, 'The Second Book of the Kings,' is more appropriate.—The book the title given it in the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, namely, 'The Second Book of the Kings,' is more appropriate.—The book itself most evidently continues the preceding narrative, and introduces that which follows; and its authenticity is considered as undoubted in every subsequent part of Scripture. The Psalms abound with references to the events recorded in it. (*Ps. 3. title. 72. 78-79. 73. 88-19. — 36. 132.*) The narrative of David's fall in the matter of Uriah, related only in this book, is mentioned in other parts of Scripture. (*1 Kings 15.5. Ps. 51. title. Matt. 1.6.*) In short, wherever the covenant made with David, concerning the regal authority, as perpetuated in his family, and at length inherited by the Messiah to descend from him; or the promises made respecting Solomon, the especial type of Christ; or the Lord's choice of Jerusalem, and of mount Zion, as the place of his sanctuary, to which the Israelites should resort; or the building and continuance of the temple there, are mentioned; the events recorded in this book are divinely attested.—As containing the history of almost the whole of David's reign, and *exclusively* that of many important transactions, during this interesting period, there are perhaps more references directly or indirectly made to it in other parts of the Scripture, than to any other portion of the sacred narrative. The promises made to David were, both in the literal and typical sense of them, evident prophecies, the fulfilment of which, as recorded in the subsequent books of Scripture, and in the history of the church and kingdom of Christ even to this day, are a divine attestation, that it was written by inspiration of that God, "to whom were known all his works from the beginning of the world." (*Notes, 7: 22: 23: 1-7.*)—It opens with David's accession to the throne, his gradual prevalence against the house of Saul, and his establishment in the kingdom; it proceeds to relate his victories over his enemies, together with his zealous endeavours to reform the state of religion among his people, as well as to enlarge their territory and advance their prosperity. But with these more pleasing events, are recorded the grievous sins which he committed, and the many domestic and public calamities with which he was chastised. These, as a dark cloud, cover the latter part of the history of this book; (which brings us almost to the close of his reign of forty years;) yet, through all, his character shines very bright in many instances, and we learn from another place, that he closed his life in a most honourable manner. (*Notes, 1 Chr. 28: 29.*)

B. C. 1056.

CHAPTER I

An Amalekite brings Saul's crown and bracelet to David, informs him of the event of the battle, and asserts that he slew Saul, 1-10. David rends his clothes, weeps, and orders the messenger to be put to death as a murderer, 11-16. His poetical lamentation for Saul and Jonathan, 17-27.

NOW it came to pass, after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in ^bZiklag;

2 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul, with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

3 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel I am escaped.

4 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

5 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

6 And the young man that told him said, As I

a 1 Sam. 30: 17-25. b 1 Sam. 27: 6. c Gen. 22: 4. Euth. 4: 16. 5: 1. Hos. 6: 2. Matt. 12: 40. 16: 21. d 4: 10. e Gen. 37: 29, 34. Josh. 7: 1 Sam. 4: 12. Joel 2: 13. f 15: 32. See on 1 Sam. 4: 12. g 14: 4. Gen. 37: 10-13. 1 Sam. 20: 41. 25: 23. Ps. 66: 3. Rev. 3: 9. h 2 Kings 5: 25. i Job 1: 15-19. j Heb. what was, &c. k 1 Sam. 4: 16. marg. l 1 Sam. 31: 6. 1 Chr. 10: 1-6. m Prov. 14: 15. n 1 Sam. 6: 9. Luke 10: 31. n 21. l 1 Sam. 25: 4. 31: 1. o 1 Sam. 31: 2-7. t Heb. behold

NOTES.—**CHAP. I. V. 1.** David and his men had returned to Ziklag, and probably were employed in repairing its desolations, when tidings were brought him of the death of Saul. It does not appear that he made much inquiry concerning the event of the war, though he had every reason to be anxious about it. The decisive blow must have been given about the time when he was so exceedingly distressed. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 30: 1-6.*)

V. 2-10. As it is expressly said, that the armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, before he slew himself, (*1 Sam. 31: 5.*) we must conclude that this man feigned many circumstances of his story. But happening to pass by the field of battle, and finding Saul's dead body, with the insignia of royalty on it, or near to it, he knew who it was; and by bringing these away he sufficiently proved Saul's death. He therefore framed his story, and ordered his behaviour, in that manner which he supposed would most ingratiate him with David. It is remarkable, that an Amalekite should boast of having slain Saul, who had been rejected for not punctually

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happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me; and I answered, Here am I.

8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite.

9 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.

10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

11 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him.

12 And they mourned and wept, and fasted until even for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

13 ¶ And David said unto the young man that

me. 9: 6. 1 Sam. 22: 12. Is. 6: 8. marg. 65: 1. p Gen. 14: 7. Ex. 17: 8-16. Num. 24: 30. Deut. 25: 17-19. 1 Sam. 15: 3. 27: 8. 30: 1, 13. q Or, my coat of mail, or, my embroidered coat hindereth me, that my, &c. r Jud. 3: 34. 1 Sam. 31: 4, 5. r 12: 30. Lam. 5: 16. s 3: 31. 13: 31. Gen. 37: 29, 34. Acts 14: 14. 1 Rom. 12: 15. o Ps. 35: 13, 14. Prov. 24: 17, 18. Jer. 9: 1. Amos 6: 8. Matt. 5: 44. 2 Cor. 11: 20. 1 Pet. 3: 8.

executing the command of God, concerning that nation. (*1 Sam. 15: 18-23. 28: 18.*) But this rendered the story the more improbable; for it might well be supposed, that Saul would be as unwilling to be slain by an Amalekite, as by a Philistine. *Anguish.* (9) The marginal reading seems the true meaning of the original.

V. 11, 12. David mourned for Jonathan, as having lost a most excellent and beloved friend; for Saul, as having good will and compassion for him without resentment, and because every circumstance preceding and attending his death, was peculiarly melancholy and affecting; and for Israel, as having lost a multitude of valiant men, as disgracefully triumphed over by the Philistines, and as exposed to further injuries and oppressions. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13-16. This man was an Amalekite, and so devoted by God himself to destruction; and David, as the king of Israel after Saul's death, was appointed to put this sentence in execution. He had boasted of having killed the king of Israel; David could not disprove his testimony. *And having*

told him, "Whence *art* thou? And he answered, *I am* the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

14 And David said unto him, "How, wast thou not afraid *to* stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?"

15 And David called one of the young men, and said, "Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.

16 And David said unto him, "Thy blood be upon thy head: for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed."

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son:

18 (Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow; behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.)

19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!

20 ¶ Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

21 Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

8. y Num. 12:8. 1 Sam. 31:4. 2 Pet. 2:10. x 1 Sam. 24:6. 26:9. Ps. 105:15. y 4:10-12. Judg. 8:26. 1 Sam. 22:1, 18. 1 Kings 2:25, 34, 46. z Gen. 9:5. 6. Lev. 20:9-11. 13. 16:27. Deut. 19:10. Josh. 2:22. Ez. 18:13. 33. 5. Matt. 27:25. Acts 20:26. e Job. 15:6. Prov. 6:2. Luke 19:22. Rom. 3:19. d Gen. 50:11. 2 Chr. 33:25. Jer. 9:17-21. e 1 Sam. 31:3. f Josh. 10:13. "Or, the upright." g 23. Deut. 4:7, 8. 1 Sam. 31:4. Is. 4:2. 53:2. Lam. 2:1. Zech. 11:7, 10. h 1:23, 27. Lam. 5:16. i Deut. 22:26, 27. Judg. 16:23, 24. Mic. 1:19. k Ex. 15:20, 21. Judg. 11:34. 1 Sam. 18:6. Ez. 16:27, 28. l 1 Sam. 17:26, 36. 31:4. m 1 Sam. 31:1. 1 Chr. 10:1-8. n Judg. 5:23. Job 3:3-8. Is. 5:6. Jer. 20:14.

received no other intelligence, probably he believed it. By his own confession he deserved death; (for a man's desire to die cannot authorize another to kill him; and by his punishment, David solemnly protested that he had no hand in the death of Saul; he warned all others not to expect favour from him, by doing violence to any of Saul's family; and he aimed to conciliate their good will, and that of Israel in general. (Notes, 4:8-12.)

V. 18. Perhaps the bow had fallen into disuse among the Israelites, and this had given the Philistines an advantage: at the time therefore that this poem was inserted in the book of Jasher, (Note, Josh. 10:12-14.) it was also recorded, that David had given orders to the people to habituate themselves to the expert use of the bow. Some, however, understand this expression of a tune, or musical instrument, to which this poem was adapted.

V. 19-27. This elegy contains little directly relating to religion; but it is highly poetical. It was intended as a tribute of respect to the memory of Saul, and of affection to that of Jonathan; who perhaps was principally meant by "The beauty of Israel," being in every respect an ornament to his religion and people. Saul's valour and military renown are celebrated, and his faults are veiled; but nothing is spoken of his piety or justice. The charge given to every one, not to mention the catastrophe in the cities of the Philistines, lest the enemies of God should rejoice, is very beautiful. The wish that neither rain nor dew might fructify the fields, on which the fatal battle was fought; and that no sacrifices might thence be brought to the altar of God, because there the anointed of the Lord had cast away his shield, as if he had been a common soldier, is a strong expression of regret for such an event. The harmony which generally subsisted between Saul and Jonathan, in warring against the enemies of Israel; the impetuosity and fury with which they had together charged and pursued them; and their falling in the same battle, are touched upon in a very poetical manner. It is probable that Saul had encouraged the manufactures of Israel, and perhaps had increased their wealth: the daughters of Israel therefore, as most delighted with external embellishment, are called upon to lament over their prince. Every thing is mentioned in his commendation, which truth permitted: but Jonathan is named with most passionate affection; as having fallen upon the high places, where he had often successfully displayed his valour; and as having shown a strong and faithful affection, in such trying circumstances, and in so disinterested a manner, as could not be equalled by any instances of conjugal fidelity, or the most constant love which had ever subsisted between the sexes. Considering therefore how pleasant his friendship had been to David, he could not but be greatly distressed at his premature death.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-16. The deepest distress sometimes immediately

23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

24 Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

25 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.

26 I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

27 How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

CHAPTER II.

David, by divine direction, goes with his company to Hebron, and is anointed king over Judah, 1-4. He commends the men of Jabesh-gilead for their kindness to Saul, 5-7. Abner sets up Ish-bosheth as king over Israel, 8-11. Twelve of Abner's men, and twelve of Joab's, engage in a fatal contest, which brings on a battle, in which Israel is vanquished, 12-17. Abner, Joab's brother, is slain by Abner, 18-24. At Abner's desire Joab sounds a retreat, 25-28. The number of the slain, 30, 31. Asahel's burial, 32.

AND it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron.

2 So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail, Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

o Joel 1:9. 2:14. p 1 Sam. 10:1. Is. 21:5. q 1 Sam. 14:7-14. 18:4. Is. 34:6, 7. f Or, sweet. 1 Sam. 18:1. 20:2. r 1 Sam. 31:2-5. s 2:18. Deut. 28:49. Jer. 12:8. Josh. 9:26. Jer. 4:13. Lam. 4:18. z 23:20. Judg. 14:18. Prov. 30:30. u Judg. 5:30. Ps. 68:12. Prov. 31:21. Is. 3:15-26. Jer. 2:22. 1 Tim. 2:9, 10. l Pet. 3:3-5. w 19:27. Lam. 5:16. x Judg. 5:18. 1 Sam. 14:13-15. y 1 Sam. 18:1-4. 20:17, 41. 23:16. z 2 Kings 2:12. 13:14. Ps. 46:9. 76:6. Ez. 39:10. a 5:19, 23. Num. 27:21. Judg. 1:1. 1 Sam. 22:24, 25-12. 30:7, 8. Ps. 25:4, 5. 27:4. 143:8. Prov. 3:5, 6. Ez. 36:37. b 5:1-3. 15:7. Gen. 22:2. Num. 13:22. Josh. 14:14, 15. 1 Kings 2:11. 1 Chr. 29:27. c 1 Sam. 25:42, 43. 30:5. Luke 22:28, 29.

precedes the dawning of deliverance: but those who have committed their concerns to the Lord, should quietly abide his will; and repress that eagerness and anxiety, with which others disquiet themselves, when they expect important changes.—Many secretly wish for the death of those who keep them from honours or estates, without excepting even their nearest relations; and inwardly rejoice at those events for which they decently appear to mourn. This is well known to mercenary men, who form their plans accordingly; and are apt to conclude that all are actuated by the same selfish principles. But the grace of God subdues this base disposition, and forms the mind to a more liberal temper: the true believer does not allow himself to desire, or to rejoice in, the calamity or death of a rival or an enemy, (Note, Prov. 24:17, 18.) much less for that of a kind and superior relation, to whom gratitude and honour are justly due; and his mourning will on such occasions be unfeigned, though moderated by submission to the will of God. He cannot exult in the prospect of worldly advancement: for he considers himself as by it intrusted with more talents, surrounded by greater temptations, and called to increasing cares, duties, and burdens. Those therefore will be deceived, who court his favour, as sycophants do that of ungodly superiors: they will meet with a frown, a rebuke, and perhaps punishment, where they expected a large reward: and this treatment of such mercenary men promises a useful and honourable possession of worldly pre-eminence.

V. 17-27. The faults even of our enemies should not be needlessly exposed, and all remembrance of injuries should be buried with the deceased, except the glory of God and the benefit of men require the contrary; and the offices and rank of distinguished persons are entitled to respect, though their characters do not deserve our esteem.—Useful endowments are conferred on numbers who are destitute of true piety; and it is in some cases allowable and decent to give them due commendation: yet we must on no account praise them for virtues which they do not possess. But holiness demands our peculiar love, and renders the society of those who possess it very pleasant to the true believer. Next to the love which subsists between the Lord and his people, that endeared affection which springs from it, produces the most vigorous, durable, faithful, and disinterested friendship: (Notes, 1 Pet. 1:22-25.) yet even this heavenly love occasions deep distress in this world, in which it is an *exotic*; but in its own climate above, it will flourish into unalloyed and eternal pleasure.—The calamities of the Lord's people, and the triumphs of his enemies, always grieve the hearts of true believers, whatever advantages they may incidentally derive from them; and it would be well, if many things which continually occur among professed Christians could be concealed from infidels and profligates, who are exceedingly hardened and emboldened by them. But it is not enough to conceal offences. Indeed the wish to do it is vain, and the thing

3 And ^hhis men that *were* with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in ^hthe cities of Hebron.

4 And ^hthe men of Judah came, and there they ^hanointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, *That* ^hthe men of Jabesh-gilead *were* they that buried Saul.

5 And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, *Blessed be ye of the Lord*, that ye have showed this kindness unto your lord, *even* unto Saul, and have buried him.

6 And now ^hthe Lord show kindness and truth unto you: and ^hI also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing.

7 Therefore now ^hlet your hands be strengthened, and be ye ^hvaliant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Saul have anointed me king over them.

8 ¶ But ^hAbner the son of Ner, captain of ^hSaul's host, took ^hIsh-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to ^hMahanaim;

9 And made him king over ^hGilead, and over the ^hAshurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel.

10 Ish-bosheth Saul's son *was* forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years: but the house of Judah followed David.

11 And ^hthe time that David was king in

d 1 Sam. 22:2. 27:2,3. 30:9,10. 1 Chr. 12:1. &c. e Josh. 21:11,12. f 19:11,42. Gen. 49:8-10. g 7. 5:3,17. 1 Sam. 16:13. 1 Chr. 11:3. h 1 Sam. 31:11-13. 1 Ruth 1:8. 2:30. 3:10. 1 Sam. 23:21. 24:19. 25:32,33. Ps. 115:15. k 15:20. Ps. 57:3. Prov. 14:22. Matt. 5:7. 2 Tim. 1:16-18. 19:3,7. 10:2. Matt. 5:44. 10:16. Philim. 19:19. m 10:12. Gen. 15:1. 1 Sam. 4:9. 31:7,12. 1 Chr. 10:18. Eph. 6:10. n ^hHeb. the son of Saul. o 1 Sam. 14:50. 17:55. 26:14. p ^hHeb. the host which was Saul's. q 3:7,8. 4:5,6. 1 Chr. 8:33. 9:39. Esh. col. p 17. 25:27. Gen. 32:2. q Num. 32:1. &c. Josh. 13:8-11. Ps. 105:8. r Gen. 30:13. Num. 1:10. s 5:

itself generally impracticable: and the very endeavour often increases the mischief; being considered as an effort to connive at or palliate evil conduct, in those of our own creed or party. And at the same time the hope of escaping disgrace decreases resistance in the hour of temptation; and so multiplies the scandals themselves. We must therefore watch and pray against them, and use all our influence to prevent them. Let us then learn to repress ambition, resentment, and self-love; and to exercise patience, meekness, gratitude to our benefactors, love to our country, and good will to men; with zeal for the glory of God, and the interests of true religion.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1-3. After the death of Saul many of the Israelites resorted to David at Ziklag, till his forces became very considerable: (Notes, 1 Chr. 12:1-22.) yet he took no step to obtain possession of the vacant throne, without consulting the Lord as in former instances by Abiathar the priest. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 29:30. Num. 27:21.) He trusted in him who had promised him the kingdom, to give it him in his own time and manner; that he might possess it with a clear conscience, and avoid all appearance of those evils with which he knew Saul's adherents would be ready to charge him. (Note, 1 Kings 11:37.) Judah was his own tribe, and he was decided in his opinion, that he must first go up to some city of that tribe. Accordingly he was directed to go up to Hebron, a chief city of Judah: and his men with their families were placed in the adjacent towns, dependent on Hebron. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. David had been *privately* anointed by Samuel, as Saul's successor: (1 Sam. 16:12,13.) and now the principal persons in the tribe of Judah *publicly* anointed him to be their king; but they did not attempt to place him over the other tribes. (Note, 5:3.)

V. 5-7. David took every opportunity of expressing the same regard to Saul, as he had done in his lifetime.—But he and three of his sons were now dead; and all Israel knew that Saul's family had been rejected by the Lord, who had appointed David his successor. The tribe of Judah had recognized his title: it was proper that he should act as king; and he could not begin his reign by a more conciliating measure, than by sending a deputation to thank those who had rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons, and performed the funeral ceremonies over them. (Note, 1 Sam. 31:11-13.) He not only besought the Lord to reward the men of Jabesh, but promised that he also would requite them; being determined to show *all* kindness to the friends of his predecessor: and he also encouraged them to expect his firm support against the Philistines and other enemies.

V. 8. Abner was a near relation of Saul, and commander of his armies; and Ish-bosheth was an insignificant person; Abner therefore doubtless intended to give him only the title of king, and to possess the authority himself. (Marg. Ref. Notes 3:6-12,17-21. 1 Sam. 14:47-52.) Either Abner

Hebron over the house of Judah, was seven years and six months. [Practical Observations.]

12 ¶ And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to ^hGibeon.

13 And ^hJoab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met ^htogether by the ^hpool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

14 And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and ^hplay before us. And Joab said, Let them arise.

15 Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which *pertained* to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David.

16 And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and *thrust* his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called ^hHelkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.

17 And there was a very sore battle that day: and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David.

18 And there were ^hthree sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel *was* as light of ^hfoot as a ^hwild roe.

19 And Asahel pursued after Abner; and in going he ^hturned not to the right hand nor to the left, from ^hfollowing Abner.

5. 1 Kings 2:11. 1 Chr. 2:4. 29:27. ¶ Heb. number of days. ¶ Josh. 9:3. 10:12. 18:25. u 18:9,16. 20:23. 1 Kings 1:7. 2:28-35. ¶ Heb. them together. x Jer. 41:12. y 26. Prov. 10:23. 17:14. 20:18. 25:8. 26:18,19. ¶ That is, The field of strongmen. z 1 Chr. 2:15,16. a 1:23. 1 Chr. 12:8. Ps. 147:10,11. Ec. 9:11. ¶ Heb. his feet. ¶ Heb. one of the roses that is in the field. Ps. 19:33. Cant. 2:17,8,14. Hab. 3:19. b 21. Josh. 1:7. 23:6. 2 Kings 22:2. Prov. 4:27. ¶ Heb. after Abner.

had not been present at the battle in Gilboa, or he had escaped by flight.

V. 9. Abner deemed it prudent to fix Ish-bosheth's residence at Mahanaim, east of Jordan, (Note, 2 Sam. 3:21,2.) as most secure both from David and the Philistines; yet all the tribes west of Jordan adhered to him, except the tribe of Judah.—The Ashurites were the tribe of Asher.—The nation in general had rejected the judges whom God had raised up for them, and had demanded a king: and in the same rebellious spirit they refused the prince whom the Lord had selected for them, and had demanded a king: and in the same rebellious spirit they refused the prince whom the Lord had selected for them, who was a man of approved abilities and character; and preferred the surviving son of their rejected king, though in every respect an improper person. In this, David was a type of Christ, whom Israel would not submit to, though anointed by the Father to be their Prince and Saviour. (Notes, 1 Sam. 8:1-9. Pa. 2: Luke 19:11-27. Acts 7:51-53.)

V. 10, 11. For two years Ish-bosheth reigned in peace, and David made no attempts against him: but for the remainder of the seven years and six months, there was war. Abner possessed the authority, and Ish-bosheth was only a nominal king. Ish-bosheth signifies a man of shame. He is also called Esh-baal. (1 Chr. 8:33. Note, Judg. 6:31,32.) He was evidently a very inconsiderable and despised person.

V. 12, 13. David was made king by God himself, and had never been subject to Ish-bosheth: yet he did not begin hostilities, but waited to see how God would order things in his favour. When however Abner made war on him, he was not bound to the same measures of mere self-defence, as when persecuted by the Lord's anointed.—Abner marched his army over Jordan, unto Gibeon of Benjamin, doubtless expecting to be effectually supported in subduing the tribe of Judah to Ish-bosheth: but David opposed an army to him under the command of Joab, his sister's son; and to the instructions given him we may ascribe the moderation with which he conducted the war. 'For he had sworn to Saul, that he would not cut off his seed, and therefore would not willingly engage against Ish-bosheth.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, 1 Sam. 24:16-22.)

V. 14-16. It is probable that Joab kept upon the defensive, and gave Abner no opportunity of attacking him; and that Abner's impatience to engage induced him to give this rash challenge. He expressed himself as if he only intended to make diversion for the two armies, according to the horrible custom of gladiators in after ages, who gratified the diabolical spectators by murdering each other. Joab, though backward to engage, had not resolution to refuse the challenge. Some think that only the twelve Benjamites were slain: but the words more obviously mean, that all the company were butchered.

V. 18-23. The circumstances stated in these verses, show that Abner was not at all to blame in the death of Asahel: for he was constrained to slay him in his own defence.

20 Then Abner looked behind him, and said, *Art thou Asahel?* And he answered, *I am.*

21 And Abner said to him, *Turn thee aside to thy right hand or to thy left, and lay thee hold on one of the young men, and take thee his armour. But Asahel would not turn aside from following of him.*

22 And Abner said again to Asahel, *Turn thee aside from following me: wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?*

23 Howbeit, he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner, with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still.

24 Joab also and Abishai pursued after Abner: and the sun went down when they were come to the hill of Ammah, that lieth before Giah, by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon.

25 And the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became one troop, and stood on the top of an hill.

26 Then Abner called to Joab, and said, *Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? how long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?*

27 And Joab said, *As God liveth, unless thou hadst spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone up every one from following his brother.*

28 So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

29 And Abner and his men walked all that night through the plain, and passed over Jordan, and went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.

30 And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the people together there lacked of David's servants nineteen men, and Asahel.

31 But the servants of David had smitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's men, so that three hundred and threescore men died.

32 And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

CHAPTER III.

David grows stronger, and Ish-bosheth weaker, during the war, l. Six sons are born to David in Hebron, 2-5. Abner quarrels with Ish-bosheth, and offers his services to David, 6-12. David demands and receives back Michal, 13-16. Abner communes with the Israelites, goes to David, and is feasted by him, and sent away in peace, 17-21. Joab is angry with David, and murders Abner, 22-27. David protests against his wickedness, and denounces a curse upon him, 28-30. David mourns for Abner, 31-33.

NOW there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David

* Or, spoil. Judg. 14:19. c 2 Kings 14:10-12. Prov. 29:1. Ec. 6:10. d 3:27. e 4:6. 20:10. f 20:12, 13. g 14. Acts 7:36. h 11:25. Ja. 1:20. Jer. 22:30. 12:12. 46:10, 14. Hos. 11:6. i Job 18:2, 19:2. Ps. 4:2. Jer. 4:31. j 1 Sam. 23:39. Job 37:2. l Prov. 15:1. 17:14. 20:18, 25:8. Luke 14:31, 32. t Heb. from the morning. † Or, gone away. m Cant. 2:17. Bether. n 8:1.

as nothing could satisfy Asahel, but either killing or taking captive the commander of Ish-bosheth's army, for which he was wholly incompetent. (Notes, 3:26, 27, 31.)

Sons of Zeruiah. (18) Zeruiah was David's sister: (1 Chr. 2:16.) and Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, were his nephews. (Notes, 23:18-24. 1 Chr. 11:6.)

V. 26-29. Abner used very different language when vanquished, than when eager to engage. (Note, 14-16.) Now he spoke "of the sword devouring for ever," and of the bitterness which the slaughter would occasion in the event; and recollected that the combatants were brethren. He forgot himself, however, when he threw the blame upon Joab; and he would not have made so moderate a use of victory had he obtained it. Though Joab was deeply exasperated by the death of his brother; yet, in regard to David's inclinations and Israel's advantage, he stopped the pursuit, and gave Abner and his troops an opportunity of retiring to a place of safety.

V. 30-32. (Marg. Ref.) The slain of Israel, though much exceeding that of David's men, were not numerous. This might be owing to the directions given by David, to be as lenient as possible: but the death of Asahel seems to have stopped the pursuers, and greatly to have favoured the escape of the vanquished. (23. Note, 26-29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. If we would possess temporal things with a blessing, we must not eagerly seize upon them, nor be determined by favourable events or carnal counsellors: but we must observe the rules of God's word, and pray for his direction; using those means, and those only, which he has appointed or allowed, and avoiding all evil and "appearance of evil," in our pursuit of them: and then whatever else we fail in we shall certainly be directed in the way to the kingdom of heaven.—Those who have shared our afflictions should be associated in our prosperity; as they, "who suffer with Christ, shall also reign with him."—When we are influenced by faith, and the fear and love of God, and act with integrity, kindness, forgiveness, and a desire of peace, we conduct our affairs with the best wisdom.—We are bound to pray for and do good to those who have acted properly, even to our enemies; and to use conciliatory measures towards all men, but especially those who have behaved with gratitude and fidelity, in dangerous circumstances and without prospect of advantage: for such friends are worthy of attention; and they, who have been grateful to one benefactor, will find another to protect them when he is removed. But the believer's progress must be gradual: his faith and graces must be exercised and proved, and his pride subdued, before he can properly endure any kind of prosperity: and for these purposes, the Lord often employs the perverseness of his brethren, without their knowledge or contrary to their intention.—In the professing church few honour those whom the Lord will honour: before Jesus came, and in every succeeding generation, the very builders have rejected such as He intended for eminent situations; and his servants must be conformed to him.—Ambition, jealousy, envy, and other evil passions, cause men to rebel against the word of God: but they generally attempt to conceal their real motives under plausible pretences. The believer's wisdom,

however, consists in waiting quietly and silently under injuries, and in leaving God to plead his cause, except it is evidently his duty to be active. But there is a respect due to superior relations, to which equals or inferiors, in similar circumstances, are not entitled.

V. 12-32. Ambitious and bloody men often consider the dire trade of war, and the slaughter of their fellow-creatures, as a mere diversion; and the lives of millions have been trifled away, out of an irrational point of honour, to the great gratification of Satan, that first great murderer of the bodies and souls of men. From age to age numbers are ambitious of venturing their lives and souls, for the empty hope of being celebrated as valiant men, after they are dead! and from the same motive they mingle the blood of their brethren with their own; though they bear them no resentment, and have received no provocation from them! But what can be more senseless and infatuated than such a conduct?—The sword of civil war, when once unsheathed, is not easily returned into the scabbard; and those who, in their eagerness to engage, make light of such unnatural contests, will perceive in the event that they are bitterness to all concerned.—Men are exceedingly disposed to throw the blame of manifest evil upon others, that they may exculpate themselves: and those arguments which were disregarded as futile when employed against them, will often be deemed very conclusive when urged on their own behalf.—Success, as well as self-love, has a great effect in determining men's judgments: of the evil of prosperous attempts they cannot be convinced; yet they can easily perceive those measures to be wrong, which occasion loss or peril to themselves! Such partial decisions should be exposed and rebuked: yet it is always right to exercise clemency to the vanquished, and generosity to the wretched; to spare the shedding of human blood; to alleviate, in every way we possibly can, the sum of human misery; and to strive for peace, especially in the intestine contentions of nations or churches, where the common cause must suffer, which party soever may acquire the ascendancy.—Different endowments qualify us for varied kinds of service, and should be improved for that purpose. But when talents are overrated, and when men confide and glory in them, they will go beyond the dictates of prudence, as well as out of the line of duty, in order to distinguish themselves; they will despise warning and counsel, as the effect of envy and cowardice: and they will always be shamed, and frequently ruined, by those qualifications in which they prided themselves. Often do men fancy themselves about to seize upon happiness, when death stops their career, and lays them in the dust: and if they will rush forwards in the road to destruction though plainly warned of their danger, they can blame none but themselves.—Finally, there are many distinctions among us, both during life, and in the disposal of our bodies after death; but in the eternal world no distinction subsists, except between those "who have served the Lord, and those who have not served him."

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. The civil war, between David and Ish-bosheth, continued about five years and a half; but it seems to have been conducted with great moderation on the part of David. He, however, gained continually upon the

waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

2 And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his first born was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess;

3 And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmi king of Geshur;

4 And the fourth Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.

7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?

8 Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do show kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to-day with a fault concerning this woman?

9 So do God to Abner, and more also, except as the Lord hath sworn to David, even so I do to him;

10 To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel, and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.

11 And he could not answer Abner a word again, because he feared him.

12 ¶ And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, Whose is the land? saying also, Make thy league with me, and behold, my

hand shall be with thee, to bring about all Israel unto thee.

13 And he said, Well; I will make a league with thee: but one thing I require of thee, that is, Thou shalt not see my face, except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face.

14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

15 And Ish-bosheth sent, and took her from her husband, even from Phaltiel the son of Laish.

16 And her husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim. Then said Abner unto him, Go, return. And he returned.

[Practical Observations.]

17 And Abner had communication with the elders of Israel, saying, Ye sought for David in times past to be king over you:

18 Now then do it: for the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies.

19 And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin: and Abner went also to speak in the ears of David in Hebron, all that seemed good to Israel, and that seemed good to the whole house of Benjamin.

20 So Abner came to David to Hebron, and twenty men with him. And David made Abner, and the men that were with him, a feast.

21 And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and I will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, and they make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace.

d 1 Chr. 3:1-4. e 13:1-29. Gen. 49:3-4. f 1 Sam. 25:43. g 1 Chr. 3:1. Daniel. h 1 Sam. 25:32, 42. i 13:20-28. 14:24-33. 15:1-14. 17:1-14. 18:9-18.3. j 13:37, 38. k Deut. 3:14. Josh. 13:13. l 1 Sam. 27:1. m 1 Kings: 1, 5, &c. 2:13-25. n 2:8-9. 2 Kings 10:2-3. 2 Chr. 25:8. Prov. 21:30. Is. 8:9. o Joel 3:9-13. Matt. 12:30. p 21:8-10. q 12:8. 16:21, 22. l 1 Kings 2:17. 9:22. r Ps. 76:10. Mark 6:18, 19. q 9:8. 16:9. Deut. 23:18. l 1 Sam. 24:14. 2 Kings 8:13. r 9:18, 19. l 1 Sam. 15:28. Ps. 21:4. Is. 37:23. Acts 9:4, 5. s 19:13. Rom. 1:17. l 1 Sam. 3:17. 14:11. 29:22. l 1 Kings 19:2. l 1 Sam. 15:28. 16:1, 12, 13, 20, 27. l 1 Chr. 12:23. Ps. 9:3, 19, 20. n 17:11, 21, 2. Judg. 20:1.

1 Kings 4:25. x 39. y 19:6, 7, 20:1-13. z Ps. 62:9. Luke 16:5-8. a 21:27. 51:3. 19:14, 41-43. 20:1, 2. l 1 Chr. 11:1-3. 12:38-40. Matt. 21:8-10. * Heb. saying. b Gen. 43:3. 44:23, 26. c 20-23. l 1 Sam. 18:20-28. 19:11-17. l 1 Chr. 15:29. d 1 Sam. 25:44. Phaltiel. l Heb. going and weeping. Prov. 9:17, 18. e 16:5. 17:18. 19:16. l 1 Kings 2:8. l Heb. both yesterday and the third day. f 9. l 1 Sam. 13:14. 15:28. 16:11, 12, 13. John 12:42, 43. g Ps. 59:3, 4, 19-23. 132:17, 18. h 1 Sam. 10:20, 21. l 1 Chr. 12:29. Ps. 68:27. l 1 Gen. 26:30. 31:54. Esau. 1:3. j 16:12. 2:9. Phil. 2:21. k 1 Kings 11:37. Ps. 20:4.

esteem and affections of the people, and in the extent of his dominions and the number of his subjects; while Ish-bosheth gradually sunk into insignificance and contempt. (Notes, 2:10, 11. Prov. 4:18, 19.)

V. 2-5. (Marg. Ref.) David's motives for multiplying wives must have been carnal, in one way or other; and his conduct in this respect proved the occasion of much sin and trouble in the subsequent part of his life. He had by all his wives no more than six sons, during the seven years that he reigned at Hebron; though probably he had some daughters, who are not mentioned. Perhaps Maacah, the daughter of Talmi, had been taken prisoner, and proselyted before David married her: though some think David had contracted affinity with the king of Geshur, to strengthen himself against Ish-bosheth. It is not known, why Eglah only is called "David's wife."

V. 6-10. (Marg. Ref.) Perhaps Abner was weary of Ish-bosheth's unsuccessful cause, and was glad of an occasion of seeking preferment in David's service. No doubt he was guilty of the crime charged upon him, which was considered as a claim to the kingdom of a deceased prince. (Notes, 1 Kings 2:15-25.) Ish-bosheth however was very imprudent to mention it, as he was entirely dependant upon Abner. He proudly disdained to be called to an account by Ish-bosheth, after all his boasted services to the house of Saul; which he had supported, not only against the house of Judah, but against the known appointment of God, confirmed by an oath, (7:18,) and against the convictions of his own conscience. Ambition, and not regard to Ish-bosheth, had hitherto induced him to support his interest: and revenge and policy, not regard to the will of God, at length prevailed with him at this time to join David's party. "Such is the genius of many great courtiers, who are irritated on slight occasions; and rather rule over kings, than are ruled by them." Pellicanus.

Dog a head. (18) (Marg. Ref.) A proverbial expression for what was deemed worthless and contemptible.—Some explain it to mean, "As if I were only fit to be set over a company of dogs."

V. 12. Whose is the land? Abner by this expression seems to have insinuated, that he, not Ish-bosheth, retained the authority: if therefore David would grant him advantageous terms, he would put him in possession of the whole

land.—Some however interpret the words, as an acknowledgment of David's title by the appointment of God to the kingdom over all Israel.

V. 13-16. David knew that the kingdom was his, in the purpose of God; it was desirable to sheath the sword of civil war, and to unite all Israel voluntarily under one king; he was not accountable for Abner's secret motives; and doubtless he meant to grant Ish-bosheth very favourable terms, had not his purposes been prevented.—If David had divorced Michal, and she had in consequence been married to another, he must not have received her again: but the separation was violent on both sides. (Notes, 1 Sam. 18:23-27. 25:43, 44.) It is probable that her marriage to Phaltiel was a force upon her inclinations: and Phaltiel was very criminal in taking another man's wife, whatever affection he had for her.—David required Michal to be restored, perhaps out of affection for her; or to strengthen his interest by asserting his affinity with the house of Saul, and showing the value he put upon it; or to show his regard for the law of God, and to rebuke a man who openly violated it.—As Abner did not deem it politic, at that juncture, directly to take Michal from Phaltiel, David addressed himself to Ish-bosheth, whose sister she was, who complied with his demand; perhaps being willing to be upon amicable terms with him, as he could not overcome him by arms.

V. 17-21. Abner, being satisfied that David would recompense his services, was very active in bringing the elders of the other tribes, and of Benjamin in particular, to receive David as their king.—It seems that the people in general had desired this, especially when Saul and his sons were slain; but that Abner's great authority had induced them to set up Ish-bosheth: so that now, when Abner entered into the interests of David, he had little difficulty in bringing them over to him. The words which Abner mentions, as spoken by the Lord concerning David, are not found in the preceding history; but the meaning of them is implied in the promises given him. (Marg. Ref. f, g.)—Having made all requisite preparations, Abner went to David, and being cordially entertained, and peaceably dismissed, he expected, no doubt, to obtain high preferment under him.

V. 22. A troop.] Probably, this was a troop of Philistines, or other enemies, not of Ish-bosheth's forces.

22 ¶ And, I hold, the servants of David and Joab came from *pursuing* a troop, and brought in a great spoil with them: but Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had sent him away, and he was gone in peace.

23 When Joab and all the host that was with him were come, they told Joab, saying, Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he hath sent him away, and he is gone in peace.

24 Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee: why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone?

25 Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out, and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest.

26 And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew it not.

27 And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother.

28 ¶ And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever, from the blood of Abner the son of Ner.

29 Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house: and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread.

16, 39, 19:5-7, Num. 32:11. John 18:35. m 27. 2 Kings 18:32, marg. John 7:12, 47. Rom. 2:1. n 10:3. Gen. 42:9, 12, 16. Num. 27:17. Deut. 28:6. 1 Sam. 29:4-6. Ps. 121:8. is. 37:28. o Prov. 25:23-26, 27:4-6. p 20:9, 10. Deut. 27:24. 1 Kings 2:5, 32. q Or, peaceably. Jer. 41:2, 6, 7. q 4:6. r 2:19-23. s Gen. 9:6. Ex. 21:12. Num. 35:33. Deut. 21:1-8. Matt. 27:34. t Heb. bloods. Gen. 4:10. marg. t 1:16. Judg. 9:24, 55, 57. 1 Kings 2:31-34. Acts 28:4. u 1 Sam. 2:32-36. 2 Kings 5:27. Ps. 108:8-19. v Heb. be cut off. v Lev. 15:2. x Lev. 19:44-48. 2 Kings 5:1. y Prov. 28:17. Acts 28:4. z 2:19-23. a 1:2, 11. Gen. 37:39, 34. Josh. 7:6. Job. 11:35. 2 Kings 19:1. § Heb. bed. Luke 7:14. b 1:

V. 24, 25. Joab, and his brother Abishai, David's nephews, had been very faithful and useful to him in his afflictions; and from gratitude and natural affection, he had inadvertently given them almost as great an ascendancy over him, as Abner had over Ish-bosheth: so that he had trusted and feared them too much, and allowed them all the importance which they claimed; and that had emboldened them, especially Joab, to a high degree of presumption. Indeed nothing could well be more affronting than this address of Joab to his prince, whom he grossly charged with the most egregious folly, and then left his presence without waiting for an answer! (*Marg. Ref.*) But it was the language of envy and ambition, as well as of resentment: he supposed that he had missed an opportunity of avenging the death of Asahel, and he feared a formidable rival, if Abner made a league with David; for it is evident he only pretended to doubt his sincerity.

V. 26, 27. Joab seems to have recalled Abner, in David's name, without his knowledge; which was very base treatment of him, as if he meant to bring him under suspicion of conspiring at the murder: and when Abner, imprudently indeed, but in confidence, stepped aside to confer with him as the officer of David, he treacherously assassinated him, in violation of every law of hospitality and public faith. Abishai also was privy to, or concerned in, the base transaction. (30) But, while Joab's conduct cannot be too severely reprobated, the wisdom and justice of God are manifest in Abner's punishment. From ambition he had pertinaciously, against his conscience, opposed the declared and known will of God; and was induced by base resentment to desert Ish-bosheth, and offer his services to David. (*Note*, 6-10.) He was therefore thrown aside, as unworthy to raise David to the throne, or to give peace to Israel. Indeed it is probable, that if he had lived, his ambition, talents, influence, and ungodliness, would have occasioned further mischief to all parties.

V. 28, 29. (*Marg. Ref.*) David no doubt intended by these protestations, and imprecations upon Joab and his family, to wipe off all suspicion of his own guilt, and to remove it from the land; being perhaps afraid of a revolt of the soldiers, if he proceeded to execute vengeance on the murderer. But he should have remembered, that he, "who stilleth the raging of the sea," is able also "to still the madness of the people." In so just a cause he ought to have risked all consequences. He was anointed king to administer justice without respect of persons; and he might have been assured of the Lord's support in doing so important a duty: the example would have been very salutary; all impartial persons would have applauded his firmness; perhaps Ish-bosheth's murder would have been prevented, as well as many other crimes and cala-

30 So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

31 And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier.

32 And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner as a fool dieth?

34 Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men, so fillest thou. And all the people wept again over him.

35 And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying, So do God to me and more also, if I taste bread, or ought else, till the sun be down.

36 And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people.

37 For all the people, and all Israel, understood that day, that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner.

38 And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?

39 And I am this day weak though anointed king, and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

12, 18, 33. 1 Sam. 30:4. Job 31:29. Prov. 24:17. Luke 19:41, 42. c 13:28, 29. Ec. 2:15, 16. Luke 12:19, 20. d Judg. 16:21. Ps. 107:40, 11. i Heb. children of iniquity. Job 24:14. Hos. 6:9 u 1:12. f 12:17. Jer. 16:7. Ez. 24:17, 22. g See on 9. h Judg. 20:26. i Heb. was good in their eyes. 1 Sam. 15:6, 13. Ps. 62:3. Mark 7:17, 15:11-13. k 12:28. 1 Sam. 14:50, 51. Job 32:9. l Ex. 31:12. 2 Chr. 19:6, 7. Ps. 73:10, 101:8. Prov. 20:8, 25:5. ** Heb. tender. 1 Chr. 22:5. Is. 7:4. marg. Rom. 13:4. m 1 Chr. 2:15, 16. n 18:7. o 1 Kings 2:5, 6, 33, 34. Ps. 28:4, 62:12. 2 Tim. 4:14.

mities, in the latter part of his reign. But his fear of man in this instance overcame his faith in God, and Joab continued and increased in authority, and in crimes, to the end of David's life: he was at length, however, called to account for them all. (*Notes*, 38, 39. 4:20, 8-10. Num. 35:31-34. 1 Kings 2:5, 6, 28-34.)

V. 30. *Marg. Ref.* Note 2:18-23.

V. 31. Joab was constrained to do penance, so to speak, by appearing as a mourner for Abner: but, as his revenge was gratified, his rival removed, and no heavier punishment inflicted, it is likely he would have but little objection to such a ceremonial. David, however, no doubt intended to lessen Joab's authority with the people, by requiring his attendance: but his military rank and achievements counteracted and rendered ineffectual this design; as might have been foreseen.

V. 33, 34. Abner did not die as criminals do, who are bound, fettered, put to shame, and executed for their offences; nor as a coward fleeing from enemies, or taken prisoner by them; nor as a rash man, who had needlessly run himself into danger: but as an honest man, who is unexpectedly set upon by ruffians, and murdered.—It must have been very mortifying to Joab, to be thus publicly reproached as an assassin.

V. 35. The Israelites had a custom of *inviting*, and *pressing*, the friends of the dead to take food, after the funeral was over; it being supposed that their sorrow would indispose them to it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 38, 39. David, in thus addressing his officers, seems first to have given a reason, why he made such lamentation over Abner; and then to have excused himself for not punishing Joab and Abishai. The near relation, in which Joab and Abishai stood to David; (*Note*, 2:18.) their steady adherence to him, during Saul's persecutions; the important services which they had rendered him; and the influence which they had thus acquired among his soldiers and friends, and even with him; combined to render it extremely difficult, and even perilous to oppose and punish them. But the satisfaction, which the people expressed in the former part of his conduct, showed, that he might notwithstanding very safely have proceeded to execute the divine law on the offenders, in its utmost strictness.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-16. The power and policy of Satan, and of wicked men, may struggle against the purposes of God, and the cause of his anointed King, and occasion apparent delays: but his interest is gaining ground, though by unnoticed degrees, and his glory will ere long be displayed throughout the earth.—When he sets up his kingdom in any heart, inbred lusts and

CHAPTER IV.

Ish-bosheth and Israel are troubled at Abner's death, 1. After Saul's death, changes took place, and Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, was lame, 2-4. Rechab and Baanah slay Ish-bosheth, and bring his head to David, 5-8. Israel causes them to be put to death, and Ish-bosheth's head to be buried, 9-12.

AND when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, ^{his} hands were feeble, ^{and} all the Israelites were troubled.

2 And Saul's son had two men *that were* captains of bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin: (for ^aBeeroth also was reckoned to Benjamin:

3 And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.)

4 And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *that was* lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was ^aMephibosheth.

a 17:2. Ezra 4:4. Neh. 6:9. Is. 13:7. 35:3. Jer. 6:24. 50:43. Zeph. 3:16. b Matt. 2:23. c 3:22. 2 Kings 5:2. 6:23. * Heb. *second*. d Josh. 9:17. 18:25. e 1 Sam. 31:7. Neh. 11:37. f 9:5. g 1 Sam. 29:1, 11. 31:1-10. h 1 Chr. 8:34. 9:40. Meribonai. i 2 Chr. 21:25. 25:27. 33:24. j 11:2. 1 Kings 16:9. Prov. 24:35, 34.

outward temptations will powerfully oppose it: but grace will gather strength, and every corruption be weakened continually in the conflict, till the believer is at length sanctified wholly in spirit, soul, and body.—Inconstancy must be incident to selfish men: if their avarice or ambition meets with disappointment in one course, they will turn into another: and sometimes making pretensions to religion seems the readiest way to the gratification of worldly ambition, rapacity, or revenge.—Many are not *above* committing very base crimes, who are too proud to bear reproach, or even the suspicion of being guilty: and while men go on in their sins *apparently without concern*, they are often conscious that they are fighting against God!—Little confidence can be placed in those who affront their Maker, betray their country, or deceive those who confide in them, under the pretence of serving their friends: most certainly they mean to serve their own purposes; and will betray those also who now trust them, when they can obtain advantageous terms for doing it. Yet even by such as act from revenge, ambition, lust, or avarice, the Lord secretly carries on his own designs: but as they intend not to honour him, whatever they profess; so when his ends are answered, he will throw them aside with contempt.—In some cases, and for some purposes, we too may use their help, without inquiring about their motives: but it will require great caution and wisdom, else we shall not escape guilt or reproach.—The reunion of near relatives, who have been involuntarily separated, is right in itself; and it is always our duty to express our regard for the divine law, and to bear testimony against sin.—Though guilt commonly renders men the objects of our deepest compassion: yet no affection can be either truly amiable or allowable, which is not regulated according to the word of God.

V. 17-39. The bulk of mankind, in all ages, are guided by those who rule or teach them, and address their passions by eloquence or flattery: but let us seek for a sound judgment, a good conscience, and an upright heart; that we may know and adhere to the truth and will of God, amidst all changes.—Those who have deceived others, should endeavour to undeceive them: but good words will do little, while a man continues the slave of his lusts.—In cultivating Christian tempers and performing relative duties, extremes and counterfeits must be guarded against: as zeal and boldness may become furious and contentious; so meekness, and the love of peace may degenerate into imbecility and irresolution; and through undue ascendancy of those inferiors, who ought "to be kept in subjection with all gravity," shameful things will often be done or connived at, to the disgrace of individuals, and the reproach of the common cause. Every one therefore should know his own place and duties, and exercise the Christian temper in *doing them*; and not make the fear of being ruffled or discomposed an excuse for neglecting them.—Proud men rate their services so high, and are so regardless of relative duties and decorum, that it is not desirable to be under obligations to them: we should however receive every thing as from God; and consider every man as a channel through which the gift is communicated, of whom there is indeed no real necessity, on whom we should rest no dependence, and to whom that gratitude is due, and that alone which consists with every other duty.—Ungodly men, who cannot brook an affront or a rival, and who deem themselves too powerful for human justice, have little to restrain them from the commission of the most horrid crimes: and the human heart is capable of making the highest professions of friendship subservient to the most cruel murders, and of violating every sacred tie. It is not enough for those, who are invested with authority, to express their abhorrence of such crimes and criminals, or their compassion for those who suffer by

5 And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth, who lay on a bed at noon.

6 And they came thither into the midst of the house, *as though* they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

7 For when they came into the house, he lay on his bed in his bedchamber, and they smote him, and slew him, and beheaded him, and took his head, and gat them away through the plain all night.

8 And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the Lord hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

9 And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said unto them, *As* the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,

1 Thes. 5:3-7. k 2:23. 3:27. 20:10. l 1 Sam. 17:54. 31:9. 2 Kings 10:6, 7. Matt. 14:11. Mark 6:33, 29. m 1 Sam. 18:11. 19:2-10, 15. 30:1. 23:15. 25:29. Matt. 2:40. n 18:19, 31. 22:43. Luke 18:7, 8. Rev. 6:10. 19:20. o Gen. 48:16. 1 Kings 1:29. Ps. 31:5-7. 34:22. 71:23. 103:4. 106:10. 107:2. 2 Tim. 4:17, 18.

them: but all partialities, relative affections, and interested considerations should be laid aside, and condign punishment inflicted; that "others may hear, and fear, and do no more such wickedness;" and in every state, the executive authority should possess power sufficient to punish the proudest subject, lest blood be imputed to the land. As our lives are so exposed on every side; and as he most emphatically "dieth as a fool," who dies in his sins; we should be careful to be always ready for all the honour or commendations, that men can bestow on us after our decease, will not affect or amend the state of the departed soul.—Alas, what are the imagined advantages of royalty? The king "after God's own heart" finds as much cause for lamentation and complaint, as when a poor fugitive! But he who now reigns upon the throne of David, has a kingdom of a nobler kind: whatever he does is noticed by and pleases all his willing people: and he will bring them all to share his glory and joy. Many however are outwardly servicable to his cause, who only seek *themselves* in all they do, and from time to time disgrace it with their crimes: these may escape for a season, but at length they shall be numbered with his enemies, and shall perish for ever.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. Perhaps Ish-bosheth had not before been certainly informed that Abner had deserted to David: or, both he and the people hoped by Abner's means to have obtained better terms. But by his death their affairs were left in a most unsettled and dangerous situation; and they had no person in whom they could place confidence, either as leading them to battle, or as negotiating a treaty.

V. 2-4. Beeroth was one of the cities of Gibeon. (Josh. 9:17.) and it was allotted to Benjamin; (Josh. 18:25.) but when Saul's army was routed, and he and his sons slain, the inhabitants of Beeroth deserted their city, and went to sojourn at Gittaim; where they remained when this history was written. (Neh. 11:33. Note, 1 Sam. 31:7.) At the same time Mephibosheth fell and was lame.—These facts seem to have been recorded, to illustrate the consternation which followed the death of Saul and his sons; and perhaps Mephibosheth's youth and lameness emboldened Rechab and Baanah to murder Ish-bosheth; as Mephibosheth was the next heir of Saul, and the avenger of blood. (Note, Num. 35:11-15.)

V. 5. Ish-bosheth had enough to employ him in this emergency, without sleeping on his bed at noon. But he appears to have been an inactive, self-indulgent man. It was indeed, and is still, a custom in the east countries, to retire for sleep about noon; that is, for such as live in ease and luxury, not for others, except in very sultry regions. The Scripture gives no intimation that this was a common practice in Israel. (Marg. Ref. j.)

V. 6, 7. Rechab and Baanah, as captains of bands, had access to some granary attached to Ish-bosheth's house, whence their soldiers had provisions; and under this pretence, without being suspected, they entered into his apartments and stabbed him, in that part of the body where a wound was known to be most certainly fatal. (Marg. Ref. k.)—And when he was thus slain, they cut off his head also, and escaped.

V. 8. These men entirely mistook David's character, as if he had such a thirst for revenge, that he would reward any villany by which it could be accomplished; and they presumed that they had performed the will of God, in this complicated treason and parricide! The Lord had indeed avenged his servant of his enemies; but neither David, nor David's Lord, had commissioned them to murder their prince, whom they professed to serve. (Note, 3:6-10.)

V. 9, 10. Redeemed, &c. (9) (Marg. Ref. Note, Gen. 48:16.) By using this language, David *implied* all who

10 When none told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, (thinking to have brought good tidings,) I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, ¹who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings:

11 How much more, when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed! shall I not therefore now require his blood of your hand, and take you away from the earth?

12 And David commanded his young men, and they slew them, and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-bosheth, and buried it in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.

CHAPTER V.

The Elders of the tribes, at Hebron, anoint David king over all Israel, 1-8. His age at the beginning of his reign, and the length of his reign, 4, 5. He takes Zion from the Jebusites, and calls it the city of David, 6-10. Hiram sends him timber and workmen to build him a house, 11. He prospers, and takes more cities; and eleven sons are born to him, 13-25. By divine direction, he gains two victories over the Philistines, 17-25.

THEN came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

2 Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that eldest out and broughtest

p. 12-16. * Heb. he was in his own eyes, as a bringer, &c. † Or, which was the reward I gave him for his tidings. q. 1 Kings 2:32. Prov. 25:36. Heb. 1:4. 12. 1 John 3:12. r. 3:27, 39. Gen. 9:5, 6. Ex. 21:12. Num. 35:31-34. Ps. 9:12. 1 Gen. 4:11. 6:13, 7:23. Ex. 9:15. Ps. 109:15. Prov. 2:22. Jer. 10:11. t. 1:15. Ps. 65:22. Mat. 7:2. u. 21:9. Deut. 21:22, 23. v. 3:32. a. 1 Chr. 11:1-3. 12:23-40. b. 19:13. Gen. 29:14. Deut. 17:15. Jude. 9:2. Eph. 5:30. Heb. 2:14. c. Num. 27:17. 1 Sam. 18:13, 16. 25:28. Is. 55:4. d. 7:7. 1 Sam. 16:1, 13. 25:30. Ps. 78:72. Is. 40:11. Ex. 34:23. 37:24, 25. Mic. 5:4. Matt. 2:6. marg. John 10:3, 4, 11. e. 1 Sam. 9:16. 13:14. 2 Kings 20:5. Heb. 2:10. f. 1 Chr. 11.

heard him, that in his most extreme dangers, he had neither used treachery or cruelty himself, nor allowed his men to use them. It must therefore be evident, that now the Lord had rescued and prospered him, he had no temptation to countenance such traitors as Rechab and Baanah.

V. 11, 12. (Note, 1:13-16.) Whatever Ish-bosheth's character was before God, he was righteous as to his murderers, having done them no injury, and given them no provocation; so that in slaying him, they "shed innocent blood," from the basest motives, and with the greatest aggravations: and David, as God's vicergerent, most justly executed vengeance upon them for it. (Note, Ex. 23:6-9.)—It would have been well, if he had been equally decisive in the case of Joab: that there might have been no appearance of partiality, and no hope of impunity to any criminal. (Note, 3:28, 29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Innumerable are the perils, to which our tender years are exposed: and we owe much gratitude, both to God and to our parents, if preserved during that period, from losing our limbs or senses, or contracting harms, which would have rendered our whole lives uncomfortable to ourselves and others. Parents too should take occasion from this reflection, not only to be very attentive to their offspring, but by prayer to commit them continually to the Lord's keeping.—Every thing will concur in forwarding the accomplishment of God's word, whether of promise or of wrath, when the appointed time approaches: on one hand there can be no failure; on the other, no escape.—Wretched, indeed, are they who are engaged in undertakings in which none can serve them without opposing the known will of God! The more exalted their station, the greater is their danger: for the very men in whom they repose their chief confidence, are destitute of principle, serve them only for gain, and will betray or murder them when their mercenary schemes require it.—Alas! what numbers sink from self-indulgence and carnal security, into unsuspected and inevitable destruction!—Many are conscious, that they should be pleased with villany, provided it conduced greatly to their profit: thus they are led confidently to conclude, that others will be so too; and as numbers are rewarded for villainous actions, they expect the same. Persons in authority should therefore decidedly manifest, that they will not be served by such base characters, but will, instead of rewarding, severely punish their crimes.—The servants of God are encouraged by the Scriptures, and by their own experience, to trust him in the path of duty; and confidently to expect that he will redeem them from all adversity, without countenancing sin, any more than committing it, for that purpose: they will also pity and pray for, and behave kindly to, their opposers, and speak as favourably of them as they can; and on no account become their own avengers.—Finally, the son of David will requite those who pretend to serve his cause by frauds, treasons, massacres, and persecutions, with far more dreadful vengeance, than was inflicted by David on Ish-bosheth's murderers.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. (Note, 1 Chr. 12:23-40.) When Abner and Ish-bosheth were dead, the tribes of Israel were left "as sheep without a shepherd;" they had no inclination to set up another of Saul's family in opposition to David: and having observed the prosperous state of Judah

in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, "Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel."

3 So fall the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel.

4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.

5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

6 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: "thinking, David cannot come in hither."

7 Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

8 And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

3. p. 1 Sam. 11:15. 2 Kings 11:17. 2 Chr. 23:16. h. Jude. 11:11. 1 Sam. 24:18. 12:4. 1 Sam. 16:13. k. Luke 3:23. 11 Chr. 26:31. 29:27. m. 2:11. 1 Kings 2:11. 1 Chr. 3:4. n. 1 Chr. 11:4-9. q. Gen. 14:13. Josh. 10:3. Jude. 1:3. p. Josh. 15:63. 18:28. Jude. 1:21. 19:10-12. q. Jer. 37:10. * Or, saying, David shall not. * Ps. 2:6. 9:11. 48:12. 51:18. 87:2. 132:13. Is. 12:6. 59:20. Mic. 4:2. Rom. 9:33. Heb. 12:22. Rev. 14:1. s. 6:16. 1 Kings 2:10. 3:1. 8:1. 1 Chr. 11:7. 2 Chr. 5:2. 24:16. t. Josh. 15:16, 17. 1 Sam. 17:25. † Or, because they had said, even the lame and the blind, he shall not come into the house.

under his government, they began to entertain higher and more honourable thoughts of him. Of their own accord therefore they applied to him, by their elders, to take the government upon him; and as a reason why he should forgive their ill-usage, they pleaded their near relation to him, being his brethren, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Marg. Ref. b.) They now praised his former services, which before they had overlooked; and they acknowledged the Lord's appointment of him, which before they had resisted. They therefore desired to put themselves under his protection: and hoped that he would rule over them in tenderness and equity, for their safety and comfort, as a shepherd feeds his flock; as well as that he would lead them forth to victory over their enemies. This is introduced, as a part of the Lord's commission to him, when he appointed him to the kingdom; by which they conveyed the intimation in the most unexceptionable and efficacious manner.—This is the first time good rulers are spoken of, under the emblem of shepherds, which is afterwards very common, and is especially applied to Christ our King. (Marg. Ref. d.) But wicked rulers are characterized as lions, bears, wolves, and leopards. (Notes, Prov. 28:15, 16. Ez. 19:2-9. 22:27, 28. Dan. 7:2-8.)

V. 3. It is probable, that David agreed to an act of indemnity for past offences, and engaged to rule over his people according to the law of God; and they submitted to his authority according to the same rule.—On this occasion he was anointed a third time, probably by the high-priest. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref. m.) If David was twenty years of age, when Samuel anointed him, Saul reigned ten years after that transaction, but it is not certainly known how long he had reigned before. (Note, Acts 13:21.)

V. 6-8. The greater part of Jerusalem lay in the lot of Benjamin, and had hitherto been possessed by the Jebusites. (Notes, Josh. 15:63. Jude. 1:8, 21.) But as soon as Israel had submitted to David, he marched to dispossess them. The citadel, called "the Strong hold of Zion," was fortified by nature and art, and the Jebusites set him at defiance. Confiding in its strength, they told him that blind and lame men could defend it against his army; and perhaps in derision, placed a company of invalids upon it, who insulted David and his soldiers: for the last clause (8) may be translated "They had said, even the blind and the lame, that he shall not come into the house." But David commanded his men, "wher they smote the Jebusites, to throw down the blind and the lame into the gutter," or ditch, as it might be rendered; which, under the conduct of Joab, they effected accordingly. These were said to be "hated of David's soul;" for they were devoted Canaanites and idolaters, if not blasphemers of God.—But, by "the blind and the lame," some understand the idols of the Jebusites, which David's soldiers had thus called in contempt; yet their worshippers so confided in them, that they defied David to take the citadel while they kept their station, or by any means to remove them; and declared that if he did, they would no longer admit them into their temples or houses.—David, however, got possession: and near to this mount the ark was placed, and the temple was built; and the residence of the family of David was fixed. (Notes, 11:6:17. Ps. 122:132:13-18.)

9 So David dwelt in the fort, and called it, the city of David. And David built round about from ^{the} Millo and inward.

10 And David went on, and grew great, and ^{the} Lord God of hosts was with him.

^{B. C.]} 11 ^{1046.]} And ^{Hiram} king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house.

12 And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

13 And David took ^{him} more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David.

14 And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; ^{Shamuah}, and ^{Shobab}, and ^{Nathan}, and ^{Solomon},

15 ^{Ishar} also, and ^{Elishua}, and ^{Nepheg}, and ^{Japhia},

16 And ^{Elishamah}, and ^{Eliada}, and ^{Eliphalet}

17 But when the Philistines heard that ^{the} Lord had anointed David king over Israel, all ^{the} Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.

^{14:7. h Eliphalet, 1 Chr. 3:6. 11 Chr. 14:8,9. Ps. 2:1-5. Rev. 11:15-18. k 23:14. 1 Chr. 11:16. 123:13. Gen. 14:5. 1 Chr. 11:15. Is. 17:5. m 2:1. 1 Sam. 23:2,4. 30:7,8. n 23. Judg. 20:28. 1 Sam. 28:6. 30:8. 1 Kings 22:6,15-23. Prov. 3:6. o Is. 23:21. § That is, the plain of branches. p Deut. 7:5,25. 1 Sam. 5:2-6. 1 Chr. 14:11,12. Is. 37:19. 1 Chr. 14:13. 1 Chr. 14:12. Jer. 43:12. q 1 Kings 22:6,15-23. 1 Chr. 14:13. 1 Chr. 14:14. Matt. 9:29. 30. Mark 9:23-25. John 9:6,7. 12 Kings 7:8. 1 Chr. 14:14. 7:15. 1 Sam. 14:9-12. 1 Chr. 14:15. Phil. 2:11,12. x 1 Chr. 14:16. Gideon. y Josh. 16:10.}

V. 9. *Millo* seems to have been a place of public convention, all around which David erected such buildings, as were proper for rendering the city the seat of government. (*Note, Judg. 9:16-20. v. 20. 2 Kings 12:20,21.*)

V. 11. Hiram sent to congratulate David on his accession to the throne, and to enter into a league with him; and as Hiram's subjects were better architects than the Israelites, they were employed in building David a palace, suited to his exalted station. Though Saul affected the splendour of royalty, yet he did not build a royal palace; but David built one, perhaps as a token of his assured belief that the kingdom would be continued in his family.

V. 12. David was sensible that God had advanced him to the kingdom, not so much that he might be honourable and prosperous, as that he might promote the temporal and eternal interests of his people. "This is the greatest grace of a king, that he certainly believes himself to be made a king by God, for the sake of the people: and let him often call to mind, the people were not created or ordained by God for the king." *Conradus Pellicanus in Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13-16. (*Marg. Ref.*) It was customary for kings to multiply wives, and to strengthen their interest by many alliances: and to this David very improperly conformed. (*Notes, 3:2-5. 11:1-5. 15:16. 16:20-23. 1 Kings 11:1-8.*) Some names are mentioned in Chronicles, not found here; perhaps the sons there mentioned died in infancy. (*Note, 1 Chr. 3:1-9.*)

V. 17, 18. The Philistines, satisfied with the advantages which they had enjoyed since the death of Saul, had been restrained from molesting the Israelites during their civil dissensions: but they invaded them as soon as they were united again under one king. Thus, by beginning war, they delivered David from any embarrassment, about warring against those who had previously protected him. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 27:1-3. 28:1,2.*) He immediately therefore marched to some fortified place, where he might check their incursions, and consult what measures to take.—The valley of Rephaim was not far from Jerusalem. (*Marg. Ref. 1.*)

V. 19. *Notes, 2:1-3. Ez. 28:30. Num. 27:21.*

V. 20. Baal-perazim properly signifies the *lord of breaches*. By some evident interposition the Lord himself fought against the Philistines, like the breaking forth of impetuous torrents, which bear all down before them. David therefore gave the place the name of Baal-perazim, by way of ascribing to God all the honour of the victory.

V. 21. The Philistines expected protection from their images, but they became a prey to the conquerors. When the Philistines had taken the ark of the Lord, he by grievous judgments constrained them to restore it: (*Notes, 1 Sam. 5:6:*) but the Israelites burnt the idols of the Philistines without either fear or hurt. (*1 Chr. 14:12. Note, Deut. 7:25,26.*)

V. 24. When David heard a sound among the mulberry-trees, like the marching of an army, denoting the assistance of angels, or of God himself; he was directed to bestir himself. Sometimes the Lord commands and employs man's concurrence, and sometimes he rejects it; that we may neither be self-important nor negligent.

18 The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

19 And David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into my hand? And the Lord said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thy hand.

20 And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, the Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim.

21 And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them.

22 And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

23 And when David inquired of the Lord, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.

24 And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou shalt besir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

25 And David did so as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Mercies, long waited for in faith and patience, will be conferred in the most reputable and comfortable manner: nor shall any go unrewarded, who persist in refusing to employ sinful means for their own deliverance or advancement.—Civil government is fixed on its firmest basis, and is likely to produce the most permanent blessings, when it is regulated by wholesome laws; marking out duties, prerogatives, and privileges to the prince and people, and reciprocally ratified, as in the presence of the Lord, by the most solemn assurances, with a view to his authority, appointments, and commandments.—We are all brethren; "of one bone, and of one flesh;" and none ought to oppress or to be cruel to another: princes should use clemency, and tenderly watch over their people, like shepherds over their flocks; and the people should gratefully acknowledge the blessings which they enjoy under their government, honour the authority of God in them, and yield their willing submission in all things lawful.—Thus Jesus became our Brother, assumed and inhabits our nature, that he might be our Prince and Saviour; and thus the humbled sinner takes encouragement from this endearing relation; applies for his salvation, voluntarily submits to his kind authority, and craves his powerful protection.—The false confidences of ungodly men will assuredly deceive them, and their proud boastings will hasten their ruin: while those with whom is the Lord God of hosts, go forward and grow great. In the day of his power Satan's strong hold, the human heart, is converted into "an habitation of God through the Spirit," and into a throne, on which the Son of David rules, and brings every thought into obedience to himself. May he thus come and claim and cleanse each of our hearts; and having destroyed every idol, may he dwell and reign there for ever. (*Notes, Gal. 2:17-21. Eph 2:19-22. 3:14-19.*)—It is in mercy to a nation, when wise and righteous persons are exalted to authority: and every advancement or endowment which we receive, should remind us, that the Lord alone has conferred the distinction; and that he did it, that we might be useful to his people by the talents intrusted to us. We have therefore cause to be thankful and watchful; and to pray earnestly for grace sufficient to enable us duly to improve them. (*Note, 1 Kings 3:5-14. P. O. 1-15:*) nay, we have double cause for humility, when we reflect how little we do so.—Alas! even good men are apt to grow secure and self-indulgent in prosperity, and to sanction by their example those abuses, which they should oppose or repress: and all our returns for the Lord's mercies are deeply tinged with ingratitude.—When the church of God begins to prosper, its enemies will generally exert themselves: and the great exemption from all kinds of persecution, and the seeming friendliness of the world to religion, with which many are pleased, arise from the policy of the enemy, who determines to let men alone with their empty notions, forms and profession.—In our spiritual warfare, we must decidedly declare for the Lord, though against relatives or benefactors; and if we consult him, he will teach us to do it without even the appearance of evil.—All those objects, which men idolize, will prove a useless incumbrance to them, when the Lord shall arise to ex-

CHAPTER VI.

David fetches the ark from Kirjath-jearim on a new cart, 1-5. Uzzah is smitten, David is disconcerted, and the ark is left with Obed-edom, whose house is blessed on account of it, 6-11. David brings the ark to Zion with sacrifices; and dances before it, for which Michael despises him, 12-16. He places it in a tabernacle with joy and feasting, 17-18. Michael, deriding David for his religious joy, continues childless, 20-23.

AGAIN, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

2 And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him, from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio the sons of Abinadab drove the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir-wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

a 5:1. 1 Kings 8:1. 1 Chr. 13:1-4. Ps. 122:1-6. b Josh. 15:9, 10, 60. Baath, Kirjath-jearim. 1 Sam. 7:1. 1 Chr. 13:6. * Or, at which the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts was called upon. Lev. 24:11-16. Is. 47:4. 54:5. c Ex. 25:15-22. 1 Sam. 4:4. 1 Kings 8:6-7. Ps. 80:1. 1 Pet. 1:12. † Heb. move the ark of God to ride. ‡ Num. 4:12. 7:9. 1 Sam. 6:7. 1 Chr. 13:12. 2 Kings 19:1. 1 Sam. 7:12. 1 Chr. 13:7. § Heb. with. ¶ 1 Sam. 10:5. 16:12. 2 Kings 3:15. 1 Chr. 13:8. 15:10-24. Ps. 47:5. 68:25-27. 150:3-5. Dan. 3:5, 7, 10, 15. Am. 5:

cute judgment on his enemies: and when the wicked shall be swept into destruction, as with an impetuous flood, the earth and all its contents shall be burnt up. But those who depend upon the Lord, and act according to his directions, and are ready to give him all the praise, will doubtless prevail against all enemies, add one victory to another, and at length be admitted into his presence, to see and adore their before invisible Helper.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. In a short time after David had obtained two victories over the Philistines, he formed the plan of bringing the ark to Jerusalem; and he collected thirty thousand of the chief, or most valiant men, in order to put honour upon the ark, which had been so long left in obscurity.

V. 2. Baale, or Baalim, or Baalah, (the two former masculine, the latter feminine,) was another name for Kirjath-jearim. (Josh. 15:9, 60. 1 Chr. 13:6. Notes, 1 Sam. 7:1, 2, 17. 1 Chr. 13:1-4.)—The terms used in speaking of the ark are very expressive of reverence: "The ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubims." The name of JEHOVAH Sabaoth, the LORD of hosts, was, as it were, affixed to the ark, because it was the most honoured external representation of his invisible glory: and when the ark was in its proper place, in the holy of holies, the Lord manifested his presence, by the visible glory above it, as the Protector and Glory of Israel. It especially typified Christ, and his merits and mediation, in which the name of JEHOVAH, and all his glorious excellencies are harmoniously displayed; while all his hosts of angels, (represented by "the cherubim,") desire to look down into those mysteries, or to be employed by him who is the Saviour and Glory of his redeemed people, and whom sinners now approach upon a mercy-seat. (Notes, Ex. 25:10-22. Ps. 80:1. 1 Pet. 1:10-12.)

V. 3. David and the Israelites seem to have taken the Philistines for their precedent on this occasion. (Notes, 1 Sam. 6:2-16.) instead of consulting the law of God! (Note, Num. 7:4-9.) It is probable, that Abinadab and Eleazar his son were dead before this time, as the ark had continued at Kirjath-jearim at least seventy years; (Note, 1 Sam. 7:1, 2.) but Uzzah and Ahio, two other sons or descendants of Abinadab, had succeeded in attendance upon the ark; and they now undertook to drive the cart upon which it was conveyed. There is no proof that they were Levites; though some expositors think they were: and if any of the priests attended, they seem not to have taken an active part in the service. It does not even appear, that the ark was covered previously to its removal, according to the law! (Notes, Num. 4:5, 6.)—Gibeah signifies the hill, and means that division of the city, in which the house of Abinadab stood.

V. 5. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 15:16-24.)

V. 6, 7. When the oxen shook the ark, or stumbled, (marg.) Uzzah, fearing lest the ark should fall, apparently with a good intention, laid hold of it: yet "God smote him for his error." But in what did his error consist? On this question, it should be remembered, that even the Kohathites, who were appointed to carry the ark, were forbidden to touch it on pain of death: that is, it must first be covered by the priests, and then the Kohathites must carry it by the staves only, and not touch the ark itself; (Num. 4:15.) but Uzzah, who certainly was not a priest, laid hold on the ark, which probably was not covered. It may be supposed, that neither

6 ¶ And when they came to Nachon's thrashing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it: for the oxen shook it.

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah: and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah to this day.

9 And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

[Practical Observations.]

12 ¶ And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark

23. 6:5. g 1 Chr. 13:9. Childon's. h Num. 4:15, 19, 20. i Or, stumbled. 1 Lev. 10:1-3. 1 Sam. 6:19. 1 Chr. 13:10. 15:2, 13. 1 Cor. 11:30-32. † Or, rashness. k 1 Chr. 13:11, 12. Jon. 4:1, 9. * Heb. broken. † That is, the breach of Uzzah. l Num. 17:12, 13. 1 Sam. 5:10, 11. 6:20. Ps. 119:120. Is. 6:5. Luke 5:8, 9. 1 Pet. 3:6. m 1 Kings 8:27. 1 Chr. 13:11, 12. Job 25:5, 6. n 1 Chr. 13:13, 14. 15:18. 16:5. 24:4-8. o 4:3. 15:19, 18, 2. p Gen. 30:27. 38:5, 23. Prov. 3:9, 10. Mal. 3:16. q 1 Chr. 15:1-3, 23. Ps. 24:7-10. 68:24-27. 132:6-8.

Eleazar, nor Uzzah, nor Ahio had thus touched it during all the years it had remained with them; and that it was placed on the cart by the staves only: and though it seemed necessary for Uzzah to lay hold of it; yet the necessity arose from the method of conveyance, which some think Uzzah had proposed, and he was therefore answerable for all the consequences. It is probable, that he had become too familiar with this sacred symbol of the Lord's special presence: and that he presumed on the services which he and his family had rendered in taking care of it, when generally neglected; as if that had given him a sanctity equal or even superior to that of the priests; so that he and his brother seem to have taken the principal management of the business on themselves. Whereas, when all orders of men concurred in showing honour to the ark, they ought to have declined any further interference; and referred the care of it to the priest, on whom it properly devolved. No doubt the Lord saw in Uzzah's conduct what indicated irreverence and presumption; not wholly unlike the sin of Nadab and Abihu, when they offered strange fire before him: and therefore he smote him, perhaps in a similar manner, and for the same reasons. (Notes, Lev. 10:1-5. 1 Sam. 6:19-21.) But though he was singled out to be made an example of, his death was a pointed rebuke and warning to David, to the priests, and to all Israel.

V. 8, 9. David's heart was upright, and his zeal and love very fervent: but there were many things very faulty in his frame of mind, as well as irregular in his proceedings, on this occasion. He seems to have been possessed with some measure of self-complacency, on account of the important service which he was performing, in honouring the ark after it had been so long neglected; and to have thought that the goodness of the work would counterbalance a degree of informality in the manner of doing it, and ensure to him comfort and commendation: and he had not taken time to examine the law of God, or to consult the priests, how this good work ought to be performed. When therefore the event turned out contrary to his expectations, he was greatly disconcerted, and his lively religious affections were extinguished. He was angry, (so the word signifies,) that occasion had been given for this unexpected stroke; though it does not appear with whom he was displeased, and certainly his anger implied a degree of rebellion against the dispensation of God in smiting Uzzah! A measure of servile fear succeeded to zeal, hope, and joy: so that he would not venture to bring the ark any nearer to him, lest he should be destroyed in like manner. (Notes, Num. 17:12, 13. Josh. 7:6-9. 1 Sam. 6:19-21. 1 Chr. 15:12-14. Ps. 119:120. Is. 6:5.)

V. 10, 11. Until David had further considered the matter, and come to some determination what to do with the ark, it was carried to the house of Obed-edom; who with humble confidence was ready to receive it, notwithstanding the example of Uzzah. There it abode three months, and the whole multitude returned home, and left the business unfinished. Obed-edom was a Levite; (Marg. Ref. n.) and he is called a Gittite, perhaps from Gathrimmon, the place of his birth, or of his abode. (Josh. 21:24, 25.) All things relating to his health, family, and circumstances, prospered in so extraordinary a manner, while the ark was with him, that every one noticed it.—Doubtless Obed-edom behaved to the ark with due reverence. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 12, 13. When David heard of the extraordinary blessing, bestowed on Obed-edom because of the ark of God, he

CHAPTER VII.

David purposes to build a temple, and Nathan encourages him. 1-3. God, by Nathan, forbids it, but with promise of special blessing to Israel, to David, and to his seed, 4-17. David's prayer and thanksgiving, 18-29.

AND it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies,

2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.

3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do 'that which is in thy heart: for the Lord is with thee.

4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying,

5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in?

1 Chr. 17:1, Re. Dan. 4:29, 30. Job. 21:44, 23:1. 1 Kings 5:4, 2 Chr. 14:6. Prov. 16:7, Luke 1:74, 75. c. 12:1. 1 Chr. 29:29. d. 5:11. 1 Chr. 14:1. Jer. 23:12-15. Ps. 1:4. e. Ps. 132:5. John 2:17. Acts 7:46. f. 6:17. Ex. 26:1-14. g. 1 Chr. 17:1. h. 1 Chr. 17:1. i. 1 Sam. 16:7. 1 Kings 5:17. j. 1 Sam. 10:7. k. 1 Sam. 10:7. l. 1 Sam. 10:7. m. 1 Sam. 10:7. n. 1 Sam. 10:7. o. 1 Sam. 10:7. p. 1 Sam. 10:7. q. 1 Sam. 10:7. r. 1 Sam. 10:7. s. 1 Sam. 10:7. t. 1 Sam. 10:7. u. 1 Sam. 10:7. v. 1 Sam. 10:7. w. 1 Sam. 10:7. x. 1 Sam. 10:7. y. 1 Sam. 10:7. z. 1 Sam. 10:7.

our own work, and to proceed in the manner prescribed in his word.—Even eminently wise and good men cannot perform very important services, without feeling, at times and in some degree, the emotions of pride and self-preference. And, though religion consists very much in high affections, and great love and delight in spiritual things; yet even when the affections are genuine and gracious, except they are accompanied with proportionable knowledge, judgment, and humility, they will betray us into many unwarrantable actions, and expose us to severe rebukes. In the fervency of zeal we are all very prone to forget the precepts of God; and are too eager about the substance of our services, to consult the Scriptures concerning the right method of conducting them. Thus, we are unawares drawn into transgression, and meet with severe checks, when we expected great success and comfort. This is indeed needful and salutary, but it often exceedingly disconcerts the mind; and then the transition is very sudden from elevated joy and confidence, to great dejection and fretfulness; from a hope bordering on irreverence, to slavish fear which verges to despondency, and disheartens from present duty. Such sudden changes the experienced and vigilant believer recollects with shame. He too has often, especially in the time of his injudicious and inexperienced zeal, been "greatly displeased" or discouraged by those things, which were only intended to humble and instruct him; and while he cannot excuse David, he sees more cause to condemn himself, and to pray, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."—But while one is disheartened from active service through servile fear, others will be animated with humble faith and hope; and not dread the ark, or the ordinance, but only the sin which occasioned the rebuke, or against which the threatening is denounced. And the Lord will abundantly recompense those, who are humbly bold for him, while others are either presumptuous or desponding. (P. O. 1 Sam. 6:)

V. 12-23. When pious men, who have been betrayed into unwarrantable conduct, have had time for self-examination, searching the Scriptures, and prayer, they will discover and confess their mistakes, and be reduced to a better temper: they will justly God in his corrections: they will be convinced, that safety and comfort consist, not in absenting themselves from his ordinances, or in declining dangerous services, but in attending to their duty in a proper spirit and manner: (Notes, Matt. 5:23, 24.—1 Cor. 11:29-34, P. O. 23-31.) they will profit by their own errors, stand the stronger for their falls, and not abate in their zeal and affections, but learn to connect them with humility, and to regulate them according to the precepts of the sacred Scripture. Then they may expect to prosper in their attempts to glorify God, and promote the cause of holiness.—We are to be diligent in our services, so desirous, that all our joy in divine ordinances must be connected with the exercise of repentance, and faith in the Redeemer's atoning blood; so that the more we are preserved from sin and the more we are enabled to do in the work of God, with acceptance and comfort, the greater obligations we are brought under, and the more thankful we ought to be. (Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-19.) We ought to serve the Lord with our whole body and soul, and with every endowment or capacity we possess; our religious affections cannot be too intense, if properly directed; nor our expressions of them too strong, provided "all be done decently and in order," according to the spirit of that dispensation under which we live.—The greatest of men are as nothing before the infinite God; their dependance is as entire as that of their inferiors, and their obligations and accountableness are greater: the meanest employment in his service is in truth the greatest honour of the mightiest princes: they ought to be as base in their own eyes, when worshipping the Lord, and confessing their sins, as their meanest subjects; while they should take the lead, and set the example in every thing good: (Notes, Jam.

6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye no me a house of cedar?

8 Now therefore, so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like

m Ex. 33:14, 15. 40:35-38. Lev. 26:23, 24, 27, 28. Num. 10:33-36. Deut. 23:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 2:1. n Ex. 40:18, 19, 24. Acts 7:41. o 1 Chr. 17:8. Judges, p. 5:2. Ps. 78:71, 72. Is. 40:11. Jer. 23:4. Ex. 34:2, 15, 23. Mic. 5:4. Matt. 2:6. marg. John 21:15-17. Acts 21:28. 1 Pet. 5:2. q 1 Sam. 16:11, 12. 1 Chr. 17:7. Ps. 78:70. r Heb. after. r 6:21, 12:7. 1 Sam. 3:16, 10:1. s 5:10, 8:6, 14:29. 30:34-38. 1 Chr. 17:8. t 22:1. 1 Sam. 3:16. Ps. 39:23. u Heb. from thy flock. u Gen. 12:2. 1 Sam. 2:8. 1 Chr. 17:8. Ps. 113:7, 8. Luke 1:32. x Ps. 87:3-6.

1:9-11.) and though some will despise their piety as madness or meanness, they will be had in honour for it by numbers, yea, by many who are not themselves religious. Indeed, proud and carnal persons have always ridiculed fervent devotion, as folly or enthusiasm. Satan has long deluded men into a persuasion, that such holy earnestness is unprincely, nay, unmanly, unbecoming persons of genius, learning, wealth, or influence, and only fit for ignorant poor people, women or children. However wise or eminent a man may be in other respects, if he be scripturally zealous and devoted to God, he must expect contempt and insult, even from his inferiors and relatives: nay, he needs not wonder, if he be falsely accused of the most shameful practices. But if the Lord has chosen and accepted us, we should deem such reproaches honourable, and determine to become still more vile in the eyes of ungodly revilers, by abounding in those services which they despise. While we meekly rebuke such opposers, the Lord will certainly plead our cause against them: for "them that honour him he will honour; but they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed."—Piety should always be attended with liberality: and public exercises of religion must not exclude private prayer and family worship, which should be neglected by none in any rank of life.—Finally, in this removal of the ark, let us contemplate the Redeemer's ascension to glory, and seek to participate his precious gifts, and to serve him with ardent love and joy.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-3. (Note, 5:11.) David, now peaceably possessed of the kingdom, victorious over all his enemies, and at rest in his palace, considered how he might employ his leisure and prosperity in the service of God: when it occurred to his mind how stately his own house was, and how meanly the ark was lodged; and he conceived a design of building a magnificent temple for its reception. (Notes, Ps. 132:5. Matt. 6:33, 34.) This he intimated to Nathan the prophet, a man of great piety and wisdom, who appears to have been his companion and counsellor. And Nathan, assured that the design arose from zeal for the glory of God, who was with David in all his undertakings, encouraged him to proceed; yet he gave his advice, not by revelation from God, but according to his own private judgment. (Note, 1 Cor. 7:39, 40.)

V. 4. The message which follows was sent without delay, probably that David might not remain under a mistake, or set his heart on a work not intended for him; and it was sent by Nathan, that he might not be discouraged by having his counsel contradicted by another prophet. Nathan was not faulty in encouraging David, any more than David was in purposing to build a temple: they both did well, but the Lord had wise reasons for determining otherwise. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 8:15-21.)

V. 5. Shalt thou, &c.] That is, 'Dost thou entertain such a purpose, which did not enter into the thoughts of any that were before thee? yet thou shalt not accomplish that design: for the work is assigned to another person.' It appears that Nathan spoke more to David than is here recorded: for other reasons are afterwards given, why David was not permitted to build the temple. (Notes, 2 Chr. 22:6-10. 28:2-8.)

V. 6, 7. Though the building of a temple accorded with the spirit of the Mosaic dispensation, it was not commanded by any law; and was not therefore peculiarly any one's duty, without some further intimation from God. In the days of Moses, the Lord had, by the ark, the symbol of his presence, dwelt and removed with his people, in a tabernacle of his own appointing. (Notes, Num. 10:33-36.) Since Israel had been settled in Canaan, none of the rulers or judges, who had been raised up out of several of their tribes, were commanded to build a temple: yet the Lord had accepted their worship, while the ark abode within curtains. It was not therefore necessary either to the glory of God, or the good of Israel, to have a temple; and the erecting of one might there-

unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

10 Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee, that he will make thee a house.

12 ¶ And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 ¶ I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from

y1 Chr. 17.9. Ps. 44.2. 80.8. Jer. 18.9. 24.6. Ez. 37.25-27. Am. 9.15. z Ps. 89. 22.23. Is. 60.13. Hos. 2.18. a Ex. 1.13. 13.22. Judg. 4.3. 6.2-8. 1 Sam. 13.17. b Jer. 2.14-16. 1 Sam. 12.9-11. Ps. 105.42. c 1. Job. 5.1-19. 32.29. Ps. 46.9. d 27. Ez. 12.1. 1 Kings 2.24. 1 Chr. 17.10. 22.10. 2 Chr. 1.34. 137.1. Prov. 14.1. e 1 Kings 2.1. 8.29. f Deut. 31.16. 1 Kings 1.21. Dan. 12.2. Acts 13.36. 1 Chr. 15.51. 1 Thes. 4.14. g Gen. 13.4. 1 Kings 8.21. 1 Chr. 17.11. Ps. 89.29. 132.11. Is. 9.7. 11.1-3.10. Matt. 22.45-46. Acts 2.30. h 1 Kings 5.5. 6.12. 8.13. 1 Chr. 17.11.12. 22.9.10. 28.6.10. Zech. 6.13. Matt. 16.18. Luke 13.31-33. Heb. 3.3. 1 Pet. 2.5. 116. 1 Chr. 28.7. Ps. 59.4. 21.35.37. Is. 9.7. 49.8. Luke 13.33. k 1 Chr. 17.13. 28.6. Ps. 89.25.27. Matt. 3.17. Heb. 1.5. 1 Ps. 89.30-35. m Deut. 8.6. Job. 17. Ps. 94.19.13. Prov. 3.11.12. Jer. 30.11. 1 Chr. 11.32. Heb. 12.5-11. Rev. 8.19. n Ps. 89.28.34. Is. 55.3. Acts 13.34-37.

for very well be delayed a little longer. (Notes, Is. 66.1, 2. Acts 7.44-50.)

V. 8-11. The Lord did not employ David in building the temple, but he did not in anger reject his intended service: for it was not proper, either that he should engross all the honour, or do all the work. He had been advanced from a very inferior situation to the throne of Israel, and employed in subduing their enemies, as well as made triumphant over his own; and he was, or would become, one of the most honourable and renowned characters in the world. (Marg. Ref. u, x.) Moreover the Lord had further employment for him of another sort, which was proper to be done before the building of the temple. The Canaanites still dwelt in the land, and greatly harassed the people; and the neighbouring nations frequently afflicted them. This had been the case from their first entrance into Canaan, even in the time of the judges, who wrought only temporary deliverances from their more grievous oppressors. Indeed, it was reserved for David to crush the remnant of the Canaanites, to subjugate the other enemies of Israel, and to put them in full and quiet possession of the land of promise; so that it was by their subsequent revolts and apostasies alone, that they afterwards lost the benefit of his victories. This was his peculiar work; and as a promise thus given to Israel, was intended to mark out David's line of usefulness. He was also employed in reforming the state of religion, regulating the courses of the priests and Levites, and composing hymns of praise for the use of the church in after ages; and he made immense preparations even for the temple itself. (Notes, 23.1, 2. 1 Chr. 22: 23: 26: 28: 29.)

V. 12-16. The Lord intended to establish David's posterity upon the throne of Israel; which was a special favour not granted to Moses, to Joshua, or to any of David's predecessors; and therefore the work and honour of building the temple were reserved for his son, who was hereafter to be born; for, by the future tense in this connexion, both Absalom and Adonijah, and all the children which David then had, were excluded from the succession. This son and successor of David would be of a peaceable disposition, and enabled to live at peace, through the success of his father's wars, and would have more leisure and ability to complete the design. To him and his posterity very precious promises were given: the Lord engaged to be a Father to him, to deal with him as his son, and to establish the throne of his kingdom; and if he sinned, to correct him, as men do their children, according to what they are able to endure, and for their good; yet not to take the kingdom from him, as he had done from Saul, but to establish it from generation to generation.—Though for Solomon's sin the ten tribes were rent from his son; (Notes, 1 Kings 11:9-13, 29-31. 12:21-24.) yet the kingdom over Judah remained, unto the Babylonian captivity, in the family of David and Solomon.—These promises were, however, in an especial manner, predictions of Christ, the son of David, the true Solomon, "the Prince of peace," who builds the spiritual temple of true believers, to be "an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Notes, Zech. 6:12, 13. Eph. 2:19-22.) Accordingly a part of the prophecy is applied to Christ in the New Testament. (Heb. 1.5.) The stability and perpetuity of the kingdom in the house of David is, in Christ, fully accomplished. (Notes, Ps. 2: 7: 22:

him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

[Practical Observations.]

18 ¶ Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, "Who am I, O LORD God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?"

19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O LORD God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O LORD God?

20 And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, LORD God, knowest thy servant.

21 For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them.

22 Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any

o 1 Sam. 15.28. 16.14. 1 Kings 11:13.34-36. Is. 9.7. 37.35. p Gen. 49:10. 2 Kings 19:34. 1 Chr. 17:13.14. Ps. 45:6. 72:5.17-19. 89:36.37. Is. 9.7. Dan. 2: 34. 7:14. Matt. 16:18. Luke 1:32.33. John 12:34. Rev. 17:15. q 1 Chr. 17:15. Acts 20:20.27. 1 Cor. 15:3. r 1 Chr. 17:16. Is. 37:14. s Gen. 32:10. Ez. 3:11. Judg. 6:15. 1 Sam. 9:21. 15:17. 18:18. Ps. 8.4. t 12:8. Num. 16:9.13. u 11:16. 1 Chr. 17:17. z Ps. 36:7. Is. 55:8-9. Eph. 2:7. 9:19.20. * Heb. 10: 5. 1 Sam. 16:7. Ps. 139:1. John 2:25. 21:17. Heb. 4:13. Rev. 2:23. n 2 Chr. 19. Deut. 9:5. Josh. 23:14.15. Ps. 115:1. 138:2. Matt. 24:35. Luke 1:54.55.72. a Matt. 11:26. Luke 10:21. 12:32. 1 Cor. 1:1. Eph. 1:9. 3:11. b Deut. 3:24. 1 Chr. 15:25. 2 Chr. 2:5. Ps. 48:1. 85:10. 96:4. 135:5. c Ex. 15:11. Deut. 4:35. 32:39. 1 Sam. 2:2. Ps. 86:8. 89:6.8. Is. 40:18.25. 45:18.22. Jer. 10:6. Mic. 7:18.

89:19-37.) The clause concerning the merciful chastisement of David's son if he offended, and the engagement not to reject him for his transgressions, belongs to his people, who are his seed, and one with him. In a parallel passage, it is put in the plural number, "If his children forsake my law, &c." (Ps. 89:30-33.)—The expression, "before thee," might perhaps be a gracious intimation, that though these things would take place after David's death, yet he would be acquainted with them, and rejoice in them.

V. 17. Nathan did not hesitate to contradict his own counsel; nor did he fear lest this should expose him to censure or contempt! (Notes, 2 Kings 20:1-6.)

V. 18. David cordially acquiesced in the will of God; and likewise found his love, gratitude, hope, and joy, greatly excited, by these remembrances of past, and promises of future mercies, to himself, his people, and posterity; especially as they all centered in the promised Saviour who was to descend from him. Without delay, therefore, he went to the tabernacle of God before the ark, and poured out his heart in prayer.—It is said, that "he sat before the LORD," but it is the only place in Scripture, which mentions sitting as the posture of any servant of God in religious worship; and, though circumstances may sometimes render it necessary, it does not otherwise seem becoming. Probably, the expression only means his continuance before the LORD for a considerable time, and does not determine the posture in which he prayed.—When David considered the mean estate from which he had been advanced to the throne, and how he had been employed, prospered, and honoured; and when he recollected the infinite majesty and holiness of God, and his own sinfulness and insignificance before him: he thought nothing of his own endowments or performances, but regarded the whole as the subject of admiring gratitude and praise; and was surprised that the Lord had hitherto upheld and blessed so insignificant and worthless a person in such an extraordinary manner. (Notes, Gen. 32:9-12. 1 Chr. 20: 10-19.)

V. 19. A more particular consideration of the blessings, which had now been entailed upon his family, as well as upon himself, still more enhanced David's holy admiration; and he adored the riches of the divine mercy, as infinitely surpassing the largest bounty of man. It is not the manner of men thus to notice the mean, the base, the unworthy: thus to make one kindness an introduction to another, and an earnest of further favours, and a reason for bestowing them. No, this is beyond example or conception!—Or, "Is this thy manner of dealing with polluted, rebellious man?" (Note, Is. 55:8, 9.) How wonderful then the love of a holy God to his sinful creatures, especially in the gift of his "only begotten Son, to be the Propitiation for our sins!" (Notes, 1 John 3:1-3. 4:9-12.)

V. 20. 21. David could find nothing to ask for himself, or his people, or his posterity, but what had already been covenanted to him: so that his prayer consisted of thankful repetitions of the promises. For the Lord knew his servant, and would do every thing in perfect truth, wisdom, and love, for his good; and he desired no prosperity, wealth, or honour, except in reference to the will and glory of God. He could assign no reason for the Lord's former kindness to him, but his sovereign will, according to his own heart, dictating his

God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

23 And ^dwhat one nation in the earth is like thy people, *even* like Israel, whom God ^ewent to redeem for a people to himself, and to ^fmake him a name, and to do for you ^ggreat things and terrible, for thy land, before ^hthy people, which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and ⁱtheir gods?

24 For thou hast ^jconfirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to *be* a people unto thee for ever: and thou, Lord, ^kart become their God.

25 And now, O Lord God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, ^land concerning his house, ^mestablish *it* for ever, and do as thou hast said.

d Deut. 4:7, 8, 32-34. 33, 39. Ps. 147:20. Rom. 3:1, 2. e Ex. 3:7, 8. 19:5, 6. Num. 14:13, 14. Ps. 111:9. Is. 63:7-14. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 2:9. Rev. 5:9. f Ex. 10: 16. Josh. 7:9. 1 Chr. 17:21. Is. 63:12, 14. Ez. 20:9. Eph. 1:6. g Deut. 10:21. Ps. 40:5. 65:9. 66:3. 105:22. 145:6. h Deut. 9:26. 15:15. Neh. 1:10. i Ex. 12: 12. k Gen. 17:7. Deut. 36:18. 123. Ex. 15:2. Deut. 27:9. 1 Chr. 17:22. Ps. 45:14. Is. 12:2. Jer. 31:1, 33. 32:38. Hos. 1:10. Zech. 13:9. John 1:12. Rom. 9:

gracious promises, and then for his world's sake fulfilling them; and he had the same ground for expecting all other blessings, according to his holy covenant. (*Notes, Deut. 7: 6-8. Rom. 8:28-31. Eph. 1:3-8. 2:4-10. Jam. 1:16-18. 1 Pet. 1:3-5.*)—^jGod, he knew, would fulfil his promise made by Samuel and Nathan; to the making of which he had no other motive, but his own good will. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 22-25. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. 4:20, 32-40. 1 Sam. 2:2. 1 Kings 8:23, 24. Neh. 9:5-8.*) For you. (2a) These words are not found in the parallel passage, (1 Chr. 17:21.) and seem here redundant.

V. 26. The Lord by his promises had connected the glory of his own truth, with the establishment of David's family; and David also expected and desired, that his descendants might be instrumental in maintaining true religion for the glory of God.—In Christ all the perfections of the Godhead are glorified; and by him the cause of truth and righteousness is, and will be, established upon earth. (*Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-19. Ps. 21:13. 72:17-19. Matt. 6:13.*) In all these respects David prayed for the magnifying of God's name, in the establishment of his posterity. (*Note, 1 Chr. 17:17-24. v. 24.*)

V. 27-29. (*Marg. Ref.*) David could not have ventured to make such large requests, if the Lord had not promised the blessings which he implored; but he was humbly bold to ask all that God had engaged to give.—The promises of Scripture are not made *personally to us by name*, as these were to David; but they belong to all who believe in Jesus Christ, and plead them in his name. (*Note, 2 Pet. 1:3, 4.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. The greater leisure and ability any man is favoured with, the more should he form, and attempt to execute, plans of important usefulness; and those who are largely supplied with the providential gifts of God, and at the same time are richly replenished by his grace, will most comfortably enjoy their possessions, when they can render them subservient to his glory and the salvation of souls: they will often be grieved to reflect how much is expended on themselves, and how little in the service of God; and scarcely deem any thing done for him while so much remains undone. Such zealous and liberal Christians should be encouraged by their brethren, and by ministers, in the great designs which they conceive for the advancement of religion, as far as they agree with the Scripture. Yet many unexceptionable undertakings may fail of *success*, because they do not accord with the perfect plan of God; but none of them will fail to meet with a gracious recompense.—The wisest and best of men (not excepting prophets and apostles, unless when immediately speaking by divine inspiration,) have been liable to error; and therefore the claim of infallibility forms the very essence of blasphemous arrogance. But God will rectify the prejudicial mistakes of his upright servants, and prevent every bad consequence: and it is their true honour, as well as their duty, to retract what they have unadvisedly advanced, and to acknowledge themselves mistaken; and all wise men will respect them the more for doing so.—The Lord does not need the services of man, neither does he regard external splendour; we cannot therefore please him in his instituted worship, if we have not the warrant of his word for what we do.—He has accepted and blessed those, who *spiritually* worshipped him in the midst of external meanness; and he never rejected or found fault with them on that account: but no outward magnificence will render formal services pleasing to him.—Our desires, even of usefulness, must be subjected to his holy will, and regulated by his precept. He appoints unto every man his work, and endows him with suitable qualifications: and each of us should thankfully and faithfully mind our proper business; and rejoice in the superior talents, and more honourable and important services, of our brethren.

—When we feel the risings of envy or discontent, and are ready to murmur at disappointment, we should reflect on what the Lord has already done for us; from what a wretched condition he has brought us; and what blessings he has pre-

pared for us; and we shall readily perceive that we have been dealt with far better than we have deserved, or could reasonably have expected; nay, that if our desires be not granted, it is merely because our wise and gracious Lord sees it better for us that they should be refused.—Our own plans, though well intended, are often fit for nothing but to be laid aside, to make way for the Lord's purposes respecting us, of which perhaps we had no conception. But, in one way or other, God will bless, and make useful to his church those persons, who simply devote themselves and all they have to his glory. If the Lord deny them one supposed blessing, he will counterbalance the refusal with other tokens of his love, and by raising their expectations of other promised mercies: and he teaches them to rejoice in the prosperity of his church, as in their own felicity.—Israel, according to the flesh, forfeited by their sins the rest to which they were brought; and the cause of God has hitherto been greatly opposed and run down. Yet the time is coming when this cause will gain the entire ascendancy, and overspread the earth; and when the Israel of God shall ^obe planted, and dwell in a place of their own, and move no more, neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more for ever.—The most favoured and honoured of men will soon fulfil their days, and sleep with their fathers; but they die at peace with God, and depart hence to join the blessed company before the throne.—We should indeed earnestly desire the entail of our blessings upon our posterity, that they may be the children of God also; but our chief comfort in life and death must arise from looking unto Jesus, the Son of God, and the everlasting King of Israel, and in participating his covenant mercies. (*Note, 23:5.*)

27 For thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast ^prevealed to thy servant, saying, ^qI will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant ^rfound in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.

28 And now, O Lord God, thou ^sart that God, and ^tthy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

29 Therefore now ^ulet it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken ^vit, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed ^wfor ever.

25, 26. 1 Pet. 2:10. m Gen. 32:12. Ps. 119:49. Jer. 11:4, 5. Ez. 36:37. n 1 Chr. 17:23, 24. 29:10-13. Ps. 72:18, 19. 115:1. Matt. 6:9. John 12:28. o Gen. 17:18. 1 Chr. 17:23, 24. Ps. 89:36. p Heb. opened the ear. Ruth 4:4. q 1 Sam. 9:16. marg. p 11. q 1 Chr. 17:25, 26. Ps. 10:17. r Num. 23:19. John 17:17. Tit. 1:2. s Heb. *be thou pleased and bless.* Num. 6:24-26. 1 Chr. 17:27. Ps. 115: 12-15. e 22:31.

pared for us; and we shall readily perceive that we have been dealt with far better than we have deserved, or could reasonably have expected; nay, that if our desires be not granted, it is merely because our wise and gracious Lord sees it better for us that they should be refused.—Our own plans, though well intended, are often fit for nothing but to be laid aside, to make way for the Lord's purposes respecting us, of which perhaps we had no conception. But, in one way or other, God will bless, and make useful to his church those persons, who simply devote themselves and all they have to his glory. If the Lord deny them one supposed blessing, he will counterbalance the refusal with other tokens of his love, and by raising their expectations of other promised mercies: and he teaches them to rejoice in the prosperity of his church, as in their own felicity.—Israel, according to the flesh, forfeited by their sins the rest to which they were brought; and the cause of God has hitherto been greatly opposed and run down. Yet the time is coming when this cause will gain the entire ascendancy, and overspread the earth; and when the Israel of God shall ^obe planted, and dwell in a place of their own, and move no more, neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more for ever.—The most favoured and honoured of men will soon fulfil their days, and sleep with their fathers; but they die at peace with God, and depart hence to join the blessed company before the throne.—We should indeed earnestly desire the entail of our blessings upon our posterity, that they may be the children of God also; but our chief comfort in life and death must arise from looking unto Jesus, the Son of God, and the everlasting King of Israel, and in participating his covenant mercies. (*Note, 23:5.*)

In his human nature "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily," and by uniting his people to himself through his Holy Spirit, he builds the living temple, in which the Lord will dwell for ever. If we belong to him, he will not finally reject us; but when we offend, he will, by rebukes and chastenings, bring us to repentance, and establish us, as kings and priests before him, to all eternity. (*Notes, Heb. 12:4-8. Rev. 3:18, 19. 5:8-10.*)

V. 18-29. When we have duly attended to the word, which the Lord has spoken; and when our affections are excited, or our consciences alarmed; let us without delay retire, to pour out our hearts before him in fervent prayer, grounded on his gracious promises in Christ Jesus.—The more God really honours any one, the lower he sinks in self-abasement; as conscious that he has nothing of his own, but meanness, sin, and misery, and that he owes all to the free mercy and goodness of God. But if the blessings which we have already received are so numerous, large, and unmerited; if it appears wonderful, as it does to every humble believer, that the Lord has brought him hitherto; what shall we say to the *future*, the eternal felicity, which he has covenanted to his people? or of the gift of his Son to be the ransom of our souls?—His thoughts and ways are not like ours, or he never would have bestowed such blessings on rebellious, polluted man. What can we then say more unto him? What can we ask or desire but the performance of those promises, which of his own sovereign mercy he has made to us? Comparing the former displays of the glorious excellencies of our God, with those which he has manifested in his dealings with us, we shall at once have our admiring gratitude enlarged, and our expectation of further blessings increased; and shall find in our hearts to plead his precious promises, neither deeming them too large, nor too hard, for him to perform to us wretched sinners. Though he have not given us "a great name, like unto the great men that are in the earth," we shall be contented with "a name written in the book of life," and a clear character among our brethren: and we can desire no more for our posterity, than that they may be "blessed with the blessing of the Lord forever."

NOTES.—*CHAP. VIII. V. 1. Note, 1 Chr. 18:1.* D is probable, that *Metheg-ammah*, or "the bride of Ammah" (*marg.*) was an eminence or natural fortress, on which Gath

CHAPTER VIII.

David subdues the Philistines and Moabites, 1, 2. He smites Hadadezer and the Syrians, 3-8. Toi, king of Hamath, sends his son to David with presents, which he dedicates to God, with the spoils that he had taken, 9-13. He puts garrisons in Edom, 14. He reigns in equity, 15. The names of his chief officers, 16-18.

AND ¹after this it came to pass, that David ²smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took ³Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

⁴And ⁵he smote Moab, and ⁶measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive: ⁷and so the Moabites became David's servants, and ⁸brought gifts.

⁹David smote also ¹⁰Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of ¹¹Zobah, as he went to recover his border ¹²at the river Euphrates.

¹³And David took ¹⁴from him a thousand chariots, and seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: and ¹⁵David houghed all the chariot-horses, but ¹⁶reserved of them for an hundred chariots.

¹⁷And ¹⁸when the Syrians of Damascus ¹⁹came to succor Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

²⁰Then David put ²¹garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And ²²the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

²³And David took the ²⁴shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

²⁵And from ²⁶Bethah, and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, king David took ²⁷exceeding much brass.

a 7:9, 21:15-22. * Or, the bride of Ammah. 2:24. 1 Chr. 18:1. Gath. b Num. 24:17. Judg. 3:29-30. 1 Sam. 14:47. Ps. 60:8. 83:6. 108:9. c 12:31. d 16:12-14. 2 Kings 1:1. 3:4-27. 1 Chr. 18:2. e 1 Sam. 10:27. 2 Chr. 28:3. Ps. 72:10-11. 1a. 35:16. f 1 Chr. 18:3. Hadadezer. g 10:6. 1 Sam. 14:47. 1 Kings 11:23, 24. Ps. 60: title. h Gen. 15:18. Ex. 23:31. Deut. 11:24. 1 Kings 4:21. Ps. 72:8. i Or, of his. j As 1 Chr. 18:4. i Deut. 17:16. Josh. 11:6, 9. Ps. 20:7. 33:16, 17. k 1 Kings 10:25. l 1 Kings 11:23-25. 1 Chr. 18:5-8. 1a. 7:8. m Job 9:14. Ps. 83:4-5. 1a. 6:9-10. 31:3. n 14. 22:14. 1 Sam. 13:3. 14:1, 15:15. 2 s. hr. 17:2. Ps. 13:4-46. o 14. 7:9. 1 Chr. 18:13. Ps. 5:11, 12. 121:7, 8. 140:7. 144:1, 2. Prov. 21:31. p 1 Kings 10:16, 17. 14:25, 27. 1 Chr. 18:7. 2 Chr. 9:15, 16. q 1 Chr. 18:6. Tithiah. Chum. r 1 Chr. 22:14, 16. 29:7. 2 Chr. 4:1-18. s 1 Chr. 18:9. Tou. t Am. 6:2. u 1 Chr. 18:10. Hadram. § Heb. askim of peace. Gen. 49:27.

was built, and which gave the inhabitants an opportunity of retaining the neighbourhood in subjection. The Philistines had long oppressed Israel: Samson had begun to deliver his people from them; but David effectually subdued the Philistines, and left them no power any more to molest the Israelites. (Notes, Judg. 13:4, 5.)

V. 2. The Jews say, that the Moabites had slain David's parents. It may be supposed, that he had just cause for this war, and for the severity with which he treated the vanquished; as he seems to have measured their country, and desolated two-thirds of it, and to have slaughtered two-thirds of the captives. (Note, 12:26-31.) Thus the Moabites became tributaries to Israel, as Balaam had predicted. (Notes, Num. 24:17. 2 Kings 1:1.)

V. 3. Zobah seems to have been a part of Syria, to the northeast of Canaan, to the south of Damascus, and reaching to the river Euphrates.—It is probable, that Hadadezer was jealous of David's growing greatness, and came to assist the Moabites, in order to secure his own dominions: and that this gave David a fair opportunity of extending his conquests to the Euphrates.—Some think, however, that David went to establish his dominion over all the countries as far as that river, according to the grant made to Israel; and that he was opposed by Hadadezer. (Marg. Ref. g, h.)

V. 4. Seven hundred.] Seven thousand horsemen are mentioned in Chronicles; (1 Chr. 18:4.) perhaps they were divided into seven hundred divisions of ten men each; however, David disabled the most of the horses, not desiring to trust in chariots or in horses, but in the living God. (Note, Josh. 11:6.)—Yet he reserved horses for a hundred chariots, and this ⁵is the first time, that chariots of any kind are mentioned, as possessed by a ruler in Israel. (Note, Deut. 17:16.)

V. 5-8. (Marg. Ref.) The Syrians of Damascus were in alliance with Hadadezer, but not subject to him.

V. 9-11. Hamath lay north of Canaan, and south of Damascus.—Thus, by arms or alliances, these heathen nations became tributary to David, and furnished those riches, which he dedicated to the Lord for the building of the temple. (Notes, 1 Chr. 22:14. 29:1-9.)

V. 12. Children of Ammon.] Either some of the Ammonites at this time assisted the Moabites; or this is spoken by way of anticipation. (Notes, 10:12:26-31.)

V. 13, 14. Syrians.] It is said in Chronicles, that "Abishai smote eighteen thousand Edomites in the valley of salt." (1 Chr. 18:12.) Perhaps they were Edomites fighting for the Syrians. It is evident, however, that Edom was subjected in consequence of this victory, by which David acquired great

9 ¶ When ¹⁰Toi king of ¹¹Hamath heard that David had smitten all the host of Hadadezer,

¹²Then ¹³Toi sent ¹⁴Joram his son unto king David, to ¹⁵salute him, and ¹⁶to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer, and smitten him: (for Hadadezer ¹⁷had wars with Toi) and ¹⁸Joram ¹⁹brought with him vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass;

²⁰Which ²¹also king David did dedicate unto the Lord, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued;

²²Of ²³Syria, and of Moab, and of the childrer of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

²⁵And David ²⁶gat him a name when he returned from ²⁷smitting of the Syrians in ²⁸the valley of salt, ²⁹being eighteen thousand men.

³⁰And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons; and all they of Edom became David's servants. And ³¹the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

³²¶ And David reigned ³³over all Israel; and ³⁴David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

³⁵And ³⁶Joab the son of Zeruiah ³⁷was over the host; and ³⁸Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud ³⁹was ⁴⁰recorder;

⁴¹And ⁴²Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, ⁴³were the priests; ⁴⁴and Seraiah ⁴⁵was the ⁴⁶scribe;

⁴⁷And ⁴⁸Benaiah the son of Jehonada ⁴⁹was over both ⁵⁰the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were ⁵¹chief rulers.

43:27. 1a. 39:1. x 1 Sam. 13:10. marg. 1 Kings 1:47. Ps. 129:8. § Heb. was a man of wars with. ¶ Heb. in his hand were. ¶ 1 Kings 7:51. 1 Chr. 18:11, 22:14-16. 26:26-28. 29:2. Mic. 4:13. z 10:11, 14. 12:26-31. 1 Chr. 18:11. a 7:9. 1 Chr. 18:12. b Ps. 60: title. * His smiting. b 2 Kings 14:7. 2 Chr. 25:11. † Or, having. c Gen. 25:23. 27:29, 37, 40. Num. 24:18. 1 Kings 22:47. 1 Chr. 18:13. Ps. 60:8, 9. 108:9, 10. d See on 6. e 3:12, 5:5. f 23:8, 4. 1 Chr. 18:14. Ps. 45:6, 7. 75:2. 73:7, 12. 101:1-8. 1a. 9:7. Jer. 22:5, 5:6. g 19:13. 20:23. 1 Chr. 11:6. 18:15-17. h 1 Kings 4:3. i Or, rememberancer, or writer of chronicles. j 1 Chr. 6:8, 33:24, 34. k 1 Chr. 18:16. Shascha. § Or, secretary. l 1 Kings 1:44. 24:33. m 1 Chr. 18:17. n 15:15. 20:7, 23. 22:20-23. 1 Sam. 30:14. Ez. 23:16. Zeph. 2:5. || Or, princes. 20:36.

renown.—Twelve thousand of Edom are elsewhere mentioned, as slain by Joab. (Note, Ps. 60: title.) Perhaps Joab and Abishai commanded distinct bodies of troops, and eighteen thousand were slain between them, six thousand by Abishai, and twelve thousand by Joab.—Thus the predictions concerning the Edomites began to be fulfilled. (Notes, Gen. 25:22, 23. 27:27-29, 39, 40. Num. 24:18, 19. Ps. 60:6-12.)

V. 15-18. The assiduity, as well as the equity and impartiality of David's administration, is here stated; in which, as well as in his victories, he was a type of Christ. Under David Joab was commander in chief of the forces. Jehosaphat recorded and brought forward every business in an orderly manner, or acted as judge or chancellor. Under Abiathar the high-priest, Ahimelech his son, and Zadok, descended from Eleazar, were the presiding priests; probably the one on mount Zion, the other at Gibeon where the tabernacle was. (Notes, 1 Kings 3:4. 1 Chr. 16:37-43.) Seraiah was scribe or secretary, to inspect and manage all writings concerning foreign or domestic transactions. And Benaiah commanded the Cherethites and Pelethites, David's constant attendants or guards, who were chosen out from his other troops, and probably consisted chiefly of those who had accompanied him in his distresses; or of such as had joined him from among the Philistines, who are called Cherethites. (Marg. Ref. m.) His sons also, when grown up, were initiated into public business, as they became capable of it.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In due season and succession, every promise and prediction of God's word will receive its full accomplishment.—Short is the triumphing and certain the ruin of all his enemies, however strong and confederated. But those who confide in his protection, and are doing his work, will be preserved and prospered, "whithersoever they go." They will not allow themselves to glory in their success, or to establish any other ground of confidence, than the mercy, power, and truth of him who has hitherto helped them, to whom they will dedicate the fruits of their prosperity; and in this they will be distinguished from all the other mighty ones, who have been renowned upon the earth. It is true wisdom to court the friendship of those whom the Lord prospers. A safe and honourable peace should be the object of all wars: and the diligent, impartial administration of justice, the business of those who are advanced above others; for their authority was given them to do good with.—Thus the Son of David subjects his enemies: his gospel is a saviour of life to some, and of death to others; and he will be glorified upon his obstinate opposers, and by those who welcome him as their Lord and

CHAPTER IX.

David inquires after Saul's family, and is informed, by Ziba, of Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, &c. He sends for him, and orders him to his table for Jonathan's sake, 5-8. He restores to him the family-estate, intrusting the management to Ziba, 9-13.

AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant, whose name was Ziba: and when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.

3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

4 And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.

5 ¶ Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant.

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself; and said, What is thy

a 1:26. 1 Sam. 18:1-4, 20:42. 23:16-18. 1 Kings 2:7. Prov. 27:10. Matt. 10:25-40. Mark 9:41. John 19:26-27. Philom. 9-12. 1 Pet. 3:8. b Gen. 15:2,3. 24:2. 39:6. c 16:1-4. 19:17,27-29. d Deut. 4:37. 10:15. 1 Sam. 20:14-17. 24:2. 39:6. e 16:1-4. 19:17,27-29. f 17:27-29. g 1 Chr. 8:1. Mark 5:44. Luke 6:36. Tit. 3:3,4. e 4:4. 19:26. f 17:27-29. g 1 Chr. 8:1. 9:40. Meribbaal. h Gen. 18:2. 33:3. 1 Sam. 20:41. 25:23. i Gen. 43:16,23. 50:18-21. 1 Sam. 12:19,20,24. Is. 35:3,4. Mark 5:33,34. Luke 1:12,13,29,30.

Saviour. Many assist in building his spiritual temple, who have no place in it: his government is in judgment and in justice, as well as in mercy: and all who adhere to him faithfully in a state of humiliation and suffering, shall reign with him forever in glory. Let us then submit to him and seek his friendship, counting his service our honour and our pleasure, and diligently attending to the work which he assigns us in our different stations and relations, in the church, the community, and in relative life.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1. Mephibosheth was only five years old at his father's death; (44.) but at this time he had a son: (12.) so that many years must have elapsed before David made this inquiry. For above seven years he had been opposed by Ish-bosheth, and his engagements afterwards had been numerous. He had not indeed injured any of Saul's family: yet he seems to have been too forgetful of his friendship with Jonathan, and his engagements to him. (Notes, 1 Sam. 18:3,4. 20:14-17. 23:16-18.) As, however, Mephibosheth was brought up in obscurity beyond Jordan, and perhaps purposely concealed by the suspicious care of his friends, David might not know that Jonathan had any child living. (4.) But at length, recollecting himself, he desired to show his entire forgiveness of Saul's injuries, and his gratitude for Jonathan's kindness, by restoring Saul's estate to some of his remaining posterity; and by conferring further favours on them, for the sake of his friend. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. 12:46-50. John 19:25-27.)

V. 2. Ziba.] Notes, 9-11. 16:1-4. 19:24-30.

V. 3. The kindness of God.] For the sake of the oath of God sworn to Jonathan, or according to the example of the Lord's kindness unto himself.—Lame, &c.] Note, 4:3,4.

V. 4. Machir.] This person was afterwards a very useful friend to David; and perhaps the more willingly, on account of David's kindness to Mephibosheth, whom he had generously brought up. (Note, 17:27-29.)

V. 6. David might have heard of the name of Mephibosheth; or perhaps he had seen him in his infancy, and now recollected his features, though he knew not before that he was living.

V. 7. Saul's paternal estate came into David's hands after the death of Ish-bosheth, and it seems to have been large. This was now restored by him to Mephibosheth as the right heir; and he was besides admitted to a place at David's own table, as one of his near friends or relatives.

V. 8. A dead dog.] (Marg. Ref. 1.) That is, a person who is very mean, and incapable of being any way serviceable. Mephibosheth adverted, not only to his unworthiness, but to his bodily infirmities, in this expression of grateful surprise. He seems to have been an unambitious, modest, friendly, and pious man.

servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread always at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha: and all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

CHAPTER X.

David sends ambassadors to comfort Hanun, the king of Ammon, on the death of his father; who grossly insult them, 1-4. David counsels and comforts them, 5. The Ammonites, assisted by the Syrians, are overcome by Jozabab and Abiahai 6-14. Hadarezer sends another army, which David conquers, slaying Shobach its general, 15-18. The kings of Syria submit to David, 19.

AND it came to pass after this, that the king of the children of Ammon died, and Hanun his son reigned in his stead.

2 Then said David, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness unto me. And David sent to comfort him, by the hand of his servants, for his father.

j See on 1.S. Ruth 2:11,12. 2 Tim. 1:16-18. k 11, 19:28,33. 1 Kings 2:7. Jer. 52:33,34. Luke 22:30. Rev. 9:30. 13:8. 16:9. 1 Sam. 24:14. 26:20. Matt. 15:2. m 16:14. 1 Sam. 19:1. 2 Sam. 9:1. Is. 32:3. n 11:19,28. 2 Kings 25:22. 1 Luke 14:15. o 19:17. p 16:1-4. 19:26,27. q 1 Chr. 8:34-40. 9:40-44. Micah. r Mic. 7:6. s 7:10,11. a Judg. 10:7-9. 11:12-28. 1 Sam. 11:1-3. 1 Chr. 18:1-3. b Deut. 23:3-6. Neh. 4:3-7. 13:1-3. c 1 Sam. 22:3,4.

V. 9-11. Ziba had been greatly enriched under Saul, and was now intrusted with the management of Mephibosheth's estate, because of his professed affection for his family: but David seems to have been more generous than prudent in this appointment. Mephibosheth's family must be provided for out of the estate, though he himself lived at David's table.—Some understand the last clause, as the words of Ziba, proposing in a boasting manner to entertain Mephibosheth royally at his own table: but they seem to be the words of David.

V. 12. Micha.] The posterity of Jonathan and Mephibosheth, by Micha, was very numerous. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. 8:29-40. 9:35-44.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Amidst a multiplicity of affairs, we are prone to forget the gratitude we owe, and the engagements we are under, not only to our friends, but to the Lord himself: but persons of real and eminent piety, when they recollect their obligations, will have no rest till they have discharged them: they will be burdened with those possessions, which they suppose in equity belong to another; and impatient to express their forgiveness of those by whom they have been injured, and their gratitude to the persons or the relations of those who have been kind to them.—Those who have much in their power should sedulously inquire after opportunities of doing good; for frequently the most deserving objects of our compassion are concealed by modesty and patient resignation.—Kindness, shown to the most helpless persons, is sometimes recompensed in a very seasonable manner, by those from whom we had no expectation of obtaining or wanting assistance.—To be trained up in privacy, poverty, and hardship, and afterwards more prospered, is far more comfortable, than to be brought up in pride and delicacy, with great expectations, and then to be reduced to poverty and distress. "When riches increase, they are increased that eat them:" and, though the liberality of friends should be thankfully acknowledged, it can contribute little to our real happiness, further than providing us with the necessities or conveniences of life. But the love of Jesus who seeks out, provides for, enriches, and entertains us poor, ruined, worthless sinners, confers substantial and enduring felicity. May we humbly acknowledge our unworthiness of his mercies, thankfully accept them, and return him our cheerful praises and willing services, and show our gratitude to him, by kindness to those whom he owns, as his "brethren, sisters, and mother."

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 2. It is probable, that Nahash was kind to David in the days of Saul, from repentment and dislike to that prince: but it may be questioned, whether David ought to have shown respect to the memory of so cruel an enemy to his people; especially as the law forbid Israel to seek the peace and prosperity of the Ammonites. (Notes, (543))

And David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon.

3 And the princes of the children of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, "Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? ^dhath not David *rather* sent his servants unto thee, to search the city, and to spy it out, and to overthrow it?"

4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, *even* to their buttocks, and sent them away.

5 When they told *it* unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they ^estank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ish-tob twelve thousand men.

7 And when David heard of *it*, he sent Joab, and ^fall the host of the mighty men.

8 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entering in of the gate: and the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Ish-tob, and Maacah, *were* by themselves in the field.

9 When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice *men* of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians.

10 And the rest of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother, that he might put *them* in array against the children of Ammon.

* Heb. *In thine eyes doth*. d Gen. 42:9, 16. 1 Cor. 13:5. e Lev. 19:27. 1 Chr. 19:3, 4. Ps. 109:45. Is. 15:2. f Is. 20:4. 47:2, 3. Jer. 41:5. g Josh. 6:24-26. 1 Kings 16:34. 1 Chr. 19:5. h Gen. 34:30. Ex. 5:21. 1 Sam. 15:4. 27:12. 1 Chr. 19:6, 7. 1 s. 3:5, 12. Zoba. Prov. 25:8. Is. 8:9, 10. k Josh. 13:11-13. l Or, *the men of Zoba*. Judg. 11:3, 5. 12:3, 8. m Gen. 32:6. Num. 13:21. Josh. 19:28. Judg. 1:31. n Josh. 8:22. Judg. 20:42, 43. o 1 Chr. 19:9-12. Neh. 4:30. Luke 22:32. Rom. 15:1. (Gal. 6:2. Phil. 1:27, 28. p Num. 13:20. Deut. 31:6. Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18. 1 Sam. 14:6, 12. 17:32. 2 Chr. 32:7. Neh. 4:14.

Deut. 23:3-6. 1 Sam. 11:1-3.) They were not, however, of the devoted nations; so that, perhaps, it was not wrong for David to express a sense of gratitude to a benefactor, without deciding upon the motives of his conduct; and to render the customary civilities to his son, on his decease.

V. 3, 4. The princes of Hanun, who had great authority with him, seem to have been suspicious of David, from consciousness of the injuries which they had done to Israel, and were still meditating against it. (Note, 1 Sam. 29:4-6.) But if they had seen cause to be reserved, they ought not to have abused and insulted David's ambassadors. This was a violation of the most sacred laws of nations; the greatest affront imaginable to the prince whom they represented; and a direct declaration of war against him.—According to the sentiments and customs of those days, the Ammonites treated David's ambassadors in the most contemptuous manner, which they could possibly devise. (Marg. Ref. e, f.)

V. 5. Jericho.) This was a village near the spot where Jericho had stood: for that city was not yet rebuilt. (Notes, Josh. 6:26. 1 Kings 16:34.)—In this place, as soon as the ambassadors had crossed Jordan, they were advised to remain till their beards were grown; (which were considered as necessary to the appearance in public of grave and venerable persons;) that thus the disgrace which they had received might be obliterated.

V. 6. (Note, Gen. 34:30.) The Ammonites had made themselves so odious to David, that they could not expect but that he would make war on them: and therefore they determined to form alliances, and act offensively.—Little more can be determined with certainty concerning the different tribes of the Syrians, than what may be collected from the texts referred to in the margin. Maacah seems to have been the name of a district, and not of a king: and the clause may be rendered, "of the king of Maacah." (Notes, 1 Chr. 19:6, 7.)

V. 8-14. This battle seems to have been fought at the gate of Medeba, a city upon the borders of the Ammonites, and in their possession. (1 Chr. 19:7.) Joab's forces were opposed by two armies, before and behind: but his arrangement was judicious, and his address spirited.—His valour and regard to his country were *real* and eminent: and the language of faith and piety which he employed probably under some transient convictions, was honourable to God, and might be useful to the soldiers. Perhaps the slaughter was not very great, as both the Syrians and Ammonites took shelter in the city.

V. 18. The men of seven hundred, &c.] "Seven thousand men which fought in chariots." (1 Chr. 19:18.) Probably

11 And he said, "If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee."

12 Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.

13 And Joab drew nigh, and the people that *were* with him, unto the battle against the Syrians: and they fled before him.

14 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, then fled they also before Abishai, and entered into the city. So Joab returned from the children of Ammon, and came to Jerusalem.

15 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were smitten before Israel, they gathered themselves together.

16 And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that *were* beyond the river; and they came to Helam: and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them.

17 And when it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and passed over Jordan, and came to Helam: and the Syrians set themselves in array against David, and fought with him.

18 And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the *men* of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

19 And when all the kings that *were* servants to Hadarezer saw that they were smitten before Israel, they made peace with Israel, and served them. So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more.

Heb. 13:6. q 1 Sam. 4:9. 1 Chr. 19:13. 1 Cor. 16:13. r 16:10, 11. Judg. 10:15. 1 Sam. 9:18. Job 1:21. s 1 Kings 20:13, 14, 19-21. 25-30. 1 Chr. 19:14, 15. 2 Chr. 13:16-18. Ps. 2:1. Is. 8:9, 10. Mic. 4:11, 12. Zech. 14:2, 3. Rev. 19:18-21. u 8:3-8. 1 Chr. 18:3, 5. v That is, *Euphrates*. s Or, *Shophach*. 1 Chr. 19:16. x 1 Chr. 19:17. y 8:4. Ps. 18:38. 46:11. z 1 Chr. 19:18. *footmen*. a Judg. 4:2, 22. 5:26. b Gen. 14:1-5. Josh. 11:10. Judg. 1:7. 1 Kings 20:20. Dan. 2:37. c 8:6. 1 Chr. 19:19. Ps. 48:4, 5. Is. 26:11. Rev. 18:10.

seven thousand men belonging to seven hundred chariots; and forty thousand men, who fought on foot, or on horseback, as there was occasion or opportunity. Or, some were foot-soldiers and some horsemen.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to sympathize with the afflicted, and show gratitude to our friends: but nothing except vexation and disappointment, can be expected by courting the friendship of ungodly men.—Treacherous minds are always suspicious: as they are conscious, that they themselves mean to deceive when they can gain by it, they naturally suppose that others intend the same; and weak and wicked princes generally employ counsellors of this description.—It is the height of folly to awaken the resentment of those, by insult and contempt, whose power of taking vengeance cannot be thus diminished: and the fatal effects of rash affronts, though little feared, are often severely felt.—We should show respect and kindness, to those who have been unjustly disgraced; yet it is needless to lay mere affronts and insults to heart: unmerited reproaches or contempt will soon wear away, and a clear conscience should be deemed sufficient to counterbalance the present uneasiness. Yet, by measures of this kind, valuable persons are often driven for a season into obscurity, to the loss of the public rather than of themselves.—Those, who are the most ready to commit injustice, are commonly the most averse to reconciliation: and confidence in numbers, strength, or valour, frequently buoys up men to their destruction; for "though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished." But a good cause and a single dependence upon the Lord afford the surest indications of success: and when valiant men are cordial to the interests of their country, and are defending its civil and religious liberties, their animation and presence of mind will often increase in proportion to dangers and difficulties.—It is our duty, in every emergency, to do our utmost, and to encourage others to do the same, helping one another as occasion may require; and thus committing the event to the Lord; "Let him do what seemeth him good." But alas, many use good words, and seem, in perilous circumstances, to depend on God, and to be submissive to him, whose hearts are not upright in his sight: and many are very serviceable to his church, who have no part in its peculiar blessings.—But especially let the impenitent and unbelieving and disobedient recollect, that the son of David will assuredly resent their contempt of his ambassadors, whom he sends to them with a message of peace and love; and that he will consider the ill-use of them as a declaration of war against himself. In this warfare numbers and confederacies are utterly unavailing,

CHAPTER XI.

Joab besieges Rabbah. 1. David commits adultery with Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah, 2-4. She informs David that she is pregnant, 5; he sends for Uriah, and in vain tries to induce him to visit his wife, 6-13. He sends by Uriah a letter to Jiah; according to which Uriah, with others, is slain by the Ammonites, 14-17. Jiah sends word to David, and he answers the messengers in very improper language, 18-25. David marries Bath-sheba, who bears him a son; but God is displeased, 26, 27.

AND it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah: but David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her: and she came in unto him, and he lay with her, (for she was purified from her uncleanness,) and she returned unto her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.

6 And David sent to Joab, saying Send

* Heb. at the return of the year. 1 Kings 20:22, 26. 2 Chr. 35:10. Ec. 3:8. 1 Chr. 20:1. Zech. 14:3. c. 12:26. Deut. 3:11. 1 Chr. 20:1. Ez. 21:20. d. 4:5, 7. Prov. 19:15. 24:33, 34. Matt. 26:40, 41. 1 Thes. 5:6, 7. 1 Pet. 4:7. e. Deut. 22:3. Jer. 19:13. Matt. 10:27. Acts 10:9. f. Gen. 3:8. g. 2:24, 2. Job 31:1. Ps. 119:37. Matt. 5:28. 1 John 2:16. g. Gen. 39:6. Prov. 6:25. 31:30. h. Jer. 5:8. Hos. 7:6, 7. Am. 1:14, 15. i. Or, Bath-sheba. j. Or, Ammiel. 1 Chr. 3:5. 12:39. 1 Chr. 11:41. k. Gen. 39:7. Job 31:9-11. Ps. 50:18. 1 Ps. 51: title. Lam. 1:4. \$0r, and when she had purified herself, &c. she returned. Prov. 30:30. m. Lev. 12:

and destruction is inevitable. Those therefore, who have rashly engaged in the desperate contest, should without delay, separate from his enemies, fearing any longer to help them: and make it their great object to obtain his forgiveness, and to be numbered among his subjects. All his people should be valiant in his cause, and for his truth and righteousness: and ministers should neither fear, nor be ashamed, to exercise their embassy of reconciliation, however despised, insulted, or persecuted; for he will plead their cause, comfort them under their trials, and reward their faithfulness with "a crown of glory which fadeth not away."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1-5.—David committed the management of the war against Ammon to Joab, and continued at ease in his palace, when he ought to have been "fighting the battles of the LORD;" and thus, being out of the line of present duty, he slothfully wasted his time. Without doubt his prosperity had gradually rendered him more negligent than formerly in his devotional exercises, and more self-indulgent; and perhaps had occasioned a measure of self-confidence and carnal security. Thus his passions gathered force, in proportion as his holy affections abated; and, having been accustomed, without censure, to marry any single woman, for whom he conceived an affection, his inclinations had not been habituated to a denial. When therefore, after an unseasonable sleep, he was walking on the flat roof of his house, and by some means had a view of a very beautiful woman, who was washing herself from a ceremonial uncleanness, he allowed himself to gaze upon her, until he lusted after her in his heart; and, perhaps supposing her not to be a married woman, he sent to inquire after her, in order to add her to the number of his wives. But his sinful passion had acquired such an ascendancy, that he was the more inflamed by being informed, that she was the wife of one of his bravest and most faithful officers. He therefore sent messengers for her, who could not be ignorant of his intentions: and though she was previously a person of virtue and reputation, he obtained her compliance, (probably by means of those hopes which his rank in life was capable of inspiring,) and committed adultery with her.—This crime was attended with manifold aggravations: it was a gross violation of the seventh commandment: it was likewise punishable by the death of both parties according to the judicial law. (Lev. 20:10.) David was chief magistrate, to whom it belonged to carry that law into execution: he was at this time about fifty years of age; and he had already many wives; and many children also, approaching to man's estate, to whom the example would be prejudicial in the extreme. His acquaintance with the divine law, his open profession of true religion, his high reputation for piety and wisdom, and the immense obligations which the Lord had conferred on him; the rank and character of Bath-sheba too, and the service for him and his country in which Uriah was engaged, were all circumstances which exceedingly aggravated his offence.—When Bath-sheba found that she was with child by David, she justly dreaded the resentment of her husband, who had been absent from her for a considerable time; and she sent to inform David, that by the iniquitous interposition of his authority, which perhaps he had promised, she might be

me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thine house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest not thou from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields: shall I then go into mine house to eat, and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to-day also, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat

2-5, 15, 19. &c. 18, 19. n. Deut. 21:22. Prov. 6:34. e. Gen. 4:7. 38:18-23. 1 Sam. 15:30. Job 30:12-14. Prov. 23:13. 1s. 59:13. Matt. 26:70, 72, 74. j. Heb. of the peace of Joab, Gen. 29:6, 37:14. 1 Sam. 17:22. marg. p. Ps. 44:21. 1s. 29:15. Luke 12:2. Gen. 4:13. q. Gen. 18:4. 19:2. r. Ps. 12:2. 55:21. u. Heb. went out after him, e. Gen. 43:34. j. Job. 5:12-14. Prov. 21:30. v. 7:2, 6. 1 Sam. 4:4. 14:18. 20:5. Matt. 10:24, 25. John 13:14. 1 Cor. 9:25. 27. 2 Tim. 3:4, 12. Heb. 12:1, 2. w. 14:19. 1 Sam. 1:26. 17:55. 20:3. 25:26. x. Jer. 2:22, 23, 37.

preserved from being made a public example. (Note, Matt. 1:18, 19.)—Most of the Jewish writers on the most frivolous pretences, exculpate both David and Bath-sheba, as to the adultery; and only condemn David as to the murder! This is a specimen of their morality.

V. 6, 7. It is probable that Uriah was descended from the Hittites; but he was a proselyte, and had the heart of an Israelite.—Under the guilt of his very heinous sin, David was more anxious to conceal his shame, and prevent the temporal consequences, than to obtain forgiveness from God! indeed the former seems for the time to have almost wholly occupied his mind. (Note, Ps. 32:3-5.)—Perhaps he feared lest Uriah, in his deep resentment, should raise rebellion against him: and certainly he dreaded the reproaches which he might well expect from every quarter, when his shameful misconduct should be publicly known. In this state of mind, he did not consider the treachery and injustice of drawing in Uriah to consider himself as the father of the child, with which Bath-sheba was pregnant: but, having formed his plan, he sent to Uriah, as if he could depend more on him to inform him of the state of the war than on any other person.

V. 8, 9. Uriah's house was near David's palace, perhaps because he commanded some of the Cherethites and Pelishtites, who were the king's guard. (Note, 8:15-18.) David never questioned but that he would gladly embrace the opportunity of visiting his wife, and accordingly provided them an entertainment. But whether any thing had excited Uriah's suspicions, or whether, through a hardy self-denied disposition, he scorned to fare better than his commander and comrades, he would not go home, but slept with the other soldiers: and thus the Lord defeated David's design of "covering his transgression." (Note, Prov. 28:13.)

V. 10, 11. The circumstance of the ark being constantly placed in a tabernacle, and not a temple, could be no reason why Uriah should not go home to his house. It is therefore probable, that the ark was on this occasion carried with the army to the war. (Notes, 1 Sam. 4:4, 5. 14:16-23.)—Uriah's answer was so decided, that David's heart, it might have been expected, should have been deeply touched, to think how he had abused so brave a man; and made him reflect, how vilely he indulged himself in sinful pleasure, while this man and the rest gloriously endured all manner of hardships, and refused the most innocent pleasure for the sake of their country. But he was so corrupted for the present, that he was troubled to find Uriah so true a soldier. *Ps. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. David pretended further business with Uriah, and great kindness for him, in order to deceive him; that, if possible, he might break his resolution. Accordingly he entertained him at his own table: and, in addition to his other injuries, became his tempter to drunkenness; hoping that when his passions were inflamed, he might be induced to go home to his wife: but in this too he found himself disappointed. (Notes, 13:22-29. Gen. 19:31-38. Hab. 2:15-17.)

V. 14-17. Satan having gradually drawn David on into one sinful attempt after another, had prepared his mind for still more atrocious wickedness. (Notes, Matt. 26:14-16, 25, 30. —35, 40, 41, 69-75. John 12:1-8. 13:18-30.) He now per-

and drunk before him; and he made him drink: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying 'Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten,' and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place, where he knew that valiant men were.

17 And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

18 Then Joab sent, and told David all the things concerning the war;

19 And charged the messenger, saying, When thou hast made an end of telling the matters of the war unto the king;

20 And if so be that the king's wrath arise, and he say unto thee, Wherefore approached ye so nigh unto the city when ye did fight? knew ye not that they would shoot from the wall?

21 Who smote Abimelech the son of ^hJerub-

a Gen. 19:32-35, Ex. 32:21, Hab. 2:15, b 1 Kings 21:8-10, Ps. 19:13, 52:2, 62:9, Jer. 9:1-4, 17:9, Mic. 7:3-5, c 17:1 Sam. 18:17, 25, Ps. 51:4, 14, Jer. 10:23, * Heb. strong, † Heb. from after him, d 12:9, e 21:3, 27, 29, 10, 1 Sam. 22:17-19, 1 Kings 2:53-34, 21:12-14, 2 Kings 10:6, 7, Prov. 29:12, Job. 5:11, Acts 5:29, f 12:9, g Ps. 51:14, g Judg. 9:53, h Judg. 6:32, 7:1,

ceived that, if Uriah lived, he must detect his wife's unfaithfulness; to prevent this was at present his leading object, and all other consequences were for the moment forgotten. David, however, would not kill Uriah with his own hands, nor order his servants to assassinate him, nor put him to death under colour of law: for his reputation must have been ruined by such measures; nay, perhaps the direct injustice and murder would have disquieted his conscience, insensible as it was become. But he devised a more plausible and secret method of getting rid of him; which seemed at the time less atrocious, though in reality it was unspeakably more complicated and heinous. The known valour, fidelity, and zeal for his country, of this gallant officer, suggested the method of murdering him! David had such confidence in this much-injured man, that he did not hesitate to intrust him with the letter which decreed his death: and whatever else Uriah suspected, he did not betray his trust. Joab, and those "who retired from Uriah," were thus made accomplices in the murder; and the soldiers who were slain with Uriah, were no less murdered by David, than he was. Whatever causticity David might use with his conscience, this was deliberate murder of many persons with malice prepense, aggravated exceedingly by the circumstance, that these men were slain in the very act of fighting for him and his kingdom. Perhaps Joab imagined that the king had some political reason for thus taking off Uriah: but probably he was rejoiced to see him involved in the guilt of murder as well as himself. (Notes, 3:26-39.)—And is this David, who repeatedly spared his enemy, and whose heart smote him, when he had cut off Saul's skirt! (Notes, 1 Sam. 24:4-15, 26:8-20.) Alas, how is he changed and fallen!—*Quantum mutatus ab illo!*

V. 21. Then say, &c.] This was a plain intimation to the messenger, that the death of Uriah would be so agreeable to David, as to reconcile him to the loss which had been sustained. Thus he began already to be despised even by his accomplices!—Amidst all the painful sensations excited by reading this chapter, it is pleasing to find David's soldiers so ready at quoting the Scripture: for probably the book of Judges was then extant as a part of Holy Writ. (Note, Judg. 9:50-57.)

V. 25. Provided the brave Uriah were dead, David seems not to have regarded who were slain with him. He spoke on this occasion with an insensibility about the lives of his subjects, which borders on infidelity, and strongly marks the state of his heart at this time. On other occasions he would have considered such an event as a rebuke, which required humiliation, prayer and sacrifices, and a more entire dependence on God in future; (Notes, Josh. 7:6-9, 1 Chr. 15:12-14.) and he would have censured the imprudence of the commanders, and charged them, on pain of his displeasure, to be more careful of the lives of their brethren.

V. 27. David married Bath-sheba as soon as it could be done with decency, and the customary mourning (which was in this case a vile mockery,) was ended. But though there remained no injured husband to avenge the adultery, the premature birth of the child would discover it.—All this time, as it appears from the narrative, David continued impenitent, and comparatively unconcerned. Probably, he still attended on the ordinances of religion. By some ingenious self-flattery he endeavoured to palliate his conduct to himself; and no one reproved him for it. Perhaps the general practice of

bethesh? did not a woman cast a piece of a mill-stone upon him from the wall, that he died in Thebez? why went ye nigh the wall? Then say thou, Thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

22 So the messenger went, and came and showed David all that Joab had sent him for.

23 And the messenger said unto David, Surely the men prevailed against us, and came out unto us into the field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate.

24 And the shooters shot from off the wall upon thy servants, and some of the king's servants be dead, and thy servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.

25 Then David said unto the messenger, Thus shalt thou say unto Joab, Let not this thing displease thee; for the sword devoureth one as well as another: make thy battle more strong against the city, and overthrow it; and encourage thou him.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

Jerub-bant, 13:37, 34, Ps. 39:8, Is. 14:10, Ez. 16:51, 52, † Heb. be evil in thing eyes, k Josh. 7:3-9, 1 Sam. 6:9, Ez. 9:1-3, 11:12, ‡ Heb. so and such, 112:28, m 8:31, 14:2, Gen. 27:41, n 3:3-5, 5:13-16, 12:9, o Gen. 38:10, 1 Chr. 21:7, ¶ Heb. was evil in the eyes of, Ps. 5:6, 51:4, 5, * Heb. 13:4,

other princes induced him to conclude, that persons in his high station were not, in this respect, bound to the same strictness as their subjects. However, though he had no deep remorse of conscience, we may be sure that he lost all spirituality and comfort in religion: for small transgressions, like slight wounds, give much pain to the believer's conscience; but enormous crimes, like a violent blow upon the head, leave him for a season in an unaccountable state of insensibility.

But the thing, &c.] Such marriages, as this of David with Bath-sheba, with whom he had previously committed adultery, were not forbidden in the law, as some of the rabbies suppose; for this was needless, as both parties were condemned to die; and David was not afterwards ordered to put her away. Yet as he married her in order to cover his iniquity, and as the desire of possessing her may be supposed to have been an inducement to the murder of Uriah, it formed an additional aggravation of the crime; and the whole transaction, from first to last, was in all respects displeasing to the Lord.—But why was this permitted? or why was it recorded? It is certain that thousands, through succeeding generations, have, by this fall of "the man after God's own heart," been prejudiced against true religion, hardened in infidelity, or emboldened in blasphemy: while others have thence taken occasion to commit habitual wickedness under a religious profession, and with presumptuous confidence, to the still greater discredit of the gospel. It should, however, be considered, that all these have been, previously, either open enemies to true religion, or hypocritical pretenders to it: and it is the righteous purpose of God, that stumblingblocks should be thrown in the way of such men, that they "may stumble, and fall, and be snared, and taken, and perish:" it is his holy will thus to detect the secret malignity of their hearts, and to make way for the display of his justice in their condemnation.—On the other hand thousands, from age to age, have by this awful example been rendered more suspicious of themselves, more watchful, more afraid of temptation, more dependent on the Lord, and more fervent in prayer; and by means of David's fall, have themselves been preserved from falling. Numbers, who have been overcome by temptation, have thus been preserved from despair. Every upright soul will eventually derive benefit from the impartial record of this event; and none will finally be injured by it, except those, who desire an excuse for sin, or an objection to the religion of the Bible. Bees will collect honey, and spiders poison, from the same plants, according to their different natures. No excuse can be made for David; he attempted none for himself; and much self-knowledge is requisite to account for his conduct, or to deem it possible that a man, who had so long enjoyed communion with God, in the highest exercises of devotion, could commit such enormous crimes, and continue so long impenitent. But the Lord's design in leaving him to himself was doubtless wise, righteous, and merciful; and he can and will overrule it for great good to those who fear and love him. The glory of all the good is his due; the blame of all the evil, original or consequent, belongs to those who commit it. (Notes, Gen. 50:20, 2 Chr. 32:30-33, v. 31 Matt. 26:69-75.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1-13. A deep conviction, that the human heart is, even the heart of every man, is "deceitful above all things, and

CHAPTER XII.

Nathan by a parable causes David to pass sentence on himself, 1-6. David, convicted by Nathan, confesses his guilt; and is pardoned, but told that the child shall die, 7-14. The child is smitten and dies, though David fasted and prayed for him while he lived, 15-19. Finding that the child is dead, David worships God, and takes comfort, 19-23. Solomon is born, and named Jedidiah, 24, 25. David takes Babbah, and treats the Ammonites with severity, 26-31.

AND the LORD sent Nathan unto David: and he came unto him, and said unto him, "There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds;

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe-lamb, which he had bought, and nourished up: and it grew up together with him,

a 7:1-5. 24:11-13. 1 Kings 13:1, 18:1. 2 Kings 1:3. b 11:10-17, 23. 14:4. Is. 57:17, 18. c Ez. 31: title. d 14:5-11. Jude. 5:7-15. 1 Kings 20:35-41. Is. 5:1-6. Matt. 21:33-45. Luke 15:11, &c. e 8:16, 19, &c. f 8:32-5. 5:13-16. 13:15. Job 1:3. f 11:3. i rov. 5:18, 19. * Heb. morsel. g Ueut. 13:6. Mic. 7:5.

desperately wicked," is of the greatest importance to the due exercise of repentance, faith, and every Christian grace; and in order to impress this humiliating conviction on the minds of those who attend to the word of God, a few of his most eminent servants have been left to fall in such a manner, as fully to prove, that every evil dwells in each of us; and that in circumstances of concurring temptations, we are capable of committing any crime; even that which we at present and habitually most dread and detest! Neither eminent piety, nor a long and close walk with God, habits of obedience and of the government of the passions, nor the sobriety of advancing age, nor peculiar obligations from God, great reputation and usefulness, nor clear knowledge of the divine law; nor even the Spirit of prophecy, have been found capable of extirpating the most hateful propensities of the human heart: though restrained, dethroned, and crucified, they have still lived; and have revived, obtained advantages, and for a season seemed to reign with the most destructive tyranny! Who then are we, that we should deem ourselves secure? We are never in this world out of the reach of temptation; never exempted, in respect of any sin, from the necessity of watchfulness, prayer, and dependence on divine grace. Let us not then be highminded; but beg of God that he would enable us to pass the time of our sojourning in humble jealous fear.—The declensions of believers are commonly gradual: exemption from trials, and worldly prosperity, induce habits of negligence in duty, and inexpedient self-indulgence; and thus the soul falls into a careless and unworthy frame. (Note, 1 Kings 11:1-8.) Then a man is drawn to the verge of prohibited gratification; and far beyond the bounds of expediency and moderation, in things not absolutely unlawful: and when his passions have been accustomed to indulgence, he is the more easily prevailed on to commit evident evil. The eye, the ear, the outward senses are not turned away from forbidden objects; by these inlets the sinful imagination is excited, and concupiscence is produced. Perhaps he hopes that the desire may be lawfully gratified, and on that vain pretence the mind is allowed to dwell on it. (Notes, Gen. 3:2-6.) But when lust is conceived, every restraint generally increases its vehemence: the thoughts of future consequences, and the consideration of the presence, purity, and justice of God, are excluded; his law and authority are disregarded: faith and fear and love are out of exercise; and the enhanced imagination of the satisfaction to be found in indulgence, possesses and engrosses the soul. Thus sin is brought forth: and, notwithstanding palliations, and previous hopes of concealment and impunity, the mind is soon tortured with that dread of future consequences, which far exceeds all guilty pleasures. (Notes, Gen. 3:7. Jam. 1:13-15.) But when the bait is swallowed, Satan hath caught the sinner; and no power except that of God can deliver him, or prevent his being more and more entangled. (Note, 2 Tim. 2:23-26.)—The fear of contempt, and even of disgracing the cause of religion, leads the believer, who is thus fallen, to devise methods of concealment; and such thoughts for a season exclude others of much greater importance, and afford Satan an opportunity of tempting him to still further iniquities: while the conscience, once corrupted, makes feeble opposition to fraudulent measures of preserving the reputation, or of preventing the consequences of transgression. Every concession hardens the heart, and provokes the departure of the Holy Spirit. The end being considered necessary; means of every kind, which promise success, seem needful also: and when a man's obligations to God are forgotten, no wonder if all the ties of justice, gratitude, and friendship are disregarded; and to impose upon the credulity and confidence of men, to injure them in their property, reputation, and connexions, and to tempt them to commit sin, are obvious, and, alas! common measures.

V. 14-27. When a man has so far given place to the devil, as not only to commit scandalous sins, but to use dissolutive and base means of concealing them, and sees a prospect of having the whole exposed to public view; what shall prevent his being pushed forward, by the same influence and from the same motives, to treachery, malice, and

and with his children: it did eat of his own meat and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

h Gen. 18:2-7. Jam. 1:14. 1:11:3, 4. k Gen. 38:24. 1 Sam. 25:21, 22. Luke 6:41, 42. 9:55. Rom. 2:1. 11 Sam. 14:39. l 11 Sam. 14:39. m Ex. 22:1. Prov. 6:31. Luke 19:8. n Jam. 2:13.

murder, till crimes are multiplied and aggravated, beyond computation, and till every nobler consideration is extinguished? If conscience be thus stupefied, it will be easy for the same artful enemy to amuse the deluded offender, with some form of godliness, some palliation or cloak of iniquity, which shall quiet the rising scruple: and success in such a course may even be considered as a divine sanction, and induce the language of indifference or of infidelity; while the heart is rendered callous, when the exercise even of atrocious cruelty is needful for the end proposed. But can a real and eminent believer ever tread this downward path, and, as it were, fall asleep in the arms of Satan? (Notes apud P. O. Judg. 16.) Can a person who has committed such atrocious crimes, and so long remains impenitent, be indeed a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and an heir of eternal glory? Can one spark of divine life exist unextinguished in such an ocean? It is plain that these things are possible; but no man in such a case can have warranted evidence to conclude that he is a believer: the higher his confidence, who has sunk thus low in wickedness, the greater proof is there of his presumption and hypocrisy. Though grace be not lost in such an awful case, the assurance and consolation of it must be wholly suspended. Let not then any hypocrite, who resembles David in nothing but his transgressions, and who adds the habit of allowed sin to all other aggravations, buoy up his confidence with his example: let him first imitate David's humiliation, repentance, and other eminent graces, before he thinks himself, or requires others to consider him, as merely a backslider. (Notes, 12:13-15. 15:24-29. 1 Chr. 29: Ps. 51.) Neither let any opposer or despiser of the truth say, Are these the fruits of faith and devotion? We confidently answer, No. They are the effects of a corrupt nature, the tendency of which to evil must be inconceivably strong, when it overcomes the contrary tendency of truth and grace in the heart of an eminent servant of God.—And let us all watch against the beginnings of negligence and self-indulgence, and keep at the utmost distance from that precipice, whence David fell, earnestly beseeching God to close our senses, imaginations, and affections to all forbidden objects, thoughts, and desires. Let us study moderation, expediency, and superiority to all animal inclinations, in things lawful: continually attend to our proper work, and pray always that we may not be led into temptation. Then will our lives best show the tendency of our principles, and confute those who accuse us of encouraging men to sin by the freeness of salvation.—But again: Is it possible that such a backslider from God can be recovered, and admitted afterwards to comfortable communion with him? Doubtless it is; "for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption," and he will neither cast out one humble penitent believer, whatever his former crimes have been; nor suffer Satan to pluck any of his sheep out of his hand. (Note, John 10:26-31.) Let then those who are fallen, return to the Lord without delay, and seek forgiveness through the Redeemer's atoning blood.—But how poor is every success and gratification, when the Lord is displeased with us! Either in this world or the next, he will surely expose us to shame for our crimes.—It is also grievous to observe how the sins of believers quiet the consciences and rejoice the hearts of wicked men, who are ready to insult and say, "Art thou also become as one of us?" But while many will thus abuse these humiliating instances, may we be unfeignedly thankful, if we have been restrained from such dreadful falls. May we commit our souls to him, who is able to keep us from falling: may we take warning by David's sins; and imitate the generosity, self-denial, and attachment to the cause of Israel, of the gallant and deeply injured Uriah.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1-6. When God was displeased with his servant David, he did not immediately inflict heavy judgments upon him; but he sent a prophet to call him to repentance.—Nathan did not go, of his own accord and in his own name, to reprove David for his offences: but when sent by the Lord, he plainly delivered his message; without being induced by David's royal authority, his previous emi-

7 ¶ And Nathan said to David, 'Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives unto thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and, if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart

from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun;

12 For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast

o 1 Sam. 13:13. 1 Kings 18:18, 21:19, 20. Matt. 14:4. p 7:8. 1 Sam. 15:17, 15:18. q 2:1, 149. 1 Sam. 18:11, 21:19, 19:10—15, 23:7, 14:29—28. r 11. 1 Kings 2:22. s 2:4, 5:5. t 7:19. Ps. 84:11, 85:15. Rom. 9:32. u 10. 11:4, 14—17. Gen. 9:5, 6. Ex. 20:13, 14. Num. 15:30—31. 1 Sam. 15:19, 28. Is. 5:24. Am. 2:4. Heb. 10:23, 29. x 2 Chr. 33:6. Ps. 51:4, 90:8. 139:1, 2. Jer. 18:10. y 11:15—17, 27. z 13:28, 29. 18:14, 15, 33. 1 Kings 2:23—25. Am. 7:9. Matt. 25:32. o Num. 11:20. 1 Sam. 2:30. Mal. 1:6, 7. Matt. 6:24. Rom. 2:4. 1 Tim. 4:8. g Gen. 20:3. Prov. 6:32, 33. c 13:1—14, 28, 29. 15:6, 10. d 16:21, 22. Dent. 28:30.

nent character as a saint and psalmist, or his own peculiar affection for him, to conceal or mutilate it. It is probable, that this took place soon after the birth of David's son by Bath-sheba; when the scandalous transactions would begin to be generally noticed. But whatever others whispered and circulated, David seems not to have been in any due measure sensible of his exceedingly aggravated wickedness, till the Lord thus awakened his conscience.—In order to insinuate the necessary truths, without exciting the resistance of David's partial self-love; and to induce him to give sentence against himself before he was aware, Nathan introduced his message with a parable. (Notes, Judg. 9:7—15.) 'There is never more use of wisdom, than in the contrivance of rephension; especially of princes, and great persons. *Ep. Patrick.* There scarcely ever was any thing more calculated, on the one hand to awaken emotions of sympathy, and on the other, those of indignation, than the case here supposed, and the several circumstances, by which the heart must be interested in the poor man's case, and by which the unfeeling oppression of his rich neighbour was aggravated. Several expressions, however, might have excited a suspicion, that more was intended, than merely to plead the cause of an injured man against his oppressor: yet David evidently supposed it to be matter of fact, till Nathan made the application.—The rich man, who had many flocks and herds, represented David with his many wives and concubines: the poor man, with his single ewe-lamb, which was so tenderly brought up by him, was Uriah with his one well-beloved wife; and the traveller may mean David's sensual lust, which nothing could satisfy but the wife of Uriah. 'In the beginning it' (the evil desire) 'is but a traveller, but in time it becomes a guest; and in conclusion, is the master of the house.' *Jewish doctors in Ep. Patrick.* Yet this parable, apposite and beautiful as it was, pointed out only a small part of the enormity of David's conduct. Uriah's loyal and gallant services, and David's ingratitude and treachery, with the murder of him and his fellow-soldiers, were not so much as alluded to. His injury to Uriah and Bath-sheba, in the crime of adultery, was alone shadowed forth: for perhaps the prophet meant to bring him by degrees to a view of his exceeding sinfulness; and would not make the case too exact in all particulars, lest he should suspect his intentions, and be kept from giving sentence against himself.—David, forgetful of his own crimes, was fired with indignation against the imaginary offender; and with a solemn oath condemned him, not only to make legal restitution, but also to suffer death, or at least declared, that he was deserving of death. (Note, Gen. 38:24—26.)

V. 7. David failed of making the application of the parable to himself: yet Nathan had gained a great point, in bringing him to pronounce so severe a sentence against a supposed offender, for crimes of far inferior malignity to his own. He therefore, with great firmness and courage, directly applied his parable to the conscience of the offender; and assured David, that he was the very person whose conduct had been delineated, and whose sentence had been denounced out of his own mouth: and he then proceeded in a very plain, convincing, and even severe discourse, to show the extent, aggravations, and effects of his guilt. (Notes, 1 Sam. 15:13—25. 1 Kings 2:17—23. Matt. 14:3—5.)

V. 8. *Wives.] Or, Women.* We read of no more than one wife of Saul, and Rizpah his concubine; (21:8. 1 Sam. 14:50.) and probably he had not any more. The women therefore of his court and family seem to be meant; which, according to the custom of the east, came into David's possession, when he succeeded to the kingdom. But if Saul had more wives or concubines, it is not probable that David married any of them, as Saul was his father-in-law. The Lord, by giving David these women in his providence, no more sanctioned his polygamy, than his giving Israel a king proved that they did well in desiring and asking one; or than his giving David's concubines to Absalom, sanctioned his detestable incest. (Notes, 11:12. 16:20—23. 1 Sam. 12:11—19.) But the multitude of unmarried women, of whom David had

Ex. 14:9. 20:25, 26. Hos. 4:13, 14. e 11:4, 8, 13, 15. Ec. 12:14. Luke 12:1, 2. 1 Cor. 4:5. f 1 Sam. 15:20. 1 Kings 13:4. 21:20. 22:8. 2 Kings 1:5. 2 Chr. 16:10, 24:20—22, 25:16. Matt. 14:3—5, 10. z 24:10. 1 Sam. 15:24, 25, 30. Job 7:30. 32:27. Ps. 23:3—5. 51:4. Prov. 25:12, 28:13. Luke 15:21. Acts 2:37. 1 John 1:8—10. b Job 7:21. Ps. 32:1, 2. 130:3, 4. Is. 38:17. 43:25, 44:22. Lam. 3:32. Mic. 7:19. 19. Zech. 3:4. Heb. 9:26. i Lev. 20:10. Num. 35:31—33. Ps. 51:16. Acts 13:38, 39. Rom. 8:33, 34. k Neh. 5:9. Ps. 74:10. Is. 52:5. Ez. 36:21—23. Matt. 18:7. Rom. 2:24.

it in his power to make choice, aggravated his guilt in seizing upon the wife of another man. Nay, had he thought that any thing conducive to his comfort was yet wanting, he was allowed to ask for it, and the Lord declared that he would not have denied it, if he had seen it good for him. (Note, Ps. 84:11, 12.)

V. 9. *Wherefore, &c.]* The clause may be rendered, "Wherefore hast thou despised the word of the LORD?" His promises, as well as his precepts. (Notes, Job 2:9. Matt. 16:21—23.) David, in this instance, had shown that he thought the general and special promises of God, either too scanty or too precarious, to suffice for his felicity, or to ensure it; for otherwise he could have no need to seek satisfaction in another way; and this was a great contempt of them. He had also treated the commandments of God, as rigorous and needless restraints; and as worthy to be neglected, dispensed with, nay trampled on, when they interfered with his present gratification. (Notes, 11:14—17, 27.)

V. 10. *Despised me, &c.]* (Note, 1 Sam. 2:30.) When David despised the word of God, he despised God himself; even his power and authority, his justice and purity, his omnipresence and omniscience, his favour and wrath, and all his glorious perfections: else, he would not thus have offended him, for the base gratification of his lusts. This was an aggravation of his crimes, less obvious to man's natural apprehensions, but full of deeper malignity, than all those enumerated in the former chapter. (Notes, 11:1—17. Ps. 51:4. Rom. 2:4—6.)—As the parable had particularly represented the evil of David's adultery, the address of Nathan is most pointed against his murder of Uriah.—The word rendered never, in this connexion, only implies perpetuity. (Note, Gen. 17:7, 8.) So long as David lived, one after another of his family was slain, and Adonijah just after his death. (Notes, 13:22—29. 18:9—14. 1 Kings 2:15—25.)

V. 11, 12. David was not at Jerusalem when Absalom perpetrated his abominable crime; but it was committed in so shameless a manner, that it was as notorious as if he had seen it with his own eyes. (Note, 16:20—23.)—The Lord raised up this evil out of his own house: yet he did not put the wickedness into the hearts of his sons; but he left them to their own vile passions, and overruled the effects of them for David's chastisement. (Notes, Luke 22:21—23, v. 22. Acts 2:22—24. 4:23—28.)

V. 13. The dormant spark of divine grace in David's heart now began to rekindle: and by means of this plain and faithful statement of facts, in the name of God, his evasions vanished, and his guilt appeared in all its magnitude. (Notes, 2 Chr. 16:7—10. 24:19—22. 25:14—16.) He therefore was far from resenting the pointed rebuke of the prophet, or attempting any palliation of his conduct; but, in deep humiliation of heart, he confessed, "I have sinned against the LORD." The words are few; but the event proved them to have been the language of genuine repentance, which regards sin as committed against the authority and glory of the Lord, whether or not it have occasioned evil to any fellow-creature. (Note Ps. 51:4.) And Nathan assured him, (perhaps not at that time, but when the sincerity of his repentance had been further proved,) that the "LORD had put away his sin, and he should not die."—Murder and adultery were crimes punishable by death: no Israelite indeed had authority to execute this sentence upon the Lord's anointed; yet David might justly fear that God himself would cut him off by some sudden judgment. But the prophet informed him, that he should not die in this manner, or be cast out of his kingdom, and this intimated, that the eternal punishment also would be remitted.

V. 14. Perhaps the Ammonites, and other idolatrous enemies of God and Israel, had received information of these sins of the highly favoured servant and zealous worshipper of JEHOVAH, and blasphemed his name on that account: and the wicked Israelites, especially those of Saul's party, would reflect upon the divine justice, in that Saul had been rejected for apparently less heinous crimes, and David was spared

given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. [Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ And Nathan departed unto his house: and the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.

16 David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth.

17 And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

18 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

19 But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead.

20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive; but when the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread.

22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell

whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

24 And David comforted Bath-sheba, his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon; and the LORD loved him.

25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.

26 ¶ And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city.

27 And Joab sent messengers to David, and said, I have fought against Rabbah, and have taken the city of waters.

28 Now therefore gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; lest I take the city, and it be called after my name.

29 And David gathered all the people together, and went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it.

30 And he took their king's crown from off his head, (the weight whereof was a talent of gold, with the precious stones,) and it was set on David's head: and he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.

31 And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. So David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem.

1 Ps. 89:31—33. 54:12. Prov. 3:11, 12. Am. 3:2. 1 Cor. 11:32. Heb. 12:6. Rev. 3:19. In Deut. 32:39. 1 Sam. 25:38. 26:10. 2 Kings 15:5. 2 Chr. 13:20. Ps. 104:29. Act. 13:23. n. 22. Ps. 50:15. Is. 25:16. Joel 2:13—14. Jon. 3:9. * Heb. fasted a fast. Fath. 4:16. Ps. 69:10. Is. 22:12. Act. 9:9. o 13:31. Job 20:12—14. p 3:35. 1 Sam. 28:23. † Heb. do hurt to. q Job 1:20. 2:10. Ps. 39:9. Lam. 3:39—41. r Ruth 3:3. Ec. 9:8. s 6:17. 7:18. t 1 Cor. 2:15.

notwithstanding these enormities. (Notes, Matt. 18:7—9. 1 Tim. 6:1—5. Tit. 2:3—6.) But the Lord did not punish Saul above his deservings, and therefore did him no injustice in forgiving David: and he judges not merely by the outward action, but by the inward disposition of the heart; and there he perceived a very important difference, and even contrariety, in the two characters. In the temporal punishment, however, of David in his family, the Lord determined to silence these blasphemies; and he began by the death of the child which Bath-sheba had born to him. This event, though in fact a mercy to all parties, yet being predicted and publicly declared to be a rebuke for his sin, would be for the time a sharp and painful chastisement.

V. 15. The prophet, having delivered his message, returned home, probably to pray for the king; and David retired, and poured out his soul in godly sorrow and ingenuous confessions; and perhaps immediately wrote, and soon after published, the fifty-first Psalm; which forms the most complete specimen and standard of genuine and deep repentance, that is any where extant. (Notes, Ps. 51.)

V. 16. David might hope, that there was a secret condition in the threatening: and that upon his humiliation, attended by fasting and prayer, the child might yet be spared. (Marg. Ref.) He considered the infant as an innocent sufferer for his crimes; (Note, 24:17.) he had doubtless a very great affection for him; his spirit was at that time peculiarly tender; and perhaps Bath-sheba likewise was overwhelmed with a load of guilt and sorrow. (24.) On all these accounts, he thus deeply humbled himself before God, and sought the life of the child, though he would have lived a monument of his sin and shame.—We may conceive of him, as laying aside his royal robes, and appearing as a penitent in a mean and mournful garment, fasting, lying on the ground, confessing his guilt, mourning over it, and praying with all fervency, and without intermission, during the whole night. (Notes, Joel 2:12—14. Jon. 3:5—9.)

V. 17. Eat bread with them.] 'As he was wont to do at other times, when the principal persons of the court sat at table with him.' Bp. Patrick. Probably, some days past before the child died; but, whatever sustenance David might take during that time, no doubt it was mean, scanty, and taken privately. (Note, Dan. 10:2, 3.)

V. 18. Some think that the child died on the seventh day from his birth; and that this was an additional rebuke, as he died uncircumcised. But others suppose that the continuance of the child's sickness, and of David's sorrow and mortification is meant.

V. 20. By changing his raiment, and going up to the house of God to worship, David publicly expressed his acceptance of

u Is. 38:1—3. Joel 1:14. Am. 6:15. Jon. 1:6. 3:9, 10. Jam. 4:9, 10. x Gen. 37:30, 33, 38. Luke 23:43. y Job 7:8—10. z 7:12. 1 Chr. 3:5. 22:9, 10. 28:5, 8. 29:1. Matt. 1:5. a 1—14. 7:4. 1 Kings 11:1, 23. † That is, beloved of the Lord. Matt. 3:17. 17:5. b 11:25. 1 Chr. 20:1. c 11:1. Deut. 3:11. Ez. 21:20. § Heb. my name be called upon st. d John 7:18. e 1 Chr. 20:2. ¶ Heb. very great. f 8:2. Ps. 21:8, 9.

the chastisement, his submission to the will of God, and his gratitude to him for sparing his life. (Marg. Ref. Note, Job 1:20—22.)

V. 21—23. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Cor. 2:14—16.) While David entertained any hope of the child's life, humble fasting and prayer formed the present duty: but after the event, meek submission was required. He could not profit the child, and he might injure himself, and neglect his duty, by mourning for him. The child, released from sufferings, and gone before to a better world, was no loser; the public sustained no detriment, as in the death of useful persons; and there remained no farther reason for sorrow, except he should repine against the will of God: and this he would not do, but rather prepare to follow his son, and hope to meet him in the world above.

V. 24, 25. David's marriage with Bath-sheba was in many respects very sinful; (Note, 11—27.) yet it must not be disannulled. In the mystery of the divine counsels, it made way for the performance of the promises before given: (Note, 7:12—16.) and Bath-sheba has her name inserted in the genealogy of the Redeemer!—As a token of the Lord's reconciliation to David and Bath-sheba, this son by her was named Solomon, or the peaceable; and Jedidiah, or Beloved of the LORD, because of the LORD's peculiar favour to him. (Marg.—Notes, Gen. 49:10. Matt. 1:20—23.) In this he especially typified Him of whom the Father hath said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—It is observable, that there is not one word said to Bath-sheba, in all this relation. . . . She was punished . . . in the calamity that befel David; who enticed her, not she him, to commit the foul sin of adultery; and she was innocent in the murder of Uriah.' Bp. Patrick. It seems, that she was released from the legal punishment of death, by the same act of grace, which pardoned David: but she was, probably, for some time both in great sorrow and distress, and overwhelmed with fears, and remorse, and shame.

V. 26—31. The sacred historian, having finished the account of David's fall and repentance, resumes the subject of the war with Ammon.—As the siege of Rabbah seems to have been considerably advanced when Uriah was slain, the event here recorded must be supposed to have occurred not long after. The Lord was very gracious to David, in thus prospering his arms, notwithstanding his aggravated offences: and Joab approved himself very faithful to his prince, and attentive to his reputation. The crown of the king of the Ammonites is said to have weighed a talent: but that being above a hundred weight, seems enormous: probably it means the value of it with the precious stones.—David appears to have been too much pleased with this crown: whereas his anointing, as the king of God's people, was a far more honour-

CHAPTER XIII.

Amnon. David's son loves his sister Tamar, 1, 2. and by Jonadab's advice he seizes sickness, that Tamar might wait on him; and taking that opportunity he ravishes her, 3—14. He hates her and drives her away, and she in grief and shame resolves to abandon 15—20. David is angry; but Abiathar conceals his hatred, 21, 22. Absalom invites his brethren to a feast; where Amnon, at his command is murdered, 23—29. David grieves vehemently, supposing that all his sons are slain; but is comforted by Jonadab, and learns the truth, 30—36. Absalom flees to Geshur; but David lingers after him, 37—39.

AND it came to pass after this, that ^aAbiathar, the son of David, had ^aa fair sister, whose

a 3:2, 3. 1 Chr. 3:2. b 11:2. Gen. 6:2, 39:6, 7. Prov. 6:25, 31:30. c 14:27. 1 Chr. 3:9. d 15. Gen. 29:18, 20, 34:3. 1 Kings 11:1. e 1 Kings 21:4. Cant. 5:8. 2 Cor. 7:10. f Heb. it was marvellous, or hidden, in the eyes of Amnon. g Gen.

able distinction.—It is not certain what the punishments were, which he inflicted upon the prisoners; whether he put them to death, under saws, axes, and harrows; or whether he condemned them to wear out their lives in severe bondage, by various labours. He meant to punish their cruelty to the men of Jabesh-gilead, and their contempt of his ambassadors: (*Notes*, 10:3, 4. 1 Sam. 11:1—3); but if there were, as it seems probable, an undistinguishing severity exercised towards them, we must ascribe it to the state of his mind at that time.

City of waters. (27) The other part of the city being supplied with water, from that part of which Joab had got possession, could not hold out long, but must be soon forced to surrender.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14. Our falls into sin originate from the evil of our depraved hearts, but our recoveries are from the Lord. He commonly employs the ministry of the word in bringing sinners to repentance: and the plain authoritative declaration of the divine law, and of the evil nature and effects of sin, is the appointed method of awakening the careless conscience, and of bringing men to condemn themselves. In some cases, great prudence and address are necessary in delivering the message of God, especially to those in exalted stations. Apt illustration often forms the most compendious and effectual method of producing conviction: and it is well when such an indirect address will spare the painful necessity of more explicit reproofs. But self-flattery renders us quicksighted to the faults of others, though of inferior malignity, and blind to our own most atrocious offences; and in proportion as men are tender to their own sins, they are often unreasonably severe in animadverting upon those of their neighbours. Hence arises the necessity of "great plainness of speech" in the public ministry of the gospel; that the conduct and cases of sinners of every description may be explicitly declared, and that the conscience of every one that is guilty may say to him, "Thou art the man." Nor is this *personal*; provided the general cases of multitudes are described, and the *peculiarities* of an individual's character are not so marked, as to draw the attention of the auditors from themselves to him. But it is often necessary, *in private*, to be still more explicit and particular, with such professed Christians as cannot, or will not, understand the plainest public address; and this without any reserve or respect of persons, and with all seriousness, energy, and expostulation. It will never be well with the church of God, till secret lamentations over unreprieved scandals and abuses, and private conversations concerning the faults of the absent, be generally changed, by the ministers of Christ especially, for faithful plain dealing with men *in private*: and those who are of reputation ought to take the lead, and to set the example, in this arduous but salutary business.—The true minister's message will comfort or distress the consciences of those who regard it, according as they are walking with God, or the contrary: nay, the believer himself can expect no consolation from a scriptural statement of the truth, while he lies under the guilt and power of unrepented sin; and if he obtain any, it is either through the minister's error or unfaithfulness, or his own self-flattery, and ill-grounded confidence.—Every instance of the divine goodness to us increases the heinousness of our transgressions: but the extent of the promises, and the Lord's readiness to hear prayer, and to give every good thing to his people, peculiarly aggravate our guilt, when we desire forbidden gratifications. We need not wonder that men in general despise the promises and commandments of God; yea, and the Lord himself, in his whole character, and in all his relations to them: when even eminent believers, in some instances, are capable of the same folly and ingratitude. From this source all our sins proceed: man's contempt of the infinite excellency and invaluable favour of God; disregard to his authority, aversion to his service, and enmity to his justice and holiness, give being and malignity to every species of disobedience; and they are in themselves utterly inexcusable.—But, however, iniquity may have prevailed, where true grace exists there is also *sensibility*, and a ground in which the word of God may take root. (*Note*, Matt. 13:23.) The humbled sinner will not be offended by his faithful reprover, but rather thank him; and God will never refuse forgiveness to true penitents.—It is however grievous to think, what great occasion of blasphemy to the enemies of the Lord the falls of his professing people afford: yet none except his enemies will make this use of them; and the open confessions of the penitent offenders, their future holy conduct, the severe corrections which they experience, and their patience under them, will manifest the equity and purity, as well as the mercy of

name was ^aTamar; and Amnon the son of David ^aloved her.

2 And Amnon was so ^avexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin: and ^aAmnon thought it hard for him to do any thing to her.

3 But Amnon had ^aa friend, whose name was Jonadab the son of ^aShimeah, David's brother: and Jonadab was a very ^asubtle man.

38, 1, 20. Jndg. 14:20. Esth. 5:10, 14:6, 13. Prov. 19:6. g 32. 1 Sam. 16:9. Shammah. h 14:2, 19, 20. Gen. 3:1. Jer. 4:22. 1 Cor. 3:15. Jam. 3:15.

God, in pardoning their offences; and will mark an essential difference, of *habitual character and disposition*, between them and unhumiliated sinners of every description. (*Notes*, Rom. 7: 13—18.)

V. 15—31. The Lord often causes his offending people to read their sins in their punishment; he puts them to *open shame* for their *secret* offences; and, by the sufferings of those whom they most tenderly love, he fills their hearts with the keenest anguish. Under such rebukes they will be led to deeper and deeper humiliation, to chasten themselves with fasting, and to pour out more fervent and incessant prayers; and especially for those who are suffering on their account, and are unable to pray for themselves. Yet, the same principles will teach them to moderate their sorrows for those beloved objects, whom God has taken from them, and to prepare diligently to follow them: and nothing should induce them to neglect their present duty. After the same manner, as long as life lasts, let the discouraged sinner seek the Lord, humble himself, and pour out his prayers before him; if only able to say, "Who knoweth if God will be gracious to me?"—Those, who are ignorant of the divine life, cannot comprehend the reasons of a believer's conduct in his varied experiences; they mistake deep humility and fervent prayer, for impatience and an inordinate love to created objects; acquiescence in the Lord's will, and cheerful gratitude under sharp trials, will be deemed indifference and apathy; and in a thousand different ways they will show their incapacity to judge of the consistency and reasons of his behaviour. (*Notes*, Acts 16:1—5. P. O. 1 Cor. 2:10—16.) But God accepts those services which man censures: a humble, submissive spirit prepares the way for divine consolations, notwithstanding former crimes; and we should encourage the desponding hearts of our fellow-sinners, with the comforts which the Lord has graciously afforded us: and when the heart is thus prepared, the message of the minister will again be peace and joy.—Our prayers for our children are graciously answered, if some of them die in their tender infancy, (for they are well taken care of,) and the others live "beloved of the Lord."—Vengeance will in due season overtake the persecutors and abusers of God's people and ministers; and in their severest sufferings He will be righteous, though the instruments should be unreasonably and iniquitously severe.—In proportion as we lose sight of the honour that cometh from God, we become ambitious and vain of worldly distinctions: (*Note*, 2 Kings 20:12—19.) and we are most compassionate, kind, and forgiving to our fellow-sinners, when we most feel our need of the Lord's forgiving love to our own souls, and experience the comfort of it.—Finally, in whatever service the Lord may please to employ us, may we, (as Joab with David,) execute his will faithfully, and then give him the whole glory without any reserve.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. Nathan's word began to take effect not very long after it was delivered. (*Notes*, 12:10—12.)—David seems to have been far too indulgent of his children; probably, their mothers had a great share in their education, and some of these instilled into them bad principles; indeed these are the natural effects of polygamy. Yet his sons had been restrained from open wickedness, by his example, influence, and occasional instructions, until he had committed those crimes which have been considered. But notwithstanding David's repentance, they, now grown up, would *naturally* consider that his conduct gave some license to their youthful inclinations, and conclude that he could not greatly censure them, after he had set them such an example. Thus he might clearly trace the sins of his children from his own misconduct, and this would increase the anguish of the chastisement.—Tamar was Amnon's sister, as the daughter of David, but of another mother. (*Note*, 3:2—5.) If Amnon had not been *secretly* habituated to vice, he surely never could, in the *first* instance, have yielded to so unnatural a passion! (*Note*, Lev. 18:6—17.) By gazing upon Tamar's beauty his concupiscence was excited, and, being indulged, it gained an entire ascendancy. (*Notes*, 11:1—5. Matt. 5:27, 28.) He was not restrained from attempting to accomplish his base purpose by the fear of God; by conscience, shame, regard to the peace or favour of his father, or to the reputation, virtue, or comfort of Tamar; or by any foresight of evil consequences: but, because of her modesty, and the care which was taken of her, he could not find an opportunity of getting her into his power. His passion therefore preyed upon his spirits, and impaired his health. (*Notes*, Cant. 5:8. 2 Cor. 7:9—11.)

V. 3, 4. Amnon deemed Jonadab his friend, because he

4 And he said unto him, *Why art thou, being the king's son, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me?* And Amnon said unto him, *I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.*

5 And Jonadab said unto him, *Lay thee down on thy bed, and rake thyself sick: and when thy father cometh to see thee, say unto him, I pray thee, let my sister Tamar come, and give me meat, and dress the meat in my sight, that I may see it, and eat it at her hand.*

6 *¶* So Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, *I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand.*

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, *Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat.*

8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laid down. And she took flour, and kneaded it, and made cakes in his sight, and did bake the cakes.

9 And she took a pan, and poured them out before him, but he refused to eat. *¶* And Amnon said, *Have out all men from me: and they went out every man from him.*

10 And Amnon said unto Tamar, *Bring the meat into the chamber, that I may eat of thine hand.* And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother.

11 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, *Come, lie with me, my sister.*

12 And she answered him, *Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly.*

13 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to

go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. *¶* Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.

14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice; but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. [Practical Observations.]

15 Then Amnon hated her *exceedingly*; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her: and Amnon said unto her, *Arise, be gone.*

16 And she said unto him, *There is no cause; this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me: but he would not hearken unto her.*

17 Then he called his servant that ministered unto him, and said, *Put now this woman out from me, and bolt the door after her.*

18 And she had a garment of divers colours upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled. Then his servant brought her out, and bolted the door after her.

19 And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.

20 And Absalom her brother said unto her, *Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing.* So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

21 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.

22 *¶* And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

B.C.] 23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheep-shearers in

1 Kings 21:7. Bath. 5:13,14. Luke 12:32. * Heb. thin. † Heb. morning by morning. ‡ Is. 3:9. Jer. 8:12. Mic. 7:3. 1 Lev. 18:9. 20:17. m 16:21-23. 17:1-4. Ps. 50:13,19. Prov. 19:27. Mark 6:24,25. Acts 23:15. n Gen. 18:8. Matt. 13:33. † Or, piece. o Gen. 45:1. Judg. 3:19. John 3:20. p Gen. 39:7,12. ‡ Heb. humble. Gen. 34:2. Deut. 22:29. § Heb. it ought not to be done. Lev. 18:9. 20:17. q Gen. 34:7. Judg. 19:23. 20:6. Prov. 7:7. r Gen. 19:8. Judg. 19:24. s 12:11. Deut. 22:25-27. Judg. 20:5. Esth. 7:8. t Ez. 23:17. † Heb. with great hair'd

was his flatterer, and the caterer for his lusts. He was "a very subtle man;" (Notes, 32,33. 1620-23. Gen. 3:1.) one very sagacious, as to this present world; or rather, a very crafty courtier, who readily discerned the inclinations of his superiors, and was very ingenious in devising means for the gratification of them. Observing Amnon to look more and more languid one day after another, he suspected the cause, and intimated to him that a person of his rank might obtain his desires if he went about it: and thus he drew from him the shameful secret. Had he not interposed, probably Amnon's passion might have been suppressed, and at length supplanted by an affection for some other object. (Notes, 1 Kings 21:4-7.) But when Jonadab understood the state of his mind, he speedily put him in a way of obtaining his wishes. Amnon was the heir-apparent of the crown: David was growing old, and probably showed Jonadab but little favour though he was his nephew; being the son of David's brother Shimeah, called also Shammah, and Shamma. (32. 1 Sam. 16:9. 1 Chr. 2:13.) He therefore paid court to Amnon; and supposed that his rank and authority would bear him out in any crime, which he was disposed to commit.

V. 5-14. This plot was laid very artfully. Amnon's sickly looks gave plausibility to his pretended illness: David's tender affection to his children was well known: persons, who have been accustomed to indulgence, are naturally whimsical in their diet when sick: David would be sure to visit Amnon, and be disposed to humour him in every thing, and would not at all suspect so base a design concealed under his request: and thus he would readily obtain David's consent to Tamar's coming to him. Nor could she have any suspicion of such horrid villany from one, who seemed very ill and in danger of death: but when he commanded all to leave the room, whilst he ate of her cakes, she might very justly have apprehended some bad design.—Tamar's skill and readiness in such ordinary employments, though a king's daughter; her compassionate attention to her half-brother; and all her answers and behaviour, are suited to give us a very favourable opinion of her character. She pleaded that ye, as her brother, ought to protect her, instead of injuring her; that such behaviour was peculiarly foolish and wicked in an Israelite; that it would forever disgrace and ruin her; and would expose him to scorn and hatred, as one of the most abandoned of men. (Marg. Ref. p-r.) Her proposal to marry her, to ask her of the king, who would rather allow him to marry her, than leave him to die of his sickness, was doubtless solely meant to prevent present violence; for she

knew that David would afterwards protect her. (Note, Gen. 19:6-9.) And it is probable, that she accompanied her complaints and expostulations with unavailing outcries, which Amnon's domestics doubtless disregarded: for she seems to have been entirely free from blame in the scandalous transaction.

V. 15-18. The determined language and conduct of Tamar, probably joined with sharp reproaches, so irritated Amnon, that his licentious love was at once changed into the most vehement hatred; and without regarding her remonstrances, he ordered her to be turned out of doors, with every circumstance of aversion and abhorrence, 'as if she had been an infamous intruder.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Note, Gen. 39:13-16.) This was doubtless additional and most malignant ill usage, and tended to publish her disgrace, which might otherwise have been concealed: but we must attribute it to the confusion and distress of her mind, that she stated this to be the greater injury; unless she supposed that, in so singular a case, he might and ought to have married her.

V. 19, 20. Tamar went home in the manner, and with all the gestures of an inconsolable mourner. (Marg. Ref.) Doubtless her mind was filled with extreme anguish; but perhaps she meant also thus to protest, that though unfortunate, she was not criminal. Absalom dissembled his deep and implacable resentment, and persuaded her to compose her mind, and not further to expose the shame of her family.—It seems that Tamar not only shunned society at the time; but also lived all her days a single and retired life. (Note, Gen. 34:31.)

V. 21. Amnon's incest was an express violation of the divine law; and to one prohibition it is added, "they shall be cut off;... he shall bear his iniquity." (Lev. 18:9. 20:17.) Yet the magistrate was not explicitly commanded to put the offender to death. Neither was it enjoined, that he who forced a woman should be put to death, unless she was betrothed; because otherwise he would have been obliged to marry her. (Notes, Ex. 22:16,17. Deut. 22:23-27.) Perhaps these circumstances, united with David's excessive paternal tenderness, especially to his eldest son, and with the consciousness of his own guilt, to satisfy his mind in leaving Amnon to the judgment of God, without inflicting any punishment upon him. But certainly he ought to have manifested his displeasure in some very decided manner; and this complication of crimes would have justified the severest punishment: but as he neglected his duty, the Lord afterwards took vengeance on Amnon, in a way which added still more to

Baal-hazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheep-shearers: let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant.

25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him.

26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

28 ¶ Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, for fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.

29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule and fled.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, while they were in the way, that tidings came to David, saying, Absalom hath slain all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left.

31 Then the king arose, and tare his garments and lay on the earth; and all his servants stood by with their clothes rent.

f 1 Kings 1:9, 25. g 11:8-15. Pa. 12:55-21. Jer. 41:6, 7. h Gen. 19:2, 3. Judg. 1:7-10. Luke 14:23-24, 29. Acts 16:15. i 14:22. marg. Ruth 2:4. k 3:27, 11:13-15, 20:9. Pa. 55:21. Prov. 26:24, 35. 11:15. Ex. 1:16, 17. 1 Sam. 22:11-13. Act. 5:21. n 11:13. Gen. 9:21, 19:32-35. Judg. 19:6, 22. 1 Sam. 25:36-38. 1 Kings 20:16. Esth. 1:10. Dan. 5:2-6, 30. Nab. 1:10. Luke 21:34. n Num. 22:16, 17. 1 Sam. 23:10, 13. * Or, Will you not, since I have commanded you? Josh. 1:9. † Heb. sons of valour. o 1 Sam. 22:13, 19. 1 Kings 21:11-13. 2 Kings 1:9-12. Prov. 29:12. Mic. 7:3. ‡ Heb. rode. p 18:9. Gen.

32 And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.

33 Now therefore let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.

34 But Absalom fled. And the young man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold; there came much people by the way of the hill-side behind him.

35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.

36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speaking, that behold, the king's sons came, and lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day.

38 So Absalom fled, and went to Geshur, and was there three years.

39 And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.

David's domestic trials. (Notes, 22-33. 1 Sam. 2:29-31.)

V. 22-29. Absalom harboured the deepest resentment of the gross affront put upon himself, and the irreparable injury done to his sister: yet for two years he concealed his hatred under the appearance of total indifference! (Notes, Gen. 27:41, 42. Prov. 26:24-27. Eph. 4:26, 27.) This imposed on Amnon, who on that very account ought to have been more afraid of him: at length, however, Absalom deemed matters ripe for the execution of his determined revenge. According to the custom of those times, having flocks of sheep, and making a feast when they were shorn, he formed his plot upon that circumstance. To cover his design he invited his father with all his attendants, to come to his feast, sensible that from prudential reasons he would decline the invitation: but he thus obtained his approbation to Amnon's going with the rest of his brethren; and David perhaps hoped that a reconciliation between them would be thus effected or cemented. Probably, Absalom was urged on the more resolutely to the murder of his brother, because he was the next heir to the crown; if Chileab were dead, as it is generally supposed. (3:3.) His atrocious crime was greatly aggravated, by being a breach of hospitality, and committed under the mask of affection, in the presence of his brethren; and by his father being drawn in unintentionally to be accessory to it. He involved his servants also in the guilt of murder, as if his command could warrant their transgression of God's law! (Notes, 1 Sam. 28:9, 10. 1 Kings 21:8-14.) He took the opportunity of killing Amnon when he was drunk, or nearly so, as if he had meant to murder body and soul at once: and his servants, without hesitation, punctually executed his most iniquitous command. (Notes, 1 Sam. 22:17-19.)—His mule. (29) Mules seem about this time to have come greatly into use among the superior persons, being substituted in the place of asses: for horses were still little employed in Israel. (Marg. Ref. p.) Yet the breeding of mules was a violation of the divine law. (Lev. 19:19.)—Probably they were imported.

V. 32, 33. It cannot be supposed, that Absalom would make Jonadab his confidant; but being a sagacious man he had, from some circumstances, or casual expressions, suspected his malicious intentions. (Marg. Ref. Note, 3, 4.) It would, however, have been far more profitable sagacity, to have foreseen these consequences, and to have forewarned Amnon, before he had perpetrated the crime which provoked this fatal revenge. (Jer. 4:22. Note, Jer. 8:8, 9.)

V. 37-39. (Notes, Gen. 4:9-12.) Absalom fled for refuge to the court of his mother's father; (Marg. Ref. y:) and there he continued for three years: and David so far from requiring him to be delivered up, that he might be punished according to the law of God; after a time impatiently desired to recall him, and to be reconciled to him. In this he too closely copied Eli's example and honoured his sons more

36, 24. Lev. 19:19. 1 Kings 1:36. q 12:16. Gen. 37:29, 34. Josh. 7:6. Job 1:20. r 1:11, 3:31. s 3-5. t 1 Sam. 16:9. Shamma. § Heb. mouth. † Or, settled. Gen. 27:41. Pa. 7:14. Prov. 24:11, 12. u 19:19. x 38. Gen. 4:8-14. Prov. 28:17. Jer. 48:44. Am. 5:19. ¶ Heb. according to the word of thy servant. ** Heb. with a great weeping greatly. 15. marg. 19:21, 19:33. † 3:3. 1 Chr. 3:2. ‡ Or, Ammihur. § 14:23, 32, 15:8. a Gen. 31:30. Tent. 29:32. Phil. 2:26. †† Or, was consumed. Pa. 84:2, 119:20. b 12:23. Gen. 24:67, 37:35, 38:12.

than God; (Note, 1 Sam. 2:29.) who therefore made them his scourges, and then punished them himself. David's sons however were not priests, and so did not disgrace the sanctuary: he could not have proceeded against Absalom, without condemning him to die; as Eli might have done against his sons: and David's own blood-guiltiness, too much resembling Absalom's, (in that he murdered Uriah under the guise of friendship by the hand of others, after having previously tempted him to drunkenness,) might tend to enervate his resolution and dispose him to lenity. (Notes, 11:12-17.) These considerations may account for his conduct, but they by no means excuse it.—Absalom's servants fled with him, and thus escaped the doom which they merited, and so were reserved for further mischief. (14:30, 15:10.)

Mourned for his son. (37) Absalom seems here exclusively intended; for David was comforted for "Amnon;" who was buried privately, as it appears; and not, as Abner had been, with any public honour. (Notes, 3:33-39.) Amnon's base conduct had, it may well be supposed, rendered him unpopular: and an honourable interment would have been a strong protest against Absalom's crimes, which David was not disposed to enter.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. The judgments of God upon those, who are finally saved, may be so terrible, varied, and continued, as effectually to proclaim his abhorrence of their crimes; and no reflecting person, with these records before his eyes, would venture to commit iniquity, even if he could be sure to escape eternal misery; any more than a man would, for a trifling advantage, throw himself from a precipice and break his bones, if he could be assured that his life would be preserved; for he would be sensible, that he must suffer immense pain, and probably be a cripple all his days.—The Lord overrules the wickedness of men, (while they are hurried on by their own lusts and Satan's temptations,) to accomplish his holy and righteous purposes.—External accomplishments are generally a detriment to the possessors, and a temptation to others: none therefore ought to be vain of them, or to regret the want of them.—So depraved is the human heart, that even natural affection may degenerate into licentiousness: and the intercourse even between near relations should be conducted with caution and prudence, that no opportunity may be given to those who are disposed to commit iniquity.—What men dignify with the name of love, is commonly a base sensual inclination, entire selfishness, which triumphs over conscience and the fear of God, and without pity consigns its object to irreparable disgrace and misery, for the sake of a momentary gratification! How different from that love, which the law of God commands! yea, how contrary to it!—Men's domineering lusts, when restrained by external hinderances, become their tormentors, drink up their spirits, and disorder their bodies; and probably the fury of sinful passions, without any possibility of gratification, will form one dreadful part of the misery of the damned

CHAPTER XIV.

Joab instructs a woman of Tekoah, and sends her to David, 1-3. With a feigned tale and artful management she induces him to recall Absalom, 4-20. Joab is sent to bring him to Jerusalem; yet he is not allowed to see the king, 21-24. His injury, 25, 26. His children, 27. After two years, he prevails with Joab to induce him to David, 28-35.

NOW ^aJoab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was ^btoward Absalom.

2 And Joab sent ^cto Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee feign thyself to be a mourner, and put on now ^dmourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:

3 And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab ^eput the words in her mouth.

4 ¶ And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, ^f'Help, O king.

5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, ^gI am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead.

^a 2:18. 1 Chr. 2:16. b 13:39. 18:33. 19:24. Prov. 29:26. ^c 2 Chr. 11:6. 20:20. Neh. 9:3, 27. Jer. 6:1. Am. 1:1. ^d Tekoah. 4:11:26. Ruth 3:3. Ps. 104:15. Ec. 9:8. Matt. 6:17. ^e 19. Ex. 4:15. Num. 33:5. Deut. 18:18. Is. 51:16. 59:21. Jer. 1:9. f 1:2. 1 Sam. 20:41. 25:33. ^f Heb. *save*. 2 Kings 6:26-28. Job 29:12-14. Luke 18:3-5. g 12:1-3. Judg. 9:8-15. h Gen. 4:8. Ex. 2:13. Deut. 22:26, 27.

let the tremendous thought lead every reader to seek the mortification of them, that by the grace of God they may be extirpated from his heart.—Who can conceive, what the state of his world would be, if every sinner's power was equal to his inclination, for the commission of wickedness?—If indulged melancholy be improper for those, who possess eminent stations and great affluence in this world; how inconsistent is it with the profession, privileges, and prospects of the children of God! and if they are "lean from day to day" in their souls, it is commonly the effect of yielding to sloth and worldly affections.—When iniquity is conceived in the heart, all the powers of the understanding will be employed in devising how to effect it; and even sickness will not always be sufficient to take men off even for the time from licentious pursuits.—When debauched persons occupy exalted stations, they will be attended by "very subtle men," nearly resembling Satan; sagacious prompters, and crafty advisers in iniquity! These will assist them in overcoming the opposition of shame and conscience; and encourage them to gratify themselves, without regarding truth or justice, or the interests or happiness of others. Such are deemed and treated as friends; but the event will prove them to have been, merely for their own advantage, the most destructive enemies.—Many violent, but concealed, evil desires would be extinguished, did not such prompters discern and draw forth the confession of them, and contrive the method of gratification. Such plausible villains know how to take advantage of the affection, candour, modesty, and unsuspecting confidence of pious persons, for the accomplishment of their own infamous designs; and when iniquity is resolved on, a perfect infatuation takes place, and all probable or certain consequences are forgotten.—But silent abhorrence is the proper censure of these abominable deeds of darkness, which are especially horrible under the light of revelation: even ungodly persons will execrate those, who perpetrate such outrages against common decency: and they will appear as fools and probates to their neighbours in general; notwithstanding high rank, or even princely or royal dignity.

V. 15-39. Sensual love is readily changed into hatred, and conscience into loathing: nor can it reasonably be expected, that those, who make no scruple of debauching the persons for whom they *pretend affection*, will feel any remorse at deserting them with cruelty and disdain, at exposing them to shame and contempt, or at leaving them to all the horrors of penury or prostitution. Let no one ever expect better treatment from those who are capable of attempting to seduce them.—But whatever anguish and distress may result from injuries received, nothing will eventually harm us except our own iniquity: and it is better to suffer the *greatest wrong*, than to commit the *least sin*, though apparently with impunity and without rebuke.—It is every one's duty to comfort those who are in distress: and generally it is most advisable for injured persons to be quiet, and leave their cause with God.

—When less atrocious crimes escape punishment from man, more and greater will be committed: and the magistrate's indignant anger against heinous offences should stimulate him to enforce the laws without respect of persons: but all others must learn to bear every injury without seeking to revenge themselves; and if mild expostulations and prayers will not prevail, they must quietly leave the event to God.—Hatred and revenge, however, possess the hearts of ungodly men; and some are so artful and malicious, that they defer their vengeance, and cover it with the appearance of affection, till they have an opportunity of executing it with more determined malignity.—Often have festive interviews, and seasons of sensual indulgence, been the chosen scenes for assassinations and massacres; and men have been sent into the eternal

6 And thy handmaid had two sons, ^hand they two strove together in the field, and ⁱthere was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

7 And behold, ^jthe whole family is risen against thy handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and ^kso they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband ^lneither name nor remainder upon the earth.

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thy house, and ^mI will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, ⁿthe iniquity be on me, and on my father's house: ^oand the king and his throne be guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whosoever saith ^pought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

11 Then said she, I pray thee, ^qlet the king

^h Heb. *no deliverer between them*. 1 Gen. 4:14. Num. 35:19. Deut. 19:12. k Gen. 27:45. Deut. 25:8. l 12:17. ⁱ Heb. *upon the face of*. m 12:5, 16, 14. Job 29:16. Prov. 18:13. Is. 11:3, 4. n Gen. 27:13. Matt. 27:25. o 3:28. Num. 35:33. Deut. 21:1-9. 1 Kings 2:33. p Gen. 14:22. 24:3, 31:50. 1 Sam. 20:42.

world from the midst of riot and excess! Such is human nature, left to itself, armed with power, and emboldened by prosperity: what need then have we to pray for converting grace, and to be satisfied, in our inferior stations!—No crime is so great or evident that men in general will not be found daring enough to commit, in order to please their superiors: but alas! their command will not bear out the guilt at the day of judgment, for violating the law of God!—Evil tidings are generally enhanced: yet the imaginary calamity proves a real affliction for the time, and may serve the purpose of an humiliating chastisement.—Children are always uncertain comforts: but *indulged* children will surely prove trials to pious parents, whose foolish fondness induces them to neglect their duty to God: yet parental affection can scarcely be extinguished by any degree of misconduct. But the case of parents is very deplorable, when the children copy their conduct in the crimes which they perpetrate; and when it is nevertheless their duty to punish them with great severity for those very imitations! Let this be a warning to us, to watch and pray against temptation, lest by the misconduct of one unguarded hour, we should occasion such fatal consequences to our offspring, and such misery to ourselves throughout our future lives. And let us not covet that worldly wisdom, which, with all its boasted sagacity, cannot prevent the destruction of those who are counselled by it: but let us seek that heavenly wisdom, which safely leads the possessor through all the dangerous paths of this life, to the perfect felicity of the eternal world.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XIV. V. 1-3. Joab perceived that David greatly desired to recall Absalom; but did not know how to do it, without disgracing his character and government: he therefore framed a plausible story, and employed an ingenious woman, in the character of a disconsolate widow, to relate it to him. He doubtless intended to obtain a concession from David, that in *some possible cases* the punishment of a murderer might be dispensed with; and then to apply it to the case of Absalom. Thus he hoped to ingratiate himself with both parties, with the king and the next heir to the crown; as Absalom would be now considered. Doubtless he would also be glad to increase the number of precedents for the *impunity of murderers*, as he lay under the guilt of that crime himself.

V. 6, 7. (Notes, 13:22-29. Gen. 4:8.) This feigned case was widely different from that which it was intended to represent. It was indeed stated that one brother had been slain by the other, and that the survivor, "the only son of his mother who was a widow," was exposed to the sentence of the law; but David had many other sons; and the death of Absalom would not have "quenched his coal that was left," or deprived him of the comfort of children to succeed him in his inheritance. Absalom had not slain Amnon in sudden anger and hasty striving, when they were alone; but in deliberate malice and revenge, in the presence of his brethren. There was no malicious prosecution carrying on against Absalom by those who coveted his inheritance: but the law of God demanded his death, as a satisfaction to justice, and for a salutary example to all others. Had the case been drawn more similar, it would have betrayed the design, and defeated Joab's purpose: and the state of David's heart rendered it unnecessary to be very exact: for he wanted, not a good reason, but a plausible excuse for following his inclinations, as Joab well knew.

V. 8-11. It would not have answered the intent of the woman, or of Joab her prompter, had David merely engaged to examine into the case: a present absolute decision in favour of the supposed criminal was the object. The woman therefore having excited David's compassion, urged her plea with

remember the Lord thy God, that 'thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, *As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.*

12 Then the woman said, 'Let thy handmaid, I pray thee, *“speak one word unto my lord the king.”* And he said, *“Say on.”*

13 And the woman said, 'Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the 'people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, *“in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.”*

14 For *“we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.”*

15 Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, *“it is because the people have made me afraid: and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.”*

16 For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man *“that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.”*

17 Then thy handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be *“comfortable: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad: therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee.”*

18 Then the king answered and said unto the

woman, *“Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee.”* And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

19 And the king said, *“Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?”* And the woman answered and said, *“As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from aught that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thy handmaid.”*

20 To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, *“according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth.”*

[Practical Observations.]

21 ¶ And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

22 And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.

23 So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

24 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

25 *“But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: for the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.”*

* Heb. the revenger of blood do not multiply to destroy. q Num. 35:19,27. Deut. 19:4-10, Josh. 30:3-6, r 1 Sam. 14:45, 24:10, s 1 Kings 1:52, Matt. 10:30, Act. 27:34. t 1 Sam. 25:21, u Gen. 18:27, 32, 44:18, Jer. 12:1, x Acts 26:1, y 12:7, 1 Kings 20:40-42, Luke 7:42-44, z 7:8, June, 20:2, a 13:37, 38, b 11:25, Job 30:23, 34:15, Ec. 3:19-21, 9:5, Heb. 9:27, c Job 14:7-12, 14, Ps. 22:14, 75:3, 1 Or, because God hath not taken away his life, he hath also devised means, &c. d Deut. 10:17, Job 34:19, Matt. 22:16, Act. 10:34, Rom. 2:11, 1 Pet. 1:17, e Ex. 21:13, Num. 35:13,28, f Heb. for rest, f 20, 19:27, 1 Sam. 22:9, Prov. 27:21, 29:5, g Heb. to have, g 1 Kings 3:9,28, Job 6:30, 1 Cor. 12:15, marg. Heb. 5:14, h 1 Sam. 3:17,18, Jer. 36:14,25, 13:27,29,34.

11:14,15, 1 Kings 2:5,6, k 11:11, 1 Sam. 1:26, 17:55, 20:3, 25:26, 2 Kings 2:2, 1 Num. 20:17, Deut. 5:32, 28:14, Job 1:7, Prov. 4:27, m See on 8, Ex. 4:15, Luke 21:15, n 5:28, 17:38, 23:21,22, Prov. 26:28, 29:5, p Gen. 3:5, Job 36:16, &c. 1 Cor. 8:1,2, q 11, 1 Sam. 14:39, Mark 6:26, r Heb. blessed, 19:39, Neh. 11:2, Job 29:11, 31:20, Prov. 31:28, r Gen. 6:8, Ex. 33:16,17, Ruth 2:2, 1 Sam. 20:3, ¶ Or, thy, s 3:3, 13:37, t 28, 3:13, Gen. 43:3, Rev. 22:4, ** Heb. And as Absalom there was not a beautiful man in all Israel to praise greatly, 1 Sam. 9:2, 16:7, Prov. 31:30, Matt. 23:27, u Deut. 28:35, Job 2:7, 1s. 1:6, Eph. 5:27.

great earnestness and assured him that she was so satisfied of the goodness of the cause, that she was willing all the guilt, if there were any, should rest on her and her father's house, and not upon David or his kingdom. Thus she engaged for what was out of her power; (Note, 1 Sam. 28:9,10,) for the neglect of punishing murder would, notwithstanding, bring guilt upon both king and people. (Note, Num. 35:31-34.) She, however, requested him to "remember the Lord his God;" that is, to give her the security of an oath, that he would spare and protect her son; and he was prevailed upon to grant her unreasonable demand. In this, David acted more according to his feelings than his judgment, and was very precipitate. If the party concerned in the supposed case did not deserve to die, the city of refuge would have afforded him a safe retreat, and a fair trial: (Note, Josh. 20:2-6.) and if he merited death, David had no right to dispense with the divine law by protecting him; and moreover he had examined no other witness, than one interested party!

V. 13-17. The woman, having thus far carried her point, proceeded, gradually and ambiguously, to apply David's concession to the case of Absalom; and her speech was most artfully devised, so that she might retract, or be more explicit, according as he took it. She intimated that the king's severity to his son was injurious to the people of God; and that he was wanting in his duty to the kingdom, in delaying to recall him: as if Absalom had been so excellent a young man, that all the hopes of Israel centered in him! She represented his flight to Geshur as a banishment, which had already been too severe a punishment of his offence. She pleaded the certainty of death, and the impossibility of recalling the dead to life again; by which she would either insinuate that Amnon would have died in some other way, if Absalom had not slain him; or that the punishment of Absalom would not bring him to life again; or that, as David himself must at length die, it was proper that Absalom should be recalled to succeed him. But whatever she meant, it was nothing to the purpose: for God hath commanded the death of the murderer, which exceedingly tends to the preservation of the life of man, though it cannot raise the dead; and if such an argument were of any force, no malefactor must be put to death!

When we have a mind to a thing, all reasons seem strong to persuade us to it. Bp. Patrick.—She also pleaded the mercy of God, in sparing, and readmitting sinful men into its presence and favour, though justly banished from it; in which she seems to have referred to the return of the man-slayer to his inheritance, at the death of the high-priest.—The marginal reading, (14) "because God hath not taken away his life, he hath also, &c." appears to be the proper translation; and it is intimated, that as God had spared Ab-

salom, David ought to pardon him.—But God pardons none who are impenitent; nor any, to the dishonour of his law and justice, or to the encouragement of crimes, and the injury of others. Perhaps she meant to hint, that the people expressed their dissatisfaction with Absalom's banishment so openly, that they made her afraid of an insurrection: but she purposely so confounded the feigned cause of her son, with the real cause of Absalom, that part of her address is obscure. While however, she ventured to censure David for not gratifying himself; she took care repeatedly to give him flattering commendations for his wisdom and goodness, which in such a cause abundantly compensated for the ambiguity of her discourse, and the weakness of her arguments: (Notes, Prov. 26:28, 29:5) and to do her justice, her ingenuity in pleading so bad a cause was admirable. We love those that admire us!

V. 18-20. (Notes, 3:26-39, 11:14-17.) Even when David perceived, and the woman had acknowledged, the drift of her discourse; she seems to have aimed to keep up the idea, that the case stated was real, though she had turned the discourse to Absalom; and that she could not hope the king would spare her son, if he would not recall his own.—Her flattery in the conclusion was very great; even though she meant only the land of Israel, and not the whole earth: but in fact, David was not at this time giving much proof of his wisdom, as the event showed!

V. 21, 22. David was willing to suppose that his oath, to spare the woman's son, obliged him to recall Absalom, who was the person really intended; though he could not but perceive the insufficiency of her arguments, and the disparity of the cases. As a favour therefore he gave Joab permission to fetch home Absalom; and Joab appeared as thankful to the king for allotting him this service, as if the most expensive kindness had been done him. There was much of the courtier in this: but it was far distant from godly sincerity! If however Joab thought, that this conduct of David as a pledge of reconciliation, or act of indemnity, secured him, as a murderer, from punishment, he was deceived; for he was at length put to death for his crimes, and that by David's counsel. (Notes, 1 Kings 2:5,6,28-34.)

V. 24. David probably meant to quiet his own conscience, and to silence the censures of others, or to show his abhorrence of murder, by laying Absalom under some tokens of disgrace, and by denying himself the pleasure of seeing him. This might also be intended to humble Absalom: but it entirely failed of producing that effect.

V. 25-27. Absalom was not praised for wisdom, justice, or piety; but merely for his beauty, and effeminacy; nor such doubtless was his attention to his hair: and yet he was the

26 And ^{when} he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled *it*; because *the hair* was heavy on him, therefore he polled it;) he weighed the hair of his head at ^{two} hundred shekels after the king's weight.

27 And unto Absalom there were ^{born} three sons, and one daughter, whose name was ^{Tamar}: she was a woman of a fair countenance.

a. c.] 28 ¶ So Absalom dwelt two full years in ^{1025.} Jerusalem, and saw not the king's face.

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; ^{but} he would not come to him: and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near ^{mine}, and he hath barley there; ^{go} and set it on fire. ^{And} Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

31 Then Joab arose, and came to Absalom unto his house, and said unto him, Wherefore have thy servants set my field on fire?

32 And Absalom answered Joab, Behold, I sent

unto thee, saying, Come hither, that I may send thee to the king, to say, Wherefore am I come from Geshur? ^{it had been good for me to have been} there still: now therefore let me see the king's face; and ^{if} there be *any* iniquity in me, let him kill me.

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king ^{kissed} Absalom.

CHAPTER XV.

Absalom, by fair speeches and affected courtesy, steals the hearts of the people, 1-6. Under pretence of a wife, he obtains leave to go to Hebron, where he raises rebellion, 7-12. David hearing it rallies from Jerusalem, 13-18. Itai the Gittite faithfully adheres to him, and the people weep over him, 19-23. Zadok and Abiathar are sent back with the ark, 24-28. David and his company ascend mount Olivet weeping, 30. Hearing that Abiathar had joined Absalom, he prays that his counsel may be turned into foolishness, 31. Hushai is sent back with instructions, 32-37.

AND it came to pass after this, that ^{Absalom} prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom ^{rose} up early, and stood beside

x 19:9. Is. 9:21. 1 Cor. 11:14. y Gen. 23:16. Lev. 19:36. Ez. 45:9-14. z 18:18. Job 15:16-19. Is. 14:22. Jer. 22:30. a 13:1. b 30:31. Eccl. 1:12. Matt. 22:4. * Heb. my place. c 13:28. d Job 14:5. e 1 Kings 21:9-14. 2 Kings 9:33. 10:6-7. e Ex. 14:12. 15:3. 17:3. f Gen. 3:12. 1 Sam. 15:13. Ps. 36:2.

admiration and the favourite of Israel! (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 15:1-6. 1 Kings 1:5,6.) 'It is not certain that he cut his hair once a year: for the words in the Hebrew are "from the end of days to days," ... at stated times, ... when it grew too heavy.' *Bp. Patrick*.—As 200 shekels, according to the usual meaning of the word, was no less than eight pounds four ounces Troy weight; it has been thought, that the shekel of half an ounce is not meant, but a much less weight; or that the decorations used about his hair were included. Absalom's atrocious guilt however was forgotten, and his accomplishments universally celebrated; which increased his arrogance, and ended in his ruin.—His sons died before him. (18:18.)

V. 28, 29. Perhaps Absalom was not only forbidden to visit his father; but was confined to his own house and its environs, and not allowed to go abroad. (*Note*, 1 Kings 2:36-46.) Thus he would be greatly embarrassed in his ambitious projects; and this might be one reason of his impatient desire of being reconciled to David, and enjoying his full liberty; and also of being freed from the disgrace of his present situation, which would hinder many from attaching themselves to him. He seems, however, to have been secretly active in forming a party, even at this time: and either he had not favoured Joab for his former services, according to his expectations; or Absalom's popularity and ambition made that sagacious politician regard him as a dangerous person, with whom he did not wish to form any further connexions; so that he declined coming to him.

V. 30-33. Absalom's injurious and hectoring treatment of so considerable a person as Joab; and his arrogant message to David, almost vindicating his conduct and demanding justice; plainly showed his character and intentions, and his confidence in the favour of the people, and the ill-judged lenity of his father. This aggravated David's sin and folly in receiving him into full favour, in the manner he did; and which would give him access, without restraint, to all those who before were reserved, or afraid of showing their attachment to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-20. It behoves princes and magistrates to be accessible, and to protect the destitute and oppressed; yet the most amiable dispositions must be regulated by discretion; or they will lead us to improper concessions.—While the *urgent wants* of the poor are unheeded by most men; the *secret wishes* of those, who possess authority and affluence, are discovered and anticipated by crafty courtiers and dependents, who seek their own interest by forwarding their indulgence: so that conscientious self-denial in such a situation is doubly difficult and doubly needful.—If scruples and fears deter great men from complying with their inclinations; some feigned precedent, some plausible arguments, or some partial illustration, will be devised and speciously suggested, to remove the hindrance. *In such a case*, the discerning favourite, or candidate for royal favour, will personally, or by some well-chosen instrument, venture to find fault with his prince or his patron; and to represent to him, that the safety of the state, or some other important interest, demands those measures which he scruples to adopt; and by such addresses to the passions as are suited to his character and disposition, mixed with flattering commendations and expostulations, he will cover the fallacy of his reasonings, and the unlawfulness and impolicy of that conduct which he recommends. Thus many a one has been led to impose on his own judgment and conscience, and conclude that he could not resist such urgent importunities, and such cogent arguments; that his consent was almost extorted; and that to oblige such kind friends he had passed his word, and could not in honour retract it: while in reality he was overcome by his own inclinations, and

only wanted a specious excuse for indulging them. If the required concessions are evidently contrary to the duty of a man's station, and the interests of society; it will plausibly be argued, that some exceptions must be admitted; that this was a singular case; and that here exactness would be harsh, injurious, and of bad consequence; by sophistry, so manifest and slight, many even wise and good men deceive themselves, where their affections are previously engaged.—Let us hence learn, what need we have to adhere closely to our rule of duty; to pray earnestly for the teaching of the Holy Spirit; and to watch against the deceitfulness of our own hearts, the bribery of our passions, and the agreeable poison of adulation.—Sin has so filled the world with misery, that real cases of distress may be found, more pitiable than any which the imagination can feign; and we should readily endeavour to relieve those who are in trouble: but even compassion, amiable as it is, will not justify our violations of the divine law, or neglect of the important duties of our station. (*Note*, *Ex. 23:1-3*.) With this single exception, alleviating misery is the noblest privilege and employment of the great; who should in this especially "remember the Lord their God;" not only his authority and their accountability to him; but his compassion and mercy to others and to themselves; and his justice and holiness, who in his love to sinners manifests most conspicuously his abhorrence of their crimes.—As all must die, and there is no recall from the tomb by human power, we should not spend our time in immoderate, unavailing lamentations for the dead; but should be employed in preparing for our own dissolution, and in seizing the fleeting opportunity of "serving our generation."—When we are most commended for our discernment, we generally act the *most foolishly*; for those very praises cloud the understanding and pervert the judgment. We deem it unnecessary for persons of such acknowledged wisdom as we are, to waste time in nice distinctions; we can scarcely refuse to speak *comfortably* to them, who speak so agreeably to us: and hence extravagant commendations lead to self-deception, and entangle all parties in the net of the great deceiver of our fallen race.

V. 21-33. In our treatment of children or others who have greatly offended, every method should be used, which has a tendency to mortify pride, and to bring them to repentance; and in aiming at this important object, the feelings of our hearts must be repressed. But when high rank, early indulgence, impunity in crimes, flattering commendations, personal accomplishments, and popular favour, concur to increase the natural haughtiness of the human heart; and when the Lord leaves a man to himself, it is inconceivable to what a pitch of arrogance and insolence he will arrive. A person of this description will vindicate the basest villainies, treat all superiors with contempt, and all benefactors with ingratitude; and overbear and terrify all around him into compliance with his unreasonable demands.—But all this is the forerunner of destruction: and when parents or rulers countenance such imperious characters, they will soon experience the most fatal effects.—The Lord grant unto us the inward beauty of holiness, and the adorning of a meek and quiet spirit: for "holiness is deceitful, and beauty is vain;" and those only, who fear the Lord, are truly excellent and happy.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1-6. The last clause in these verses aptly marks the way, in which Absalom ingratiated himself with the people. He "stole the hearts of the men of Israel." (*Note*, *Rom. 16:17-20*.) He did not gain their hearts by eminent services, or by a wise and virtuous conduct. But he affected to look great, as heir to the crown; and yet to be very condescending and affable to his inferiors: he pretended a great regard to their interests, and threw out

the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy 'came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, 'thy matters are good and right; but 'there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.

4 Absalom said moreover, 'Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and 'I would do him justice!

5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and 'took him, and 'kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom 'stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

[B. C. 1021.] 7 ¶ And it came to pass after 'forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and 'pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord in Hebron.

8 For 'thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at 'Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then 'I will serve the Lord.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

* Heb. to come. Ex. 18:14, 16, 23. 1 Kings 3:16—28. c Num. 13:13, 14. Ps. 12: 2. Dan. 11:21. 2 Pt. 2:10. 1 Chr. none will keep thee from the king's house, &c. 15. Ex. 20:19. 21:17. Prov. 30:11, 17. Ps. 22. Matt. 15:4. Jer. 33:5. 1 Pet. 2:17. d 1 Jdt. 9:1—15:29. Prov. 25:6, 7. Luke 11:8—11. e Prov. 27:2. 2 Pet. 2:19. f Ps. 119:10. 55:21. Prov. 28:25. g 14:33. h Prov. 11:9. Rom. 16:18. 2 Pt. 2:3. i 1 Sam. 16:13. k 13:24—27. l Prov. 21:27. Is. 58:4. Matt. 2:8. 23:14. 23:28. 20:21. 1 Sam. 1:11. Ps. 56:12. Ec. 5:4. n 13:37, 38. 14:23. 22. o Josh. 24:15. Is. 28:15. Jer. 9:3—5. 42:20. p 13:26, 29. 14:30. q 19:10. Job 20:5. Ps. 73:18, 19. r 2:11. 3:2, 3. 5:5. 1 Chr. 11:3. 12:23, 28. s 1 Sam. 9:

artful insinuations against David's administration: he flattered every one who had a cause to be tried, with the assurance that he had right on his side; that, if it went against him, he might be led to accuse David and the magistrates of injustice. Though Absalom knew not how to obey, and deserved to die for his atrocious crime; yet he expressed a vehement desire to be judge over all the land; and suggested that suits should not then be so tedious, expensive, and partially decided as they were. This he confirmed by rising early and by apparent application; though it was to other people's business, and not to his own duty; and by such sinister arts, united with his personal attractions, magnificence, and address, he imposed upon multitudes all over the land, to prefer so worthless a character to the wise, righteous, and pious David!—Others of the king's sons were employed in public business, but Absalom seems not to have had any place. (Note, 8:15—18.) This might offend him; and his artifices tended to alienate the people from his brethren, as well as from his father.—The chariots and horsemen of Absalom, being a deviation from the divine law, should not have been allowed by David on any account. (Notes, 8:4. Deut. 17:16. 1 Kings 1:5, 6.) and indeed he might easily have foreseen the consequences of Absalom's ostentation, and should at once have restrained it.

V. 7—9. The era, from which the "forty years" here mentioned should be computed, cannot easily be assigned; nor are any of the conjectures of learned men on the subject fully satisfactory. The most approved seems to be, that they must be reckoned from the time of David's anointing by Samuel to the kingdom: yet that, being a private transaction, would scarcely have been referred to in a public computation; no other events are dated from that era; the subsequent history has no apparent connexion with it; and indeed it would fix Absalom's rebellion more early in David's reign, than it seems to have occurred.—It is evident that Josephus read four years, which he dates from Absalom's reconciliation; (a very proper time for his artful schemes to produce their effects; and this seems to be the true reading; from which a trivial error easily made, was fallen into by some very ancient transcriber.—Absalom was born at Hebron; (3:2, 3.) and that gave him the pretext for asking to go thither to pay the vow, which he feigned to have made at Geshur: yet as David was made king at Hebron, (Notes, 5:1—5.) it was obvious to conclude from Absalom's whole character, that he was influenced by ambition rather than devotion. But he knew his father would be pleased to suppose that he paid any regard to religion; and therefore he cloaked his intended treason and parricide with hypocrisy. (Note, Gen. 27:21—23.)

V. 10. Spies having been previously sent into all parts of the land, to sound the inclinations of the people, and to prepare the way; when the design was ripe for execution, trumpeters were sent after them: that, when the signal was given, the spies might, through all the tribes of Israel, proclaim Absalom king, without expressly avowing the treason, or saying whether David was dead, or had resigned, or had

tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in 'their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Absalom sent for 'Aithophel the Gilonite, 'David's counsellor, from his city, even from 'Gilo, 'while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for 'the people increased continually with Absalom. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And there came a messenger to David, saying, 'The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, 'Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not 'else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and 'bring evil upon us, 'and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's servants said unto the king, 'Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

16 And the king went forth, and all his household 'after him: and the king left 'ten women which were concubines to keep the house.

13. 16:3—5. t Gen. 20:5. 1 Sam. 22:15. Prov. 14:15. 22:3. Matt. 10:16. Rom. 16:18, 19. u 21. 16:20—23. 17:14, 23. x Ps. 41:9. 55:13—14. Mic. 7:5, 6. John 13:18. y Josh. 13:51. z Num. 33:14, 20. (Kings 21:9, 12. Ps. 56:16—21. Prov. 21:27. Is. 1:10—16. Tit. 1:16. a Ps. 3:1. 43:1, 2. b 6:3, 36. Jdt. 9:3. Ps. 62:9. Matt. 21:9. 27:22. c 19:9. Ps. 3:1. 3:1. d 1 Heb. thrust. Ez. 46:18. Matt. 11:12. marg. Luke 10:15. d 23:16, 17. Ps. 51:18. 55:3—11. 137:5, 6. e Prov. 18:24. Luke 22:23, 29. John 6:66, 69. 15:14. f 5 Heb. choose. i Heb. at his feet. Jdt. 9:10. 1 Sam. 25:27, 42. marg. f 12:11. 16:21, 22. 20:3. Rom. 13:2.

admitted Absalom to share the authority. Thus while David's loyal subjects would hesitate in uncertainty, Absalom's party became formidable.

V. 11. Absalom went to Hebron with David's approbation, and under the pretence of religion; and these persons, (who doubtless were of chief rank at Jerusalem,) being invited to a sacred feast, accompanied him, and thus undesignedly countenanced his rebellion. By involving them in the suspicion of treason, he doubtless intended either to fix them in his interests, or to prevent David from placing confidence in them.

V. 12. (Marg. Ref.) Aithophel possessed great abilities; and he had professed much religion, and been David's counsellor and bosom friend: but he was now retired from court, perhaps in some disgust. Bath-sheba was daughter to Eliam, and Eliam was son to Aithophel; (11:3. 23:34.) it has therefore been thought that he was her grandfather, and resented the dishonour done to his family. He, however, readily joined Absalom's conspiracy, and would have been the chief stay of it, had not God "turned his counsel into foolishness." (Note, 31.) In many things he resembled Judas the traitor, and may even be said to have typified him. (Notes, Ps. 41:9. 55:12—15, 20, 21. 109:2—20. John 13:18—30. Acts 1:16—18.)

The people increased, &c.] Various motives would induce numbers to assemble; and many of them might have no previous purpose of joining in a conspiracy against David: but the feasting, the conversation, the exultations, and menaces of the leading conspirators; with the promises, and fascinating objects held forth to their vain but sanguine hopes; drew them in to commit themselves, beyond their first intention, as it is usual on such occasions.—They heedlessly approached the vortex, and were irrecoverably drawn into it.

V. 13—15. It is most probable, that some of the two hundred men, who "went in their simplicity," sent David word concerning the conspiracy; and also represented it as extremely formidable. It must indeed have been expected, that the conspirators would act in the most decided manner: and though Jerusalem was a well-fortified city, yet it might not be stored with a garrison or provisions for a siege. The small force, which David had with him, might be insufficient to defend it against Absalom; and perhaps he had no confidence in the inhabitants, or he was unwilling to expose that populous and sacred city to the effects of a siege. He might also deem it prudent to give the furious blaze of popular frenzy time to spend itself, hoping that numbers would soon be sensible of their folly and ingratitude.—It is probable, however, that conscious guilt; the hand of God evidently lifted up against him as it had been predicted; the treason of his much beloved Absalom; and the fickleness of the people after all his past services, and successes for their benefit; damped his wonted courage, and rendered him less prompt for battle, especially in so horrid and unnatural a war. It does not however appear that his measures were impolitic, or that his friends thought them so.

17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

18 And all his servants passed on beside him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

19 ¶ Then said the king to Ittai, the Gittite, Wherefore goest thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king; for thou art a stranger, and also an exile.

20 Whereas thou earnest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may; return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee.

21 And Ittai answered the king, and said, As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.

22 And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him.

23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness.

24 ¶ And lo, Zadok also, and all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant

of God: and they set down the ark of God; and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city.

25 And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation.

26 But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.

27 The king said also unto Zadok the priest, Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

28 See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me.

29 Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the ark of God again to Jerusalem: and they tarried there.

30 ¶ And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

31 ¶ And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to

g. Ps. 3: title, 2. 66:12. Ec. 10:7. h. 8:18. 22:7,23. 1 Sam. 30:14. 1 Kings 1: 39. 1 Chr. 18:17. 1:19-22. 2:10. 18:2. 1 Sam. 27:3. 1:18:2. Ruth 1:11-13. * Heb. *wander in going*. 1s. 56:8. 59:15. Am. 9:12. Heb. 11:37,38. 1 Sam. 23:13. 1:26. Ps. 55:10. 57:3. 61:7. 85:10. 88:14. Prov. 14:22. John 1:17. 2 Tim. 1:16-18. m. 1 Sam. 20:3. 25:25. 2 Kings 2:24,6. 4:30. n. Ruth 1:16,17. Prov. 17:17. 18:24. Matt. 8:19,20. John 6:56-69. Acts 11:23. 21:13. 2 Cor. 7:3. o. 1 Kings 2:37. John 18:1. Cedron. p. 16:2. Matt. 3:1,3. Luke 1:30. q. 27. 35:8,17. 20:25. 1 Kings 1:8. 2:35. 4:2-4. 1 Chr. 6:8-12. Ez. 48:11. v. 6:13. Num. 4:15. 7:9. Josh. 3:3,6,15-17. 4:16-18. 6:4,6. 1 Sam. 4:3-5,11. 1 Chr. 15:2. r. 12:10,11. 1 Sam. 4:3-11. Jer. 7:4. s. 1 Ps. 25:9. 27:4,5. 42:1,2. 43:3,4. 63:1,2. 44:1-3,10. 122:1,2,9. Is. 38:22. u. 6:17. 7:2. v. 22:26. Num. 14:8.

V. 16. David, it is probable, took his wives and children with him; but supposing that these concubines would be an additional incumbrance, and not apprehending that Absalom would injure them, he left them to take care of his house; by which inadvertency the Lord fulfilled his denunciation. (Notes, 12:11,12. 16:20-23.)

V. 17. It is highly probable, from the original, that both David and all his company went on foot, upon this distressing occasion.—*After him.* בְּאַחֲרָיו. *At his feet.* 16. marg.

V. 18-22. The six hundred Gittites seem to have been a distinct body from the Cherethites and Pelethites: they had accompanied, or followed, David from Gath, and probably were proselyted Philistines, commanded by Ittai of the same nation. The Cherethites and Pelethites seem likewise to have been collected from among the several districts of the Philistines, or adjacent and allied tribes. (Marg. Ref. h. Note, 8:15-18.) They were, however, numbered among David's most faithful attendants, being attached to him by esteem for his character, and love to his religion: and we may infer, that his sojourning in the land of the Philistines was overruled for very important good to numbers of that nation.—David was unwilling to expose Ittai and his men, who were strangers and exiles in Israel, (having been driven from their families from Gath, for their affection to David, and to his religion and people,) to so much hardship and peril, as were now before him: and he would have dismissed them with thanks and prayers for them: but their attachment to his person and cause was more strong than that of most of the native Israelites; and they were determined to cleave to him, and serve him at all events. (Note, 1 Chr. 12:16-18.)—David called Absalom king, (19) as he had usurped the throne, and was at present in possession of regal authority.

V. 23. Though the multitude favoured Absalom, yet many sympathized with David.—Thus while the general cry against Jesus was, "Crucify him, crucify him;" there were those who wept, and bewailed him. (Note, Luke 23:26-31.)

At the country wept, &c. All the land (אֶרֶץ) wept; that is, the weeping was general among the inhabitants; the adherents to Absalom being at a distance.—*Kidron.* Our blessed Saviour passed this same brook, in his way to the garden, at or near to the mount of Olives, in the evening before his crucifixion. (Note, John 18:1-3, v. .)

V. 24-29. Abiathar was the high-priest: yet Zadok, of the family of Eleazar, was more noticed than he, as more favoured by David; for Eli's family was gradually declining. (Notes, 1 Sam. 2:30,35,36. 1 Kings 2:26,27,35.)—The priests and Levites were generally attached to David, which was honourable to them, and showed that religion was upon the whole in a flourishing state. The presence of the ark and the

high-priest would have been a comfort, and an apparent advantage to David; but the ark had been placed, and the ordinances of God established, in Zion. David was under the divine rebuke, and would express his humiliation and submission to it; and not assume, by the presence of the ark, that God was on his side, while he was suffering for his sins; (Notes, 1 Sam. 4:3-11.) but he would refer his cause to the Lord, either to bring him back to Zion in peace, or to let his unnatural and ungrateful foes prevail against him; being conscious that he deserved the worst at the hands of God, though not from them. (Marg. Ref. s-v.)—David's frame of spirit was excellent on this trying occasion, and his language beautifully humble, resigned, and pious.—It is not certain whether Zadok was endued with the Spirit of prophecy, or whether he sometimes inquired of the Lord in the place of the high-priest; or whether David only meant to say, that he was a person of remarkable discernment and penetration, who could furnish him with important and authentic information by his observance of Absalom's conduct; and one in whose faithfulness he could entirely depend. He would not therefore go to any great distance, till he heard from Zadok.

V. 30. These were expressions of David's self-abasement, and sorrow for his sins, and for the miseries which he had brought on himself, on his family, and people. He thus "humbled himself under the mighty hand of God," which he saw lifted up against him: and the people joined him with the same tokens of godly sorrow and repentance. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 31. David apprehended more danger from Ahithophel's superior talents, and decisive energy of mind, than from all the courage and numbers of Absalom's followers: immediately therefore, upon hearing that he had joined the conspirators, he addressed the Lord in one short ejaculation; and it proved effectual. He did not pray against Ahithophel himself; but, "that his counsel might be turned into foolishness;" either that he might be left to give foolish counsel, or that his prudent advice might be despised and neglected as folly: and all, who heard this petition, could not but be much impressed with the answer which it shortly received. (Note, 17:14-23.)—He afterwards worshipped God in a more solemn manner with his whole company. (32)

V. 32-37. It seems that David entirely confided in the fidelity and prudence of Hushai, and that his reputation as a wise counsellor was great: but either he was not able to endure the fatigues of war, or he was no soldier. David therefore stated, that in his present destitute condition, Hushai would only burden him and his friends, by attending him, and he pointed out how he might better serve his cause by remaining in Jerusalem.—Stratagems of war are lawful: for an enemy may as well be outwitted as overpowered: but the instructions given to Hushai imply a falsehood, which cannot

meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head;

33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me:

34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; *as I have been* thy father's servant hitherto, so *will I now also be* thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And *hast thou* not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, *that* what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold, *they have* there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

m 1:2. 13:19. n 19:35. o 20. Josh. 8:2. Matt. 10:16. p 16:16—19. q 17:5
r 17:15, 16. s 27. 17:17, 19. t 16:16. 1 Chr. 27:33. u 16:15
a 15:30, 32. b 9:2, 9—12. c 17:27—29. 19:32. 1 Sam. 25:18. 1 Chr. 12:40. Prov.
18:16. 29:4, 5. d Jer. 40:10, 12. Am. 8:1. Mic. 7:1. e 1 Sam. 10:3. 16:20.

be wholly vindicated. (*Note*, Josh. 8:1, 2.)—The conduct of Ahithophel, in joining Absalom, would render Hushai's less supported by the conspirators.—*Ahimaaz*, &c. (36) *Notes*, 17:15—21.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12. The ostentation of emulating or exceeding superiors in external pomp, is an evidence of a narrow mind, a weak judgment, and a depraved heart. It is, however, the common folly and ruin of *indulged* children, and frequently prepares the way for the most atrocious crimes. The very first appearance, therefore, of this affectation should be repressed by parents, with decision, and even with severity, if they would prevent the ruin of their families.—Those who least understand the duties, and could least endure the burdens of authority, are commonly most desirous of it. But when ambition prompts, the most self-indulgent assume the appearance of diligence; and the most haughty, that of affability and condescension: and while men aspire to the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, they, for the time, pay the most abject court to the meanest of the mob! Such fawning sons of ambition are peculiar to no age or nation: but let every wise and honest man shun them as a pestilence. They make their way by *openly or obliquely* traducing the characters, or censuring the measures, of their rulers; and the wisdom and perfection of an angel would be no security against their malignant insinuations. As self-love cannot but murmur at impartiality, and men are generally discontented and desirous of change, these demagogues always have proper persons on whom to practise. By joining in the groundless complaints of the dissatisfied, they feed their discontent; by flattering their persons and approving their cause, they humour their pride; by lavish promises (which cost and mean nothing) of what they would do if they were in power, they excite their sanguine hopes of greater felicity; and by a voluble tongue, an insinuating address, personal accomplishments, and consummate impudence, they *steal* the hearts of the people, and prepare the way for popular tumults, insurrections, and rebellion. For such is human nature, that these arts and attainments go much further in gaining the favour of the multitude, than wisdom and justice, truth and piety, or the most important and long-continued services! This is the old hackneyed way for men, destitute of conscience or honour, to wind themselves into important stations; and yet it is as much practised, and as little suspected, as if it were quite a new discovery!—No wise and good man, therefore, should on any account promise himself the continuance of popular favour, or be cast down if he meet with treachery and ingratitude: yet, in general, we may perceive the righteousness of God, in the basest treatment which we can receive from man; and may thence be reminded to humble ourselves before him, and to expect all our happiness from him alone.—No villany can be termed *complete*, which is not disguised under the mask of religion; especially at those times, when the profession of godliness is treated with general respect. Pious persons are glad to see others; and particularly those whom they most love, appear to be religious, and are not apt to suspect them of hypocrisy: and this gives occasion to the most scandalous and pernicious deceptions.—The policy of wicked men and the subtlety of Satan are exerted to the utmost, in drawing in respectable persons to give an unintended and unsuspected countenance to the basest designs; by which, opinions, principles, and practices acquire a degree of regard, to which they are not at all entitled, and which they would not otherwise have obtained; but none so much strengthen the hands of propagators or infidels, as apostates from a religious profession.

V. 13—37. Little dependence can be placed on earthly prosperity; and as little can be judged of causes or characters by success, until the final event of things shall arrive.—Our severest trials often come from those, in whom we most confided; and our firmest friends are sometimes raised up

CHAPTER XVI.

Ziba imposes on David, and obtains a grant of Mephibosheth's estate, 1—4. Shimai a Benjaminite curses and slanders David, who bears it humbly and meekly, 5—14. Hushai insinuates himself into Absalom's councils, 15—19. By Ahithophel's advice, Absalom openly goes in to his father's concubines 20—23.

AND when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine.

2 And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.

3 And the king said, And where is thy master's son? And Ziba said, unto the king, Behold, he

f Gen. 21:29. 33:8. Ez. 37:18. g 15:1. 19:26. Judg. 5:10. 10:4. h 1 Sam. 25:27. 115:23. 17:29. Judg. 8:4, 5. 1 Sam. 14:23. Prov. 31:6, 7. j 9:10. Ps. 38:18. Mic. 7:5.

among persons, from whom we had the least expectations. But a truly pious man will never be entirely excluded from usefulness: some individuals, wherever he abides, will have to bless God for his example, converse, and prayers.—In our most critical and important concerns, we ought not to require any thing unreasonable from our friends; or “bind heavy burdens” on new converts, lest they should be discouraged: we should be thankful for fidelity and kindness from those, who are not likely to be further serviceable to us, and recompense them with our earnest prayers: and if the mercy and truth of God be with them, and with us and ours, we shall be safe and eventually happy, however at present afflicted or separated. But that love of the brethren, which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, when it is vigorous, will not be restrained by the fear of hardship, danger, or even death, from rendering assistance to those in affliction.—We often in despondency think our enemies to be more numerous, and our friends fewer, than they are found upon trial: for our severest crosses are mingled with comforts, which afford us causes for thankfulness.—The ministers of God should always set an example of submission to “the powers that be,” in all things lawful; and of cordial attachment and faithful adherence to those rulers, who protect and countenance them in their pious labours; and especially in those seasons, when others oppose and revile them.—It becometh us to humble ourselves before God under the tokens of his displeasure: and godly sorrow, confession of sin, repentance, self-denial, and self-abasement are the proper methods of seeking deliverance out of those troubles, which are evidently chastisements for sins. (*Notes*, Is. 22:3—14.) At such a time, therefore, it is improper to buoy up our confidence by the externals of religion, which do not always imply the gracious presence of the Lord. If he pardon our sins, and then again employ us, his house and ordinances will be our comfort: and he will do us no wrong, though he lay us aside, or cut us off by death, as though he had “no delight in us.” Nothing, however, must prevent our worshipping the Lord, though we have not access to his more solemn ordinances: and as afflictions abound, the fervency of our prayers should also increase.—Vain is all worldly wisdom and power against “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man,” as in answer to a single emphatical ejaculation, “the counsel of the prudent is carried headlong,” and the force of the potent is turned into perfect weakness.—Some are useful in one way, and some in another, to one common cause, when they are cordially united; yet alas! where shall we find wisdom and simplicity so united in any mere man, that we can perceive nothing which merits censure, and needs forgiveness? But when the Son of David was treated with all possible treachery, indignity, cruelty, and ingratitude; his wisdom, meekness, candour, and patience were unalloyed perfection. His inexpressible sufferings are now over: his humiliation is exchanged for the throne of glory, where unseen, except by realizing faith, he serves our cause in the world above. Let us follow, and serve, and cleave to him, in tribulation, life, and death. And let us not forget, that we are left behind among his enemies, to promote his cause; and his instruction is, that we be “wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” (*Note*, Matt. 10:16—18.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1—4. (*Notes*, 9:) Ziba took advantage of existing circumstances, to form an artful plan for obtaining a grant from David of Mephibosheth's estate. By his seasonable, and apparently generous present and his insinuating behaviour, he prepossessed David's mind in his favour: (*Notes*, Prov. 17:8. 18:16.) and then by false accusation, he prejudiced him against Mephibosheth. It was indeed improbable, that Mephibosheth should prove so ungrateful, or form expectations of obtaining the kingdom: but what villany could excite wonder, when Absalom was in arms against his own too indulgent father? And Ziba might hope that some event would secure him from detection, or

abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, *"To-day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father."*

4 Then said the king to Ziba, *"Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, 'I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.'"*

5 ¶ And when king David came to *"Bahurim"*, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, *"whosename was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and 'cursed still as he came."*

6 And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left.

7 And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou *'bloody man, and thou 'man of Belial:*

8 The LORD hath *"returned upon thee all 'the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and 'behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man."*

9 ¶ Then said *"Abishai the son of Zeruiah* unto the king, *"Why should this 'dead dog 'curse my lord the king? 'let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head."*

10 And the king said, *"What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because 'the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. 'Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?"*

11 And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, *"Behold, my son, which 'came forth of my bowels, 'seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjaminite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; 'for the LORD hath bidden him."*

12 It may be that *'the LORD 'will look on mine 'affliction, and that the LORD 'will requite me good for his cursing this day."*

1:19-21. f Gen. 20:16. Deut. 19:15, 19. Ps. 15:3. 101:5. Prov. 1:19. 21:26. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. Jude 11. 114:10, 11. Ex. 23:8. Deut. 19:15. Prov. 18:13. 17:2. g Heb. 1. Do obeisance. 14:22. m 14. 3:16. 17:18. n 19:16. 1 Kings 2:9, 36-44. i Or, he still came forth and cursed. o Ex. 22:28. 1 Sam. 17:43. Ps. 69:26. 109:16-19. 28. Prov. 26:12. Ec. 10:20. Is. 8:21. Matt. 15:12. i Heb. men of blood. 3:37. 11:15-17. 12:9. Ps. 5:6. 51:14. p Deut. 13:13. 1 Sam. 2:12. 23:17. 1 Kings 21:10, 13. q Jude. 9:24, 56, 57. 1 Kings 2:32. 83. Acts 28:4, 5. Rev. 16:6. r 1:16. 3:26, 29. 4:11, 12. Ps. 3:2. 4:2. s Or, behold thee in thy evil. a 3:30. 1 Sam. 26:6-8. 1:38. 9:8. 1 Sam. 24:14. o See on De. 22:28. Acts 23:5. 1 Pet. 2:17. a 1 Sam. 26:6-11. Job 31:30, 31. Jer. 40:13. De. 2:33. 19:28. 2 Kings 2:5. Matt. 16:23. Luke 9:54-56. 1 Pet. 2:23. r Gen. 50:20. 1 Kings 22:1-23. 2 Kings 18:25. 1 Am. 3:58, 59. John 18:11. a Job 9:12. Ec. 8:4. Dan. 4:35. Rom. 9:20. b 12:11, 12. c 7:12. Gen. 15:4. d 17:1-4. 2 Kings 19:37. 2 Chr. 32:21. Matt. 10:21. e Is. 10:5-7. Ec. 14:9.

that David would be ashamed to retract his grant when he had once made it. (Note, 19:24-30.)—It is evident, however, that David acted very precipitately, did great injustice to Mephibosheth, and even forgot his covenant with Jonathan, in passing sentence without hearing Mephibosheth's defence. (Note, 1 Sam. 20:14-17.)

V. 5-14. Bahurim was a city of Benjamin; and Shimei was a relation of Saul: so that the translation of the kingdom to David marred all his prospects of preferment. He disregarded the express appointment of God, and his heart was full of implacable enmity to David, as a usurper of the throne. Contrary to the fullest evidence, he accused him of murdering Saul's life, and interpreted his affliction into a proof of his guilt; and he took this opportunity to pour out all kinds of imprecations and reproaches, and to express all the rage of impotent contempt and malice. But if David had been a bloody man, and disposed to slay the family of Saul, Shimei would soon have suffered the just punishment of his audacity; for David was so well guarded that Shimei could only show his malice at a distance: and David's prohibition alone prevented his nephew Abishai from putting him to death. This Shimei merited: but David was now under the divine rebuke for his sins. Though free from the guilt charged upon him, he was consciously guilty of having murdered Uriah: he therefore submitted to the justice of God, in this injurious treatment from Shimei; and he could not wonder that his enemies were stirred up against him, when his own son sought his life. The sin both of Shimei and of Absalom was from themselves and Satan: but David's affliction was from the Lord; and they were merely instruments, which he employed, without their intention, of correcting David for good. (Notes, Gen. 50:20. Is. 10:7, 15. Ec. 14:9-11. Acts 2:22-24.) The curse causeless could only injure him who used it: and David hoped that his humble submission to such usage from man, would prepare the way for the return of peace and comfort from a merciful God; and therefore he would not permit Shimei to be molested. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 19:19-23. 1 Kings 2:8, 9, 36-46.)

Come out, &c. (7) Or rather, "Go out, go out." 'Get

13 And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and *"cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and 'cast dust."*

14 And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came *wearily*, and refreshed themselves there. [Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ And *"Absalom, and all the people the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel with him."*

16 And it came to pass, when Hushai the Archite, David's friend, was come unto Absalom, that Hushai said unto Absalom, *"God save the king, God save the king."*

17 And Absalom said to Hushai, *"Is this thy kindness to thy friend? 'why wentest thou not with thy friend?"*

18 And Hushai said unto Absalom, *"Nay; but 'whom the LORD, and his people, and all the men of Israel choose, his will I be, and with him will I abide."*

19 And again, *"Whom should I serve? 'Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in thy father's presence, so will I be in thy presence."*

20 ¶ Then said Absalom to Ahithophel, *"Give counsel among you what we shall do."*

21 And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, *"Go in 'unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art 'abhorred of 'thy father: 'then shall 'the hands of all that are with thee be strong."*

22 So they spread Absalom a tent upon *"the top of the house; and Absalom went in unto his father's concubines 'in the sight of all Israel."*

23 And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, *was 'as if a man had inquired at the 'oracle of God: so was 'all the counsel of Ahithophel 'both with David and with Absalom."*

20:25. f Gen. 29:32, 33. Ex. 2:24, 25. 3:7, 8. 1 Sam. 1:11. Ps. 25:16. g Or, tears. Heb. eye. g Deut. 23:5. Is. 27:7. Matt. 5:11, 12. Rom. 8:28. 2 Cor. 4:17. 2 Thes. 1:7. Heb. 12:10, 11. 1 Pet. 4:12-19. h 5:6. i Heb. dusted him with dust. Acts 22:23. Is. 1:15, 37. j Heb. let the king live. 1 Sam. 10:24. 1 Kings 1:25, 26. 2 Kings 11:12. Dan. 2:4. 5:10. 6:6, 21. Matt. 21:9. k Deut. 32:6. 115:32-37. 19:25. Prov. 17:17. 18:24. m 5:1-3. 1 Sam. 16:13. n 15:34. 1 Sam. 28:2. 29:8. Is. 55:21. Gal. 2:13. o Ex. 1:10. Ps. 2:2. 37:12, 13. Prov. 21:30. Is. 8:10. 29:15. Matt. 27:1. Acts 4:23-28. p Gen. 6:4. 38:16. q 12:11. 15:16. 20:3. Gen. 35:22. Lev. 18:3. 20:17. 1 Kings 2:17, 22. 1 Cor. 5:1. r Gen. 34:30. 1 Sam. 15:4. s Gen. 49:34. 1 Sam. 37:12. t 2:27. Zech. 8:13. x 11:2. y 12:11, 12. Num. 25:6. Is. 3:9. Jer. 3:8. 8:12. Ez. 24:7. Phil. 3:17. z Num. 27:21. 1 Sam. 30:8. Ps. 28:2. 1 Pet. 4:11. t Heb. word. Ps. 19:7. u 17:14. 23. Job 5:12. 28:28. Ec. 4:22. 8:9. Matt. 11:25. Luke 16:8. Rom. 1:22. 1 Cor. 3:19, 20. Jam. 3:13-18. b 15:12. Ec. 10:1.

thee out of the kingdom, from whence thou deservest to be expelled.' *Bp. Patrick.—The Lord hath bidden him.* (11)

'Grotius thinks David excuses Shimei in these words: for speaking concerning the respect that is to be used to kings, in not giving them public reproaches, he excepts those which are given by a prophet, who had a special command of God for it. Upon which account he saith, when David was openly upbraided by Shimei as a murderer, he had no excuse to make for him but this, that perhaps God had commanded him to do it.' *Bp. Patrick.* How could such a thought ever come into the mind of this learned and eminent man, or find a reception there? What prophet, in his most pointed reproofs, ever used such virulent and slanderous language as that of Shimei? not to speak of his casting stones and dust.

V. 15-19. Though Absalom interpreted Hushai's words as implying an express promise of fidelity, and an unreserved tender of his services, they did not necessarily imply these things. He said, *"Let the king live," not Let king Absalom live.* And when Absalom expressed his surprise, that he thus forsook his friend; he declared his resolution to accompany, and devote himself to him, whom the LORD and whom all Israel chose; but the event soon proved that this was not Absalom, however it appeared for a time. "He would also serve in the presence of the son, as in the presence of the father." But whom would he serve? He would serve David in Absalom's presence, as faithfully as he had hitherto done. (Note, Gen. 34:5.)—If Absalom had not been blinded with pride and popularity, he would have suspected such ambiguous words, when used by the known and hitherto zealous friend of his father; and not have admitted him at once among his confidential counsellors.—It is indeed very difficult to conduct stratagems without such equivocations, if not direct falsehoods; and therefore it is best to keep at a distance from them if it be possible.—When Absalom said, *"Is this thy kindness to thy friend?"* Hushai might have answered, *"Is this thy duty to thy father and king?"*

V. 20-23. (Note, 15:12.) Ahithophel's counsel was generally considered as *"the oracle of God,"* because of his great sagacity: and at one time his professed *"counselors* seem to have

CHAPTER XVII.

Hushai's counsel is preferred to the politic, but desperately wicked counsel of Ahithophel, by the secret appointment of God, 1-14. Hushai sends intelligence to David, who hastily passes over Jordan, 15-22. Ahithophel returns home and hangs himself, 23. David comes to Mahanaim, 24. Amasa is made captain of Absalom's army, which is encamped at Gilead, 25, 26. David's friends bring him provisions, 27-28.

MOREOVER, Ahithophel said unto Absalom, ^aLet me now choose out twelve thousand men, and ^bI will arise and pursue after David ^cthis night :

² And I will come upon him while he is ^dweary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid : and ^eall the people that ^fare with him shall flee ; and ^gI will smite the king only.

³ And ^hI will bring back all the people unto thee : the man whom thou seekest ⁱis as if all returned : ^jso all the people ^kshall be in peace.

⁴ And ^lthe saying ^mpleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel.

⁵ Then said Absalom, Call now ⁿHushai the Archite also, and let us hear likewise ^owhat ^phe saith.

⁶ And when Hushai was come to Absalom,

a Prov. 1:16. 4:16. Is. 59:7,8. Ps. 3:3-5. 4:8. 109:2-4. e 16:14. Deut. 25:18. d 1 Kings 22:31. Zech. 13:7. Matt. 21:38. 26:31. John 11:50. 18:4-8. e 3:21. f Is. 48:22. 57:21. 1 Thes. 5:3. g 1 Sam. 18:20,21. 23:21. Euth. 5:14. Rom. 1:32. h Heb. was right in the eyes of. i 2 Chr. 30:4. Euth. 1:21. marg. h 15:32-37. 15:16-19. j Heb. is in his mouth. k Heb. word. l Heb. counselled. m Prov. 31:8. j 15:18. 21:19-22. 23:8,9. 16:18,20-22. 1 Sam. 16:18. 17:34-36.

been equally depended on. He did not, however, show his wisdom in joining himself to a party, so devoid of all principle, and headed by a rash young man of consummate villany, which foreboded nothing but ruin. But his confidence in his own wisdom made him presume that he could render Absalom successful ; and his mind seems to have been much imbittered against David. His first counsel to Absalom, after his peaceable entrance into Jerusalem, was like an *oracle of Satan*, both for subtlety and atrocity. For his own security and that of the whole party, he intended to preclude all hope of reconciliation with David, that Absalom might determine to conquer or to perish : and he put him on an act of shameless wickedness, which indeed was well suited effectually to ensure the purpose. (Note, Gen. 49:3-4.) By Ahithophel's advice, Absalom, without expressing the least reluctance, and in defiance of the law of God, and even of common decency, in the most public manner, lay with his father's concubines ; thus inflicting on him the correction that had been denounced. (Note, 12:11,12.) It may be supposed that he meant to act as king, having dethroned and succeeded David : but had he been the rightful king, it would not in the least have excused his inconstancy.—It is surprising, that this atrocious crime did not set the people against him.—So many concubines, besides his wives, were by no means honourable to David : and probably none of them expressed a proper degree of abhorrence of so gross an enormity. (Notes, 15:16. 20:3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. Selfish men often effect to appear generous in giving away the property of others for their own advantage, and are great adepts in address and insinuation. Flatterers are generally backbiters ; for it is as easy to them to forge slanders of the absent, as to pretend affection and respect for the present : and those servants, who purloin their master's substance, commonly likewise asperse their reputations.—Both adulation and calumny are injurious to a great degree, but the former is the most hurtful ; for to be tempted to sin is more injurious than to be robbed of riches, or even of our characters : and smooth speeches and well-timed presents, often seduce even the wise and righteous into improper measures.—When much treachery and ingratitude have been experienced, men are apt to become too suspicious, and to listen to every plausible tale of calumny ; the mind being greatly agitated, views every thing through a false medium, and we are all naturally most precipitate when least capable of judging aright : but this is especially the danger of those persons whose affections are very strong, and easily excited. But while the dissimulation of false friends occasions sin ; the rage, malice, and contumely of cruel enemies call forth the exercises of the believer's graces, and often prove advantageous to him.—Wicked men judge of right and wrong by self-interest ; and count themselves robbed of every expected advantage which goes beside them. It gratifies malevolence to insult the afflicted, and to use imprecations and reproaches : and those, who think nothing of the authority, providence, or word of God in other respects, are often most ready to interpret the afflictions of their neighbours as divine judgments, in opposition to the clearest evidence. But it is good to see the hand of God directing, though not dictating, the injuries of men. Their calumnies may recall to memory some evil, or appearance of evil, which requires humiliation, watchfulness, and prayer : we deserve worse from the Lord than their most cruel and contemptuous treatment, and should consider it as his correction : and if we bear it humbly, patiently, and meekly, for his sake, he will graciously requite us with inward peace and consolation.—Seasons of peculiar humiliation before God, require peculiar long-suffering towards men : private revenge

Absalom spake unto him, saying, Ahithophel hath spoken after this manner : shall we do ^aafter his saying ? if not, speak thou.

⁷ And Hushai said unto Absalom, The counsel that Ahithophel hath ^bgiven is ^cnot good at this time.

⁸ For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they ^dbe mighty men, and they ^ebe chafed in their minds, ^fas a bear robbed of her whelps in the field : and ^gthy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people.

⁹ Behold, ^hhe is hid now in some pit, or in some other place : and it will come to pass, when ⁱsome of them be ^joverthrown at the first, that whosoever heareth it, will say, There is a slaughter among the people that follow Absalom.

¹⁰ And he also that ^kis valiant, whose ^lheart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt : for all Israel knoweth that thy father ^mis a mighty man, and ⁿthey which ^obe with him are valiant men.

¹¹ Therefore I counsel that ^pall Israel be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to

51,51. 1 Chr. 11:25-47. Heb. 11:32-34. i Heb. bitter of soul. Judg. 18:23. marg. k 2 Kings 2:24. Prov. 17:12. 23:15. Dan. 7:5. Hos. 13:3. l 1 Sam. 23:23. m Judg. 20:38. 1 Sam. 22:1. 24:3. n Josh. 7:5. 8:6. Judg. 20:32. 1 Sam. 14:14,15. o Heb. fallen. p 1 Cor. 1:23. 23:20. Gen. 49:9. Num. 24:8,9. Prov. 28:1. p Ex. 15:15. Deut. 1:28. Josh. 2:9-11. Is. 13:7. 19:1. q 24:2. Judg. 20:1.

must never be indulged ; and on such occasions it behoves us to be very reluctant in seeking the execution of public justice, on those offenders who have injured us alone : for even the Judge of the world, in his humiliation for *our sins*, bore with those who reviled and crucified him, and prayed for them : yet he will at length execute vengeance on all the impenitent and unbelieving.—A deep sense of personal guilt will soften the spirit towards others, and dispose a man to be indignant and severe against himself : and the most zealous friends must be disregarded, and even reproved, when they counsel what is evidently wrong.

V. 15-23. Men, who admire themselves, will be easily deceived by those who profess an attachment to them : yet they readily discern those faults in others, of which themselves are far more notoriously guilty ; and are apt to express astonishment at them.—If a zealous disciple of Christ be betrayed into evident wickedness, even profligates will exclaim, "Is this thy kindness to thy Friend !" But alas, how often might the Saviour himself address each of us in these words, to our shame and confusion ! And how often should we thus check ourselves, and remember our ingratitude, to our deeper humiliation !—Destruction is before those who hearken to deceitful and wicked counsellors : yet young people in general, especially in high life, will not regard any other.—How desperately wicked is the human heart, that can conceive, execute, and glory in those deeds of darkness, which it is shocking to think of, and shameful to mention ! (Note, Eph. 5:8-14.) yet all this might be drawn forth out of *our hearts* by successive temptations, if Satan and his agents were permitted to practise upon us !—When eminent abilities and daring wickedness unite in one character, they form the express image of the devil : and, like that arch-apostate and rebel, men of this description will spare no pains to push others forward into those kinds and degrees of guilt, which may drive them desperate, and extinguish all thoughts of reconciliation unto God. But this wisdom will shortly appear the most wretched and contemptible folly, which perverts the noble powers of an angel, to increase and propagate guilt, condemnation, and eternal misery.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1-4 Ahithophel was fully aware, that delay must eventually ruin Absalom's cause ; and he therefore proposed to assault David, while he and his men were weary and dispirited, and unprepared for battle, and he undertook to conduct the assault himself, perhaps, fearing lest Absalom's rashness should defeat the design. Thus he thought that David might easily be smitten alone ; and that this would effectually answer Absalom's purpose, and bring over the people to a quiet submission to his authority. The desperate wickedness of the proposal excited no opposition, either from Absalom or from the elders ; and doubtless it was the most politic measure, which could possibly have been adopted in such circumstances.

V. 7-14. It is evident that Hushai aimed to gain time for David to remove to a greater distance, and to increase and encourage his army ; and if he had put Absalom off from adopting Ahithophel's counsel and measure, only for one night, it might have proved of essential service, especially as he hoped to be able to give David intelligence of his danger. In pursuing this object, he opposed Ahithophel's proposal with consummate address : and with some specious arguments, taken from David's character for valour and military skill ; from the courage and indignation of his followers ; and from the probability that David would, by some stratagem of war, in which he was well versed, surprise and overcome his assailants, if they were not very numerous, and so discourage the whole party ; he therefore stated that Ahithophel's counsel was not

Beer-sheba, 'as the sand that **is** by the sea for multitude; and that 'thou go to battle in thine own person.

12 So shall we come upon him 'in some place where he shall be found, and 'we will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground: and of him and of all the men that **are** with him there shall not be left so much as one.

13 Moreover, if he be gotten into a city, then shall all Israel bring ropes to that city, and we will draw it into the river, until there be not 'one small stone found there.

14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite **is** better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For 'the LORD had 'appointed 'to defeat the 'good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.

15 ¶ Then said Hushai unto 'Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled.

16 Now therefore send quickly, and tell David, saying, 'Lodge not this night in the plains of the wilderness, 'but speedily pass over; lest the king 'be swallowed up, and all the people that **are** with him.

17 Now 'Jonathan and Ahimaaz stayed by 'En-rogel; for they might not be seen to come into the city: and a wench went and told them; and they went and told king David.

18 Nevertheless, a lad saw them, and told Absalom: but they went both of them away quickly, and came to a man's house in 'Bahurim, which had a well in his court; whither they went down.

19 And the woman took and 'spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon; and the thing was not known.

20 And when Absalom's servants came to the woman to the house, they said, Where **is** Ahimaaz

and Jonathan? And the woman said unto them, 'They be gone over the brook of water. And 'when they had sought and could not find **them** they returned to Jerusalem.

21 And it came to pass after they were departed that they came up out of the well, and went and told king David, and said unto David, 'Arise, and pass quickly over the water: for 'thus hath Ahithophel counselled against you.

22 Then David arose, and all the people that **were** with him, 'and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light 'there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

23 ¶ And when Ahithophel 'saw that his counsel was not 'followed, he saddled **his** ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to 'his city, and 'put his household in order, 'and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

24 Then David came to 'Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

25 ¶ And Absalom made 'Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son whose name **was** 'Ithra, an Israelite, that went in to 'Abigail the daughter of 'Nahash, sister to Zeruiah, Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the 'land of Gilead.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi 'the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and 'Machir the son of Amiel of Lo-debar, and 'Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

28 Brought 'beds, and 'basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched **corn**, and beans, and lentiles, and parched **pulse**,

29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and 'cheese of kine, 'for David, and for the people

r Gen. 13:16, 22:17. Josh. 11:4. 1 Kings 4:20. * Heb. thy face, or presence, go, &c. 12:23. Ps. 7:15, 16:9, 16. 1 Sam. 23:23. u 1 Kings 20:10, 2 Kings 18:23, 19:24, 14, 10:13, 14. Oh. 3. x Matt. 24:2. y 15:31. Gen. 32:28. Ex. 9:16. Deut. 2:30. 2 Chr. 25:16, 20. + Heb. commended. Ps. 33:9, 10. Lam. 3:37. Am. 9:3. z 15:34, 16:23. Job 5:12-14. 1 Prov. 19:21, 21:30. Is. 8:10. 1 Cor. 1:19, 21:3. a Luke 16:8. b 15:35. c 15:28. d 21:22, 15:14. 1 Sam. 20:38. 1a. 55. e Prov. 8:4, 5. Matt. 24:16-19. e 20:19, 20. 1a. 33:25, 55:2, 57:3. 1 Cor. 15:54. 2 Cor. 5:4. f 15:27, 28. g Josh. 15:7, 18:16. 1 Kings 1:9. h 8:16, 16:5, 19:16. 1 Josh. 2:4-6. j 15:34. Ex. 1:19. Josh. 2:4, 5. 1 Sam. 19:14-17.

good at that time, though he generally was known to be a wise counsellor. But the measures, which he proposed instead of it, were addressed to the vainglory, the ambition, and perhaps the revenge, of Absalom and of his followers. (Note, 15:1-6.) To raise a very large army, which Absalom, being the universal favourite, might easily accomplish; to command it himself, that the honour might be all his own; to carry matters with a high hand, to make sure work, and to destroy David and all his party: this was a more pompous scheme, and more suited to a man of Absalom's capacity and disposition, and to an unreflecting multitude, than the deep and sagacious counsel of Ahithophel. Hushai doubtless framed his speech, not to meet the approbation of the wise, but to please the humour of the many: and it pleased God so to inflate Absalom and all his party, that it met with general approbation.—Ahithophel's former counsel was followed, for God intended to correct David: (Note, 16:20-23.) but his latter was not, for he did not mean to destroy him, but Absalom. Thus God answered David's prayer, and turned the good, that is, the politic counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. (Notes, 15:31, 16:15-19.)—A bear, &c. (8) Note, Hos. 13:5-8.

Appointed. (14) Commanded. (Marg.) It was God's determined purpose thus to defeat Ahithophel's counsel, and to preserve David; and the whole transaction was so conducted, by the secret influence on the minds of all concerned, that the event was as certainly secured, as if he had given an express command to that purpose. This accorded to the language of David concerning Shimei. (Notes, 16:5-14. Ps. 76:10. Acts 4:23-28.)

V. 15, 16. Hushai feared, lest Absalom should be persuaded by Ahithophel to change his mind; and he was fully convinced that Absalom was determined to murder David, if possible, and without delay: he therefore sent him intelligence, and counselled him to provide immediately for his safety, by crossing Jordan without delay.

V. 17-21. Absalom and his party were restrained from injuring Zadok and Abiathar; but they seem to have suspected them. It was not, therefore, thought safe, or advisable, for Jonathan and Ahimaaz to enter the city. But they abode at En-rogel, near the city, (Marg. Ref. g.) whither intelligence was sent to them by a young woman, as an unsuspected messenger, which, with very great danger to them-

21:2 27:11, 12. k Josh. 2:22, 23. l See on 15:16. m 1-3. n 24. Prov. 27:12. Matt. 10:16. o Num. 31:49. Job 15:9. p Prov. 16:8, 18:3. q 15:12. * Heb. gave charge concerning his house. 2 Kings 20:1. r 15:31. 1 Sam. 31:4, 5. 1 Kings 16:18. Job 31:3. Ps. 5:10, 55:23. Matt. 27:5. a 2:8. Gen. 32:2. Josh. 13:25. t 19:13, 20:4, 9-12. u 1 Chr. 2:16, 17. Jethur the Ishmaelite. j Heb. Abigail. ¶ Or, Jesse. 1 Chr. 2:13, 16. y Num. 32:1, &c. Deut. 3:15. Josh. 17:1. x 10:12, 12:30. 1 Sam. 11:1. y 8:4. z 19:31, 32. 1 Kings 2:7. Ezra 2:61. a 16:12. 1 Sam. 25:18. Is. 52:8. ** Or, cups, b 1 Sam. 17:17. c Luke 8:3. Phil. 4:15-19.

selves, and by means of a stratagem, united with a degree of falsehood in others, they were at length enabled to deliver. (Notes, Josh. 2:2-6. 1 Sam. 19:12-17.)

V. 22. Lacked not one, &c.] This was a remarkable instance of God's providential care over his servant David and his friends, that not one was lost, or had deserted, out of the whole company; and he was in this a type of Christ, who loses none of his true followers.—About this time David wrote the third psalm.

V. 23. Ahithophel had by this time seen enough of Absalom, to consider his cause as already lost. His vexation, when he saw so wild a measure as that proposed by Hushai, preferred to his sound policy was intolerable. He expected nothing but extreme disgrace and a public execution for his treason; but it is doubtful whether he despaired of mercy from God, or was hardened in presumption and infidelity: he, however, most deliberately murdered himself. (Notes, Job. 5:11-16. Prov. 24:21, 22.)—It is observable that three at least of those who are recorded in Scripture as suicides, were apostate professors of godliness, viz. Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas. (Note, 1 Sam. 31:3-6.) It is also remarkable that he should have hanged himself, rather than kill himself in any other way. (Notes, Deut. 21:22, 23. Matt. 27:3-5.) David's prayer was answered more terribly than he expected or desired. (Marg. Ref.)

Hanged himself.] Ἀπὸ γὰρ. Sept. Matt. 27:5. Gr. The whole narrative confutes the absurd gloss of those Jews, who would represent him as choked with grief, and not as having strangled himself.—He deliberately returned home, "gave charge concerning his house," (marg.) made his will, settled his affairs, and then hanged himself.

V. 24. (Marg. Ref.) While Absalom was collecting his army, David had time for taking effectual measures for resisting him.

V. 25. Nahash was evidently another name of Jesse. Ithra is supposed to have been an Ishmaelite by birth, but proselyted to the religion of Israel.—Amasa was nephew to David, by Abigail his sister, as were also Joab and Abishai, by Zeruiah. (1 Chr. 2:13-17. Note, 17.)

V. 27-29. Perhaps Shobi, the son of Nahash, had been advanced to reign over Ammon by David, instead of Hanun his brother; and thus expressed his gratitude: (Notes, 10.)

that *were* with him, ^dto eat: for they said, ^eThe people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, ^fin the wilderness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

David musters his troops under three commanders, and charges them to spare Absalom, 1-5. Absalom's army is routed; he flees, and his head being entangled in an oak, he is slain by Joab, and cast into a pit, 6-17. Absalom's place, 18. Ahinoam and Cushai carry tidings to David, 19-32. He laments most bitterly, 33.

AND David ^anumbered the people that *were* with him, and set ^bcaptains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.

2 And David sent forth ^aa third part of the people under ^dthe hand of Joab, and a third part under the hand of Abishai the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and a third part under the hand of ^eIttai the Gittite. And the king said unto the people, ^fI will surely go forth with you myself also.

3 But the people answered, ^gThou shalt not go forth: for ^hif we flee away, they will not ⁱcare for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us; but now *thou art* ^jworth ten thousand of us: therefore now it *is* better that thou ^ksuccour us out of the city.

4 And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood ^lby the gate side, and all the people came out ^mby hundreds and by thousands.

5 And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, ⁿDeal gently for my sake with the young man, ^oeven with Absalom. And ^pall the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.

d Ps. 34:8-9. o 84:11. e Judg. 8:4-5. Ec. 11:12. Is. 21:14. 58:7. f 16:2. g Ps. 17:9. Josh. 8:10. h 1 Sam. 8:12. c Judg. 7:16, 19, 20. 9:43. d 10:7-10. e 15:19-22. f 17:11. Ps. 3:6. 27:1-3. 118:6-8. g 21:17. h 17:2. i 1 Kings 22:31. Zech. 13:7. j Heb. *set their heart on*. k Heb. *as ten thousand of us*. Lam. 4:30. l Heb. *to succour*. 10:11. Ex. 17:10-12. m 124. Is. 38:6. n 1 Sam. 29:2. k 16:11. 17:1-4, 14. Deut. 21:13-21. Ps. 103:13. Luke 23:34. l 12. m Judg. 12:1-6. n 2:17. 15:6. 19:41-43. o Prov. 11:21. 24:21, 22.

or perhaps he was proselyted and lived among the Israelites. —The various kinds of provisions which were brought to David, not only expressed the liberality of his friends, but showed the extreme distress to which his followers were reduced. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 9:4. 19:31-39. 1 Sam. 25: 18, 19. 1 Chr. 12:23-40.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When Satan has seduced men into a wicked course of life, every crime makes more and greater enormities almost necessary; and they must go forward, or lose the fruit, and suffer the punishment of their former villanies.—His decided servants are more sagacious and vigorous in their mischievous devices, than the Lord's servants are in doing good: and they have a very great *apparent* advantage; being freed from the restraints of conscience, gratitude, natural affection, and the fear of God.—That some few individuals should be monsters of iniquity would not excite much surprise: but from age to age immense multitudes are found, who with one consent break through every tie of duty; especially when engaged in opposing the cause of religion and its cordial friends: and this demonstrates, that man by nature is an enemy to the service and holiness of God.—When the heart is hardened in iniquity, it is righteous for God to infatuate the understanding: and when the rage of his enemies has accomplished his secret purposes, and they are about to proceed further, their machinations prove unsuccessful, and accelerate their own destruction. (*Notes*, Is. 10:7-19.)—The Lord can perform the greatest deliverances by the feeblest instruments: he can protect his servants in their extremest dangers, or provide for them in their most pressing necessities: he can restrain the malice of their most cruel enemies, and enlarge the heart of unexpected friends; and whatever wisdom, address, despatch, or assistance, any man employs or affords; the success is from God alone, who will not suffer one of his people to perish.—When Satan has tempted men to successive crimes, till they are ripe for destruction; and when Providence has disappointed their ambitious and vainglorious projects, and their lives are rendered miserable; the last device of that subtle enemy is to urge them to murder themselves: and in this way he sometimes deludes those, who have been most renowned for wisdom; but who are at length so foolish as to plunge themselves into everlasting misery, for fear of temporal disgrace and suffering! Let us then beware of hypocrisy and apostacy, which frequently have this event: let us fear sinning against knowledge and conscience, which is often the forerunner of judicial hardness: let us seek the wisdom which comes from God, and leads to heaven: let us watch against pride, malice, envy, and ambition; and learn to pity and relieve those who are in distress, with liberality proportioned to our ability.—Our King indeed needs not our help: but he has assured us, that what we do for the least of his brethren, who are sick, poor, or destitute, shall be accepted

6 ^qSo the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the ^rwood of Ephraim;

7 Where ^sthe people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there ^ta great slaughter that day of ^utwenty thousand men.

8 For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and ^vthe wood ^wdevoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

9 ^xAnd Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was ^ytaken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.

10 And a certain man saw *it*, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak.

11 And Joab said unto the man that told him, And behold, thou sawest *him*, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten *shekels* of silver, and a girdle.

12 And the man said unto Joab, Though I should ^zreceive a thousand *shekels* of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son: for ^{aa}in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, ^{ab}Beware that none *touch* the young man Absalom.

13 Otherwise I should have ^{ac}wrought falsehood against mine own life: ^{ad}for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against *me*.

q 29:31. 2 Chr. 13:16, 17. 28:5. r Ex. 15:10. Josh. 10:11. Judg. 5:20, 21. 1 Kings 20:30. Ps. 3:7. 43:1. s Heb. *multiplied to devour*. t 14:28. 17:23. Matt. 27:5. u Deut. 21:23. 27:16, 20. Job. 18:10. 31:3. Prov. 20:20. 30:17. Jer. 48:44. Mark 7:10. Gal. 3:13. v Heb. *weigh upon my hand*. w 5. x Heb. *Behold whosoever ye be, of the, &c.* a 1:15, 16. 4:10-12. v 14:19, 20. Heb. 4:13.

and recompensed, as if it were done for himself in person. (*Note*, Matt. 25:34-40.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1-3. As Ahithophel had foreseen, Absalom's delay afforded David's friends an opportunity of strengthening his army, which was now become capable of meeting their opponents in the field of battle. It is probable, that it was greatly inferior in numbers to Absalom's, but far superior in discipline, and consisted chiefly of old and approved friends, and such as acted from principle and conscience in adhering to their prince. This appears in the answer which they returned to his proposal of leading them to battle in his own person.

Ten thousand. (3.) This seems to have been spoken, not only out of affection to David, but from a proper estimate of the importance of his life to the civil and religious interests of the nation; which was in great danger of falling into the most abject misery and the greatest ungodliness, if Absalom were successful in his wicked usurpation: and, no doubt, the truly pious Israelites adhered to David, with one accord.

V. 5. Absalom aimed directly at the life of his indulgent father; David desired nothing so much as the preservation of his rebellious son! (*Notes*, 17:1-4.) But Absalom's crimes were too enormous to be pardoned, consistently with David's duty; and the peace of Israel could not be established while he lived. Perhaps David hoped, that if Absalom were not slain in battle, he might live to repent, and so escape future vengeance. But if he had been spared, he would probably have occasioned David further trouble and sin; and it pleased God to preserve his servant from the guilt of pardoning him, and from the anguish of punishing him.—David does not seem to have doubted of the victory, after his prayer against Ahithophel had been so remarkably answered.

V. 6. The wood of Ephraim here mentioned was beyond Jordan; and it is supposed to be the place where the Ephraimites had been slain in the days of Jephthah. (*Judg.* 12:4-6.)

V. 8. The wood, &c.] More were slain in the pursuit through the wood, than in the battle. It is also probable, that numbers perished by pressing on one another in the thickets, or were devoured by wild beasts. (*Marg. Ref.* o, p.)

V. 9. Either Absalom's hair, which he had effeminately tended, was so entangled in the boughs of the oak that he could not extricate himself; (*Note*, 14:25-27.) or his head itself was confined betwixt two arms of the tree, through the rapidity and inattention with which he rode, to escape the servants of David. In this dreadful situation he remained for a considerable time, doubtless with unspeakable horror, expecting his doom, without being able in the least to help himself. His fate was as extraordinary as his crimes; and being providentially hanged on a tree, he was as if *executed*, pronounced accursed by God himself. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, i, 23.)

V. 13. Wrought falsehood, &c.] This man meant to say, that he should have cheated himself; and by seeking a

14 Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus *with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and *thrust them though the heart of Absalom, while he *was* yet alive in the midst of the oak.

15 And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him.

16 And Joab *blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

17 And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and *laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

18 Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and *reared up for himself a pillar, which *is* in *the king's dale: for he said, *I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and *he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, *Absalom's place. [Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, Let me now run, and bear the king tidings, how that the Lord hath *avenged him of his enemies.

20 And Joab said unto him, Thou shalt not *bear tidings this day, but thou shalt bear tidings another day: but this day thou shalt bear no tidings, *because the king's son is dead.

21 Then said Joab to Cushi, Go, tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cushi bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

22 Then said Ahimaaz the son of Zadok yet again to Joab, But *howsoever, let me, I pray thee, also run after Cushi. And Joab said, Wherefore wilt thou run, my son, seeing that thou hast no tidings *ready?

23 But howsoever, *said he*, let me run. And he said unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and overran Cushi.

24 And David sat *between the two gates: and *the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, a man running alone.

* Heb. *before thee*. v 5. Jude. 4:21. 5:28, 31. Ps. 45:5. 1 Thes. 5:3. † Heb. *heart*. Matt. 12:40. x 2:29. 20:22. Num. 10:2-10. 1 Cor. 14:9. ‡ Josh. 7:28. 8:29. 10:27. Prov. 10:7. Jer. 22:18, 19. z 1 Sam. 15:12. a Gen. 14:17. b 14:27. Job 18:16, 17. Ps. 109:13. Jer. 22:30. c Gen. 11:4. 1 Sam. 15:12. Ps. 49:11. Dan. 4:30. d Gen. 11:9. Acts 1:18, 19. e 23:27-29. 15:36. 17:17. f Heb. *judged him from the hand*, &c. Ps. 7:6-8. 9:4-16. 10:14, 18. Rom. 12:19. § Heb. *he is a man of*. f 17:16-21. f 5:27, 29, 33. || Heb. *he went* may. ¶ Or, *convenient*. Rom. 1:28. Eph. 5:4. g 4. 1 Sam. 4:13. h 2 Kings 9:17-20.

eward, have forfeited his life. His words were replete with truth, good sense, and sound argument; and Joab was conscious that they did not admit of an answer.

V. 14. Joab doubtless intended the interest of both David and his kingdom, in killing Absalom; and his death was of salutary tendency, and even necessary: yet Joab cannot be excused in acting against the express command of his sovereign. He had no warrant from God or man to execute vengeance on Absalom: and, having deserved death himself, he was the last person who should have complained of the obstruction of public justice.

V. 17, 18. It seems that Absalom's sons died young, as a just judgment upon him for seeking the life of his father: (14:27.) and that, after their death, he erected a magnificent column, in or near which he meant to be interred; and by which he hoped to perpetuate his memory, with honour, to future generations. (Notes, Gen. 11:34. Ps. 49:11. Dan. 4:28-33.) But, on the contrary, he was buried with ignominy as a malefactor; (Josh. 10:26, 27. Prov. 10:7.—Notes, Josh. 7:25, 26. 8:29.) and his pillar proved a monument of his folly and wicked ambition.

V. 19-22. Ahimaaz had continued with David, after he had brought tidings from Hushai: (17:17-21.) and was present in the battle, probably sounding one of the sacred trumpets. (Note, Num. 10:1-10. 2 Chr. 13:1-12.) He was desirous of being the first to announce to David the tidings of the Lord's having "judged him from the hand of his enemies;" (*sang.) both from disinterested love to him, and probably in hopes of gradually preparing David for the account of Absalom's death. (Note, 28-32.) But Joab was sensible that David would bitterly lament the death of Absalom, and was not willing to send so respectable a person as Ahimaaz with tidings which would be unsuitable to his friendly purpose, and unwelcome to David. (27) He therefore appointed for that service a man, whose name intimates that he was an Ethiopian, and perhaps a slave: he was, however, cordially attached to the interests of David. Joab afterwards permitted Ahimaaz to go also.

V. 28-32. Probably, one motive which induced Ahimaaz so earnestly to desire to carry David the first news of the victory, was, that he might gradually prepare his mind for the intelligence of Absalom's death: for, though he rejoiced

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he *be* alone *there is* tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter and said, *Behold, another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, *Methinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok. And the king said, *He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, *All is well. And *he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath *delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

29 And the king said, *Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and *me* thy servant, *I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what *it* was.

30 And the king said unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, *Tidings my lord the king: for *the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto Cushi, *Is* the young man Absalom safe? and Cushi answered, *The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man *is*.

33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, *O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! *Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!

20. Is. 21:6-9, 11, 12. P. 33:2-6. ** Heb. *I see thee running*. 2 Kings 9:20. 11 Kings 1:42. Prov. 25:13, 25. Is. 52:7. Rom. 10:15. † Or, *Peace be to thee*. Heb. *Peace*. k 1:2. 14:1. l 1:22, 47. Gen. 14:20. 24:27. 2 Chr. 20:26. Ps. 115:1. 144:1, 2. Rev. 19:1-3. ‡ Heb. *shut up*. 1 Sam. 21:19. 26:8. Ps. 31:8. § Heb. *Is there peace to*, &c. f m 19:20, 22. || Heb. *Tidings is brought*. n 19:24. 22:48, 49. Deut. 32:35, 36. Is. 59:10. 94:1-4. o Jude. 5:31. Ps. 68:1, 2. Dan. 4:19. p 19:4. q 12:10-53. Ps. 103:13. Prov. 10:1. 17:55. Jam. 5:17.

in David's deliverance, he sympathized with him in his grief; and for this purpose he evaded the king's question, which Cushi soon after indirectly, but more plainly, replied to.—The piety of the language both of Ahimaaz and Cushi on this occasion are worthy of notice and imitation.

V. 33. David's grief was doubtless excessive, and very imprudent and criminal. He ought to have been thankful for his own deliverance and for that of Israel; and to have submitted with silent patience to the righteous judgment of God upon his son. (Notes, Lev. 10:3. 1 Sam. 3:16-18. Ps. 39:9, 10.) But he was a man of warm passions: he had inordinately loved a very unworthy object, who was cut off in the midst of his crimes; he could not but think of the state of his immortal soul; and vainly hoped, that if he had been preserved, he might have repented: he was conscious, that when his own forfeited life was spared, after his adultery and murder, this burden had been laid upon his family: he considered himself, by his transgression, example, and the chastisement of God, as accessory to the dire catastrophe; and in the vehemency of his grief he wished, that he had died himself rather than his son, probably, as being better prepared for the eternal world; while the agitation of his mind prevented him from adverting to the fatal effects of such an event to his kingdom, and to that cause which in his calmer hours was nearest to his heart.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-18. The peculiar exercises of religion ought to *precede*, but not to *exclude*, the use of every prudent means of securing success in lawful undertakings: and those who would engage others in arduous and perilous attempts, must be willing to take a full share of the hardship and danger. But in some cases the life of an individual is of such importance to the public welfare, that thousands are authorized to require it of him, as a duty, to take the utmost care of himself. It is well when affection and fidelity of this kind subsist between princes and their subjects; and when they are mutually willing to venture, or to suffer, for each other's benefit. Thus Jesus loved his people, and laid down his life for them: and thus they consider his cause as dearer to them than every personal interest, and are prepared to lay down their lives for his sake.—True courage and firmness of mind are very different from rashness and obstinacy.

CHAPTER XIX.

The people being greatly disappointed and discouraged by David's conduct, Joab, by rude expostulations, induces him to restrain his grief and come forth to them, 1-8. The men of Israel dispute about bringing back David; who sends to the priests to incite the men of Judah to take the lead in this; and they readily comply, 9-15. Shimei submitting is not punished, 16-23. Nephthali's men David; complaining that Ziba had deceived and slandered him; and his half his land restored, 24-30. Barzillai attends David over Jordan, and his son is taken into the king's family, 31-40. The Israelites expostulate with the men of Judah, for bringing back the king without them, 41-43.

AND it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom.

2 And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son.

3 And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.

4 But the king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!

5 And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons, and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;

6 In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends: for thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, when it had pleased thee well.

7 Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by

the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now.

8 Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.

9 And all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom.

10 And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?

11 And king David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, saying, Speak unto the elders of Judah, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king, even to his house.

12 Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh: wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king?

13 And say ye to Amasa, Art thou not of my bone, and of my flesh? God do so to me, and more also, if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab.

14 And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants.

18:5, 19:14, 20:33. * Heb. *salvation, or deliverance.* b Prov. 16:15, 19:12, c 32, 17:24. d Gen. 31:27. e See on 15:30. f 18:33. g Neh. 9:27. Ps. 3:8, 16:47, 48. h Heb. *by loving, &c.* i Heb. *princes or servants are not to thee.* j 3:24, 25, 19:34-18. Prov. 19:9, 10. Acts 23:5. k Heb. *to the heart of.* Gen. 24:3. l Is. 40:1. Hos. 2:14. marg. i Prov. 14:28. j Ps. 71:4-6, 9-11, 19-20. 128:1-2. k 18:5, 24. l 1:5, 18:7. i Kings 22:36. 2 Kings 14:12. m 1:12, 13:13.

and wise men are always most ready to listen to prudent counsel, even from their inferiors.—The extremes of our most amiable propensities are often of fatal consequence: and it is merciful for God to deny us those things which we greatly desire, when he sees they would prove our temptation or affliction.—Multitudes suffer through the wickedness of one, but for their own crimes: and rebellion against good and lawful governors is generally and justly punished with the ruin of those concerned in it. Yet the seducers into the ways of sin must be answerable to God for the consequences; and who can number the murders, for which many ambitious usurpers will stand indicted before his righteous tribunal!—At all times “evil pursueth sinners,” and when in the appointed hour it overtakes them, they cannot possibly escape; but those things on which they have most depended, and of which they have been most proud, often prove the occasion or instruments of their destruction.—Let young people look on Absalom, suspended upon the tree, accursed and forsaken of Heaven and earth; and there read the Lord's abhorrence of rebellion against parents: let them consider the agony of his death and the ignominy of his burial, and learn how empty are all external embellishments; and how vain the flattery of man, (Note, 14:25-27.) and all that care, which is employed in rendering themselves admired and renowned. After all, “the memory of the wicked shall rot,” and nothing can preserve us from misery and contempt, but heavenly grace and wisdom.—They who are greedy of gain, often work falsehood against their own lives or souls: and many will rejoice in the effects of wickedness, who will be the first to inform against those who have committed it, in order to exculpate themselves: but our safety lies in obeying the Lord and the lawful commands of our rulers.—The removal of one ringleader in daring crimes proves a public benefit, and makes way for the exercise of clemency to numbers: but that will not authorize every individual to take away the life of the most notorious offender; for it is not enough that the thing ought to be done, but we are to consider whether it be a service allotted to us by our great Master.

V. 19-33. Every deliverance should be received with praise and thanksgiving: and good men delight in bearing glad tidings to those whom they love. May all, who proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to sinners, be men of holy lives, and unblemished reputation; and may numbers more be sent forth with this joyful message!—All other good things have so much alloy, that our joy on account of them must be mingled with weeping, or with trembling: and alas! we are more disposed to complain of the trouble which alloys our mercies, than to be thankful for the mercies themselves. But while we learn from the example before us, to watch and pray against partial and inordinate attachments, the

indulgence or neglect of our children, and the unadvised language and passionate wishes of excessive grief; while we learn to bow down to the righteous appointments of God in our sharpest trials, to adore his unmerited mercy in our comforts and deliverances, and to prefer the public welfare to any personal or private affections; we may in David perceive a shadow of the Saviour's love, who wept, prayed, and suffered death in all its bitterness, for us rebels and enemies, without even excepting those, who persecuted and crucified him; and hence learn “not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1-8. (Note, 18:33.) David's conduct on this occasion was exceedingly impolitic, and tended to weaken the attachment, and damp the zeal of his adherents; who would interpret his excessive grief, so passionately expressed, into an indifference about their interests, and dissatisfaction with their services. For instead of being led to celebrate their important success with joyful exultations, and meeting the animating hearty commendations of their prince, whom they had bravely and faithfully served; they were sent away grieved and ashamed. Joab had therefore good reason to interpose, and would have been justifiable in a very plain remonstrance with David on the impropriety of his conduct: but the asperity, the reproaches, and the threat, confirmed with an oath of a general defection, which his language plainly implied, must be ascribed to his pride and insolence; for he seems to have gloried in disobeying and being rude to his prince. (Note, 3:24, 25, 18:14, 20:8-13.) David, however, being conscious that Joab had truth and reason on his side, smothered his resentment, and very prudently obviated the disgust of the people.

V. 9-15. David would not appear to reign by force of arms: and therefore he waited till he was publicly invited to resume the reins of government. From the time that he began to reign in Hebron over the tribe of Judah only, the distinction between Judah and Israel began to be observed. (Notes, 2:4, 5:1-3.) The men of Israel were first disposed to return to their allegiance, and they spoke honourably of David's former services; but either fear or shame, or want of unanimity, deterred them from publicly inviting him to return. And they seem also to have disputed to whom the blame of the late rebellion belonged; each endeavouring to excuse himself.—When therefore the report of these things reached the king, he probably thought it would be dishonourable to his own tribe, if they were the last in this service; or perhaps they were so deeply involved in Absalom's rebellion, that they feared David's resentment, when reinstated in his authority. He therefore employed Zadok and Abiathar to assure the principal persons of his affection, and to excite them to appear in this business; by which means they took the lead in such a manner, as induced the men of Israel to conclude, that

15 So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to ^gGilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hastened and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David.

17 And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.

18 And there went over a ferry-boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan;

19 And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.

20 For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king.

21 But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?

22 And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel?

23 Therefore the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die: and the king swore unto him.

24 ¶ And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace.

25 And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem, to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wastest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?

26 And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame.

27 And he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes.

28 For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?

29 And the king said unto him, Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land.

30 And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house.

[Practical Observations.]

31 ¶ And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan.

32 Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim: for he was a very great man.

33 And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem.

34 And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?

35 I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?

36 Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?

37 Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother: but behold thy servant Chimham.

^a Josh. 5:9. ¹ Sam. 11:14, 15. ^c 15:5-12. ¹ Kings 2:8, 36-46. ^d Job 2:4. ^e Prov. 6:4, 5. ^f Matt. 5:25. ^g 26:27. ^h 27:10. ⁱ 16:1-4. ^j Heb. the good in his eyes. ^k Ps. 65:3, 81:15. ^l Rev. 3:9. ^m Ec. 10:4. ⁿ 1 Sam. 22:15. ^o Ps. 32:2. ^p Rom. 4:6, 8. ^q Cor. 5:19. ^r 1 Ps. 79:8. ^s Is. 43:25. ^t Jer. 31:34. ^u k 16:5-9, 13. ^v Ex. 10:16, 17. ^w 1 Sam. 22:21. ^x Matt. 27:4. ^y 113:29, 33. ^z 1 Sam. 25:25. ^{aa} Ps. 78:34-37. ^{ab} Jer. 22:23. ^{ac} Hos. 5:15. ^{ad} 9:16, 5. ^{ae} Gen. 48:11, 21. ^{af} 1 Kings 12:29, 35. ^{ag} Hos. 15:17, 5:3. ^{ah} Ec. 22:28. ^{ai} 1 Kings 21:10, 11. ^{aj} p 16:5, 7, 13. ^{ak} 1 Sam. 34:6, 28:9. ^{al} q 3:39. ^{am} 15:10. ^{an} 1 Sam. 26:3. ^{ao} Matt. 8:29. ^{ap} 1 Sam. 11:13. ^{aq} Is. 16:5. ^{ar} Luke 9:54-56. ^{as} a 1 Kings 2:8, 9, 37, 46. ^{at} 1 Sam. 28:10, 30:15. ^{au} Heb. 6:16. ^{av} u 9:6, 16:3. ^{aw} 15:30, 15:10. ^{ax} Jer. 41:5. ^{ay} Matt. 6:16. ^{az} Rom. 12:15. ^{ba} Heb. 13:3. ^{bb} v 16:17. ^{bc} 16:2, 3. ^{bd} b 16:3. ^{be} Ec. 20:16. ^{bf} Ps. 15:3, 101:5. ^{bg} Jer. 9:4. ^{bh} a 14:17, 20.

they meant to engross the credit of recalling David, and exclusively to secure his favour. (Note, 40-43.) But it would have been more prudent, if they had consulted with their brethren, that all of them might act in concert; as this would have prevented many bad consequences.—David also was very uneasy under Joab's haughtiness, and was exceedingly displeased with him for slaying Abalom, and for his subsequent rudeness; and he wished to lay him aside. (Note, 1-8.) He supposed likewise, that if Amasa were assured of pardon and preferment, he would draw over all that party into his interests: (Note, 17, 25.) and doubtless his influence was very great, especially in Judah. But Amasa, having needed so daring a rebellion, was not a proper person to supplant Joab, whose influence with the army and with David's best friends, was too firmly established to be thus shaken; and he was sure not to submit quietly to such a disgrace. David therefore does not seem to have acted with prudence on this emergency.

Anointed. (10) It is not recorded, that Absalom was anointed; but perhaps he was; and if not, he was obeyed, as if he had been the anointed king.

V. 16, 17. (Marg. Ref.) Perhaps Shimei had been captain of a thousand men of Benjamin, who now attended him, to request that he might be pardoned.

V. 18. Ferry-boat.] This is the only place in which a boat for passing over a river is mentioned. Bridges are not once mentioned in Scripture. Rivers were generally forded at this time.

V. 19-23. Next to the tribe of Judah, the descendants of Joseph had the pre-eminence; and Israel, as distinguished from Judah, was named from them. Shimei, therefore, though a Benjamite, ranked himself among the sons of Joseph, or the Israelites; and intimated, that none except the men of Judah had come to David so soon as he had. Perhaps he meant, that he had come before any of the house of Joseph.—

1 Sam. 29:9. ^d Gen. 32:10. [†] Heb. men of death. ¹ Sam. 26:16. ^e 9:7, 8, 10, 13. ^f 2 Kings 8:3. ^g Job 19:16, 17. ^h Prov. 18:13. ⁱ Acts 18:15. ^j Deut. 19:17-19. ^k Ps. 82:2, 101:5. ^l 128. ^m Acts 20:34. ⁿ Phil. 1:20. ^o 1 Kings 2:7. ^p Ezra 2:61. ^q Neh. 7:68. ^r 1 Sam. 5:7, 9:29, 35:7, 47:29, 50:25. ^s 1 Sam. 24:7. ^t Ps. 80:3-10. ^u 117:27. ^v 1 Sam. 25:2. ^w Job 1:3. ^x n 9:11. ^y Matt. 25:34-40. ^z Luke 22:36-30. ^{aa} 2 Thea. 1:7. ^{ab} † Heb. How many days are the years of my life? ^{ac} Gen. 47:9. ^{ad} Job 14:14. ^{ae} Ps. 39:5, 1. ^{af} Cor. 7:29. ^{ag} Jam. 4:14. ^{ah} o Job 6:30, 12:11. ^{ai} Heb. 5:14. ^{aj} 1 Pet. 2:3. ^{ak} p Ec. 13:1-5. ^{al} y Job 36:5. ^{am} Neh. 7:77. ^{an} Ec. 28:12, 4. ^{ao} r 13:25. ^{ap} 13:33. ^{aq} Gen. 49:21. ^{ar} Josh. 2:23, 31. ^{as} Luke 2:29, 34. ^{at} 2 Tim. 4:6. ^{au} 2 Pet. 1:14. ^{av} t Gen. 47:30. ^{aw} 29-31. ^{ax} 50:13. ^{ay} 1 Kings 13:22. ^{ba} u 40. ^{bb} 1 Kings 2:7. ^{bc} Jer. 41:17.

Shimei confessed his crime, and seemed penitent; and David granted him a pardon, and swore to him that he should not die at that time, or for that offence. (Notes, 16:5-14. 1 Kings 2:8, 9, 36-46.) Abishai, however, would have had him made an example of, as indeed he well deserved: but David intimated, that he and Joab were always instigating him to acts of severity; but it would be injurious to his interests, as well as contrary to his inclinations, to sully his restoration with the execution of a single criminal; and that there was no occasion, for all he was disposed peaceably to submit to him.

V. 24-30. Mephibosheth did not come to David till his return to Jerusalem, probably, because he could not procure an ass prepared for him to ride on; having been deserted by Ziba, and all his attendants. From the time of the king's departure, he had utterly neglected the care of his person, and shown every token of excessive sorrow. To David's inquiry, why he had not accompanied him, he answered by a simple narration of facts, united with the most respectful, affectionate, thankful, and submissive language. He owed all he possessed to David's clemency and bounty; he did not complain of the grant made to Ziba; and he was confident that the king would do nothing but what was consistent with wisdom and justice.—But whether David did not fully credit him; or whether he was ashamed of his credulity, and wished not to have it further noticed; he suffered Ziba to escape merited punishment, and to enjoy part of the fruits of his slander: or at least he contented himself with restoring matters to their former settlement, as some understand it. (Note, 9:9-11.) Mephibosheth; however, so greatly rejoiced in David's safety and success, that he generously treated the affair concerning his own estate, as a matter of indifference. (Notes Phil. 1:15-20.)

V. 31-39. The narrative of the conversation which passed between David and Barzillai, and their affectionate parting, is exceedingly pleasing and instructive; but it requires little

at him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.

38 And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, *that* will I do for thee.

39 And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king ¹kissed Barzillai, and ²blessed him: and ³he returned unto his own place.

40 Then the king went on to Gilgal, and ¹Chimham went on with him: and all ²the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel.

41 ¶ And behold, all the men of Israel came to the king, and said unto the king, ¹Why have our

brethren the men of Judah ¹stolen thee away, and have brought the king, and his household, and all David's men with him, over Jordan?

42 And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, ¹Because the king is near of kin to us: wherefore then be ye angry for this matter? have we eaten at all of the king's *cost*? or hath he given us any gift?

43 And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah, and said, ¹We have ²ten parts in the king, and we have also more *right* in David than ye: why then did ye ³despise us, that ⁴our advice should not be first had in bringing back our king? And ⁵the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.

* Heb. *choose*. † Gen. 31:55. 45:15. Ruth 1:14. 1 Kings 19:20. Acts 20:37. x 6:18, 20. 13:25. Gen. 14:19. 28:3. 47:16. Luke 2:34. y Gen. 31:55. Num. 21:25. 1 Sam. 21:22. ‡ Heb. *Chimham*. z 11—15. Gen. 49:10. Matt. 21:9. a Judg. 8:1. 12:1. John 7:5, 6. b 3. Gen. 31:25, 37. c 12. 5:1. 1 Chr. 2:3—17. d 20:1, 6.

1 Kings 12:16. e 5:1. Prov. 13:10. † Heb. *set us at light*. f 9, 14. Gal. 5:20. 26. Phil. 2:3. g Judg. 9:23. 12:1—5. Prov. 15:1. 17:14. 18:19. Rom. 12:21. Gal. 5:15, 20. Jam. 1:20. 3:14—16. 4:1—3.

comment. Barzillai had merely done his duty; he required no recompense; and he was too old either to enjoy the pleasures of the court, or to be of any further use to his king. (*Note, Ec. 12:2—7.*) He only desired to go home to prepare for death: but the case might be different in respect to his son.—It is probable that David settled part of his patrimony at Bethlehem on Chimham. (*Note, Jer. 41:16—18.*)

V. 40—43. By the time that David had passed over Jordan, part of the elders of Israel came to bring him back, and were disgusted at finding that they came too late; and that David's reinstatement in the kingdom had been decided on, though their advice had not been asked. They thought themselves despised, and that the men of Judah took too much upon them: while the plea of relationship to David, urged by the men of Judah, tended only to increase suspicions and envy; and the *fiercer* words, which they returned to the angry remonstrance of their brethren, produced very bad effects. (*Notes, Judg. 8:1—3. 12:1—17. Prov. 13:10. 17:14. 18:19. 1 Cor. 13:4—7. Gal. 5:13—15. Phil. 2:1—4. Jam. 3:13—18.*) Whatever value or respect the men of Israel at this time professed for their king, they would not have quarrelled so fiercely about their own credit and interest in recalling him, if they had been truly sorry for their former rebellion. David freely forgave them all their gross injuries against him; but they could not endure the least affront from each other. (*Note, 20:1, 2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15. The excessive indulgence of any passion, (grief by no means excepted,) not only offends God, but betrays men into great imprudence even in their temporal concerns.—Those who have faithfully served us expect that we should appear pleased with them, and thankful for their services: and many will do more for a smile and a kind word from their superiors, than for a more substantial recompense; and be much grieved and disheartened, if they think themselves frowned on.—Upon important emergencies, plain truths may properly be spoken to the greatest and best of men, and they may be closely reasoned and expostulated with; but indecent roughness, and an assuming demeanor in an inferior, will render the most prudent, reasonable, and honest counsel unacceptable, and perhaps ineffectual. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 25:23—33. Prov. 25:1, 12. 27:9.*) A wise man, however, will endeavour to overlook the impropriety, and benefit by the sound reason, of well-intended remonstrances: and timely concessions will commonly prevent the ill effects of mistaken measures.—Men are often betrayed, by their discontent and fickleness, into such actions as their sober judgment approves, and of which experience will constrain them to be weary: but they do not so readily condemn themselves for the most evident treachery or ingratitude.—Many allow that such and such things should be done, and wonder that others do not set about them: and yet they themselves are equally dilatory, through indolence, pride, or covetousness.—Ministers should at all times be examples of fidelity to magistrates and rulers; and may very properly exhort others to do their *plain and evident duty*, in that as well as in other respects: but, this case excepted, it is generally best for them not to intermeddle in public affairs.—Convincing arguments, urged in mildness and love, are very forcible, and produce great effects upon the minds of men in all temporal concerns: but the grace of God alone can bow our hearts into submission to his humble truth and holy will.—In acts of clemency to those who have been open offenders, care should be taken not to disgust such as have deserved better of us, though in some respects they have failed of their duty: and that which exposes a man to envy or rivalry, however splendid and valuable, will probably be injurious to him. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 18:6—11. Prov. 27:4.*)—Self-preference and contempt of others should always be guarded against; and every thing avoided which may be thought to spring from these evils: while equity, mutual respect, and harmony should be studied, and many interests and supposed points of honour, preceded from that strife and contention may be excluded.

V. 16—30. Many seem to be sorry for those crimes

which expose them to present punishment; and the language and semblance of repentance are easily imitated: but it is safest for us to judge favourably of others; if we do err, to err on the side of candour and clemency; and to leave it to the heart-searching God to determine between the upright and the hypocritical.—Peculiar mercies from God should dispose us to be the more merciful to others: and our best friends must be considered as adversaries, when they would persuade us to act contrary to our conscience and our duty. (*Note, Matt. 16:21—23.*)—Perseverance in well-doing will at length refute slanderous accusations: true affection for our friends, and sympathy with them in their afflictions, will create an indifference to the pleasures of sense and external decorations: and when they are beloved for the Lord's sake, as well as for personal obligations, the effect will be much greater, and more permanent. But this sorrow shall be turned into joy, on account of their present success, or in the prospect of their future happiness, and our own in fellowship with them: and these hopes and comforts tend to wean the soul more and more from the trifling interests of this world.—Credulity in believing slanders often leads pious persons into difficulties, and covers them with shame: and no offenders are so seldom treated with proper severity as backbiters.

V. 31—43. When God gives largeness of heart, as well as great wealth, he qualifies a man to be a public blessing: and doing good liberally is the proper pleasure and advantage of wealth. For the little pleasure of outward enjoyments quickly grows insipid; old age destroys the relish for them; and death must soon separate a man from his riches, and then he must give an account to God of his stewardship.—It becomes us therefore, as we advance in life, to relinquish worldly pursuits before we be torn from them; and leaving to our juniors those scenes of business, or of pleasure, where reflection is too often dissipated, and the voice of conscience stunted, to prefer retirement and privacy, where we may best prepare for the closing hour. Even the cities where the truths of God are most professed, and his ordinances are best administered; and those courts, where the prince encourages and sets an example of true piety; are ensnaring places, through the multitudes of another character which frequent them. And, though allowances should be made to youth, in matters *inexpedient* to old age; yet the sooner and the more entirely young people devote themselves to God, the safer and happier they will be.—It is our duty to recompense to the children the kindness shown us by their parents, and to pray for them that they may have grace properly to use their temporal good things.—Envy and anger often interrupt the most promising appearances, and in quarrels generally both parties are culpable. A supposed neglect excites displeasure; an angry expression provokes a retort; words grow warmer and fiercer. Thus the best designs are disconcerted, and much evil is committed: when it might be otherwise, if men would watch against their own pride, and be careful not to affront that of others; remembering that a "soft answer turneth away wrath." (*Notes, Prov. 15:1. 26:4, 5.*)—But here again, some glimpses may be discerned of the glorious character and kingdom of David's Son and David's Lord. Being anointed by the Father to be his King upon his holy hill of Zion, he reigns over a willing people, who deem it their privilege to be his subjects. Once indeed they were rebels, and numbers of their associates perished in rebellion: but when they became sensible of their danger, they were fearful or reluctant to submit unto him; till his ministers, by representing his tender love, and his promises of pardon and preferment, through the concurring influences of his Spirit, bowed their hearts to a humble willingness that he should reign over them: then he readily pardoned and accepted them, and upon no accusation will he cast out, or cut off, the greatest offender who cries for his mercy. His friends sincerely mourn when his cause is run down, and rejoice when it prospers, whether they prosper in the world or not. He will recompense those, who from love to him feed his servants: he will assign them a place in his holy city, the new Jerusalem; he will feast them upon the provisions

CHAPTER XX.

Sheba draws the men of Israel into a revolt, 1, 2. David's shut up his ten concubines, 3. Amasa, being sent to call together the men of Judah, is murdered by Joab, who seizes the command and pursues Sheba, 4-13. He besieges Abel; whither Sheba had fled, 14, 15. Through the interposition of a wise woman, Sheba's head is thrown over the wall, and the revolt is terminated, 16-22. David's officers, 23-28.

AND ^athere happened to be there ^ba man of ^cBelial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, ^d"We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel."

2 So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but ^ethe men of Judah clave unto their king, ^ffrom Jordan even to Jerusalem.

3 ¶ And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ^gten women ^hhis concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ⁱward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were ^jshut up unto the day of their death, ^kliving in widowhood.

4 ¶ Then said the king to ^lAmasa, ^m"Assemble me the men of Judah within three days, and be thou here present."

5 So Amasa went to assemble the ⁿmen of Judah: but he ^otarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him.

6 And David said to ^pAbishai, Now shall Sheba the son of Bichri ^qdo us more harm than ^rdid Absalom: take thou ^sthy lord's servants and pursue after him, lest he get him fenced cities and ^tescape us.

7 And there went out after him ^uJoab's men, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men: and they went out of Jerusalem, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

a 19:41-43. Ps. 54:19. b 23:6. Deut. 13:13. Judg. 19:22. 1 Sam. 2:12. 30:22. Ps. 17:13. Prov. 26:21. Hab. 1:12,13. c 15:10. Judg. 3:27. Prov. 24:21,22. 25:8. d 19:43. 1 Kings 12:16. 2 Chr. 10:16. Luke 19:14,27. e 19:41. Ps. 62:9. 118:8-10. Prov. 17:14. f 1 John 6:56-68. Acts 11:23. g 19:15,40,41. h 15:16, 16:1, 21:22. i Heb. a house of ward. Gen. 40:5. j Heb. bound. k Heb. in widowhood. l 19:15. 17:25. 19:13. 1 Chr. 2:17. m Heb. call. n 1 Sam. 18:8. 19:18. 3:30. 39:9,10,14. 18:2,12. 21:17. 25:16. 1 Sam. 26:6. 1 Chr. 11:20. 12:16. m 19:30. n 11:11. 1 Kings 1:33. o Heb. deliver himself from our eyes. o 18:2. 8:16.

of his house, and will bless their children after them. Alas! that it must be added, that while the King himself is so plenteous in mercy; many of his professed subjects are envious and contentious with each other, and quarrel about the most trivial concerns; which prevents much good, does immense mischief, and occasions lamentable scandals. May he at length teach all who are called by his name, to follow the example of his humility and meekness; and to rejoice in seeing the common cause promoted, let who will have the credit of being the instrument; and may all "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!" (Note, Eph. 4:1-6.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. The disputants at first professed to vie with each other in loyal affection for their prince; (Note, 19:40-43.) yet most of them were really actuated by ambition of pre-eminence: one party confiding in nearness of relation to David, the other in numbers. At length therefore the men of Israel, who had boasted that they had *ten parts* in David, were so irritated, that they would have *no part* in him, but preferred a man of Belial before him: intimating, that they had no share in his regard, which was engrossed by the men of Judah; and therefore they would have nothing more to do with him. (Note, 1 Kings 12:16.)—Sheba, it is probable, had been a commander under Amasa in Absalom's revolt, and possessed great influence among the men of Israel; so that, when he blew a trumpet, and gave the signal, instead of returning home, they generally followed him as the leader of another rebellion. "But the men of Judah clave unto their king;" and probably a few of the men of Israel; some from fear, and others from attachment.—Shimei did not join this rebellion, or he would have been punished.

V. 3. The confinement and retired maintenance of these women was the only measure, which could be adopted, in justice or prudence; unless they had been found deserving of severer punishment. The less they were seen or heard of, the better; and perhaps their seclusion might be a benefit to their souls.

V. 4, 5. Amasa's appointment to be commander of the army, in the place of Joab, must have been very unpopular with all those, who had fought and conquered under that commander: and as Amasa had not been successful for Absalom, perhaps his own party did not entirely confide in him. This might occasion some unexpected delay in raising an army: but the men of Judah seem to have been more eager to dispute about their king, than to engage in battle for him.

V. 6, 7. *Thy lord's servants.*] That is, *Joab's soldiers*, or a body of men which had been more immediately com-

8 When they *were* at the great stone which is *in* Gibeon, ^aAmasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle ^bwith a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.

9 And Joab said to Amasa, ^c"Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand ^dto kiss him."

10 But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was ^ein Joab's hand: so ^fhe smote him therewith in the fifth ^grib, ^hand shed out his bowels to the ground, and ⁱstruck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri.

11 And one of Joab's men stood by him, and said, ^j"He that favoureth Joab, and he that ^kis ^lfor David, ^mlet him go after Joab."

12 And ⁿAmasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

13 When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri. [Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto ^oAbel, and to Beth-maachah, and all the ^pBerites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him.

15 And they came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah, and they ^qcast up a bank against the city, and ^r"it stood in the trench: and all the people that ^swere with Joab ^tbattered the wall to throw it down."

18. 15:18. 29:22,23. 1 Kings 1:38,44. p 2:19. 5:30. q 4:5. r Ps. 55:21. Prov. 26:24-26. Mic. 7:2. s Matt. 26:18,49. Luke 22:47,48. t 9. Jvlg. 3:21. 1 Chr. 12:2. u 2:23. 3:27. Gen. 4:8. 1 Kings 2:5,6,31-34. v Acts 1:18,19. ¶ Heb. doubled not his stroke. 1 Sam. 26:8. y 6,7,13,21. z 4. 2 Kings 9:32. a 17:25. ¶ a. 9:16. 55:23. Prov. 24:21,22. b 1 Kings 15:20. 2 Kings 15:29. 2 Chr. 16:4. c Josh. 18:25. Beeroth. d 2 Kings 19:32. Jer. 32:24. 33:4. Luke 19:43. ¶ Or, it stood against the outmost wall. ¶ Heb. married to throw down.

manded by him. (Marg. Ref. n. o.) David would not employ Joab upon this occasion, because he intended to remove him from his service: but, by assigning the service to his brother Abishai, he effectually made way for Joab's resuming the command, in defiance of him.

V. 8-10. Amasa, at length arriving with the troops which he had collected, took upon him the command of the army: and Joab seemed very cheerfully to submit; following the army as a private person, and professing zeal for the cause of David, whilst he was meditating revenge and murder! He had contrived, that his sword should fall from its scabbard, as if by chance, when he approached Amasa, that without suspicion he might have it drawn in his hand, when he saluted him: and thus, pretending brotherly love, (for he was a near relation,) and in the very expression of endeared friendship, he basely murdered him at one blow. Amasa could not but know Joab's daring and revengeful character, and his vexation at being superseded by the commander of that very rebellion which he had crushed; yet he did not suspect his intention, or attempt to avoid the fatal blow! perhaps not apprehending danger from the sword, because Joab held it in his *left* hand. But it was the Lord's righteous will, that Amasa should thus suffer the punishment due to his former treason. (Notes, 3:26,27. 18:14. Judg. 9:50-57.)—Joab, confiding in the favour of the army, by this conduct set both the king and public justice at defiance, and declared his resolution to keep his place in contempt of all opposition. (Notes, 3:38,39. 1 Kings 2:5,6, 28-34.) Having therefore given Amasa a mortal wound, he left him in the agonies of death, resumed the command of the troops, and marched against the common enemy, without concern or delay!

V. 11-13. By the artifice of representing the cause of Joab as united with that of David, the people in general were left in suspense, whether Joab acted by the king's orders, or against them: but when the body of Amasa was removed and covered, they followed their old commander without further hesitation.

He that *favoureth Joab.* (11) "Delighteth (אָהַב) in Joab, and in David." Joab is placed first. Probably many who had highly favoured Joab, felt indignant on this occasion.

V. 14, 15. Sheba endeavoured to raise forces, through the several tribes of Israel: but it is probable, that the elders who at first had followed him, upon recollection, and from dread of another civil war, had generally withdrawn from him; and therefore he had little success. So that with only a few followers, chiefly from Beeroth of city of Benjamin, he at length shut himself up in Abel-beth-maachah, in the tribe of Naphtali, as some of the citizens seem at first to have

16 ¶ Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee.

17 And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, *Art thou Joab?* and he answered, *I am he.* Then she said unto him, *Hear the words of thine handmaid.* And he answered, *I do hear.*

18 Then she spake, saying, *They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter.*

19 *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?*

20 And Joab answered and said, *Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.*

21 The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri thy name, hath

lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, this head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

22 Then the woman went unto all the people sin her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

23 ¶ Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites: and over the Pelethites:

24 And Adoram was over the tribute: and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder:

25 And Sheva was scribe: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests:

26 And Ira also the Jairite was a chief ruler about David.

e 14:2, 1 Sam. 25:3, 32, 33. Ec. 9:14—18. f 14:12, 1 Sam. 25:24. *Or, they plainly spake in the beginning, saying, Surely they will ask of Abel, and so make an end. g 20:10, 11. g Gen. 16:23. Rom. 13:5, 4. 1 Tim. 2:2. h Judg. 5:7. Ex. 18:45—49. 117:16. Num. 16:32, 26:10. Ps. 124:3. Jer. 61:34, 44. Lam. 2:2, 5. 16. 1 Cor. 15:54. 2 Cor. 5:4. k 21:3. Ex. 19:5, 6. Deut. 32:9. 1 Sam. 26:19. 123:17. Job 21:16, 22:18. m 10. Prov. 28:13. Jer. 17:9. Luke 10:29. n 1. Judg. 2:9. 7:24. 2 Kings 5:22. Jer. 41:5. 50:19. † Heb. by his name. o 23:

18. 1 Sam. 24:6, 26:9. p 17:2, 3. 2 Kings 10:7. John 18:4—8. q Ec. 7:19. 9:14—18. r 1. 2:28. 18:15. † Heo. were scattered. s 3:28—39. 11:6—21. Ec. 11. t 8:16—18. 1 Chr. 18:15—17. u See on 7. v 1 Kings 4:6. 12:18. x 1 King 4:3. § Or, remembrance. y 6:17. 1 Kings 4:4. 1 Chr. 18:16. Shasha. s 28. 38. 1 Chr. 11:40. Ithra. s Judg. 10:4, 5. † Or, a prince. 8:18. Gen. 41:43. Ec. 2:14.

been favourable to his cause: but when Joab was so far pushed the siege, as to fill up the trench, and to fix his engines close to the wall to batter it; he may be supposed, that they began to dread the consequences.

V. 16—19. Joab seems to have taken it for granted, that the citizens in general were firmly attached to Sheba; and so did not propose terms of peace, or require them to deliver him up; and they appear to have concluded, that there was no safety except in resistance. But the fatal effects of this misunderstanding were prevented by the timely interposition of a woman of noted wisdom and prudence. In her argument with Joab, she seems to have referred to the law which required, that before siege was laid even to a foreign city, peace should be offered if the citizens would submit; and much more to a city, which had hitherto been "peaceful and faithful, and a mother in Israel," as protecting the adjacent villages. (Note, Deut. 20:10—18.) And she tacitly intimated that Joab, by neglecting this previous measure, was about to destroy the city, to the public injury of the nation, and so to "swallow up the inheritance of the Lord." This seems the proper interpretation of her expostulation; and it accords with the marginal reading: though she expressed herself rather obscurely, perhaps for fear of giving offence. *As if she had said, When the people saw thee lay siege to the city, they said, Surely they will ask us, if we will have peace, and then we shall soon come to an agreement, and have an end. Bp. Patrick. Some adhering to the translation in the text suppose, that this city had long been noted, as the residence of wise men, who had settled differences by prudent and equitable accommodation; so that it was become proverbial, 'that the way to terminate matters in litigation, was to ask counsel at Abel': and therefore that city ought not rashly to be destroyed.

V. 20—22. Joab, though guilty of private revenge and murder, and setting his king at defiance, was, in other respects, attentive to the public interest, and very willing to settle the dispute: if the citizens therefore would deliver up the traitor, he would not injure them. Thus Sheba's head purchased the safety of the city, and terminated the rebellion: (Notes, Prov. 17:11. Ec. 9:13—18.) and Joab without fear or shame, (apparently glorying as much in revenging himself, as in serving the public,) returned to David as though nothing had happened: and he was now become too powerful to be removed, or called to account, or punished, without endangering another rebellion.

V. 23—26. Note, 8:15—18.—Tribute. (24) This office is not before mentioned. Perhaps, at first, the contributions of the nation had been but small; in a measure voluntary, and placed under the management of the other officers: but now regular taxes were paid; and the tribute from the conquered nations especially tended to render this new office requisite. (Notes, 1 Kings 4:4—6. 12:18.)—Abiathar was the high-priest: Ahimelech his son is not mentioned. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13. We must expect one trial after another, for our salutary chastisement, till we reach the place where sin and sorrow are for ever excluded.—Angry disputants commonly misunderstand, or misinterpret, one another's words: proud men will either manage every thing their own way, or entirely refuse their concurrence; and when greatly enraged, they are apt to avenge themselves on the innocent, and on persons whom they profess to love, instead of those who have affronted them.—The favour of the many is no more to be depended on, than that of the great: and what indeed have men a right to expect, when "Hosannah to the Son of David," was so soon by the multitude changed into "Crucify him, crucify him?" All appearance, however, of partiality,

in our conduct towards those who are equally related to us or have an equal claim upon us, ought to be avoided: for it often excites discord in families, churches, and kingdoms.—Many a vehement quarrel would spend its fury in angry words, and then die away, if some "man of Belial" were not present, to sound the trumpet of public contention. Satan, if permitted,—will be sure to excite such ringleaders of dissension: and God, in wise and holy sovereignty, is pleased often to permit it, that he may execute vengeance, or inflict correction, according to his righteous purposes. Hence nations are visited with war and bloodshed, especially the dire scourge of civil wars; and the church with pestilent divisions, and virulent controversies.—When immoderate and inexperienced provision is made for sensual gratification, it will surely terminate in grief and shame; and obscure retirement best suits those who are become infamous by sin.—The most powerful cannot effect all that they wish, or all that they see to be right; nay, they cannot attempt it without danger: for at last they can only do, what the many can be prevailed with to concur in.—Consequences should be well weighed before important measures are adopted; for resentment and disgust are dangerous counsellors.—Our inbred lusts, like able wicked men, cannot be brought under, without great difficulties, when they have acquired a habit of domineering: the beginning of evil should therefore in every thing be decisively resisted.—By degrees men grow more and more bold and unfeeling in the commission of crimes of every kind; until they vindicate and glory in their villainies: and when such daring offenders are actuated by ambition or revenge, they will not be restrained by the ties of relationship, or friendship; nay, they will employ the guise and language of love, to obtain the opportunity of perpetrating the most atrocious murders: but the more of contrivance, or of dissimulation, is connected with malice, the deeper is its malignity.—The murderer may conceal his crimes, or prosper in his ways for a season, and elude or outbrave the justice of man: but let him not expect to escape the vengeance of God.—Vain are earthly distinctions and preferments, which excite so much envy and enmity, without affording any additional security to man's uncertain life: may we then be ambitious "of that honour which cometh from God only?"—Great abilities, strong attachment to the interests of the public, and eminent services, performed with firmness, prudence, and clemency, constitute a great, but not always a good man: and a person thus peculiarly distinguished, being the slave of one imperious lust, may violate every moral obligation in order to its indulgence; though such treachery, cruelty, and injustice seem to "be far from him," in other parts of his conduct.

V. 14—26. Wisdom is not restricted to rank or sex: and it does not consist in extensive knowledge or ingenious speculations; but in understanding how to act as circumstances arise, in order that calamities may be averted, and benefits secured, personal, relative, and public.—Contending parties would often be reconciled if they properly understood each other; hence the benefit of a prudent and impartial mediation: and the just punishment of one atrocious criminal, is frequently mercy to great numbers.—Thus the sinner persists in his rebellion, till, through the Saviour's mediation, he perceives that his offended Lord does not seek his destruction, but that of his sins: then he becomes willing that they should be crucified, especially, the strongest and most domineering of them; and receiving pardon and grace from God, he becomes peaceable, faithful, and useful in Israel.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1—3. It is not certain, whether this famine occurred in the order of time in which it is related, or earlier in the reign of David.—It does not seem to have been very grievous, and the scarcity of the first and second year occasioned no great alarm: at which con-

CHAPTER XXI.

A famine prevails for three years; as a judgment on the land, for Saul's cruelty to the Gibeonites, who being asked, require seven of his descendants, and hang them up before the Lord, 1-9. Rizpah watches their bodies; David buries their bones, with those of Saul and Jonathan, in the sepulchre of Kish; and the famine ceases, 10-14. In several battles with the Philistines, four of David's mighty men slay four giants, 15-22.

THEN there was ^aa famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David ^binquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, ^cIt is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

2 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now ^dthe Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them, ^ein his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

3 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and ^fwherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may ^gbless the inheritance of the LORD?

4 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have ^hno silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, ⁱthat will I do for you.

5 And they answered the king, ^kThe man that consumed us, and that ^ldevised against us, that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

6 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will ^mhang them up unto the LORD ⁿin Gibeah of Saul, ^owhom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.

7 But the king spared ^pMephibosheth, the son

of Jonathan, the son of Saul, ^qbecause of the LORD's oath that ^rwas between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

8 But the king took the two sons of ^sRizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of ^tMichal the daughter of Saul, whom she ^ubrought up for Adriel, the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill ^vbefore the LORD: and they fell ^wall seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, ^xin the beginning of barley-harvest.

10 And ^yRizpah the daughter of Aiah ^ztook sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, ^{aa}from the beginning of harvest ^{ab}until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither ^{ac}the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

11 And it was ^{ad}told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

12 ^{ae}¶ And David went and took ^{af}the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of ^{ag}Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul ^{ah}in Gilboa:

13 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son: and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

14 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his

^a Gen. 12:10, 26:11, 41:57, 42:1, 43:1. Lev. 26:19, 20, 25. 1 Kings 17:1, 18:2. 2 Kings 6:25-31. Jer. 14:1, &c. * Heb. sought the face. b 5:19, 23. Num. 7:21. 1 Sam. 23:2, 4, 11. Job 5:8-10, 10:2. Ps. 50:15, 91:15. c Josh. 7:1, 11:12. d 1 Sam. 22:17-19. e Josh. 9:3, 15-21. f 1 Deut. 7:16. 1 Sam. 14:44, 13:8, 9. g 1 Kings 10:16, 31. Luke 9:4, 55. John 16:2. Rom. 10:2. Gal. 4:17. g Ex. 32:10. Lev. 17:1-15. 2 Sam. 6:6, 7. Heb. 9:22, 10:4-12. h 20:15. i Or, It is not silver nor gold that we have to do with Saul, or his house; neither pertains it to us to kill, &c. j Ps. 49:7, 8. 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. k 1. Esh. 9:24, 25. Matt. 7:2. l Or, cut us off. Dan. 9:26. 1:17, 23, 18:10. Gen. 40:19, 22. Num.

25:4, 5. Deut. 21:22. Josh. 8:29, 10:25. Ezra 6:11. Esth. 9:10, 13, 14. Matt. 27:5. m 1 Sam. 10:26. 11:4. n Or, the chosen of the LORD. 1 Sam. 9:16, 17, 10:1. 24. Act. 13:21. o 4:4, 9:10, 16:4, 19:25. p 1 Sam. 16:3, 20:8, 15, 17, 42, 23:18. q 3:7. r Or, Michal's sister. 1 Sam. 18:19. s Heb. bare to. q See on 6:21. Ex. 20:5. Num. 35:31-34. Deut. 21:1-9. 2 Kings 24:3, 4. r Ruth 1:22. s 8, 3:7. t 1 Kings 21:27. Joel 1:13. u See on 3. x Deut. 11:4, 1 Kings 18:41-45. Jer. 5:24, 25, 14:22. Hos. 6:3. Joel 2:23. Zech. 10:1. y Gen. 40:19. Ez. 39:4. z 2:4. Ruth 2:11, 12. a 2:5-7. 1 Sam. 31:14-13. b Josh 17:11. Bethshean. 1 Sam. 31:10. c 1:6, 21. 1 Sam. 28:4, 31:1. 1 Chr. 10:1, 3.

tinued the third year also, David understood that it was a national judgment, and inquired of God, for what particular sin he thus contended with his people; perhaps thinking of his own crimes in the matter of Uriah.—The history of Saul gives no account of the transaction which was declared to be the cause of this calamity: but it seems that Saul, in order to promote the supposed interests of Israel and Judah, attempted to extirpate the Gibeonites, who were of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan: though they had submitted to Israel, and had quietly served them for ages; and were protected by the public faith, and a solemn oath ratifying a covenant of peace with them. (Notes, Josh. 9.) Yet he did not attempt to extirpate the Amalekites, Philistines, and other hostile nations, whom God commanded him to destroy! These were able and determined to resist, and could not be subdued without apparent danger and difficulty; while the inoffensive Gibeonites might be oppressed with ease, and apparent safety. Perhaps he disliked them the more, for being peculiarly devoted to the service of the priests and the sanctuary; and attempted to destroy them when he slew the priests: (Notes, 1 Sam. 22:9-19.) but it does not appear, that many of them dwelt at Nob; and neither they nor the Levites are mentioned in that transaction. Nor could it have been said, that the slaughter been made by Doeg on that occasion, that "Saul sought to slay them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah." It seems that Saul's relations also were disposed to cruelty, and concurred in this bloodshed; and that many Israelites had willingly assisted in the persecution.—The violation of the oath of God, the treachery of Israel towards the Gibeonites, and the murder of them, formed an enormous load of national guilt, which had never been expiated by the punishment of the guilty: and it pleased God in this manner, and so long after, to proceed against the nation for it; to show them his abhorrence of such crimes; to teach rulers to keep at a distance from similar offences themselves, and to punish them in others; and to intimate that the chief punishment of sin is after the death of the offender. And God informed David of the cause of the visitation; that he might take proper measures for expiating the national guilt. (Notes, Num. 35:31-34. Deut. 21:1-9.)

V. 4-7. As God accepted the expiation here demanded, we must suppose, that both the inquiry of David, and the answer of the Gibeonites, were directed by some open or secret intimation from him. They did not demand their own liberty, or any accession of wealth, or the death of any other Israelite: but that, in the character of the avengers of the blood of their brethren, they might be permitted to put to death seven of Saul's descendants; whom they would "hang up unto the LORD," as a sacrifice to his justice, and an ex-

ample to others not to injure or oppress them. They were willing to undertake the trouble, and to bear the odium of the execution; and would do it in Saul's own city, for a warning to those who had witnessed or assisted in the oppression.—As David consented to this measure in obedience to God, and for the public welfare, and not out of private resentment; he did not violate his oath to Saul: (Notes, 1 Sam. 24:16-22.) but as he could spare one at least of Saul's descendants, his covenant, and his oath of sacred friendship with Jonathan, required the preservation of his son in preference to all the rest.

V. 8. "The five sons of Michal," here mentioned, seem to have been the children of her sister Merab, whom Michal had adopted, and brought up as her own. (1 Sam. 18:19.)—This Barzillai is called "the Meholathite;" to distinguish him from Barzillai the Gileadite, before spoken of. (19:31. Judg. 7:22. 1 Kings 4:12, 19:16.)

V. 9-14. As these persons were hung up by the express appointment of God, for an anathema, an accursed thing, a national atonement to divine justice; they were left on the tree or gibbet, till some tokens of the Lord's reconciliation were afforded by seasonable rains. (Note, Deut. 21:22, 23.) They were not considered to be within the meaning of the law, against the bodies of malefactors being left on a tree all night: for that statute meant, that those, who were put to death for breaking human laws, should not be treated as "accursed of God." Indeed he may command that, in a particular case, which he prohibits in general: provided it be not intrinsically unjust. He ordered the children to be put to death for the parents' crimes, though magistrates in general were forbidden to do it; and in like manner he might require this treatment of these dead bodies, though, in some respects, contrary to the general rule.—Rizpah improperly fed and indulged her grief by a useless attention to the dead bodies: yet her case was truly pitiable, and her patient, self-denying natural affection extraordinary. David doubtless sympathized with the bereaved and aged parent; and gladly embraced the opportunity, as soon as it was proper, of relieving her from her melancholy charge, by decently interring them, together with the bones of Saul and his other sons: and by this he avowed that he had not acted out of disrespect to Saul or his family. (Notes, 2:5-7. 1 Sam. 31:14-13.)—The first rain was a token of reconciliation: but after the expiation was finished, the scarcity was removed in answer to prayer; and doubtless the Gibeonites joined, in seeking "this blessing for the inheritance of the LORD." (3.)

V. 15-22. (Marg. Ref.) All these events seem to have occurred, in the order here related, and towards the latter end of David's reign. The Philistines, though frequently van-

son ^aburied in the country of Benjamin in ^bZelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that ^cGod was entreated for the land.

15 ^dMoreover, ^ethe Philistines had yet war again with Israel; and David went down, and his servants with him, and fought against the Philistines: ^fand David waxed faint.

16 And Ishbi-benob, which was ^gof the sons of ^hthe giant, (the weight of ⁱwhose spear weighed three hundred *shekels* of brass in weight,) he, being girded with a new sword, ^kthought to have slain David.

17 But ^lAbishai the son of Zeruiah ^msuccoured him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore unto him, saying, ⁿThou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou ^oquench not the light of Israel.

18 And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then ^pSibbechai the Hushathite slew ^qSaph, which was ^rof the sons of ^sthe giant.

19 And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where ^tElhanan the son of ^uJaaregeregim, a Bethlehemit, slew the brother of ^vGoli-

^d 9:32-41, 2. ^e Josh. 7:26. 1 Kings 18:40, 41. Jer. 14:1-7. Joel 2:18, 19. Am. 7:1-6. Jon. 1:15. Zech. 6:8. ^f 5:17, 22. 1 Chr. 20:4. ^g Josh. 14:10, 11. Ps. 71:9, 19. 73:26. Ec. 12:3. Is. 40:29-30. Jer. 9:23, 24. 1 Pet. 1:24, 25. 1 Gen. 6:4. Num. 13:32, 33. 1. ent. 1:28. 2:10, 21. 3:11, 2. 2 Sam. 17:45. ^h Or, *Rapha*, 18:20. ⁱ marg. 5:18. Gen. 14:5. ^j Heb. *the staff, or the head*. ^k 1 Sam. 17:43-51. ^l See on 20:6-10. ^m 22:19. Ps. 45:1. 144:10. ⁿ 18:3. ^o 14:7. 1 Kings 11:36. 15:4. Ps. 132:17. John 1:8, 9. 5:35. ^p Heb. *canale, or lamp*. ^q 1 Chr. 11:23. 20:4. ^r Or, *Sippai*. 1 Chr. 20:4. ^s Or, *Rapha*. 16:20. ^t marg. ^u q 1 Chr. 11:23.

quished, were not totally subjugated: and the remains of the Anakims, of enormous size and strength, gave David and his servants, not only an opportunity of signaling their courage, but repeated proofs of the Lord's truth and goodness.—David himself was on one occasion in imminent danger of death, by the hands of Ishbi-benob, who seems to have been Goliath's son, (as indeed do the others here mentioned,) and probably aimed to revenge his father's death: and David's life was deemed too valuable to Israel to be any more exposed, now that his strength and activity began to fail him. For, as king, prophet, and psalmist, he was the "light of Israel," and a type of "the Light of the world." (Notes, 18:3, 23:4.)

Six fingers, &c. (20.) Other instances of this peculiarity are recorded by historians; and the author has been informed, by most indisputable testimony, of one such who is now living.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Every affliction arises from sin, and should excite us to repentance: but some troubles loudly proclaim that they were especially sent to "bring sin to remembrance." (Note, 1 Kings 17:18.) In this case, we prolong our sufferings by neglecting self-examination, and prayer to the Lord to show us in what we have offended, if the cause be not already plain to our consciences: and, however reluctant, we must submit to this, before we can expect relief from his mercy.—While the grand outlines of the Lord's government are evidently righteous, some of his judgments are far too deep for us: but faith believes those appointments to be just, which assume a different appearance, and waits for the more complete display of the glory of God in them.—By the punishment of children for the sins of their parents, and of subjects for those of their princes, even after their death, he marks his abhorrence of destructive crimes, gives a check to enormous wickedness, and teaches us to pray for our rulers, and to let our passions out of love to our offspring: and he will so arrange the whole, that no individual shall in the event have cause to complain of injustice.—That our guilty land should experience successive years of plenty, calls for admiring gratitude: and we need not wonder, if our misused abundance should be punished with as great a scarcity. Yet when a scarce season occurs, how few are disposed to inquire of the Lord, concerning the *sinful cause*; while the ingenuity of numbers is employed in discovering the *second causes*, by which he is pleased to work; and the impatience and malignity of multitudes are expressed by outrages against those who are, generally without cause, charged with being the authors of the calamity!—The Lord will plead for those who cannot or will not avenge themselves; and the prayers of the poor, either for or against us, are of very great efficacy. The blood of nobles is not an adequate, though the only required and accepted atonement, to expiate the guilt of the murder of the meanest person, in order that the wrath of God may be averted from the land: and violated oaths and covenants will be severely punished, either in this world or the next, let the criminal be ever so highly exalted among his fellow-creatures.—Our zeal, either for the public good or the supposed cause of religion, is *naturally* exercised in a perverse manner, and as if in contempt of God's commandments: but an apparently easy and safe exertion, which consists with our self-indulgence, and flatters our pride and lusts, is the temptation which pre-

ath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam.

20 And there was ^ayet a battle in Gath, where was a man of ^bgreat stature; that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to ^cthe giant.

21 And when he ^ddefied Israel, Jonathan the son of ^eShimeah the brother of David slew him.

22 These ^ffour were born to the giant in Gath, and ^gfell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

CHAPTER XXII.

The introduction to David's psalm of thanksgiving, 1. He professes his confidence and joy in God, 2, 3. He states his trials and dangers, and celebrates the praises of God for surprising deliverances, 4-20. He avows his integrity, and shows the method of the Lord's dealings with men, 21-29. He ascribes to God all the glory of his victories, 29-36. He exults, with grateful praises, in the destruction or subjection of all his enemies, 37-44. He anticipates the submission of the nations, and glories in the salvation of God, and his mercies to him and to his seed for ever, 45-51.

AND ^aDavid spake unto the Lord ^bthe words of this song ^cin the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and ^dout of the hand of Saul:

2 And he said, ^eThe Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer;

3 ^fThe God of my rock; ^gin him will I trust: ^hhe

¹ Or, *Jair*. 1 Chr. 20:5. ^r 1 Sam. 17:4, &c. ^s 1 Chr. 20:6. ^{**} Or, *Rapha*. 15:15. ^{marg.} ^t 1 Or, *reproached*. 1 Sam. 17:10, 36, 35. 2 Kings 19:23. ¹ 1 Chr. 27:32. ² 1 Sam. 16:9. 17:13. ³ *Shammah*. 1 Chr. 2:13. ⁴ *Shimma*. ⁵ 1 Chr. 20:8. ⁶ Josh. 14:12. ⁷ Ps. 106:12. 108:13. 118:15. ⁸ Ec. 9:11. ⁹ Jer. 2:23. ¹⁰ Rom. 8:31, 37. ¹¹ a. 50:14. 103:1-6. 116:1, &c. ¹² b. Ex. 15:1. ¹³ Judg. 5:1. ¹⁴ c. 49. ¹⁵ Ps. 18:1, 37. 34:19. ¹⁶ Is. 12:1, &c. 2 Cor. 1:10. ¹⁷ 2 Tim. 4:18. ¹⁸ Jer. 7:16-17. ¹⁹ d. 1 Sam. 23:14. 24:15, 25, 29. 26:34. ²⁰ e. Deut. 32:4. 1 Sam. 2:2. ²¹ Ps. 18:2. 51:3. 42:8, 71:3. ²² Matt. 16:18. ²³ Heb. 2:13.

vails against us, unless the grace of God teach us a better way.—Little do we know what may befall our children, or what anguish they may occasion us: but if we educate them in the fear of God, and commit them to his keeping, he will either exempt us from heavy trials about them, or else support us under them. In every case resignation to the will of God is our duty and interest; and whatever cherishes inordinate grief, is sinful, rebellious, and tormenting, however specious its appearance.—All personal respects must yield to the command of God: yet, in subordination to it, a tribute of gratitude is due to the memory of our friends, and of respect to our civil governors.—While we are able, we ought to venture and labour for the public welfare; but we cannot exceed our appointed measure of service: and when bodily vigour fails, some are so useful by their counsels, prayers, and examples, that their lives should be taken care of as a public blessing.—Strength and courage often increase men's pride; but far more frequently hasten, than retard, the stroke of death; the unexpected approach of which miserably causes all their vain thoughts to perish.—The valour and affection of friends should be acknowledged; and the strongest need the assistance of the more feeble: but the glory of every thing belongs to God.—Through the atonement of Jesus who performed all that was commanded, and through his intercession, the Lord is willingly entreated for sinners: and the believer, having peace with God, needs not fear the stoutest foe who defies Israel; for though sometimes he be in apparent danger, he will at length be made "more than conqueror, through him who loved" and died for sinners.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. It is probable, that this song of praise was composed early in the reign of David, and soon after he was finally delivered from the persecuting rage of Saul. Perhaps it stands in this place, as it was found among those compositions, which David used in his private devotions: and in the book of Psalms, as it was corrected and delivered to the chief singer, to be sung in the public service of the sanctuary, from time to time, on occasions of recent deliverances, as well as in remembrance of former mercies. (Ps. 18: title.) The variations are immaterial; though the Jewish writers enumerate no less than seventy-four. Few of them, however, need be here particularly noted. (Note, Ps. 18:1.)—The first verse of this chapter, forms the title of the eighteenth psalm, with some alterations; the most remarkable of which is, the insertion of the words, "The servant of the Lord," in which it seems, the Psalmist deemed himself more honoured, than in being a renowned conqueror, and a very prosperous king.—He had had many enemies, both among his own people and the surrounding nations: but Saul especially is mentioned, as having been more formidable, malicious, and unwearied than any of them.—In the whole of this sacred hymn, David seems immediately to celebrate providential deliverances; yet he uses language, which may fairly be accommodated to spiritual blessings. He appears also primarily to speak of the Lord's dealings with himself: yet he was led by the prophetic Spirit to utter many things, which may with great propriety be applied to the Redeemer's sufferings and victories, of whom David was an evident and remarkable type. (Notes, Ps. 2: 22:1. 40:1-5. 69:1-3. 88:1, 2.)

V. 2, 3. The eighteenth psalm apparently begins, "I will

is my ^aShield, and ^bthe Horn of my salvation, ^cmy high Tower, and ^dmy Refuge, ^emy Saviour; ^fthou savest me from violence.

4 I ^awill call on the Lord, *who is* ^bworthy to be praised: ^cso shall I be saved from mine enemies.

5 When the ^awaves of death compassed me, the floods of ^bungodly men made me afraid;

6 ^aThe ^bis sorrows of hell compassed me about; the ^csnarers of death prevented me;

7 In ^amy distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to ^bmy God: and he ^cdid hear my voice ^dout of his temple, and ^emy cry *did enter* into his ears.

8 Then ^athe earth shook and trembled: ^bthe foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

9 There ^awent up a smoke ^bout of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: ^ccoals were kindled by it.

10 He ^abowed the heavens also, and came down; and ^bdarkness *was* under his feet.

11 And he rode upon ^aa cherub, and did fly: and he was seen ^bupon the wings of the wind.

g Gen. 15:1. Dent. 33:29. Ps. 3:3, 5:12, 28:7, 84:9, 111:5-9, 115:9-11. Prov. 30:5. f 1 Sam. 2:1. Luke 1:69. 151. Ps. 61:3. 144:2. Prov. 18:10. k Ps. 9:9. 18:2. 27:5. 32:7. 46:7, 11:1, 71:7. 142:4. Is. 32:2. Jer. 16:19. l Is. 12:2. 45:21. Luke 1:47, 11:3. 4:6. m 49. Ps. 35:9, 72:14. 89:14. 140:1, 11. n Ps. 116:24, 13:17. o 14:1. Ps. 11:3. 3:7. 10:2. 118:1-11. Rev. 4:11. 5:12. p Ps. 34:6. 50:15. 55:16. 59:5. 57:1-3. Rom. 10:4. * Or, pangs. 1 Thess. 5:3. q Ps. 18: k Ex. 14:21-27. 15:8-10. Ps. 18:15-17. 114:3-7. 1 Ex. 15:8. Job 38:11. Ps. 106:9. Nah. 1:4. Hab. 3:8-10. Matt. 8:26-27. r Or, anger. s Ps. 74:1. m Ps. 18:16, 17. 144:7. n Ps. 32:6. 59:12. 93:3, 124:4, 5. 130:1. Is. 43:2. Lam. 3:54. Rev. 17:15. * Or, great. a 1. Ps. 3:7. 36:9. 2 Cor. 1:10. 2 Tim. 4:17. p 15:10-13. s Sam. 19:11-17. 23:25-27. Ps. 18:18, 118:10-13. Matt. 27:39 -44. q Ps. 71:20, 21. Is. 26:3, 4. 50:10. r Gen. 26:22. 1 Chr. 4:10. Ps. 31:8, 118:5. Hov. 4:16. s 15:26. Ps. 22:8. 147:11. 149:4. Is. 42:1. Matt. 3:17. 17:5. 27: 43. Acts 2:32-35.

love thee, O LORD, my Strength;" perhaps these words were added, when it was made public, as an expression of David's exulting gratitude, in order to kindle the devotions of the people. (Note, Ps. 18:1.)—The accumulation of metaphors here used, as descriptive of David's expectations from God, which had been fully answered, denotes, that those energetic figures of speech, which commonly exceed the bounds of exact truth, are too feeble to express what God is to his believing people, and what he does for them. (Note, 2 Cor. 4:13 -18.) He is a *Rock*, on which securely to build their confidence, a *Refuge*, in which to shelter themselves from every foe, and in every trouble: a *Fortress* and a *strong Tower*, which are formed by human art and labour, to supply the want of the natural fortifications of rocks and mountains, or to increase the security which they afford: a *Shield* to ward off every hostile assault; and a *Horn* with which to push and prostrate every assailant. (Notes, Ex. 17:5-6. Deut. 32:4, 15:30, 31. 1 Sam. 2:1, 2.) For the LORD is a *Deliverer*, a *Saviour*, and *Salvation*, from every evil and danger, to which the believer is exposed, who cannot but be safe and comfortable, when exercising faith in him.—Several expressions, as "The God of my rock," and "the Horn of my salvation," seem to refer to the person of the Redeemer, "God manifested in the flesh," become the Salvation of his people, and in human nature displaying divine power and authority in the redemption of believers, and the destruction of their enemies. (Notes, Ps. 27:1-3. Is. 12:2, 45:15-17. Matt. 1:20, 21. Luke 2:25-32. Tit. 2:13. 3:4-7.)

V. 4. "The *ravonim*" (whole armour) of a soldier does him no service, except he put it on to defend himself, and offend his enemy; so, no protection or help from God is to be expected, . . . unless we apply ourselves to him by prayer. *Strigelius* in *Bp. Patrick*. (Note, Ps. 116:2.)

V. 5, 6. These verses contain a figurative and poetical description of the violence of David's enemies, and the imminent danger to which he was exposed. Death seemed ready to swallow him up, as the waves of the sea overwhelm those who are cast into them, and encompassed by them. (Notes, Jon. 2:1-7.) Multitudes of wicked men, pressed upon him with incumbent force, like the rising floods from which there appears no deliverance: nay, the temptations of Satan, and the consciousness of his sins, filled him with fears of wrath, and dreadful apprehensions of future consequences: and he felt like a malefactor bound for execution, whose fetters prevent him from attempting an escape, for whose body the grave nas certainly opened her mouth, and who is horribly alarmed lest the pit of hell should swallow up his soul. In short, he was like the helpless bird caught in the fowler's snare, and doomed to inevitable death. (Marg. Ref.)—In this he was a type of Christ our King, when agonizing in the garden; when he endured the severest tortures, the pangs of death, the temptations of Satan, yea, the wrath of God against our sins; and was at the same time surrounded by the insulting scribes, priests, and people. (Notes, Ps. 18:4, 5. 40:1-5.)

V. 7-16. When every other hope failed, the Psalmist simply and earnestly sought help from God; whose manifested presence, in the sanctuary above the mercy-seat, represented his tabernacling in human nature, as "God our Saviour," and our access to him on a throne of grace; (Note,

12 And he made darkness ^apavilions round about him, ^bdark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

13 Through the brightness before him were ^acoals of fire kindled.

14 The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice.

15 And he sent out ^aarrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

16 And ^athe channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his ^bpostrils.

17 He ^asent from above, he took me; ^bhe drew me out of ^cmany waters:

18 He ^adelivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

19 They ^aprevented me in the day of my calamity: but ^bthe Lord was my stay.

20 He ^adelivered me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he ^bdelighted in me.

[Practical Observations.]

64:1-3. d Ex. 20:21. Deut. 4:11. 1 Kings 8:12. Ps. 97:2, 104:3. Matt. 27:46. Luke 23:44, 45. e Gen. 3:24. Ex. 25:19. 1 Sam. 4:4. Ps. 18:10. 68:17. 80:1. 99:1. Ez. 9:3. 10:2-14. Heb. 1:14. f Ps. 104:3. 139:9, 10. g Ps. 18:11, 12. 27:5. h Heb. *bindings of waters*. h 9. i Ex. 19:16. Judg. 5:20. 1 Sam. 2:10. 7:30. 12:17, 18. Job 37:2-5. 40:3. Ps. 29:3-9. 77:16-19. Is. 30:30. Ex. 10:15. Rev. 11:19. 1 Thess. 3:23. Job. 10:10. Ps. 7:12, 13. 18:11. 45:5. 144:6, 7. Hab. 3:11. k Ex. 14:21-27. 15:8-10. Ps. 18:15-17. 114:3-7. 1 Ex. 15:8. Job 38:11. Ps. 106:9. Nah. 1:4. Hab. 3:8-10. Matt. 8:26-27. l Or, anger. s Ps. 74:1. m Ps. 18:16, 17. 144:7. n Ps. 32:6. 59:12. 93:3, 124:4, 5. 130:1. Is. 43:2. Lam. 3:54. Rev. 17:15. * Or, great. a 1. Ps. 3:7. 36:9. 2 Cor. 1:10. 2 Tim. 4:17. p 15:10-13. s Sam. 19:11-17. 23:25-27. Ps. 18:18, 118:10-13. Matt. 27:39 -44. q Ps. 71:20, 21. Is. 26:3, 4. 50:10. r Gen. 26:22. 1 Chr. 4:10. Ps. 31:8, 118:5. Hov. 4:16. s 15:26. Ps. 22:8. 147:11. 149:4. Is. 42:1. Matt. 3:17. 17:5. 27: 43. Acts 2:32-35.

Ex. 25:10-21.) as well as his exalted display of his glorious presence in his holy temple in heaven. Thither the prayers of David ascended, and thence they were answered in a most effectual manner.—As we are not informed, that the Lord delivered David, with the *external* displays of his power here mentioned: it is supposed that he adorned his sacred poem with sublime images, taken from the history of Israel in Egypt, at the Red Sea, at mount Sinai, in the wilderness, and in the conquest of Canaan; and thus intimated that the deliverances vouchsafed to him were as honourable to God, as those which of old he had wrought for his people, though effected in a different manner. The *earthquake*, and the shaking of the foundations of the heavens, the *smoke*, the *fire*, and the *darkness*, into which the Lord came down, and in which he majestically dwelt, with several other expressions, lead our thoughts to mount Sinai. (Notes, Ex. 19:16-20. 20:18-20.) His "riding upon a cherub," and "his flying on the wings of the wind," denote the ministration of angels, and the speed with which he effected the deliverance of his servant. (Notes, Gen. 3:22-24. Ps. 104:4. Ez. 1:4-25. 10:1-22. 11:22-25.) "The coals of fire kindled" at his presence, may indicate, that the wrath of God arms all creatures against his enemies, or that it will consume them as fuel is consumed by the fire. Other circumstances recall to our remembrance the dividing of the Red Sea, and of the river Jordan; the destruction of the Canaanites, when the hailstones destroyed more than the sword of Israel; and that of the Philistines, when the Lord thundered upon them and discomfited them. And the whole declared, that the indignation of the Lord, against the enemies of his servant, equalled his displeasure against those adversaries of his people; and that their consternation and destruction were no less than that of the others had been.—Here David was eminently the type of Christ; and the figurative language, used by him, was in many respects exactly accomplished in the preternatural convulsions attending our Lord's death and resurrection. (Notes, Ps. 18:6-15. Matt. 27:51-53. 28:1 -8.)

V. 17, 18. The providential interposition of God in delivering David from his strongest enemy, when he was ready to devour him, was like sending from heaven on purpose to take him out of great waters, into which he must otherwise have sunk and perished. (Notes, Ps. 124:4-8. Lam. 3:52-57.) For his enemies were too strong for him, and therefore his preservation was evidently the work of God.—Goliath and Saul, and other enemies were perhaps intended by the Psalmist: but the victory of Christ over "death and him that has the power of death," was prefigured.

V. 19. When David had framed any plan, for secreting or securing himself "in the day of his calamity," his enemies employed every method of treachery and malice to prevent his success. Thus the men of Keilah were ready to deliver him to Saul, and the Ziphites repeatedly informed of him: (Notes, 1 Sam. 23:9-13, 19-28. 26:1, 2.) and therefore, notwithstanding his own prudence and activity, he must have been cut off, if the Lord himself had not protected him, by his own immediate and extraordinary interposition.

V. 20. David had been straitened in dens and caves, as in a prison, and was afraid to go abroad in the open air, but now through the divine goodness, he might walk at liberty, accord-

21 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes I did not depart from them.

24 I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 Therefore the LORD hath recompensed me according to my righteousness: according to my cleanness in his eyesight.

26 With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.

27 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the forward thou wilt show thyself unsavoury.

28 And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.

29 For thou art my Lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.

30 For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.

t25. 1 Sam. 26:23. 1 Kings 8:32. Ps. 7:3, 4, 8. 18:20—25. 19:11. 1 Cor. 15:58. u Job 17:9. Ps. 24:4. Jam. 4:8. x Num. 18:15. 1 Sam. 12:8. Job 23:10—12. 2 Cor. 1:12. y Gen. 16:19. Ps. 119:1—3. 128:1. Prov. 8:32. z Job 26:3. 125:5. Zeph. 1:8. John 15:10. Heb. 10:38, 39. Ps. 119:6, 86, 128. Luke 1:6. John 15:14. b Deut. 6:1, 2. 7:12. Ps. 19:8, 9. 119:13, 30, 102. c Deut. 8:11. d Gen. 6:9. 17:1. Job 1:1. Ps. 51:6. 84:11. John 1:47. 2 Cor. 5:11. e Heb. 10:10. f Ex. 4:23. Heb. 12:1. 121. g Matt. 5:7. Jam. 2:13. h Matt. 5:8. i Heb. before his eyes. Prov. 5:21. j Matt. 5:7. Jam. 2:13. h Matt. 5:8. 1 Lev. 25:23—28. Deut. 28:58—61. Ps. 125:5. i Or, wrestle. Ex. 18:11. Ps. 18:26. Is. 45:9. k Ex. 3:7, 8. Ps. 12:5. 72:12, 13. 140:12. Is. 61:1—3. 63:9. Matt. 5:3. l Ex. 9:14—17. 10:3. 18:11. Job 40:11, 12. Ps. 138:6. Prov. 21:4. Is. 2:11. 87:23, 28. Jer. 4:37. Jam. 4:7. 1 Pet. 5:5, 6. m Or, condole. Job 29:3. Ps. 77:1. 84:11. John 8:12. Rev. 21:23. m Ps. 45:9. 18:28. 97:11. 112:4. Is. 50:10. 60:19, 20. Mic. 7:9. Mal. 4:2. John 12:46. n Or, broken a troop. Ps. 18:29.

ing to his own inclination. The words may also refer to the extent of his dominions, and the greatness of his prosperity, compared with his former difficulties. (Notes, Ps. 31:7, 8. 118:5. 142: title. 6, 7.) All this the Lord had done for him, "because he delighted in him," as the object of his special love, and a partaker of his sanctifying grace; and as, in the general tenor of his conduct, "a man after his own heart." (Note, Ps. 22:7, 8.)

V. 21—28. David's character had been grievously aspersed, and many heinous things laid to his charge: but his conduct had been upright and conscientious in an uncommon degree. In all his persecutions by Saul, he would not in any way, or on any account, injure him or his party: nay he embraced every occasion to serve the cause of Israel, though rewarded by envy, treachery, and ingratitude: and in his other calamities, he was hated without a cause, and was ever ready to overcome evil with good. Under every trial he steadfastly adhered to the worship of the Lord: and from fear and love of his name, he continued to act with equity, candour, and kindness to man; unreservedly and uprightly making the commandments of God his rule, and the glory of God his aim, in the habitual course of his conduct. In these respects he could "rejoice in the testimony of his conscience;" and confidently appeal to the Searcher of all hearts: and every providential deliverance was both a gracious recompense, and a divine attestation to his innocence, from those crimes of which his enemies accused him; and a declaration that his cause was more righteous than theirs.—He mentioned particularly, "That he had kept himself from his own iniquity;" from those sins to which he was most strongly tempted; especially, he would by no means be induced to injure Saul, to which his circumstances powerfully tempted him.—He had indeed committed many sins, and some of them were very grievous; and he was conscious of manifold imperfections, (which the review of the book of Psalms will sufficiently demonstrate;) but he neither denied, excused, nor persisted in them: on the contrary, he had been deeply humbled for them; and he was in that respect also conscious of his uprightness. This profession, therefore, did not relate to David's "justification in the sight of God;" nor was it intended as a vindication of every part of his conduct, as not needing forgiveness. (Notes, Ps. 130:3, 4. 143:2.) But it was the same consciousness of general integrity which every true believer possesses, and may on some occasions avow, as an answer to unmerited reproach, consistently with the deepest humility, and the most entire dependence on the mercy and grace of God through Jesus Christ. (Notes, 2 Chr. 1:12—14. 1 Thes. 2:9—12. 1 John 3:18—24.) And the gracious recompense, of which David spoke, may be generally expected by those, who act conscientiously in the sight of God, from right motives. This accords to his method of dealing with mankind, and especially with his professed worshippers. If he sees them humble, sincere, teachable, watchful, loving, pure and obedient in their general conduct; he will be merciful and kind to them, and will fulfil his promises, and communicate his holy consolations, to them; but if he sees them disssembling or perverse, "he will

31 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.

32 For who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God?

33 God is my Strength and Power: and he maketh my way perfect. [Practical Observations.]

34 He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places.

35 He teacheth my hands to war: so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great.

37 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip.

38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them.

39 And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet.

40 For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: thou hast rose up against me hast thou subdued under me.

118:10—12. Rom. 8:37. Phil. 4:13. n Deut. 32:4. Dan. 4:37. Matt. 5:46. Rev. 15:3. o Ps. 12:6. 18:30. 118:140. Prov. 30:5. p Or, refused. p Ps. 35:2. 51:4. Prov. 2:7. q Deut. 32:31, 32. 1 Sam. 2:2. Is. 42:3. 44:8. 45:6, 21. Jer. 10:6, 7, 16. r 23. s Ex. 15:2. Ps. 18:32. 27:1. 28:7, 8. 31:4. 45:1. Is. 41:10. Zeph. 10:12. t 2 Cor. 12:9. Eph. 6:10. Phil. 4:13. u Heb. rideth or looseth. t Heb. 13:21. u Deut. 18:13. Job 22:5. Ps. 101:2, 5. 119:1. v Heb. equalith to. v 2. 18: Deut. 33:25. Hab. 3:19. x Deut. 32:13. Is. 53:16. 58:14. y Ps. 18:33, 34. 141:1. z Heb. for the war. z Ps. 46:3. Ex. 38:3, 10. a Gen. 15:1. Ps. 94:11. Eph. 6:16. b Ps. 18:36. 45: Heb. multiplied me. Gen. 12:2. 22:17. Ps. 115:14. c Ps. 41:18, 36. Prov. 4:12. d 1 Sam. 2:9. Ps. 17:5. 94:18. 119:117. 121:3. e Heb. ankie. e 5:18—25. 8:1, 2, 13, 14. 10:14. Ps. 21:8, 9. Rom. 9:37. f Ps. 18:33. 116:5, 18. 118:10—12. Mal. 4:1. g 1 Sam. 17:49—51. 28:5. Ps. 18:32. 39:18. 45:5. Col. 1:11. h Ps. 44:5. 144:2. i Heb. caused to bow. Is. 60:14. Rev. 8:9.

wrestle with them." He will likewise save those who are poor in spirit, and suffer persecution for his sake; but with his wrath he will frown upon proud oppressors to bring them down. (Marg. Ref. k, l.)—It should be remembered, that David, in these things, was a type of Christ, to whom many of the expressions here used are applicable in the fullest sense, and to him alone.

Wilt thou shew thy unsavoury. (27) וְיִחַדְתִּי "wilt wrestle." (Marg.) The rendering in the text is as if the word were formed from *חָדַר*, *insulsum, insipidum*. But no verb is formed from that root in any other part of the Bible.—In the parallel passage, (Ps. 18:26 or 27,) the word is *וְיִחַדְתִּי*; (from *חָדַר* *pervertere, luctari*;) and it is generally supposed that the same is intended, though rather differently modified. Indeed the translation in this place gives no intelligible meaning.—*Μερα σπασθῶν σπρεβλῶσθησθαι*. Sept.

V. 29, 30. David's way had been intricate, dangerous, and gloomy; but the presence and favour of the Lord was a Lamp unto him, marking out his path, and cheering him as he walked in it. (Notes, Ps. 27:1—3. 84:11, 12. John 8:12.) By his help also he had singly broken through whole armies of his enemies, and leaped over every wall which obstructed his escape or success. (Notes, Ps. 18:28, 29.) Many of the verbs, in different parts of the Psalm, are future in the original; probably, as expressing David's previous believing expectations, to which the subsequent events corresponded; and thus turned the language of hope into that of thanksgiving.

V. 31—33. From experience the Psalmist could testify, that the word of God was in every case a sufficient security: as all the methods of providence and grace towards him had been ordered in perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. None else could be in any degree depended on, for *יהוה* is God alone. (Notes, 23. Deut. 32:4.) They who trusted and served him were perfectly safe: and whatever steadfastness and integrity David had before spoken of, as marked in his own conduct, all the glory belonged unto God, by whose strength he had been upheld and preserved from falling.

V. 34, 35. As hinds climb the craggy rocks, and stand firm upon the slippery summit of the precipice; so David had been upheld in the most dangerous and slippery paths, and advanced to his present exalted station, by the providence and grace of God: (Notes, Deut. 33:24, 25. Hab. 3:17—19.) and his extraordinary skill and strength in war must be ascribed to the same cause.—The word (*רַחֲמָיו*) rendered *steel*, generally signifies *copper*, or *brass*, of which the ancients frequently made arms; though bows, requiring elasticity, could not well be made of it.

V. 36. Gentleness, &c.] The rebukes, corrections; and instructions, which the Lord intermixed with his merciful forgiveness, encouragements, and deliverances, like the gentle tuition of a kind parent, tended to prepare David for prosperity and authority, and to advance him to them.

V. 37—42. The meaning of these verses, as applied to David, wants no other explanation than the preceding history, implying his believing anticipations, fully verified by the event. But they are peculiarly descriptive of the

41 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me;

42 They looked, but *there was none to save; even unto the Lord*, but he answered them not.

43 Then did I beat them *as small as the dust of the earth*, I did stamp them *as the mire of the street*, and did spread them abroad.

44 Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me to be *Head of the heathen*: a people *which I knew not shall serve me*.

45 Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

46 Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid *of their own place*.

1 Tim. 4:9, 8. Ex. 23:27. Josh. 10:24. Ps. 18:40, 41. k Ps. 21:3, 9. Luke 19:44, 27. 2 Thim. 1:9. 1 Sam. 26:6. Job 27:9. Prov. 1:23. Is. 1:15. Ps. 20:3. Mic. 3:4. Matt. 7:22, 23. Luke 13:25, 26. m 2 Kings 13:7. Ps. 18:42, 35:5. Dan. 2:35. Mal. 4:1. n Ps. 18:42. Is. 10:6. Mic. 7:10. Zech. 10:5. o Dent. 32:26. Is. 5:1. Zech. 2:4. Luke 21:24. p 31. 5:1. 18:6—8. 19:9, 14. 20:1, 2, 22. Ps. 2:1—6. 18:43. Acts 4:25, 28. 5:30, 31. q 6:1—14. Dent. 28:13. Ps. 2:3. 60:9. 72:9. 110:6. Is. 60:12. Dan. 7:14. Rom. 15:12. Rev. 11:15. r 1a. 55:5, 6:1. Hos. 2:23. Rom. 9:25, 26. * Heb. *some of the stranger*. Is. 56:3, 6. r Or, *yield feigned obedience*. Heb. *He*. Deut. 33:29. Ps. 18:44, 45. 66:3. 81:15. Acts 8:13.

Redeemer's conflicts and victories, and especially of the inevitable destruction which came upon the Jews, and the disgraceful dispersion of the degraded remnant of that nation, for crucifying the Lord of glory, and rejecting the gospel. They cried and still cry to the Lord to save them; but refusing to obey his beloved Son, he vouchsafes them no answer.—Thus David's enemies, in their extreme distress, are represented as crying to the Lord for deliverance from impending ruin; but, as they did it not in repentance, faith, and integrity, it was in vain. Thus Saul inquired of the Lord, and he answered him not. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. 28:6. 1 Chr. 10:13, 14.)

V. 43—51. This conclusion may be explained of David's victories over his rebellious countrymen, and the surrounding nations; and of the desolations made among them. These he might consider as the earnest of still more decisive advantages; till the spirits of all his adversaries should fail, and their strength decay; and the strongest of them should tremble even in their fastnesses and fortified cities, and surrender themselves to him to be his servants upon the first summons. (*Marg. Ref.*)—But here the Spirit of inspiration seems especially to have carried his mind forward to the glorious kingdom of the Redeemer, the destruction of all his enemies, and the prevalence of his cause on earth. And while he concluded with the high praises of God, and exulting joy in him; he looked forward to his posterity, and rejoiced in the prospect of the blessings reserved for them, not only as kings of Judah for many successive generations; but also in Christ, the anointed King of the church and of the world for evermore, yea, even for ever and ever. (*Note*, Ps. 18:49.)

Submit themselves. (45) Or, *yield feigned obedience*. Heb. *lie*. (*Marg.*) May not this expression, which occurs in many Psalms prophetic of the Messiah's kingdom, be considered as a prediction of that influx of hypocrites into the church, especially in and after the days of Constantine, in consequence of the astonishing external displays of the Redeemer's power, in the first ages? From this time formal Christians, who *lie* in their profession, have been exceedingly multiplied. (*Note*, Ps. 66:1—3.)—*The God of the Rock of my salvation.* (47) This remarkable expression may well call to mind, what may be considered as the style of the New Testament;—"The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (*Note*, 2 Cor. 1:1—7, v. 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20. When we have received mercies from God, we ought, without delay, to render him our tribute of praise and gratitude; every recent favour should be acknowledged with thankful remembrance of former deliverances; and signal interpositions of the Lord in our behalf, ought to be publicly celebrated, with the best endowments which we possess.—They who know the Lord in his glorious perfections, and the various relations in which he stands to his rational creatures, and especially as "a God of Salvation;" and who thus learn to fear, trust, love, and serve him, choosing him as their Portion, and waiting for his mercy unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ, and according to the covenant which he mediated, may expect from him every conceivable blessing. Nay, words can never express, nor the creation itself afford objects sufficient to represent all that the Lord is and will be unto them, through time and to eternity. The more they expect and ask from him in humble faith, the larger blessings shall they receive; while past experiences will encourage and dictate further supplications. But while this felicity belongs to all true believers; yet frequently both the events of Providence, and their inward experience, seem to indicate the contrary. They are assailed by powerful enemies, and exposed to manifold troubles and dangers, from without; they are often disquieted by distressing fears and terrors of conscience, from within; while Satan pours in his horrible suggestions to aggravate their distress, and to urge them to despair. Thus they feel, as it were, the very "pains of hell," and are so

47 The *Lord* liveth; and blessed be my Rock, and exalted be the God of *the rock of my salvation*.

48 It is God that *avengeth me*, and *thou* bringest down the people under me;

49 And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: *thou* also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from *the violent man*.

50 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, *among the heathen*, and I will sing praises unto thy name.

51 He is *the* Tower of salvation for his King: and sheweth mercy to *his* anointed, unto David, and to his *Seed* for evermore.

Cl—23. s Ps. 1:3. Is. 64:6. Jam. 1:11. t Is. 2:19, 21. Am. 9:3. Mic. 7:17. u Dent. 32:39, 40. Job 19:25. x Ps. 18:46. 89:26, 35:1. Luke 1:47. † Heb. *gileth vengeance for me*. 18:19, 31. 1 Sam. 25:39. Ps. 18:47. 35:1. 94:1. y Ps. 110:1. 144:2. 1 Cor. 15:25. z 1:2. 7:9, 9. Num. 24:7—19. 1 Sam. 2:8. Ps. 18:48. a Ps. 140:1. b Rom. 15:9. c Ps. 18:49. 103:1. 138:1. 145:1, 2. 146:1, 2. Is. 12:1—6. d 2. Ps. 3:3. 21:1. 48:3. 89:26. 91:2. 144:10. e Ps. 18:50. 89:20. Acts. 4:27. f 7:12, 13. Ps. 18:50. 89:29. Jer. 30:9. Luke 1:31—33. Rev. 11:15.

bound in the snares of death, that they are ready to give up their lives and souls for lost. But in their extreme distress, they cry unto the Lord with the greatest earnestness, and he supports them, and appears for their relief: so that all their sorrows and fears shall terminate in the more conspicuous display of the glory of God's perfections, and in the evidence of his special love to them: all shall exercise and increase their grace, prepare the way for future comforts, and become the subject of triumphant praise and thanksgiving; and however painful their feelings are at present, the retrospect shall hereafter be delightful.—When, therefore, temptations and tribulations abound, and our prayers are mingled with groans and fears, with dismay and anguish of spirit; let us not despond, but be of good courage: for we shall certainly bless God for them ere long, as many before us have done for similar or severer trials. Without a renewal of the miraculous displays, with which Israel of old was favoured, the true believer, comparing his dangers, fears, prayers, and deliverances, may be as firmly assured that the Lord has wrought for him, as that he wrought for that favoured people: and that he has not only made his angels, and other creatures, the ministers of good to him; but that his own hand has affected the surprising change which he has experienced, in his condition, character, hopes, and prospects.—Nor are the judgments of God less terrible now on the enemies of his people, than they were when the earth swallowed them up, the depths of the sea overwhelmed them, or the fire of the Lord consumed them: though they are less noticed, because more spiritual, and chiefly executed in the eternal world. For still the whole creation fights against his enemies, yea, his own almighty arm is lifted up to destroy them, as well as to deliver those who trust in him.

V. 21—33. Under reproaches and persecutions, the testimony of our conscience, to our integrity and sincerity in our religious profession, "not of fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God," will prove a singular support: and it perfectly consists with the deepest humility and the most simple dependence upon the Saviour. Nor can we without it expect the witness of the comforting Spirit of God. We should therefore "exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man;" and, earnestly seeking supporting and sanctifying grace, we should steadily persevere in the path of duty, rejecting every temptation to seek relief by forsaking it.—We must keep all God's statutes and judgments before our eyes, without one exception, that we may regulate our conduct and conversation by them; and we must watch and pray especially against those sins which, by constitution, custom, or circumstances, may be called "our own iniquity." If this be our aim and practice, the Lord will plead our cause, and clear up our characters in due season. For he will deal with us, according as we walk before him in humility and sincerity, or the contrary; both with respect to the dispensations of his providence, and the consolations of his Spirit.—In the darkest seasons, the Lord will guide and comfort those who trust in and follow him: and of the very many millions who have tried his word, none ever complained that he was unfaithful; but all have been so assisted, that they have at length wondered at what the Lord had enabled them to do, as well as what he had done for them. Without him all other helpers are vain; and with him they are needless, except as he pleases to work by them as his instruments of good to us.

V. 34—51. All our talents and abilities are from God, and all our improvement of them: whatever services we have performed, or however consistent our walk has been, the will and the power have been from him: "He is our Strength, who maketh our way perfect." Ability and success in our spiritual warfare, liberty from sin and Satan, enlargement of heart in the service of our God, and preservation in the slippery paths of this ensnaring world, are causes for thankfulness, and not for glorying in ourselves. His gentle rebukes and corrections tend to real advancement, as much as our comforts and prosperity do. (*Note*, Heb. 12:9—11.) Armed with the

CHAPTER XXIII.

David's last words, 1-7. The names and exploits of his chief warriors, 8-39.

NOW these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said,

2 The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

a Gen. 49:1, 2. 1. eut. 33:1, &c. Josh. 23:24. Ps. 72:20. 2 Pet. 1:13-15. b 5:1-3. 7:8, 9. Ps. 73:70, 81. 89:27. c 1 Sam. 2:10. 16:12, 13. Ps. 3:6. 89:20. d 1 Chr. 18:4, 5, 7, 9. Am. 6:5. Luke 20:42. Eph. 5:19, 20. Col. 3:16. Jam. 5:13. e Matt. 22:43. Mark 12:36. Acts 2:33-31. Heb. 3:7, 8. 2 Pet. 1:21. f Gen. 33:20. Ex. 3:15. 19:5, 6. 20:2. g See on 2:2, 32. Deut. 32:4, 30, 31. Ps. 42:9. h Or, De thou ruler over men, &c. i Ps. 110:2. h Ex. 23:5-8. 1 Pet. 16:18-20. j Ps. 82:3-4. Is. 11:4, 5. 32:1. Jer. 23:5. Zech. 9:9. Heb. 1:8. l Ex. 18:21. 2 Chr. 19:7-9. Neh. 5:15. k Judg. 3:31. Ps. 89:38. 110:3. Prov. 4:18. Is. 60:1.

shield of salvation and "the sword of the Spirit," the Christian soldier, being "strong in the LORD," will pursue his victories, till he has trodden upon the necks of all his enemies, and received the conqueror's crown. (Notes, Rom. 8:35-39. Eph. 6:10-17.) For "the LORD liveth," as the God of strength and salvation, and will never leave us nor forsake us, till he has brought us forth from all our enemies, and lifted us up on high, above all that rose up against us. In the prospect of that complete salvation, let us joyfully praise him on the field of battle, surrounded with our enemies, and in the midst of our conflicts: and ere long we shall adore him, and sing praises to his name in more exalted strains, surrounded with millions of the redeemed, and innumerable multitudes of holy angels, who will triumph in our victories, and rejoice in our felicity.—But we may here likewise meditate upon the Redeemer's sufferings, and the glory which was to follow, and which has followed, and shall still far more be displayed: for our sins he was encompassed with the waves of death, the floods of ungodly men, and the very sorrows of hell, in the garden and on the cross. In his distress he called upon the Lord, and was heard, and raised from the dead, and exalted to the throne of glory: while his death was attended by the most stupendous displays of the divine indignation, against those who perpetrated that most atrocious crime. In him the Father delighted: his righteousness was perfect, yea, divine; he was justified from the blasphemies of his enemies by his resurrection and ascension. All power in heaven and earth are in his hands: all enemies shall be put under his feet, and he will destroy all who hate him. He has been "delivered from the strivings of the people, and made the Head of the heathen;" he continually receives the submissions of those who hear of him, and willingly obey him; while many who have no love for him, profess submission to him from fear of his power: but all opposition shall at length melt away before him, and all nations shall do him service. For he is the anointed King, whom the Father has exalted, and his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him: (Dan. 7:27. Note, Rev. 11:15-18.) we may then accept of his salvation, and submit to his authority; may we now follow him bearing our cross; that, when he shall appear to judgment, we also may "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. Many things, after this, are recorded concerning the words and actions of David; so that it is not agreed in what sense these were his "last words." Some suppose them to have been the last words which he spoke by inspiration, and, as it were, an appendix to the Psalms which he composed; but perhaps he repeated them in his dying moments, as the expression of his faith and hope, and the source of his consolation. (Notes, Ps. 72:17-20.)—The last words of eminent persons have often been much attended to, and long remembered: and these of David were peculiarly worthy of consideration, as they showed that this venerable servant of God, when dying, was more than ever assured of the reality and excellency of true religion; decided in his judgment concerning it, and his choice of its blessings; and animated with humble gratitude, and joyful expectation of his approaching felicity.—In the introduction, he mentioned his lowly birth, obscure station, and unexpected exaltation, with thankfulness. God had raised him to a throne, and made him very successful and prosperous: but the most valuable circumstance of his advancement was, that he was the anointed of God, to rule over his own people Jacob, and to be the type of the Messiah. Nor was he less thankful for being made "the sweet Psalmist of Israel" for being employed and enabled to compose hymns of praise and sacred poems, for the use of his people, and of the church of God, in all future ages; and to set them to music, and provide for the public performance of this delightful part of God's worship. And no wonder that the work was done in so complete a manner; "for the Spirit of the LORD spake by him, and his word was in his tongue." This he declared with his dying lips, that Israel, and that we through successive generations, might learn how to estimate that part of holy Scripture; not so much as the words of David, as of the holy Spirit, which spake by him. (Marg. Ref. Note, Mark 12:35-37.)

4 And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

5 Although my house be not so with God: yet the God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:

3:18-20. Hos. 6:5. Mal. 4:2. Luke 1:78, 79. John 1:7. 1 Hos. 6:3. m Deut. 32:2. Ps. 72:5. Is. 4:2. Mic. 5:7. n 7:18, 19, 12:10, 13:14, 15:28, 18:14, 15, 1 Kings 1:5, 6. 2:24, 25. 11:6-8. 12:14, 15. o 7:15, 16. 1 Chr. 17:11-14. Ps. 89:3, 4, 28, 29. Is. 9:6, 7. 55:3. 61:8. Jer. 32:40, 33:25, 36. Ez. 37:26. Heb. 13:20. p 1 Sam. 2:35. 25:23. 1 Kings 11:38. Acta 13:34. Heb. 6:19. q 14:62. 2:119, 81. r Ps. 74:6, 31:3-33. 35:23. s 4:4, 2:7, 14. 9:6, 7. 11:1. 27:6. Am. 9:11. 1 Cor. 3:6, 7. t 20:1. Deut. 13:13. 1 Sam. 2:12. u Gen. 3:18. Cant. 2:2. Is. 33:12. Ez. 2:6.

V. 3, 4. "The Spirit of the Lord spake," by David, yea, "the God of Israel spake to him;" and he recorded his words with his own meditations on them.—These verses, explained of David, taught the duties incumbent on him, as king of Israel; how he ought to instruct his son and successor Solomon; and the general character of good and pious magistrates, who are blessings to the people.—"He that ruleth over men" should treat them as reasonable creatures of the same nature with himself: and therefore he "must be just," oppressing and injuring none, and by an equal administration of justice, restraining them from defrauding or doing wrong to one another; and by his example and influence promoting general equity; "ruling in the fear of God," as accountable to him for the authority deputed to him, and the use which he makes of it, and teaching others to fear God. Rulers of this character may reasonably expect that the Lord will prosper them, and afford them blessings and comforts, like the exhilarating light of the unclouded morning sun: while their salutary regulations, discountenancing every species of evil, and protecting and advancing every good thing, diffuse the most important advantages, temporal and spiritual, around them; as the rising sun dispels the fogs and damps, and brightens and cheers the face of nature; or as his clear shining, after refreshing showers, rapidly promotes vegetation, and renders the earth luxuriantly fruitful. (Marg. Ref.)—Many expositors, however, interpret the words almost exclusively of Christ; the anointed King of Israel, and the Ruler over the sons of Adam in general. He is indeed just and righteous: he is the Righteousness and Sanctification of his subjects; and both requires and teaches, inclines and enables, them to fear God, and work righteousness. His light, and grace, and consolations, render them fruitful and happy; and the blessings of his kingdom are inexpressible, and shall be eternal. (Notes, Ps. 45:6, 7. 72:1-14. Is. 11:1-9. 32:1-8. Jer. 23:5, 6. Zech. 9:9, 10. Tit. 2:11, 12. Heb. 7:1-3. Rev. 19:11-16.)

V. 5. This verse is supposed to be peculiarly difficult, and is variously interpreted, generally as relating to the covenant made with David concerning the kingdom.—But, he seems here to have turned his reflections from the kingdom of his posterity, and especially that of the Messiah, to his own personal concerns, and those of his family and immediate descendants; and he could not but regret, that "his house was not so with God," as the preceding statement implied. By his own misconduct, as well as that of others concerned, his family was much less religious and prosperous, than it might have been expected; and both he and Israel had suffered many things in consequence. Several grievous and scandalous events had occurred: matters were not yet as he could wish; and he seems to have had his fears concerning his descendants who should succeed him in the kingdom. Perhaps, by prophetic monition, he foresaw, that they would neither be happy themselves, nor blessings to Israel, nor instruments of glorifying God, in that measure which he desired, and had hoped. He however comforted himself, that "the LORD had made with him an everlasting covenant." God had indeed covenanted to David that his family should succeed him in the kingdom; (Notes, 7:8-16. Ps. 89:19-37.) yet this was not "all his salvation and all his desire;" and it could give him comparatively but little consolation in his dying moments, (for these are part of his last words,) except as it referred to the promised Seed, who was to descend from him. By "the everlasting covenant," therefore, David no doubt principally intended the covenant of mercy and peace, which the Lord had made with him, as one who believed in the promised Saviour, and had yielded up himself to be his redeemed servant, and had been made partaker of his sanctifying grace as the seal and pledge of it. (Notes, Is. 55:1-3. Jer. 32:39-41. Ez. 37:25, 26. Heb. 13:20, 21.)—This covenant was "from everlasting" in the purposes of God, and shall be "to everlasting" in the blessed effects of it. From age to age sinners, when they accede to it by true faith, are admitted to share its benefits, which believers shall for ever enjoy; and God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, shall for ever be glorified through it, in their salvation. It is made with the Surety, in behalf of those for whom he engaged; and the

7 But the man *that* shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the *same* place.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ These *be* the names of the mighty men whom David had: 'The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: *he lifted up his spear* against eight hundred; 'whom he slew at one time.

9 And after him was 'Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, *one of the three mighty men with David*, when they 'defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and 'the men of Israel were gone away:—

10 He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and 'the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and 'the people returned after him only to spoil.

Heb. filled, x 22:8—10, Is. 27:4, Matt. 3:10—12, 13:42, Luke 19:47, 27, John 15:6, 2 Thes. 1:8, 2:8, Heb. 6:8, 1 Or, *Joshua-bassebet*, the Tachmonite, head of the three. 1 Chr. 11:11, 27:32, 2 Heb. *slain*, y 1 Chr. 11:12—14, 27:4, *Dodai*, z Num. 23:7, 8, 1 Sam. 17:10, 26:39, 45, 46, 1 s. 63:5, Mark 14:50, b Josh. 10:10, 42: 11:3, Judg. 15:14, 18: 1 Sam. 11: 13, 14, 6:23, 19:5, 2 Kings 5:1, Ps. 108:13, 144:10, Rom. 15:18, 2 Cor. 4:5, Eph. 6:10—18, c Ps. 68:12, Is. 53:12, d 1 Chr. 11:27, *Shammoh* the Hararite.

blessings of it were obtained and secured by his atoning blood, and are freely bestowed upon all who believe in his name; and it secures to them pardon, righteousness, grace, and 'eternal life, as the gift of God through Jesus Christ.' It is, "ordered in all things;" for in the Person, undertaking, and mediation of the Saviour, effectual provision is made for the manifestation of the holiness, the satisfaction of the justice, and the honour of the law of God, and the discovery of the evil and desert of sin. While his mercy abounds in the forgiveness and salvation of the chief of sinners; there is an infinite fulness of grace, and of all blessings, treasured up in Christ, for the supply of those who seek for this salvation; a way opened to the mercy-seat of God, in which they may come in humble confidence; ordinances appointed, through which these blessings are communicated; invitations to draw near, and "exceedingly great and precious promises" to plead with God. All those things, which in one respect are commanded, in another are promised; and while we pray for the performance of the promise, we are enabled to obey the command, to repent, to forsake sin, to turn unto God, and to walk in newness of life. This covenant is also "sure" or preserved. (צטיר) It is preserved by the continual intercession of Christ, and the promises and securities grounded on it. (Notes, Luke 22:31—34, Rom. 5:7—10, 8:32—34, Col. 3:1—4, 1 Pet. 1:3—5, 2 Pet. 1:10, 11, Jude 1, 2).—Provision is made for the recovery of those, who have walked inconsistently with it, in the most disgraceful manner; and yet not the least encouragement is given to commit sin, but the most effectual methods are used to deter men from it, and constrain them to all holy obedience. (Note, 1 John 2:1—3). So that it is "ordered in all things," in such a manner, that no believer can want wisdom, grace, or strength sufficient for him, whatever his conflicts, temptations, or difficulties may be; and he shall either persevere in a uniform course of holy obedience, or be brought to deep and evident repentance of his misconduct, and shall infallibly at length inherit eternal life.—This covenant was "all David's salvation;" for he was so well acquainted with the holy character and law of God, the evil of sin, and his own sinfulness in every thing, that he knew he could not escape condemnation, according to the covenant of works; and he perceived that all things suited to his case, and sufficient for his salvation, were engaged for by it to every believer; and that it was framed in perfect wisdom, so as to honour God, to humble and encourage the sinner, to inspire love and gratitude, to bring him to a holy and happy disposition of mind, and to prepare him for that state of complete felicity, in which all the powers of the human soul shall be eternally satisfied. It was also "all his desire," or *delight*, as the word is generally rendered: in comparison with it, all earthly objects lost their attractions; he was willing to renounce them, as far as required, for the sake of the blessings of the covenant; his comfort while he possessed them, was derived from it, not from them; and he was willing to die and leave all else, that he might enjoy its full felicity. This he was conscious of; and yet he complained, that matters were not with his soul, any more than with his house, as he could wish; for this seems the meaning of the words, "although he make it not to grow." The grace of the covenant he had received, but it had not been made to increase and flourish, in that measure which he desired. Still the prevalence of sinful propensities, and the weakness of his faith, hope, and love, were his grief and burden. The Lord had not "made love to grow." David did not mean to impeach the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, who had good reasons for what he withheld, as well as for what he gave; and doubtless David would have allowed that his own inattention and negligence were the criminal cause why his grace had not more been made to grow. But the hope that it would ere long be per-

11 And after him was 'Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And 'the Philistines were gathered together 'into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles; and the people fled from the Philistines.

12 But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and 'the LORD wrought a great victory.

13 And 'three of the thirty chief went down and came to David in the harvest time unto 'the cave of Adullam: and the troop of the Philistines pitched in 'the valley of Rephaim.

14 And David was then in 'a hold, and the 'garrison of the Philistines was then in Beth-lehem.

15 And David 'longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate!

16 And 'the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of

e 1 Chr. 11:13, 14, 5 Or, *for foraging*, f See on b 10, Ps. 3:8, 44:2, Prov. 21:31, 11 Or, *the three captains over the thirty*, 1 Chr. 11:15—19, g Josh. 12: 15, 15:35, 1 Sam. 22:1, Mic. 1:15, h 5:18, 22, 11:15, 15:14, 1 s. 17:5, i 1 Sam. 22:4, 5, 24:22, 1 Chr. 12:16, k 1 Sam. 10:5, 13:4, 28:14, 1 s. 1 Num. 11:4, 5, 14:3, 21:2, 63:1, 119:81, Is. 41:17, 18, 44:3, John 4:10, 14, 7:37, 38, m 9, 1 Sam. 19:5, Acts 20:24, Rom. 5:7, 2 Cor. 5:14.

fect in glory, animated and encouraged him in his dying moments.—Referring this also to the Redeemer, it may be observed, that the kingdom of David's family was not so with God in any other period, as under him; and foreseen by faith, he, as the Surety of the everlasting covenant, was all David's Salvation and Desire; though his coming was distant, and though his cause of truth and righteousness did not prosper in Israel, nor even in the prophet's own heart, as he most earnestly desired that it might. (Notes, Deut. 29:4, 1 Cor. 3:4—9.)

V. 6, 7. Those who opposed the authority of David, and afterwards of his descendants, were generally worthless and troublesome characters, and would be certainly rejected and destroyed, as useless thorns are cast into the fire. (Note, 1 Kings 12:16.) And those sons of Belial, who will not bear the yoke of Christ, or "have him to reign over them," are injurious to his people; but they bring upon themselves certain destruction. They cannot indeed be "taken with hands," or dealt with by those who are unarmed and unprotected. But in every government, there must be persons who possess power to apprehend, confine, and punish the disobedient and rebellious; in the same manner, as a man fenced, or *completely armed*, (marg.) "with iron and the staff of a spear," can thrust the thorns into the fire; and so Christ is able to destroy out of his kingdom all his enemies, and will "make them as a fiery oven in the day of his wrath;" for he can deal with those who, to all others, are utterly unmanageable. (Notes, Ps. 21:8—12, Nah. 1:3, 10.) As the willing subjects of David prospered, but his opposers were crushed; so shall it be with those who submit to the authority of the Redeemer, and those who reject him. (Notes, Matt. 3:11, 12, 13:36—43, 2 Thes. 1:5—10.)

V. 8. Under Joab, the chief captain, the persons mentioned in this chapter, were the principal officers in David's army; and as only thirty-six are named, Joab must be added to complete the number thirty-seven. (39) There were two triumvirates; and under them thirty officers, who commanded subdivisions of the troops. Of several of them, and of their exploits, we read nothing elsewhere: so that David's reign and actions were far more splendid than they appear in the history.—Adino the Tachmonite, is called Jashobeam the Hachmonite. (1 Chr. 11:11.) It is supposed that he had his title from his wisdom, and that he ordinarily presided in councils of war (חכמה, from חכם wise).—It is here said that he slew eight hundred men, in Chronicles only three hundred are mentioned: perhaps three hundred were left dead on the spot, and the rest died afterwards; or two different actions are meant, or some trivial mistake has been made. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 9, 10. (Marg. Ref.) When the most of David's army had retired or fled, for fear of the Philistines; he and three of his officers defied them, as Goliath had done the army of Saul; and Eleazar greatly distinguished himself on the occasion; fighting till his hand was weary and clave to his sword. Thus "the LORD wrought a great victory that day," principally by him: and when the people that had fled saw what was done, they rallied again, and shared the spoil of their vanquished enemies.—The divine interposition seems to have been miraculous, in answer to the expectation of faith; as in the case of Jonathan and his armour-bearer. (Notes, Josh. 10:9, 10, 1 Sam. 14:6—10, 45, 46.)

V. 11, 12. In Chronicles this victory seems ascribed to Eleazar, who perhaps was the chief commander, though Shammah most distinguished himself.—The field also is said to have been "full of barley;" perhaps part of it was sown with lentiles, and part with barley. (1 Chr. 11:12—14).—The annexed titles seem to have been generally derived from the place of the birth, or abode of the persons spoken of (Marg. Ref.)

the well of Beth-lehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but *poured it out unto the LORD.

17 And he said, *Be it far from me, O LORD, that I should do this: *is not this* the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men.

18 And *Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred, *and slew them, and had the name among three.

19 Was he not most honourable of three? therefore he was their captain: howbeit *he attained not unto the first three.

20 And *Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of *Kabzeel, *who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and *slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow.

21 And he slew an Egyptian, *a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand: but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and *slew him with his own spear.

22 These things, did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among three mighty men.

23 He was *more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three. And David set him *over his guard.

n Num. 23:7. 1 Sam. 7:6. 1 Sam. 2:19. Phil. 2:17, marg. o 20:20. Gen. 44:17. 1 Sam. 2:30. 26:11. 1 Kings 21:3. 1 Chr. 11:19. p Gen. 9:4. Ps. 72:14. Matt. 26:28. Mark 14:24. John 6:52-54. q Judg. 5:18. 1 Cor. 15:30. r 2:18. 9:30. 10:10, 14. 18:2. 20:10. 1 Sam. 26:6-8. 1 Chr. 2:16. 11:20, 21. * Heb. *also*. s 9:13, 16. 1 Chr. 11:25. Matt. 13:38, 23. 1 Cor. 15:41. 18:18. 20:23. 1 Kings 1:26, 33. 2:29-35, 46. 1 Chr. 18:17. 27:5, 6. u Josh. 15:21. t Heb. *great of acts*. 1 Heb. *sons of God*. 1:23. 1 Chr. 11:22-24. 12:8. x Judg. 14:5, 6. 1 Sam. 17:34-37. y Heb. *a man of countenance, or sight*, called. 1 Chr. 11:23. z *man of great stature*. y 1 Sam. 17:51. Col. 2:15. 1 Chr. 11:23. 29:26. 1 Chr. 2:53. 1 Chr. 27:6. t Or, *over his council*. Heb. *at his command*, 20:23.

V. 13-17. It is probable, that during the harvest, the Philistines invaded the land of Israel; in order to carry off or destroy the crop, and that David and his men opposed them: and the three captains, of the thirty afterwards mentioned, having come to him in the cave of Adullam, (probably when persecuted by Saul,) assisted him. (Notes, 1 Sam. 22:1, 2. Ps. 142: title.) A garrison also of Philistines, at the same time, occupied the outer gate of Beth-lehem the city of David.—Some expositors think that David, by wishing for the water of the well of Beth-lehem, meant to stir up his whole band to attempt dispossessing the garrison, and not that his officers alone should attack them. It is more probable, however, that being very thirsty in hot weather, he eagerly desired, and inconsiderately wished, to quench his thirst at that well, the water being remarkably good: and that these brave men, to express their peculiar attachment to him, broke, sword in hand, through the Philistines, and returned to him with some of the water. David however was, on recollection, ashamed of his inordinate desire and rash wish; and, being unwilling to encourage such desperate attempts, he refused to drink of it, but poured it out as a drink-offering unto the Lord. For as it had been procured at the hazard of the lives of these brave officers, he would no more drink of it, than he would drink their blood: "Far be it from me," said he, or "My God forbid it me." (Notes, Ps. 72:14. 116:15.)—"Beth-lehem" signifies the *house of bread*; and the place was likewise noted for excellent water. There Christ was born, who is the Bread of Life, and who also gives us the Water of Life. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 18-24. (Marg. Ref.) We are not told on what occasions these exploits were performed: but they were done in faith, by the Lord's extraordinary assistance, and for the public good. Asahel seems to have been the third captain in the second triumvirate, though mentioned as one of the thirty, over whom perhaps he presided as captain: for there are thirty names besides his; and only two of the three are named, if he was not the third. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2:18-23.)

V. 25-39. The names of the captains here enumerated are not exactly the same in Chronicles, but the same persons must be meant. In some instances a trivial variation is made in the spelling; in others, they might be known by more names than one.—The list closes with Uriah, who met with a base reward of his services! Others also are added in Chronicles, but they were not so renowned as these. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Chr. 11:10-47.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. It has been observed by those who intimately converse with persons of genuine piety, that they are uniformly most sensible of the reality and importance of heavenly things, when they consider themselves as very nearly approaching to the eternal world. If discouraged respecting their own interest in the invisible blessings, they assured

24 *Asahel the brother of Joab *was* one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

25 *Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite, 26 Helez the *Paltite, *Ira the son of Ikkesh the *Tekoite,

27 *Abiezer the Anethothite, *Mebunnai the Hushathite,

28 Zalmon the Ahohite, *Maharai the Netophathite,

29 *Heleb the son of Baanah, a Netophathite, *Ittai the son of Ribai out of Gibeath of the children of Benjamin,

30 *Benaiah the *Pirathonite, *Hiddai of the *brooks of Gaash,

31 *Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the *Barhumite,

32 Elahabha the Shaalbonite; of the sons of *Jashen, Jonathan,

33 *Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of *Sharar the Hararite,

34 Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of the Maachathite, *Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

35 *Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite, 36 *Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

37 *Zelek the Ammonite, *Naharai the Beerothite, armour-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah,

38 *Ira an Ithrite, Garab an Ithrite,

39 *Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven in all.

1 Sam. 22:14. x 2:18. 1 Chr. 11:26. 27:7. a 1 Chr. 11:27, 28. Shammoth Harorite. b 1 Chr. 11:27. 27:10. Pelonite. c 1 Chr. 11:28. 27:9. d See on 14:2. e 1 Chr. 11:28. Anethothite. 27:12. Anethothite. f 1 Chr. 11:29. Sibbecai g 1 Chr. 11:30. 27:13. h 1 Chr. 11:30. Heldai. 27:15. Heldai. i 1 Chr. 11:31. Jitai. j 1 Chr. 11:31. 27:14. i Judg. 12:15. m 1 Chr. 11:32. Hurai. * Or, valleys. Deut. 1:24. Judg. 2:9. n 1 Chr. 11:32. Abiel. o 1 Chr. 11:33. Baharumite. p 1 Chr. 11:34. Hushem, the Gilonite. q 1 Chr. 11:27. r 1 Chr. 11:35. Sacar. s 1 Chr. 11:35. 17:23. 1 Chr. 27:33, 34. t 1 Chr. 11:37. Herro u 1 Chr. 11:38. Joel. x 1 Chr. 11:39. y 1 Chr. 11:37. z 20:26. 1 Chr. 2:53 11:40. a 11:3, 6. 12:9. 1 Kings 15:5. 1 Chr. 11:41. Matt. 1:6.

belief excites the most earnest and distressing anxiety, lest they should come short of them: but when their hope abounds, they exult and triumph, though parting with all below, though oppressed with pain and sickness, and in the very agonies of death! So that many have gone from their dying beds more convinced of the truth and excellency of the gospel by their "last words" and behaviour, than by all the arguments which have conclusively been adduced in proof of it.—When we approach this closing scene, it will be useful and pleasant to consider what we originally were, and to inquire what the Lord has done for us, in his providence, and by his grace. The more we have been conformed to the Saviour, as bearing his image, and copying his example; and the more we have been treated by the world as he was; and the more clearly it will appear that we belong to him. When our endowments have been employed in the service of the church; and our words and works have been such, as evince that we were "led by the Spirit," and brought forth "the fruits of the Spirit," the review will be comfortable to us, and we shall give the glory to God.—They who stir up and assist their brethren in the exercises of devotion, are peculiarly useful: and the sweet work of praise and thanksgiving, when conducted with solemnity, as springing from lively affections, is an anticipation of heavenly joy, a solace of earthly sorrows, a preparation for every service, most honourable to God, and calculated to give religion an attractive aspect. When by us the Lord excites others to their duty, he speaks to us likewise concerning our own; that we may exemplify by our conduct, in our proper station of life, the rules that we propose to others.—"Those who rule over men" must be reminded on every occasion which occurs, and ought themselves continually to remember that they are the *subjects of God*: and in all things responsible to him for their conduct, especially in the exercise of their delegated authority; and are under the most powerful obligations to imitate his equity, maintain his cause, and seek his glory, in all their plans and undertakings. Then will they be happy themselves, and blessings to multitudes, who will praise God for them. The sons of Belial indeed will be the more enraged against their equitable administration, and will create disturbance and vexation; but they should endeavour, and will in some measure be able, to crush and keep them under; though they cannot quite extirpate them.—The best of men, however, reviewing their past conduct, and comparing it impartially with the rule of duty, will see great cause to be humbled, and to mourn over their sins. Neither their hearts nor their houses will be found what they ought to be: but it will be their earnest desire, aim, and prayer, that their families may be the accepted servants of God, without which no outward prosperity will satisfy their minds: and if, through their own negligence, or occasional misconduct, they are otherwise; they will be the more earnest in supplication for them, that they may not perish with

CHAPTER XXIV.

David requires Job to number the people, who very reluctantly complies, 1-8. Job delivers in the number to the king, 9. He repents; and being covered by God the prophet, and obliged to choose one plague, out of three, proposed to him, he fixes on three days' pestilence, 10-14. After seventy thousand had died in Israel, the angel is stayed from destroying Jerusalem, in answer to David's prayer, 15-17. David directed by God, purchases Araunah's threshing-floor, builds an altar, and sacrifices; and the plague is stayed, 18-25.

AND again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah."

2 For the king said to "Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, 'Go now through all the tribes of Israel, 'from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, 'that I may know the number of the people.

3 And Joab said unto the king, "Now the LORD

a 21:1, &c. * *Satan*. 1 Chr. 21:1. Jam. 1:13,14. b 12:11. 16:10. Gen. 45:5. 5:20. Ez. 7:3. 1 Sam. 26:13. 1 Kings 22:30-32. Ez. 14:9. 20:25. Acts 4:28. 2 Thes. 2:11. c 1 Chr. 27:23,24. d 12:13. 8:16. 20:23. 23:37. f Or, compass now all. e 3:10. 17:11. Judg. 20:1. f Dent. 8:13,14. 2 Chr. 32:25. g 3:1. Prov. 29:33. Jer. 17:5. 2 Cor. 12:7. g 10:12. 1 Chr. 21:3,4. 1a. 115:14.

the sons of Belial.—Yet in all their troubles, true believers, being conscious that they "have fled for refuge to the hope set before them" in the gospel; and having experienced the power of renewing grace, may rejoice that the Lord "hath made with them an everlasting covenant;" and may meditate with comfort on the rich provisions and firm security of it: and seeing all their salvation there treasured up, and there finding all their desires centre, they may cheerfully bear up under all they feel or fear, and look forward with joyful hope of complete deliverance.—Such, as are in reality partakers of divine grace, will long for more holiness: and those who, in this imperfect state, are satisfied with their present attainments, have no good ground to consider themselves as true Christians.

V. 8-39. The Lord dispenses all his gifts as he pleases, and there are various degrees of eminence and usefulness among able and serviceable men. Whether our talents therefore be more or fewer, the honour of them belongs to God, and we ought to improve them for the benefit of the church, and of the world, without envying or despising others.—In a good cause we should willingly venture, and endure hardship, even when deserted by those who ought to help us; for the Lord will be our Helper: and we should allow others sometimes to share the advantages, who would not expose themselves with us for the public good.—The habit of wishing and hankering after those things which Providence withholds, though natural to us, and often given way to by godly men in an unguarded hour, is indeed a degree of rebellion against the Lord; and it shows the remaining sensuality and selfishness of the heart, and leads to many snares and evils. Upon recollection and experience, a wise man will be ashamed of this folly; and will abstain, not only from unlawful indulgences, but from those also which are inexpedient, and might expose his brethren to temptation and danger.—Were we but as much attached to the person and cause of "the Captain of our salvation," and as much pleased to show our love and gratitude to him, by doing his will and promoting his honour, as some soldiers have been to a beloved prince or commander; how self-denying, and ready for every service and suffering should we be, and how glad to spend or to lay down our lives for his sake! Yet surely, never ruler or captain was of so excellent a character as ours; his commands are all righteous and beneficial, his authority is an inexpressible blessing. The obligations that he has conferred on his soldiers and servants, the love he bears to them, and the honours that he has prepared for the meanest of them, are beyond all computation or conception. The blessings, which he freely bestows, were dearly purchased by him; and for them when rebels and enemies! "Precious in his sight is the death of his saints;" he will expose them to no danger or loss, but for their good; he will comfort them under every suffering; and finally deliver them, and present them and all their services, as an oblation to the glory of God. Under his command, and refreshed by the waters of life which he bestows, we may venture to engage, yea defy, all our adversaries at the greatest disadvantage, and shall be able to turn their own arms upon them. Though not numbered with apostles and prophets, our names and services will be recorded in the book of life; and not a cup of cold water, given for his sake, shall be unrewarded: yea, the willing mind to suffer for him, shall be accepted, as if we had actually laid down our lives in his cause. But, as he has shed his blood for sinners, let all beware of neglecting so great salvation: for the sons of Belial, especially those who reject or pervert his truth, and persecute his people, will be thrust away as thorns into the everlasting fire of hell.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. The Israelites had offended God, by their ungrateful and repeated rebellions against David; by not duly profiting under the means employed for the revival of religion; and probably by that pride, luxury, and ungodliness, which generally spring from great prosperity. They had before, in a famine which lasted three years, experienced the effects of the divine displeasure; and it is likely they had not been amended by the correction; (Notes, 21:1-14.) but some think, that the sin immediately

thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, a hundred fold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

4 Notwithstanding, the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel.

5 And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and towards Jazer:

6 Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahim-hodshi; and they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon,

Prov. 14:28. 1a. 60:5. h 1 Chr. 21:4. Fe. 8:4. 1 Ex. 1:17. Acts 5:29. j Dent. 2:36. Josh. 13:9,16. 1 Sam. 30:24. 1a. 17:2. j Or, valley. k Num. 32:1,3,35. 1a. 10:8,9. 13:19. 31:21,47,48. Num. 32:1,3. l Or, he her land newly inhabited. m Josh. 19:47. Judg. 18:29. n Gen. 10:15. Josh. 11:8. 19:28. Judg. 18:28.

intended, was their setting up Absalom for king, and rebelling against David. (Notes, 1 Sam. 8:6-9. Hos. 8:2-4.) This David had cordially forgiven: but it was a national defection from God, which he did not judge it proper to leave unpunished. So that "again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel;" and he permitted Satan to tempt and prevail against David, that in chastising him, he might punish them. David's thought and purpose of numbering the people, sprang from his remaining depravity, excited by Satan's suggestions; and as this "was of the LORD," (in the same manner, that it was of him that the Canaanites should be hardened, and that Ahab should be deceived,) he withdrew every internal or external restraint, and left him to follow his own counsels. (Marg. Ref. b.) Thus, by a manner of expression common in Scripture, the Lord is said to have "moved David against Israel;" for certainly this is the most natural construction of the words. (Marg. Note, 1 Chr. 21:1.) But other passages prove, that the sinful disposition and resolution could not be from God, though he both permitted them, and overruled them to accomplish his own wise and righteous purposes: and this example throws light upon the doctrine of God's providential government of the world, and suggests many practical instructions. (Notes, 12:11,12. Gen. 50:20. 1 Kings 22:19-23.)—But what constituted David's sin in numbering the people? Some expositors think it was a contempt of the promise that they should be innumerable; and that they ought not to have been numbered without express command, as in the days of Moses; and others suppose, that David neglected to collect the half shekel apiece for the use of the sanctuary, which should have attended the numbering of them. (Notes, Gen. 13:16. Ex. 30:11-16.) It however seems evident, that pride both induced David to this measure, and rendered it so very displeasing to the Lord. Elated with the prosperity and extent of his dominions, he wished to know, and that others might know, the number of his subjects who were capable of bearing arms. This originated from an ambitious curiosity, and an ostentatious vanity; and probably it was accompanied with a secret complacency in his own good conduct, under whose government Israel had attained this prosperity, and with an improper dependence on the number and valour of his forces. As he was far advanced in life, he probably indulged the idea of having it said, how populous and flourishing a kingdom he had left to his posterity. It is likewise evident, that the chastisement was especially levelled against his pride and ambition. These evils had before been secretly indulged: but the Lord would have restrained them, had he not seen it best to permit them to break forth, both for the people's punishment, and David's deeper humiliation: as a physician permits some disorders to come forward to a crisis, that the cure may be radical; which is more salutary than merely for a time to suspend their effects. (Notes, 2 Kings 20:12-19. 2 Chr. 32:24-33. 2 Cor. 12:1-6.)

V. 3, 4. Joab readily perceived, that David's purpose arose from ambition, and was inconsistent with his character and interest; and that if he persevered to "delight in," or require "such a thing, it would be a cause of trespass," i. e. of guilt and punishment, "to Israel." (1 Chr. 21:3.) On this occasion he spoke with great reason and temper; expressed much affection both for his prince and country; and even assumed an appearance of piety: and David would have shown his wisdom, had he yielded to his remonstrances. Yet the king's word prevailed, but "it was abominable to Joab;" (1 Chr. 21:6.) and as he and the captains set about it reluctantly, we may suppose that they did not perform it very exactly. "It is something strange, that Joab should see the danger of this, and David not think of it; nor when it was so plainly represented to him. But the best of men are sometimes very drowsy, and apprehend not those things, which plainly appear to those who are not so good. Bp. Patrick. A considerable degree of self-will and precipitation was manifested in David's conduct respecting this measure.

V. 5-8. Joab and his assistants began by numbering

7 And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, *even* to Beer-sheba.

8 So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

13 So Gad came to David, and told him, and

o Josh. 19:29. p. 2. Gen. 21:31—33. q 1 Chr. 21:5-6. 27:23,24. r 1 Sam. 24:5. John 3:9. 1 John 3:20-21. s 12:13. 1 Chr. 21:8. 2 Chr. 32:25. Job 33:27,28. Ps. 32:5. Prov. 28:13. Mic. 7:8,9. 1 John 1. t Job 7:21. Hos. 14:2. 1 John 1:29. u 13:13. Deut. 32:6. 1 Sam. 13:13. 26:21. 2 Chr. 16:9. Mark 7:22. Tit. 3:3. 1 Sam. 22:5. 1 Chr. 21:9. 29:29. v 1 Sam. 9:9. z 1 Chr. 21:10,11. a 12:9,10. x 1 Lev. 26:41. Job 5:17,18. Prov. 3:12. Heb. 12:6—10. Rev. 3:19. b 21:1. Lev. 26:20,26. 1 Kings 17:1. Eccl. 1 Chr. 21:12. Ez. 14:13,21. Luke 4:25. c 1 Lev. 26:27. Deut. 28:25,29. d Lev. 26:16,25. Deut. 28:22,27,35. Ps. 91:6. Ez. 14:19—21. e 1 Sam. 13:6. 2 Kings 6:15. John 12:27. Phil. 1:23. f Ex. 34:6,7. 1 Chr. 21:13. Ps. 51:1. 88:5,15. 103:8,13,14. 119:156. 145:9. Is. 55:7. Jon. 4:2.

the inhabitants of the country, to the east of Jordan; thence they proceeded to the northern part of the land in the borders of Zidon and Tyre; and passing through the regions to the west of Jordan, they numbered all the men capable of bearing arms, (except the Levites and Benjamites:) having spent almost ten months in accomplishing it! (*Marg. Ref. 1 Chr. 21:6.*)

Land of Tahtim-hodshi. (6) "Nether land newly inhabited." (*Marg.*)—It is not known what region is meant; as the name occurs only in this place; probably, it was a tract of low land, which had lately been taken possession of by the Gileadites, in the northern part of the country.

V. 9. The numbers, as stated in Chronicles, are very different from those here given: and in order to reconcile them, it is thought that the regular troops, serving in rotation every month, and amounting to two hundred and eighty-eight thousand, (besides their officers, as it is supposed,) are included in the one account, but not in the other. (*Note, 1 Chr. 27:1—15.*) If these are added to the men of Israel as here numbered, and a due proportion taken from the men of Judah for their part of this militia, the round numbers will amount to nearly the same in both places.—This is, however, uncertain: and as Levi and Benjamin were not numbered, we may suppose that in other respects the accounts were inaccurate: and it might please God thus to order it, that David at last "might not know the number of the people." (*Notes, 1 Chr. 21:2—6. 27:23,24.*)—It is remarkable that the Israelites had not multiplied when possessed of Canaan, in any proportion to what they had done during their bondage in Egypt. (*Note, Ex. 1:7.*)

V. 10. David was not convinced of the evil of his conduct, until he received an account of the numbers which had been rated, and then "his heart smote him;" he became sensible that he had displeased the Lord, and earnestly entreated God to forgive him. (*Notes, Ez. 11:17—20. 1 John 3:18—24.*)—When he ordered it, he was possessed with other thoughts; and did not seriously reflect upon what he had done, till God touched his heart with a sense of his guilt after the sin was committed. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11. Literally: "And David arose in the morning; and the word of the LORD was unto the prophet Gad." It is probable, that David had become in some measure sensible of his sin, and had offered his humble confession and supplication to God over night, or in the night; before Gad delivered his message to him in the morning.—Gad was called David's seer, for he had long been employed as the messenger of God to him, and David had paid great regard to his admonitions; (*Notes, 1 Sam. 9:6—10. 22:5.*) and he also compiled, in part at least, the annals of David's last years. (*Note, 1 Chr. 29:29,30.*)—Had David's history been written in the manner of modern memoirs, by friends of the deceased; how many things would have been concealed, or thrown into the back-ground! how much palliated! and what eulogiums would have been paid to his excellent and honourable actions. Thus David's character would have appeared more faultless: but his history would have been, in exact proportion, so much the less instructive.

V. 12—14. Though the Lord intended to forgive the sin

said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man.

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thy hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the thrashing place of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 And David spake unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thy hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

Mic. 7:18. * Or, many. g 2 Kings 13:3—7. 2 Chr. 28:5—9. Prov. 12:10. Is. 47:6. Zech. 1:15. h Num. 16:46—49. 25:9. 1 Sam. 6:19. 1 Chr. 21:14. 27:24. Mat. 24:7. Rev. 6:8. i See on 2. k Is. 37:36. l Ez. 12:23. 2 Kings 19:35. 1 Chr. 21:15,16. 2 Chr. 32:21. Ps. 35:6. Acts 12:23. m Gen. 6:6. 1 Sam. 15:11. Ps. 78:38. Jer. 18:7—10. Joel 2:13,14. Am. 7:8,6. Hab. 3:2. n Ez. 9:23. 1 Kings 19:4. Is. 40:1,3. Mark 14:41. 2 Cor. 2:6. o 1 Chr. 21:15. 2 Chr. 3:1. Ornan. p 5:8. Gen. 10:16. Josh. 15:63. Judg. 1:21. 19:11. Zech. 9:7. q 1 Chr. 21:16,17. r 10. Job 7:20. 42:6. Ps. 51:2—5. Is. 6:5. s 1 Kings 22:17. Ps. 44:11. Ez. 34:2—6,23,24. Zech. 13:7. t Gen. 44:53. John 10:11,12. 1 Pet. 2:24,25.

of his repenting servant, as to his personal concern; yet as it was a public offence, he would correct it in a public manner, by destroying his subjects before his eyes. (*Notes, 1, 2 Kings 23:26,27. 24:3,4. 2 Chr. 33:12—17.*) This would be extremely distressing to him, both because of his affection for them, and because they suffered in consequence of his pride and vainglorious confidence.—Only three years of famine are proposed in Chronicles; (1 Chr. 21:12.) but such variations frequently occur, and are probably owing to some trivial errors of transcribers in so long a course of years; especially as the numbers were often distinguished by marks which might the more easily be mistaken.—In this distressing difficulty, David preferred a calamity, which came immediately from God, whose mercies he knew to be very great, to those in which men were concerned, who would have triumphed in the miseries of Israel, and thus have been hardened in their idolatry. He seems also to have chosen the pestilence in preference to the famine, not only because the land had already been visited with one famine of three years' continuance, from which perhaps it was scarcely recovered; and because he and his family would be as much exposed to the pestilence, as the poorest Israelite; but especially that he might continue for a shorter time under the divine rebuke, however severe it might be.—They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and humble their souls in his sight, saying, We will fall into the hands of the LORD, and not into the hands of men: for as his majesty is, so is his mercy. *Ecclesiasticus 2:17,18. (See Heb. 10:31.)*

V. 15, 16. "The time appointed" may mean either the close of the third day; or, as it is more probable, the appointed hour of the evening sacrifice on the first day. For "the LORD repented him of the evil," which implies, that he did not proceed to the extent of the judgment denounced. Yet on this supposition seventy thousand died in the different parts of the land, in about as few hours as Joab had employed months in numbering the people; and this apparently by the ministration of a single angel! (*Notes, Ez. 12:29,30. 2 Kings 19:35. Heb. 11:28.*) "If it," (the pestilence,) "had raged three days, and in every nine hours had killed so many, above a third part of those who had been numbered would have died by this plague; but as Kimchi here observes, by the great mercy of God, the time was contracted." *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Num. 16:45—50. 1 Cor. 10:6—10.)*

V. 17. Probably, the angel had before been invisible: but at length "David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces." 1 Chr. 21:16,17. The "drawn sword" was an emblem of the divine justice about to be executed upon the city. David had before humbled himself in the sight of God, and no doubt, had earnestly interceded for the people; but this sight affected him more than ever: and, while he and the elders prostrated themselves upon the ground, he poured out his soul before God in fervent prayer for his subjects, and especially for Jerusalem. He pleaded, that "it was he who had commanded the people to be numbered," that "he had sinned, and done evil indeed;" and entreated that "the whole blame belonged to him, so the indignation might

18 ¶ And ¹⁸Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the thrashing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up, ¹⁹as the Lord commanded.

20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground.

21 And Araunah said, ²¹Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? and David said, ²²To buy the thrashing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the Lord, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

22 And Araunah said unto David, ²³Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto

him: behold, ²⁴here be oxen for burnt-sacrifice, and thrashing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.

23 All these things did Araunah, ²⁵as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, ²⁶the Lord thy God accept thee.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, ²⁷Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing. ²⁸So David bought the thrashing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 And David ²⁹built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. ³⁰So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

u 11. 1 Chr. 21:18. Heb. Araunah. See on p. 16. v Gen. 6:22. 1 Chr. 11:19. 2 Chr. 20:20. 35:18. Neh. 9:26. Heb. 11:8. y 9:8. Gen. 18:2. Ruth 2:10. 2 Chr. 21:20, 21. z 3:18. a Gen. 23:8—16. 1 Chr. 21:22. Jer. 32:6—14. b 21:3. —14. Num. 16:47—50. 25:8. Ps. 106:30. c Gen. 23:11. 1 Chr. 21:22. 1 Sam.

6:14. 1 Kings 19:21. e 1s. 32:8. f Job 42:8. Ps. 20:3, 4. Is. 60:7. Ex. 29:40, 41. Hos. 1:13. Rom. 15:30, 31. 1 Tim. 2:1, 2. 1 Pet. 2:2. 2 Cor. 7:13. 1 Chr. 21:24. Mal. 1:12—14. Rom. 12:17. h 1 Chr. 21:24. i 2s. 2. 1 Gen. 5:20, 22, 9. 1 Sam. 7:9, 17. k 14. 21:14. 1 Chr. 21:26, 27. Lam. 3:29, 30.

cease in the punishment of him and his family. His guilt indeed occasioned the judgment: but the people were far from that innocence which David supposed; for their wickedness was in reality the cause of the calamity. (Note, 1, 2.) His intercession however prevailed: and it was doubtless in answer to his prayer, that the Lord said to the destroying angel, "It is enough: stay now thine hand."

V. 18—25. (Note, 1 Chr. 21:18—25, v. 20.) Araunah, or Ornon, though a Jebusite by birth, seems to have been cordially attached to the interests of David, and of Israel; and was permitted to possess a thrashing-floor, and some contiguous estate, near mount Zion. On that very spot the angel of the Lord appeared, and thence spake to Gad, (16. 1 Chr. 21:18.) that he should order David to build an altar there; whose ready obedience afforded Araunah an opportunity of showing his veneration for the king, his affection for Israel, and his liberality in the service of God and for the public advantage. With a generosity like that of a king, he was ready to give David the oxen, thrashing-floor, and all that appertained to it, that he might offer the appointed sacrifices: but David did not think it right to accept of them as a gift: and therefore he gave him fifty shekels of silver for the oxen and the wood, and six hundred shekels of gold for the ground; for this is the most obvious way of reconciling this account with that in Chronicles. (1 Chr. 21:25.) There the sacrifices were offered, and "the Lord answered by fire from heaven." (Notes, Lev. 9:24. 1 Kings 18:38, 39. 1 Chr. 21:26. 2 Chr. 7:1—3.) and the plague was stayed. On this very spot, bought of a Gentile, the temple was soon after built, no doubt, by the express command of God. (Note, 1 Chr. 22:1. 2 Chr. 3:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9. In the righteous government of God, rulers and their subjects have a reciprocal influence on one another. Like the members in the human body, they are interested in each other's conduct and welfare; and cannot sin or suffer without being mutually affected.—When the wickedness of nations provokes God, he leaves princes to adopt pernicious measures, or to commit atrocious crimes, which bring calamities on the people: and when the ruler commits iniquity, he is punished by the diminution of his power, and by witnessing the distresses of his subjects. Instead therefore of mutual recriminations under public calamities, however occasioned, all parties should be reminded to repent of their own sins, and to practise their own duties. Princes should hence be instructed even for their own sakes, to repress wickedness, and to promote righteousness in their dominions, as well as to set a good example: and the people, for the public benefit, should concur in salutary measures, and pray continually for their rulers.—The remains of sin live, and will often revive, in the best of men, as long as they continue in this world: and the wisest are soon induced to do very foolishly, when God leaves them to themselves, and permits Satan to tempt them: and against this there is no security, except humble watchfulness and unceasing prayer.—Pride, in all its varied exercises, is the sin of fallen man, as well as of fallen angels: it is the substance of spiritual wickedness, the rival and enemy of the glory and authority of God, and equally averse to the submissive obedience of the law, and the sovereign grace of the gospel. (Notes, Dan. 4:28—37. Jam. 4:4—6.) Yet this hateful evil mixes with and defiles the best of our services. Even the believer often sacrilegiously assumes to himself the glory which belongs to God: idolatrously confides in himself, or in some creature: ostentatiously courts that admiration and applause, of which the Lord alone is worthy; and becomes vain of those endowments or possessions, which he had no share in procuring, and cannot secure for one hour! Those, who are altogether proud, God will resist and fight against their destruction: and he will detect and chastise the indulged pride of those who, upon the whole, are humbled before him as mean, sinful creatures, and yet inconsistently value and prefer themselves upon some incidental advantages! (Notes, 2 Kings 20:12—15. 2 Cor. 12:1—6.) Through this hateful principle it comes to pass, that we so readily can say a mote in

our brother's eye, and yet remain unconconscious of a beam in our own: so that even ungodly men can discern those evil tempers and that unbecoming conduct in eminent believers, to which themselves are insensible! (Note, Matt. 7:3—5.) This should warn Christians to walk circumspectly, lest their mistakes should encourage others in unbelief and ungodliness; and it is sometimes a part of our chastisement to be shamed and rebuked by men of very bad characters. Yet those who have no real piety may, on personal and relative accounts, be sincerely attached to the interests of true Christians; and in a certain way have the cause of religion much at heart, as it happens to be connected with that of their party or their friends: but they cannot love the disciple simply because he loves and bears the image of his Master. They sometimes however give good advice supported by solid arguments: they can foresee consequences which the believer does not suspect, and sincerely endeavour to prevent them; and they can mingle their expostulations with affectionate good wishes, and a kind of prayers for their welfare and success. These things do not prove a man to be a partaker of the grace of God; but they entitle him so far to the attention of godly persons. It is indeed a shame for us to require and delight in those things, that such men perceive to be wrong; and it is our own fault, if we do not in many ways profit by their advice and cautions.—But when authority prevails against reason and truth, pernicious effects must follow: yet this is so common, that those who possess much power and influence, rarely acquit themselves honourably as professors of godliness.—Men seldom accomplish to good purpose those services in which they reluctantly engage: and God does not generally allow those whom he loves, the satisfactions which they sinfully covet.

V. 10—25. Where grace possesses the heart, a man's conscience, on reflection, will reproach him with his transgressions: and he will not only be frightened and distressed, (which the hypocrite may be,) but he will be humbled before God, and with ingenious confessions and fervent prayers, seek forgiveness from him; sincerely purposing by his grace no more to return to folly: and thus a man's pride will prove an occasion of increasing his humility. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:24—26. 30—33, v. 31.)—But when God corrects the transgressions of his people; he makes them by the anguish of their souls, in the great straits to which he reduces them, taste the bitterness of their sins, and perceive his abhorrence of them.—Whatever we idolize, or grow proud of, will generally be taken from us, or converted into a source of distress; and no aggravation or affliction is more painful to generous minds, than the reflection, that others whom they love are suffering on their account. This is a common case in kingdoms and families: and perhaps, while ministers mourn over the state of their congregations; they may sometimes profitably inquire, whether their own supineness, pride, and desire of applause or popularity; their want of zeal and simplicity; their self-indulgence, or conformity to the world, do not bring a secret blight upon their labours, although more open evils do not bring a blot upon their profession? and whether the people's souls are not suffering for their correction; and to bring them to deeper humiliation, greater fervency in prayer, and a more simple, spiritual frame of mind, and devotedness to God? And surely we should choose to be chastened in our own persons, rather than that the blessing should be withheld from our congregations: for, though the Lord is righteous in these dispensations; yet the people have not deserved *at our hands*, that we should occasion this evil to them.—Grace teaches men to condemn themselves rather than others, and to seek the interests of their fellow-creatures in many respects before their own; and earnest prayers offered in this temper of mind, by those who unreservedly cast themselves on the mercies of the Lord, are very prevalent. For "he is slow to anger, and ready to forgive;" and he never fails of his promises, though he readily recedes from his threatenings in behalf of the humbled sinner.—If the power of angels, as it appears in this chapter, is so terrible, what is that of the Almighty Creator! and as they are so obedient to their Maker's word, and so prompt in executing his will; we ought carefully to

imitate them, especially in the delightful service of "ministering to the heirs of salvation."—Death is continually, and in so many forms and so suddenly, destroying all around, that it is madness not to be expecting and preparing for the closing scene.—Through the great sacrifice and intercession of the Saviour, the chief of sinners may approach a reconciled God: and, being justified by faith in his blood, may become his servant and child, and be made meet for his eternal kingdom. This message, the ministers of God propose to men, that they may "advise, and consider what answer they will return to him that sent them;" and they affectionately long that sinners would thankfully accept of this great salvation. Though men are required to forsake sin, to renounce the world and its friendship, and to deny themselves, if they would be

Christ's disciples: yet surely this need not reduce them to a great strait; for he will supply every want, make up every loss, and give them a hundred-fold more in this present time, for all which they part with for his sake.—Grace will teach men liberality when the honour of God and the good of his people require it: and extraordinary occasions require extraordinary disinterestedness. But we should not encroach on those who are willing to give, or prefer a cheap religion. All we possess and are belongs to God, and we should desire to employ in his immediate service, that measure of our time and substance which he requires: and while we simply follow his directions, we shall speedily obtain the comfort of his pardoning love, and also be instrumental in averting his wrath from others.

THE

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THE two following books contain, as their name imports, the history of Judah and Israel, under the government of kings, from the close of David's reign to the Babylonish captivity, during about four hundred and twenty-seven years. They seem originally to have formed but one book; but they were afterwards divided into two, and called "The first and second books of the Kings;" and in some versions, "The third and fourth books of the Kings;" as the two books of Samuel are, in the Septuagint and in the Vulgate, called "The first and the second books of the Kings." It is evident, that they contain an abstract of the history, compiled from much more copious records, which seem to have been collected and preserved by contemporary prophets. (11:41, 14:29, 15:31, 23:39, 43, 2 Chr. 9:23, 12:15, 13:22, 20:34, 26:23.) Indeed a considerable part of the transactions of their own times is recorded in connexion with the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It is, however, uncertain by whom this compilation was made: but, if Ezra, as it is generally and probably supposed, compiled the books of Chronicles; it is not likely, that, (according to the opinion of some learned men) he compiled these also: as they form a distinct history of the same times. If, therefore, they were arranged in the present manner, principally by one sacred writer, those, who ascribe them to Jeremiah, seem to have adopted the more probable opinion. Indeed, the second book of the Kings and his prophecy end with the narrative of the same events; though perhaps, both were added after his death by another hand: and it is not unlikely that some other trivial alterations were made in the days of Ezra, to render the narrative more perspicuous to the Jews after the captivity.—They have, however, been constantly received, both by Jews and Christians, as a part of the sacred canon, the holy Scriptures: and the events recorded are frequently referred to in the New Testament. (Matt. 1:7—12, 6:29, 12:42, Luke 4:25—27, Acts 2:29, 7:47—50, Jam. 5:17, 18.) It is observable also, that our Lord and his apostle James not only speak of them as authentic records, and a part of the sacred oracles as received by the Jews; but especially attest some of the most wonderful miracles recorded in them; and thus affix a direct sanction to them, as given by inspiration of God.—They also contain many prophecies; especially that of Josiah, who was foretold by name three hundred years before his birth: (Note, 1 Kings 13:2,) but none of these predictions, in their most evident literal meaning, refer to events later than the Babylonish captivity.—After the death of David, the sacred historian records the principal transactions of Solomon's long and peaceable reign; which, however, was covered with a dark cloud towards the close: and under his successor, the nation was divided into the two distinct kingdoms of Judah and Israel.—The descendants of Solomon reigned over that of Judah till the captivity, for about three hundred and eighty-seven years. So that from the accession of David, during a course of four hundred and sixty-seven years, the throne was filled by his descendants, in lineal descent, except as the sons of Josiah succeeded one another. During this long term of years there was not a single revolution, or civil war; and but one short interruption, by Athaliah's usurpation. Perhaps it would be difficult to find, in universal history, any thing equal to this permanent internal order and tranquillity. Let the reader recollect how many revolutions, civil wars, murders of reigning kings by rivals and successors, and changes in the succession, are found in the English history, during the same number of years.—Above half the kings of Judah supported true religion, and several of them were eminently pious men; and it is remarkable that their reigns were much longer than those of the wicked princes; (11:42, 15:10, 22:42, 2 Kings 15:2, 33, 18:2, 22:1, so that they comprise much above three hundred years of this period; and the greatest part of this time was evidently passed, either in profound peace, or in remarkable prosperity. Let this state of things be compared with the history of Greece or Rome; and the situation of Judah must be allowed to have been exceedingly more desirable, than that of these celebrated heathen nations.—The kingdom of Israel continued about two hundred and fifty-four years, till the Assyrian captivity. The nineteen kings, of several families, who, during this period, reigned in succession, were all idolaters, and most of them monsters of iniquity; yet the Lord by his prophets, especially by Elijah and Elisha, preserved a considerable degree of true religion in the land, till the measure of their national wickedness was full; and then they were finally dispersed among the Gentiles: except as a remnant of them was in various ways, and at different times, incorporated among the Jews.—In these books the history of the two kingdoms is carried on together; and the whole forms an admirable comment on the prophecies delivered to the nation by Moses and Joshua: (Notes, Lev. 26: Deut. 4: 28: 29: 30: 31: 32: Josh. 23: 15, 16,) and a striking illustration of the proverb, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is the reproach of any people."—This first book contains the history of about a hundred and twenty years. Connected with the peace and prosperity of Solomon's reign, and the fame of his wisdom, a full account is given of the temple having been built by him. God had commanded Israel to offer all their sacrifices at one place; which had for some time been that place; and the ark had been removed to Zion, by David, in order that a temple might there be built, which Solomon his son accomplished. (Note, Deut. 12:5—7.) A large proportion of the subsequent parts of the Old Testament relate to this temple; to the sins of the people in sacrificing elsewhere; to their profanation of the temple; to the judgments of God upon them for these crimes; especially to the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans; and to the rebuilding of it by Zerubbabel; and these things so run through all the subsequent history and prophecies; that if Solomon did not build the temple by the express command of God, it must follow, that God punished the nation with tremendous judgments for violating merely human appointments.—When the Samaritans preferred mount Gerizim, our Lord told the woman of Samaria, that they "knew not what they worshipped, for salvation was of the Jews;" and this declaration, with his own constant attendance at the ordinances administered at the temple in Jerusalem, sufficiently attest the divine inspiration of those records, in which alone it is expressly declared, that Solomon built the temple by the direction and appointment of God himself.—Solomon's fall into idolatry seems evidently implied in the book of Ecclesiastes: and the history of Rehoboam's imprudence, the division of his kingdom, Jehoahaz's idolatry, and the subsequent events to the end of the book, are assumed as undoubted facts in the writings of all the prophets. So entirely does the whole canon of Scripture coincide; with each part confirms, and receives confirmation from, all the rest.

CHAPTER I.

Adishag is procured for Jeriah. David, in his old age and sickness, 1-4. Adonijah gains over Joab and Abiathar, and aspires to the throne, 5-10. Nathan counsels Bath-sheba, who speaks to David, and is rewarded by Nathan, 11-27. David assures Bath-sheba, by an oath, that Solomon shall succeed him; and gives orders that he should, that day, be anointed and proclaimed king, 28-37. Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan, zealously execute these orders, and the people rejoice, 38-40. Jonathan informs Adonijah and his company; and they hastily depart, 41-49. Adonijah flees to the horns of the altar, and obtains from Solomon a conditional pardon, 50-53.

NOW king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

2 Wherefore his servants said unto him, 'Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat.

3 So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

4 And the damsel was very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not.

5 ¶ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, 'I will be king; and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

6 And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom.

7 And he conferred with Joab the son of

Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they, following Adonijah helped him.

8 But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah.

9 And Adonijah slew sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle, by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by Engrogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants:

10 But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not?

12 Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.

13 Go, and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thy handmaid, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

14 Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, 'I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words.

15 ¶ And Bath-sheba went in unto the king

a 2 Sam. 5:1. 1 Chr. 23:1. 29:23. Ps. 90:10. b Gen. 11:1. 24:1. Luke 1:7. * Heb. entered into days. Josh. 23:12. marg. f Heb. Let them seek. † Heb. a damsel, a virgin. d Deut. 10:9. 1 Sam. 16:21. 22. 2 Chr. 29:11. § Heb. be a cherisher unto him. e Gen. 16:5. Dent. 13:6. 9 Sam. 12:3. Mic. 7:5. f Ec. 4:11. g Ruth. 2:1. h 2:17-25. 1 Job. 19:13. 1 Sam. 28:4. 2 Kings 4:35. k Matt. 1:22. 1 2 Sam. 3:4. 1 Chr. 3:2. m 11. 224. Ex. 9:17. Prov. 15:18. 18:12. 1 2 Sam. 14:11. 18:14. d Deut. 17:15. Judg. 9:2. 1 Chr. 22:5-11. 28:5. 29:1. † Heb. reign. o Deut. 17:16. 2 Sam. 15:1. Is. 2:7. p 1 Sam. 9:13. Prov. 22:15. 23:13, 14. 29:15. Heb. 12:5-6. † Heb. from his days. q 1 Sam. 9:2. 10:23. 2 Sam. 14:23. r 2 Sam. 3:3, 4. 1 Chr. 3:2. ** Heb. his

words were with. s 2 Sam. 15:12. Ps. 2:2. 2:23. 2 Sam. 8:16. 20:23. v 1 Sam. 22:23-23. 2 Sam. 15:24-29. 35. 20:25. † Heb. helped after Adonijah. 2:22. 26-31. v 2:35. 2 Sam. 8:17. 18. 20:25. 1 Chr. 27:5. 6. Ez. 44:15. x 2 Sam. 7:2-4. 12:11-15. y 4:18. Zech. 12:13. z 2 Sam. 23:8-39. 1 Chr. 11:10-47. a 2 Sam. 15:12. Prov. 15:5. † Or. the well Rogel. 2 Sam. 17:17. b 2 Sam. 13:23-27. 15:11. c 5:19. d 2 Sam. 7:12-17. 12:31. 25. 1 Chr. 22:9. 10. 28:4. 29:1. e See on 5. f Prov. 11:14. 20:18. 27:9. Jer. 38:15. g 21. Gen. 19:17. Acts 27. 31. h Judg. 9:2. 5 Kings 11:1. 2 Chr. 21. 1 22:10. Matt. 21:38. i See on 11. j 17. k 17. 24. 30. 35. 48. 2:12. 1 Chr. 17. 18. 1 Chr. 29:23. Ps. 132:1. 12. Is. 9:7. Jer. 33:21. Luke 1:32. 33. k 17-27. 2 Cor. 16:1. § Heb. full up.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1-4. David was seventy years old when he died, and these events occurred not long before. He seems to have been a healthy man: yet his constitution was entirely worn out; perhaps in some measure through his great exertions in his various wars.—The counsel of his courtiers, or physicians, (if they may be so called,) to excite in him a due degree of animal heat, especially when we advert to the pains bestowed to find out a very fair damsel for the purpose, deserves much censure; though similar advice has been given in other ages and countries. We may suppose, that David acceded to it merely in compliance with their wishes, and in deference to their judgment; but the appearance was not at all becoming his character, and circumstances. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2:15-18.)

V. 5, 6. Adonijah could not be ignorant, that Solomon had been appointed by God himself to succeed David in the kingdom: (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:12-16. 1 Chr. 22:6-10. 23:1. 28:5.) and his whole conduct shows, that he considered Solomon only as his rival. After the death of Absalom, Adonijah was David's eldest son: and no doubt he considered the kingdom as his birthright, and confided in the support of the people to seize upon it: without any regard to his father, or to the revealed will of God.—It is remarkable how frequently the first-born were set aside by his express appointment. In the ordinary course of things, it is expedient that the primogeniture should have the pre-eminence; and the judicial law of Moses, (as well as the civil laws of most nations,) was formed accordingly. But he examples of Jacob, Judah, the sons of Joseph, David, Solomon, and others, prove that this is not grounded on moral obligation; that it is not divine, or unalterable, or to be put in competition with the welfare of whole nations, and the liberty and rights of all the rest of mankind; according to the sentiments of some authors, who most absurdly ground their doctrine upon the word of God, though it is evidently contradictory to it!—Absalom had been displeased with his father, though most unjustly, because of the disgrace under which he laid him for the murder of Amnon: (Note, 2 Sam. 14:28, 29.) but David had never given Adonijah the least cause of displeasure; except that, in obedience to God, he intended and appointed Solomon to be his successor. It is probable, that Adonijah was of an impetuous disposition; and David very imprudently indulged him, and never restrained or reprovved him in any matter. This was David's fault: for he ought to have exerted his authority, and kept him in subjection; but at the same time it aggravated Adonijah's contempt and ingratitude. He seems to have greatly resembled his elder brother Absalom: like him he was too much indulged, and beloved on account of his exterior accomplishments; and like him, he affected royal pomp and magnificence: (Notes, 2 Sam. 14:25-27. 15:1-6.) and he succeeded to his ambitious projects,

though he concealed and deferred them, till his father was, as he supposed, finally incapacitated for business.

V. 7. It seems wonderful that Joab and Abiathar, who were persons of years, experience, and capacity; who had long attended on David, and were highly preferred under him; and who doubtless understood his intentions concerning Solomon, should at last concur in Adonijah's conspiracy! But perhaps Joab, though attached to David, was not favourable to Solomon, and preferred Adonijah as more congenial with his own disposition. Being destitute of piety, he disregarded the divine appointment, and deemed it more politic to place the eldest son upon the throne; and no wrong to David, who, he might think, injured Adonijah in preferring his younger brother. Perhaps he was still afraid of being called to account for his murders; and hoped to secure himself, to continue his preferment, and to increase his influence, by helping Adonijah to the kingdom: and it may be supposed, that he secretly resented David's conduct in attempting to lay him aside, and to put Amasa in his place. (Notes, 2 Sam. 19:9-15. 20:6-10.)—Abiathar, though high-priest, seems to have been less regarded by David than Zadok was: (Note, 2 Sam. 15:24-29.) and perhaps he suspected that Solomon would set his family aside, in favour of the line of Eleazar to which Zadok belonged. But by attaching himself to Adonijah, he hastened that event, and showed, that David had good reasons for preferring Zadok, who probably was a man of much deeper and more serious religion. (Notes, 2:26, 27, 35. 1 Sam. 2:31-36. Ez. 44:15, 16.)

V. 8-10. Adonijah knew that it would be in vain and dangerous to tamper with Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, who were firmly attached to the cause of Solomon, as well as to that of David.—It is highly improbable, that Shimei, the son of Gera, would be much regarded by either party. (Notes, 2:8, 9, 36-46. 2 Sam. 16:5-14. 19:19-23.) Solomon afterwards preferred a person of this name: (4:18.) and probably he was a man of considerable consequence. (Note, Zech. 12:9-14.)—We know nothing further of Rei, but no doubt he also was a person of rank and great influence.—The mighty men were the chieftains before enumerated. (2 Sam. 23:8-39.)—It is most likely that Adonijah made a solemn sacrifice, as well as a magnificent feast, on the occasion; and thus he concealed his designs, till ripe for execution. (Note, 2 Sam. 15:7-9.)—En-rogel was in the vicinity of Jerusalem. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 11-14. Solomon could not be ignorant of Adonijah's intentions, of which he made no secret: but he remained quiet, and left his cause with God. His life and succession were secured by promise: yet it was proper that Nathan and Bath-sheba should use prudent means for his preservation, and the maintenance of his right. Had Adonijah succeeded, he would, no doubt, have put Solomon and Bath-sheba to death: for the history of the world demonstrates,

into the chamber: and the king was ^{very} old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

16 And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. ^{And} the king said, ^{What} wouldst thou?

17 And she said unto him, ^{My lord,} ^{thou} swearst by the LORD thy God unto thy hand, ^{saying,} Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.

18 And now, behold, ^{Adonijah} reigneth; and now, my lord the king, ^{thou} knowest it not:

19 And ^{he} hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

20 And thou, my lord, O king, ^{the eyes of all Israel are} upon thee, that ^{thou} shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

21 Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall ^{sleep} with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted ^{offenders}.

22 ^{And} lo, ^{while} she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

23 And they told the king, saying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, ^{he} bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Nathan said, My lord, O king, ^{thast} thou said, Adonijah shall ^{reign} after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

25 For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest: and behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, ^{God} save king Adonijah.

26 But me, ^{even} ^{me} thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

27 Is this thing done by my lord the king, ^{and} thou hast not showed ^{it} unto thy servant, who

should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

[Practical Observations.]

28 ^{Then} king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came ^{into} the king's presence, and stood before the king.

29 And the king sware, and said, ^{As} the LORD liveth, that ^{hath} redeemed my soul out of all distress,

30 Even ^{as} I swear unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

31 Then Bath-sheba bowed with ^{her} face to the earth, and ^{did} reverence to the king, and said, ^{Let} my lord king David live for ever.

32 ^{And} king David said, Call me ^{Zadok} the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son ^{to} ride upon ^{mine own} mule, and bring him down to ^{Gihon}:

34 And let ^{Zadok} the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and ^{blow} ye with the trumpet, and say, ^{God} save king Solomon.

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and ^{sit} upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and ^I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, ^{Amen}: ^{the LORD God of my lord} the king say so too.

37 ^{As} ^{the LORD} hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, ^{and} make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

38 So ^{Zadok} the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and ^{the} Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon ^{king David's} mule, and brought him to Gihon.

39 And Zadok the priest took ^a horn of oil

1-2. m 23. 1 Sam. 20:41. 24:8. 25:23. n 2:20. Esth. 7:2. Matt. 20:21. 32. * Heb. What to thee? o Gen. 18:12. 1 Pet. 3:5. p 13:30. q 5:24. 2 Sam. 13:10. r 11:21, 27. Acts 3:17. s See on 7-10. t 2 Chr. 30:12. u 25:15. 12:2. Zech. 3:9. v 2 Sam. 23:2. 1 Chr. 22:8-10. 27:5, 6, 10. 29:1. s See on 2:10. Gen. 15:15. Deut. 31:16. 1 Heb. sinne. s. 2:15, 22-24. x Gen. 24:15. Job 1:16-18. Dan. 9:20. y See on 16. Rom. 13:7. 1 Pet. 2:17. z 14:13. a 5:13, 17. b See on 9. 1 Sam. 11:14, 15. 1 Chr. 29:23-23. c 1 Heb. Let us Adonijah. d 1 Sam. 10:12. e 2 Sam. 16:15. 2 Kings 11:12. 2 Chr. 23:11. m Gen. 24:1. n Mark 11:21. 1 Luke 11:2. c. 19. 2 Sam. 7:12-17, 12. 21. 2 Chr. 1:27. 1. 15:15. f Heb. before the king. e 2:24. 17:18. 16. Job 12:1. g 1 Sam. 11:15. 2 Sam. 12:5. 2 Kings 4:30. 5:16, 20. f Gen. 48:16. 2 Sam. 4:9. Ps. 31:14-22. 72:14. 136:24. 139:7. g See on 13, 17.

that when men are aspiring after dominion, they are easily tempted to the most enormous crimes, which seem necessary for their purpose, even when most contrary to their apparent natural disposition. (Notes, Judg. 9:4-6. 2 Kings 11:1, 2. Matt. 2:3-6, 16-18.)

V. 15-18. It is not recorded on what occasion David swore to Bath-sheba that Solomon should succeed him: but it is supposed with probability, that it took place after Absalom's rebellion; and as God himself had settled the succession, he might very properly give her this assurance.—David was aware that Adonijah had taken great state upon him; but he did not know that he had actually advanced a claim to the kingdom: this both enhanced Adonijah's crime, and pleaded David's excuse.

V. 20. The people knew, that "the Spirit of the LORD spake by David, and his word was in his tongue." (Note, 2 Sam. 23:1, 2.) and they had great confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection. They therefore waited to know the will of God from him. David, though anointed to the kingdom, did not assume regal authority at first, without the concurrence of the elders of Judah and Israel: (Notes, 2 Sam. 2:4. 5:1-5.) and after Absalom's rebellion, he did not return to the exercise of it without their approbation. (Note, 2 Sam. 19:9-15.) He could not therefore claim a right to dispose of the kingdom by will, as if it had been his own private property, according to the statement of some writers; but he might very properly inform the people of the Lord's appointment in that behalf: (Note, 1 Sam. 8:19-22.) and so far were they from eagerly joining Adonijah, as they had done Absalom; that they remained in suspense, till his determination was notified.

V. 23. He bowed, &c.] The exterior indications of civil honour, to persons in authority, were generally rendered by the most eminent servants and prophets of God. The refusal

of them may arise from an erroneous conscience: but it has the appearance of pride and affected moroseness. (Acts 26:25.)

V. 24-27. (Marg. Ref.) As the transaction was so public, and so many eminent persons were concerned, it had the appearance of being countenanced by the king; but after all that had passed, the prophet could not believe that David would have taken such a step without informing him.

V. 29. Notes, Gen. 48:16. 2 Sam. 4:9.

V. 31. Live for ever.] This common expression of loyalty and affection to princes, as here used, implied that Bath-sheba cordially desired the continuance of David's life, in preference to her son's succession to the throne. (Notes, Neh. 2:3. Dan. 2:4.)

V. 33. Mine own mule.] Notes, 5:6. Esth. 6:6-11.

V. 36, 37. The language of Benaiah, on this occasion, not only expressed the most loyal attachment to Solomon, but also fervent piety; and an earnest desire of the prosperity of Israel under the government which God had placed over them.—This instance serves to explain the original use and emphasis of the word Amen. (Notes, Deut. 27:15-26. Ps. 72:17-19. Matt. 6:13.)

V. 38. Notes, 1 Chr. 23:1. 29:21-25.—Gihon.] A fountain near Jerusalem. (33. 2 Chr. 32:30.) It does not appear that there was any special reason, why this spot was selected; but, probably, it was a place so much frequented that it was peculiarly suited to make the transaction speedily known throughout the whole city.

V. 39. A horn, &c.] Neither Absalom nor Adonijah regarded this expressive ceremony: perhaps presuming on the right of primogeniture; for we do not find that kings, who succeeded as the first-born of their predecessors, without any interruption, were anointed. (Notes, 19:15-17. 1 Sam. 10:1. 16:13. 2 Kings 9:5-10. 11:2.) The anointing denoted both their appointment expressly from God, and the qualifications with which he would endow them; and the verb being

out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon.

40 And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

41 ¶ And Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it, as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?

42 And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou art a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

43 And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

44 And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:

45 And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This is the noise that ye have heard.

d Ex. 30:23-33. Ps. 89:20. e 1 Chr. 29:22. f See on 25. 1 Sam. 10:24. 2 Kings 11:12. 2 Chr. 23:11, 13. * Or, *Autes*. Dan. 3:5. g 1 Sam. 11:15. 2 Kings 11:14, 20. 1 Chr. 12:38-40. Ps. 97:1. Zech. 9:9. Luke 19:37. Rev. 11:15-18. h Job 20:5. Prov. 14:13. Matt. 24:38, 39. Luke 17:26-29. i Ex. 32:17, 18. Job 15:21, 22. Ps. 73:13-20. k Matt. 21:9-11, 15. Acts 21:31. l 2 Sam. 15:36, 17:17. m 23:13. 2 Sam. 18:27. 2 Kings 9:22. n 5:21. 1 Prov. 5:2, 3. o See on 32-40. o 1 Sam. 4:5. Ezra 3:13. p 14:6. 1 Sam. 23:29. Dan. 5:26-28. q 13. 1 Chr. 29:23. Ps. 132:11. Hag. 2:22. r Ex. 12:32. 2 Sam. 8:10. 21:3.

types of Christ, the anointed of the Father.—The oil, with which Solomon was anointed, was taken out of the tabernacle; being, as it is probable, the same holy oil with which the priests were anointed. (*Note, Ex. 30:22-33*.)

V. 41. Adonijah and his guests seem to have wasted much time upon this magnificent feast, when far more important concerns waited their attention, and when ruin hung over their heads. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Dan. 5:1-9. Nah. 1:9, 10.*)

V. 42. (*Note, 2 Sam. 17:17-21.*) It is probable, that Jonathan was not invited to the feast, nor concerned in the conspiracy; but he went to warn his father of the danger; though some think he was left in the city to learn what should occur, and to bring an account of it to Adonijah.

V. 43-48. The loud acclamations of the people on this occasion, and the pious and fervent congratulations of David's servants, were especially suited to dismay the conspirators. (*Notes, Matt. 21:6-11.*)

V. 49-53. Adonijah had doubtless expected to be joined by the multitude; but finding himself mistaken, and being deserted by his friends, he gave up all for lost.—*The murderer* was to be taken from the altar and slain: (*Note, Ex. 21:12-14*) but in other crimes it was a customary refuge, at least till a pardon could be supplicated; as representing the method of obtaining forgiveness from God, through the great sacrifice for sin.—Adonijah acknowledged Solomon as king, both by word and deed; and received a conditional pardon, but Solomon gave him fair warning that he was put upon his good behaviour. He also required him to go to his house and live a retired, private life, not affecting the splendour and state which he had before.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The most vigorous constitutions must soon wear out, and our lives hasten to a close; and, though proper means of restoring health and prolonging our days should be used; yet a pious and wise man ought not to yield to such expedients as have the appearance of evil, or may become temptations to him. But carnal men counsel others according to their own inclinations, and often enforce their advice under specious pretences; by which they impose upon such as mean no evil, but are induced to actions inconsistent with their character and profession.—*Indulgent* parents are commonly chastised with *disobedient* children, who ungratefully despise their infirmities, and are impatient to get possession of their estates.—Every depraved propensity gathers strength by being gratified; and when ambition comes within the reach of its object, it urges a man to violate all obligations, to break through all obstructions, to despise all dangers, and to disregard the examples of those who have before been ruined by similar attempts. So long as carnal self-love reigns in the heart, no worldly wisdom and experience, no maturity of age, no rank or station in the community or in the church, no previous fidelity or attachment to princes or patrons, can secure men's continuance in their former course or connexions; for innumerable circumstances may occur, which may prompt

46 And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

47 And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed.

48 And also thus said the king, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it.

49 And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

50 ¶ And Adonijah feared because of Solomon and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

51 And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to-day that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

52 And Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

53 So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thy house.

Ezra 6:10. Ps. 20:1-4. s See on 37. Luke 19:38. t Gen. 47:31. Heb. 11:21. u Gen. 14:20. 1 Chr. 29:10, 20. Neh. 9:5. Ps. 34:1. 41:13. 72:17-18. 103:12. 145:2. Dan. 4:34. Luke 1:46, 67, 68, 69. Eph. 1:3. 1 Pet. 1:3. x 3:5. 1 Chr. 17:11-14, 17. Ps. 132:11, 12. Prov. 17:6. y 2 Sam. 21:5. 1 Prov. 26:14. 21:15. Dan. 5:4-6. z 2 Chr. 34:11. 34:2. Ps. 118:27. b 1 Sam. 14:45. 2 Sam. 14:11. Matt. 10:30. Luke 21:18. Acts 27:34. c 21:43. d See on 16, 31. 2 Sam. 1:2. e 2:36. 2 Sam. 14:21, 28. Prov. 24:21.

them to some new method of attempting to gratify their reigning inclinations. So that disgust, fear, conscious guilt, or the hope of greater authority, influence, or wealth, may speedily induce them to measures, which stand in opposition to all their former lives! We ought therefore to depend on the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and from the fickleness and treachery of men.—Political wisdom frequently contradicts the word of God, and proves in the event the greatest folly: and crafty seducers can discern who are, and who are not, fit for their purpose; and will shun determined honest characters as their enemies and rivals.

V. 11-27. In every age men form designs, which their own consciences condemn as contrary to the will of God: and yet they hope for success from the favour and assistance of man! But those, who are vain of their own accomplishments, often flatter themselves with the imagined attachment of numbers, that have no real esteem or affection for them.—A feast, and a sacrifice, are proper baits to draw in the sensual or the unsuspecting; and aspiring men, according to the taste of the times, have always employed one or both of these expedients, to subvert their own ambitious purposes; by which numbers have been inadvertently betrayed to concur in criminal measures, contrary to their judgments, consciences, characters, and interests.—In these days, when kingdoms are disposed of by common providence, the ministers of God have little to do with disputed successions; and are best at a distance from the cabals, intrigues, and parties, which generally surround the courts of kings: yet the welfare of the state, as well as of the church, should lie near their hearts: and they ought to use all their influence, and embrace every opportunity, to remind the greatest men, to whom they are allowed access, of the words of God, and to excite them to do their duty according to his revealed will.—If a neighbour is in danger of being injured or murdered, without knowing it, or being able to avoid the snare; it must be the duty of every man, in all cases or at any hazard, to give him warning or counsel, and to interpose for his preservation.—When others are neglecting their duty, through inattention or multiplied infirmities or engagements, they should be put in remembrance of it: when they are slack to do it, prudent contrivances, and quickening expostulations may be successfully employed to incite them; and every means should be used to prevent manifest injustice, to exclude occasions of future discord, and to promote decisive measures for the glory of God, and the good of his people: for if the enemies of religion be combined, active, and daring; its friends should not be timid, supine, and disunited.—The most respectful behaviour to our superiors is very consistent with plainness of speech in the great concerns of God; and such language and behaviour combined in persons of known and approved character, will be very forcible with men of piety and integrity.

V. 28-53. The true believer loves to review his past experience: even the frequent recollection of his distresses, from all which "the Lord hath redeemed him, increases his

CHAPTER II.

Do *ad* charges Solomon to *serve* *G. d.*; and directs him how to act towards *Joab*, the son of *Barzillai*, and *Shimei*, *1-5*. *His death*, and the years of *his reign*, *10, 11*. *Solomon succeeds him*, *12*. *Adonijah persuades Bathsheba to ask Solomon to give him Abiathar to wife*; and is put to death, *13-25*. *Abiathar's life is spared*, but he is deprived of the high-priesthood, *26, 27*. *Joab, having fled to the altar, is there put to death*, *28-34*. *Benaiah succeeds Joab*, and *Zadab, Abiathar*, *35*. *Shimei is, by Solomon, required to reside in Jerusalem*, and engages by oath to do so: but in breaking his engagement, he is put to death, *36-46*.

NOW ^athe days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he ^bcharged Solomon his son, saying,

2 ^cI go the way of all the earth: ^dbe thou strong therefore, and ^eshow thyself a man;

3 And ^fkeep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his ^gstatutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his ^htestimonies, ⁱas it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and ^jwhithersoever thou turnest thyself:

4 ^kThat the LORD may continue ^lhis word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to ^mwalk before me in truth, ⁿwith all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

a Gen. 47:29. Deut. 31:14, 33-1. 2 Tim. 4:6. 2 Pet. 1:13-15. b Num. 27:19. Deut. 3:28, 31-23. Acts 20:28-31. 1 Tim. 1:18. 6:13. 2 Tim. 4:1. c Josh. 24:1. 30:16, 20-23. Heb. 9:7. d Dent. 31:6. Josh. 1:6, 7. 1 Chr. 28:2. Eze. 6:10. e 2 Tim. 2:1. f 3 7. 2 Sam. 10:12. 1 Chr. 16:13. 1 Tim. 4:12. f Dent 29. Josh. 1:7, 22-13. 20:8, 9, 29-19. g See on Dent. 4:1. 5:8, 5, 1-12. h Jer. 1:15. Ps. 117. 119:2, 111, 133. I Dent. 17:18-20. Mal. 4:4. k Or, do mildly. Josh. 1:7, 8. marg. 1 Sam. 18:5, 14, 30. 2 Chr. 31:20, 21. 1 Chr. 12:3. 119:98-100. Prov. 3:1-4. k 2 Sam. 8:5, 14. 2 Kings 8:7. 1 Gen. 18:1. Dent. 7:12. 1 Chr. 28:9. John 15:9, 10. Jude 20, 21, 24. n 2 Sam. 11-16, 25. 1 Chr. 17:11-15. 22:9-11. 25:5-7. Ps. 89:29-37. 132:11, 12. n 3:14, 8.

comfort as well as his gratitude; and inspires him with hope, and animates him to his duty, though under the decays of nature, and at the approach of death. In preparation for that event, we should arrange all our domestic or more public concerns, as may best secure peace and good to the survivors: and we should lose no time before we do so useful a work, even though it somewhat interrupt our religious exercises.—Those enterprises must end well which are conducted with piety and integrity, in simple dependence on God, and cordial acquiescence in his will.—We can see no one so wise, so good, or so happy in this world, but we may well desire that others may be more wise, more holy, and more happy than he; and every pious man must long that it may be thus with his beloved children, both for their sakes, and for the benefit of the community.—They, who are engaged in a bad cause, are exposed to continual terrors: and no good man can bring other than evil tidings to those who are rebelling against God and the king.—Vain confidence and sensual pleasure are the usual forerunners of temporal and eternal destruction.—Combinations formed upon iniquitous principles will speedily be dissolved, when self-preservation or self-interest calls another way. But clemency becomes those in power, especially towards such as have rather injured them than the public: yet, no government can pardon or tolerate a traitor, who perseveres in his treasonable machinations.—But we see here, as in a glass, Jesus, the Son of David and the Son of God, exalted to the throne of glory, notwithstanding all the conspiracies and opposition of his enemies. (Notes, Ps. 2.) His kingdom is far greater than that of his father David; and all the true people of God most cordially rejoice in his exaltation. The prosperity of his cause and the triumphing of his servants, are the vexation and terror of his enemies: and no “horns of the altar,” no forms of godliness, no pretences to religion of any kind, can profit those who will not submit to his authority and accept of his salvation. He spares and is ready to pardon those, who have most desperately rebelled against him, when they seem disposed to repent, and do works meet for repentance. But if wickedness be afterwards found in them, discovering the hypocrisy of their professed submission, they will at length die without mercy, and perish without remedy.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. Solomon could not at this time be more than twenty years of age; and, it is probable, he was not so much: an early period for him to enter upon so weighty a charge, as the government of God's people! (Note, 3:5-14.) But he was endowed with extraordinary wisdom; and David charged and exhorted him to shew all Israel, that though he was but a child in years, he was a man in capacity and attention to business. (Notes, Num. 27:19. 1 Tim. 4:1-16. 2 Tim. 2:1, 2.)

V. 3. (Notes, Josh. 1:7, 8. 1 Chr. 22:11-13. 28:9.) Testimonies, in this connexion, may signify those laws, which preserved the remembrance of great events; as the sabbaths, the passover, and others. (Notes, Deut. 6:1. Ps. 19:7-11. Is. 8:16, 20.)—Nothing can be more manifest, than that the law of Moses, as written in the Pentateuch, was known at this time. (Notes, Deut. 17:16-18.)

V. 4. (Notes, Gen. 18:18, 19. 2 Sam. 7:12-16.) The continuance of the kingdom to David's posterity was sure, as it respected the Messiah and his spiritual reign: nor would

5 Moreover, thou knowest also what ^aJoab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the host of Israel, unto ^bAbner the son of Ner, and unto ^cAmasa the son of ^dJether whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.

6 Do therefore ^eaccording to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.

7 But show kindness unto the sons of ^fBarzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me ^gwhen I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

8 And, behold, thou hast with thee ^hShimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but ⁱhe came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

9 Now therefore ^jhold him not guiltless: for thou art ^ka wise man, and knowest what thou

23. Gen. 17:1. Lev. 26:8. 2 Kings 20:3. 23:3, 25. 2 Chr. 17:3. Luke 1:5. o Dent. 6:5, 10-12. 1:13. Mat. 22:2. 1 Heb. he cut off from them from the throne. 8:27. Ps. 37:9, 22. Zech. 14:2. p 1-7, 18, 19. 2 Sam. 3:39. 18:5, 14. 18:5-7. q 2 Sam. 3:27. r 2 Sam. 20:10. s 2 Sam. 17:25. Titus. t Heb. put. 1 Chr. 23:1 6:15. Ps. 24:7, 8. u 9. Prov. 20:28. x 28-34. Gen. 9:6. Num. 35:33. Ps. 28:17. Eze. 8:11. Is. 65:20. y 2 Kings 22:20. Ps. 37:37. Is. 48:22. 57:2, 21. z 2 Sam. 17:27-29. 19:31-38. Prov. 27:10. a 2 Sam. 9:10. 19:28. Luke 12:37. 22:28-30. Rev. 3:20, 21. b 2 Sam. 15:15-15. c 36-46. 2 Sam. 16:5-8. d Heb. strong. d 2 Sam. 19:16-23. Jer. 4:2. e Ex. 20:7. 22:28. Job 28:3. f 3:12, 25.

every transgression forfeit the temporal kingdom entailed upon his descendants; for chastisements would be used to bring them to repentance: yet obstinate and aggravated disobedience would cut off the entail. Thus the Lord punished Solomon's idolatry by the defection of the ten tribes from his son: (Notes, 11:9-13. 12:8-15.) and at length, the family of David was deprived of all authority, till Christ came and set up his spiritual kingdom.

V. 5, 6. These dying counsels of David ought by no means to be imputed to personal resentment; but to a regard to justice, and a wise and pious concern for the security of Solomon's throne, which was the cause of God and of Israel.—Joab had long deserved to die: and David's timidity had left bloodguiltiness upon his family and kingdom. (Notes, Num. 35:31-34. 2 Sam. 3:28, 29.) His late conspiracy proved him to be a factious and dangerous person: and, though his influence seems to have been weakened by it; yet his party was still so strong, that it was not probable Solomon would reign in peace while he lived.—He had not so much as attempted to conceal the base murders which he had committed; but he avowed and vindicated them, without shame or fear of punishment; and it was evident that he did not now repent, but would readily repeat them, to carry his purpose and secure his preferment. His murders were crimes against David, as committed upon two men who were connected with David: and yet they were so conducted, as to bring him into suspicion as if privy to them. David, therefore, reminded his successor to expiate the guilt of these murders by Joab's blood, that he and his kingdom and family might be guiltless. (Note, 28-34.)—It is observable that David did not blame Joab for killing Absalom: being doubtless conscious that he deserved to die; and that his own desire to spare him was a weakness and a sin.

V. 7. Notes, 2 Sam. 17:27-29. 19:31-39.

V. 8, 9. (Notes, 2 Sam. 16:5-14. 19:19-23.) Shimei also deserved to die, though for an offence of a different kind from Joab's. Probably he retained his old enmity to the family of David, and his partiality to the house of Saul. Solomon was not bound by the oath which David had sworn not to put him to death: his punishment, at first, would indeed have been a salutary act of justice; yet David would not then consent to it, because unsuitable to his circumstances: and had he been suitably affected with David's lenity, and acted properly afterwards, he would have been fully and finally pardoned. But it is evident that he had not done this; and the case was different with Solomon; who might take occasion from some recent offence, to remember the old crimes, and to execute deserved vengeance on an irreconcilable enemy to him and the peace of the kingdom. David therefore counselled him, as a wise man, not to trust Shimei, but to watch him narrowly; and he would be sure to find just cause for punishing him. (Note, 36-46.)

V. 10, 11. (Marg. Ref.) The remains of Saul, and his sons, were buried in the sepulchre of Kish his father. (2 Sam. 21:14.) But David was not buried in the sepulchre of Jesse at Bethlehem; but in that city which he had taken from the Jebusites, and made the capital of his kingdom, and the seat of his government, and that of his family. (Note, Acts 2:25-32.)

V. 14-18. It is evident that Adonijah had by no means

oughtest to do unto him; but ^hthis hoar head bring thou down to the grave ^hwith blood.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ So ^hDavid slept with his fathers, and was buried in ^hthe city of David.

11 And the days that David ^hreigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then ^hsat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and ^hthis kingdom was established greatly.

13 ¶ And ^hAdonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, ^hComest thou peaceably? and he said, Peaceably.

14 He said moreover, ^hI have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.

15 And he said, ^hThou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that ^hall Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for ^hit was his from the LORD.

16 And now I ask one petition of thee, ^hdeny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

17 And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me ^hAbishag the Shunammite to wife.

18 And Bath-sheba said, ^hWell; I will speak for thee unto the king.

19 ¶ Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king ^hrose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and ^hshe sat on his right hand.

20 Then she said, ^hI desire one small petition of thee: ^hI pray thee, say me not nay. And the king

said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay.

21 And she said, ^hLet Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

22 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And ^hwhy dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him ^hthe kingdom also; for he ^his mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

23 Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, ^hGod do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not ^hspoken this word against his own life.

24 Now therefore, ^has the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and ^hset me on the throne of David my father, and who hath ^hmade me a house, ^has he promised, Adonijah shall be ^hput to death this day.

25 And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and ^hhe fell upon him, that he died.

[Practical Observations.]

26 ¶ And unto ^hAbiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to ^hAnathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou ^hart worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, ^hbecause thou barest the ark of the LORD God before David my father, and ^hbecause thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

27 So Solomon ^htrust unto Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; ^hthat he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in ^hShiloh.

28 ¶ Then tidings came to Joab: (for ^hJoab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom;) and Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and ^hcaught hold on the horns of the altar.

g Gen. 42:38, 44:31. h Num. 32:33. i See on 1:21. 1 Chr. 29:28, Acts 2:29. 13:36. j 3:1, 11:43. 2 Sam. 5:7. 1 Chr. 11:7. k 2 Sam. 5:4. 1 Chr. 28:26, 27. 11:46. l 1 Chr. 29:23-25. 2 Chr. 1:1. Ps. 132:12. m 2 Sam. 7:12, 13, 29. Ps. 80:26, 37. n See on 1:5-10, 50-53. o 1 Sam. 16:4, 5. 2 Kings 9:18-22. 1 Chr. 17:18. Luke 10:5. p 2 Sam. 14:12. Luke 7:40. q 1:5, 25. 2 Sam. 15:6, 13. 16:13. r 2 Sam. 7:12. 12:24. 1 Chr. 22:9, 10. 28:3-7. Prov. 21:30. Jer. 27:5-7. Dan. 2:31. * Heb. turn not away my face. Ps. 132:10. Prov. 30:7. marg. 1-2. s 2 Sam. 3:7, 12:8. t Prov. 14:15. u Ex. 20:12. Lev. 19:3. x Ps. 45:9. 119:1. Matt. 23:33. y Matt. 20:21. John 2:3, 4. z Matt. 7:7-11. 18:19. Mark 10:35, 36. 11:24. Luke 11:9, 10. John 14:13, 14. 15:16. a 2 Sam. 16:21.

given up his pretensions to the throne; and highly probable, that neither he, nor Joab, nor Abiathar expected safety, unless in success; and that they were in concert forming new designs against Solomon. With this view, they seem to have thought, that if Adonijah married Abishag, it would increase the number of his adherents; both by the accession of her friends and relations, and from the general notions which prevail, concerning the wives and concubines of deceased kings. (Notes, 2 Sam. 3:6-10. 12:8. 16:20-23.) But they could not get possession of Abishag, without Solomon's consent; which they had no hopes of obtaining, but by the interposition of Bath-sheba. In Adonijah's speech to her, he insinuated, that the kingdom was his, by the right of primogeniture: and that he had been in possession of it, by the consent of all Israel. This, however, was totally false: the kingdom had never been his, except in his own groundless opinion, and that of the few who abetted his usurpation; for the people generally favoured Solomon. But he meant to induce Bath-sheba to compassionate his case; and to make a merit with her of peaceably receding from his claim: and that she might not suspect any ill design, he at length conceded, that "it was Solomon's from the LORD." But though his language was not well calculated to inspire confidence; and his request was in itself improper, and highly indecorous at least; yet according to his hopes, Bath-sheba suspected no ill, but considered him as entitled to compassion, and supposed his request to be the result of love, not ambition: and perhaps she thought this an easy way of satisfying Adonijah, and securing Solomon in the kingdom.—She did not look upon Abishag as the wife of David, (Note, 1:1-4.) and therefore did not consider her marriage with Adonijah as unlawful; and she readily consented to become his intercessor with Solomon. (Note, Matt. 20:20-23.)

V. 20. For I, &c.] All such general promises imply the supposition, that the request is lawful and proper to be granted: for even the assurances of God's word, that whatever we ask of him, shall be given, admit of a similar limitation: i. e. if consistent with his glory, and for our real good. (Notes, Rom. 8:24-27. Jam. 4:1-3. 1 John 5:14, 15.)

V. 22. Solomon immediately saw through Adonijah's intentions, and was fully convinced that he was aiming to take the fortress by sap, (so to speak,) which he had failed of seizing by surprise. He perceived him still restless, ^haspiring, and scheming; that he considered this as one step to the

throne, and that Joab and Abiathar were concerned in the project. To show the inefficacy therefore of every application in his favour; to convince Bath-sheba of the impropriety and impolicy of her request; and to declare the necessity of his death, in order to public peace, and the establishment of his authority, he spoke with great earnestness and decision. (Notes, Matt. 12:46-50. John 2:1-5.)

V. 23-25. Solomon has been censured, as too severe and precipitate in this execution; but there is no intimation of this in the Scripture. Adonijah's pardon had been conditional; and he had owned Solomon as king, yet he was plotting against him; (Note, 1:49-53.) he affected to tread in the steps of Absalom; and doubtless he would have created as fatal disturbances to Solomon's government, as Absalom had to David's. Nor would sound policy admit of any delay; when persons of so great authority and extensive influence were joined in the conspiracy, and had far more specious reasons for opposing Solomon, than Absalom had for rebelling against David.

V. 26, 27. Solomon's language to Abiathar, and his silence, clearly prove, that some recent conspiracies had been formed. Abiathar had suffered much with David, and had been faithful and useful to him; (1 Sam. 22:20-23. Notes, 1 Sam. 23:1-13. 2 Sam. 15:24-29.) so that, in remembrance of his services, as well as in respect to his sacred character, Solomon resolved to spare his life: and as he had not committed murder, this clemency might properly be exercised. In deposing Abiathar from the high-priesthood, Solomon purposely intended to fulfil the word of God to Eli. (Notes, 1 Sam. 2:30-36.) And in confining him to his own estate in the country, he only put him under a disgrace which he justly merited. (Notes, 36-46. 2 Sam. 14:28, 29.) The entire subjection of the priests and even of the high-priest, to the kings of Israel, in all civil and political concerns, is clearly shown in this instance: nor is any exemption from capital punishment, in the case of treason, or other crimes deserving death, even in favour of the high-priesthood itself, in the least intimated.—How different from the claims of the Roman hierarchy in these respects!

V. 28-34. (Note, 5, 6.) In fleeing to the altar, Joab pleaded guilty of the treason charged upon him; and Solomon in ordering him to be slain before the altar, not for that crime alone, but especially for his former murders, evinced his knowledge of, and his regard for, the law of God, and his

29 And it was told king Solon on that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and behold, *he is* by the altar: then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, fall upon him."

30 And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.

31 And the king said unto him, "Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father."

32 And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, "my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah."

33 Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

34 So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness.

35 And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest and the king put in the room of Abiathar.

36 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, "Build thee a house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither."

37 For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou

shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

38 And Shimei said unto the king, "The saying is good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days."

39 And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto Achish son of Maachah king of Gath: and they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath.

40 And Shimei arose and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath.

41 And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, "Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word that I have heard is good."

43 Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?

44 The king said moreover to Shimei, "Thou knowest all the wickedness which thy heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head;"

45 And king Solomon shall be "blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever."

46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

α 25, 31, 46. x Ex. 21:14. y Gen. 9:5-6. Num. 35:33. Deut. 19:12, 13. 21:9, 9. Kings 9:26. Prov. 23:17. Acts 28:4. z 2 Sam. 3:28. a 44. Gen. 4:11. Judg. 9:24, 57. Ps. 7:16. b 2 Sam. 3:27. 20:10. c 1 Sam. 15:28. 2 Sam. 4:11. 2 Chr. 21:13. Ezech. 1:19. d 2 Sam. 3:26, 37. e 5. 2 Sam. 17:23. f 1 Sam. 1:1. g See on 32. 2 Sam. 2:29. 2 Kings 1:37. h 101. i 109:6-15. Matt. 27:25. j 2 Sam. 3:28. Prov. 25:5. k Ps. 59:22, 37, 132:12. l 9:6, 7. 11:1-6. Luke 1:31-33. 2:14. i 25, 31, 46. j 2 Kings 21:18. 2 Chr. 33:20. k Josh. 15:61. Matt. 3:1. l See on 27. Num. 25:11-13. 1 Sam. 2:35. 1 Chr. 6:4-15, 50-53, 24:3. Ps. 109:8. Acts 1:20.

m 9, 9. 2 Sam. 16:5-9. Prov. 20:26. n 1:53. 2 Sam. 14:24, 28. o 15:13. 2 Sam. 15:28. 2 Kings 25:6. 2 Chr. 29:16. Jer. 31:40. p 101. q 101. r 101. s 101. t 101. u 101. v 101. w 101. x 101. y 101. z 101. 1 Sam. 21:10. 2 Chr. 21:13. 2 Sam. 17:23. 2 Prov. 15:27. Luke 12:15. 1 Tim. 6:10. 1:36-38. Ps. 15:4. Luke 19:22. u 2 Sam. 21:2. Ec. 17:18, 19. x 2 Chr. 30:12. Ec. 8:2. Rom. 13:5. y 2 Sam. 16:5-13. John 8:9. Rom. 2:15. 1 John 3:20. z See on 32, 33. 7:16. Prov. 16:22. Hos. 4:9. Matt. 2:15. 2:16. 7:17. b See on 24. Prov. 25:5. l 9:6, 7. e 12, 45. f 1:1. Prov. 29:24.

superiority to vulgar prejudices. He also showed the people, that no place, however sacred, should secure a murderer from justice. (Note, Ex. 21:12-14.)—His language, on this occasion, proves, that he considered the guilt of innocent blood as resting on his family and kingdom, so long as Joab's murders remained unpunished. (Note, Num. 35:31-34.)

V. 35. *Zadok.*] The high-priesthood seems to have continued, from this time, in the line of Eleazar and Phinehas, at least till long after the Babylonian captivity. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Chr. 6:4-15.)—Nothing further is said of Jonathan the son of Abiathar. (Note, 1:42.)

V. 36-46. No doubt Solomon suspected, that Shimei's influence would be dangerous upon his own estate, and among his numerous dependents in different parts of the land: and therefore he proposed to him, as the condition of his indemnity for former crimes, that he should live in Jerusalem under his eye, and by no means remove thence. (Note, 26:27.) These terms Shimei readily agreed to, and solemnly swore to observe them; and for three years he lived unmolested, and in affluence. But growing secure, in contempt of Solomon's authority, and of the oath of God, upon an unnecessary business, he took a journey, which according to his own engagement forfeited his life. Thus the Lord left him to be infatuated, that due punishment might be inflicted upon him: in order, that every ringleader of opposition to Solomon's kingdom might be crushed, and others be intimidated by their examples; and that his throne might be established in peace, as the type of the Redeemer's kingdom of peace and righteousness. (Note, 8:9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. It is desirable to be habitually and calmly expecting the approach of death; for that is "the way of all flesh," appointed for all men, to pass from this world to another: a dark and gloomy road indeed it is for the workers of iniquity, to a still more dark and dreadful place; but rendered cheerful to the righteous, by the presence of the Lord, and by the hopes of complete felicity. Whilst they are supported by these lively hopes and strong consolations, how becoming is it for them to animate their survivors and successors, to fill up their stations in the church of God, and in society, after a proper manner!—Young men, who are called to important services, should be cautioned by their seniors to act with gravity and prudence, that they may prevent others "from despising their youth." And those who in this evil world, would keep the commandments of God, and, as magistrates

or ministers, would induce others to do the same, need resolution and fortitude, as well as meekness, discretion, and zeal. "For they must keep the charge of the LORD;" and the smiles and flatteries, the reproaches and opposition, the friendships and enmities of the world, will, in different ways, impede them in the performance of their duty.—We can neither act with true wisdom, nor prosper in our undertakings further, than we make the whole word of God our rule and our hope; nor can we finally come short of all desirable success, if we do this, however appearances may for a while be against us.—No length of time will obliterate the guilt of sin; and justice, though long delayed, will finally be executed on the impenitent.—In human governments undue lenity is an evidence of imbecility, want of wisdom, and disregard to justice. Can it then be supposed that the King of heaven will so indiscriminately exercise mercy, as not to magnify his law, and show decidedly his abhorrence of iniquity?—No human authority has a right to pardon *wilful murder*: and the magistrate, who presumes to do so, is unfaithful to him, who has commissioned him to execute vengeance upon evil doers; and not only exposes the peaceable subject, but brings guilt on his own soul, on his family, and on the land. They, therefore, who act "according to wisdom," will not let the murderer, though advanced in years, or exalted in rank, go down to the grave in peace.—As private persons, we are not to avenge ourselves, but must return blessings and prayers for the bitterest curses and injuries of our enemies: but such offenders will not be held guiltless before God, and if their crimes be a violation of human laws, we may, out of regard to public justice, and for the sake of the peace and prosperity of the church or state, desire that they should be restrained and punished; and in our proper stations we may promote the execution of the law upon them. Nay, in doing this, we "may serve our generation according to the will of God," and prepare for death; no less than when we are recompensing our benefactors, and doing acts of kindness to the distressed.

V. 10-25. It is very happy for a nation, when the death of one good king is followed by the peaceable succession of another, equally wise and righteous. But men are not duly thankful for these blessings: and therefore the Lord permits their course to be interrupted; that public calamities, experienced or dreaded, may promote humiliation for sin, fervency in prayer, and general reformation; and make way for more lively gratitude, when they are removed or prevented. On

CHAPTER III.

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, 1. The people sacrifice in high places, 2, 3. Solomon offers a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon, 4. God appears to him in a dream, and he asks and obtains from him wisdom, together with riches and honour, 5-15. His anxious decision of a perplexing case between two heritors renders him celebrated for wisdom, 16-28.

AND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

2 Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the LORD, until those days.

3 And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burned incense in high places.

4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice

a 2 Chr. 18:1. Ezra 9:14. b 7:8. 9:24. 11:1. c 2 Sam. 5:7. 1 Chr. 11:7. d 7:1-12. e 8:7. 13:5-51. 2 Chr. 2:4-4. Ezra 5:11. f 9:15-19. g 22:43. Lev. 17:3-6. 26:30. Deut. 12:5-5. 2 Chr. 33:17. h 5:3. 1 Chr. 17:4-6. 28:3-5. Acts 7:47-49. 1 Deut. 6:5. 10:12. 30:9. 16:20. 2 Sam. 12:24. 25. Ps. 31. 23. Mark 12:29. 30. Rom. 8:28. 1 Cor. 8:3. Jam. 1:12. 2:5. 1 John 4:19. 20. 5:2, 3. i See on 14. 2:3. 4. 11:34. 15:3. 1 Chr. 28:8-9. 2 Chr. 17:3-5. a 15:14. 22:43. 2 Kings 1:3. 1:5. 14:3. 15:3. 18:24. 22. 19:2. Josh. 9:3. 10:1. 1 Chr. 16:39. 21:29. 2 Chr. 1:3. 1:6. 1:8. 2 Chr. 1:6. 7:5. 29:32-33. 30:24. 1a. 40:16. Mic. 6:6, 7. n Gen.

such great emergencies, wisdom is needful to direct Christians, that they may neither neglect their present duty, nor intermeddle out of their proper sphere.—Ambitious men can never rest; they must continually be aiming to disturb the settled order and public peace, that they may mount to superior authority; and when baffled with one weapon, they make trial of another. Whatever goes beside them in Providence they deem taken from them; and if they may not domineer, they claim compassion as injured persons: under plausible pretences and soft insinuations, they conceal their aspiring purposes; and with apparent modesty and affection, address themselves to the passions of the unsuspecting, the undiscerning and the tender-hearted. These they would persuade into improper concessions, and engage to use their influence, that their moderate and equitable desires may be granted; and then they shall rest satisfied, and give nobody any further disturbance: whilst perhaps all this covers the most dangerous and subtle intentions. But those, who have the ear of princes, should be careful what requests they present to them. Compassion, generosity, or even gratitude, may induce them to ask for others, what cannot be granted, consistently with the honour of the sovereign, or the interest of the kingdom: and it were better to be upbraided with unkindness or ingratitude, than to make so ill a use of influence.—The duty of honouring parents is obligatory upon us in every station in life; and too much respect and gratitude cannot be shown them, provided they be not gratified by unlawful and improper compliances; but no relative affection, no engagement whatever, can bind us to do a thing that is evil, or of bad tendency to the public.—The machinations of crafty men generally entangle themselves, and involve them in mischiefs which simple, upright men escape. (Note, Ps. 125:4.) No government can be secure, whilst they, who aim to subvert it, remain unpunished: and such as have been convicted, and still persist in treasonable designs, are proper persons to be sacrificed for the public good, and for an example to others; for apparent severity to them may eventually be mercy to thousands.

V. 25-46. Those, who have disgraced the sacred ministry by their crimes, are unworthy to officiate in holy things, and should be excluded from them: and wicked priests, though often spared here, will hereafter receive the deepest condemnation. Yet distinctions should be made in the punishment of the guilty; former services and sufferings in a good cause may plead for an alleviation of the sentence, where the law of God will admit of it: and in every event his word will one way or other be accomplished.—Many, who slight the ordinances of God in their prosperity, flee to them in terror and affliction: but no expedients will avail to secure the impenitent from condign punishment; and the crimes, in which men long glory and prosper, will at length fall with heavier vengeance on their heads.—Even murder admits of degrees of criminality. The character of the persons murdered, their rank, and usefulness to society; and the malice, treachery and boldness with which the crime was perpetrated, enhance proportionably its malignity.—Different offenders ought to be treated in diverse ways, and punishments so inflicted, as may appear most equitable.—The old malignity remains in the unconverted heart, and a watchful eye should be kept on those, who have manifested their enmity, but have given no evidence of their repentance: yet it is well to show them such impartiality, as shall cause them to confess "The saying is good." But no engagements or dangers can restrain worldly men from their pursuits: they will go on, though they forfeit their lives and souls: and contempt of authority, and the obligation of an oath, when their own interests are concerned, evince them to be ripe for destruction.—Thus, the kingdom of Christ is established by the ruin of its obstinate opposers, and the advancement of its cordial friends. Those who injure his people will be called to account perhaps long

there; for that was the great high place: ma thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.

5 ¶ In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

28:12,13. Num. 12:6. Job 33:14,15. Matt. 1:20. 2:13,19. a 2 Chr. 1:7-12. Matt. 7:7,8. Mark 10:35-35,51. 11:24. John 14:13,14. 15:16. 16:23,24. Jam. 1:5,6. 1 John 5:14,15. p Num. 12:7. 2 Sam. 7:5. q 2 Sam. 7:8-12. 12:7,8. 22:47-51. 1 Chr. 28:12-14. Ps. 78:70-72. r Heb. bounty. Ps. 136:6. 116:7. 119:17. 2 Chr. 8:5,11. e 24. 9:4. 2 Kings 20:3. Ps. 15:2. 18:20-24. s See on 1:48. 1 Dan. 2:21. 4:23,27. 5:18,21. u 1 Chr. 29:1. Job 32:6-9. Ec. 10:16. Jer. 1:6. Matt. 18:3,4. v Num. 27:17. Deut. 31:2. 1 Sam. 18:16. 2 Sam. 5:2. John 10:3,4,9.

after; and all who are kind to them shall be surely recompensed. Wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy unite in his administration: his kingdom is from the Lord; his enemies will be condemned out of their own mouths; and the wickedness to which their own hearts are privy, will silence all their pleas. (Note, 1 John 3:8-24.) Many have incurred his wrath by a forbidden pursuit of worldly objects; and in aiming to secure some needless possession, have lost their immortal souls. May we be his faithful subjects! May the Lord more and more establish and extend his kingdom by making his foes his footstool, and may the whole earth be filled with his glory, and with the acclamations of his willing people!

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. As Rehoboam was born before the death of David, (comp. 11:42 with 14:21.) it is plain that Solomon had before this married Naamah an Ammonitess; (Note, 14:21.) and at this time he married the daughter of the Egyptian king. It is supposed that both of them had embraced the religion of Israel: and, as Solomon is not censured on this account, there might be special reasons inducing him to this conduct, of which we are not informed. It is also remarkable, that when Solomon's wives drew him into idolatry, the idols of Egypt are not mentioned: so that Pharaoh's daughter does not seem to have been one of his tempters. (Note, 11:1-8.) At first he brought her into the city of David: but after he had finished his other works, he built her a palace at some distance from the temple. (9:24. Note, 2 Chr. 8:11.)

V. 2, 3. Until the temple was builded, the irregularity of sacrificing to the God of Israel in high places, and burning incense at them by the priests, was in some degree connived at: but the people proceeded much further in it, than in the days of David, and Solomon was censurable for countenancing them by his example. Upon high hills, especially when covered with trees, as having peculiar solemnity, and being favourable to retirement, they erected altars, and offered sacrifices, after the manner of the nations around them, but contrary to the law of Moses. (Notes, Lev. 26:30. Deut. 12:2-7. 2 Kings 18:4,22. Ec. 20:28,29.) Solomon, however, loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father."

V. 4. The tabernacle made under the direction of Moses, and the altar belonging to it, were at this time stationed at Gibeon: and this was on that account, the principal high place, where the priests and Levites officiated according to the law. (2 Chr. 1:5,6. Notes, 1 Chr. 16:37-43. 21:28-30.) Solomon must have continued at Gibeon for some time on this occasion; as he offered a thousand burnt-offerings upon the altar made by Bezaleel, (Note, Ex. 27:1-8.) which the constant and vehement fire on the altar entirely consumed. (Note, 8:63-65.)

V. 5-14. (Notes, Gen. 20:1-6. 31:23,24. Job. 4:12-16. 33:14-18.) In ordinary dreams almost every thing is incoherent and irrational, though they often savour of a man's waking thoughts, pursuits, and character: but Solomon's dream was of another kind. While his corporeal senses were locked up in sleep, the powers of his soul were supernaturally invigorated; and he was enabled to receive the divine vision, and to make a suitable choice in the case referred to him. His pleas were cogent, and his determination wise. His father had ruled over Israel in truth and righteousness, and had been greatly favoured and prospered: he was the first of the rulers of Israel, who had been succeeded by his son: Solomon had been preferred before his elder brethren by God's own appointment: all these circumstances concurred to raise men's expectations, or to excite their enmity and envy; and thus to increase the importance and arduousness of his station. The people were very numerous, they were the chosen of God, and among them he must both judge in equity, and promote true religion. Yet he was very young, and inexperienced as a child. (Notes, 2:2. 1 Chr. 22:2-5

8 And thy servant *is* in the midst of *thy* people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that *was* not numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 Give therefore thy servant an *understanding* heart *to* judge thy people, that I may *discern* between good and bad: for *who* is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech *pleased* the **LORD**, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and *hast* not asked for thyself *long* life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies: but hast asked for thyself *understanding* to *discern* judgment;

12 Behold, *I* have done according to thy words: lo, *I* have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither *after* thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And *I* have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both *riches* and honour: so that there *shall* not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14 And *if* thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, *as* thy father David did walk, then *I* will lengthen thy days.

15 And Solomon *awoke*; and behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood *before* the ark of the covenant of the **LORD**, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered *peace-offerings*, and made *a* feast to all his servants.

[Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ Then came there *two* women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and *stood* before him.

17 And the one woman said, *O* my lord, *I* and this woman dwell in one house; and *I* was delivered of a child with her in the house.

18 And it came to pass the third day after that

x Ex. 19:5-6, Deut. 7:6-8. 1 Sam. 12:22. Ps. 78:71. y Gen. 13:16, 15:5, 22:17. 1 Chr. 21:2, 25:6, 27:23-21. z 1 Chr. 22:12, 29:19. 2 Chr. 1:10. Ps. 119:34, 73:144. Prov. 2:6, 3:13-15, 16:15. Jam. 1:7. 3:17. Heb. *learning*. Prov. 30:12. z 28. Ps. 72:12. Prov. 14:5. Ec. 7:11, 19:15-18. b 2 Sam. 11:17. Is. 11:2-4. 1 Cor. 2:14, 15. Eph. 5:17. Phil. 1:10. Gr. Heb. 5:14. c Ex. 3:11, 12, 4:10-16, 13:1. Jer. 1:6. Matt. 3:11, 14. 2 Cor. 2:16. 3:5. d Prov. 15:8. e Ps. 4:6. Prov. 16:31. Matt. 20:21, 22. Jam. 4:3. f Heb. *many days*. 1 Heb. *hear*. 9. *warm*. f Ps. 10:17. Is. 65:34. Rom. 3:26, 27. 1 John 5:14, 15. x 28. 2:6, 9. 4:28-34. 3:12. 10:3-8. 2 Chr. 1:11, 12. 2:12, 9:5-8. Ec. 1:16. Luke 21:15. h Matt. 12:42. Col. 2:3. i Ps. 84:11, 12. Matt. 6:33. Rom. 8:32. 1 Cor. 3:22, 29. Eph. 3:20. k 4:21-24. 10:23, 27. Prov. 3:16. § Or, *hath* not been. l 2:3, 4. 1 Chr. 22:12, 13. 29:9.

29:1. Jer. 1:6-8.) His single petition therefore was, that the Lord would give his servant an understanding heart: that is, that he would enlarge and strengthen his intellectual powers, give him a ready discernment in spiritual things and a correspondent disposition; and furnish him with the peculiar talents and capacities for government; that he might administer justice and judgment, with impartial rectitude and deep penetration, for the benefit of the people and the honour of God. Doubtless these sentiments were habitually in Solomon's mind, previously to this dream: and his consciousness of his own insufficiency had led him to depend upon the Lord to qualify him for the discharge of the duties of his important station: and his request accorded to the exhortations which David had given him, and the prayers which he had offered for him. (Notes, 1 Chr. 22:11, 12. 28:9. 29:10-19. Ps. 72: title, 1:2. Prov. 2:1-6. 14:8. Jam. 1:5-8.)—Absalom and Adonijah do not seem to have been troubled with anxiety on this account, though far inferior to Solomon in capacity for ruling; but they sought the *honour* and *power* of the kingdom, he desired to *discharge* the *duty* of a king.—The disposition and judgment which dictated this petition, in preference to all those alluring distinctions which carnal minds pursue, and which especially attract young persons in superior stations, was well pleasing to the Lord; and he assured Solomon, that *“he had given him a wise and understanding heart,”* and that he should receive a very large accession of wisdom: (Note, Matt. 13:12.) so that he should excel all the kings of Israel, who had preceded or should succeed him, and indeed all other kings, in every kind of knowledge and discernment, and also in riches and honour, which he had not asked.—(Notes, 4:30-34. Matt. 6:33, 34. 12:41, 42.)—The promise of long life was conditionally added; and perhaps it was in part forfeited by the idolatry, and other sins, into which he was afterwards betrayed. (Notes, 2 Chr. 1:7-13.)

V. 15. Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Sam. 6:17.

V. 16-22. These harlots, who by some means escaped punishment for their licentious conduct, were alone when the child of the one died; though probably not when the children were born. The first woman's account, though in great part conjectural seems to have been the truth. Perhaps the

I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.

19 And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.

20 And she arose at *midnight*, and *took* my son from beside me, while thy handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

21 And when *I* arose in the morning to *give* my child suck, behold, it was dead; but when *I* had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which *I* did bear.

22 And the other woman said, *Nay*; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, *No*; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.

23 Then said the king, The one saith, *This is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead; and the other saith, *Nay*; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living.

24 And the king said, bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

25 And the king said, *Divide* the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

26 Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for *her* bowels *learned* upon her son, and she said, *O* my lord, *give* her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, *Let* it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide it.

27 Then the king answered and said. Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof.

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they *feared* the king: for they saw that *the wisdom of God was* in him to do judgment.

2 Chr. 7:17-19. Ps. 132:12. Zech. 3:7. m See on 3:9, 4:5, 15:5. 2 Chr. 17:3, 4. 29:2. 34:2. Acts 13:22. n Deut. 5:16. Ps. 91:16. Prov. 3:2, 16. 1 Tim. 4:8. o Gen. 41:7. Jer. 31:22. 2 Sam. 6:17. 1 Chr. 16:12. q 8:63. Lev. 3:7, 11-15. 2 Sam. 6:18, 19. 2 Chr. 7:37-10, 30:22-26. r Gen. 31:54. 40:20. Esth. 1:3. Dan. 5:1. Mark 6:21. s Lev. 19:29. Deut. 23:17. Josh. 2:1. t Ex. 13:13, 16. Num. 27:2. u Gen. 43:20. Rom. 13:7. x Job 24:13-17. Matt. 13:25. John 3:20. y 21. z Gen. 21:7. 1 Sam. 1:23. Lam. 4:3, 4. a 23:24. b Prov. 25:3. c Gen. 43:30. Is. 49:15. Jer. 31:20. Hos. 11:3. Phil. 1:8. 2:1. 1 John 3:17. i Heb. *were* hot. Ps. 89:3. d Rom. 1:31. 2 Tim. 3:3. e Ex. 14:31. Josh. 4:14. 1 Sam. 12:18. 1 Chr. 29:24. f Prov. 24:21. f 9-12. Ezra 7:25. Ec. 7:19. Dan. 2:21, 47. 5:11. 1 Cor. 1:24, 30. Col. 2:3. ¶ Heb. *in the midst of him*.

other woman feared some reproach, suspicion, or punishment, as if she had willingly or negligently occasioned the death of her child; or she hoped to have some gain by means of the living child; or perhaps she was induced by envy and malignity to claim it as her own: for her willingness to have it divided afterwards evinced that she had no true affection for it. (26)

V. 23-28. As there were no witnesses in this transaction, and both parties were alike strenuous and positive, the cause became extremely difficult; and probably it was referred to the king's hearing, because it had proved too difficult for the inferior judges. In many countries such cases have been decided by *lot*, and which is much worse, by *duels*; or the parties have been tortured, that they might be compelled to declare the truth. But Solomon adopted the only rational method, by making use of his acquaintance with the human heart, to discover which of them had the *feelings* of a mother for the living child. Yet when he called for the sword, and ordered the living child to be divided; as none of the auditors seemed to have perceived his intentions, they doubtless would secretly condemn the proposal, as puerile, absurd, and inhuman. The woman, who consented to the division of the child, perhaps expected to obtain Solomon's favour by this acquiescence: but she betrayed her want of natural affection for the child, and her resentment against her competitor; while the other expressed all the feelings of a mother in an artless and inimitable manner. And when the people saw, that, by this extraordinary measure, Solomon had extorted the truth beyond all further doubt; they revered and stood in awe of him, notwithstanding his youth; perceiving *“that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.”* (Note, 2:2.)—The murder of illegitimate infants by their mothers, to conceal their own sin and shame, which so frequently occurs in this land, is not so much as intimated in any way in the Scriptures, nor, as far as my reading and recollection extend, in any ancient history. The state of morals among the heathen accounts for this, among them, in two ways: 1st. It was not considered as peculiarly disgraceful to either parent to have spurious children; and 2dly The common practice of exposing infants,

CHAPTER IV.

Solomon's princes, 1-6. Twelve officers who provided for his household, each in his month, 7-19. The prosperity and grandeur of his kingdom, 20-25. His horses and chariots, 26-28. His wisdom and reputation, 29-31.

SO king Solomon was king ^aover all Israel.

2 And these ^bwere ^cthe princes which he had, ^d'Azariah the son of Zadok the ^epriest:

3 Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of ^f'Shisha, ^g'scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the ^hrecorder.

4 And ⁱ'Benaiah the son of Jehoiada ^jwas over the host: and ^k'Zadok and Abiathar ^lwere the priests:

5 And Azariah the ^mson of Nathan ⁿwas over the

officers: and Zabud the son of Nathan ^owas principal officer, and ^pthe king's friend:

6 And Ahishar ^qwas over the household: and Adoniram the son of Abda ^rwas over the ^stribute.

7 ^tAnd Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: ^ueach man his month in a year made provision.

8 And these ^vare their names: ^w'The son of Hur, in ^x'mount Ephraim:

9 ^y'The son of Dekar, in Makaz, and in ^z'Shaalbin, and ^{aa}'Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth hanaim:

10 ^{ab}'The son of Hesei in Aruboth; to him ^{ac}pertained ^{ad}'Sochoh, and all the land of ^{ae}'Hepher:

whether spurious or not, excluded all temptation to the secret murder of any. But the case must have been very different in Israel: yet this crime seems never to have occurred; nor was any law enacted concerning it. It is not, however, difficult to discover the cause of its frequent and horrid occurrence in our enlightened land, in the stern rejection of the offending female, if detected, from the society of all who are not thus disgraced, without discrimination, or hope of recovery from this infamous loss of caste, so to speak; and in the entire impunity of her male paramour, though perhaps far more deeply criminal. And it is a question of no small importance, in every view, whether some measures might not be taken, to counteract this dire evil, without lowering the standard of morality, or giving encouragement to vice.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. Whatever external or intellectual accomplishments any man may possess; "to love the LORD" is the grand distinction between one man and another: and thus the meaneast believer is preferred before all the wise, learned, renowned, and prosperous unbelievers on earth; and is classed among apostles, prophets, and those few princes who have served God. Indeed, admiration of his perfections, gratitude for his goodness, delight in his service, and zeal for his glory, form the perfection and felicity of angels; and to this character the grace of our Redeemer renews all those, who accept of his salvation.—Such as love the Lord ought to copy the examples, and follow the instructions, of those who have gone before them in the same path; especially of pious parents: but they should be careful to avoid their errors and transgressions; for even good men find it difficult to act themselves at all times as they would counsel others: so that defects will be found in the best characters, and the best state of the church upon earth. We should indeed watch and pray against all evil in ourselves, and use our influence to prevent it in others: yet we should expect to see many things that we disapprove, and learn to make allowances for them.—That is never wasted, which is prudently spent in the service of God: and the munificence and liberality of the great should be proportioned to their affluence, that their example may edify their inferiors. To abound in the work of the Lord, upon scriptural principles, forms the proper method of waiting for the communications of further knowledge, grace, and comfort.—In effect, the Lord by his gospel makes this proposal to all who hear it, "Ask what I shall give thee." (Note, Matt. 7:7-11.) He does not indeed engage to gratify the desires of the ambitious, the covetous, the sensual, the envious, or the revengeful: but he is ever ready to answer the petitions of those, who ask of him heavenly wisdom and spiritual blessings, however guilty, depraved, and foolish they have hitherto been. We should therefore first request the Lord to teach us what to pray for, and how to pray aright: and if we pray from our hearts, and in the Redeemer's name; if we have been taught to ask of the Lord, his favour, his image, his graces, and his comforts; with wisdom, ability, and a willing mind, to fill up our station in the church and in society, to his glory and the good of others; he has already given us an understanding heart, and will make continual accessions to this gift. When we decidedly prefer these spiritual blessings to all worldly advantages, we may be sure that he will give us as much of outward comforts, as he sees really subservient to our good. We should also honour the riches of his all-sufficiency and liberality, by multiplying and enlarging our requests, and grasping at more and more from him; for he will take it graciously, and deal with us accordingly.—In every service, public and private, they are most qualified for their work, and acquit themselves the best in it, who are most sensible of its difficulty, and of their own insufficiency. It is a hopeful circumstance, when those, whom others call wise men, deem themselves children; and very discouraging, when men are singular in a good opinion of their own abilities and attainments.—Distinguishing favours require peculiar returns of gratitude: and a man's being evidently called to very important and arduous services, may dictate his prayers, and encourage his expectations of proportionable assistance.

Such as succeed eminently wise and good men, should ask a double portion of wisdom and grace, to answer the expectations of others from them: and they who, in deviation from ordinary rules, are employed in any public service, will be more narrowly watched, and more severely censured, if they act inconsistently. Let not this hint be overlooked, or taken amiss, by those who preach the gospel without an express regular appointment from man, in any of those ways by which ministers are ordinarily sent forth.—The continued blessing of God can only be expected in the way of persevering obedience: and negligence or wickedness will always ensure loss in our temporal or spiritual comforts.

V. 16-28. Judges, magistrates, and all concerned in trying causes, need great discernment, as well as integrity, in order to search out the truth, when all possible pains and fallacy are employed to conceal it: they ought therefore, in all their studies and in all their decisions, to ask wisdom of God; and we should earnestly remember them in our prayers that he would confer it upon them.—Where the Lord has given abilities, and a heart disposed to improve them, he will open a way for the profitable exercise of them in his due time: and an accurate acquaintance with the human heart will be found a most profitable kind of knowledge for all, but especially for magistrates and ministers.—God has made natural affection very strong, especially in mothers, as the great means of preserving their infants, in the midst of their dangers and infirmities, and notwithstanding all the trouble and fatigue which they occasion. Yet human depravity, habitual wickedness, or fear and shame, can extinguish it, and even mothers are capable of becoming the murderers of their own infants! Surely these harlots will rise up in judgment against such unmerciful criminals, and condemn them; and still more their brutal seducers, who have deserted them when exposed to these awful temptations.—But to accommodate this transaction, may we not observe, that many professors of the gospel (like the pretended mother who consented to have the child divided) would mutilate the sacred Scriptures, and leave out those parts which oppose their prejudices, pride, and lusts? yea, they would fain divide their hearts between God and mammon. But the true believer loves the whole Scripture, and holds it fast, and values doctrines, precepts, warnings, promises, and every part, as necessary to the perfection of the inestimable whole: and this cordial affection proves the whole to be his own. He would yield his heart entirely to the Lord, and seek after his happiness from him alone. Soon our Solomon will decide between these two characters: "in him is the wisdom of God to do judgment." Let us then see to it, that our cause and title be clear: for he cannot be imposed upon by any evasions or subtifuges; seeing he "searcheth the hearts of all the children of men," and "all things are naked and open before him, with whom we have to do."

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. David had not at first reigned over "all Israel"; and none of Solomon's successors had this privilege continued to them. (Note, Ec. 1:1.)

V. 2-6. (Marg. Ref.)—Several of these princes, or ministers of state, and chief officers, were either the same persons as David had employed, or their sons. (20:23-25. Note, 2 Sam. 8:15-18.)—Abiathar, though deposed from the high-priesthood, and secluded from the sanctuary, retained under Zadok the title and emoluments of a priest, or one of the chief priests. Azariah the son, or grandson, of Zakok, being the son of Ahimaaz, (1 Chr. 6:8,9.) might under his grandfather have the chief management of ecclesiastical matters. Two sons of Nathan the prophet, as it is supposed, were preferred by Solomon, and one was dignified as the king's friend.

V. 7-19. (Marg. Ref.) These officers were appointed to procure every kind of provision, where it was most plentiful and good: and we may suppose that, besides the monthly supply of such productions as were common to the whole land, they would purchase upon the spot those provisions which were peculiar to each district, and which could be preserved. This was a salutary and economical arrangement, and would prevent any part of the country from being improperly drained, it would also promote an equal consumption, and supply the

11 The son of Abinadab, in all the region of Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife:

12 Baanah the son of Ahilud; to him pertained Tanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jokneam.

13 The son of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead; to him pertained the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead: to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars:

14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo had Mahanaim: 15 Ahimaaz was in Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife:

16 Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth:

17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar: 18 Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin.

19 Geber the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and he was the only officer which was in the land.

20 And Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merrym.

21 And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal,

23 Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, beside harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl.

24 For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphshah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.

25 And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.

26 And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

27 And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

28 Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge. [Practical Observations.]

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore.

30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

34 And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

* Or, Ben-abinadab. p Josh. 12:23, 17:11. Judg. 1:27. q See on Josh. 17:11. Judg. 5:19. r 2 Kings 23:28, 30. s 1 Sam. 31:10, 12. t 7:46. Zarthan. Josh. 3:16. Zartanah. u 18:46. v 19:16. w Or, Ben-geber. y 22:3. Deut. 4:43. Josh. 20:8, 21:38. 2 Kings 9:14, 1. z Num. 32:41. Deut. 3:14. a Dent. 3:13, 14. Ps. 22:12, 68:15. b Or, to Mahanaim. Gen. 32:2. 2 Sam. 17:24, 27. c Josh. 19:23-32. c. 11. 1 Sam. 18:16. d Josh. 19:24-31. e Josh. 19:17-23. f 1:8. Zech. 12:13. g Josh. 18:20-28. h Num. 21:21-25. Deut. 2:26-37. 3:1-17. Josh. 13:9-12. 1:3. Gen. 13:16, 15:5, 22:17. Prov. 14:28. k 1 Sam. 30:16. 1 Chr. 12:38. Job 1:24. Ps. 72:3-7. Ec. 2:24. Is. 22:13. Mic. 4:4. Zech. 3:10, 9:15. Acts 2:46. 1:24. Gen. 15:18. Ex. 23:31. Deut. 11:24. Josh. 1:4. 2 Chr. 9:26. Ezra 4:30. Ps. 72:8, 9. m 1 Sam. 10:27. 2 Kings 17:3. n Ps. 15:5, 92:23. p Ps. 68:29, 72:10, 11, 76:11. q Heb. bread. r Heb. cora. n Neh. 5:17, 18. o Gen. 10:19. Judg. 16:1. Gaza. p See on 21. Ps. 72:8, 11.

q 5:4. 1 Chr. 28:9. Ps. 72:3-7. Is. 9:7. Luke 2:14. Heb. 7:12. r Heb. confidently. Is. 60:18. Jer. 23:5-6, 36:15, 16. Ez. 38:11, marg. r 2 Kings 18:31. Mic. 4:4. Zech. 3:10. a 1 Judg. 20:1. 2 Sam. 17:11, 24:15. t 10:25, 26. Deut. 17:16. 2 Sam. 8:4. 2 Chr. 1:14, 9:25. Ps. 20:7. u 7-19. v Or, mulier, or wife/beasts. Ruth 3:10, 14. Mic. 1:13. z See on 3:12, 8:10, 23:24. 2 Chr. 1:10-12. Ps. 119, 34. Prov. 3:6. Ec. 1:16, 2:26. Jam. 1:5, 17, 3:17. y In 60:5. z See on 20. Gen. 41:49. Judg. 7:12. Jer. 33:22. Hab. 1:9. a Gen. 25:6. Job 1:3. Lam. 1:120, 47, 51, 112. Matt. 2:1. b Is. 19:11, 12. Acts 7:22. c See on 3:12. Matt. 12:42. Luke 11:31. Col. 2:3. d 1 Chr. 15:19. Ps. 89: title. e 1 Chr. 2:6, 6:33, 15:17, 19. Ps. 86:16. f 5:7, 10:1-5, 2 Chr. 9:23. Matt. 4:24. g Jam. 1:1. Ec. 12:12. Mic. 13:35. h Cant. 1:1. i Num. 24:4. j 1 Kings 10:2, 12. k Ex. 12:23. Num. 19:18. Ps. 51:7. Heb. 9:1. l See on Gen. 1:20-25. m 10:1. 2 Chr. 9:1, 23. Is. 2:2. Zech. 9:23.

requisite plenty upon the best terms.—Two of these purveyors married daughters of Solomon: for it was not his policy to prevent his children from intermarrying with his subjects. Perhaps he had more daughters, though but one son by all his wives. But these marriages must have taken place many years after his accession, and this chapter should be considered as a general account of the state of the land in his reign. Geber seems to have had the chief management of the whole country beyond Jordan, and to have employed his son, and Ahinadab, under him in that district. (13:14, 19.)

V. 20. The people were not diminished in Solomon's reign by wars, invasions, or intestine contests; and therefore they grew exceedingly numerous and prosperous, and lived in great peace and plenty. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ec. 2:24-26.) But they seem to have been too much pleased and elated with their external blessings, and to have indulged themselves too freely in the use of them.

V. 21. David had subdued all the countries, from the entrance of Egypt to the river Euphrates; and Solomon reaped the fruit of his victories, by reigning peaceably over these extensive territories, and increasing his own wealth, and that of his native subjects, by the presents and tributes of the inhabitants. (Notes, Gen. 15:18-21. Ec. 2:31. Josh. 1:3, 4. 2 Sam. 8:3. Ps. 72:8-11.)

V. 22, 23. The provisions here mentioned would suffice for several thousands of people. Solomon's servants and officers, and those who flocked to his court from all parts of the land, and from distant nations, with their retinues, were no doubt entertained upon them. (Note, Neh. 5:14-18.)

Measures. (22) Cors. (marg.) A cor is generally computed at ten ephahs, or rather above seventy-two gallons.

V. 24. Tiphshah is supposed to have been a city, near which there was a passage over the Euphrates, either by a ford, a ferry, or a bridge; the name being derived from a word which signifies to pass over. (Note, 2 Sam. 19:18.) Azzah is Gaza of the Philistines, the original word being the same.

V. 25. (Marg. Ref.) The land from the one end to the other was in such profound peace, and was so exempt from oppression or terror, that the people disregarded the protection of walled cities, and lived upon their lands, that they might enjoy their abundance upon the spot, where it was produced. (Note, Ez. 38:11. Mic. 4:4. Zech. 3:9, 10.)

V. 26. "A thousand four hundred chariots, &c." 10:26. 2 Chr. 1:14. "Four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, &c." 2 Chr. 9:25. Different ways have been taken of reconciling these texts; none of which are satisfactory. Four thousand stalls (not stables) would be a proper number for a thousand chariots to have change of horses. The four hundred might be added afterwards. As numbers were generally expressed in the manuscripts by numeral letters, over which, in many cases, a small mark distinguished one number from another much smaller; it seems most obvious to suppose that a trivial mistake has here occurred. Forty thousand stalls for chariot horses, (unless all sorts of carriages be included,) seems out of all proportion to twelve thousand horsemen; and in no other place are more than a thousand and four hundred chariots mentioned. (Notes, 10:24-27. Deut. 17:16.)

V. 27, 28. Note, 7-19.—Dromedaries. (25) Marg.—Esth. 8:10, 14.

V. 29. Largeness of heart, &c.] This expression and comparison denote the unparalleled greatness of Solomon's intellectual powers, his most extensive knowledge, and his enlargement of heart in communicating instruction to all around him. "A mind very comprehensive of all sort of knowledge; and a heart to do a vast deal of good. . . . As the sand . . . encloses a vast body of waters; so his mind contained an ocean of knowledge, as Lord Bacon . . . speaks." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Ps. 119:32. 2 Cor. 5:13-15.)

V. 30-34. God gave Solomon, not only heavenly wisdom, and singular talents for government, but extraordinary capacities for the attainment of all kinds of knowledge; so that he excelled the wise men of Egypt, and of Babylon, of Arabia, or countries still more to the east, in astronomy, and all other sciences for which they were renowned. In the knowledge of divinity he surpassed Ethan and Heman, who seem to have been men renowned for extraordinary piety and wisdom at that time; and all others who were celebrated in Israel on the same account.—(Marg. Ref. d-f. 1 Chr. 2:5, 6.) He excelled also in morality, politics, and economics; for he spake three thousand proverbs, of which such as were most suited for general utility have come down to us in the book of Proverbs. He likewise excelled in poetry, and wrote one thousand and five songs; but only one of these is preserved in Scripture. It may, how ever, be supposed, that many of the

CHAPTER V.

Hiram, king of Tyre, sends to congratulate Solomon; who informs him that he intends to build a temple, and desires him to furnish the timber, 1-6. Hiram blesses God for Solomon's wisdom, and engages for the timber; requiring in return food for his household, 7-9. The mutual good offices between Hiram and Solomon, 10-12. The number of Solomon's workmen and labourers, 13-18.

AND Hiram king of Tyre ^bsent his servants unto Solomon: for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David.

2 And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying,

3 Thou knowest how that David my father could not build a house unto the name of the LORD his God, ^cfor the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD ^dput them under the soles of his feet.

4 But now the LORD my God ^ehath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.

5 And, behold, I ^fpurpose to build a house unto the name of the LORD my God, ^gas the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build a house unto my name.

6 Now therefore command thou, that they hew ^hcedar-trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee ⁱwill I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest ^jthat there

is not among us any that can sail to hew timber like unto the Sidonians.

7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.

8 And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.

9 My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea; and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household.

10 So Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir trees, according to all his desire. [B. 1012.]

11 And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.

12 And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.

a 10:18, 9:11-14. 2 Chr. 2:3. Hiram. b 2 Sam. 8:10, 10:1, 2. Ps. 45:12. c 2 Sam. 5:11. 1 Chr. 14:1. Am. 1:9. d 2 Chr. 2:3. e 2 Sam. 7:5-11. 1 Chr. 22:4-6. 2 Chr. 6:8-8. f 1 Chr. 22:9, 28:3. g Josh. 10:24. Ps. 8:6, 110:1. Mal. 4:3. 1 Cor. 13:25. Eph. 1:22. h See on 4:24. 1 Chr. 22:9. Ps. 73:7. Ia. 9:7. Act. 9:31. 12 Chr. 2:14. k Heb. say. l 2 Sam. 7:12, 13. 1 Chr. 17:12. 10:12, 28:6, 10. Zech. 6:12, 13. 16:9, 10, 16:20. 2 Chr. 2:8, 10. Ps. 29:5. m Rom. 12:17. Phil. 4:8. n Heb. say. o 1 Cor. 12:14-21. Eph. 4:7. o Gen. 10:15.

others were upon moral and religious subjects; as well as remarkable for the beauties of poetry. He was, moreover, deeply versed in all the branches of natural philosophy, and discoursed in an admirable manner upon the nature, properties, and uses of the several species of plants and animals. So that in every thing he possessed such an undisputed superiority over all men in that age, that his reputation for wisdom brought numbers from different kings and nations all around, to learn every kind of useful knowledge from him; and perhaps he possessed more accurate and extensive knowledge, on an immense variety of subjects, than any mere man besides, in any age or nation of the world, ever did.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-28. True wisdom generally directs those, who succeed prudent and prosperous men in kingdoms or estates, to tread in their steps, to employ their servants, and to avail themselves of the good advice of their friends and counsellors: but folly and self-conceit delight in making many and great changes, though they commonly prove disadvantageous. (Notes, 12:6-15. 2 Kings 21:1-3. Ec. 2:18-23.)—Those who faithfully seek the good of our souls, though sometimes with sharp reproofs, are our best friends: and their memories are always entitled to grateful respect, and their children to kind regard; yet these are worthy of a wise man's confidence and friendship, only when they tread in the steps of their pious parents.—The different ranks of men in society should be distinguished by a suitable attendance and provision; but when goods increase, they are increased that eat them, and the owner's have much additional incumbrance, and but little accession of solid advantage. (Note, Ec. 5:9-12.) It is also extremely difficult to possess abundance, without covetousness, luxury, or ostentation; without abusing, wasting, or burying, the goods of our common Lord, to whom every one must give an account of his stewardship; yet, prudent management and frugality are excellent appendages to liberality, and serve to support the expenses of it.—Wise and righteous princes are most valuable blessings to whole kingdoms, and should be sought in prayer from that God, who has all hearts in his hands: yet all outward prosperity is precarious and transient; and too often it proves unfavourable to religion, and increases pride, sloth and sensual indulgence; thus rendering divine judgments necessary.—Wealth without wisdom, and knowledge without humility and grace, are generally destructive to the possessor, and to those with whom he is connected; yet both are the gifts of God, good in themselves, and only evil as perverted by man's depravity. And heavenly wisdom teaches men to give God the glory in the use of these inferior blessings, and so renders them ornamental to the Christian profession, and conducive to promote designs of extensive usefulness.

V. 29-34. A reputation for wisdom and piety is no further desirable, than as it consists with humility, and affords a man an opportunity of communicating more extensively that useful knowledge, which the Lord has imparted. (Note, Ec. 10:1.)—Every information, which is useful in order to our glorifying God and obtaining his "salvation with eternal glory," is preserved to us in the sacred Scriptures: and the light of heaven will more certainly and speedily instruct us in

all useful knowledge, than all the regretted records of antiquity could if we had them. Let us then rejoice that the Lord reigns on a mercy-seat, and that his name is Emmanuel. His kingdom was faintly shadowed forth in that of Solomon, but is of a nobler and more heavenly nature. The blessings of it consist not "in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." In his days the righteous flourish; their numbers have already been exceedingly multiplied, and future ages shall witness a more rapid and immense increase, "when all kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him." (Note, Ps. 72:8-11.) Thou "shalt beat their swords into ploughshares, and war shall be learned no more;" then shall "every man call his neighbour under the vine, and under the fig-tree." (Notes, Is. 2:2-5. Mic. 4:1-3.) "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" his fame shall spread through all the earth, and all people shall come to him, learn of him, take upon them his easy yoke, and find rest for their souls.—But, whilst we look with joyful, longing desires and fervent prayers for these glorious days, let us now sit at his feet, hear his word, ask of him wisdom, submit to his will, and seek his glory. Then, outward tribulation shall not break our inward peace; then, we shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of his house; then, we shall enjoy much liberty, and have many glimpses of his glory on earth; and shall speedily remove to our brighter world above, where innumerable angels, and redeemed sinners, are happy in his presence, and rapturously celebrating his praises.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. (Note, 2 Sam. 5:11.) It is highly probable, that Hiram was himself a worshipper of JEHOVAH, and loved David on account of his wisdom and piety; though his people in general seem to have continued idolaters. He sent to condole with Solomon on his father's death, and to congratulate him on his peaceable succession.—Tyre and Zidon lay north of Canaan, and were not expressly included in the grant to Israel; it was therefore lawful to form alliances with them.

V. 2-9. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 22:6-10. 2 Chr. 2:3-12.) The Tyrians possessed only a small tract of land, and were employed and enriched by commerce and manufactures; and they had their provisions chiefly from the fruitful land of Canaan. (Note, Acts 12:20-23.)

V. 11. "Twenty thousand baths of oil" are mentioned in Chronicles, which amounted at least to two thousand cors. (Marg. Note, 4:22.) But as barley and wine are there spoken of; some think that the wheat, here mentioned, was intended for the use of Hiram's family, and the small quantity of very fine oil for his own use; whereas in Chronicles the provisions made for the workmen are intended. (Note, 2 Chr. 2:3-10.)

V. 13-18. A small number comparatively of Israelites were employed, in rotation, as it consisted with their convenience, and probably in the easier services; but a great number of the remains of the ancient inhabitants of the land continually assisted the Tyrians, by removing the timber, conveying it to the sea, helping to navigate the floats, and conveying it when landed to Jerusalem; and in preparing stones for the temple. (Marg. Ref. Note, 9:20-22.) These

13 ¶ And king Solomon raised a 'levy out of all Israel; and *the levy was thirty thousand men.

14 And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and *Adoniram was over the levy.

15 And Solomon had †threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains:

16 Beside the chief of Solomon's officers, which were over the work, *three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.

17 And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, 'costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

18 And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew *them*, and 'the stone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house.

CHAPTER VI.

The building of the temple is begun, 1. The dimensions of the house, and its porch, 2, 3. The windows, 4. The chambers, 5-10. The promise of God concerning the temple, 11-13. Its walls, ceiling, floor, and ornaments, 14-18. The Oracle and Cherubim, 19-30. The doors of the Oracle, and of the house, 31-35. The inner-court, 36. The time in which the whole was completed, 37, 38.

AND it came to pass, in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth

* Heb. tribute of men. See on 4:6. e 9:15. h 4:7-19. 1 Chr. 27:1-15. c See on 4:6. d 9:20-22. 2 Chr. 2:17, 18. 8:7-9. Ezra 2:58. Neh. 7:57, 60. e 9:23. 2 Chr. 2:2. f 6:7, 7:9. 1 Chr. 22:2. Is. 28:16. 1 Cor. 3:11, 12. 1 Pet. 2:6, 7. Rev. 21:14-21. † Or, Giblites. Josh. 13:5. Ps. 83:7. Ez. 27:3. a Judg. 11:26. 2 Chr. 3:12. b 37. Num. 1:1. * Heb. built. Acts 7:47. c 1 Chr. 29:19. Zech. 6:12, 13, 15. John 2:19-21. 1 Cor. 6:19. 2 Cor. 6:16. Eph. 2:20-22. Col. 2:7. Heb. 9:11. 11:16. 1 Pet. 2:5. d Ezra 6:3, 4. Ez. 41:1, &c. Rev. 21:16, 17. e 1 Chr. 28:11. 2 Chr. 2:3, 4. Ez. 41:15. Matt. 4:5. John 10:23. Acts 3:10.

were superintended by three thousand and three hundred persons, perhaps of the same nations. Three thousand six hundred are mentioned in Chronicles: (2 Chr. 2:17, 18.) perhaps three hundred were officers over the rest; or they were supernumeraries, to supply for such as were sick and disabled from attendance.—Thus the temple was chiefly built by the labour and riches of those who were originally Gentiles; which typified the calling of the Gentiles into the church; and the costly stones laid out of sight, as the foundation of the temple, typified Christ, our tried and precious Foundation; and were an emblem of the hidden excellency of those who form a part of his spiritual temple. (Note, 1 Pet. 2:4-6.)

Stone-squarers. (18) Giblites. *Marg.*—Josh. 13:5. 'The Giblites, ... being Phenicians, inhabitants of Gabala a promontory mentioned by Pliny, ... were the most excellent artists in those parts.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who love God are influenced to love one another, and rendered superior to selfish jealousies and envyings; and this divine energy teaches them to rejoice in each other's prosperity, and to be glad to receive or afford mutual assistance in every good undertaking.—The most necessary and successful wars, not only produce very much temporal evil, but obstruct or retard the execution of many useful designs for promoting godliness: we may then well pray, 'Send peace in our time, O Lord: and when he "gives rest to every side, so that there is no adversary nor evil occurrent," no time should be lost, but every one should be intent to devise and execute such useful undertakings as were before prevented. (Note, Acts 9:31.)—Different persons are qualified for diverse services; and while all harmoniously concur, in their proper places, and by improving their several talents, the common cause will prosper.—It is admirable when the children rise up, and complete the wise and pious designs of their deceased parents; and all should rejoice and bless the Lord, when they see such tokens of the prosperity of his church.—God has so constituted the earth, that every nation has its peculiar productions, and its inhabitants their distinguished endowments: thus their mutual intercourse is forwarded; and, by an interchange of benefits, they are instructed to love one another as children of the same family. Happy would it be, if commerce were generally conducted on such principles, and rendered subservient to the promulgation of true religion; but alas! through man's depravity, it has often tended to diffuse wickedness and misery rapidly through the nations of the earth!—All agreements should be made with consideration, that equity may be established, and contests precluded; and great punctuality should be observed in paying labourers their wages.—Frequently, they are most ingenious in the liberal arts, who are strangers to true godliness; and many are employed about the church of God, who have no interest in its blessings. (Notes, Ps. 87:4-7. P. O.) The meanest office in his service is honourable and profitable, if cordially performed: and millions of us poor Gentiles, who in ourselves were devoted to destruction, have been employed by him.—Our gracious Lord lays no intolerable burdens on

year of Solomon's reign over Israel, 'in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he 'began to 'build the house of the Lord.

2 And the house which king Solomon built for the Lord, the length thereof was †threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.

3 And the 'porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof, before the house.

4 And for the house he made 'windows of narrow lights.

5 ¶ And 'against the wall of the house he 'built †chambers round about, 'against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle; and he made †chambers round about.

6 The northernmost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad: for without in the wall of the house he made †narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house.

7 And the house, when it was in building, was 'built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was 'neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was in building.

8 The door for the middle chamber was in the

11. † Or, windows broad within, and narrow without: or, skewed and closed. See on 6:4. Cant. 2:9. Ez. 40:16. 11:23. 1 Tr. upon, or, joining to. c 1 Chr. 9:26. 23:28. 28:11. 2 Chr. 3:11. Neh. 10:37. 12:44. 13:5-6. Cant. 1:4. Jer. 35:4. Ez. 40:44. 41:5-11. 42:3-12. † Heb. floors. g 16:19-21, 31. Ez. 25:22. Lev. 16:2. Num. 7:89. 2 Chr. 4:2. 5:7, 9. Ps. 28:2. † Heb. ribs. † Or, narrowings, or, rebtements. h 5:18 Prov. 24:27. Rom. 9:23. 2 Cor. 5:5. Col. 1:12. 1 Pet. 2:5. i Is. 42:2. Acts 9:31. Jam. 1:20. 3:17, 18.

any of his people; but in every injunction consults their interests and comfort. Let us then serve him cheerfully, and attend to our proper work: and after his example may we be humane and considerate in all our requisitions from our inferiors; that our service, like his, may be loved, and considered as a privilege by those employed in it.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1. The use and typical meaning of the temple, and those of the tabernacle, were the same: but the moveable tabernacle suited the state of Israel when wandering in the wilderness, and a magnificent temple was more proper when they were settled in Canaan. (Notes, Ez. 25:8, 9.)—A temple was not indeed essential to the religion of Israel: and therefore the building of it was deferred till four hundred and eighty years after that people was brought out of Egypt; or four hundred and forty years after they entered Canaan: (Note, Judg. 11:26.) and this temple was destroyed in less than four hundred and twenty years after it was finished.—Solomon was more than three years in making the necessary preparations; and in the fourth year of his reign, he laid the foundation. The month Zif was the second of the ecclesiastical year. Some think that the names of the months, here given, were not in use before the captivity.

V. 2, 3. The temple was a very magnificent building, and immense quantities of gold and silver were used about it yet, apart from its courts, it was but a small structure, compared with many buildings in ancient and modern times.—It was about a hundred feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and fifty feet high: and it had a porch, on the east end at the entrance, which formed in some respects an ornamental steeple of about two hundred feet high. (Notes, 2 Chr. 3:3, 4.) The tabernacle erected in the wilderness is computed to have been fifty feet long, twelve or thirteen feet wide, and nearly seventeen feet high.

V. 4. The tabernacle had no light from without, and the temple had not much. (Note, Ez. 25:31-39.) These windows, which are supposed to have been wider on the inside than without, were situated in the spaces between the chambers afterwards mentioned; or, as some think, above them. (Marg.)

V. 5, 6. These chambers accommodated the priests, when they were upon duty at the temple: and in them they laid up their clothes, the sacred vessels not in immediate use, and the other treasures belonging to the temple. For the purpose of fixing these chambers, the wall of the temple was made two cubits thicker at the bottom than at the top: and where it was made a cubit less in thickness, a rest was formed on the outside, for the beams of the second story of chambers to lodge upon, and so for the third. By this contrivance the upper stories were larger than the lower; and the wall of the temple was not weakened, either by building, or by repairing the chambers. It is supposed that there was also a gallery round about, by which the priests entered the chambers; and that there were no chambers over the entrance of the temple. (Notes, Ez. 41:5-12.)

V. 7. Every stone was squared, and fitted for its place,

right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third.

9 So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar.

10 And then he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 ¶ And the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying,

12 Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:

13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.

[Practical Observations.]

14 So Solomon built the house, and finished it.

15 And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling: and he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir.

16 And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls, with boards of cedar: he even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the most holy place.

17 And the house, that is, the temple before it, was forty cubits long.

18 And the cedar of the house within was carved with knobs and open flowers: all was cedar; there was no stone seen.

19 And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

20 And the oracle in the forepart was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof; and he overlaid it with pure gold; and so covered the altar which was of cedar.

21 So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold.

22 And the whole house he overlaid with gold,

until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

23 ¶ And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive-tree, each ten cubits high.

24 And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits.

25 And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure and one size.

26 The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub.

27 And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another, in the midst of the house.

28 And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.

29 And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, within and without.

30 And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.

31 ¶ And for the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive-tree: the lintel and side-posts were a fifth part of the wall.

32 The two doors also were of olive-tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm-trees.

33 So also made he for the door of the temple, posts of olive-tree, a fourth part of the wall.

34 And the two doors were of fir-tree: the two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.

35 And he carved thereon cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers; and covered them with gold, fitted upon the carved work.

36 ¶ And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.

37 ¶ In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the Lord laid, in the month Zif:

* Heb. shoulder. † Ex. 41:17, 18. ‡ Or, the vault beams and the ceilings with cedar. 12:34, 3:14, 2:25, 9:3—5. 1 Sam. 12:14, 15. 1 Chr. 28:9, 2 Chr. 7:17, 18. Ps. 132:12. Zech. 3:7. Col. 1:23. m 2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Chr. 22:10. n 8:27. Ex. 23:8. Lev. 26:11. Ps. 68:18. 132:12, 13. Is. 57:15. Ex. 37:26—28. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 21:3. o See on Deut. 31:6, 8. 1 Sam. 12:22. 1 Chr. 28:9, 20. p 9:38. Acts 7:14. q Or, from the floor of the house, unto the walls, &c. 16. r 15, 19, 20. s Ex. 25:21, 22, 36:33. Lev. 16:2. 2 Chr. 3:8. Heb. 9:3. t Or, pour'd, † Or, openings of flowers. r See on Ex. 4:20. s 8:6—10. Ex. 40:20, 21. 2 Chr. 5:7. Heb. 9:3, 4. t See on 2:3. † Heb. shut up. u 22, 7:48. Ex. 30:1—3. x Ex. 36:29, 32, 36:34. 2 Chr. 3:7—9. y Ex. 26:34, 33. 2 Chr. 3:14—16. z See on

20. a Gen. 3:24. Ex. 25:18—22, 37:7—9. 2 Chr. 3:10—13. Ps. 18:10, 80:1. Is. 37:16. Ex. 10:2, &c. Heb. 1:14. 1 Pet. 1:12. ** Or, oily. Heb. trees of oil. b Ex. 25:20, 37:9. 2 Chr. 5:8. † Or, the cherubim stretched forth their wings. 2 Chr. 3:11. c Ex. 36:8. 2 Chr. 3:14, 4:2—5. Ps. 103:20, 149:2. Luke 9:13, 14. Eph. 3:10. Rev. 5:11—14. d Ps. 92:12—15. Rev. 7:9. † Heb. openings of flowers. 18:32. e Is. 54:11, 12. 60:17. Rev. 21:18—21. f John 10:9, 14:6. Eph. 2:18. Heb. 10:19, 20. g Or, five square. † Or, leaves of the doors. † Heb. openings of flowers. ** Or, four square. g 5:8. h Ex. 41:23—25. i Ex. 27:9—19, 38:9—20. 2 Chr. 4:9, 7:7. Rev. 11:2. k 1. 2 Chr. 3:2.

at the quarry; so that the temple was erected without noise, or the incumbrance of useless rubbish. Several of these circumstances may shadow forth spiritual things. (P. O.)

V. 8. There seems to have been a door, in each of the two upper stories, into a gallery, which communicated with all the chambers; and winding stairs from one story to another.

V. 10. The chambers were five cubits high in each story; and thus they did not go up to the top of the temple, which was thirty cubits high. (3) The windows are supposed to have been placed above the top of the chambers. (Note, 4).—The beams of cedar lay on the rests in the wall. (Note, 5, 6.)

V. 11—13. This word of the Lord was both an encouragement to Solomon to proceed; and an intimation to him, and to Israel, that neither the service performed in building the temple, nor its continuance with them, could secure to them the Lord's favour, if they were not obedient to his commandments: for both king and people stood upon the same terms with God, as they did before the temple was begun. (Notes, 9:3—6. Jer. 7:3—15.)

V. 15—22. The inside of the walls of the temple were throughout wainscotted with cedar, ornamented with exquisite workmanship; and it was floored with planks of fir, or, as some explain the word, of a very durable kind of cedar: yet both these were covered with plates of solid gold. (Note, Ex. 41:22.) In the same manner and proportion, as the tabernacle had been, this building was divided into two parts. (Note, Ex. 26:31—33.) "The oracle," or "the most holy place," in which was the ark of the covenant, with the mercy-seat, and from whence the Lord delivered his answers to the high-priest from above the mercy-seat was twenty cubits square:

it is also said to have been twenty cubits high, though the house was thirty: it was therefore either built or ceiled lower than the other part of the temple. The veil, which separated the holy of holies, was hung by golden chains on pillars erected for that purpose. (2 Chr. 3:15, 16).—"The altar, by the oracle," was the altar of incense without the veil; in the holy place, which was twice as long as the most holy place.

V. 23—28. These cherubim were the emblems of the angels, as jointly worshipping God our Saviour; and as delighting to contemplate the mysteries of redemption.—They were distinct from, and much larger than, those which covered the mercy-seat, and indeed were inseparably united to it. (Notes, Ex. 25:10—22).—They stood erect with "their faces towards the wall" (2 Chr. 3:13.) and they covered with their outstretched wings the whole breadth of the most holy place.—The others were of solid gold; but these of olive-tree covered with gold.

V. 31—35. It is probable, that, besides the veil, there was another partition between the holy of holies and the sanctuary. The veil covered the whole of this: but when that was drawn aside, folding doors, of olive-tree plated with gold, and curiously engraved with cherubim and palm-trees, took up a fifth of the partition, or about four cubits.—The doors at the entrance of the sanctuary were rather larger.

V. 36. The inner court, at the entrance of the sanctuary, in which the altar of burnt-offering stood, was principally appropriated to the priests, Levites, and those who brought the sacrifices. (Notes, Ex. 27:9—19. Ez. 40:41, 42.) It was separated from the outer courts by a wall of hewn stone. but it is supposed that part of it was built of cedar-beams, to leave openings, through which the other worshippers might see the sacrifices offered, and join in the sacred services.

38 And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, (which is the eighth month,) was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

CHAPTER VII.

Solomon builds himself a house, 1: and the house of the forest of Lebanon, 2-5: the porch of pillars, 6: the porch of judgment, 7: the house of Pharaoh's daughter, 8: The costly materials of these structures, and of the great court, 9-12. Hiram, a skilful artificer, is fetched from Tyre, 13, 14. He casts two pillars of brass, 15-22: and the brazen sea; with ten bases, and ten lavers, and other vessels for the temple, 23-47. The furniture and sacred vessels of gold are made for the temple, 48-50. The dedicated treasures are brought into it, 51.

BUT Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

2 ¶ He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was a hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar-pillars, with cedar-beams upon the pillars.

3 And it was covered with cedar above upon the beams, that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row.

4 And there were windows in three rows, and light was against light in three ranks.

5 And all the doors and posts were square with the windows: and light was against light in three ranks.

Exra 6:14, 15. Zech. 4:9. 6:13-15. * Or, with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof. m 7:1. Exra 3:8-13. 6:15. John 2:20. ¶ 9:10. 2 Chr. 8:1. Ex. 24:5. Matt. 6:33. ¶ 9:19. 10:17. 2 Chr. 9:16. Cant. 7:4. * Heb. ribs, 6:5. marg. c 5:64. 1s. 54:12. Ex. 40:16, 22, 25, 28, 33, 38, 41, 29. † Heb. eight against eight. ‡ Or, spaces and pillars were square in prospect.

V. 37, 38. The whole time was seven years and a half; but the number of whole years alone is mentioned. This is frequently the case.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. Though God does not delight in outward magnificence, but is present with his poor people who assemble in the meanest place, and accepts their worship: yet he expects that the wealthy should devote their riches to his service. And whatever is liberally expended, out of zeal for his glory, and according to the rule of his word, shall be graciously accepted; though perhaps man may censure the expense, as needless or useless. (Notes, Matt. 26:6-13. John 12:1-8.)—Every good work should be done heartily and without procrastination: but it is not needless delay to consult prudent measures, to make requisite preparations, and to remove such obstructions, as might afterwards impede our progress, or divert our attention. Thus, young men, animated with a laudable design to seek the salvation of souls, and impatient to be employed in the work of the ministry, would do well to restrain their ardour, to wait for a proper opening in Providence, and to spend some time in previous study, meditation, and prayer; that they may acquire the wisdom, experience, humility, and steadiness, requisite for so important a work; and afterwards proceed in it without interruption, and to better effect: and a few years spent in this manner will no more be lost time, than those which were employed in preparations for the building of Solomon's temple.—Every thing in the church above is conducted in perfect harmony and regularity; every part of that spiritual temple being made ready for its place, before it is conveyed thither: and the more the church on earth resembles it the better.—The true church of God is most glorious within; and the true believer is chiefly employed in attending to the state of his heart.—In all religious matters convenience must be preferred to splendour; but stability must not be sacrificed even to apparent convenience.—No pompous services will purchase a dispensation from obeying the least of God's commandments. All those things in which men, who allow themselves in sin, confide, will be found as unavailing, as the temple was to the wicked kings and people of Israel: for nothing but unreserved obedience, to the precepts and statutes of God's word, can prove the sincerity of our faith, and our love to the Saviour. But though numbers of professors apostatize, and whole nations forfeit their peculiar privileges; yet the Lord will dwell in the midst of his true people, and never forsake them; and they will delight in his ordinances and commandments; and be encouraged by being told their duty, as it is a token of the Lord's favour to them.

V. 14-38. What is begun in the fear and love of God, in dependence on him, and obedience to him, will in due time be accomplished to his glory.—God must be honoured with the best we have: but gold is only meet to be trodden under foot, in comparison with the beauty of holiness, which is the glory and ornament of his spiritual temple.—The human nature of the Redeemer, that true Temple in which God dwells with man, is immaculately holy: the Christian, as united unto Jesus, and "an habitation of God through the Spirit," is sanctified in his measure: and the church above, where innumerable angels unite with redeemed sinners, in ceaseless worship of God our Saviour, is perfect in this beauty. Let not then the hypocrite, or formal professor of Christianity, who is a stranger to the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit,

6 ¶ And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch was before them: and the other pillars and the thick beam were before them.

7 ¶ Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment: and it was covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other.

8 ¶ And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work. Solomon made also a house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch.

9 All these were of costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court.

10 And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones; stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.

11 And above were costly stones, after the measures of hewed stones, and cedars.

12 And the great court round about was with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar-

¶ Or, according to them. ¶ Or, according to them. d 6:3. e 10:18-20. Ps. 122:5. 1s. 9:7. 13:9, 28. Prov. 20:8. ¶ Heb. from floor to floor. g 2 Kings 20:4. h See on 3:1. 9:24. 2 Chr. 8:11. i 10:11. 5:17. k 1s. 28:16. 54:11. l Cor. 3:10, 11. Rev. 21:19, 20. 1 Eph. 2:20-22. 1 Pet. 2:5. m See on 6:36.

and who lives in secret or open sin, suppose himself a part of this living Temple.—Yet let sinners come to Jesus, as the living Foundation, that they may be built on him, a part of this spiritual house, consecrated in body and soul to the glory of God. (Notes, Eph. 2:19-22. 1 Pet. 2:4-6.)—If we have good ground to conclude, that we are a part of this living Temple; let us look to it, that our inward part, which is seen by God alone, may be preserved most pure; let us be careful also of our outward conduct, that our blameless conversation may be ornamental to our profession in the sight of man; let us look to Jesus for encouragement and assistance in every service, and as the great exemplar to which we are to be conformed: and let us by faith behold that glorious company whom we hope soon to join; that we may now emulate their praises, imitate their obedience, and thus anticipate their comforts, even in this world of sin and sorrow.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1. Solomon began the temple first, and was most earnest in expediting it; and therefore it was finished in far less time than his own palace. As he employed twenty years in these buildings; (9:10.) it seems he finished the temple before he began his own house; though his numerous workmen might have carried on both together.

V. 2. Some have thought that this palace was built, for retirement, in a beautiful situation near mount Lebanon: but it seems rather to have been erected not far from Jerusalem; and to have been thus called, either from its airy and lofty situation, or from the cedars of Lebanon of which it was built. For Solomon put the shields of gold "in the house of the forest of Lebanon;" yet when Shishak came to Jerusalem he seized on them; and when Rehoboam made brazen ones in their stead, they were carried before him when he went to the house of the Lord, and brought back with him to the great chamber. (10:17. 2 Chr. 9:16. 12:9-11.)

V. 6-12. The "porch of pillars" is supposed to have been a covered portico, in which Solomon's guards and attendants waited: and "The porch of judgment," another portico, in which he sat to decide causes. It is not certain, whether "the porch of pillars" belonged to "the house of the forest of Lebanon," or to the palace in Jerusalem: but it is most probable, that "the porch for the throne" was at Jerusalem.—The palace seems to have stood within two courts; one nearer to it than "the porch for the throne," and the other farther off.—The palace for Pharaoh's daughter was placed at some distance, "out of the city of David." (Note, 2 Chr. 8:11.) but it was built with the same magnificence as the other palaces. The costly stones seem to have been large valuable blocks of marble, beautifully squared and polished on every side; and the outer court was surrounded with a wall, like that which separated the court of the temple; so that the people might look through the rows of the cedar-beams, which were placed at proper distances. These buildings, though magnificent, were intended for use, and not merely for ostentation: and no doubt they were finished in the best style of the architecture of those days. The court round Solomon's own house was built in the same manner as the inner court of the house of the Lord.

V. 13, 14. Hiram's mother is in Chronicles said to have been "of the daughters of Dan;" (2 Chr. 2:14.) and some think, that Dan was the name of her father: but probably, she was originally of the tribe of Dan, and had first been married to a man of Naphtali; and, being by him left a widow, had married a Tyrian to whom she bore Hiram, &c.

beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, and for the porch of the house.

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.

14 He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.

15 For he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about.

16 And he made two chapters of molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapter was five cubits, and the height of the other chapter was five cubits:

17 And nets of checker-work, and wreaths of chainwork, for the chapters which were upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapter, and seven for the other chapter.

18 And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapters that were upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapter.

19 And the chapters that were upon the top of the pillars were of lily work in the porch, four cubits.

20 And the chapters upon the two pillars had pomegranates also above, over against the belly which was by the network: and the pomegranates were two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapter.

21 And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.

22 And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

23 ¶ And he made a molten sea, ten cubits from the one brim to the other: it was round all about, and his height was five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

24 And under the brim of it round about there were knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about: the knops were cast in two rows when it was cast.

25 It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was

set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.

26 And it was a handbreadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained two thousand baths.

27 ¶ And he made ten bases of brass; four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it.

28 And the work of the bases was on this manner: they had borders, and the borders were between the ledges:

29 And on the borders that were between the ledges were lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges there was a base above: and beneath the lions and oxen were certain additions made of thin work.

30 And every base had four brazen wheels, and plates of brass: and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under the laver were undersetters molten, at the side of every addition.

31 And the mouth of it within the chapter and above was a cubit: but the mouth thereof was round after the work of the base, a cubit and a half: and also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, four-square, not round.

32 And under the borders were four wheels; and the axle-trees of the wheels were joined to the base: and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit.

33 And the wheels of the wheels was like the work of a chariot-wheel: their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, were all molten.

34 And there were four undersetters to the four corners of one base: and the undersetters were of the very base itself.

35 And in the top of the base was there a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof, were of the same.

36 For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.

37 After this manner he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one size.

38 ¶ Then made he ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths: and every laver was four cubits: and upon every one of the ten bases one laver.

n John 10:23. Acts 3:11, 5:12. o 40. 2 Chr. 2:13, 4:11. Huram. * Heb. the son of a widow woman. † 2 Chr. 2:14. q Ex. 31:2—6, 35:30—35, 36:1, 2, 8. Is. 28:26. Dan. 1:7. ‡ Heb. fashioned. § 2 Kings 25:16, 17. 2 Chr. 3:15—17, 4:12. Jer. 32:21—22. ¶ Ex. 35:38, 38:17, 19:28. 2 Chr. 4:12, 13. 1 Ez. 28:14, 22, 24, 25, 33, 15—18. 2 Kings 25:17. ¶ 22, 6:18, 33, 35. § 2 Kings 25:17. 2 Chr. 3:16, 4:13. Jer. 52:22, 23. ¶ 2 Chr. 3:17. Gal. 2:9. Rev. 1:2, 3: 6:3. Ez. 40:48, 49. ‡ That is, He shall establish. 2 Sam. 7:12. Is. 9:7. § That is, In it is strength. Ruth 4:21. Is. 45:24. Matt. 16:18. ¶ Ex. 30:13—21, 38:8. b 2 Kings 25:13. 2 Chr. 4:2. Jer. 52:17, 20. ¶ Heb. his brim to his brim. c 6:

18. Ex. 25:31—36, 37:17—22. d 2 Chr. 4:3. e 2 Chr. 4:4. Jer. 52:20. Ez. 10. Matt. 28:19. Mark 16:15, 16. Luke 24:47. 1 Cor. 9:9. Rev. 4:6, 7. f Jer. 52: 21. g 19. 6:18, 32, 35. h 38. 2 Chr. 4:5. Ez. 45:14. i 2 Kings 25:13, 16. 2 Chr. 4:14. Jer. 52:17, 20. ¶ See on 25:6, 27. Ez. 1:10, 10:14, 41:18, 19. Rev. 4:6, 7. k Ez. 1:16—21, 3:13, 10:10—13. ¶ Heb. on the base. 1 Ez. 1:16, 18. n 28: 6. 29, 32, 35. Ez. 40:31, 37, 41:18—20, 25, 26. ** Heb. nakedness. n Ex. 30:17—21, 28, 38:8, 40:11, 12. 2 Chr. 4:6. Zech. 13:1. Heb. 9:10, 10:22. 1 John 1:7. Rev. 7:14.

Huram, who was called by the name of the king of Tyre. This man, uniting, as it were, the Israelite and the Gentile in one person, and being the chief workman in making the furniture of the temple, aptly represented the union of Jews and Gentiles in the Christian church. (Note, Eph. 2: 19—22.)

V. 15—22. (Marg. Ref.) Each of these pillars being eighteen cubits in height, the two together would measure thirty-six cubits in length: but one cubit is supposed to be allowed for the bases. (2 Chr. 3:15.)—The chapters are, in one place, said to have been three cubits in height: but the upper part, covered with decorations, is thought to be there mentioned separately, and to be here included. (16. 2 Kings 25:17.)—There were four hundred pomegranates in all; two hundred on each chapter, in two rows of an hundred each. Perhaps ninety-six of these might be counted on every side; being nearly one half of the whole number on each chapter: but, as some think, there were ninety-six smaller pomegranates in each row, in four divisions, towards the four quarters of the sky; and four larger pomegranates were placed between these four divisions. (Jer. 52:23.)—A writer, who completely understood such subjects, would scarcely be able, by words without plates, to convey any adequate ideas of the ornamental workmanship described in this chapter.—These pillars were intended for ornament and for significance. “Jachin” signifies, *He shall establish*: “Boaz,” *In him is strength*. (Marg.) And thus the priests and worshippers were re-

minded to trust only in the Lord, and not in themselves, or in their forms.

V. 23—39. In the tabernacle there had been one laver of brass, at which the priests continually washed themselves, and the sacrifices. (Note, Ex. 30:18—21.) But now the numbers of the priests and Levites were multiplied, and the sacrifices were proportionately increased. Therefore Solomon prepared this brazen sea; and ten lavers besides, at which the sacrifices were to be washed. These were constantly supplied with water by the Nethinim, or the Gibeonites, who were servants to the priests. (Note, Josh. 9:27.) The brazen sea was a very large reservoir, capable of holding three thousand baths, or about four hundred and fifty hogsheds; though no more than two thousand were generally put into it.—The knops are supposed to have been in the form of an ox's head, (2 Chr. 4:3.) and some think that the water flowed out at the mouths of them, or of some of them.—The oxen on which it was placed, might be intended as a protest against the absurd idolatry of worshipping God under an image in that form.—The ten lavers, though generally placed in two rows, in the inner court of the temple, were fixed upon bases, which ran on wheels, that they might be removed as convenience required.—The description given of these bases, is very difficult: many of the original words are but seldom used, if at all, elsewhere: and it would be impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of each particular, without labour and prolixity, disproportioned to its importance to us.—The likeness

39 And he put five bases on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south.

40 ¶ And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the Lord:

41 The two pillars, and the two bowls of the chapters that were on the top of the two pillars; and the two networks, to cover the two bowls of the chapters which were upon the top of the pillars;

42 And four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, even two rows of pomegranates for one network, to cover the two bowls of the chapters that were upon the pillars;

43 And the ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases;

44 And one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;

45 And the pots, and the shovels, and the basins: and all these vessels which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the Lord, were of bright brass.

46 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zartan.

47 And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass found out.

¶ Heb. shoulder. o 2 Chr. 4:6, 10. † Heb. Hiram. See on 13. p See on 28. 2 Kings 25:14, 15. 2 Chr. 4:8, 11—13. Jer. 52:18, 19. q 45. * Ex. 24:8. a Ex. 39:23—43. † See on 15—22. 2 Chr. 4:12. u 17, 18. † Heb. the face of the pillars. x 27—39. y See on 23—26. z Ex. 27:3, 38:3. Lev. 8:31. 1 Sam. 4:13, 14. 2 Chr. 4:16. Ex. 46:20—24. Zech. 14:21. † Heb. brass made bright, or, scoured. ‡ Heb. the thickness of the ground. u Gen. 33:17. b 4:12. Zertanah. Josh. 3:16. Zartanah. 2 Chr. 4:17. Zertanah. ¶ Heb. for the exceeding multitude. 2 Chr. 4:18. * Heb. searched. 1 Chr. 22:14, 16. c Ex. 30:1—5. 37:25—28. 39:38. 40:26. 2 Chr. 4:19. d Ex. 25:23—30. 37:10—16, 39:

of lions, oxen, &c. we shall hereafter find to be undeniably emblematic of the boldness, patience, diligence, and heavenly-mindedness of the ministers of Christ. (Notes, Ex. 1:5—14. Rev. 4:6—8.) Oxen and cherubim are both mentioned, (29) which shows they were not the same figures. (Note, Ex. 10:14.)

V. 40—47. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 15—39.*—In the plain of Jordan. (46) The place chosen for casting all these vessels of brass, or copper, was doubtless selected for convenience, and as best suited for the purpose: and, being at a considerable distance from Jerusalem, that city would be preserved from the smoke and noxious vapours necessarily occasioned by the process: and all the vessels brought ready for use to the court of the temple. (6:7.)

V. 48—51. There were ten tables; (2 Chr. 4:8.) but perhaps one was much larger than the rest, and the showbread was chiefly placed upon it. Every thing was made new for the temple, even the altar for burnt-offerings; (Note, 2 Chr. 4:1.) except the ark of the covenant with the mercy-seat and cherubim: for this was the peculiar symbol of the Lord's presence with his people, as reconciled in Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and man. (Notes, Ex. 25:10—40. 27:1—8. 30:1—8. Ex. 40:38—44. 41:22. 43:13—17.) Thus under the gospel dispensation, externals of worship are altogether changed, but the way of access and acceptance with God is the same.—Most things were multiplied, or enlarged above what they had been in the tabernacle: but there was but one altar of burnt-offering, and one altar of incense as before. Thus the New Testament dispensation is suited to the promulgation of the gospel, through all nations: but the multiplication of atonements and intercessors is antichristian.—Solomon, having plenty of materials, prepared great quantities of all requisite utensils for the service of the sanctuary, for the benefit of those who should come after him: and he deposited the remainder of the consecrated treasures in the house of the Lord, for the same purpose in future times. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12. Princes and nobles may be allowed, without censure, to build their houses, and to lay out their estates, as it is suitable to their rank, convenience, or inclinations: yet they should be reminded that Solomon found it, and they will at length find it all a mere vanity. (Notes, Ec. 2:9—11.) They should also be cautioned, not to expend too much in that manner, lest they should be straitened in their ability of doing good to others, and glorifying God: (Notes, and P. O. Luke 16:1—12.) and likewise not to suffer such cares and contrivances to take up their time, or to draw their thoughts and affections off from communion with God, and the care of their souls: for peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and the lively hope of a heavenly inheritance, are the choicest comforts: the beauties of holiness are the most valuable ornaments; and distinguished usefulness

48 And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the Lord: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the showbread was,

49 And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongues of gold,

50 And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold: and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, to wit, of the temple.

51 So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the Lord. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated: even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord.

CHAPTER VIII.

Solomon assembles the elders and princes; and the priests carry the ark into the most holy place, 1—9. The glory of the Lord fills the house, 10, 11. Solomon blesses Israel; and praises God for performing his word to David, 12—4. He prays, that God would answer the supplications of Israel, and of strangers, in all cases, and in all cases in which they should call upon him, towards his holy temple, 22—33. He again praises God, and blesses the people, 54—61. He offers very numerous sacrifices, keeps the feast fourteen days; and dismisses the people, who return home joyful and thankful, 62—66.

THEN Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up

36. 40:22, 23. Lev. 24:5—9. 2 Chr. 4:8. Ex. 40:39, 42, 41:22, 44:16. Mal. 1:12. 1 Cor. 10:21. e Ex. 25:31, &c. 37:17, &c. 39:37, 40:24, 25. 2 Chr. 4:7. Zech. 4:1—3, 11—14. Matt. 5:14—16. Rev. 1:20, 2:1. † See on 2 Chr. 4:20. g Ex. 26:38. Num. 4:9. h Ex. 25:29. Num. 7:86. † Heb. ash-pans. Lev. 16:12. 2 Chr. 4:21, 22. 1 Chr. 40:38. Ezra 6:15. Zech. 4:9. † Heb. holy things of David. k 2 Sam. 8:7—11. 1 Chr. 18:7, 10, 11, 26:26—28, 28:11—18, 29:2—8. 2 Chr. 5:1. a 2 Chr. 5:2. b Josh. 23:2, 24:1. 1 Chr. 28:1. 2 Chr. 30:1. Ezra 3:1. * Heb. princes. Num. 7:3. c 2 Sam. 6:1, 2, 12. 1 Chr. 13:1—5, 15:3, 25.

is the most honourable and durable testimony to a man's character.—When, however, men begin first with the service of God, and are not by other employments taken off from it, or rendered negligent in it, and still return to it for satisfaction; and when in all their undertakings, they have an eye to the peculiar duties of their stations, as well as to general convenience and utility; we may hope, that the multiplicity of their engagements will not materially injure them: but they are treading on perilous ground, and have need of peculiar circumspection, watchfulness, and earnestness in prayer.

V. 13—51. It is well when great ingenuity unites with equal integrity; when entire confidence is proved to have been well placed; and when every one abounds in the work of the Lord, in proportion as his abilities are enlarged. Yet, in all our services, and after them, we need washing from the guilt and pollution of sin, which defiles us and all we do. Let us therefore bless God for "the Fountain" which he has "opened for sin and for uncleanness;" and which by the preaching of the gospel and the written word, may be conveyed to every part of the earth.—In him also is Strength, and he will establish all who trust in him. Those who depend on their own resolutions, wisdom, or works; who trust in riches, honour, prosperity, or powerful friends; who worship other gods, or depend on other intercessors; and who presume upon their notions, creeds, or external forms; can never be established, but will at length sink and perish. But the power of Christ rests upon the humble believer; his arms uphold him; his grace establishes his heart in hope and love; he is his Stability in every trial, and his Sufficiency for every service; and is both able and willing "to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy." He indeed is both the Temple and the Builder; the Altar and the Sacrifice; the Light of our souls, and the Bread of life; and is every way adequate to the largest and most numerous wants of the millions who have applied, and shall in faith apply to him. External images cannot describe, words cannot express, the heart cannot conceive, his preciousness or his love. Let us come to him, and wash away our sins in his blood; let us seek for the purifying grace of his Spirit; let us walk in the light of his instructive word, and observe his kind directions; let us feed upon him daily "in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving," maintain communion with God the Father, through his intercession, and yield up ourselves and all we have to his service. Thus being "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," we shall be accepted, useful, and happy; and shall be enabled to do our own work, in our proper places, with fidelity, in a manner consistent with our profession, and to the glory of his name.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1. (Notes, 2 Sam. 6:1, 2. 1 Chr. 13:1—4.) The temple was in a peculiar manner the residence of JEHOVAH in the midst of Israel, when the ark of the covenant was placed in it: and the want of the ark, after the Babylonish captivity, in the temple then built, imitated

the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priest took up the ark.

4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5 And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

6 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.

7 For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

8 And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.

9 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 And that the priests could not stand to

minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

12 ¶ Then spake Solomon, "The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

13 I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.

14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood:

15 And he said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying,

16 Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.

17 And it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto David my father, "Whereas it was in thy heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart.

19 Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.

20 And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

21 And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which he

d 3:15. 2 Sam. 5:7-9. 6:12-17. 1 Chr. 11:7. 15:29. 16:1. Ps. 9:11. 102:21. Is. 23:16. 46:13. 1 Pet. 2:6. e Lev. 23:34. Num. 29:12, &c. Deut. 16:13. 2 Chr. 5:3. 7:3-10. Ezra 3:4. Neh. 8:14-18. 2 Chr. 1:19-19. John 7:27, 38. f Num. 4:5. Deut. 31:9. Josh. 3:3, 6, 14, 15. 4:8, 6:6. 1 Chr. 15:2, 11-15. 2 Chr. 5:3-6. g 3:4. 2 Chr. 1:3. h See on Ex. 40:2-33. i 6:23, 6:28. 2 Sam. 6:13. 1 Chr. 16:1. k 4. 2 Chr. 5:7. 16:19. Ex. 26:33, 34. 40:20, 21. m 6:27. Ex. 25:20-22. 37:9. 1 Sam. 4:4. 2 Sam. 6:2. Ps. 50:1. 59:1. Is. 37:16. Ex. 10:5. n Ex. 25:14, 15. 27:4, 5. 40:20. o Heb. *hente*. p Or, *ark*. q 2 Chr. 5:9. r Josh. 4:9. Matt. 23:9. s p Ex. 25:21. Deut. 10:2. 2 Chr. 5:10. q Ex. 16:33. Num. 17:10. Heb. 9:4. r Ex. 40:20. Deut. 10:5. 31:26. t Or, *where*. u 21. Ex. 24:8. 34:27, 28. Deut. 4:13. s Ex. 13:21. 14:24. 16:10. 24:16-18. 40:34, 35. Lev. 16:2. Num. 9:15. 2 Chr. 5:13, 14. 7:1-3. Ex. 10:4. Rav. 15:8. l Lev. 9:6, 33. Ex. 43:2, 4, 5. 44:4. John 1:14. Acts 7:55. 2 Cor. 3:18. 4:8. Rev. 21:11, 23. u Deut. 4:11. 2 Chr. 6:1, 2. Ps. 18:8-11. 97:2. v Ex. 20:21. Deut. 5:22. Heb. 12:18.

that that dispensation was ready to vanish away. Solomon's undertaking therefore was incomplete, and the temple lacked its chief glory, (notwithstanding all its gold and exquisite workmanship), until the ark was removed thither, and fixed in the most holy place. This therefore he took care to perform, according to the law, and in the most public and solemn manner.—Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built, was near to the city of David, on mount Zion where the ark was before placed; and was distinct from it. (Notes, 1 Chr. 21:18—30. 2 Chr. 3:1, 2.)

V. 2. This was about eleven months after the temple was completed. The intervening time was doubtless employed in getting every thing ready for the solemnity; and the time which was chosen coincided with the feast of tabernacles, which ensured the presence of multitudes of the most zealous and pious Israelites, along with the elders and chief persons. (2 Chr. 7:8, 9. Note, 63—65.)

V. 3. The Levites of Kohath's family were appointed to carry the ark; and the priests were of that family: on the most solemn occasions, therefore, the priest performed this service. (Notes, Num. 7:4—9. Josh. 3:3, 4. 2 Sam. 6:12, 13. 1 Chr. 15:15. 2 Chr. 5:2—5.)

V. 4. It is probable, that both the ancient tabernacle which Moses had made, and that which David had formed at Jerusalem, were brought up to the temple, and, with all their vessels and furniture, deposited in its treasures, to avoid all danger of superstition and idolatry; and that no worship might be performed any where, but only at this house of God, which he (Solomon) now dedicated to him. Bp. Patrick. (Note, 2 Kings 18:4.) Thus the Mosaic dispensation afterwards resigned up all its honours to the Christian; and thus the knowledge and grace of the church on earth will be absorbed and lost in the vision and glory of heaven.

V. 5. The altar of burnt-offering, which Solomon had prepared, seems to have been covered with sacrifices, without any fire under them: and when Solomon had ended his prayer, the fire came down from heaven and consumed them. (Note, Lev. 9:24. 2 Chr. 7:1—3.) But there might also be other sacrifices on the former altar, and likewise temporary altars erected, with all suitable preparations for so extraordinary an occasion. (Note, 63—65.)

V. 6. (Marg. Ref.)—Oracle.]—וְדַבֵּר, from (דָּבַר to speak;) because from above the mercy-seat the Lord spake, when the ulcers inquired of him by the high-priest.

x 2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Chr. 17:12. 22:10, 11. 28:6, 10, 20. 2 Chr. 6:2. y Ps. 78:68, 69. 132:13, 14. John 4:21—23. Acts 6:14. Heb. 8:5—13. 9:11, 12, 21. z 55:58. Josh. 22:6. 2 Sam. 6:18. 1 Chr. 16:2. 2 Chr. 6:3. 30:18—20. Ps. 118:26. Luke 24:50. 51. a 2 Chr. 7:6. Neh. 8:7, 9, 2. Matt. 13:2. b 1 Chr. 29:10, 20. 2 Chr. 6:4. 20:26. Neh. 9:5. Ps. 41:13. 72:18, 19. 115:18. 171:2. Luke 1:68. Eph. 1:3. 1 Pet. 1:3. c 2 Sam. 7:25, 28, 29. 1 Chr. 17:12. 14:1, 30. Luke 1:70. d Josh. 21:45. 23:15, 16. Ps. 138:2. Matt. 24:35. Luke 1:54, 55, 72. e See on 2 Sam. 7:6, 7. 2 Chr. 6:5. f 1 Chr. 17:5, 6. Ps. 132:13. g See on 20, 11:36. 2 Kings 23:27. Neh. 1:9. Jer. 7:12. Dan. 9:19. h 1 Sam. 16:1. 2 Sam. 7:8. 1 Chr. 28:3. i Ps. 78:70. 89:19, 20. j 2 Sam. 7:23. 1 Chr. 17:12. 22:7, 28, 2. k 2 Chr. 6:7, 8. 2 Cor. 1:12. l 5:3—5. s Sam. 7:5, 12, 13. 1 Chr. 17:14, 12. 22:8, 10. 28:6. m See on 15. Neh. 9:8. Is. 9:7. Jer. 29:10, 11, 29. Ez. 12:25. 37:14. Mic. 7:9. Rom. 4:21. Phil. 1:6. n See on 5, 6. o Ex. 34:28. Deut. 9:9, 11.

V. 7—9. The cherubim, here mentioned, do not mean those made of solid gold, in the days of Moses, shadowing the ark, which were inseparable from the mercy-seat; (Note, Ex. 25:10—21.) but those which Solomon had just prepared in the most holy place. (Note, 6:23—28.) The ends of the staves might be seen in the holy of holies, but not in the outer sanctuary. The ark now came to its resting place, and it continued in the same situation, when this history was written.—Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the copy of the law, were by, but not within, the ark. (Note, Heb. 9:1—5.)

V. 10—14. All the priests and Levites attended the removal of the ark, and sang solemn praises upon the occasion, with the sound of trumpets and instruments of music. (Notes, 2 Chr. 5:11—13.) But when the ark, as the symbol of JEHOVAH'S presence, had taken possession of the temple, the cloud filled the whole of it, so that the priests could no longer continue in it. The "thick darkness" represented the comparative obscurity and terror of that dispensation; and the darkness, which in this world rests upon all our inquiries into the things of God and of eternity. "God indeed is LIGHT, and with him is no darkness at all;" but we sinners cannot approach or endure that light, except as seen in the person of Jesus Christ. (Marg. Ref. u, v. Notes, 2 Cor. 4:5, 6. 1 Tim. 6:13—16. 1 John 1:5—7.) This thick darkness, whilst it terrified others, assured Solomon of the divine favour, and that the temple which he had built would be the residence of the ark, and the centre of the worship of Israel, for generations to come; and with these assurances he encouraged the people: he congratulated them on this renewed token of the Lord's former favours to Israel; and he pronounced a solemn and affectionate blessing on them. (Note, 2 Sam. 6:18, 19.)—Similar evidences of the Lord's gracious presence, and of his awful glory, had been vouchsafed, when the tabernacle was erected: (Notes, Ex. 40:34, 35. Lev. 16:2.) and it is not easy to distinguish with accuracy between the cloud, and the glory of God which filled the house. It may, however, be observed, that at the close of Solomon's prayer, the fire burst forth from the cloud and consumed the sacrifices on the altar. (Note, 2 Chr. 7:1—3.)

V. 15—21. In this introductory address, while Solomon adored and blessed God, with lively gratitude, for performing his promises: he also reminded the people of several particulars, which were well suited to affect their hearts, and prepare

made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. [Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no god like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:

24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: *thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as it is this day.

25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, *There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

26 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

2 Kings 11:14, 23-3. 2 Chr. 6:12, 13. q Ex. 9:29, 33. See on 2 Chr. 6:12. Ezra 9:5. Job 11:3. Is. 28: 2. 3. 4. Is. 1:15. 1 Tim. 2:8. r Gen. 33:20. Ex. 3:15. Ex. 15:11. 1 Sam. 2:2. 2 Sam. 7:22. Ps. 35:10. 86:8. 89:8-11. 113:5. Is. 40:18. 25. Jer. 10:6, 16. Mic. 7:18. 1 Deut. 7:9. Neh. 1:5. 3:32. Ps. 89:3-5. Dan. 9:4. Mic. 7:13, 20. Luke 1:72. u 24. 36. 6:12. Gen. 17:1. 2 Kings 20:3. z See on 16. 2 Chr. 6:12. 7:24. 2 Sam. 7:27-29. 1 Chr. 17:23-27. Luke 1:68-72. * Heb. There shall not be cut off unto thee a man from my sight. Jer. 33:17-26. 1 Heb. only if. z 24. 94-6. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 6:16, 17. a 23. Ex. 24:10. 1 Sam. 1:17. Ps. 41:13. Is. 41:17. 45:3. b 2 Sam. 7:25-29. 2 Chr. 1:9. Jer. 1:5. Ez. 35:37. c 2 Chr. 6:18. Is. 66:1. John 1:14. Acts 7:19. 17:21. 2 Cor. 6:16. 1 John 3:1. d Deut. 10:14. 2 Chr. 2:6. Ps. 113:4. 139:7-16. Jer. 23:24. 2 Cor. 12:2. e 2 Chr. 6:19. Ps. 141:2. Dan. 9:17-19. Luke 15:17. 1 Ps. 4:1. 5:1. 86:3, 7. 88:12. g 52. 2 Kings 19:16. 2 Chr. 6:20.

them to unite with worshippers in the solemn services of that interesting occasion. The Lord had by Moses declared his purpose of selecting one place for his sanctuary, where he might "record his name," and meet and bless his worshippers: but hitherto no temple had been built, and the tabernacle and ark had been removed from one place to another. (Notes, Ex. 20:21-25. Deut. 12:5-7. 2 Sam. 7:5-16.)—David, his chosen king, was indeed accepted in his design of erecting a temple; yet he was not allowed to accomplish his purpose. But at length, according to the promise of God to him, his son had completed the temple, and had brought the ark into the most holy place.—The tables of the law are called the covenant, because the covenant with Israel at Sinai was grounded on them. (Note, Ex. 25:10-22.)

V. 22. A scaffold had been prepared in the court of the temple; and on this Solomon stood up to bless and instruct the people, and then he knelt down upon it, to offer the following most copious and comprehensive prayer. (2 Chr. 6: 3.) To this reverential posture he also added the spreading forth of his hands towards heaven, as expressive of the fervour of his heart, and the largeness of his expectations, in this act of worship. (Marg. Ref. q.)—The king of Israel never looked more glorious than on this occasion. Doubtless his personal performance of this service gave it a peculiar solemnity, and greatly affected the people: (Note, 2 Kings 23:2.) but he was also a type of Christ, who is at once our King and our Intercessor.—It is most probable, that he prayed from a full heart, without any precomposed form of words: but not without having seriously and fully considered the various blessings for which he should pray.

V. 23, 24. Solomon, in opening his prayer, addressed the Lord, with reference to his essential perfections, and relations to all his rational creatures; and, as the God of Israel, the sole object of their worship, the Author of their peculiar mercies, a God in covenant with them, and the eternal Portion of his believing-obedient people. Other nations had their imagined deities, whom they worshipped and confided in; but they were not like the God of Israel, who had evidently performed all his covenant engagements to his "servants, that walked before him with all their heart," especially in his recent dealings with David and his family. (Marg. Ref. s, t. Notes, Ex. 15:11. Deut. 33:26-28. 2 Sam. 7:8-16.)

V. 25, 26. As the Lord had thus far performed his promises to David, in placing his son on his throne, and in enabling him to build him a house; Solomon took occasion to plead for the accomplishment of the other promises, respecting the perpetuity of the succession in his posterity: but this was conditional; and his petition implied a prayer, that they might be directed and inclined to walk before God, as David had done, and in such a manner as might ensure that event. (Notes, 1 Chr. 28:7-9. 29:10-19. Ps. 89:19-37.)

V. 27. Solomon was deeply sensible, and he would have

28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry, and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to-day:

29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, *My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, for give. [Practical Observations.]

31 ¶ If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteous ness.

33 ¶ When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:

40. 7:15. 16:9. Neh. 1:6. Ps. 34:15. Dan. 9:18. h 16:43. marg. 11:36. Ex. 20: 2. Deut. 12:11. 16:2. 28:2. 2 Kings 21:4, 7. 23:7. 2 Chr. 6:5, 6, 20. 7:16. 20: 8. 33:47. Neh. 1:9. John 14:13, 14. * Or, in this place. Dan. 6:10. 13 Chr. 20: 8, 9. Neh. 1:5, 6. * Or, in this place. k 34, 36, 39, 45, 49. 2 Chr. 6:21. Ps. 33:13, 14. 113:5. 123:1. Ec. 5:2. Is. 57:15. Matt. 6:9. 134, 36, 39. 2 Chr. 7:14. Ps. 130: 3, 4. Dan. 9:19. Matt. 6:12. m 2 Chr. 6:32, 23. n Heb. he require an oath of him. Ex. 22:8-11. Lev. 5:1. Prov. 30:9. o Num. 5:15-22. o See on k. 30. p Num. 5:27. Deut. 25:1. Prov. 1:31. Is. 3:10, 11. Ps. 18:13, 30. Rom. 2:6-10. q Ex. 23:7. Prov. 17:15. Ex. 18:20. r Lev. 25:17, 25. Deut. 28:25, 48. Josh. 7:8. 18:12. 2 Chr. 6:24, 25. Ps. 44:10. o Josh. 7:11, 12. Josh. 6:11-18. 7:18. 18:11, 12. 2 Chr. 36:14-17. t Lev. 24:40, 41. Neh. 1:9. Jon. 3:10. u Ex. 9:5, &c. Neh. 9:1, 3, &c. Is. 63:15-19. 64: &c. Dan. 9:3, &c. ¶ Or, toward, 30.

the people seriously consider, that the most magnificent temple was no meet habitation for the infinite God. The ark might abide in it, and the Lord might thence display his gracious presence with his worshippers; which, contrasting his majesty, purity, and justice, with their meanness, guilt, and pollution, was a condescension that could not be sufficiently admired: but "the heaven of heavens," the glorious mansion of angels and archangels, could not contain, or circumscribe, his essential presence. (Notes, Is. 57:15, 16. 66:1, 2. John 1:1-3, 14. Acts 7:44-50. Eph. 2:19-22. Col. 2:9. Rev. 21:1-4.)

V. 28-30. The Lord was not essentially more present in the temple than elsewhere; and the full displays of his glory were made in heaven, his throne and his dwelling-place: yet he had "recorded his name" in the temple; and it was a peculiar type of the human nature of Christ, in whom the divine perfections are revealed, as harmonizing in the salvation of believers; and in whom "God is reconciling the world to himself," dwelling among men, and accepting the services and answering the prayers of all true believers.—The sacrifices continually offered, the incense burnt, and the whole service performed at the temple, were typical of the Redeemer's offices, oblation, and intercession. The temple, therefore, must be continually adverted to in all their prayers.—Accordingly, the Israelites, when far distant from Jerusalem, were accustomed to turn their faces towards it, as expressive of their dependence on the services there performed by the priests, and of their communion with the worshippers of JEHOVAH: and when they were near it, they resorted thither to present their supplications. (Marg. Ref. g, h. Notes, Dan. 6:10, 11. Jon. 2:3, 4.)—Thus Solomon besought God, that in answer to the prayer which he that day offered, he would in all future ages regard the temple with his peculiar favour, and hear the prayers of all who should present them towards it, wheresoever they were, or whatever were their distresses. (Luke 1:8-10.) Under one word, "forgive," he comprised all that he could ask in behalf of his people; for, as all misery springs from sin; forgiveness of sin must prepare the way for the removal of every evil, and the communication of every good; and without it, no deliverance can eventually prove a blessing. (Notes, Ps. 32:1, 2. Rom. 4:6-8.)

V. 31, 32. In case a man should be accused of defrauding or robbing his neighbour; and decisive evidence being wanting to prove whether he were or were not guilty; an appeal should be made by oath, at or towards the altar, before the temple, to the heart-searching God, that he was innocent; or in any other case in which this solemn appeal was made; Solomon prayed, that the Lord would interpose, in some evident manner, to discover and punish the guilty, and to clear up the character and recompense the integrity of the innocent. (Notes, Ex. 22:7-15. Num. 5:22-31. Matt. 23:16-22.)

34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto thy fathers.

35 ¶ When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

37 ¶ If there be sin in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities, whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;

38 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house:

39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

40 That they may fear thee all the days that

they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

41 ¶ Moreover, concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) when he shall come and pray towards this house;

43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house which I have builded is called by thy name.

44 ¶ If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name.

45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

[Practical Observations.]

46 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

47 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the

z See on 30. Ezra 1:1-6. Ps. 106:47. Jer. 31:4-9, 27. 32:37. 33:10-13. Dan. 9:2. 10:25. Am. 7:2. 1 Chron. 13:15. Ez. 6:8. Josh. 21:43. 17:1. Lev. 26:19. Deut. 11:17. 28:23. 32:24. 2 Sam. 24:13. Jer. 14:1-7. Ez. 14:13. Mal. 3:10. Luke 4:25. Rev. 11:6. a. 3. 2 Chr. 6:24, 25. Rom. 10:9, 15:9. b. 29. 30. Joel 1:13-20. 2:15-17. c. 33. 1. 1:15. 16. 9:13. Ez. 18:30-32. Hos. 14:1. d. Ps. 29:4. 5:12. 27:11. 32:8. 34:12. 119:33. 145:3. 15:35. Mic. 4:2. e. 1 Sam. 12:23. 2 Chr. 6:26, 27. Is. 30:21. Jer. 6:16. 42:3. Matt. 22:16. 118:17-40, 45. Ps. 63:9. Jer. 14:22. Jam. 5:17, 18. g. Lev. 25:16, 23. Deut. 28:21, 22, 23, 38-42, 52-61. 2 Kings 6:25-29. 1 Chr. 21:12. 2 Chr. 6:23-31. 29:9. Ps. 105:34, 35. Jer. 32:2. 39:1-3. Ez. 14:21. Is. 37:4. 17:2. 23:35. h. Or, jurisdiction. i. 2 Chr. 20:5-13. Ps. 50:15. 91:15. Jer. 34:15-21. Joel 2:17. Am. 7:2. j. 2 Chr. 6:29. Job 7:11. Ps. 32:3, 4. 42:6. 54:1. 73:21. 142:5. Prov. 14:10. Rom. 7:34. Phil. 4:1. 1 Peter on 12. Jer. 1:15. k. See on 33. 1. Ps. 18:20-26. 28:4. Jer. 17:10. 32:19. Ez. 18:30. Rev. 22:12. m. 1 Sam. 16:7. 2 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 6:30. Ps. 114:5. John 2:25. 21:17. Acts 1:24. Heb. 4:13. 2:23. n. Gen. 22:12. Ez. 20:20. Deut. 6:13. 1 Sam. 2:24. Ps. 104:13. 130:4. Jer. 32:39, 40. Hos. 3:5. Act. 9:31. 10:9. Heb. 12:28. 13:1. Rev. 14:5. 19:5. o. 10:12. Ruth 1:6. 2:11. 2 Chr. 6:32. Is. 36:7. Matt. 8:5, 10, 11. 15:22-28. Luke 17:18. John 12:20. Acts 10:1-4. p. 10:12. Ex. 18:

8-12. 2 Kings 5:1-7, 16, 17. Is. 60:1-10. Matt. 2:1. 12:42. Acts 8:27. & c. q. Ex. 15:14, 15. Deut. 4:6. Josh. 24:10, 11. 9:9, 10. 2 Chr. 32:31. Dan. 2:47. 3:28. 4:37. r. Ex. 13:15-16. 34:5-7. Josh. 7:19. 1 Sam. 9:9. 15:9. 20:9. s. Ex. 3:19, 20. 4:23. 17:11. 22:17. t. Is. 65:19, 20. Jer. 3:19. Zech. 14:16. Acts 8:27. u. 1 Sam. 17:46. 2 Kings 19:19. 2 Chr. 6:33. Ps. 22:27. 67:2. 72:10, 11. 86:9. Is. 11:9. Rev. 11:15. x. Ps. 103:15. 117:1. y. Heb. thy name is called upon this house. 29. y. Deut. 20:1. 1 Chr. 19:13. 2 Chr. 6:34. z. Num. 31:1, & c. Josh. 6:3-5. 8:1. 2. Judg. 1:1, 2. 4:6. 5:14. 1 Sam. 15:3-18. 30:8. 2 Sam. 5:19, 23. a. 2 Chr. 14:9. 18:31. 20:6-13. 32:30. y. Heb. the way of the city. b. See on 16. Ps. 78:67-69. 132:13, 14. Dan. 9:17-19. s. Or, right. Gen. 18:25. Ps. 9:4. Jer. 5:28. c. 2 Chr. 6:38. Job 14:4. 15:14-15. Ps. 19:12. 130:3. 143:2. Prov. 20:9. Ez. 7:20. Is. 59:6. 64:6. Rom. 8:19. Gal. 3:22. Jam. 3:2. 1 John 18-10. d. Lev. 26:34-39. Deut. 4:26, 27. 28:34-68. 29:23. 2 Kings 17:18, 19. 23:21. Dan. 9:7, 14. Luke 21:24. e. Lev. 26:40-45. 1. eut. 4:29-31. 30:12. 2 Chr. 6:37. 32:13. Ez. 16:61, 63. 18:28. Hag. 1:7. Luke 15:17. f. Heb. bring back to their heart.

V. 33, 34. The Israelites would not be "smitten down," or taken prisoners, by their enemies, except they sinned against God: and, notwithstanding their temple, altar, and sacrifices, they could not expect deliverance, or restoration from captivity or bondage, without repentance and turning to the Lord; without confessing their relations and obligations to him, and their sins against him; and without offering their supplications towards the temple, to him who dwelt upon a mercy-seat between the cherubim. (Notes, Job. 1:10-18. Dan. 9:2-20.)

V. 35, 36. Marg. Ref. Notes, 17:1. 18:36-40. Jer. 14:1-6.—That thou, &c. (36) In addition to all the teaching of the written word, and the instructions of the priests, Levites, and prophets, Solomon entreated the Lord himself to teach the people to profit by their advantages and their chastisements: for this would make way for forgiveness, and consequently for returning plenty and prosperity.—The same words are rendered in Chronicles, "When thou hast taught them the good way in which they should walk." (2 Chr. 6:26, 27.)—The divine teaching particularly respects this "good way in which we ought to walk," and not merely notions and speculations.

V. 37. Marg. Ref.

V. 38. The plague, &c.] That is, "His own sore, and his own grief." 2 Chr. 6:29. (Note, Prov. 14:10.) The former petitions particularly respected public judgments and distresses; but this passage related to private afflictions and trials, and whatever should fill the heart and conscience of any individual with anguish and dismay.—This interpretation doubtless includes, though it is not confined to, that meaning which is very frequently given to the expression, "the plague of his own heart;" namely, the prevalence of in-dwelling sin, which as a plague or pestilential disease, is the grief and sore of every true believer; and in connexion with the guilt which in consequence accumulates upon his conscience, brings him day by day, to offer his fervent prayers and supplications before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God.

V. 39. (Notes, John 2:23-25. Heb. 4:12, 13. Rev. 2:20-23. v. 23.) The Lord, "who only knoweth the hearts of the children of men," could exactly distinguish between the hypocrite, and the upright penitent believer: and would deal with each, according to the covenant of mercy and grace through the promised Saviour, forgiving and doing all good to the one, and leaving the other under condemnation.

V. 40. As "there is no man that sinneth not," (46) so no man could worship a holy God, "if there were not forgiveness with him." (Notes, Gen. 22:12. Ps. 130:3, 4.) Unless this was clearly revealed, that reverential fear, which

unites with hope, and leads men to repent and seek the Lord, would be extinguished, when sinners became acquainted with their own character and state, and with the perfections and holy laws of God; and that slavish fear alone would remain, which unites with enmity and despair, and drives men further and further from God and his worship. (Note, Jam. 2:19, 20.)

—It is very instructive to compare the several parts of this prayer with the preceding prophecies, and the subsequent history; which may in good measure be done by consulting the marginal references.

V. 41-43. Solomon was persuaded that the heathen nations would hear of the name, perfections, and wonderful works of JEHOVAH; and would come and worship him at this temple, as the God of Israel, who dwelt among his people by the ark of his strength, and was propitious to them through the sacrifices there offered. (Notes, John 12:20-22. Acts 8:26-31.) He therefore interceded for them also, that they might be accepted, and obtain the same blessings with the native Israelites; and he desired and hoped, that all the nations of the earth might know, fear, and worship the God of Israel. (Notes, 1 Sam. 17:45-47. 2 Kings 13:14-19. v. 19. Ps. 22:27, 28. Jer. 16:19-21. Matt. 6:13.) Accordingly there was a court built, called "the court of the Gentiles," which was appropriated to the use of those, who came from other nations to worship the God of Israel, but who were not circumcised, and did not observe the ceremonial law.—The prejudices of the Jews, in the days of Christ, against the admission of the Gentiles into the church, arose from ignorance of the Scriptures, connected with national prejudices, pharisaical pride, and bigotry; which being early imbibed, were not easily removed even from true believers.

V. 44, 45. (Marg. Ref.) Thou shalt send, &c. (44) That is, in any just and necessary war; for God did not send the Israelites, when they were actuated by selfishness to engage in oppressive and unrighteous wars; neither could they reasonably expect his assistance in them. It does not indeed appear from their history, that they were much engaged in such wars; and many circumstances, arising from the tenure of their lands, and other judicial regulations, as well as their religious ordinances, tending to constitute Israel a nation of agriculturists, powerfully counteracted the pernicious natural propensity of fallen man, both rulers and people, to make war their favourite and most honourable employment.

V. 46-53. This concluding part of Solomon's intercession was evidently answered, in the restoration of the Jews after the Babylonish captivity. (Notes, Lev. 26:38-45. Deut. 4:29-31. Neh. 1:5-11. Jer. 29:11-14. Ez. 36:25-32.) Though the temple and city lay in ruins; yet whom

land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

48 And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause,

50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

51 For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron:

52 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.

53 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

54 ¶ And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

55 And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

56 Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

f Ezra 9:6,7. Neh. 1:8. 9:23-30. Ps. 106:6. Is. 64:6-12. Dan. 9:5-11. Zech. 12:10. g Job 33:27,28. Jer. 31:18-20. Luke 15:18. h Deut. 4:29. 6:5. Judg. 10:16. 1 Sam. 7:3,4. Neh. 1:9. Ps. 119:2,10,145. Prov. 23:26. Is. 55:6,7. Jer. 10:2. 24:7. 29:12-14. Dan. 9:13. Acts 37. Rom. 10:10. i See on 30. Jsa. 6:10. k 1 Sam. 10:4. l See on 30. m Or, *right*. 45. 2 Kings 19:19. Zech. 1:15,16. n 2 Chr. 30:9. Ezra 7:27,28. Neh. 1:11. 2:4-8. Ps. 106:46. Prov. 16:17. Dan. 1:9,10. Acts 7:10. n 53. Ex. 32:11,12. Num. 14:13-19. 1 Pet. 9:26-29. 2 Chr. 6:30. Neh. 1:10. Is. 63:15-18. 64:9. Jer. 51:19. o Deut. 4:20. Jer. 11:4. p See on 32. 2 Chr. 6:40. q Ps. 85:5. 145:18. r Ex. 19:5,6. 33:16. Num. 22:9. Deut. 4:31. 7:6-8. 14:2. 29:2. 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 1:1. s Deut. 32:9. Jer. 10:16. Eph. 1:18. t Deut. 33:1-3,26-29. u Luke 11:1. 22:45. v See on 2 Chr. 6:13. Ps. 95:6. Luke 22:45. Acts 20:36. 21:5. w See on 22. 2 Chr. 6:12. x See on 14. Num. 6:23-25. 2 Sam. 6:18. 1 Chr. 16:2. y See on 15. z Deut. 9:21. 12:10-12. Josh. 21:44. 2 Chr. 14:6. Heb. 4:3-9. a Josh. 21:45. 22:14,15. Luke 1:74,75. 7:3. 21:33. b Heb. *fallen*. 1 Sam. 8:9. 2 Kings 10:10. c Deut. 31:8,9. Josh. 1:5,9. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 32:7,8. Ps. 46:7,11. Is. 8:10. 41:10. Matt.

they bethought themselves, and repented, and prayed in the land of Chaldea, towards the land of Israel; the Lord heard, forgave, and restored them to their own land. (Notes, Dan. 9:1-19.) But it will hereafter receive another more remarkable answer, when the Jews shall be gathered from their present dispersion, become a part of the Christian church, and probably be reinstated in their own country.—All Solomon's arguments, in this plea for his people, were deduced from the Lord's choice of them, his separation of them from other nations to be his inheritance, and the favours which he had already conferred upon them; and all inseparably connecting their returning peace and prosperity, with their deep humiliation, true repentance, conversion, and fervent prayer. (Note, Zech. 1:29-14.)—It appears from Chronicles, that Solomon concluded with a passage taken from one of the Psalms. (Note, 2 Chr. 6:41,42.)—There is no man that sinneth not. (45) Notes, Ec. 7:19,20. Rom. 3:21-26. Jam. 3:1,2. 1 John 1:8-10. 3:4-6.

V. 55-61. (Notes, Josh. 21:43-45. 23:14-16.) *Incline, &c.* (58) No blessing can be expected whilst men continue wilfully disobedient. No human heart is of itself inclined to obey the call to repentance, faith, and newness of life, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. The first benefit communicated to sinners, through the intercession of him whom Solomon typified, is 'the inclining of the heart to this obedience.' 'Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law.' *Communion service.*—'As by thy special grace preventing us, thou dost put into our hearts good desires.' *Col. for Easter Sunday.*—'We have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we

57 The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:

58 That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.

59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:

60 That shall the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else.

61 Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62 ¶ And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord.

63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the Lord, two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord.

64 The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord: for there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings: because the brazen altar that was before the Lord was too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.

65 And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the Lord our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days.

66 On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

1:23. 26:30. Rom. 8:31. Heb. 13:5. c Ps. 110:3. 112:36. Cant. 1:4. Jer. 31:33. Ez. 36:26,27. Phil. 2:13. Heb. 13:21. d See on Deut. 4:1,45. 6:1. e Ps. 102:12. 114:1. 2 John 17:20-24. 1 John 2:2. f Heb. *the thing of a day in his day*. Luke 11:3. g Deut. 33:25. h See on 43. Josh. 4:24. 1 Sam. 17:46. 2 Kings 19:11. h 19:39. Deut. 4:35,39. Is. 44:6,5,24. 45:5,6,22. Jer. 10:10-12. Joel 2:27. 11:4. 15:3,14. Gen. 17:1. 2 Kings 20:3. 1 Chr. 28:9. Job 1:8. Ps. 37:27. 2 Cor. 7:1. Phil. 3:12-16. 12 Sam. 6:17-19. 2 Chr. 7:4-7. k Lev. 3:1. l 2 Chr. 29:21. 2 Chr. 15:11. 29:32-35. 30:24. 35:7-9. Ezra 6:16,17. Ez. 45:17. Mic. 6:7. 1 Num. 7:10,11,84-88. 2 Chr. 2:4. 7:5. Ezra 6:16,17. Neh. 12:27. John 10:22. m 2 Chr. 7:7. n 2 Chr. 4:1. o 2 Lev. 23:34-43. 2 Chr. 7:8,9. p 2 Chr. 30:13. Ps. 40:9,10. q 4:21,24. Num. 31:8. Josh. 13:5. Judg. 3:3. s 2 Kings 14:25. Am. 6:14. r Gen. 15:18. Ez. 23:31. Num. 34:5. Josh. 13:3. t 2 Chr. 7:8,9. 30:22. u 2 Chr. 7:10. 31:1. v Or, *thanked*. 1:47. v Deut. 12:7,12,18. 16:11. 2 Chr. 29:36. 30:26,27. Neh. 1:4. Ps. 95:1,2. 100:1,2. Is. 61:9,10. 66:13,14. Jer. 31:12-14. Zeph. 3:14. Zech. 9:9,17. Acts 2:46. Gal. 5:22. Phil. 4:4.

have that good will.' Art. x. This, therefore, we should beg of God for others, and for ourselves, when we perceive our need of it: for when this is granted all else will follow. Yet Solomon afterwards exhorted the people to be 'perfect with the Lord, &c.' (61) and this is the scriptural method, though to many it appears inconsistent: but the exhortation reminds men of their duty; and the prayer or promise shows how they may be enabled to do it. (Notes, Ps. 51:10. 110:3. Ez. 11:17-20. 18:30-32. 36:25-27. Phil. 2:12,13.)

V. 63-65. (Num. 7.) The sacrifices offered at the dedication of the tabernacle were very few, compared with the immense number here mentioned: but those were proportioned to the circumstances of the princes of Israel in the wilderness, these to the riches and power of king Solomon. (Marg. Ref. k.)—It is probable, that altars of earth, or of rough stone, were prepared all over the inner court. (Note, Ez. 20:21-25.)—All these sacrifices were not offered on the same day, but during the whole time of the solemnity; and the immense multitudes assembled feasted on the flesh of the peace-offerings.—The people separated on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, the day after the close of the feast of tabernacles; (2 Chr. 7:9,10.) so that the dedication of the temple must have preceded. And, as the great day of atonement was observed on the tenth day of the seventh month, it is not improbably conjectured, that the seven days of the feast of dedication preceded that solemnity; and that the people waited after it, to keep the feast of tabernacles also, before they returned home. (Notes, Lev. 16:29-31. 23:26-32,34-36.)—The brazen altar, &c. (64) Note, 2 Chr. 4:1.—From the entering in of Hamath, &c. (65) Marg. Ref. q, r.

V. 66. The people departed full of admiration of Solo-

CHAPTER IX.

God appears again to Solomon, and makes a covenant with him, 1-9. Transactions between Solomon and Hiram, 10-14. Solomon builds or rebuilds several cities, 15-19. He subjects the remnant of the Amorites to himself, and employs the Levites in more honourable offices, 20-23. Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house, 24. Solomon sacrifices thrice every year, 25. His navy fetches gold from Ophir, 26-28.

AND it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the

a 6:37,38. 7:1,51. 2 Chr. 7:11. b 2 Chr. 8:1-6. Ec. 2:4. c 11:19. Ec. 2:10. 6:9. d 3:5. 11:9. 2 Chr. 1:7-12. 7:12. e 2 Kings 20:5. Ps. 10:17. 66:19. 116:1.

mon's piety, wisdom, magnificence, and liberality; as well as of gratitude to the Lord for all his goodness: and they prayed most fervently for the king, being much enlivened by the sacred ordinance. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. When those in authority heartily and scripturally promote the cause of true religion, increasing numbers will soon be engaged in the cause: thus, the pious designs, which were conceived in a single breast, may, by the blessing of God, be completed with the concurrence and to the benefit of thousands, nay perhaps millions! and what a blessed improvement is this of authority, influence, affluence, and wisdom! Numbers indeed will assist on such occasions, to please their superiors, or to acquire reputation, or from secular motives, who are not cordially attached to the cause, and who will not profit by it themselves; yet, even they may forward such measures as conduce to the good of others.—True wisdom is displayed as much in the well timing, as in the orderly conducting, of important undertakings; and in obtaining the *voluntary* concurrence of others, where folly would deem it sufficient to employ superior power and constraint.—But without the gracious presence of the Lord, every religious observance is an empty form: the written word, the preaching of the gospel, prayer, baptism, and the Lord's supper, orthodox creeds, professions, speculations, and external order, form but a well-proportioned lifeless carcass: a temple without the ark, and without the glory; unless we in these things hold communion with a reconciled God upon a mercy-seat, through the person and work of the Redeemer, and by the influences of his sanctifying Spirit. This is the life and soul of true godliness, which infuses efficacy into every truth, ordinance, or duty; and in all things it should be chiefly attended to. (*Note, 2 Cor. 3:17,18.*) For, as far as this is attained, we, the believing servants of God on earth, hold fellowship with the church above; and, with all the company of angels and archangels, we worship the name of God our Saviour, with affection, and to his glory.

V. 10-21. When we wait upon the Lord in the ways of his appointment, we shall surely receive tokens of his special favour: yet his light is inaccessible to us: and the cloud, with which he veils his insufferable brightness, in his discoveries of himself to us, sometimes obstructs our view of his love, and causes us to tremble for fear of his judgments. The dark dispensations of Providence, the awful declarations of God's word, the apprehensions of his purity and justice, and the consciousness of guilt and pollution, often induce the awakened sinner to say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" when such views should quicken him in fleeing for refuge to the hope of the gospel. (*Note, Luke 5:1-11. P. O. 1-15, conclusion.*) On these occasions, those who are stronger in faith, and more advanced in knowledge and experience, should encourage their weaker brethren, and explain such things to them as needlessly alarm them: for the established believer can deduce comfort, and motives for thankful obedience, from that very darkness which dismays and confounds the inexperienced Christian. However, blessed be God, in the person of our Emmanuel, in his complete redemption, "the thick darkness," in which JEHOVAH dwells, is greatly dispelled: the dark cloud is become bright to us; (*Note, Matt. 17:5-8.*) and though, compared with the beatific vision, we "see though a glass darkly," yet, following him who "is the Light of the world," "we shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Yet in the most spiritual frame of heart of the most eminent believers, sacred joy, gratitude, and love, will be mixed with deep humility and reverential fear; and conscious guilt and pollution will connect self-abhorrence and godly sorrow, with their most fervent praises and adorations. We all are bound by the strongest obligations to use our utmost exertions for the honour of God: yet the most zealous believer will be conscious, that he has lost opportunities of service, through infirmity, temptation, and incurabilities. But when the Lord is not pleased to employ us in any work, which we sincerely design and vigorously attempt, he will notice and recompense the intention, even as much as if it had been accomplished. Let us then persevere in devising, and endeavouring to execute, plans of usefulness, though we be often baffled and unsuccessful; for it shall at last be declared, that we "did well that it was in our heart," and let sinners remember, that they also are accountable to God, and will be punished, for all the wickedness which was conceived in their hearts, though they were restrained in Providence, left destitute of the power, or deterred by the fear of man; and therefore did not actually commit it.—When the Lord's time arrives for any work to be done, all opposition

LORD, and the king's house, and 'all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do,

2 That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, 'as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

3 And the LORD said unto him, 'I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication that thou hast made before me: 'I have hallowed this house.

Dan.9:23. John 11:42. Acts 10:31. f 8:10,11. Ex.20:11. Num.16:38. Matt 6:9.

will die away, all difficulties vanish, and all things concur in forwarding its completion: and whatever good work we have been employed in, and enabled to effect, we should consider it as a performance of his promises, and as an occasion afforded of celebrating his praises, to whom alone all the glory belongs.

V. 22-30. The service of God is the highest honour of the greatest of men; and to lead others in prayer and praise, to animate and assist them in worshipping the Lord, forms the noblest employment on earth, and most resembles that of the angels in heaven. But indeed, the most exalted adorations of the noblest creatures are beneath the notice of his infinite majesty, and only accepted through his unspeakable condescension. With what internal awe, and external indications of reverence, should we, worthless sinners, prostrate ourselves before his glorious and holy majesty! How should we approach his mercy-seat with admiring, adoring gratitude, and humble expectation of his invaluable and most needed benefits! and how should faith and love exalt our souls above all external objects, and raise them to heaven, his dwelling-place, where He displays his glory, who fills immensity, and "inhabitieth eternity!"—But behold, he dwells in human nature, as in his temple! these sinners may see his glory and live: and when we pray in his name, directing our faith towards that sacred residence of the Deity, he will assuredly hear, and forgive our sins, and save our souls. His "name is Emmanuel;" "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

V. 31-45. It is a debt we owe to our brethren, neighbours, friends, and strangers, yea, to our enemies, to intercede for them as their cases may require. Having therefore such a multiplicity of persons, cases, and wants to spread before the Lord, our hearts should frequently be enlarged to pray copiously, as well as fervently: and we shall not be condemned for long prayers, if they be not *formal*, and rendered tedious by vain, unmeaning repetitions.—It is also a comfort to the believer to reflect, how many prayers of parents, ministers, and pious friends, are laid up before God on his behalf; and how many are now praying for him in one place or other. All these shall, in due time, be answered in blessings unnumbered: nay, even whole nations, through successive generations, have reaped the benefits of the fervent supplications of a single true believer. Such intercessors form the unseen strength and bulwark of kingdoms: may the Lord increase their numbers, and may we be found among them!—Yet the prayers of all the subjects would be unavailing, did not the King, our Prince of Peace, the Builder of the Spiritual Temple, intercede for them. His pleading is always prevalent, and gives efficacy to all the rest: yet neither the prayers of godly friends, nor even the Saviour's intercession, will benefit those who are never brought to pray earnestly for themselves. For he intercedes for those alone, who eventually are led to "believe in his name," and "who come to God by him:" and the prayers of his people, for such as continue impenitent and unbelieving, return into their own bosom. (*Note, John 17:6-10,20,21.*)

V. 46-66. We are alas! all sinners, and sin is the cause of all calamities public and personal; and unless forsaken and forgiven, it must terminate in final misery. But when the vilest transgressor bethinks himself, and examines his heart and life; when he is humbled before God, and penitently confesses that he has sinned, has done perversely, and committed wickedness; when he returns to the Lord with his whole heart, and prays unto him, in the Saviour's name: then he has begun to receive the benefit of his intercession, and the Father will hear in heaven his supplication, and maintain his cause. Then, whatever be his grief, his burden and terror, and "the plague of his own heart," the guilt of his conscience, the depravity of his nature, his evil habits, the force of temptation, or the pressure of affliction, he will bring it, and spread it in secret before a heart-searching and merciful God: thus he will obtain pardon and peace, and learn to love and fear the Lord all his days. In this manner the Israel of God is established and sanctified, and the backslider is recovered and healed; the stranger is brought nigh, and the mourner comforted: the name of God is glorified, and numbers are added to the church of such as shall be saved. Often did offending Israel in this way prove the mercy of God, when they sought him under their distresses; and there failed not one good word of all that he had promised them. But at length they wearied out his patience, and all his threatenings were accomplished: yet, even in their present dispersion, they will at length bethink themselves, and turn to God, as dwelling in his true Temple, and then they shall be numbered among his people. Oh, may they speedily be restored, that their conversion may be "as

which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.

4 And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

5 Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

6 But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:

7 Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a by-word among all people.

8 And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house?

9 And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them,

and served them: therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord, and the king's house,

11 (Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

12 And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not.

13 And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.

14 And Hiram sent to him the king sixscore talents of gold.

15 ¶ And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer.

16 For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife.

17 And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethoron the nether,

g See on 8:29. Deut. 12:5, 11, 21, 16:11. h Deut. 11:12. 2 Chr. 6:40, 7:15, 16, 18:13, 14. Cant. 4:9, 10. Jer. 15:1. 13:14, 8:25. 11:4, 6, 38. 14:8. 15:5. Deut. 28:1. 2 Chr. 7:17, 18. Job 23:11, 12. Ps. 15:2. 26:1, 11. Prov. 20:7. Zech. 3:7. Luke 1:6. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2. 2 Tim. 3:12, 16. 1 Chr. 22:10. Ps. 89:28—39. 122:11, 12. 11 Sam. 2:30. 2 Sam. 7:14—15. 1 Chr. 28:9. 2 Chr. 7:19—22. 15:2. m 1:14—10. Josh. 24:15, 16, n Lev. 1:24—28. Deut. 4:26. 29:25—28. 2 Kings 17:24—25. 25:9. Jer. 7:15. 24:9. Ez. 33:27—29. Luke 21:24. o See on 8. 2 Kings 26:9. 2 Chr. 7:29. 36:18. Jer. 7:4—14. 26:6, 18. 52:13. Lam. 2:6, 7. Ez. 24:21. Mic. 3:12. Matt. 24:2. Luke 21:24. p Deut. 28:37. Neh. 4:1—4. Ps. 44:14. Is. 65:15. Jer. 34:19. Lam. 2:15, 16. Joel 2:17. q 2 Chr. 7:21. Is. 64:11. Jer. 18:9. 49:17, 50:

life from the dead" to all nations, "that all the people of the earth may know," and worship our God and Saviour! "May the Lord our God be again with them, as he was with their fathers, . . . and incline their hearts unto him to walk in all his ways!"—By the example of Israel other nations should be warned and instructed: no war ought to be engaged in, which cannot be conducted in a spirit of faith and prayer: princes and nobles should set the example in the worship of God, and act accordingly: public calamities should excite to national repentance, reformation, and prayer: and these things would best secure public peace and prosperity. The same should be the conduct of churches, families, and individuals.—May "the Lord then incline our hearts unto him, that we may walk in all his ways, and keep his commandments and statutes" may we abound in his work, and stir up others to do the same: may we love the Lord, and do good to and pray for one another, and rejoice together for all the goodness that the Lord has done for us and for his people! Then shall we enjoy some of the days of heaven upon earth, and be continually preparing for that world, where the feast of holy love and joy will be unalloyed and eternal.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. Solomon did not finish his other buildings, till above twelve years after the dedication of the temple; (10. Note, 7:1.) and it is exceedingly improbable, that this gracious appearance of God to him was delayed so long. Some expositors therefore render these verses, "And it was, that thus Solomon finished," &c.—"And the Lord appeared," &c.—The two subjects are kept entirely distinct in Chronicles. (2 Chr. 7:11, 12.)—The encouragement given Solomon, while building the temple, (Note, 6:11—13.) was either sent by a prophet, or given in an answer by the high-priest: for this was only the second appearance of God to him. (Note, 3:5—14.)

V. 3. The Lord favourably accepted the temple, which Solomon had built and consecrated to him; and set it apart as holy, for the residence of his ark, the centre of his worship, the place of his altar and sacrifices, and the visible pledge of his gracious presence with Israel, so long as they adhered to his ordinances and commandments. (Notes, Deut. 12:2—7.) And he promised, "that his eyes and his heart should be there perpetually" (Notes, Deut. 11:12. Ps. 34:15—17. Jer. 15:1.) that is, he would regard it with peculiar attention and favour, and delight in doing good to those, who worshipped at, or towards, that holy place. (2 Chr. 7:12—16.) And had not the national sins of Israel forfeited the blessing, this would uninterruptedly have been the case until the coming of Christ.

V. 4—6. Solomon and his posterity, and Israel in that and future ages, were alike concerned in these promises and warnings. The obedience intended in all such declarations, is the *unreserved, though imperfect, obedience* of a penitent believer; by which he evidences his cordial acceptance of

13. Dan. 9:12. r Deut. 29:24. Jer. 22:8, 9, 28. s Deut. 29:25—28. 2 Chr. 7:22. Jer. 2:10—13, 19. 5:19. 16:10—13. 50:7. Lam. 2:16, 17. 4:13—15. Ez. 36:17—20. 1. 6:37, 29. 7:1. 2 Chr. 8:1. u See on 5:6—10. 2 Chr. 2:8—10, 16. v 2 Chr. 5:2. x See on Josh. 20:7. y Heb. were not right in his eyes. Num. 22:34. Judg. 14:3. margins. y 5:12. 2 Sam. 1:9. † That is, Displeasing, or dirty. Josh. 19:27. z 11:28, 10:10, 14:21. a 21. See on 5:19. b 10. 6:38. 7:1. 2 Chr. 8:1. c 24. 11:27. Judg. 9:6, 20. 2 Sam. 5:9. 2 Kings 12:20. d Josh. 11:1. 19:36. Judg. 4:2. 2 Kings 15:29. e 4:12. Josh. 17:11. Judg. 5:19. 2 Kings 6:27. 23:29. 30. 2 Chr. 35:22. Zech. 12:11. f 16:17. Josh. 10:33. 16:10. 21:21. Judg. 1:39. 1 Chr. 6:67. 20:4. g See on 24. 31. h Josh. 16:3. 21:22. 2 Chr. 8:5, 6.

unmerited mercies, and aims to glorify the God of his salvation. (Notes, Matt. 7:24—27. John 14:21—24. Rom. 2:7—11.)—The words "if ye shall at all turn," &c. certainly mean, "if ye altogether turn," &c. (2 Chr. 7:19.) and indeed not every sin, but national idolatry or apostasy, sanctioned by the example of the prince, or rulers, or tolerated by them, was intended: for this especially violated the national covenant, and forfeited all the covenanted blessings.

V. 7—9. These denunciations were remarkably fulfilled during the Babylonish captivity; but the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the state of the Jews to this very day, are the most extraordinary accomplishment of them. (Notes, Deut. 29:21—25. 2 Kings 25:8—10. Jer. 40:2, 3. Lam. 1:8—11. 2:15, 16. 4:13—16.)

V. 11—14. Hiram had furnished Solomon with timber, not only for building the temple, but also for his own house, and his many other magnificent works; and he likewise "had sent him a hundred and twenty talents of gold;" for that seems to be the proper construction of the fourteenth verse. Solomon therefore was indebted to Hiram, beyond the corn and wine and oil agreed upon; (Note, 6:11.) and he gave him twenty cities in Galilee as a compensation. They seem to have been small towns in the vicinity of Tyre, beyond the boundaries of the land, as divided by Joshua, and lately taken from the ancient inhabitants. Probably they lay in ruins.—Hiram, however, was not satisfied with them, and "called them the land of Cabul." (Marg.)—Perhaps, being accustomed to magnificence, and to acquire wealth by commerce, he had not the turn of mind for cultivating land; and finding the roads bad, the houses mean, and the country depopulated, he was not aware of the advantage which might be made of them. Solomon afterwards rebuilt them, and the Israelites dwelt in them; and probably Hiram was satisfied with some equivalent.

V. 15. The reason, &c.] That is, the occasion which there was for the levy, in order to accomplish so many great and magnificent works: or, the method in which it was raised, (Note, 5:13—18.)

V. 16, 17. The Canaanites kept possession of Gezer, a city in the lot of Ephraim, in the time of Joshua and the judges; but the inhabitants paid tribute to Israel. (Judg. 1:29. Note, Josh. 17:10.) It seems that they had continued in this state, till Pharaoh destroyed them, and burned the city; but on what account this was done, we know not. And he gave the site of the city, and the suburbs to his daughter: some think, at the time of her marriage to Solomon. Solomon, however, rebuilt the city, with several others, which probably were in a ruinous condition.

V. 18. Tadmor in the wilderness.] This is supposed to have been the same with the city Palmyra, the magnificent ruins of which, in the midst of widely extended plains of barren sands, attract the attention, and excite the admiration, of modern travellers and antiquarians. But the architecture

18 And [†]Baalath, and [†]Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land,

19 And all [†]the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and [†]that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

20 And all the people that were [†]left of the [†]Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel,

21 Their children [†]that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were [†]not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute [†]of bondservice unto this day.

22 But [†]of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: [†]but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.

23 These were the [†]chief of the officers that were

over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

24 [†]But [†]Pharaoh's daughter came up out of [†]the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build [†]Milko.

25 [†]And [†]three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and [†]he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD. [†]So he finished the house.

26 [†]And king Solomon [†]made a navy of ships in [†]Ezion-geber, which is beside [†]Eloth, on the [†]shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

27 And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon.

28 And they came to [†]Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

[†]Josh. 19:44. [†]2 Chr. 8:4. 14:26-28. Ex. 1:11. [†]Heb. the desire of Solomon which he desired. See on 1. Ec. 2:10. 6:9. m 2 Chr. 8:7, 8. n Gen. 15:19-21. Ex. 23:23-26. 34:11, 12. Deut. 7:1-3. o Judg. 1:21, 27-35. 2:20-23. 3:1-4. Ps. 106:34-36. p Josh. 15:53. 17:12-18. q 15. 5:13. Judg. 1:28, 35. r Gen. 2:23, 25. Erra 2:5-36. Neh. 7:57, 11:3. s Lev. 25:39. t 4:1-27. 1 Sam. 8:11, 11, 12. 2 Chr. 8:9, 10. u 5:16. 2 Chr. 2:18. 8:10. v 16. 3:1. 7:8. 2 Chr. 8:11.

of these ruins, being evidently Grecian, does not allow us to suppose that they are the remains of buildings erected by Solomon; for they must be of much later date.

V. 19. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 4:26.*) Perhaps the levy of service raised for the building of these cities, gave occasion to the complaint of the people after his death. (*Note, 12:4.*)

V. 20-22. It is probable, that these remains of the Amorites, and the other devoted nations, had submitted to Israel, and renounced idolatry; and so were spared on terms, not dissimilar from those formerly granted to the Gibeonites. (*Notes, Josh. 7:2. 9:3-5, 19-27.*)—They and their posterity seem to have been afterwards called "Solomon's servants," and thus to have been distinguished from the *Nethinim*. (*Note, Ezra 2:55-58.*)—By employing them in these laborious services, Solomon was enabled to exempt the native Israelites from all but the more honourable employments. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. *Notes, 5:13-18. 2 Chr. 8:10.*

V. 24. *Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Chr. 8:11.*

V. 25. Solomon observed the three great festivals with peculiar solemnity: yet he sacrificed at other times also; and "burned incense," not personally, but by the priests. (*Note, 2 Chr. 26:16-23.*)

V. 26-28. Solomon, possessing Ezion-geber, a seaport upon the Red Sea, (*Marg. Ref. e.*) which communicates with the Indian ocean; united with Hiram, whose subjects were skilled in navigation and commerce, and probably traded to some part of the East Indies; and this is perhaps as ancient and authentic an account of the East India trade, as any that is extant. (*Note, 10:22.*) Ophir is by many supposed to have been the island now called Ceylon: though various other opinions are advanced concerning it. (*Marg. Ref. h.*)—Four hundred and fifty talents are mentioned in Chronicles: but perhaps thirty talents were divided among the officers and seamen; so that only four hundred and twenty were paid into the treasury.

PRACICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayers which we make before him, and to manifest his acceptance of our upright services: and when we present ourselves, in body and soul, to be consecrated as the temples of the Holy Spirit, to his glory, he will hallow and sanctify us by his grace, and render us meet to be a holy habitation for himself; though before we were altogether polluted. (*Note, Eph. 2:19-22.*) In and through Jesus Christ, his eyes and his heart are always upon every true believer, to watch over him, and to rejoice in doing him good; yet it is only at intervals, that he manifests his presence, and lifts up the light of his countenance upon him: but in heaven we shall always behold his face, and be filled with unalloyed, uninterrupted felicity.—After all the services which we can perform, we stand upon the same terms with the Lord as before: nothing can purchase for us an exemption from obedience, or a dispensation to sin, in any case whatever: nor would the true believer desire such a license. Rather, in the integrity and uprightness of his heart, he longs for the entire mortification of every lust, and the increase of grace in his soul; and in his calmest moments would rather choose to be severely rebuked and "chastened of the Lord;" and thus kept from sin, or recalled from his wanderings, than be allowed to transgress with impunity and prosperity. As for those, who merely call themselves Christians, of every sect and creed, who make their forms and notions an excuse for breaking God's commandments, they will ere long be exposed to universal and everlasting contempt. For none will be so despised and miserable, either in this world or the next, as those who have continued wicked under the means of grace, who have apostatized from a religious profession, or who have made the truths and ordinances of God the cloak or the occasion of their iniquitous practices.—

y 2 Sam. 6:9. z 15. 11:27. 2 Chr. 32:5. a Ex. 23:14-17. 34:23. Deut. 16:16. 2 Chr. 8:12, 13. b Ex. 30:7. 1 Chr. 23:13. 2 Chr. 26:16-21. 29:11. 34:25. [†]Heb. upon it which was before. c 6:38. d 2 Chr. 8:16. e 2 Chr. 8:17, 18. e 22:48. Num. 33:35. Deut. 2:8. f 2 Kings 14:22. [†]Heb. *hip*. g 5:5, 8. 22:48. 2 Chr. 20:35, 37. h 10:11. Gen. 10:32. 1 Chr. 29:2. 2 Chr. 8:18. 9:10. Job 22:24. 28:16. Ps. 45:9. Is. 13:12. 12 Chr. 8:18.

The conduct of individuals, of churches, and nations, who are exposed to great calamities, when carefully considered, will always sufficiently answer the inquiry, "Why hath the LORD done this unto them?" Nay, even infidels and profligates frequently justify God in the punishment of unrighteous professors of religion, though not without casting unwarrantable scoffs and insults upon them.—Parents, who set their children good examples and give them good instructions, are warranted to hope, that their prayers for them will be answered, and the blessings of the covenant entailed upon them. (*Note, Gen. 18:18, 19.*) But the examples of those, whose sins are recorded in their punishment, may be equally instructive.—The present dispersed and despised state of the Jews is both a demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures, and a daily instruction and warning to us, not to trust in outward privileges, not to trifle with the commandments of God, and not to neglect the salvation of the gospel. We have indeed a better covenant, founded on better promises, than that made with the nation of Israel: but let us see to it, that it is really made *with us*; and that the law of God is written in our hearts, as the proof that our iniquities are forgiven. If this be the case, our persevering obedience, as well as our faith in the Saviour, is provided for; and the Lord "will put his fear into our hearts that we may never depart from him." (*Note, Jer. 32:38-41.*)

V. 10-28. In the world, and in the church, we all have need of each other, and should endeavour, according to our ability, to equal or to exceed the kindness of others to us: but we should not be surprised or discouraged, if our attempts be not acceptable even to our brethren. For men are, and will be, of different judgments and dispositions; and they may be allowed to differ in all temporal matters, and in some things which pertain to the worship of God: but as all believers come to the mercy-seat of their reconciled Father, by Christ the living Way, and through his propitiation, and intercession: and as they all choose and delight in the same spiritual excellency of heavenly things; in these respects, they must and will be of one mind and of one judgment.—High stations furnish abundant employment for men's hands and hearts; and it is wonderful, if those who fill them are not "careful and troubled about many things," to the neglect of "the one thing needful;" yet at last, all their magnificence and splendid achievements are vanity and vexation of spirit. Nothing is truly valuable, but in proportion as it is useful: and that is most valuable which promotes the salvation of souls. They however, who begin with the service of God, regulate their worldly employments according to the precepts of his word, and still adhere to his worship and ordinances, take the best measures for obtaining all desirable success in their undertakings. Their activity and ingenuity may be beneficial to others, and they may perhaps escape material harm themselves: yet it is hard to persevere in such a course: few can resist the fascinating temptations of great prosperity; it gradually fosters pride and sensual indulgence, and eats out the life and power of godliness: and most of those, who have risen to great honour and affluence, after having given satisfactory evidence of real godliness, have evidently shown that their souls were losers in proportion. Let the rich and prosperous, then, "rejoice with trembling," and take heed lest they forget the Lord; and let the poor and obscure be thankful for their safer condition! (*P. O. Deut. 8: latter part. Notes, 1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19. Jam. 1:9-11.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. Cush, the son of Ham, had a descendant called Seba, and it is probable, that he settled in Africa, to the south of Egypt. (*Note, Gen. 10:6, 7.*) Eber also had a descendant called Seba; and Abraham a grandson by Keturah, called by the same name. (*Gen. 10:28, 25:1-3.*) On these and other accounts, it has been controverted, whether the queen of Seba came from some

CHAPTER X.

The queen of Sheba comes to visit Solomon and to propose hard questions to him, 1, 2. He answers her questions; and she greatly admires his piety, wisdom, and magnificence, 3-9. Their presents to each other, 10-13. Solomon's yearly regnum, 14, 15. His golden targets and shields, 16, 17. His throne of ivory, 18-20. His rich vessels, and lucrative commerce; and the presents brought him, by such as came to hear his wisdom, 21-25. His chariots and horsemen, 26. The plenty of silver and cedar in his time, 27. Horses, chariots, and linen-yarn, brought out of Egypt, 28, 29.

AND when the queen of ^bSheba heard of the fame of Solomon ^aconcerning the name of the LORD, she came ^cto prove him with hard questions. 2 And she came to Jerusalem with ^da very great train, with camels that bare ^espices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she ^fcommuned with him of all that was in her heart.

3 And Solomon ^gtold her all her ^hquestions: there was not ⁱany thing ^jhid from the king, which he told her not.

4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all ^kSolomon's wisdom, and ^lthe house that he had built,

5 And ^mthe meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the ⁿattendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his ^ocupbearers, and his ^pascend by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; ^qthere was no more spirit in her.

[Practical Observations.]

6 And she said to the king, It was a true ^rreport that I heard in mine own land of thy ^sacts and of thy wisdom.

a 2 Chr. 9:1. Matt. 12:42. Luke 11:31. b Gen. 10:7, 28. 25:3. Job 6:19. Ps. 72: 10, 15. Is. 60:6. Jer. 6:20. Ez. 27:22, 23. 28:13. c 4 Chr. 2:1. d Job 28:28. Prov. 2: 3-6. John 17:17. 1 Cor. 1:20, 21. e Judg. 14:12-14. Ps. 49:4. Prov. 1:6. Matt. 13:11, 35. Mark 4:34. f 2 Kings 5:5, 9. Is. 60:6-9. Acts 25:23. g Ex. 23:6. 2 Kings 20:13. h Gen. 18:33. Job 4:2. Ps. 4:4. Luke 24:15. i 2 Chr. 9:2. Prov. 1:5, 6. 13:20. Is. 42:16. Matt. 18:11. John 7:17. 1 Cor. 1:30. Col. 2:3. j Heb. words. k See on 1:19. 2 Sam. 14:17, 20. Dan. 2:20-23. Heb. 1:12, 13. k 3: 23. 4:29-31. 2 Chr. 9:3, 4. Ez. 12:9. Matt. 12:42. 16: 7. Mat. 23:23. l Heb. standing. m Or, butlers. n 2 Kings 16:18. 1 Chr. 9:19. 2 Chr. 23:13. Ez. 44:3, 46: 2. o Josh. 5:1. 2 Chr. 9:4. p Heb. word. 2 Chr. 9:5, 5. marg. l Or, sayings. p Is.

part of Ethiopia in Africa, or from the most remote region of Arabia, near the Indian ocean, in Asia.—Tradition favours the former opinion, but then it is blended with manifest falsehoods. Our Lord says, "The queen of the south, came from the uttermost part of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon;" and Ethiopia is more distant from Jerusalem than any part of Arabia; but at the same time it does not so well answer the description, "the uttermost part of the earth." (Matt. 12:42.) Learned men are therefore now generally of opinion, that Sheba lay in the most southern part of Arabia Felix, between the Red Sea and the Indian ocean; that the queen of Sheba was descended from Abraham by Keturah, and retained some traditional fragments of true religion; and that she had heard the fame of Solomon from the mariners of the fleet to Ophir, which had put into some of her ports: and indeed the more general connexion, in which the name Sheba is used, in the subsequent part of Scripture, powerfully confirms this conclusion. (Marg. Ref. b.)—Our Lord's testimony to the motives which influenced the queen of Sheba, sufficiently refutes the disadvantageous surmises which have often been entertained and advanced. She "had heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD," and she came "to hear his wisdom." The report of his knowledge in the truth and precepts of religion, of his piety and zeal in the worship of JEHOVAH, and of the wisdom given him, peculiarly attracted her attention: and she came to propose many questions to him which perplexed her mind, upon those important subjects: she could meet with no one, who could clear them up to her; and she desired "to prove him," whether he could or not. This shows that she was used to reflect seriously upon religion; but for want of proper instruction, was not able to obtain satisfactory solutions of her difficulties: and considering her sex and rank, and the magnificence and indulgence in which she might have lived at home; her long journey, undertaken for these purposes, formed a strong proof of a pious and ingenuous mind, which knew the value of true wisdom, and was willing "to buy the truth" at any price. (Notes, Prov. 23:23. Acts 8:26-31.)—Her train and attendance were suited to her high rank; and many think, that the treasures, which she brought, serve also to mark out the region whence she came.—Hard questions. (1) חִידִּים: (from חָנָה *anigma loqui vel proponere*: translated a riddle; Judg. 14:12-18. *dark saying*, Ps. 49:4.—The plural, *dark sayings*, Ps. 78:2. *prov. 1:5*—Notes, Ps. 78:2. Prov. 1:6.

V. 3. With the books of holy Scripture, then extant, and the wise and understanding heart, which the Lord had given him, Solomon readily answered those questions that were most difficult to the queen of Sheba. He had prayed, that "all the people of the earth might know the name of the LORD, to fear him;" (8:43.) and he doubtless instructed her fully in those truths, which relate to the being and perfections, the authority, law, and worship of the one living and true God: in the nature, and meaning of the temple, altar, priests, and sacrifices, at Jerusalem; and in every other subject,

7 Howbeit ^aI believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen ^bit: and behold, the half was not told me: ^c"thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard."

8 Happy ^dare thy men, ^ehappy ^fare these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, ^gand that hear thy wisdom.

9 ^hBlessed be the LORD thy God, which ⁱde-lighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel. ^j"because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, ^kto do judgment and justice."

10 And ^lshe gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of ^mspices very great store, ⁿand precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

11 And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from ^oOphir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of ^palmug-trees, and precious stones.

12 And the king made of the almug-trees ^q"pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, ^rharps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug-trees, nor were seen unto this day."

13 And king Solomon gave unto the queen o. Sheba ^sall her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside ^tthat ^uwhich Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

[Practical Observations.]

6:4. Zeck. 9:17. Mark 16:11. John 20:25-29. 1 Cor. 2:9. 1 John 3:2. 1 Heb. Thou hast added wisdom and riches to the fame. q 2 Chr. 9:7, 8. Prov. 8:13. 14:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100. r See on 5:7. Ps. 72:17-19. s Ps. 18:19, 22:8. Is. 42:1, 62:4, 1 Deut. 7:8. 1 Chr. 17:22. 2 Chr. 2:11. a 2 Sam. 8:17, 23:3. Ps. 72:2. Ps. 8:15, 16. Is. 9:7, 11:4, 5, 32:1, 2. Jer. 23:5, 6. Rom. 13: 3, 4. y See on 2:14. Matt. 2:11. z Gen. 43:11. Ps. 39:31. y Prov. 3:13-15, 20:15. Rev. 21:11. z See on 9:7, 28. 2 Chr. 8:18. Ps. 46:9. a 2 Chr. 2:8. 9:10, 11. algum. ** Or, rails. Heb. a prop. b 1 Chr. 23:5, 25:1, &c. Ps. 92:1-3. 150:3-5. Rev. 14:2, 3. c 2 Chr. 1:20. 37:4. Matt. 15:28. John 14:13, 14. Eph. 3:20. 1 Heb. which he gave her, according to the hand of king Solomon.

which was essential to the acceptable worship of JEHOVAH. Her language also indicates that she profited by his instructions; and probably carried home with her the sacred Scriptures; and a large accession of profitable knowledge concerning true religion, for the benefit of her subjects. (Notes, Acts 8:36-40.)

V. 4, 5. Marg. Ref. His ascent, &c. (5) Some understand these words of a magnificent communication, which Solomon had prepared, between his palace and the courts o the temple, by which he and all his attendants regularly went up to worship the Lord. (Notes, 2 Kings 16:17, 18. Ez. 44: 1-3. 46:1-3.) Others suppose that they mean the sacrifices which he offered upon the altar: while others explain them of the cheerful and fervent solemnity with which he worshipped, showing that his heart was much engaged in the sacred service. The first indeed seems the true meaning; but however that may be, Solomon's wisdom and wealth, his magnificence, and his regular and prudent management of his numerous concerns, united with his exemplary piety, overpowered the queen's mind with astonishment; so that she was altogether overcome by it.—This event probably took place about the middle of Solomon's reign, at least before he began to turn aside to idolatry.

V. 6-9. Solomon's wisdom made a deeper impression upon the mind of the queen of Sheba, than all his prosperity and grandeur. She congratulated, and almost seemed to envy, the felicity of his servants. She had derived such benefit from her occasional conversation with him; that she considered those persons peculiarly favoured, though far her inferiors in rank, who continually enjoyed the advantage of his instructive discourse and wise counsels. She also very fervently praised God, for his love to Solomon and to Israel, in endowing him with such extraordinary wisdom, in raising him to the throne, and in blessing him with peace and prosperity, that he might rule over his people "in justice, and in judgment." These sentiments concerning the sovereignty and providence of God, the Giver of all wisdom and prosperity; his free and unfeeling love to his people; the duty of kings; and the happiness of those nations who are favoured with those that do their duty; together with her praising God for his love to his people, in which she cordially rejoiced, prove an understanding and pious mind, and must convince the reflecting reader that she returned home much benefited by her journey.

V. 11, 12. It is not known what kind of wood is intended by the words *almug-trees*, or *algum-trees*: but the specimen brought from Sheba would remain to posterity in the pillars, or rails, and the musical instruments, made of it. (2 Chr. 2: 8. 9:10, 11.)

V. 13. (Marg. Ref.) Besides the munificent presents, which Solomon, no doubt, unsolicited, conferred on the queen of Sheba; he also gave her all those things which she particularly requested: being, probably, such productions of Judah and the adjacent regions, as she had not seen in her own

14 ¶ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year ^awas six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,

15 Besides *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice-merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.

16 ¶ And king Solomon made ^ttwo hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target.

17 And *he made* three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went to one shield; and the king put them ⁱⁿin the house of the forest of Lebanon.

18 ¶ Moreover, the king made ^aa great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

19 The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was round* behind: and *there were* stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.

20 And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not ^{the}like made in any kingdom.

21 ¶ And all king Solomon's drinking vessels *were* of gold, and all the vessels of ^{the}the house of the forest of Lebanon *were* of pure gold; none *were* of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

22 For the king had at sea a navy of ^aTharshish

with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

23 So king Solomon ^{exceeded}all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

24 ¶ And all the earth sought ^tto Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

25 And they brought ^{every}man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, ^aa rate year by year.

26 And ^aSolomon gathered together chariots, and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed ⁱⁿin the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

27 And ^{the}king made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore-trees that *are* in the vale, for abundance.

28 And ^aSolomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

29 And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so for all ^{the}the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out by ^{the}their means.

^d See on 9:28. ^e 2 Chr. 9:13,14. Ps. 72:10. Is. 21:13. Gal. 4:25. ^a Or, captivities. f 14:26-28. 2 Chr. 9:15,16,12,9,10. g See on 7:2. h 2 Chr. 9:17-19. Is. 45:6. 110:1,122:5. Heb. 1:3-8. Rev. 20:11. i 22:32,39. Ps. 45:8. Ex. 27:6. Am. 6:4. Rev. 18:12. j Heb. on the hind-part thereof. k 1 Heb. hand. l Gen. 49:9. Num. 23:24,24:9. Rev. 5:5. § Heb. so made. m 12 Chr. 9:20-22. m 17:2. n Or, there was no silver in them. o 22 44. Gen. 10:4. 2 Chr. 9:21. 20:39,37. Ps. 48:7. 72:10. Is. 2:16. 23:1,6,10. 60:9. 66:19. Ez. 27:12. John 1:9. Tharshish. p Or, elephant's teeth. q Am. 3:15. o Job 39:13. p 9:12,13. q 30:31. 2 Chr. 9:22,23. Ps. 69:47. Eph. 5:8. Col. 1:15,19,2,2,3. ** Heb. the

force of. q See on 3:9,12,28. Prov. 2:6. Dan. 1:17. 2:21,23. 5:11. r 10. Judg. 3:15. 1 Sam. 10:27. s Sam. 8:2,10. 24:17,20. s Job 42:11. Ps. 72:10,15. Is. 30:16. Matt. 2:11. e 1:33. 18:5. Gen. 36:1. Erra 2:66. Eath. 8:10,14. Is. 66:2. Is. 37:11. e 2 Kings 17:4. 2 Chr. 9:24. q See on 4:26. 2 Chr. 1:14. 9:25. 14:7. r 2 Chr. 9:23. x 2 Chr. 1:15-17. 9:27. Job 22:24,25. y Heb. 2:11. z Heb. the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's. y Deut. 17:16. 2 Chr. 1:16,17. 9:28. Is. 31:1-3. 36:9. a Gen. 41:42. Prov. 7:16. Is. 19:9. Ez. 27:7. b Josh. 1:4. 2 Kings 7:6. § Heb. their hand. Hos. 12:10. Mal. 1:1. margins.

country. These would keep in her remembrance, when she arrived in her own kingdom, what she had seen and heard at Jerusalem.

V. 14, 15. Perhaps the kings of Arabia were induced, by the queen of Sheba's report and example, to pay court to Solomon and send him presents.

V. 16, 17. These targets and shields seem to have been intended principally for magnificence, and to be carried before the king on special occasions. (Notes, 7:2. 14:25-28.)

V. 18-20. Ivory is not mentioned in Scripture, till the time of Solomon, who doubtless imported it from India.—It cannot be supposed, that the ivory was entirely covered with gold; but rather inlaid with it, so as to add to its beauty.—The lions seem to have been intended not only for ornament, but as emblems of the courage and resolution, requisite in the impartial administration of justice; and they denoted that magistrates should be a terror to evil-doers, and the protectors of those who peaceably submit to their authority. Judah was compared by Jacob to a young lion; and our Lord is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." (Notes, Gen. 49:8,9. Rev. 5:5-7.)

V. 22. Many learned men have endeavoured to show that Tharshish was a city in Spain, called Tartessus; and some think that this navy, which Solomon had with the navy of Hiram, was distinct from that which traded to Ophir, and was fitted out from some port on the Mediterranean: and they account for the length of time taken up in each voyage, by supposing that a great part of it was employed in selling and buying, or bartering, the several articles of commerce.—But, whatever gold might be, ivory, apes, and peacocks, (or *parrots*, as some render the word,) do not seem to have been articles of trade in all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean.—Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold; but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-gaber."—"He joined himself with Ahaziah to make ships to go to Tharshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber. . . . And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tharshish." (Note, 22:48,49. 2 Chr. 20:35-37.) These passages, being decisive proofs that the ships of Tharshish, ships to go to Tharshish, were built at Ezion-gaber on the Red Sea, the learned Bishop Lowth, (having adopted the opinion that Tharshish was Tartessus in Spain,) says, "Tharshish is celebrated in Scripture for the trade, which Solomon carried on thither in conjunction with the Tyrians. Jehoshaphat attempted afterward to renew that trade; and from the account given of that attempt, it appears, that this fleet was to sail from Ezion-gaber on the Red Sea, and must therefore have designed to sail round Africa, as Solomon's fleet probably had done before: for it was a three years' voyage; and they brought gold from Ophir, probably from the coast of Arabia, silver from Tartessus, and ivory, apes, and peacocks, from Africa.—It is certain, that under Pharaoh-necho, about two hundred years after, this voyage was made by the Egyptians, &c. Ep. Lowth on Is. 21:3—

16.—But, with all deference to so eminent a writer, it must be allowed extremely improbable, that in regular voyages, for commerce, (not discovery, for which Pharaoh-necho's extraordinary expedition doubtless was undertaken,) such a circuitous course should be chosen; when, as far as we can learn, it was not then known that Africa was a peninsula! To fit out one navy at Ezion-gaber, for Ophir, whether in Arabia, or the East Indies, which might cost some parts of Africa; and to fit out another navy to Spain from some Mediterranean port, would be an obvious and compendious measure; but that the same ships should attempt the whole, and after taking in the far richest part of their freight, comparatively near home; should with it attempt to sail round Africa, in order to add silver, and some other articles of inferior value, at Tartessus, must strike every reflecting person as a most unparalleled proceeding.—To sail round Africa at that time, would be immensely more formidable than a voyage round the world at present: and a single glance at a map must convince any person, acquainted with commerce, that no man of common prudence would ever think of such a voyage for lucrative purposes.—Tharshish seems indeed, in some places, to mean Tartessus, or Tarsus, or some place connected with the Mediterranean; for Jonah embarked for Tharshish at Joppa; and Joppa is situated on the Mediterranean. Ships of Tharshish seem also sometimes to mean any large ships fitted out for long voyages. But in this place, and some others referred to, if the text be not corrupted, (which there is not the least reason to suppose,) Tharshish must mean some place in the East Indies, or bordering on the Indian ocean. (Note, 2 Chr. 9:13-21. v. 21.)

V. 24-27. (Notes, 3:5-14. 4:26-34.) These particulars were recorded, to show the faithfulness of God to the promises which he had made to David and to Solomon, whose reign typified the kingdom of the Messiah, in its peace and prosperity, and in the submission and willing services of princes and nations.—But Solomon was doubtless culpable in several respects, and his mind was gradually corrupted from its simplicity to excessive luxury and ostentation, which prepared the way for the awful departure from God recorded in the ensuing chapter. (Note, 2 Sam. 11:1-5.)

V. 28, 29. Solomon and Pharaoh seem to have traded together, by their merchants, to the exclusion of other persons. The price of the linen yarn, according to its quality, was fixed by contract. The price of a good chariot-horse also was fixed at about nineteen pounds sterling, and that of a chariot at seventy-five; and, in a contract, there is no absurdity in supposing that, the quality being described, a certain sum should be given for each, one with another. Besides those which were brought for the king's use, numbers were sold again, at a great profit doubtless, to the neighbouring princes: for Pharaoh reserved to his son-in-law the exclusive advantage of this lucrative trade. Some indeed suppose the stipulated sums to have been an exorbitant tax, laid by Pharaoh on all chariots, or horses, which were exported:

CHAPTER XI.

Solomon, having taken very many wives and concubines, even strange women, is in his old age seduced by them into idolatry, 1-8. The Lord threatens to rend the greater part of the kingdom from his family, 9-13. Solomon finds an adversary in Hiram the Edomite, who had been entertained in Egypt, 14-22; and in Rezon, who reigned in Damascus, 23-25; and in Jeroboam, to whom Aijah foretold that he should reign over ten tribes, and whom Solomon in vain attempts to kill, 26-40. Solomon dies and is buried, and Jeroboam succeeds him, 41-43.

BUT king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites:

2 Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you:

■ 8. Gen. 6:2-5. Deut. 17:17. Neh. 13:23-27. Prov. 3:16. 5:3-20. 6:24. 7:5. 22:14. 23:35. Or, besides. 3:1. Lev. 18:18. b Ex. 32:32, 33. 34:16. Deut. 7:5. 3:4. Josh. 23:12. Ezra 9:12. 10:2, &c. Mal. 2:11. c 16:31-33. Num. 25:1-3. Jude. 3:6, 7. 2 Chr. 21:5. 2 Cor. 6:14-16. d Gen. 2:24. 34:3. Jude. 16:4-21. 2 Chr. 19:2. Ps. 139:21. Rom. 1:32. 12:9. 1 Cor. 15:33. Rev. 2:4.

but the other seems the more probable way of explaining the passage. (*Marg. Ref. t, u. Notes, Deut. 17:16. Is. 31:1-3.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-5. Wisdom and piety are exceedingly valuable, and render men truly honourable; and those, who form a due estimate of their worth, will think no expense or labour too great to obtain them.—When we first attend seriously to religion, we shall meet with many “hard questions,” which we cannot resolve, and which will often perplex and distress our minds, especially if at a distance from proper instructions. But “then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD.” By waiting and prayer, by practising what we have learned, by diligently searching the Scriptures, and by consulting wise and experienced Christians, we shall be delivered from our difficulties, and a clearer light will shine upon our path. (*Notes, Prov. 4:18, 19. Is. 42:13-17. Hos. 6:1-3. John 7:14-17.*)—Those who possess wisdom and knowledge, ought to be courteous and accessible, and glad to communicate them for the good of others; even as the rich should be to impart their wealth.—Great wisdom and piety, in the midst of singular prosperity and grandeur, are very uncommon, and therefore excite the higher admiration. A good understanding will also be displayed, in the orderly and prudent regulation of domestic and secular concerns; so that propriety, and consistency with a man’s station and circumstances, will be visible to the attentive spectator; but our greatest diligence, constancy, seriousness, and cheerfulness, should be manifested, in attending on the ordinances of God; that our example may influence others to “serve him in reverence and godly fear.” This gives a lustre to wisdom, learning, wealth, or greatness: but alas! how few are ambitious of this honour that cometh from God! how little of this is seen in our princes, and nobles, and great men!

V. 6-13. The reports which we hear concerning the achievements and excellences of our fellow-creatures, or concerning any earthly glory, are seldom verified when we become acquainted with them. But there is a spiritual excellency in heavenly things, and in consistent Christians, to which no reports can do justice: and the better they are known, the more they will be esteemed and relished.—Those who delight in the company of wise men will become wise: and they are highly favoured, who have continual opportunity of conversing with persons of this character: yet frequently, such as have occasional interviews with them get more benefit than those do who are always with them.—All our comforts and prospects spring from the Lord’s love to us; he delights in the fruits of his own Spirit; and he communicates many good gifts to magistrates, ministers, and private Christians, out of love to his people, that they may be serviceable to them, and happy are they, who are governed and instructed by those, “in whom the Lord delighteth.” This indeed has hitherto been a very uncommon case; and many are ready to conclude that it never can become general: but the Scriptures assure us, that at length it shall be the privilege and felicity of every nation under heaven.—Whatever our station and endowments be, they are connected with correspondent duties; and we should take it kindly to be reminded of them, and excited to perform them with diligence and fidelity.—Reciprocal kindnesses cement friendship; and the wealthy should not willingly be outdone in generosity: but neither the company of God’s people, nor the ordinances of his house, should detain us from our proper place and employments, but should send us to them, prepared and disposed to discharge them with greater wisdom and conscientiousness.—Thus the awakened sinner, oppressed with perplexing difficulties, discouraging objections, and distressing fears, hears the report of the Saviour’s acts and wisdom, of his unsearchable riches and unfathomable love; but can scarcely believe the report. With trouble, self-denial, and the forsaking of many earthly things, he resorts by faith and prayer unto him, and is graciously encouraged and entertained: the Lord’s effectual teaching dispels his darkness and distress; he shows him his glory and grace, he satisfies him with the provisions of his house, and enriches him from his treasures of “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” The rejoicing believer no longer glories in himself, and his own attainments:

for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

e Judg. 8:30, 31. 9:5. 2 Sam. 3:2-5. 5:13-16. 2 Chr. 11:21. Ec. 7:28. f 42:6. 1:9, 10. 14:21. g See on c. 2. Deut. 7:4. 17:17. Neh. 13:26, 27. h 6:38. 6:12, 13. 8:51. 9:4. 15:3, 14. 2 Kings 20:3. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:19. 2 Chr. 17:3. 25:2. 31:20, 21. 34:2. 1:33. Judg. 2:13. 10:6. 1 Sam. 7:3, 4. 12:10. 2 Kings 23:13. Jer. 2:10-13. k 7. Lev. 18:21. 30:2-5. Malch. Zeph. 1:5. Malcham.

nor is he terrified, though humbled with the consciousness of his own guilt and pollution. The person, the character, the love of Jesus attract and engross his admiring attention, while they confirm his lively hopes of salvation: and he finds by experience, that the half was not told him of his excellency and preciousness. He now congratulates the felicity of the meanest servant of the Redeemer, but especially that of those above, who always behold his face and do his will.—He blesses the Lord for his love to Israel, in giving them such a Prince and Saviour, and yields up himself both to be ruled and saved by him: and though Jesus needs not, and is not enriched by, all that he can render to him; yet he devotes his riches and talents to his service, and they are graciously accepted, and recompensed with all that he can desire: yea, of his royal bounty, our Prince of Peace gives more than any petitioner is able to “ask or think.” The believer, who has thus been with Jesus, will return to his station in society, to discharge his duty, with new alacrity, from purer motives, and to nobler purposes: yet he will still look forward to the day, when, being “absent from the body, he shall be present with the Lord.” And when his transient glimpses of the Saviour’s glory, which overpower him with admiration, shall be exchanged for uninterrupted vision, with faculties enlarged, and strengthened to endure and delight in that ineffable refugency. But who can express or conceive aright of that state of felicity? Every enraptured spirit will then confess, that the thousandth part of what is there enjoyed never reached his ear, nor was thought of in his most delightful moments upon earth.—Oh, may the writer, and every reader of these observations, aspire after that unutterable felicity, and at length rejoice in it together! “Behold a greater than Solomon is here.” Even upon earth he is present in his word, his ordinances, and on his throne of grace; and will be found of all who seek him uprightly.—But “the queen of the south will rise up in judgment with the men of this generation” also. “She came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon:” but they will not arise from their beds, or go out of their houses, or even open their Bibles, to learn the wisdom of the Son of God! they will not put themselves to the least inconvenience to receive his instructions, and seek his salvation! (*Note, Matt. 12:41, 42.*) Yea verily, this example shames every one of us; for we are all guilty of undervaluing our mercies, and of slackness in attending on the means of grace. Let then the careless and the infidel take warning, for evil is before them: let the negligent “strive to enter in at the strait gate,” lest he should be found without when the door is shut: let the drooping inquirer be encouraged, for poor sinners of the Gentiles are welcome to Christ: and let us all sit at his feet, hear his word, and wait for his salvation: and, by reporting his praises, and doing his will, let us endeavour to recommend him to our fellow-sinners on every side.

V. 14-29. They have the most comfort in worldly things, (though seldom the largest share of them,) who expect least from them, and decidedly prefer wisdom and grace, and who devote the best of all which they have to the Lord; for his largest promises, general and particular, shall surely be performed to those who trust and serve him. But alas! what are worldly wealth and prosperity? They can only procure luxuries, embellishments, and curiosities, which add nothing to the real enjoyment of life: abundance creates satiety, and what is had in plenty is nothing accounted of. Such possessions always multiply cares and temptations: and they generally undermine humility and heavenly-mindedness; and eat out the life of religion by leading to sensual indulgence, avarice, ostentation, or the pride of life. But the spiritual peace, riches, and abundance of the Redeemer’s kingdom, are of another nature: they satisfy, but never satiate; while they sanctify the soul, and strengthen it to resist temptation, and to mortify every fleshly lust.

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1-8. We have not a more melancholy and astonishing instance of human depravity, in the sacred Scriptures, than that recorded in these verses. He, who was named “Jedidiah,” *Beloved of the LORD*, and who early in life is declared to have “loved the LORD” (*Notes, 3:2, 3. 2 Sam. 12:24, 25.*)—he, who had been favoured with such special tokens of God’s favour, and had received such

6 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

7 Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.

8 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

[Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice,

10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

11 Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the

kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

12 Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

13 Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

14 ¶ And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom.

15 For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom;

16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:)

17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child.

* Heb. fulfilled not after. Num. 14:24. Josh. 14:8,14. Heb. 1 Lev. 26:30. Num. 33:52. 2 Kings 21:23, 23:15,14. Ps. 78:58. Ex. 20:26,30. m Num. 31:28. Judg. 11:24. Jer. 48:13. n Deut. 13:14,17,34. 27:15. Is. 44:19. Ez. 18:12. Dan. 11:31. 12:11. Rev. 17:4,5. o 2 Sam. 15:30. Zech. 14:4. Matt. 26:30. Acts 1:9,12. p See on 1. Ez. 16:22-29. Hos. 4:11,12. 1 Cor. 10:11,12,21-22. q Ex. 4:14. Num. 12:9. Deut. 3:26. 9:3,20. 2 Sam. 6:7. 11:27. 1 Chr. 21:7. Ps. 68:30-30,7,8. r See on 2,3. Deut. 7:4. Prov. 4:23. Is. 29:13,14. Hos. 4:11. 2 Tim. 4:10. a 3:5, 9,2. 16:12,13. 9:4-7. 2 Chr. 7:17-22. 1 Heb. is with thee. u 31. 12:15,16. Num. 14:23,35. 1 Sam. 2:30-32. 13:13,14. 15:26-28.

2 Sam. 12:9-12. v 21:29. 2 Kings 20:19. x 9:4,5. Gen. 12:2. 19:29. y See on Ex. 20:5. z 2 Sam. 7:15,16. 1 Chr. 17:13,14. Ps. 89:33-37. a 35:36. 12:20. b See on 11:19,32. Deut. 9:5. 2 Kings 13:23. 19:34. Ps. 89:49. 182:1,17. Is. 9:7. Jer. 33:17-26. Luke 1:32,33. c Deut. 12:5,11. 2 Kings 21:4. 22:27. Ps. 132:13,14. Is. 14:32. 62:1,7. Jer. 33:15,16. d 12:15. 1 Sam. 26:15. 2 Sam. 24:1. 1 Chr. 5:26. Is. 10:5,26. 13:17. e 2 Sam. 7:14. Ps. 89:30-34. f 2 Sam. 8:14. 1 Chr. 18:12,13. Ps. 60: title. 108:10. g Gen. 25:23. 27:40. Num. 24:18,19. Mal. 1:2. 3. h Num. 31:17. 1 Ex. 2:1-10. 2 Sam. 4:4. 2 Kings 11:2. Matt. 2:13,14.

answers to his prayers:—he, who had been honoured to build the temple, and was so enlarged in supplication when it was dedicated:—he, who was renowned throughout the earth for his wisdom and piety, as well as his wealth and prosperity:—he, who was employed as an inspired writer, whose name is affixed to a part of the oracles of God; who had given such excellent counsels and warnings to others, and was so illustrious a type of Christ:—even he apostatized, and became a public and shameful worshipper of abominable idols, to the disgrace of his understanding, as well as the scandal of his profession!—It is probable, that his declension was gradual: he was perhaps elated with spiritual pride, as well as induced by his prosperity to indulge in luxury and ostentation: or perhaps, he deemed it unnecessary for one of his wisdom and ability, and of his rank and authority, to restrict himself by those rules, which were needful or salutary to inferior persons, as if he were secure from those evils which they were intended to prevent! He first multiplied horses, and caused the people to go down into Egypt for that purpose; then he greatly multiplied gold and silver, contrary to the law of Moses; (Notes, 24:24-29. Deut. 17:16,17.) not as his father had done, for the service of the sanctuary, but for the increase of his own splendour. Thus, the barrier was broken through, and the fervour of his piety abated.—After the example of his father, he married several women, and added one to another, more and more rapidly, till he had got together an immense number of wives and concubines. And he doubtless might argue, that if it was lawful to have two wives, why not many? and in his case, who could maintain them all, they might not be inexpedient, and would add to his magnificence and royal dignity. Probably, Pharaoh's daughter, whom he first married, was a real convert; (for we find no temples built to the gods of Egypt;) and this might induce him to take more wives of the heathens, flattering himself, that his wisdom and example would prevail with them also to embrace the worship of JEHOVAH. Thus he proceeded, till perhaps persons were employed to collect from every part of his kingdom, but especially from the subjected nations, every beautiful woman whom they found, without regard to her religion. Those of superior rank seem to have been numbered among his wives, and styled princesses; while the inferiors were his concubines, with inferior privileges. (Note, Gen. 25:5,6.) Towards the close of his life, when he was above fifty years of age, he grew more addicted to his women than before; and spending much time in their company, he doubtless in a degree neglected both the worship of God, and the affairs of his kingdom: and perhaps the enormous expense, which their extravagance occasioned, rendered those burdens requisite, of which the people afterwards complained. (Note, 12:4.) But the evil did not stop here: for his women gained still greater ascendancy over him, and gradually prevailed with him to connive at their idolatries, to oblige them by building idolatrous temples, and at length to join with them in their abominable worship! When one had been thus gratified, there could be no peace, unless the others were obliged in the same manner; and therefore he did this for all his strange wives.—Those who have noted in history, or in society, the effects of the influence of inveigling women over the greatest and wisest of men, will readily perceive that matters were speedily in a train; and that it was almost impossible, without an immediate divine interposition, that Solomon should stop short of this extreme folly and wickedness, when he had once suffered himself to be entangled in the fatal net. (Notes, Judg. 16:4-21.) The inspired historian, there-

fore, quotes the prohibition of marrying strange women, with the annexed consequence, "Surely they will turn away you. heart after their gods:" to show that no eminency of wisdom, or firmness of resolution, will secure any man; when in a careless or self-confident spirit he presumes to violate God's commandments, and thus to run into temptation. Of this Solomon formed a most striking proof. (Marg. Ref. b, c. Notes, Ez. 34:11-17. Josh. 23:11-13. Neh. 13:23-30.)—David had committed several heinous sins, but he had repented, and humbled himself for them: and he had still adhered to the worship of JEHOVAH, and never in the smallest instance set the people an example of idolatry, or given any connivance to that greatest of all abominations, that open treason against the king of heaven, and violation of the national covenant with Israel. But Solomon's heart was not thus "perfect with the LORD his God;" and "he went not fully after the LORD" (Marg. Ref. h.)

V. 9-11. The Lord had twice appeared unto Solomon, in the most condescending and encouraging manner; and on the last occasion he had solemnly warned him of the consequences of disobedience, especially of idolatry. (Notes, 3:5-14. 6:11-13. 9:3-9.) This aggravated his offence: and it is probable, that God sent this awful message by a prophet; as refusing to appear again to him after his ingratitude for his former gracious appearance to him.

V. 12, 13. The sentence, however, should not be executed during his life, but immediately after his death. (Note, 21:27-29.) Benjamin was so connected with Judah, that together they were but as one tribe, and therefore it is not here particularly mentioned. As a punishment of Solomon's sin, the other ten tribes would be rent from his son: (Notes, 29-32. 12:19,20. 1 Sam. 15:27,28.) but in performance of the promises made to David, and in a gracious recompense for his obedience; and to maintain the worship of JEHOVAH at Jerusalem, which he had chosen, God would continue the tribe of Judah under the government of Solomon's posterity.—Even the mitigations of the sentence were suited to humble and afflict Solomon. Nothing was done for his sake, but all for his father's. (Notes, Gen. 19:27-29. 1 Sam. 2:30.) It is very probable, that this message brought him to himself, and led him to repentance. 'This was enough to astonish any man, to hear that all his splendour should be so soon eclipsed, if he were not perfectly stupefied, and it is likely it did make him reflect on his folly; and, as many think, moved him to write the book of Ecclesiastes.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 14. As the opposition which Hadad made to Solomon accorded to the Lord's secret design of punishing him, and was overruled for that purpose, he is said to have "stirred him up;" though it is evident Hadad was instigated by his own ambition and resentment. (Notes, 1 Sam. 26:17-19. 2 Sam. 24:1,2. Jam. 1:13-15.)

V. 15, 16. These particulars are not recorded in the preceding history. (Marg. Ref. f.)—As the Edomites afterwards continued a people, either some particular district only was treated with this severity, or numbers escaped from Joab and his men.—Unless some very peculiar cause required it, this military execution cannot be justified.—To bury the slain. (15) The Israelites, who had been slain in the contest, as many think.

V. 17-22. (Marg. Ref. g.) After the death of David and Joab, Hadad returned to Idumea, in hopes to excite disturbances before Solomon's authority was established: but he seems to have been disappointed and restrained till after:

18 And they arose out of ⁴Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him a house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

19 And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of ⁴Tahpenes the queen.

20 And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

B. C.] 21 And when Hadad heard in Egypt that 1055.] David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, 'Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.'

22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, 'But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, 'Nothing: howbeit, let me go in any wise.'

23 ¶ And ⁴God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah:

24 And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah; and they went to ⁴Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.

25 And he was an adversary to Israel ⁴all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief that Hadad did: and he ⁴abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 ¶ And ⁴Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ⁴an Ephrathite of Zereda, ⁴Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king.

[Practical Observations.]

27 And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: ⁴Solomon built Millo, and repaired ⁴the breaches of ⁴the city of David his father.

28 And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man

that he ⁴was industrious, ⁴he made him ruler over all the charge of ⁴the house of Joseph.

29 And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet ⁴Ahijah the ⁴Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field:

30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces:

31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces; for ⁴thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

32 (But ⁴he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

33 Because that ⁴they have forsaken me, and have worshipped ⁴Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.

34 Howbeit, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.

36 And unto his son will I give one tribe, that ⁴David my servant may have a ⁴light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign, according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

38 And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

k Gen. 25:24. Num. 22:4. 25:6, 14, 18. 1 Gen. 14:6. 21:21. Num. 10:12. Deut. 1:1. 33:2. Hab. 3:3. m Gen. 39:1, 21. Acts 7:10, 21. n Jer. 43:7—9. o Gen. 21:7. 1 Sam. 1:24. p 2:10. Ex. 4:19. Matt. 2:23. * Heb. Send me away. Gen. 45:24. Job. 2:21. 1 Sam. 9:26. 2 Sam. 3:21. q Jer. 2:31. Luke 22:35. † Heb. Nor. r 2 Sam. 18:22, 23. Ps. 37:8. Mark 14:31. s See on 14. 2 Sam. 16:11. Ezra 1:1, 5. Is. 13:17. 37:26. 45:5. Ez. 34:16. t 2 Sam. 8:3. 10:15—18. 1 Chr. 18:3—9. 19:6, 16—19. ⁴He tore away. Ex. 6:6, 12. u 19:15, 30, 34. Gen. 14:15. Acts 2:2. x 5:4. 2 Chr. 15:2. y Gen. 31:30. Deut. 33:7. 2 Sam. 16:21. Ps. 106:40. Zech. 11:8. z 11:28. 12:20, &c. 13:1. &c. 14:16. 15:30. 16:3. 21:22. a Gen. 35:16. Ruth 1:2. 1 Sam. 1:1. 17:12. 1 Chr. 2:19. b 9:22. 2 Chr. 13:6. c Gen. 20:11. Prov. 30:32. Is. 28:11. d See on 9:15, 24. f Heb. closed. Am. 2:11. e Neh. 4:7. Ps. 60:2. Is. 22:9. Ez. 13:5. f See on 2 Sam. 5:7. g Heb.

did work. Prov. 22:29. g 5:16. † Heb. burden. Deut. 1:12. Is. 14:25. Matt. 11:30. h Josh. 18:5. Judg. 1:22, 23. 2 Sam. 19:20. Am. 5:6. Zech. 10:6. 1 Chr. 15:14, 2. 2 Chr. 9:29. k Josh. 18:1. 1 Gen. 4:8. 2 Sam. 14:6. m 1 Sam. 15:27. 28. 24:4, 5. n See on 11:2. o See on 12:20. p See on 13. q 8:14. 6:12, 13. 9:5—7. 1 Chr. 28:3. 2 Chr. 15:2. Jer. 2:13. r See on 5—8. s See on 12, 13, 31. Job 11:6. Ps. 103:10. Hab. 3:2. t 12:15—17, 20. 2 Chr. 10:15—17. u 15:4. 2 Sam. 7:16, 29. 21:7. 2 Kings 8:19. 2 Chr. 21:7. Ps. 132:17. Jer. 33:17. Am. 9:11, 12. Luke 1:69, 70, 78, 79. Acts 15:16, 17. † Heb. lamp, or, candle. s See on 13. 9:3. Gal. 4:25, 26. Heb. 12:22. Rev. 21:10. y 26. Deut. 14:86. Zech. 9:21. z 3:14. 6:12. 9:4, 5. Ex. 19:3. Deut. 15:5. Zech. 3:7. a See on Deut. 31:8. Josh. 1:5. b 14:7—14. 2 Sam. 7:11, 16, 26—29. 1 Chr. 17:10, 24—27.

Solomon's idolatry; when he perhaps attempted to seize the kingdom of Edom, and molested Solomon all the rest of his reign.

V. 23—25. When David had defeated Hadadezer, Rezon collected a company, over whom he became a captain; and it is probable, that for a long time they lived by plunder: for ⁴David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus' (Notes, 2 Sam. 8:3—8.) but at length Rezon found an opportunity of seizing Damascus, and usurping the kingdom of Syria.—He had indeed abhorred Israel from the first; but probably he did not openly appear as Solomon's adversary, or do him any injury, till Solomon had provoked the Lord by his idolatries. (Note, Prov. 16:7.)

V. 26—28. (9:15, 24. Notes, Judg. 9:16—20, v. 20. 2 Sam. 5:9.) Jeroboam, having been employed in superintending the builders at Jerusalem, so distinguished himself by capacity and industry, that Solomon preferred him to a post of considerable authority and influence. He either placed him over the tribute collected from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, or made him superintendent of the levy sent from them by courses to assist in his works. (Note, 5:13—18.)—This advancement, probably from a low situation, opened vast prospects to his ambitious mind: and he seems to have excited and encouraged the discontent of the people, on account of the burdens laid on them. Perhaps he was plotting an open revolt; at least he joined the disaffected party: and thus he might be said to 'lift up his hand against the king'; though his designs were not carried into effect till after Solomon's death.

V. 29—32. (Marg. Ref. Note, Acts 21:7—14.) The meaning of the emblematical action, here recorded, seems to imply, that 'the new garment' belonged to the prophet, not to Jeroboam; though many expositors suppose the contrary. The division of the kingdom took nothing from Jeroboam, but gave the dominion over ten tribes to him. (Note, 12, 13.)—

Some think that the rending of the garment, into twelve pieces, represented also the subsequent divisions and distractions which prevailed in Israel.

V. 33. Induced by Solomon's example, and to obtain his favour, it seems that the people had generally joined in his idolatry; and the punishment inflicted on him and his posterity involved them in manifold and heavy calamities.

V. 34—36. (Notes, 12, 13. Gen. 18:19, 26:2—5.) 'This was an admonition to Jeroboam not to molest Solomon in his lifetime, by raising rebellion against him; and also to walk in God's way, as David did, and not to fall into idolatry.'

Bp. Patrick.

A light, &c. (36) It was the purpose of God that David's family should still continue illustrious; and be the instruments of preserving the light of true religion in Jerusalem; as well as types of Christ, 'the Light of the world.' (Notes, 15:4, 5. Ps. 89:19—37. 132:17. Is. 9:6, 7.)

V. 37. Thy soul desireth. It is probable, from this expression, that Jeroboam secretly aspired to the kingdom. But neither the designs of God nor this declaration by the prophet excused his ambition and rebellion. David, long after he had been anointed to the kingdom, was faithful to Saul, and was not driven by persecution to attempt aught against him: nor would he even seize the vacant throne, till called to it by the voice of the people. (Notes, 1 Sam. 24:4—7. 26:8—12. 2 Sam. 2:4. 5:1, 2. 2 Kings 8:14, 15.)

V. 38. And build thee, &c.] Notes, 2 Sam. 7:6—16. Distrusting this express conditional promise, Jeroboam endeavoured to establish his authority by disobedience; and thus he forfeited the kingdom as to his posterity, and brought ruin upon them, and incalculable mischiefs on Israel. (Notes, 12:26—31. 14:5—16. 2 Chr. 13:4—12.)

V. 39. Three alleviations of the denounced judgments are mentioned. They would not happen in Solomon's days:

39 And I will for this 'afflict the seed of David, but 'not for ever.

40 Solomon 'sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto 'Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 And 'the rest of the 'acts of Solomon, and

c 12:16, 13:8, 25:23, Ps. 99:38—45, 49—51. d See on 36, 1s. 7:14, 9:7, 11:1—10. Jer. 23:5, 6. Luke 1:32, 33, 2:4, 11. e 2 Chr. 16:10. Prov. 21:30. 1s. 14:24—27. 43:10. 1 Am. 3:37. f 14:25, 26. 2 Chr. 12:2—9. g 2 Chr. 9:29, 30. * Or, words.

therefore Jeroboam ought by no means to have attempted any thing against him: the whole kingdom was not to be taken from Solomon's posterity; therefore Jeroboam must not expect to subject Judah and Benjamin; and the affliction was not to be for ever; which seems especially to refer to Christ and his everlasting kingdom.

V. 40. There is nothing in the original for *therefore*; it is simply "And Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam." It does not appear that he did this because of *Ahijah's prophecy*, which would have been an instance of most infatuated rebellion against God, and utterly inconsistent with repentance; but because of *Jeroboam's subsequent misconduct*, who perhaps divulged and boasted of the promise, and "lifted up his hand against Solomon;" which implies an attempt to raise rebellion in his lifetime. (26)—It is probable that Shishak was the successor of Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon had married; but perhaps of another family and interest. He is the only king of Egypt hitherto called by his proper name; all before him being known by the general title of Pharaoh. He is also thought to have been the Sesostris of pagan history. (Notes, 14:25—28. 2 Chr. 12:2—11.)

V. 41. In the book, &c.] Some annals, or records, of Solomon's life and reign, more copious than the account here given; from which such extracts were made, as were needful for edification. (Preface to 1 Kings. Notes, 14:19. 1 Chr. 29:23, 30.)

V. 42, 43. Solomon was the only king who reigned so long as forty years over all Israel: yet he was not above sixty years of age when he died, and perhaps he had injured his constitution by indulgence.—We are not here informed, whether he repented before his death, or not: and this silence is a warning to every one of us, not to yield to temptations, lest we should leave the world in uncertainty, and be condemned as hypocrites in the consciences of God's people. But this silence in the book of Kings no more *proves* that Solomon did not repent, than the silence of the book of Chronicles *proves* that he did not commit idolatry. I would not indeed decide upon so controverted a point with unhesitating confidence: yet the book of Ecclesiastes seems fully to show, that he repented, and publicly declared that repentance before his death. (Note, Ec. 7:23—28.) We are not however much interested in the solution, as some suppose; for the doctrines of Christianity must be proved by "the sure testimony of God," and not by particular examples: for we are not sufficiently acquainted, either with the real character of men, or with their final doom; to decide on this ground. If Solomon did not repent, he doubtless perished, notwithstanding all his previous zeal, important services, and eminent endowments: for no part of Scripture gives reason to suppose that any who die in unrepented wickedness are saved. Many indeed think that this supposition would prove all his profession of religion to have been hypocritical; and this conclusion does not well accord to his name *Jedidiah*, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, that he "loved the LORD." (Notes, Ez. 3:20, 21. Heb. 10:35—39.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. We are repeatedly reminded, by the examples of the most eminent men, that no abilities or endowments; that no illustrious services, fervent affections, or vigorous resolutions; that nothing inherent in man, forms in itself any security against the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, or may be depended on as sufficient to preserve him from the commission of the most atrocious crimes.—Men of superior understanding find it far easier to lay down excellent rules for the conduct of others, than to reduce them to practice in the constant tenor of their own lives.—(Notes, Prov. 1:9.) For alas! they often fall into the same pit, and are caught in the same snare, against which they have repeatedly warned others; and sometimes are guilty of things as absurd and foolish as they are wicked. Nay, old age itself will not eradicate from the heart any evil propensity. The habit of indulgence in fleshly lusts will more than counterbalance the effect of nature's decay: and if our sinful passions be not crucified and mortified by the grace of God, they will never die of themselves, but will subsist and rage when every opportunity of gratification shall be taken away.—Thus we are taught to "cease from man," and to watch and be sober: for ours is a dangerous warfare in an enemy's country, while "the worst of our foes are the traitors which occupy our own hearts."—We all *naturally* desire prosperity and pre-eminence; yet in general these operate as fatal poisons to the soul. And when we allow of one inordinate or inexpedient indulgence, we give energy to all our passions, and to every temptation of Satan. Not only will the same inclination grow more importunate; but others also, like humoured children, will expect to be gratified in their turn: while self-

all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they now written in the book of the acts of Solomon?

42 And the 'time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was 'forty years.

43 And Solomon 'slept with his fathers, and was 'buried in the city of David his father: and 'Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

or, things. † Heb. days. h 2:11. i 1:21, 14:20, 15:8, 24, 16:6. Deut. 31:16, 2 Kings 16:20, 20:21, 21:18. k 2:10, 14:31, 2 Kings 21:19, 26, 2 Chr. 21:20, 26, 23, 28:27. Jer. 22:19. l 1 Chr. 3:10, 2 Chr. 9:31, 13:7. Matt. 1:7. Roboam.

government, even the authority of reason and conscience over the inferior faculties, is weakened by every concession. Our safety and comfort therefore consist in resolutely requiring them all to obey, and though we cannot extinguish our passions, in rigorously confining them within the bounds of what is lawful and expedient.—Indulged luxury, or the pride of life, generally introduces greater licentiousness, where a man's affluence is equal to his inclinations. But the history of the world and of the church demonstrates, that the love of women is one of the most dangerous passions of the human heart. When once the divine original appointment concerning marriage is violated, the unbridled propensity will know no bounds: nor can the wisest or the most determined say to it, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further;" but, like a descending weight, the progress is from bad to worse with accelerated rapidity. The designing objects of a sensual and roving affection will employ, by turns, all the arts of persuasion, dalliance, flattery, or upbraidings, to prevail over a man's resolution, and to induce his compliance with the most unreasonable and pernicious requests; till shame and conscience are surmounted, reputation and interest sacrificed, every barrier is broken down, and a perfect infatuation takes place. (P. O. Judg. 16:)—Parents, and those who are in reputation for piety, should be peculiarly careful what practices they sanction by their examples: for such as do not imitate them in their best actions, will be encouraged to copy and to exceed them in their mistakes and misconduct. Those who have made the boldest profession of godliness, and have been most serviceable to its interests, may expect to be assaulted by the strongest temptations from the great enemy of souls; and should always entertain a jealous fear, lest, being overcome in an unguarded hour, they should after all become a scandal to religion, a stumbling block to the prejudiced, an encouragement to hypocrites and infidels, or a snare and evil precedent to the unstable and injudicious. They should therefore be peculiarly watchful against the incursions of spiritual pride; or the fatal persuasion, that *they* are superior to those rules and cautions, which are needful for weaker persons. They should always meditate with seriousness on their danger of falling, and the wide spreading fatal effects of their misconduct; and prefer any affliction, or even death, to thus dishonouring God and his truth.—The fond hope, which numbers indulge, who marry with ungodly persons, of being instrumental to their salvation, stands exposed throughout the Scripture, but especially in this chapter: the wisest and best of men are more likely to be corrupted by the converse of a beloved ungodly companion, than to bring such a one to a sense of serious religion. Considering the state of human nature, the case is as desperate as that of a healthy person associating with those that have got the plague, who is far more likely to be infected himself, than to recover them: and the Lord's prohibition of such marriages declares them to be means, which he does not allow of, and will seldom use, for that purpose.—The slaves of fleshly lusts are meet worshippers of abominable idols; but not of the God of Israel, who is holy, and whose worshippers must be holy too.—Those who connive at the wickedness which they ought to punish, will soon join in committing it, and in inducing others to do the same: but all this proceeds from the heart not being fully devoted to the Lord; for when the love of him occupies the affections, and the soul is satisfied with the earnestness and hopes of his favour, all inferior desires, however lawful, will be moderated, regulated, and subordinated; and all unlawful inclinations will be hated and crucified.

V. 9—25. The Lord is very angry even with the objects of his special love, when their hearts are for a season, or in a measure, turned from him; and the peculiar tokens of his favour, his answers to their prayers, and their comfortable communion with him in times past, will aggravate their guilt and increase his displeasure: nor can there be any peace, or assurance of acceptance, without an unreserved persevering obedience to his commandments. Yet, in punishing transgressors, he will not dishonour his own faithful promises, desert the cause of true religion, or fail to honour the memories of those who have uprightly walked in his ways: and for the sake of Jesus, and his people whom he hath chosen, he will not suffer his whole displeasure to arise. It is grievous indeed to leave heavy judgments for our sins to our posterity; yet it is a mercy to have peace and truth in our days. But when the Lord is become an Adversary, he will give power, courage, and capacity to other adversaries, and thus render those formidable, who before appeared contemptible: and we should always observe his righteous hand, even in those sufferings which come upon us from the wickedness of others.—Unnecessary severity excites resentments, which may long after create us or ours disturbance and grief: and it is best, as far

CHAPTER XII.

The Israelites, assembled at Shechem to make Rehoboam king, with Jeroboam no longer returned from Egypt, demand redress of their grievances, 1-5. Rehoboam, rejecting the counsel of the old men, and following that of the young, answers them roughly, 6-15. Ten tribes revolt, stone Adoram, and make Jeroboam king, 16-20. Rehoboam raises an army to subdue them; but is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah, 21-24. Jeroboam builds Shechem and Dan, 25: and to establish his kingdom, he sets up the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, 26-33.

AND Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt:)

3 That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

4 Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, Depart yet for three

a See on 11:43. 2 Chr. 10:1. b Gen. 12:6. Sicheim. 33:18,19. Josh. 20:7, 24:1. 32, Judg. 9:1. Ps. 60:8. Acts 7:16. Sychem. c See on 11:26-31, 40. 2 Chr. 10:1. 23. d 4:7, 22:23, 23:25. 9:22, 23. 1 Sam. 9:11-18. 2 Chr. 10:4, 5. Matt. 11:29. 30. 23:4. 1 John 5:3. e 2 Sam. 16:20. 17:5. Job 12:12. 32:7. 1 rev. 27:10. Jer. 42:

as we can, to exercise lenity to all men, and "to overcome evil with good."—But, if the abundance and pleasure of a court, and the friendship of a king, could not detain Hadad from his own desolate and subjected country; what earthly prosperity should take off a believer's affections from his glorious inheritance in heaven, or make him reluctant to remove thither? Many abhor the Israel of God, who are not permitted to hurt them: nay, when they seem to succeed in their malice, they are only the instruments of salutary chastisement to them.

V. 26-43. We often find our worst enemies among those whom we have most befriended; especially when ingenuity, industry, and resolution, rather than piety, have recommended them to our notice. These qualifications make way for a man's preferment, and every advance enlarges the ambition of a proud, unsanctified mind: and when men of this character come within the attraction of supreme authority, and dare to hope for that dangerous pre-eminence; to "reign according to the desire of their hearts," forms the grand object, and to it every tie of gratitude or duty must be sacrificed.—Providential dispensations to this day, as well as prophetic declarations of old, try men's spirits, whether they will grasp at advantages at all events; or whether they will wait patiently, and use only lawful means of obtaining them; according to the will of God.—Many so believe some parts of God's word, as perversely to take encouragement from them to commit iniquity; instead of so believing the whole, as to expect the blessings proposed in the way of conscientious obedience there prescribed. They are shown, and seem to understand, that others have forfeited their most valuable interests by sin; and yet they will seek to seize or to secure their own by similar transgressions! so inconsistent is human nature!—The Lord will not afflict for ever the people of his covenant: but when they grievously offend, he will eclipse all their honour: he will leave obscurity and reproach upon their characters; and perhaps bring them down to the grave in disgrace, discomfort, and uncertainty; distressed concerning the state of their own souls, and about the consequences of their conduct, to their families, to the church, and to the world. May God help us to walk circumspectly; to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; and to stand with our loins girded, and our lamps burning, prepared for and expecting the coming of our Lord.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1. We read of no son of Solomon except Rehoboam, and his mother was an Ammonitess. (Notes, 14:21. Deut. 23:3-5.)—He had also two daughters. (4:11, 15.) That he should have no more children, may be considered as a providential rebuke, for his multiplying wives in so unprecedented a manner.—Solomon seems to have been sensible, that his son was not likely to prove a wise man, or to carry on his designs for the good of Israel, and the establishment of his family; and he appears to have greatly regretted it. (Note, Ec. 2:18-23.) As Rehoboam was the unrivalled heir of so flourishing a kingdom, his natural imprudence and rashness would doubtless be increased by the flattery of the young men, with whom he was brought up. The people in general, upon Solomon's death, appeared disposed to recognize his succession, and convened at Shechem for that purpose. (Marg. Ref. b. Note, 25.) Yet, it is probable, that this city, which belonged to Ephraim, was chosen, rather than Jerusalem or Hebron, that the tribe of Judah might not have too great influence in the transaction; and Rehoboam was impolitic in consenting to that appointment, if he could have prevented it.

V. 2, 3. Jeroboam, hearing of the death of Solomon, was not inclined to delay to return into the land of Israel, and wait his opportunity of seizing upon the prize, which had

days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

6 ¶ And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee,

4-5. 43:2. f 2 Chr. 10:6, 7. Prov. 15:1. Phil. 2:7-11. g 13. 2 Sam. 15:3-6. Ec. 10:4. Zech. 1:13. h 2 Chr. 10:3. 25:15, 16. Prov. 1:2-5, 23:30. 19:20. 25:12. Ec. 10:2, 3. i 22:6-8. 2 Sam. 17:5, 6. 2 Chr. 10:9. 18:5-7. k 2 Sam. 17:7-13.

been set before his ambition. He was not disposed to wait the Lord's direction to proceed, as David had done when Saul died. (Note, 2 Sam. 21:4.)—The elders of the people also, by sending for him, indicated that they meant to impose strict limitations on Rehoboam.

V. 4. When the scriptural account of Solomon's reign; and the peace, affluence, and prosperity which Israel then enjoyed, are considered, we cannot doubt, but that this charge was either false or greatly exaggerated. (Notes, 9:19. 11:1-8.) Solomon had never oppressed the people with heavy taxes or exercised cruelty towards them; and though some hardships might have been experienced in the latter end of his reign, compared with the former years; yet they were not "grievous services," or heavy burdens: but, in fact, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked."—While they complained of their own grievances and demanded redress, they were silent as to Solomon's idolatry, in which indeed many of them had concurred, and about the more complete re-establishment of the worship of God among them. (Notes, 11:33. 1 Sam. 8:1-5.)

V. 5. This delay of Rehoboam showed a reluctance to comply with the demands of the people, and afforded the malecontents time to tamper with the elders of Israel, and to render them evil-affected. It would have been a far more prudent measure to have immediately assured them of a redress of all real grievances; and then to have waited till particulars were inquired into, when the unreasonableness of exorbitant claims would have been detected.

V. 6, 7. The persons whom Rehoboam first consulted, were the friends and counsellors of Solomon, firmly attached to the interests of his family, and capable of giving safe and prudent advice. Accordingly, they advised him to make all needful concessions to the assembly, to speak fair to them, and to show a readiness to pay regard to their interests and inclinations: this would have quieted the minds of the well-disposed, and broken all the measures of the malecontents; and when matters were settled, the people in general would have quietly rendered all proper submission to the prince of the house of David. (Notes, Judg. 8:1-3. Prov. 15:1. 25:15.)

V. 8-15. The wise counsel of the old men did not suit the rash, insolent, and domineering spirit of Rehoboam; and he opposed to it the advice of the companions of his youthful pleasures, who would be sure to accommodate themselves to his inclinations. It is a frequent fault of new kings, who, to show their power, presently change their counsellors, and put in new officers, to gratify all their dependents; not considering who are wisest, but who have been their companions. Bp. Patrick. They counselled him therefore to speak with authority, and to damp the spirits of the assembly by resolute language, that they might no longer presume to dictate to him. The expressions which they suggested, allowed to the utmost, and even aggravated, the injurious charge brought against Solomon; and yet avowed a resolution of greater oppression and severity! The king was advised to menace them, that "his little finger should be thicker than his father's loins;" that is, that, as he was much more powerful than Solomon was at the beginning of his reign; so he would certainly let them feel the weight of that power, if they dared to oppose him. Perhaps he thought thus because he came to the throne at a more mature age, than Solomon had done; and had not any brothers to rival him in it. He also declared that he would "add to their yoke," by demanding heavier services and taxes of them; and, if they hesitated to obey, he would chastise them with scorpions, severe punishments as terrible as the sting of a scorpion; or, as some think, a terrible scourge thus called.—Such language as this was not only wise in Pharaoh to the poor enslaved Israelites, but it was not at all likely that it should be endured by a rich, numerous

saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; yus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

12 ¶ So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 ¶ So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who

was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

[Practical Observations.]

21 ¶ And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22 But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

23 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

24 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD.

25 ¶ Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David.

1 Jer. 10:10, 11. Prov. 10:14, 16:6, 7, 23:25, 29:23. Is. 47:6. m Ex. 1:13, 14, 5: 9-13, 1 Sam. 8:13, 2 Chr. 16:10. Is. 58:6. Jer. 27:11, 28:13, 14. n 14. Ex. 5:2, Rev. 9:13-10. o 5, 2 Chr. 10:12-14. p 20:4-11. Gen. 42:7, 30. Ex. 5:2, 10:25. Judg. 12:1-6, 1 Sam. 20:10, 30, 31, 25:10, 11. 2 Sam. 19:43. Prov. 15:1, 18:23. Heb. hardly. Dan. 15:6. q 2 Chr. 22:4. Esth. 1:16-21, 2:2-4. Prov. 12:5. Is. 19:11-13. Dan. 6:7. r 10:11. Prov. 13:10, 16:18, 17:14. Ec. 7: 8. Jam. 3:14-18, 4:1, 2. s 24, 22:23. Deut. 2:30. Judg. 14:4, 2 Chr. 10:15, 22: 7, 25:16, 20. Ps. 5:10. Am. 3:6. Act. 2:23, 4:22. t See on 11:1, 26-35. 1 Sam. 17:28, 2 Sam. 17:14. 2 Kings 9:36. 10:10. Is. 14:13-17, 46:10, 11. Dan. 4:35. John 19:23, 24, 28, 32-37. Acts 3:17, 13:27. u See on 2 Sam. 20:1, 2 Chr. 10:16. v 22:17, 36. w 11:13, 34, 36, 39. 2 Sam. 7:15, 16. Ps. 2:1-6, 76:10, 89:29-37, 132:17. Is. 7:2, 6:7, 9:6, 7. Jer. 23:5, 6, 33:15, 16, 21. Luke 19:42, 27. y Judg. 8:35. 2 Sam. 15:13, 16:11. z 11:13, 35. 2 Chr. 10:17, 11:13-17. a 4:6, 5:14.

and free people. (Notes, Ex. 5:14-14.) Nothing can be conceived more foolish and exasperating, than such an address in so critical a juncture: but it was adopted, because it coincided with the self-importance and tyrannical temper of Rehoboam; and we may cease to wonder at his extreme infatuation, when we are told, that "the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his word." (Notes, 11:29-33. 2 Sam. 17:7-14. 2 Chr. 25:14-16. Prov. 21:30. Is. 19:11-14.)

V. 16. Though Rehoboam had acted very foolishly and wickedly; yet perhaps he might have been brought to a better temper, by proper arguments and exhortations.—The Lord had indeed promised ten tribes to Jeroboam: but he had not commanded the people to revolt from the family of David; nor had he commissioned Jeroboam to wrench these tribes from Rehoboam. His purposes and declarations were not the motive of their conduct, and therefore formed no excuse for it. Their contempt of the memory of David, and ingratitude to him and his son, who had done so very much towards advancing them to their present prosperity, were very criminal; but their language concerning his house, as if the entail of the kingdom to his family, though confirmed to him by the faithful oath and covenant of God himself, would now come to nothing, was extremely profane, and discovered the infidelity of their hearts. (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:12-16. Ps. 89:19-37.) They indeed determined to have nothing more to do with the house of David, and he could not see to it himself: but the Lord would take care to fulfil his engagements; and David's family could not be destroyed, though it would be corrected or weakened; for the Messiah was to descend from him. (Notes, 11:12, 13, 36. 1 Sam. 22:9, 10. 2 Sam. 20: 2.)—Indeed the ten tribes themselves were by far the greater losers by the revolt.

V. 17. A considerable part of the priests and Levites, together with the tribe of Benjamin, and many of the Simeonites, dwelt in Judah; (Note, Josh. 19:1-9.) and many others soon after joined them. (Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.)

V. 18. It is not certain, whether Rehoboam sent Adoram to demand the taxes of the people, after their dispersion, as a feeble attempt to enforce his imprudent threats; or whether, previously to their departure from Shechem, he sent him to pacify them with proposals for an accommodation. But, whatever his age, experience, and influence might have been, his office alone rendered him a very improper person for this embassy: (4:6. Note, 2 Sam. 20:24.) for the discontents

of the people were excited by the tributes or levies over which he presided. Accordingly he lost his life in a popular tumult, and Rehoboam hastily fled to Jerusalem. (Marg.) All these measures seem to have been exceedingly impolitic: the result of passion, not of judgment.—This is the first time that we read of a king of Israel riding in a chariot; though no doubt Solomon had generally done so. (Cant. 3:9, 10.)

V. 19, 20. The defection of Israel from Rehoboam is called rebellion against the house of David; as no misconduct of either Solomon or Rehoboam was sufficient to justify or even excuse it; and neither the people nor Jeroboam intended to obey God, though they accomplished his purposes, by pursuing their own schemes. They made Jeroboam king, without any condition, that we can find: though it is likely, he promised to ease them of all their burden. Bp. Patrick.—No whole tribe, except Judah, and little Benjamin as united to it, adhered to Rehoboam. (Note, 11:12, 13.)

V. 21-24. The Lord would not allow Rehoboam to recover the ten tribes, nor was it his will that he should lose Judah: and therefore he mercifully prohibited the war, and thus prevented much bloodshed, though both parties deserved punishment for their sins. It was commendable in Rehoboam, that he submitted to the message of God by his prophet, when his loss had been so great, and his preparations were so formidable.—It is probable his more prudent counsellors opposed the war.

Shemaiah, the man of God. (22.) One who had been before known and approved as a prophet of the Lord; and not one newly raised up, whom Rehoboam and the people would have been less disposed to regard.

V. 25. (Marg. Ref.) Jeroboam repaired and fortified Shechem and Penuel; and perhaps erected palaces, and other public buildings in them, that they might be the seats of his government, on each side of Jordan. (Note, 2 Chr. 11:5-12.)

V. 26-29. The Lord had promised Jeroboam, that he would give ten tribes to him, and confirm the kingdom over them to his posterity, in case he obeyed his commandments; but he either forgot or despised the word of the Lord; and, leaning to his own understanding, he concluded, that he never could secure the obedience of the people, if they went up to Jerusalem to worship. (Notes, 11:37, 38.) For in case Rehoboam permitted them to come and return in safety, (as it is probable he would have done,) their friendly intercourse with their brethren, their social worship, and mutual kind-

CHAPTER XIII.

A man of God sent from Judah prophesies to Jeroboam, while burning incense, that Josiah of David's race should slay the altar at Beth-el; and he gives him a sign, 1-3. Jeroboam's hand, stretched forth against him, withers; and the altar is rent, 4, 5. Jeroboam's hand is restored at the prophet's prayer. He refuses entertainment and a reward, and leaves Beth-el, 7-10. He is secured, and brought back, by the life of an old prophet, who afterwards denounces the judgment of God against him for his disobedience, 11-23. A lion kills him on his way home, 23-25. The old prophet fetches his body, buries it with lamentations, and confirms his prophecy, 26-32. Jeroboam persists in his evil ways, 33, 34.

AND behold, there came ^aa man of God out of Judah ^bby the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and ^cJeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

2 And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, ^dO altar, altar! thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, ^eJosiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

3 And ^fhe gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

4 And it came to pass when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth

his hand from the altar, saying, ^gLay hold on him. And ^hhis hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

5 The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

6 And the king answered and said unto the man of God, ⁱEntreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. ^jAnd the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as ^kit was before.

7 And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and ^lrefresh thyself, ^mand I will give thee a reward.

8 And the man of God said unto the king, ⁿIf thou wilt give me half thy house, ^oI will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

9 For ^pso was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, ^qEat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

10 So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

[Practical Observations.]

^a See on 12:22. 2 Chr. 9:29. b 5:9, 26:32, 20:35. Jer. 25:3. 1 Thes. 4:15. c See on 12:3. Jer. 25:1. * On offer, Num. 16:40. Jer. 11:19. 29:29. Mal. 1:11. Rev. 8:3. d Deut. 32:1. Is. 1:2. 58:1. Jer. 22:29. Ez. 36:14. 38:4. Luke 19:10. e 2 Kings 21:1, 2. 23:15-18. 2 Chr. 34:1-4. Is. 42:9. 41:26-28. 46:10. 48. 4-5. 7. f Ex. 4:3-5. 8:9. 7:10. Deut. 13:1-3. 1 Sam. 2:34. 2 Kings 20:8. Is. 7:11. 14. 38:6-8. Jer. 44:29. Matt. 12:38-40. 1 Cor. 1:22. g 2 Chr. 16:10. 18:23. 25:15, 16. Jer. 20:2. 26:12. 11:21-23. 33:4-6. Am. 7:10-13. Matt. 26:37. Mark 14:44-46. Acts 6:12-14. h Gen. 19:11. 2 Kings 6:15-20. Jer. 30:4-6. Luke 9:19, 20. 6:10. John 18:6. Acts 9:4-5. 13:8-11. Rev. 11:5. 12:2-28, 35. Ex. 9:18-25. Num. 16:23-33. Deut. 18:22. Jer. 28:16, 17. Mark 16:20. Acts 5:1-10.

k Ex. 8:8, 23. 9:24. 10:17. 12:32. Num. 21:7. 1 Sam. 12:19. Jer. 37:3. 42:2-4. Acts 8:24. Rev. 3:9. 1 Ex. 8:12, 13. Num. 12:13. 1 Sam. 12:23. Matt. 5:44. Luke 6:27, 28. 23:34. Acts 7:60. Rom. 12:14, 21. Jam. 5:16-18. f Heb. 4:4 of the LORD. m Gen. 18:5. Judg. 13:15. 19:21. n 1 Sam. 9:7, 8. 2 Kings 5:15. Jer. 40:5. Mal. 1:10. Acts 8:18-20. 1 Pet. 5:2. o Num. 22:19. 24:13. Elish. 5:6, 7, 8. Mark 6:23. p 2 Kings 5:16, 25, 27. Mark 6:11. 2 Cor. 11:9, 10. q See on 1:21, 22. 1 Sam. 15:22. Job 23:12. John 13:17. 15:9, 10, 14. r Num. 16:26. Deut. 18:13-15. Ps. 141:4. Rom. 16:17. 1 Cor. 5:11. Eph. 5:11. 2 John 10, 11. Rev. 18:4.

authority, as much as possible to prevent the effusion of human blood.—Unbelieving men judge by appearances, and often conclude, that safety and prosperity can be obtained by those measures alone, which the word of God condemns. They engage in enterprises, in which they must either succeed, or be ruined: success in this case appears the grand object; and the necessity, they suppose, will excuse or justify their deviations from general rules: and thus they regard not what wickedness they commit, nor what numbers they involve in the same guilt and condemnation. But faith waits upon God in the path of duty, for the performance of his own promises, whatever difficulties may seem to impede it: and it perceives and aims at nobler objects, than the success of any temporal project, or even the preservation of life itself.—The duplicity of politicians often consists in concealing their selfish purposes, under plausible ostensible pretences: but men frequently conjecture aright in such matters; and God sees and will expose the thought of their hearts, notwithstanding all their disguises.—The benefit of the public is often the plea; personal impunity for their crimes, the retaining of their dignity, or the increase of their own authority, are the real motives of their conduct. The people, however, are generally willing to gratify their rulers in matters of religion, provided it be easy, cheap, pompous, or sensual: and if a few scruples intervene, the revival of some old superstition, some plea of antiquity, or of liberality of sentiment, or of agreement in the main with more scrupulous persons, though expedient alterations are adopted, will generally conciliate the minds of the majority to any religion, which suits their convenience, agrees with their interests, and does not disquiet their consciences, or disturb them in gratifying their inclinations.—When persons in authority aim to render religion conducive to their secular purposes, they generally love to bring every thing under their own management. The ceremonies must be of their own devising and the ministers of their own selecting: and indeed a hireling, ignorant priesthood well suits with an idolatrous or superstitious worship, an usurping tyrannical prince, or a rebellious, apostate people. But the pride, arrogance, and enmity of the human heart, never appears more atrocious and odious, than when it presumptuously dares to change the divine appointments, for those ^hwhich a man hath devised of his own heart, and to mould the worship of God into ⁱcontrariety to his will; when ministers, so called, can be found shameless enough to countenance this arrogance; and when whole nations of professing worshippers quietly submit to it. Indeed nothing in such a case, but a torrent of ungodliness, and most awful judgments, can be expected.—But alas! how soon all earthly prosperity is clouded! every remarkable prevalence of true religion on earth, has hitherto been succeeded by lamentable declensions, apostasies or divisions. May the Lord hasten that time, when our "Prince of Peace" shall set up his kingdom of truth and of righteousness all over the earth, and when his cause shall finally and universally prevail! (Notes, Rev. 20:1-6.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1. *To burn incense.* Notes, 2:2, 3. 12:32, 33. 2 Chr. 26:16-23.) Jeroboam seems on this occasion to have officiated himself, and to have burned incense at the same altar on which the sacrifices had been offered.

As the typical meaning of these institutions was not at all understood, and as the divine appointment was entirely disregarded, every kind of innovation was made without scruple.

V. 2. We are not informed of this prophet's name; but he came from Judah, in the name of **JEHOVAH**, whose worship at the temple Jeroboam and Israel had forsaken: (1) and he predicted the prevalence of the house of David, whose authority they had rejected. With holy boldness and great earnestness he cried against the altar, while Jeroboam and his attendants were performing their religious rites. As the destruction of this newly instituted worship was to be expressly foretold, and the stupidity of the idolaters themselves to be severely reproved, he addressed himself to the altar, and not to the worshippers. (*Marg. Ref. d.*)—This prediction was delivered considerably more than three hundred years before Josiah was born; yet during all those years, no one of the house of David gave his son this name, or attempted to fulfil the prophecy, until the appointed time was arrived; and then Amon, a wicked prince, named his son Josiah. (*Not. 2 Kings 23:15-20.*)—This extraordinary prophecy was a plain declaration, that the family of David would continue, and be honoured as the supporters of true religion, when the kingdom of the ten tribes should be incapable of resisting them.—The burning of men's bones upon the altar was the greatest contempt of it imaginable: and the offering of the priests themselves upon it, the greatest mark of God's abhorrence of their crimes. (*Marg. Ref. e.*)

V. 3-6. The judgment immediately inflicted upon Jeroboam, and the rending of the altar as it had been foretold, intimidated him, so that he did not venture to attempt any thing further against "the man of God," whose message was thus divinely attested. In this emergency he had no confidence in his idols, his newly constituted priests, or his self-invented sacrifices; but he expected help from the prayers of the prophet. He therefore begged him to entreat the *face* (or the *favour*) of the Lord his God for him; but he neither acknowledged his guilt, nor desired instructions from the prophet, nor sought forgiveness of his sins, nor desisted from his idolatry. He merely desired the removal of the divine judgment, which the prophet readily prayed for and obtained. (*Notes, Ex. 9:30. Acts 8:18-24.*)

V. 7-10. Jeroboam neither repented, nor returned thanks to God for the restoration of his withered hand: but he was willing to entertain and reward the prophet for it; perhaps supposing that he was ready to do any thing for hire, like his own priests. (*Notes, 21:8-14. 1 Sam. 9:6-10. 2 Kings 5:20-25. Is. 56:9-12. Am. 7:12, 13.*) But the Lord had prescribed to his servant a different conduct. As a solemn protestation against the idolatry of Beth-el, he was forbidden to eat or drink in that city, whatever hardship he might endure. God would not accept their most costly sacrifices: nor would he allow his servant to accept of any entertainment from its inhabitants; or to do any thing which had the appearance of having fellowship with the men, whose works of darkness he was sent to reprove. Nay, the more fully to express his abhorrence of their apostasy, and his determination not to make himself in any way familiar with them, or aught belonging to them, he was ordered to return by another road.

11 ¶ Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el, and his sons came and told him all the works, that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.

12 And their father said unto them, What way went he? for his sons had seen what way the man of God went which came from Judah.

13 And he said unto his sons, "Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon,

14 And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, "Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, *I am*.

15 Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.

16 And he said, "I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:

17 For it was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.

18 He said unto him, *I am* a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water. "But he lied unto him.

19 So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house and drank water.

[Practical Observations.]

20 And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back:

21 And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee,

22 But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcass was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the carcass.

25 And behold, men passed by, and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

26 And when the prophet that brought him

20, 21. Num. 23:4, 5, 24:2. 1 Sam. 10:11. 2 Kings 23:18. Ez. 13:2, 16. Matt. 22:2. 2 Pet. 2:1. Heb. 1:1. 1 Tim. 3:5. u 27. Num. 22:21. Judg. 5:10, 10:14. 2 Sam. 19:26. x 19:4. John 4:6, 34. 1 Cor. 4:11, 12. 2 Cor. 11:27. Phil. 4:12, 13. 1 Th. 5:9. Gen. 9:1-3. Num. 22:13, 19. Matt. 4:10. u 6:23. *He is a man of God.* a Num. 1:20, 35. b Num. 22:35. Judg. 6:11, 12, 13, 3. c Gen. 34:3. Is. 9:15. Jer. 5:12, 31. 23:14, 17, 32. 28:15, 16. Ez. 13:

9, 10, 22. Matt. 7:15, 24:24. Rom. 16:18. 2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15. 2 Pet. 2:1. 1 John 4:1. Rev. 19:20. d 9. Gen. 3:6. 2 Pet. 2:18, 19. e Num. 23:6, 16. 24:4, 16-24. Mat. 7:22. John 11:51. 1 Cor. 13:2. f 17. Gen. 3:7. Exh. 5:12. Jer. 2:19. Gal. 1:8, 9. g Lev. 10:3. Num. 20:12, 24. 1 Sam. 4:18, 13:13. 15:19, 22-24. 2 Sam. 6:7. 12:9-11. 24:13. Rev. 3:19. h 14:13. 2 Chr. 21:19, 20. Is. 14:19, 20. Jer. 2:29. 12:20, 28. 2 Kings 2:24. Am. 5:19. 1 Cor. 11:31, 32. 1 Pet. 4:17, 18.

And when solicited by the king himself, and promised a royal recompense; (though probably he was poor, as well as hungry and weary;) he thus far obediently observed his instructions.

V. 11-19. This old prophet continued to reside at Beth-el, after the priests and Levites had been driven away, and after idolatry was publicly established there: yet he entered no protest against it; and his sons were present at the idolatrous sacrifice, and made no secret of it. One old prophet: (Heb.) if any others had lived there, they had ere this left the place. These circumstances, joined to his conduct on this occasion, are convincing proofs, that though called a prophet he was not a really godly man. Perhaps he had been educated in the schools of the prophets, and had been favoured with the Spirit of prophecy. (Note, Num. 22:5.) This had acquired him the reputation of a prophet, and he had maintained it in the days of Solomon, when religion was respected. But when the change took place under Jeroboam, being a carnal man, he preferred ease and interest to his religion, and made no direct opposition to the prevailing party: perhaps satisfying his conscience with holding his own sentiments privately, and not actually joining in the idolatry. Yet he was still desirous of the reputation of a prophet, as far as he could safely retain it: and this appears to have been his leading motive, in enticing the prophet of Judah back again; and not, as has been conjectured, either real kindness to him, or malice against him. Many would doubtless applaud the resolution and disinterestedness of the man of God, who at last was not injured by Jeroboam; and perhaps this old prophet was afraid of being censured for his cowardice, connivance, and selfishness. (Note, Acts 5:1-11.) He might hope to avert this disgrace by showing kindness to the man of God; and he found he could do it, without incurring Jeroboam's displeasure. He therefore followed him, and found him sitting under a tree, weary and in need of refreshment, which would add much energy to his temptation; and when he perceived that he was decided against eating bread at Beth-el; he assured him that he also was a prophet, and came by commandment from God to bring him back; thus imposing upon him by speaking lies in the name of the Lord! (Notes, Gen. 31-6. Is. 9:13-17. Matt. 4:1-4.) And the man of God perhaps supposed that he might refresh himself at the house of a prophet in Beth-el, though not in the house of an idolater. But as the commandment of God to him had been immediate and express; and he had only this man's own word for it that he was a prophet, or that the Lord had spoken to him by an angel; his conduct was very criminal, and calculated to weaken the effect of his message upon the consciences of Jeroboam, and his other auditors; and doubtless his judgment was on this occasion bribed by his inclinations.

V. 20-22. As the Lord inspired Balaam, contrary to his intentions, to pronounce blessings, and to utter, though doubtless with the greatest reluctance, prophecies concerning Israel: (Num. 23:7, 8. 24:1-13.) so was this prophet constrained to pronounce sentence against the man of God, whom he had seduced into disobedience; and thus to publish the shame of his own most impious imposture, which also implied against himself a far more dreadful doom, except he repented.—The

sentence was direct, that the prophet of Judah should not die in peace at home, to be buried in his own sepulchre: but the time and circumstances of his death were not specified.

V. 23-32. The old prophet did not accompany the prophet of Judah, perhaps apprehensive of some divine judgment overtaking him: but some think, that he supplied him with the ass on which he rode, and that he had come on foot. The lion, commissioned by God, slew the prophet, but did not devour his body; and he neither hurt nor frightened away the ass: nay, he behaved so tamely, that travellers ventured past him, perhaps at a distance! And even the old prophet ventured, and was allowed without molestation, to take away his body for burial! "Here is a cluster of miracles; that the lion, contrary to his nature, did not eat the carcass, nor kill the ass, nor meddle with the travellers that passed by, nor with the old prophet and his ass: and that the ass stood so quietly, and was not frightened at the sight of the lion, and betake itself to flight. And more than this, the lion stood by the carcass a long time, till this strange news was carried into the city; . . . which made the miracle the more illustrious, and plainly showed that this did not happen by chance." *Bp. Patrick*. All these miraculous circumstances marked the death of the man of God as a divine rebuke for his disobedience, in eating bread at idolatrous Beth-el; and both counteracted the conclusion, which Jeroboam might have been tempted to draw from his death against the truth of his message, and formed a solemn proof, how God abhorred, and would have all his people abhor, this newly instituted worship.—Thus, for one offence, a faithful servant of God was punished with immediate death, being "chastened of the Lord, that he should not be condemned with the world;" whilst the lying prophet, and the idolatrous king, escaped with impunity, being reserved to the punishments of a future state; which were in this instance loudly proclaimed. The old prophet indeed paid respect to the man of God, and expressed his conviction that his predictions would be verified, and a concern about his own bones. But he seems to have shown no humiliation for his enormous crimes, no tokens of true repentance, no care about his soul: he neither left Beth-el, nor entered a public protest against Jeroboam's idolatry; nor did any thing, which many a hypocrite has not equalled or exceeded, in attempting to buoy up his own presumption, or to impose upon others. Nay, he appears to have been desirous of gratifying his own vanity, and his claim to be considered as a prophet, when he buried the man of God in his own sepulchre, and lamented over him, "Alas, my brother!" He was, however, instrumental in accomplishing the Lord's word: and the prophet of Judah being buried at Beth-el, with a monumental inscription, would tend to keep his prediction in remembrance, and be an abiding protest against the worship of the golden calves. The man of God from Judah appears to have spoken more prophecies, than are mentioned in the beginning of the chapter: and though the city Samaria was not yet built, the historian calls the cities in that neighbourhood, "The cities of Samaria;" in some of which Jeroboam had built high places.

back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, *It is* the man of God who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him.

27 And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him.

28 And he went, and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcass: the lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass.

29 And the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him.

30 And he laid his carcass in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!

k Lev. 10:3, 2 Sam. 12:10, 14. Ps. 119:120. Prov. 11:31. Ez. 9:5. 1 Cor. 11:30. Heb. 12:28, 29. 1 Pet. 4:17. * Heb. broken. 1 17:4, 6. Lev. 10:2, 5. Job 38:11. Ps. 148:7, 8. Jer. 22:23. Dan. 3:22, 27, 28. 6, 22-24. Acts 16:26. Heb. 11:33, 34. 1 Heb. broken. m 14:13. Jer. 22:18. Acts 8:2. n Num. 23:28. Ps. 26:9. Ec. 8:10. Luke 16:22, 23. o 2. 2 Kings 23:16-19. p 12:29, 31. Lev. 26:30. q 16:

V. 33, 34. Notes, 12:31-33. 14:9-16. 2 Chr. 13:13-22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The Lord often meets sinners in the midst of their crimes, with alarming indications of his displeasure, to show that "their way is perverse before him."¹ It requires great fortitude to deliver faithfully the messages of God, especially to those in authority: for a full and plain declaration of his word will certainly exasperate the proud and ungodly of every description, whether profane, superstitious, or hypocritical. But the Lord will bear those out whom he sends, and who simply trust and obey him: and faith in him is sufficient to overcome the fear of man. They who are employed in services of this kind should speak and act decidedly, as men in earnest, calling upon the very inanimate creation to testify, as it were, against the crimes of presumptuous offenders, who will not regard the word of God; in order that a deeper impression may be left upon the minds of their hearers.—The Lord is peculiarly offended with those who attempt any thing against such intrepid reprovers of sin; and they, who have most insulted his servants, are often brought by affliction to pay court to them, and to desire their prayers. Nor ought this ever to be refused: for by returning good for evil, their severity against men's crimes is proved to be connected with compassionate love for their persons; and in answer to prayer, God often bestows temporal mercies upon impenitent sinners; though, continuing such, they cannot escape the damnation of hell.—Carnal men frequently betray their impenitency under convictions, even by their concessions: they acknowledge the true believer to be the servant of God, but they do not imitate him: they feel the vanity of their own superstitions or worldly idols, but they do not renounce them: they desire the removal of their afflictions, rather than the forgiveness of their sins, or the mortification of their lusts: and they show kindness or offer presents to the minister who prays for them, while they requite the Lord with base ingratitude.—When persons are living in open sins, and causing others to sin by their influence and authority, the "men of God" should manifest their abhorrence of their crimes, by refusing to accept of any favours from them, and by separating from all intercourse with them. And when those who are in low circumstances act in this manner, with firmness and meekness, and plainly assign the reasons of their conduct; it will be one of the most alarming and convincing warnings, which can possibly be given. Ministers and Christians must often go among ungodly people, but they ought never to make themselves familiar with them; and should show that they are so uneasy in their company, that none of their temporal good things can bribe them, needlessly to prolong or repeat their visits. In order to this, they must be superior to the love of worldly pleasure and interest, inured to hardship and self-denial, and well acquainted with the commandments of God.—In the mystery of Providence, false religion is permitted to be planted, and to prevail to the deceiving of great multitudes: but the Lord keeps the times and seasons in his own power; he foresees and determines those events, which are most distant and appear most contingent; and he will in his appointed time destroy every species of irreligion or superstition, by one of the house of David, of far nobler name and greater excellency than Josiah.—But the tokens of his displeasure on the instruments of iniquity, proclaim his awful vengeance upon the sinners themselves: and none will become sacrifices to his justice with deeper detestation and contempt, than *hiring* ministers, who for filthy lucre have countenanced false religion, to the destruction of the souls of those who blindly followed such blind guides.

V. 11-19. The cause of God admits of no neutrality. (Note, Matt. 12:29, 30.) In times of general apostasy, or increasing infidelity and ungodliness, we are especially called to bear our testimony, without yielding to fear or shame:

31 And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones:

32 For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

33 ¶ After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.

34 And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

24. 2 Chr. 25:13. Ezra 4:10. John 4:4, 5. r 12:31-33. 2 Chr. 11:15. 13:9. Am. 4:5-11. 1 Heb. returned and made. Ps. 78:34. Jer. 18:4. marg. a Num. 1: 51. 3:10. 17:5. 12:13. s Heb. filled his hand. Ez. 28:41. marg. Judg. 17:12. t 12:30. 2 Kings 10:31. 17:21. u 12:26. 14:10. 15:29, 30.

and if any professed Christian will not confess Christ in this world, Christ will not own him in the day of judgment. But if a reputed prophet, an old prophet, who appeared zealous for the truth, while credit and advantage accrued from it, purchase security by conniving at prevailing abominations, he may justly be suspected of hypocrisy. These are indeed "dumb dogs that cannot bark," when the Lord is robbed of his worship and honour; and are not fit persons to be employed by him, or countenanced by his faithful people. In some cases they are even worse than the active instruments of deception: because they sin against greater light; they more frequently stumble unestablished persons, and bring deeper disgrace upon the truths which they have professed. Such time-servers, however, are often willing to be thought the servants of God by religious people, though ashamed of him among his enemies; and for that purpose, they covertly seek the acquaintance of those ministers who are in reputation for faithfulness, and show them kindness. But they are the most dangerous, because the most plausible and unsuspected, of all tempters to real Christians, whose candour makes them willing to hope the best of them, to credit their professions, and to return their civilities. Having learned to be silent, when called to defend the truth, they soon learn to forge lies in the name of God, when it can answer their purpose; and, by various specious pretences, they obtain the esteem of the unwary, and abuse their confidence by inveigling them into disobedience: so that tempters of this description often prevail, when the terrors of persecution, and the allurements of preferment, have been resolutely withstood. "Surely," says the tempted believer, such good men would never propose an ill thing! they brought the word of God for it! they were so very kind, and could have no interest in it!" But for our own sakes, and for the credit of the gospel, let us all with one consent withdraw from worldly professors of religion, and be upon our guard against them: let them decidedly serve God, or Baal, that we may know what they are; or let us refuse to have any acquaintance with them.

V. 20-34. Nothing can excuse any act of wilful disobedience: the tempter "hath the greater sin," but the tempted is deeply criminal; and the offences of those who are much honoured and employed of God, are of all the most dishonourable to him, as they rivet the prejudices and embolden the blasphemies of his enemies. Such offenders therefore shall by no means escape correction in this world: and perhaps their very tempters shall be employed to denounce, or inflict, the chastisements of the Lord upon them; or in other respects they shall be made very severe and alarming: while the wicked frequently escape, in this life, being "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished."²—The exact obedience of the irrational creatures to their Maker, forms a reproach of man's rebellion: for he can restrain or change the very nature of every creature, to render it subservient to his wise and righteous purposes.—Happy are they, who are habitually ready for death: even if the Lord shall call them hence, by some awful rebuke for an incidental transgression; while they are made useful warnings to others, they will be found safe and happy themselves. (Notes, 2 Kings 22:15-20. 1 Cor. 11:29-34.)—But many will show respect to the servants of the Lord, assent to the truth of their words, appear to lament their death, and wish to have their lot with them in another world; who yet live and die impenitent: (Note, Num. 23:10.) and many are warned, convinced, and alarmed, who silence their consciences, and practice increasing wickedness, to the utter ruin of themselves and those connected with them. Let all then fear provoking God to leave them to final hardness of heart: let us "take heed and beware of hypocrisy;" let us dread prospering in sinful ways; let us tremble while we read this chapter, and pray earnestly to be kept from every delusion and temptation, and to be enabled to walk with self-denying perseverance in the way of God's commandments!

CHAPTER XIV.

Jeroboam sends his wife, disguised, to Ahijah the prophet, to inquire concerning him, who was sick, 1-4. Ahijah, forewarned by God, denounces judgment upon him, and of Jeroboam's family, the death of her son, and the death of Israel, 5-16. Ahijah dies and is buried, 17, 18. Jeroboam dies, succeeded by Nadab, 19, 20. Jeroboam reigns over Judah; and they put the Lord by their wickedness, 21-24. Zisabab carries away the golden calves, and the golden shields, from Jerusalem, 25, 26. Reuben shields in their stand, 27, 28. His acts, and wars, 29, 30, 31. He dies and is succeeded by Abijah, 31.

AT that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

2 And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be king over this people.

3 And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

4 And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see her; for his eyes were set by reason of his age.

5 ¶ And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shall thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.

6 And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.

7 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord God

of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

8 And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes;

9 But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger and hast cast me behind thy back:

10 Therefore behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

11 Him that dieth of Israel in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the Lord hath spoken it.

12 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

13 And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

14 Moreover, the Lord shall raise him up a

a 13:31, 34. b 12:13. Ec. 20:5. 1 Sam. 4:19, 20, 21-2. 2 Sam. 12:15. c 5:6, 22. d 1 Sam. 23:8. 2 Sam. 14:2. 2 Chr. 18:29. Luke 12:2. d See on 11:29-38. e 13:7. 1 Sam. 9:7, 8. 2 Kings 4:42. 5:15, 3:7-9. * Heb. in thine hand. f Or, cakes. 2 Sam. 13:6. 1 Or, bottle. f 2 Kings 1:2, 8, 14. Luke 7:12, 13. John 4:47. 8:11. g 11:24. 1 Chr. 15:1. 1 Sam. 4:1. Jer. 7:12-14. h Gen. 27:1. 48:10. 1 Sam. 3:17. 1 Sam. 3:2. 15. Ps. 90:10. Ec. 12:3. i Heb. etc. of Jeroboam's house. j 2 Kings 4:27. k 5:12. 1 Chr. 21:26. Am. 3:7. Acts 10:19, 20. l J. 1:5. 12. Ps. 33:10. 1:25. Ec. 14:3-5, 7, 8. Luke 20:20-23. Acts 5:3-5, 10. Heb. 4:13. m 10:11. 13:33-22, 29. 14:13-24. 25:28. n Sam. 15:16, 20, 25-15. Jer. 21:2-7. Ec. 2:4, 5. Dan. 4:19-25. 5:17-28. Mark 14:21. l Heb. herd. m 12:24. 16:2. 2 Sam. 2:27-30. 15:16. 2 Sam. 12:7, 8. o See on 11:30, 31. p 3:14.

11:33, 38. 15:5. 2 Chr. 17:3, 28:1. Acts 13:22, 26. q 16:12, 12, 13, 34. 15:34. 16:31. r Deut. 32:16, 17, 21. Judg. 5:8. 2 Chr. 11:15. Ps. 106:19, 20. 115:4-8. Is. 44:9-20. Jer. 10:14-16. s 22. Deut. 9:8-16, 24. 2 Kings 21:3, 23:26. 2 Chr. 33:6. Ps. 78:40, 56. Jer. 7:9, 10. Ec. 8:13, 17. 1 Cor. 10:22. t Neh. 9:26. Ps. 50:7. Ec. 23:35. u 15:25-30. Am. 3:6. x 16:11, 21, 22. 1 Sam. 25:22, 23. 2 Kings 9:8, 9. y Deut. 32:36. 2 Kings 14:25. z 1 Sam. 2:30. 2 Kings 9:37, 21:13. Job 20:7. Ps. 63:10. Is. 5:25. 14:19, 23. Jer. 8:2. Ez. 26:4. Zeph. 1:17. Mal. 2:3. Luke 14:34, 35. a 16:4. 21:19, 23, 24. Is. 68:24. Jer. 15:3. Ez. 39:17-19. Rev. 17:18. b 5:6, 17. 2 Kings 1:6, 16. John 4:50-52. c Num. 20:29. Jer. 22:18. d 2 Chr. 12:12. 19:3. Job 19:28. Philim. 6. 2 Pet. 2:8. e 15:27-29.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1-4. In the remainder of the books of the Kings, we have the history of Judah and Israel carried on together, or with continual transitions from one to the other. But the latter part of the second book of Chronicles more fully relates the history of the kings of Judah, and drops that of the kings of Israel, except as connected with the other. Jeroboam had taken no notice of Ahijah, either while taking possession of the kingdom, or when establishing his idolatrous worship at Dan and Beth-el; being conscious that the prophet would have opposed and condemned his whole conduct. But when his son Abijah was dangerously ill, he wished to know from the prophet, whether he would recover or not: for he was convinced, that more dependence might be placed on his word, than on that of all his priests. But he did not inquire, "Wherefore the Lord corrected him," or, "How he might avert his displeasure." He did not request the prophet's instructions or prayers; or even his directions what to do in order to his son's recovery; he only wished to be relieved from his anxiety, by being informed whether he would or would not recover. (Notes, 2 Kings 1:2. 8:7, 8.) Not choosing himself to go to the prophet, fearing his severe reproofs and warnings; and perhaps being unwilling that the people should discover his own private judgment concerning his calves, and their priests; he would not confide the business to any servant, but sent his wife: yet, she must go in disguise, as the wife of a husbandman, with a present suitable to one in that station, to inquire about her son, without informing the prophet of her rank!—Alas! what ideas must he have had of the infinite and omniscient God, that he should expect him to reveal to his prophet whether the son of this unknown person would recover; without revealing who it was that came to inquire of him!—Ahijah was infirm, and blind with age; and, not being fitted as formerly for active service, he lived retired, and probably much respected, at Shiloh; lamenting doubtless, though he could not prevent, the sin and misery of his people.

Cracknels. (3) קריק *punctatus*, a kind of cake, marked with spots, probably reckoned a delicacy.

V. 5, 6. The Lord previously informed his servant of the whole device, by immediate revelation, and instructed him what message to deliver. The wife of Jeroboam came to the prophet; yet, as he was commissioned to declare to her the purpose of God, he told her, that he "was sent to her with heavy tidings;" and, as she came with dissimulation, and, in an assumed garb and character, in order to impose upon him; and as Jeroboam had apostatized to idolatry; he showed no manner of respect to her rank, or to that of her husband. (Notes, 21:20. Dan. 5:17.)

V. 7-11. (Notes, 11:29-38.)—Jeroboam intended that his calves, at Dan and Beth-el, should represent the God of Israel, who brought the nation out of the land of Egypt; and would have his subjects to think, that they were worshipping the God of their fathers. (Note, 12:26-29.) But the Lord called them, "other gods, and molten images;" for as he cannot be represented by any similitude, so he abhors all image worship as the grossest idolatry. The case is precisely the same, as to the worship of images in the church of Rome. (Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.) None of the rulers or Judges of Israel had acted so wickedly: Saul, who had been rejected for his rebellion, had not committed open idolatry; much less had he used his authority to promote it. Even Solomon, for whose apostasy the ten tribes had been rent from his son, had not established idolatry by a law, as Jeroboam had done; nor had any thing so atrocious been attempted by Israel, since it became a nation. Such judgments therefore were denounced against Jeroboam's house, as had never before been inflicted: and some of the terms used here occur for the first time. (Marg. Ref. x, y. Note, 1 Sam. 25:21, 22, v. 22.)—By "him that is shut up and left in Israel," may be meant, every one who has taken refuge in the most fortified cities, and every one that has escaped from the more general devastations; or, in general, all without exception, however secure they might suppose themselves to be; even these would be pursued and cut off. Or, an allusion may be made in those peculiar treasures, which are shut up for security in the safest repositories, and are reserved to the last when all else is spent; and yet they must be parted with, or will be searched out and seized upon. Indeed the house of Jeroboam was become as offensive to the Lord, as dung would be in a man's habitation; and should therefore be taken away till there was none left. Nor should any of his family, save Ahijah, be buried, but their dead bodies should be left above ground, till the dogs or the fowls of the air devoured them, to their deeper disgrace and abhorrence. (Notes, 21:21-26. 2 Kings 9:30-37. Jer. 8:1-3.)

Hast came me, &c. (9.) "Neglecting me and my service. For those things we cast behind our backs, which are nothing worth; and for which we have no regard, or concern what becomes of them." Bp. Patrick.

V. 12, 13. Ahijah was the only person of all the house of Jeroboam, who was well disposed to the worship and service of JEROBAH: and it is probable, that he had expressed strong disapprobation of his father's idolatry, and a purpose of suppressing it, if he should ever have it in his power. His removal was therefore a heavy judgment upon Israel, who were unworthy of so pious a prince to reign over them; and it was a

king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: 'but what? even now.

15 For ^{the} LORD shall smite Israel, ^{as} a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall ^{root up} Israel out of ^{this} good land which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, ^{because} they have made their groves, ^{provoking} the LORD to anger.

16 And ^{he} shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, ^{who} did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

17 ^{And} Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to ^{Tirzah}: and ^{when} she came to the threshold of the door, the child died:

18. And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, ^{how} he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written ⁱⁿ the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

B. C. 7. 20 And the days which Jeroboam reigned ⁵⁵⁴ were two and twenty years: ^{and} he ^{slept} with his fathers; and ^{Nadab} his son reigned in his stead. [Practical Observations.]

B. C. 7. 21 ^{And} Rehoboam the son of Solomon, ⁷⁵⁵ reigned in Judah. ^{Rehoboam} was forty and one years old when he began to reign; and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, ^{the} city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, ^{to} put his name there: and his mother's name was ^{Naamah} an Ammonitess.

22 And ^{Judah} did evil in the sight of the LORD,

f Ec. 8:11. Ex. 7:2-7. 12:22-28. Jam. 5:9. 2 Pt. 2:3. g 1 Sam. 12:23. 2 Kings 17:6-7. h Matt. 11:7. Luke 7:34. i Deut. 28:38. Ps. 52:5. Prov. 2:23. Am. 2:9. Zeph. 2:4. Matt. 13:13. k Lev. 23:32-34.43. Deut. 4:25; 97. 28:35. 61-68. 29:24-28. Josh. 23:15,16. l 2 Kings 15:29. 17:23. 19:11,12. Am. 5:27. Esth. 7:43. m Ex. 31:13,14. Deut. 12:34. n See on 9:23,24. o Ex. 40:25. Hos. 9:11,12,16,17. p 2 Kings 13:34. 15:30,34. 16:2. Ex. 32:21,35. Jer. 5:31. Hos. 5:11,12. Mic. 6:16. Matt. 18:7. Rom. 14:13. q 15:21,33. 15:6,8,9, 15:23. Josh. 12:24. Cant. 6:4. r See on 12:13. 1 Sam. 2:30-34. 4:18-20. s 30. 2 Chr. 13:2-20. t 29. 15:31. 16:5,14,20,27, 22:39. 1 Chr. 27:24. Esth. 6:1. u See on 2:10. 11:43. v Heb. *lay down*. Job 14:12. Ps. 3:5. 4:5. 15:25-31. y 11:43. 2 Chr. 12:13. 13:7. z See on 8:16,44. 11:36. Ps. 73:69,69. 87:1,2. 132:13,14. Is. 12:6. a See on Ex. 20:24. Deut. 12:5,21. b 1.

the earnest of the entire destruction of Jeroboam's family, and a sort of preparation for it.—It seems, that Israel, though generally apostate, had some sense of Abijah's worth, and of their loss by his death, and sincerely mourned for him. (18. Note, 2 Chr. 35:25-27.)

V. 14. (Notes, Ex. 9:13-16.)—*But what? even now.* That is, 'Do not think that these judgements are distant events; but prepare for them, and consider what will be the consequences if they should come immediately; for they are even now at hand.' In two years after Jeroboam's death, Baasha utterly extirpated his family. (15:25-30.)—Some, however, interpret the clause to mean, that the desolation of Jeroboam's house should merely be an introduction to still greater calamities on Israel.

V. 15, 16. These verses emphatically predict the enfeebled, distracted state of Israel, by continual usurpations, massacres, and civil wars, and the further idolatries into which they were led by their wicked princes, until they were given up finally at the Assyrian captivity.—They were punished for "willingly walking after the commandment" of Jeroboam, to worship the golden calves; and for concurring in his revolt from the house of David, and from the worship of God. (Marg. Ref. p. Notes, Hos. 5:11,12. 8:2-6. 13:10. 11 Mic. 6:16.)

V. 17, 18. (Notes, 12:13.—Tirzah. (17) Marg. Ref. q.

V. 19, 20. (Marg. Ref.) The book, &c. (19) These chronicles, or words of days, or journals, were the public records of the kingdom, from whence extracts seem to have been made by the inspired writers, with such additions as were suited for instruction. If any one wished further to gratify his curiosity, he was referred to the original records; but these have now long since been buried in oblivion. The same may be said of "The book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah," (29) which were the records of that kingdom, and not that part of holy writ which we call the Books of Chronicles. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 11:41. 1 Chr. 29:29,30.)

V. 21. Rehoboam was born one year before David's death: for Solomon reigned only forty years; and having had his education in the best part of his father's reign, he had abundant opportunity of becoming a wiser man than he proved to be. Naamah is supposed to have been the daughter of Shobi, the Ammonite, who was kind to David in Absalom's rebellion; (Note, 2 Sam. 17:27-29.) and Shobi having been proselyted to the religion of Israel, David took his daughter to be the wife of his son Solomon, perhaps out of gratitude for his kindness. David had himself married the daughter of Talmai the king of Geshur; but the character of

and ^{they} provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, ^{above} all that their fathers had done.

23 For they also ^{built} them high places, and ^{images} and ^{groves}, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

24 And ^{there} were also Sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations, which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

25 ^{And} it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, ^{that} Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:

26 And ^{he} took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

27 And king Rehoboam ^{made} in their stead brazen shields, and committed ^{them} unto the hands of the chief of the ^{guard}, and which he did, ^{are} they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

28 And it was so, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into ^{the} guard-chamber.

29 ^{Now} the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, ^{are} they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

30 And ^{there} was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all ^{their} days. [958.]

31 And ^{Rehoboam} slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And ^{his} mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And ^{Abijah} his son reigned in his stead.

Deut. 28:3. 2 Chr. 12:13. c Judge. 3:7,12. 4:1. 2 Kings 17:18. 2 Chr. 12:1. Jer. 3:—11. d See on 8. Deut. 4:24. 29:28. 32:16-21. Ps. 78:58. Is. 65:3,4. 1 Cor. 10:22. e 16:30. 2 Kings 21:1. Jer. 16:47,48. f 3:2. Deut. 12:2. Is. 57:5. Ex. 15:23,20. 23:25. g 1 Cor. standing images, or statues. Lev. 26:31. e Mic. 5:14. Deut. 12:2. 2 Kings 17:5,10. 21:5-7. 2 Chr. 35:4. Jer. 17:2. h 15:12,28. 46. Gen. 19:5. Deut. 23:17. Judg. 19:22. 2 Kings 23:7. Rom. 1:24-27. 1 Cor. 8:1. 9. i 11:30. 2 Chr. 12:2-4. k See on 7:51. 15:18. 2 Kings 24:13. 2 Chr. 12:9-11. Ps. 89:35-45. 110:16,17. 2 Chr. 9:15,16. Prov. 23:6. Ec. 2:15,18. m Lam. 4:1,2. 1 Heb. runners. 1:5. 16:46. 1 Sam. 8:11. 22:12. 2 Sam. 5:31. 2 Chr. 12:11. o See on 18. 11:43. 15:23. 22:45. 2 Chr. 12:15. p 12:24. 15:6,7. q See on 20. 11:43. 15:32. 22:50. 2 Chr. 12:16. r See on 21. s 1 Chr. 3:16. Abin. 2 Chr. 12:16. Abijah. Matt. 1:7. Abia.

Absalom, his son by her, should have cautioned him against such marriages. (Notes, 2 Sam. 3:2-5. 13:37-39. 15:—17.) It is very doubtful whether Naamah ever cordially embraced true religion; and as Solomon worshipped the gods of Ammon among the rest, it has been thought, that she at last became one of his seducers. (Note, 3:1. 11:1-8.)

V. 22-24. It was a most extraordinary circumstance, that, after the priests and Levites, and pious persons from Israel, had settled in Judah, (Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17. 12:1.) Rehoboam and his subjects in general should become more gross idolaters, than the Israelites were. Yet this was actually the case: for they worshipped false gods even more directly than the Israelites; and the groves seem to have been temples erected in shady places, where the most abominable lewdness was practised in honour of their filthy idols. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 9-11. 12:26-29. Lev. 18:21-30.) Thus they far surpassed all their progenitors in abominable idolatries, and emulated the abominations of the devoted Canaanites.

V. 25-28. It is probable that Shishak was excited by Jeroboam, as well as allured by the prospect of an immense booty, in thus making war against Rehoboam. (Note, 11:10.) If, as some learned men suppose, Shishak was the Sesostris of pagan historians, he was a most powerful and formidable conqueror; and Rehoboam, perhaps intimidated by seeing the hand of God so speedily lifted up against him, seems to have tamely surrendered. (Notes, 2 Chr. 12:1-11.) Thus in less than five years from Solomon's death, the temple was plundered, as well as his royal palaces; and Shishak having seized the booty, appears to have relinquished his conquests in Judah.—Rehoboam replaced the golden shields with others made of brass; and the use which he made of these shows for what purposes those of gold had been designed; and intimates, that he still on some occasions attended the worship of God at his temple. (Notes, 7:2. 10:16,17.)

V. 29. Marg. Ref. Note, 19.

V. 30. Rehoboam was not allowed to attack Jeroboam, in the beginning of his reign, and we read of no great battles fought between them: yet by mutual incursions, they molested and weakened each other all their days. (Notes, 12. 21-24. 15:6,7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-20. Parents often suffer and are corrected in the affliction of their children: and on such occasions they should examine their lives, repent of their sins, humble themselves before God, submit to his will, seek help from him, and especially pray that the affliction may be sanctified for the good

CHAPTER XV.

Abijam's wicked reign, 1-7. He dies, and is succeeded by Asa, 8. Asa's good reign, 9-15. In his war with Baasha, he makes a league with Benhadad, king of Syria; compels Baasha to desist from building Ramoth; and with the materials builds Geba and Mizpah, 16-22. He dies, and is succeeded by Jehoshaphat, 23, 24. Nadab's wicked reign over Israel, 25, 26. Baasha slays him, seizes the kingdom, and executes Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam's family, 27-32. Baasha's wicked reign, 33, 34.

NOW ¹Abim in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah.

² Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of ³Abishalom.

³ And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

⁴ Nevertheless, for David's sake did the LORD

a See on 14:31. 2 Chr. 13:1-2. b 13. 2 Chr. 11:20-22. c 2 Chr. 13:2. Michiah the daughter of Uriel. d 2 Chr. 11:21. Abasalom. e 14:21, 22. f See on 3:14. 11:14, 33. 2 Kings 20:3. 2 Chr. 25:2, 31:20, 21. Ps. 119:80. g 11:12, 32. Gen. 12:2. 19:29. 25:5. Deut. 4:37. 2 Sam. 7:12-16. Is. 37:35. Jer. 33:20-26. Rom. 11:13. h 11:35. 2 Chr. 21:7. Ps. 132:17. Luke 1:68-79. 2:32. John 8:12. Rev. 22:16.

of their souls. But sinners are more anxious to know the secret purposes of God, than to understand his revealed will and their own duty: and they are often conscious, that their forms are not to be depended on; but are afraid that others should perceive their convictions, and despise them. They secretly reverence the faithful servants of God: and, having found the truth of some of their words, they have an inward persuasion, that the rest also will be verified; except as they flatter themselves with hopes of escaping the miseries denounced against them. They form, indeed, very erroneous judgments both of God and of his servants; yet they would be glad of help or information in times of trouble, did they not fear rebukes and warnings. They therefore, either keep at a distance, or attempt to impose upon faithful ministers, by disguising their real characters, and pretending kindness to them. Indeed the wisest of men may thus be deceived; but God searches every heart, and often unmasks the hypocrite before the world: he more frequently enables his servants to see through their disguises, and to address them in their real, not their assumed characters; and at last he will expose them to universal shame and contempt before the assembled world. 'What then doth it avail thee, thou deceiver, to attempt imposing upon men? "Why feignest thou thyself to be another" person? In vain dost thou expect an answer of peace, while thou continuest in sin. The ministers of Christ are all sent to thee with heavy tidings: thine attempt to impose on them, or to bribe them by presents, does but increase thy guilt: they will not thus be diverted from giving thee faithful reproofs and awful warnings; and the event will shortly inform thee of the purpose of God concerning thee; the foreknowledge of which, would only augment thy misery, except thou repent of all thy wickedness, and turn to the Lord in uprightness of heart.'—Every providential favour demands a return of grateful obedience, and aggravates future transgression; and thus prosperous sinners accumulate guilt and wrath, with a rapidity proportioned to their abused mercies. (*Note, Rom. 2:4-6.*)—When men have witnessed, and have even gained by, the wrath of God against the sins of other men, and yet imitate and exceed them in iniquity; they may expect to be visited with more tremendous vengeance; and as they dishonour him by their crimes, he will disgrace them in their punishment.—A man is not indeed affected by the indignity shown to his dead body, or even by the miseries of his posterity; yet the prospect may torment his mind while he lives: such judgments form a proper emblem of the punishment of the wicked after death; and they strongly express the abhorrence and indignation of God for a warning to others.—Instruments will readily be found, among the depraved sons of men, for the most bloody and savage acts of inhumanity: but the circumstance of their being advanced to power by the providence of God, who overrules their crimes to the accomplishment of his own righteous purposes, forms no excuse for their ambition and cruelty.—Impenitent sinners often flatter themselves, that threatened judgments are very distant, when they are even at the door; and excuse themselves, because they were persuaded or frightened into compliance.—Awful indeed will be the doom of those who employ their abilities and authority to make others sin; for thousands will for ever execrate some of them, as the causes of their eternal perdition. They, however, who yield to temptation, follow bad examples, and obey sinful commands, will provoke the Lord to give them up, and cast them off, unless they deeply repent of their iniquity.—The Lord deals with men according to their *habitual character*: and he will not mention against the upright believer, who has cordially followed him, those incidental sins of which he has repented, and for which he has patiently borne correction.—To show the power and sovereignty of his grace, he frequently reserves an individual or two out of the worst of families, in whom there is "some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel." The fruits of his grace he peculiarly delights in, when they flourish from the hearts of the young and the affluent, and of those who are surrounded with contagious examples and instruc-

his God b'give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem:

⁵ Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

⁶ And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

⁷ Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

⁸ And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

**Or, candle. Ps. 132:13. 1 Ps. 87:5. Is. 9:7. 14:32. 62:7. Jer. 53:2. Mic. 4:1, 2. Matt. 16:18. J See on 3. 14:8. 2 Kings 22:2. 2 Chr. 34:2. Ps. 119:6. Luke 1:6. Acts 13:22, 26. k 2 Sam. 11:4, 15-17. 12:9, 10. Ps. 51: title. l See on 14:30. m See on 14:29. 2 Chr. 13:2, 21, 22. n 2 Chr. 13:3-20. o See on 14:31. 2 Chr. 14:1. p 1 Chr. 3:10. Matt. 1:7, 5.*

tions. When such young persons are spared, they prove blessings to their families and connexions; but their premature death forebodes awful judgments, and may well be mourned over as a public calamity. But they "are taken away from the evil to come," and their death can never be a loss to themselves.

V. 21-31. No wonder that they, who live at a distance from the ordinances of God, are hardened in iniquity; when such as are most favoured provoke him to jealousy by their crimes, and are uninfluenced by his judgments, mercies, warnings, and promises.—The perpetration of the worst crimes, of the worst of the heathen, in Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen for his temple and worship; and at present in this favoured land and city; demonstrates, that nothing can render the heart of fallen man holy, but the special sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit: on this alone may we depend; for this may we daily pray, in behalf of ourselves and of all around us!—But sin quickly enfeebls, impoverishes, and disgraces the most prosperous nations; and when holiness, the real glory of a religious profession, is gone, all external splendour will follow it, or become worthless. Yet many, who live in gross wickedness, keep up a formal attendance upon divine ordinances, and are pleased with an ostentatious imitation of the usages of better times; which have lost all their intrinsic value, and retain nothing, except the external glitter that amuses weak and carnal minds.—Death still marches his solemn round, and conveys monarchs from their thrones, as well as peasants from their cottages. Happy are they, and they alone, who possess the "lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance," in that world, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest!"

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1-3. (*Marg. Ref. a, b. Note, 9.*) There is no sufficient ground for the opinion, that Maachah was the daughter of Absalom the son of David (*Marg. Ref. c, d.*) She is called "Miciah the daughter of Uriel," in Chronicles.—His heart was not perfect, &c. (3) *Marg. Ref. f. Note, 14.*—As Abijam, though a wicked man, was a professed worshipper of JEHOVAH, he is called "the LORD his God." (*Note, 2 Chr. 28:5.*)

V. 4. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Abijam, and others of David's race; they were for his sake, continued as "a lamp in Jerusalem." (*Notes, 11:12, 13, 34—36, v. 36.*) and they were made highly useful, both to establish the civil state of that city, and to maintain the true worship of God in it; when the light of divine truth was extinguished in almost all other places of the earth.

V. 5. *Save only, &c.* Many other parts of David's conduct were evidently faulty: but in this instance alone he acted so inconsistently with his profession, in all respects, as otherwise it could scarcely have been conceived that a truly pious man could have done. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 11:*)—Those who know the human heart, and the state of a believer in this world of conflict and temptation, will never expect to see in mere man a character and conduct free from blemish and criminality; though they observe many preserved from falling, or from continuing long, under the power of notorious evils. David, however, deeply repented of this part of his conduct; and to the close of his life he showed himself to be the upright and devoted servant and worshipper of the Lord, and in no instance turned aside to idolatry, or countenanced it in his subjects. (*Notes, 11:1-8, conclusion. 1 Chr. 28: 29: Ps. 51:*)

V. 6, 7. God vouchsafed to continue the royal authority over Judah in the family of David: yet, instead of ruling over Israel also, as David and Solomon had done, both Rehoboam and Abijam were harassed by perpetual wars with Jeroboam the king of Israel. Rehoboam left this unnatural war, after it had lasted all his days, to his son Abijam, who obtained a most decisive victory over Jeroboam, but died soon after. (*Notes, 14:30. 2 Chr. 13:3-22.*)

V. 9. Abijam began to reign during the eighteenth year of Jeroboam; he reigned through his nineteenth year, and he died before the close of his twentieth, when Asa succeeded him. Thus Abijam is said, according to the Hebrew idiom,

9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

10 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

11 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.

12 And he took away the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

13 And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.

14 But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.

15 And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels. [Practical Observations.]

16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

17 And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; and delivered them into the hand of his servants; and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

19 There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

20 So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-bethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.

21 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah.

22 Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted: and

they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

23 The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

24 And Asa slept with his fathers, and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

26 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

27 And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.

28 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

29 And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:

30 Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

32 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.

34 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

* That is, grandmother's, 2:13. 2 Chr. 11:20, 21, 13:2. q 3. 2 Chr. 14:2, 11, 15:17, 15:7-10. r See on 14:24. 22:46. Rom. 1:26, 27, Jude 7. s 11, 7:8, 14:23. 2 Chr. 14:25, 15:5. Ex. 30:18, 19. Zech. 1:2-6. 1 Pet. 1:18. 1:2, 10. 2 Chr. 15:16. u Deut. 13:6-11, 38:9. Zech. 13:3. Matt. 10:37, 12:46-50. v 2 Cor. 5:18. Gal. 2:5, 6, 14. 1 Heb. cut off. Lev. 26:30. Deut. 7:5. 2 Kings 18:4, 23:12-15. 2 Chr. 34:4. v Ex. 34:20. Deut. 9:21. Josh. 6:24. x 2 Sam. 15:23. 2 Kings 22:6. John 18:1. Cedron. y 22:43. 2 Kings 12:3, 14:4, 15:4. 2 Chr. 14:3, 5, z 8:11, 11:4. 2 Chr. 15:17, 16:9, 25:2. a See on 7:51. 1 Chr. 26:26-28. 2 Chr. 14:13, 15:18. 1 Heb. holy things. b 5:7, 32, 14:30. 2 Chr. 16:1. c c 27. 2 Chr. 16:1. d 21. Josh. 18:45. 1 Sam. 15:34. Jer. 31:15. e 12:27. 2 Chr. 11:13-17. 15:14, 26:2. 2 Kings 12:18, 18:15, 16. 2 Chr. 15:18. 16:2-6. g 20:1-5, 33, 31. 2 Kings 8:7-15. h 11:23, 24. Gen. 14:15, 15:2. Jer. 49:27. Am. 1:4. 12 Chr. 19:

2, Is. 31:1. k 2 Sam. 21:2. 2 Chr. 16:3. Ex. 17:13-16. Rom. 1:31, 3:8. s Heb. go up. 12 Kings. 15:29, m 12:29. Gen. 14:14. Judg. 18:29. n 2 Sam. 20:14, 15. o Josh. 11:2, 12:3. p 2 Chr. 16:5. q 14:17, 16:15-18. Cant. 6:4. r 2 Chr. 16:8. s Heb. free. s Josh. 19:24. 2 Kings 14:17. 1 Josh. 18:25. 1 Sam. 7:5. Micah. Jer. 40:10. u 7, 8, 14:29-31. x 2 Chr. 16:12-14. Ps. 90:10. y 22:41-45. 2 Chr. 17:1. Matt. 1:8. Josephat. z 14:12, 20. 1 Heb. reigned. a 16:7, 25, 30, h 12:28-31. 13:33, 34. c 30, 34. 14:16, 16:19, 26, 21:22, 22:52. Gen. 20:9. Ex. 32:21. 1 Sam. 2:24. 2 Kings 3:3. 21:11, 23:15. Jer. 22:33. Rom. 14:15. 1 Cor. 8:4. 1-1. d See on 16:17. e 16:9. 2 Kings 12:30. f 16:15, 17. Josh. 19:4. 21:2. g Deut. 32:35. h 14:10-14. 2 Kings 9:7-10, 36, 37, 10:10, 11:31, 19:23. i See on 28, 14:9-15. 14:19, 16:5, 14:20, 27. k See on 16. 116:8. m 26. n See on 28, 12:29, 23, 13:33, 14:16.

to have reigned "three years," in the same manner as Christ is said to have risen after "three days." Thus also Nadab began to reign in the second year of Asa, and reigned two years: yet Baasha succeeded him in the third year of Asa. (28) This is the way, in which the computation of the years between the two kingdoms may be made to coincide: for, in the numerous successions in the kingdom of Israel, the same year is frequently twice reckoned; both to him who reigned in its commencement, and to him who succeeded before the close of it.

V. 10-13. Maachah was Asa's grandmother, but probably his own mother was dead, and Maachah had brought him up: (Notes, 1-3, 2 Chr. 11:18-23.) he however deprived her of authority, and removed her from court, for her idolatry, which he entirely suppressed.—The words translated, "from being queen," may be rendered, from the queen, namely, lest Maachah should seduce Asa's queen also into idolatry.—Idols. (12) יללים. Dungy gods. Deut. 29:17. marg. Note, Lev. 26:30. Σειβάλα. Phil. 3:5.

An idol. (13) יללים. Which imports something of terror and horror, either because it was of a frightful aspect, or brought dreadful judgments on its worshippers. Bp. Patrick.

V. 14. Was perfect, &c.] This may be opposed to the external good behaviour, and the insincere and divided heart of hypocrites; and may signify that Asa was cordially devoted to the service and worship of God all his days; and that his sins arose from infirmity, not from presumptuous, deliberate wickedness. (Notes, 5, 17-24. 2 Chr. 16: Ps. 19: 12-14.) But some explain it to mean no more, than that he

never turned aside from the worship of God to idolatry, as Solomon had done.—He had not, however, zeal and resolution enough to suppress the high places, on which the people sacrificed to the Lord, instead of coming to the temple; though he destroyed the idols out of the land. (Notes, 3: 2-4.)

V. 15. It seems that Abijam, in his war with Jeroboam, had made some vow of dedicating the spoil to God, which he did not live to perform. But Asa fulfilled it, as well as a similar vow of his own. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 27:28, 29. 2 Chr. 14:9-15.)

V. 16-22. (25-31.) The conduct of Asa evidently arose from unbelief, and was very criminal in itself. It was wholly wrong to tempt Ben-hadad to "break his league" with the king of Israel; and still worse to hire him to it with the consecrated treasures of the temple; and the calamities and miseries brought by Ben-hadad's invasions on the inhabitants of the cities in the northern part of the land, were very great. This occurred in the latter years of Asa's reign.—Baasha's policy was not unlike the impious devices of Jeroboam: (Note, 12:26-29.) but God could have turned it into foolishness, without Asa opposing it by a policy not more justifiable. (Notes, 2 Chr. 16:1-10.)

V. 23, 24. Marg. Ref. Notes, 14:19. 2 Chr. 16:12-14.

V. 27. Gibbethon.] Marg. Ref. Note, 16:15.

V. 29, 30. No doubt Baasha left the dead bodies of Jeroboam's family unburied, as it had been predicted. (Notes, 14:9-14.) It is also referred to as a well-known fact in subsequent passages. (16:3, 4, 21:22-24.) Baasha, however,

CHAPTER XVI.

Jehu, the prophet, predicts the ruin of Baasha's family, 1-4. Baasha dies, and is succeeded by his son Elah, 5-7. Zimri slays Elah, succeeds him, and fulfils Jehu's prophecy, 8-14. Omri usurps the kingdom, and besieges Tirzah, who burns himself in the palace, 15-20. Tibni opposes Omri, who prevails against him, 21, 22. Omri builds Samaria, reigns very wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by Ahab, 23-28. Ahab's excessive wickedness and idolatry, as instigated by his wife Jezebel, 29-33. Joshua's curse on him that should rebuke Jericho, is fulfilled on Hiel, 34.

THEN the word of the LORD came to ¹Jehu the son of ²Hanani against Baasha, saying,

2 Forasmuch as ¹I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and ²thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and ³hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

3 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and ¹I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

4 Him that dieth of Baasha in the city ¹shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

a 7, 2 Chr. 19:2, 20:34. b 2 Chr. 16:7-10. c 14:7. 1 Sam. 2:8, 27:28, 15:17-19. 2 Sam. 12:7-11. Ps. 113:7-8. Luke 1:52. d See on 13:33, 34. 15:34. e See on 14:16. 15:28. Ex. 32:21. 1 Sam. 2:24, 26:19. f 11, 12. 14:10. 15:29, 30, 21:21-34. 1a. 66:21. Jer. 22:19. g See on 14:11. h See on 14:18. 15:31. 14:20. 15:24. j 8, 13, 14. k See on 1:2. l Ps. 115:4. 1s. 2:3. 44:9-20. m 14:14. 15:

only sought to secure himself in the kingdom by this cruelty, and therefore he imitated Jeroboam in his idolatry and other impieties. (34. *Notes*, 16:2-7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. Even a superficial acquaintance with the divine law may enable us to perceive evident defects, in the conduct of eminent believers; and man's natural enmity to God and his servants disposes him to delight in severely animadverting on them: yet if the habitual conduct of the righteous, towards God and man, be impartially contrasted with that of unbelievers, the difference is very visible, and they appear to be of another spirit, and far more excellent than their neighbours. But when the secret desires and good works of the righteous, and the secret evils of the hearts and lives of ungodly men, shall be made manifest at the day of judgment; the glory of the divine justice and mercy will be displayed to the whole world, in the allotment of their everlasting portion of happiness or misery. (*Note*, *Mal.* 3:13-18.) The general conduct of the Lord's servants may therefore be held forth as an example for imitation: and numbers are blessed on their account, both while they live, and after they are gone to their rest. But alas! even children, who have been favoured and spared for their parents' sake, often forsake their righteous ways; and but few, especially in superior stations, or among kings and rulers, have hitherto served God in uprightness of heart. He has, however, still taken care of his cause; while those, who ought to have been servicable to it, have perished in their sins: and the Son of David will continue a Light to his church, to establish it in truth and righteousness, to the end of time, and for ever. (*Note*, *Rev.* 21:22-27.)—It is happy for nations, when wicked rulers are speedily removed; and when the righteous come in their stead, and are long preserved, "to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord."—Those who would please him, and promote reformation, must prefer his glory to the reputation of every friend or relative: nay, they must oppose the crimes even of their own parents, though this may seem a reflection upon the memory of the deceased, or a slight put upon the characters of the living. Nor may any age, sex, or relative tie, induce such as are intrusted with authority, to allow those to possess power or influence, who abuse it to the dishonour of God, and to promote idolatry, superstition, or ungodliness; and in every situation our duty to him must have the precedence over all other duties. (*Notes*, *Matt.* 10:37-39. *Luke* 14:25-27.) How absurd then is it, to be satisfied with a religion, merely because our fathers professed it! for indeed that reason, if allowed to be valid, would generally prove that men ought to continue in idolatry, superstition, and immorality. (*Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Pet.* 1:17-21.)—Every reformation upon earth has hitherto been defective: the utmost attainment of fallen man has been an upright and persevering endeavour to glorify God; and this meets with his merciful acceptance, by faith in Jesus Christ.

V. 16-34. Even true believers find it very difficult in times of urgent danger, "to trust in the LORD with all their heart, and not to lean to their own understanding;" and unbelief proportionably makes way for carnal policy. This has often induced Christians to call in the help of the enemies of God in their contests with their brethren; to spend that time and substance to obtain their favour, which ought to have been devoted to the Lord's service; and to tempt others to behave deceitfully or cruelly. Such evils have frequently disgraced religious disputes: the victories thus acquired have weakened the common cause, and ended in shame and bitterness: and some, who once shone bright in the meridian of the church, have been thus covered with a dark cloud toward the close of their days. May God help us to follow after peace, and those things, where with one may

5 Now ¹the rest of ²the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

6 So ¹Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and ²Elah his son reigned in his stead.

7 And also by ¹the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger ²with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and ³because he killed him.

8 ¹In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah, began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

9 And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, ¹conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, ²drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, ³steward of his house in Tirzah.

27-29. 2 Kings 10:30, 31. 1s. 10:6-7. Hos. 1:4. Acts 2:22. 4:27, 28. n 15:27. 2 Kings 9:14. 12:20. 15:10, 25, 30. o 20:16. 1 Sam. 25:36-38. 2 Sam. 13:23, 29. Prov. 23:29-35. Jer. 51:57. Dan. 5:1-4, 30. Nah. 1:10. Hab. 2:15, 16. Matt. 24:49-51. Luke 21:34. * Heb. which was over. Gen. 15:2. 24:2, 10. 39:4, 9.

edify another," that our "path may shine more and more bright unto the perfect day."¹—But after all, how much happier are those who are connected with godly people, than such as have their lot cast among the profane and wicked! (*Note*, 16:21, 22.)—Wretched is it for others, but most so for themselves, when children inherit the vices, with the estates, of their wicked parents: their temporal calamities may arise from the sins of their fathers; but "the wrath to come" will be the recompense of their own crimes.—Ungodly men execute the just judgment of God upon each other, whilst gratifying their own ambition, avarice, or revenge; and at the same time they ripen for sower vengeance, by imitating the sins of those whom they have supplanted. Many suffer, and many are induced to commit iniquity, by such rulers and usurpers. But in the midst of all these enormities, and this apparent confusion, the Lord is carrying on his universal plan: and when it shall be fully completed, all rational and holy creatures, and all the company of redeemed sinners, will perceive, admire, and adore the glorious justice, wisdom, truth, and mercy, displayed in every part of it through all the ages of eternity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1. Hanani, the father of Jehu, was a prophet, as well as his son. (*Note*, 2 Chr. 16:7-10.) Jehu was a young man at this time, and he continued for many years employed by the Lord, and useful to his people. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. 19:2. 20:31-34.)—Thus a succession of prophets was raised up in the nation of Israel, through every generation, till the advent of Christ approached. (*Preface to Malachi*.)

V. 2. The conduct of Baasha, in conspiring against Nadab, and murdering him and Jeroboam's family, was highly criminal. But the success of his conspiracy, and his advancement from a very low condition, to the throne of Israel, were from the Lord; whose benefits aggravated the guilt of his subsequent idolatry and wickedness. (*Note*, 2 Sam. 12:8.)—God acknowledged Israel as his people, notwithstanding their apostasy, because they professed themselves his worshippers; because there were many believers in the land, and because he intended to maintain religion among them, and not utterly to cast them off. This also was an aggravation of Baasha's sin; that being, by Providence, made prince over the Lord's people, he employed his authority in causing them to sin against him.

V. 3-6. (*Notes*, 14:5-14.) Baasha was not slain, but died and was buried; Jeroboam also died: but the threatenings were executed on his whole family and posterity.

I will take away. (3) *בִּמְהֵרָה*: *I will consume as by fire.*

V. 7. It is likely that Jehu was sent from Judah, of which kingdom he seems to have been, and delivered his message to Baasha, as the man of God did to Jeroboam. (*Notes*, 13:1-6. 2 Chr. 16:7-10. 19:2.)—*Killed him.*—Baasha destroyed Jeroboam in his posterity, by cruelly murdering them all. God had not commanded him to do this, though he had predicted that it should be done. Baasha was actuated by his own ambition and other selfish passions; and therefore deserved punishment, though he fulfilled the righteous purposes of God. (*Notes*, 2 Kings 10:29-31. 1s. 10:5-15. Hos. 1:4, 5. Acts 2:22-24.)

V. 8-14. Baasha began to reign in the third year of Asa, and he reigned twenty-four years, yet he died, and was succeeded by Elah, in the twenty-sixth year of Asa. Thus, it is evident, that a part of the third year of Asa, after Baasha came to the throne, is calculated as a whole year. (*Note*, 15:9.) In like manner Elah, who began to reign in the twenty-sixth year of Asa, and was killed in the twenty-seventh, is said to have reigned two years, that is a part of two years.—The sentence denounced against the house of Baasha, greatly resembles that denounced against Jeroboam

10 And ²²⁰Zimri went in, and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.

a. c.] 11 And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, ²²¹that he slew all the house of Baasha: ²²²he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, ²²³neither of his kinsfolks nor of his friends.

12 Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, ²²⁴according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha ²²⁵by Jehu the prophet,

13 For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, ²²⁶are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

[Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign ²²⁷seven days in Tirzah. And the people ²²⁸were encamped against Gibbethon, which ²²⁹belonged to the Philistines.

16 And the people ²³⁰that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made ²³¹Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.

17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they ²³²besieged Tirzah.

18 And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, ²³³and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

19 For his sins which he sinned ²³⁴in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and ²³⁵in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin.

20 Now ²³⁶the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his reason that he wrought, ²³⁷are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

¶ 21 Then were the people of Israel ²³⁸divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

23 ¶ In the thirty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, began Omri to reign over Israel, ²³⁹twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemei for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called ²⁴⁰the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, ²⁴¹Samaria.

25 But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and ²⁴²did worse than all that were before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with ²⁴³their vanities.

27 Now ²⁴⁴the rest of the acts of Omri, which he did, and his might that he showed, ²⁴⁵are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri ²⁴⁶slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned ²⁴⁷in his stead.

29 ¶ And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah, began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel fifteen years.

30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD ²⁴⁸above all that were before him.

31 And it came to pass, ²⁴⁹as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he ²⁵⁰took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and ²⁵¹served Baal, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in ²⁵²the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33. And Ahab ²⁵³made a grove; and Ahab

p 2 Kings 9:31. q 15. r 15:29, Judg. 1:7. s See on 14:10. 1 Sam. 25:22, 34. t Or, both his kinsmen and his friends. 1 See on 1-4. 1 Heb. by the hand of. 7. 14:18. 2 Kings 14:25. 2 Chr. 10:15. Prov. 26:6. q Deut. 32:21. 1 Sam. 12:21. 2 Kings 17:15. 14:41. 2 Jer. 10:3-5, 8-15. Jon. 2:8. 1 Cor. 8:4. 10:19, 20. v See on 5. x 2 Kings 9:31. Job 20:5. Ps. 37:35, 36. y 15:27. Josh 19:44, 21:23. z 30. 2 Kings 8:26. 2 Chr. 22:2. a King. 6:16. b Judg. 9:45, 50, 56, 57. c 2 Kings 6:24, 25. 18:2-12. 25:1-4. Luke 19:43, 44. d 16:1. 9:54. 1 Sam. 31:4. e 5 Sam. 17:23. 2 Kings 2:9, 10. Matt. 27:15. f 13:13. 15:30. 16:9. 16:30. g 11. d See on 12:24. 14:16. 15:25. e 5:14, 27. 14:19. 15:31. 22:33. f 2:29. 15:25, 28. Prov. 28:2. 1a. 9:18-21. 19:2. Matt. 12:25. 1 Cor. 1:12, 13. Eph. 4:4-5. g 8.

and his family: and both Jeroboam and Baasha died in peace; while Nadab and Elah, their sons, were slain within two years, and the posterity of each of them was entirely and ignominiously extirpated! But Baasha's friends likewise were involved in the same ruin: and Zimri executed the sentence of the prophet with great rapidity; though he meant not so.—*Drunk.* (9) *Marg. Ref. o.*

V. 15. The death of Nadab had before prevented the prosecution of the siege of Gibbethon: (15:27, 28.) and it was the second time interrupted by the murder of Elah, who stayed at home to indulge himself while his army was besieging that city.—Gibbethon lay in the lot of Dan, but it was given to the Levites. (Josh. 19:44. 21:23.) The Philistines, however, had got possession of it, during the distractions which prevailed in Israel.

V. 17-19. The army, which besieged Gibbethon, having made their commander Omri king, by military election; and Omri having left the siege of Gibbethon, to make war against Zimri in Tirzah; Zimri, finding his cause desperate, afraid of falling alive into the hands of his enemies, and perhaps envying his competitor the possession of that palace and those riches which he had coveted, burnt himself, with the palace and all its treasures. He was driven to this extremity, and left to this desperation, by the righteous judgment of God, for his sins: as in the space of seven days he had murdered all the posterity and relations of Baasha; and had manifested his determination to support the worship of the golden calves. (Note, 2 Kings 9:30-37.)

V. 21, 22. The army, encamped before Gibbethon, chose Omri, their commander, king: but it seems either that some of them were afterwards disgusted by him; or that the principal persons, who were absent, disapproved of this measure, and set up Tibni against him.—As the war lasted six years, (Note, 23.) numbers no doubt were cut off on both sides, before the contest ended with the death of Tibni.

So Tibni, &c. (22) How much is contained in this concise sentence! and similar contests continually terminate in the same manner. It is an epitome especially of the history of civil wars.

29. h 13:32. 18:2. 20:1. 22:37. 2 Kings 17:1, 6, 24. John 4:4, 5. Acts 8:5-8. i Heb. Shomeran. 1 30:31, 33. 14:9. Mic. 6:16. j 2:7, 19. 12:35-33. 13:33, 34. k See on 13. Ps. 30:6. Jer. 19:10, 13, 14, 22. 16:19. 18:15. Act. 11:15. Rom. 1:21-23. 1:5, 11, 24, 15:31. m See on 6. n See on 24. o 25:31, 33. 14:9. 21:25. 2 Kings 9:32. s Heb. was it a light thing, &c. p Gen. 30:15. Num. 16:9. 18:7, 13. Ez. 8:17. 16:30, 47. 34:18. q Gen. 6:2. Dent. 7:3, 4. Josh. 23:12, 13. Rn. 13:23-29. r 16:4, 19. 19:12. 21:5-14, 25. 2 Kings 9:30-37. Rev. 2:20. s 11:1. Judg. 10:12. 18:7. t See on 11:4-8. u 21:25. Judg. 2:11. 3:7. 10:6. 2 Kings 10:18. 17:16. x 2 Kings 10:21, 26, 27. y Ez. 34:13. 2 Kings 13:6. 17:16. 21:3. Jer. 17:2.

V. 23. *Twelve, &c.*] Twelve years elapsed between the death of Zimri and that of Omri; namely from the beginning of the twenty-seventh, to the end of the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign. But probably half that time had been spent in civil war between Omri and Tibni; and the thirty-first year of Asa was nearly concluded, when Omri obtained the undisputed possession of the throne; from which time he reigned six complete years.—Thus, whilst Israel was torn to pieces by intestine commotions, conspiracies, massacres, and the succession of one usurper to another, who were all monsters of iniquity, and all destroyed the families, friends, and adherents of the murdered king; Judah was quietly governed by one pious prince, who began to reign in the days of Jeroboam, survived Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri, and lived till the fourth year of Ahab. The revolt of Israel therefore proved to be mainly their own loss. (Note, 12:16.)

V. 24. It is probable, that the burning of the palace at Tirzah, by Zimri, induced Omri to this measure.—It is conjectured that Shemer sold this estate at a low price, upon condition of having the city to be built on it, called by his name. From this city the whole surrounding country was called Samaria, or Shomeran: and sometimes the whole kingdom of the ten tribes is thus called, after Samaria became the capital city. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 30-33. Omri had done worse than all that had been before him, and probably had enforced the worship of the golden calves with greater strictness and severity: (25:26,) but it seemed a light thing to Ahab to tread in his steps, or in those of Jeroboam; (Note, Ez. 16:44-47.) for, without any political inducement, he proceeded to still grosser idolatries. He had a rooted enmity to the worship of JEHOVAH, and to every thing which related to it; and he married Jezebel, a zealous and furious worshipper of Baal, on purpose, as it seems, to have her counsel and assistance in supplanting the worship of the Lord, and even of the golden calves; and in establishing that of Baal throughout the land.

Ethbaal, &c. (31) Called in profane writers Ithobalus. Bp. Patriick. His name was taken from the idō ²⁵⁴ch ho worshipped.

*did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

34 ¶ In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

* 21:19, 22, 26, 8. a Josh. 6:26, 23:14, 15. Zech. 1:5, 6. Matt. 21:35. * Heb. *Elijahu*. Matt. 11:14, 16:14, 27:47, 49. Luke 1:17, 4:25, 26, 9:30, 33, 54. John

An altar for Baal, &c. (32) Jeroboam and his successors professed to consider the golden calves, as representatives of the God of Israel. (*Note*, 12:26—29.) But Ahab more directly and expressly worshipped other gods. (*Note*, 2 Kings 10:18, 28.)—*A grove*. (33) *Marg. Ref. v. Notes*, 2 Kings 17:16, 21:3.

V. 34. (*Note*, Josh. 6:26.) Four hundred and forty years had passed since this word had been spoken; and the exact accomplishment of it, after so long a period, was a solemn warning to the people, to expect the fulfilment of all the curses denounced against them, in case of their idolatry, by Moses and Joshua. (*Notes*, Deut. 4:25—28. Josh. 23:13—16.)—This account illustrates the daring spirit of rebellion against God, which prevailed in those wretched times. Hiel, inured to idolatry at Beth-el, set the curse of God at defiance: and, though his eldest son died when he laid the foundation of Jericho, he scorned to be intimidated, or to desist from his undertaking; till, when he completed the work, his youngest son died also; and the rest of his children, as it is supposed, in the intermediate space of time.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14. We do not well understand the rules, and plans of wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, by which God governs nations and individuals; (*Note*, Ps. 97:2.) yet we may draw general instructive conclusions from this history. Frequently the Lord warns before he punishes: and they, who are not induced to repentance, are rendered more inexcusable in their wickedness. By whatever means men are advanced to authority; their exaltation is from the Lord, they are bound to use it in his service, and are liable to severe punishment for the abuse of it: yet they must also give an account to God, for the crimes committed in order to obtain the dangerous pre-eminence. The same observations hold good in respect of wealth, and every other temporal distinction.—God is greatly displeased with those who in any way tempt others to commit iniquity: but he is especially provoked by those, who seduce his professing people to apostasy, or true believers to conceal or disgrace their profession: persecutors, therefore, will be answerable for all the sins to which they tempt men by the dread of punishment, as well as for all the injustice which they commit, and the blood which they shed.—Those who follow the examples of such as have been awfully punished for their sins, may expect to be overtaken with similar vengeance: and many very wicked men have been men of might and renown, have built cities, and perpetuated their memories in the annals of history; but they have no name in the book of life, and stand condemned in the word of God.—The impunity of the principal culprits, while their children, relatives, or helpers suffer for their crimes, loudly declares the approaching day of judgment, and the more exact discrimination of characters, and distribution of rewards and punishments, which shall then take place.—No crime more degrades and exposes a man than drunkenness: and they who sit down with the intention of “drinking themselves drunk” or are persuaded to do so, should recollect how easily they may be murdered in such a state; in how many ways they may be hurried before the tribunal of God; and what an awful thing it would be, to meet their Judge in such a situation. And when rulers and great men spend their time in intemperate indulgence, instead of attending to the duties of their station, it bodes ill to the public and to themselves. (*Notes*, Esth. 3:12—15. Prov. 31:4—7. Ec. 10:16—19.)

V. 15—34. Wicked men accomplish the purposes of God without intending it; and their injustice and cruelty towards each other display his righteousness, while they illustrate the desperate wickedness of the heart of man.—When they are hurried on by their vile passions, and have got the power into their hands, they often perpetrate much wickedness in a little time: and thus they speedily fill up their measure, and hasten the vengeance of God upon themselves. Whether they destroy themselves, or are murdered by others, the ruin is brought upon them by sinning against the Lord: even in death they frequently show the predominancy of their pride, envy, and malice; and thus are driven away into the eternal world, not only under condemnation as sinners, but under the dominating power of most diabolical dispositions, being “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.” From such a death, good Lord deliver us!—In all cases the triumphing of the ungodly is short; and for the wickedness of nations may we see their princes. When tyrants hastily succeed one another, with massacres, conspiracies, and civil wars; and when every one is worse than all that went before him; we may be sure that the Lord has a controversy with the people for their sins: and they are loudly called to repentance and reformation. Indeed, those who forsake God, will generally be left to plague

CHAPTER XVII.

Elijah foretells to Ahab a long and excessive drought; and is sent by God to the brook Cherith, and fed by ravens, 1—7. He is afterwards sent to Zarephath, and sustained by a widow-woman, whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil do not fail, 8—16. Her son dies, but is restored to life in answer to Elijah's prayer, whom she fully believes to be sent by God, 17—24.

AND Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there

1:21, 25. Rom. 11:2. *Elihu*. a 22:14, 2 Kings 3:14, 5:16. Is. 49:18. Matt. 7:29 Luke 1:17. b Deut. 10:8. Jer. 15:19. Luke 1:19, 21:36. Acts 27:23.

one another: they, who seek not rest in his service, will always be unsettled and uneasy; and when his professed people quarrel with each other, their enemies will always be gainers.—Intermarriages with daring offenders greatly embolden men's minds in wickedness, and hurry them on to the greatest excesses.—The progress of iniquity must be from bad to worse; it seems a light thing to notorious sinners to walk in the steps of their predecessors; and they are often ambitious of distinguishing themselves, and of expressing their enmity and contempt of God, in ways before unheard of. Hence so many newly invented oaths, blasphemies, superstitions, and species of false religion; as well as new refinements in licentiousness and immorality.—When princes set the example of rebellion against God, their subjects will often ambitiously emulate them, and thus ungodliness becomes a test of loyalty, and a kind of fashionable accomplishment: nor will any warnings daunt the stout spirits of presumptuous sinners till wrath come upon them to the uttermost. But they, who despise the denunciations of God's word, will certainly know his truth in them by their own dreadful experience.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1. The most illustrious prophet Elijah was raised up, in the reign of the most wicked among the kings of Israel: and he is brought to our notice in a very abrupt manner. Nothing is recorded either of his parentage, education, or previous manner of life. He is called “the Tishbite,” but it is not agreed, whether this title was taken from the place where he lived, or given him because he was the reformer of Israel: for the word may signify a convert. He was of the inhabitants of Gilead, beyond Jordan; but we know not of which tribe. His name signifies, *The LORD my God is He*. This might imply that JEHOVAH, the true God, would stand by him in the perilous services to which he was called, in opposing the worship of false gods.—It may be supposed, that Elijah had previously warned Ahab to forsake his idolatry, and that he had treated his message with contempt: at length therefore, he declared, and confirmed it with a solemn oath by the LORD God of Israel, before whom he stood, (as his servant acting by his authority,) that there should be neither rain nor dew for years, but according to his word; that is, until he came again, and foretold its coming, and prayed for it. The expression, “As the LORD God of Israel liveth,” intimated that the idols of the heathen were lifeless stocks, and could not help their worshippers.—The duration of this drought was three years and a half; and the effects must have been inexpressibly calamitous. (*Marg. Ref. c.*) One whole year, without rain or dew, would afflict this land more terribly than it can be conceived: but in much less than three years and a half nearly all the cattle must be destroyed, and most of the inhabitants would be either dead or migrated into other countries. Yet the bulk of Israel continued mad upon their idols, throughout this most tremendous calamity! It was sent in answer to the prophet's prayer, which probably he offered in Ahab's hearing: and the judgment was intended to be a demonstration, that Baal could not defend his worshippers against the indignation of JEHOVAH. The glory of God and the interests of true religion were therefore so greatly concerned in this decision, which was needful in order to prevent the utter apostasy and rejection of Israel, that the prophet might present this petition in wise zeal, and true benevolence; and doubtless he was immediately instructed by the Lord to do so. The benefit of the calamity would abundantly outweigh the miseries: for though many were hardened, yet doubtless numbers were eventually brought to repentance, and made to embrace and continue steadfast in the service of the true God. (*Note*, Jam. 5:16—18.)

V. 2, 3. Elijah was commanded to conceal himself, not only to avoid the persecuting rage of Ahab instigated by Jezebel, but as an additional judgment upon the Israelites. The Lord did not intend to shorten the term of the calamity, and he would not have his servant pray for it and be denied. (*Notes*, Jer. 14:10—12. 15:1.) He was pleased therefore to send him out of the way, that he might not be solicited and refuse; and all this time the people were deprived of the benefit of Elijah's example and instructions. Thus he was excluded from society and usefulness: but he doubtless was engaged in heavenly contemplation and communion with God; and in prayers for the reformation of his people, and for their being turned unto the Lord, though not for the present removal of the famine.—The brook Cherith ran into the river Jordan; (5) but it seems the place was so retired, and the prophet kept so close, that neither friends nor foes knew where he was. (*Note*, 18:10.)

V. 4—6. Elijah was a very extraordinary person, and every circumstance relating to him was rendered equally ex-

shall not be 'dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

2 And 'the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and 'hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and 'I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and 'did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

6 And 'the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass, 'after a while, that 'the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. [Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ And 'the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

9 Arise, get thee to 'Zarephath, 'which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a 'widow-woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow-woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, 'Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And 'as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, 'a morsel of bread in thy hand.

c Luke 4:25. Jam. 5:17. Rev. 11:5. d 12:22. 1 Chr. 17:3. Jer. 7:1. 11:1. 18:1. Hos. 1:1, 2. e 22:25. Ps. 31:20. 83:3. Jer. 36:19, 26. John 8:59. Acts 17:14. Heb. 1:12. Rev. 12:6, 14. f 9:19, 5-8. Num. 20:8. Job 34:29. 38:8-13, 41. Ps. 38:9. 147:9. Am. 9:3, 4. Matt. 4:4, 11. e 19:9. Prov. 3:5, 6. Matt. 16:21. John 15:14. h Ez. 16:35. Num. 11:23. Judg. 14:14. 15:18, 19. Ps. 34:9, 10. 37:3. 19:78. 15:16, 23, 24. Jer. 37:21. 40:4. Hab. 3:17, 18. Matt. 6:31, 32. 13:19-21. 19:28. Luke 22:33. Heb. 6:18. * Heb. at the end of days. 1 Is. 40:30, 31. 54:10. k See on 2. Gen. 22:14. Is. 41:17. Heb. 13:6. l Ob. 20. Luke 4:28. Sa. 1:1. m Matt. 15:21, 22. n 4. Judg. 7:2, 4. Rom. 4:17-21. 2 Cor. 4:7. o Gen. 21:15. 26:17. John 4:7. 2 Cor. 11:27. Heb. 11:37. p Gen. 24:18, 19. Matt. 10:42. 25:35-40. Heb. 13:2. q 9:13, 4. Gen. 18:5. r See on 1. 1 Sam. 14:39, 45. 20:3, 21. 25:26. 26:10. 2 Sam. 15:21. Jer. 4:2, 5, 2. s 2 Kings 4:2-7. Matt. 15:33, 34. t Gen. 21:16. Jer. 14:18. Lam. 4:9. Ez. 12:18, 19. Joel 1:15, 16. u Ex.

traordinary, in order to excite the attention of a thoughtless and hardened generation. Ravens, being birds of prey, were far more likely to take away the food of those who had any, than to bring bread and flesh to the prophet in his destitute situation: but the *command*, or miraculous power of God, suspended their natural instinct, and made them act directly contrary to it. (Note, 1 Sam. 6:10-16.) It is useless and presumptuous to inquire whence they procured the bread and flesh, or how the food was prepared? He who commanded them to feed his servant, had ten thousand ways of enabling them to fulfil his word. Thus Elijah was sufficiently provided for, when numbers were starving; and the consolations of the Lord would render him contented with his solitude and sustenance.—Some have objected that *ravens*, being unclean birds, would pollute the food which they brought; but this arises from a mistake. The flesh of unclean animals might not be eaten; but the touch of them when living, communicated no ceremonial uncleanness, either to food, or any other thing: for asses and camels were also unclean; yet in constant use, for carrying provisions, as well as for other purposes. (Note, Lev. 11:31.)

V. 7. Elijah seems to have continued in this situation about a year: the natural supply of water which came by common Providence failed because of the dry weather; but the miraculous supply of food, which was ensured to him by promise, failed not. (Note, 10-16.)

V. 9. (Marg. Ref. 1.) This woman was of Gentile extraction, a Zidonian, of the same nation with Jezebel the patroness of the worship of Baal; (16:31.) yet she had become acquainted with the God of Israel, and probably was a spiritual worshipper of him, when the nation of Israel was in general lapsed to idolatry. (Note, Matt. 15:21-24.) That *ravens* first, and then a poor widow-woman, a Gentile, should be employed to feed God's prophet, in preference to any of the Israelites, was a severe refection upon that people: and Elijah's being sent to Zarephath, rather than to any other city, or any poor distressed widows, of Israel, was an illustration of God's sovereignty, and a pre-inauguration of the calling of the Gentiles. (Note, Luke 4:23-30.)—As the Lord *commands* his creatures, according to their natures and capacities; perhaps this poor widow had received some pre-inauguration of Elijah's coming, and a command to entertain him, nothing doubting.

V. 10-16. The effects of the famine in the land of Israel, were severely felt at Zidon also, and probably in all the adjacent countries; Judah perhaps being excepted. The poor woman was gathering sticks for fuel, when addressed by the

12 And she said, 'As the LORD thy God liveth I have not a cake, 'but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, 'that we may eat it and die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, 'Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but 'make me thereof a little cake 'first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For 'thus saith the LORD God of Israel, 'The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD 'sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and 'did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat 'many days.

16 And 'the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, 'according to the word of the LORD, which he spake 'by Elijah.

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, *that* 'the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, 'that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, 'What have I to do with thee, 'O thou man of God? 'Hast thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up 'into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

14:13. 2 Kings 6:16. 2 Chr. 20:17. Is. 41:10, 13. Matt. 28:5. Acts 27:24. v Gen. 22:1, 2. Judg. 7:5-7. Matt. 19:21, 22. Heb. 11:17. 1 Pet. 1:7. x Prov. 3:9, 10. Mal. 3:10. Matt. 6:33. 10:37. y 2 Kings 3:16, 17. 7:1, 3, 9, 6. z 4. 2 Kings 4:37. 7:42-44. Matt. 14:17-20. 15:38-38. 1 Heb. *giveth*. a Gen. 6:22. 12:4. 22:3. 2 Chr. 20:20. Matt. 15:28. Mark 12:43. John 11:40. Rom. 4:19, 20. Heb. 11:7. 8:17. 1 Or, a full year. b Matt. 9:28-30. 19:36. Luke 1:37, 45. John 4:50, 51. c See on 19:5. d Heb. by the hand of. e See on 16:12. f Gen. 22:1, 2. 2 Kings 4:13-20. Zach. 10:12. John 11:3, 4, 14. Jam. 1:2-4, 12. 1 Pet. 1:7, 4:12. g Job 12:10. 34:14. Ps. 104:29. Dan. 5:23. Jam. 2:28. marg. f 2 Sam. 16:10. 19:22. 2 Kings 3:13. 2 Chr. 26:21. Luke 4:34. 5:28. John 2:4. g See on 13:1. h 18:9. Gen. 42:21, 22. 50:15-17. 1 Sam. 16:4. Job 13:26. Ez. 21:23, 24. Mark 5:7, 15-17. 6:16. 12 Kings 4:10, 21, 32. Acts 9:37.

prophet, who probably knew by a divine intimation that she was the person appointed to entertain him. Notwithstanding her distress, and the scarcity that prevailed, she readily complied with the request of a stranger to fetch him a little water. But when he craved a morsel of bread also, she called "the LORD his God" to witness, that she had none, but was going to prepare her very last provision; and then had nothing to look for, but death by hunger, for herself and her son. It must be supposed that she knew Elijah to be an Israelite by his appearance and attire: (Note, Num. 15:38-40,) and he had perhaps declared himself the servant of JEHOVAH, and asked her for bread and water in his name; and for his sake, she would have been ready to help him, if it had been in her power. Moreover, she doubtless perceived something venerable in his aspect, which prepossessed her in his favour so that when he required her, "in the name of the LORD," to make him a cake *first*, (which, in her circumstances, was surely one of the hardest commands that ever was given!) promising her that her scanty supply should not fail; her faith surmounted all difficulties and silenced all objections: she believed his words, and did as she was directed, and so "became heir of the righteousness that is by faith." (Note, Heb. 11:7.) Thus having "entertained a prophet, in the name of a prophet, she received a prophet's reward." (Note, Matt. 10:40-42.) For above two years she and her son, as well as Elijah, were fed miraculously with sufficient provision; and she lived by faith, in temporal as well as in spiritual things! For though the margin renders the words "many days," a full year; it is evident from the continuance of the famine, that Elijah abode with her a much longer time.

V. 17. Perhaps the woman's son died suddenly, before the prophet had opportunity to pray for his recovery; because the Lord intended a greater display of his own glory, and a more distinguishing favour to the woman, than the sparing of his life: or he was left to die without any miraculous interposition, to try her faith. (Notes, Mark 5:35-43. John 11:1-10.)

V. 18. This woman had doubtless heard, that the drought had come upon Israel in answer to Elijah's prayer; and perhaps she supposed that her affliction had come upon her in the same way. She seems to have venerated his sanctity and to have had a trembling consciousness of her own sinfulness. Perhaps the death of her son brought her former worship of Baal to remembrance; or she thought she was not worthy of the company of the prophet, or had not duly profited by it. But her mind was much agitated; and she

20 And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the w-dow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, "O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come 'into him again."

22 And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah;

and the soul of the child came into him again, "and he revived."

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, "See, thy son liveth."

24 ¶ And the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."

1 19:36-37. Ex. 17:4. 1 Sam. 7:8,9. 2 Kings 19:4,15. Ps. 99:6. Matt. 21:22. Jam. 5:13-18. 1 Gen. 19:23-25. Jos. 7:8,9. Ps. 73:13,14. Jer. 12:1. 12 Kings 4:33-35. Act. 20:10. * Heb. measured. m Act. 9:40. Heb. 11:19. * Heb. into his inward parts. n Deut. 32:39. 1 Sam. 2:6. 2 Kings 13:21. Luke 8:54,55. John

5:28,29. 11:43,44. Act. 20:12. Rom. 14:9. Rev. 11:11. o 2 Kings 4:36,37. Luke 7:15. Act. 9:41. Heb. 11:85. p John 2:11. 4:42-48. 11:15,42. 15:24. q Ec. 12:10. 1 Thes. 2:13. 1 John 2:21.

words imply a mixture of unbelief and impatience, as well as self-abasement and a sense of guilt. And she seems to have thought the presence of the man of God was dangerous, and hastened divine judgments upon her. (*Luke 5:8. Notes, 1 Sam. 16:4. 2 Sam. 6:8,9.*) Yet by her own account the prophet's presence had prolonged her son's life, and her own also. (12) 'Their sins are said to be "called to remembrance" by the God, when he punishes them.' *Bp. Patrick. (Note, Ez. 21:23).*

V. 19. *Left.* 'The LXX translate it *ἐνταύθα*, an upper room; which he had to himself for his study, meditation, and prayer; as Elisha afterwards had in another place: 2 Kings 4:10.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 20. Elijah himself could not understand the mystery of this dispensation; but greatly wondered that the Lord should bring evil on the woman, who entertained him for his sake, as well as on those who rejected both God and his prophet; and he expostulated with God on the occasion.

V. 21, 22. The external conduct of Elijah denoted the earnestness of his desires, and the greatness of his expectations, of the child's restoration to life. He would, if possible, have communicated of his own life to him, or have concurred, if any thing had been in his power, to his revival.—The expression, "Let this child's soul come into him again," not only intimates the prophet's certainty that he was really dead; but it marks the distinction between the rational soul and the earthly body to be as real, as that between the house and its inhabitant: for both the prophet and the historian, "speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," used proper language. No one had yet, as far as we know, been raised from the dead, and perhaps no prayer to this effect had ever before been offered. (*Notes, Gen. 22:5,6. John 9:27-34. Rom. 4:18-22. Heb. 11:17-19.*) Elijah's petition was no doubt directed by immediate inspiration.

V. 24. The woman had been strongly tempted to unbelief; but she had now got the victory, and was more confirmed and assured in faith and hope than ever. She had doubted, but now she knew, that Elijah was the servant of God, and she fully expected the performance of all his declarations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. The Lord will have witnesses to his truth in the worst of times; and as he does not immediately cast off his professing people, when they renounce his service; he employs various methods to convince them of their sin, and to bring them to repentance.—Great intrepidity and resolution are necessary for those who are employed to stop the torrent of prevailing iniquity, or to declare the message of God before persecuting tyrants: but he who sends them, will qualify them, and bear them out in these arduous and perilous services.—Impenitent sinners have eventually the prayers even of the most benevolent ministers of God against them: because, if they go on in sin, his glory requires their destruction; and every servant of the Lord seeks His glory, in preference to every other consideration. But, if the severest temporal judgments be made effectual to bring men to serve God, they will have great cause to bless him for sending them.—Fruitful seasons, and abundance of provisions for the body, are valuable mercies, and famine is a most tremendous evil: yet the liberty and opportunity of attending on divine ordinances are more valuable advantages; and a famine of the word of God is above all to be dreaded and deprecated. (*Notes, Am. 8:11-14.*)—The Lord will provide for those who serve him faithfully: and he will teach them to be satisfied with their provisions though mean, and their situation though outwardly uncomfortable. Indeed, if we consider how much better we are dealt with than we deserve, and how many are destitute of the necessities of life; we shall see abundant reason to be contented with food and raiment, of the meanest and coarsest kind: nor ought we ever to desire luxuries or superfluities.—It is the greatest trial to the faithful and zealous minister, to be taken off from his work and usefulness, and excluded from the society of pious persons: yet, if thus circumstanced, he should submit to it as his trial, wait the Lord's time to be employed again, seek his comfort from communion with him and diligently prepare for future service. And if the trying dispensation did not arise from his own misconduct, the loss will not eventually be his, but that of those from whom he is banished; being frequently a judgment upon them for not profiting by former advantages, while they enjoy them.—All nature shall sooner change its course, than one of God's promises fail. We do not indeed now expect literally to be fed by ravens: but the Lord often employs

selfish men, contrary to their nature and general character to support his indigent people, or to maintain his cause by their property. The thanks, in this case, are due to the Lord, who sends the provisions by such instruments: but we should pray, that, as he has counteracted their natural disposition in this instance, he would be pleased also to change them by his renewing grace.

V. 8-16. The Lord does not generally provide long together for his people in the same way, or by the same means; lest they should rest in them, and expect help from them. But he permits one resource to fail; and when he has left them nothing but his own promise to trust to, he unexpectedly opens another resource; that they may admire the manifold riches of his wisdom, as well as adore his power, truth and love. Frequently he raises supplies from those who themselves need relief: "the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abound unto the riches of their liberality:" (*Notes, 2 Cor. 8:1-5. 9:8-11.*) and he supplies their wants, whilst they are encouraged to communicate of their pittance to others still more destitute. Indeed our faith must be proved by various trials in providence, as well as by our obedience to the commandments of God; and must also grow strong by exercise. But when it is genuine, it "worketh by love" of him and of his people: and the desire of doing good to others for his sake, united to a firm expectation that his promises will be performed, produces obedience even to hard commands, notwithstanding all the reluctance and objections of our distrustful, selfish hearts.—They who come unto God, and walk with him, must simply trust him, nay, venture their lives and souls upon his word, and at his command renounce every present interest, in expectation of future and more enduring advantages. Genuine faith encourages men to do this; while unbelief dislikes the security, holds fast things present, and for the perishing pleasures and interests of this world forgoes the blessings of eternal salvation. If it none can be losers in the event by giving up secular advantages, at the Lord's command; and what is expended upon his people, for his sake, shall be recompensed as if given to himself: so that the self-denial and liberality of faith, are the best means of excluding the fear of future want, of providing for our families, and of placing out our substance at the highest interest, and upon the most unexceptionable security. In these funds the poor may obtain property, as well as the rich; for a morsel of bread, or a cup of water, will go as far, when it is all that we can give, as thousands of gold and silver when they can be spared. (*Notes, Prov. 19:17. Mark 12:41-44. Luke 6:27-36. 2 Cor. 8:10-15.*)

V. 17-24. Neither faith nor obedience, however exemplary, can exclude afflictions and death: and under severe and unexpected trials it is extremely difficult to avoid impatience, and to exercise unshaken confidence and unreserved submission. But the Lord bears with our infirmities and compassionates our sorrows: and we should pity and readily help each other, thus bearing one another's burdens, according to the example and command of Christ. (*Note, Gal. 6:1-5.*) Though we cannot work miracles for the relief of the afflicted, we may afford much assistance to them; and in all cases we may pray in faith, that the Lord would sanctify and make up every loss, by the influences and consolations of his Spirit.—The Lord by afflictions "calls our sins to remembrance;" and this should quiet our spirits, and lead us to self-examination and repentance, that we may obtain forgiveness from him: and thus all shall issue in our increase of faith, assurance of hope, and joyful expectation of every promised good.—Thus when Jesus comes to communicate his blessings, the convinced trembling sinner often mistakes the meaning of those humbling instructions which he imparts, and those trials which he employs; he is ready to suspect, that he means to "bring his sins to remembrance," and to slay all his hopes; and is tempted to say, "What have I to do with thee?" But the loving Saviour pities and bears with such trembling souls: and when he has turned their mourning into joy, by reviving their hopes and forgiving their sins; they admire his love and power, and know assuredly that his word is truth; and expect every future good in reliance on his promise, and obedience to his holy will.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. *The third year.* That is, in the third year of Elijah's abode at Zarephath. For it is probable, that he continued there above two years, which, added to a year at the brook Cherith, completed three years and a half: for this was the time which the drought lasted. Some, however, think he remained just two years at Zarephath; and that the six months preceded his returning to

CHAPTER XVIII.

Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, 1, 2. Ahab and pious Obadiah go different ways, to search the land for pasture, 3-6. Elijah meets Obadiah and sends him to call Ahab, 7-16. Ahab, at Elijah's word, condemns Israel, with the prophets of Baal, at Carmel, 17-29. Elijah proposes to decide, whether JEHOVAH or Baal be God, by proving which would answer by fire, 21-24. Baal's prophets invoke him in vain, 25-29. Elijah prepares a sacrifice, causes much water to be poured upon it, and calls on JEHOVAH, who answers by fire, consuming the altar with the sacrifice; the people are convinced that JEHOVAH is God; and at Elijah's word they slay Baal's prophets, 30-40. Elijah gives Ahab notice of abundant rain, which he obtains by prayer; and then he runs before Ahab's chariot to Jezreel, 41-46.

AND it came to pass ^aafter many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in ^bthe third year, saying, ^cGo, show thyself unto Ahab; and ^dI will send rain upon the earth.

2 And Elijah ^ewent to show himself unto Ahab. And there was ^fa sore famine in Samaria.

3 And Ahab called ^gObadiah, which was ^hthe governor of his house. (Now Obadiah ⁱfeared the LORD greatly :

4 For it was ^jso, when ^kJezebel ^lcut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah ^mtook a hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty ⁿin a cave, and ^ofed them with ^pbread and water.)

5 And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find ^qgrass to save the horses and mules alive, that ^rwe lose not all the beasts.

6 So they divided the land between them, to pass throughout it: ^sAhab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 ¶ And as Obadiah ^twas in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and ^uhe knew him, and ^vfell on his face, and said, ^wArt thou that ^xmy lord Elijah?

a Luke 4:25. Jam. 5:17. Rev. 11:2, 6. b 17:1, 7, 15. c 2:15, &c. d Lev. 26:4. D-ut. 28:12. Ps. 65-9-13. Is. 5:6. Jer. 10:13. 14:22. Joel 2:23. Am. 4:7. e Ps. 27:1. 36:6. Prov. 28:1. Is. 51:12. Heb. 13:5, 6. f Lev. 26:26. Dent. 28:23, 24. g Kings 6:25. Jer. 14:18. Joel 1:15-20. h Heb. Obadiahu. i Heb. over his house. Gen. 24:10, 39-45, 9. 41-40. j 2. Gen. 22:12. 42:18. 2 Kings 4:1. Neh. 5:15. 7:2. Prov. 14:25, 27. Mal. 3:16. Matt. 10:28. Acts 10:2, 35. l Heb. Jezebel. m Neh. 9:23. Matt. 21:35. Rev. 17:4-6. n 1. Heb. 11:38. k 13. 2 Kings 6:23, 25. 10:10-12. 25:7-40. 13:8, 9, 16. m Ps. 104:14. Jer. 14:18. 2 Kings 4:2. Hab. 3:17. Rev. 8:20-22. o Heb. we cut out ourselves from the beasts. n Jer. 14:3. o 11:29. p 2 Kings 1:8-8. Matt. 3:4. 11:8. q Gen. 18:2. 50:18. Sam. 20:41. 2 Sam. 19:18. Is. 50:14. r Gen. 18:2. 44:16, 20, 33. Num. 12:11. s 3.

the brook Cherith. (*Luke 4:25.*)—He seems to have been little noticed at Zarephath, notwithstanding the miracles which he wrought.—Elijah could not but deeply lament the miseries of Israel: but he did not leave his retirement, till the Lord ordered him to go to Ahab, previously to his sending ^arain upon the land,^b as it should be rendered; for the land of Israel was especially intended.—The extremity of the famine rendered it the more dangerous for him to show himself to the enraged tyrant: but at this time he was raised above all fear of what flesh could do unto him. (*Notes, 19:2.*)

V. 3. Obadiah signifies *The servant of the LORD*. Obadiah was so faithful and useful a servant to Ahab, that even Jezebel's instigation did not induce him to dismiss or injure him: and he was, it seems, willing to retain his place, though perilous and difficult while he could with a safe conscience; as he might do some good, and prevent some evil, by continuing in it: and, though he witnessed abominable idolatries and iniquities, we may be sure, that he was not required to bow his knee unto Baal. (*Notes, Dan. 2:46-49. 3:1-7.*) He feared the LORD greatly. Obadiah, at a distance from religious ordinances, and surrounded by the worst of examples and by strong temptations, was eminently pious and devoted to God! (*Notes, Gen. 22:11, 12. Ec. 12:1-14.*)

V. 4. Wicked as Ahab was, he does not seem to have directly persecuted, except as instigated by Jezebel, until she had long trained him up to it.—After the institution of the worship of the golden calves, the priests and Levites, and pious Israelites, had generally left their possessions, and gone up to the tribe of Judah and united with it: (*Note, 2 Chr. 11:13-17.*) but the Lord had mercifully raised up prophets, who promoted true religion throughout the land. It is probable, that they were brought up in the schools of the prophets, first instituted by Samuel, which still remained, and were made very serviceable by the blessing of God upon them. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 10:5, 6. 2 Kings 2:3. 4:1.*) These prophets did not stately offer sacrifices: nor did they require the people to go up to Jerusalem to keep the solemn feasts: but they taught them the essentials of true religion, either in private houses, or in such assemblies as were afterwards called synagogues. Thus they worshipped the God of Israel towards, though not at, the temple and Jerusalem: (*Note, 8:28-30.*) and there seems to have been considerable numbers of believers dispersed through the tribes. Against these prophets, who were the chief opposers of idolatry, (and doubtless against the seminaries where they were educated,) Jezebel's rage was directed, and she cut off many of them: but Obadiah found means to conceal and preserve a hundred persons, through the persecution, supporting them in their concealment at his own expense. And, though his conduct was no secret, he

8 And he answered him, I am: go, tell ^athy lord Behold, Elijah ^bis here.

9 And he said, ^cWhat have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?

10 ^dAs ^ethe LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation nor kingdom, ^fwhither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, ^gHe is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that ^hthey found thee not.

11 And now thou sayest, ⁱGo, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah ^jis here.

12 And it shall come to pass, ^kas soon as I am gone from thee, that ^lthe spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, ^mhe shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD ⁿfrom my youth.

13 Was it not told my lord ^owhat I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred men of the LORD's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?

14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah ^pis here; and he shall slay me.

15 And Elijah said, ^qAs the LORD ^rof hosts liveth, ^sbefore whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to-day.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, ^tArt thou ^uhe that troubleth Israel?

Rom. 13:7. 1 Pet. 2:17, 18. 12. See on 17:18. Ex. 5:21. o 15. 1:29. 2:24. 17:11, 12. 1 Sam. 23:6. s Ps. 10:2. Jer. 26:20-23. y 17:5, 9. Ps. 12:7, 8. 31:20. 91:1. Jer. 36:25. John 8:59. z 8:14. z 2 Kings 2:11, 16. Ez. 3:12-14. 8:3. 11:24. 37:1. 40:4. 2. Matt. 4:1. Acts 8:39. 2 Cor. 12:2, 3. b 1 Sam. 22:11-19. Dan 7: 5-13. Matt. 2:16. Acts 12:12. c 1 Sam. 2:18, 28. 3:19, 20. 2 Chr. 34:3. Ps. 71: 17, 18. Luke 1:15. 2 Tim. 3:15. d 4. Gen. 20:4. Ps. 13:21-24. Acts 20:34. 1 Thes. 2:9, 10. e See on 10. Heb. 6:16, 17. f Gen. 2:1. Dent. 4:19. Job 25:3. Ps. 24:8-10. 103:21. 143:2, 3. Is. 6:3. Jer. 8:2. Luke 2:13, 14. g See on 17:1. Dent. 1:38. Luke 1:19. h 21:20. John 7:25. Jer. 26:9, 38:4. Am. 7:10. Acts 16:20. 17:6. 24:5.

was still protected and employed by Ahab!—*Bread and water.* That is, with the necessities of life; "food convenient for them." (13:8, 9, 16, 22.)

V. 5, 6. *Horses, &c.* (5) Ahab seems to have been more anxious about the animals, which ministered to his luxury, than about those, which were more immediately necessary to his poor subjects, as sheep, goats, and oxen. That the king in person should go upon such a business, could only be the effect of the extremity of the famine. Probably most of the cattle, and many of the people, had perished: yet no mention was made of returning to the Lord with repentance, fasting, and prayer! (*Notes, Joel 1:13-15. 2:15-17.*) Had God never sent to them, it seems they would never have applied to him to terminate the calamity, whatever extremities they had endured: but he had a remnant, for whose sake he was pleased to return to them in mercy; and the glory of his name required, that he should not yet give up Israel to utter destruction. (*Notes, 19:18. Judg. 3:9, 10, 14. Rom. 11:1-6.*)

V. 7. Elijah was a poor man, and greatly hated in Ahab's court, in which Obadiah held considerable preferment: yet Obadiah, by word and deed, testified the greatest reverence for him, as to an honoured and distinguished superior; because he was a man of God, and of eminent sanctity! (*Note, Matt. 8:8, 9.*)

V. 10. *No nation, &c.* That is, in the neighbourhood, among Ahab's dependants and allies.—He was so earnest to discover Elijah, that he caused the rulers of those countries, in which he possessed sufficient influence, to swear that they did not conceal him, and perhaps that they would deliver him up if they found him: yet Elijah lived part of the time in Ahab's own kingdom; and the rest, in the country of Zidon, whence Jezebel came!—As Ahab offered no violence to the prophet when he met him, it has been thought, that he did not seek him from a vindictive motive, but in expectation that he would terminate the terrible drought which he had denounced: as if the prophet could do it without the Lord, to whom no application was made! It is, however, probable, that resentment and enmity greatly influenced Ahab; and that Jezebel intended to cut off Elijah also, if he could have been found, at least, unless he consented to remove the famine. But Ahab was over-awed by his unexpected appearance and intrepidity, and did not dare to proceed against him. (*Note, 2 Kings 1:15, 16.*)

V. 12-16. Obadiah, even in Ahab's family, had from his youth been a devoted and zealous worshipper of JEHOVAH! He introduced the mention of his good services, not in ostentation, but as an evidence of his sincerity. He well knew how exceedingly Ahab would be offended, if he thought himself imposed upon, in a matter which he had so much at

18 And he answered, 'I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, ⁱⁿ that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto ^{mount} Carmel, and ^{the} prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the ^{the} prophets of the groves four hundred, which ^{eat} at Jezebel's table.

20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, ^{How} long halt ye between two ^{opinions}? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but ^{Baal's} prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under:

24 And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God

that ^{answereth} by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered ^{and} said, It is well spoken.

25 And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock, for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

26 And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal ^{from} morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, ^{hear} us. But there was ^{no} voice, nor any that ^{answered}. And they ^{leaped} upon the altar which was made.

27 And it came to pass at noon, that ^{Elijah} mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god: either ^{he} is talking, or he ^{is} pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and ^{must} be awaked.

28 And they cried aloud, and ^{cut} themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till ^{the} blood gushed out upon them.

29 And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they ^{prophesied} until the time of the ^{offering} of the evening sacrifice, that there was ^{neither} voice, nor any to answer, nor any ^{that} regarded.

[Practical Observations.]

30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come

i. Ez. 3. Matt. 14.4. Acts 24:13,20. k.9-9. 2 Chr. 15:2. Prov. 11:19. 13:21. Is. 3:11. Jer. 2:13,19. Rom. 2:8,9. 14:23. Josh. 19:26. 2 Kings 2:25. Jer. 48:14. Am. 1:2. 9:3. m. 22:6. 2 Pet. 2:1. Rev. 19:20. n. 15:13. 15:33. 2 Kings 13:6. o. 19:12. 2 Kings 9:22. Rev. 2:20. p. Deut. 4:35. 2 Kings 17:41. Zeph. 1:5. Matt. 6:24. Luke 16:13. Rom. 6:16-22. 1 Cor. 10:21,22. 2 Cor. 1:5. 14-16. Rev. 3:13,16. ^{Or, thoughts.} q. 39. Ex. 5:1,2,3. s. 24:15,24,21. 1 Sam. 7:3. 1 Chr. 17:25. 2 Chr. 33:13. Ps. 100:3. r. Gen. 24:50. 4:16. ^{Or, 4:15.} Matt. 22:12,34,46. Rom. 3:19. 6:21. s. 19:10,14. 20:13,22,35,38. 22:6-8. 1 Rom. 11:13. 1 Cor. 1:12. Matt. 7:1-15. 2 Tim. 4:5,6. 2. 2 Cor. 3-3. n. 8. Lev. 9:24. Judg. 6:21. 1 Chr. 21:26. 2 Chr. 7:1. v. 2 Sam. 14:19. ^{1 Heb. The word is good.}

Is. 39:8. x. Matt. 6:7. ^{Or, answer.} y. 24. Ps. 115:4-7. 135:15-20. Is. 37:38. 44:17. 48:20. Jer. 10:5. Dan. 5:23. Hab. 2:18. 1 Cor. 8:4. 10:19,30. 12:2. ^{Or, heard.} z. ^{Or, leaped up and down at the altar.} Zeph. 1:9. ^{Or, 22:15.} 2 Chr. 25:8. Ec. 11:9. Is. 8:9,10. 44:15-17. Ez. 20:39. Am. 4:4,5. Matt. 26:45. Mark 7:9. 14:41. ^{1 Heb. with a great voice.} ^{Or, he meditated.} 11 Heb. hath a pursuit. a. Ps. 43:23. 78:6,66. 121:4. Is. 51:9. Mark 4:38,39. b. Lev. 19:28. Deut. 14:1. Mic. 6:7. Mark 9:5,9,22. 12 Heb. they poured out blood upon them. c. 22:10, 12. 1 Sam. 18:10. Jer. 28:9. Acts 16:16,17. 1 Cor. 11:4,5. ^{Or, Heb. ascending.} See on 38. d. See on 26. Gal. 4:8. 2 Tim. 3:8,9. ^{Or, Heb. attention.}

neart: and perhaps he concluded that Ahab would be enraged, because he had not apprehended the prophet, when he had the opportunity. He could not suppose that Elijah intended to venture into the presence of his indignant enemy, and he was persuaded, that the Spirit of the Lord could readily convey away his servant, and again conceal him: (*Marg. Ref. a. Notes, 2 Kings 2:16-18. Ez. 8:2-4*) and therefore he desired to be excused from so perilous a service. But when the prophet solemnly assured him, that he did not mean to elude Ahab, but to show himself unto him on that very day, he willingly went to inform him.

V. 17. Elijah was the grand opposer of Ahab's plan, for bringing Israel to unite in the worship of Baal, and so making, according to his views, a quiet settlement of the religion of the nation; and in this sense he perhaps deemed him "a troubler of Israel." (*Notes, Acts 16:19-24. 17:5-9*).—But it is not easy to determine what his precise sentiments were concerning the drought, which came at Elijah's word. If he thought, that it was caused and continued by the prophet's power, and could be removed at his will; and that he troubled Israel in not removing it; he must have been disposed to credit any absurdity, rather than believe that JEHOVAH was the Author of it, and that it could be removed only by his power; or allow that it was his interest and duty to return to the worship of God which he had forsaken. (*Notes, Ez. 7:22,23. 1 Sam. 6:2-9*.)

V. 18-20. "Baalim" is the plural number: for Ahab worshipped many false gods.—The boldness and authority, with which the prophet charged him as the "troubler of Israel," intimidated the king, who had not his prompter Jezebel with him. He was afraid perhaps, that Elijah would execute judgment upon him at once, if he further offended him. (*Note, 1 Sam. 15:26-28*.) he found the prophet would not be induced by menaces and reproaches to comply with his requirements; and he was willing to be upon terms with him, in hopes that he would procure the removal of the famine: and thus he was induced to consent to the demand which he made.—It seems that an altar had been built upon mount Carmel, and sacrifices offered or ^{to} JEHOVAH; (30) but the worship of Baal had supplanted even this irregular service of the one living and true God.—There were no less than four hundred and fifty prophets, or priests, of Baal, and four hundred of the groves (^{אשרות}), who are supposed to have been devoted to a Zidonian goddess. These four hundred especially were entertained at Jezebel's table, as a kind of domestic chaplains; though no doubt they too were at times sent, at her expense, into every part of the land, to promote idolatry among the inhabitants.—Elijah, however, desired to confront the whole company before all the people of Israel, and to bring the matter in dispute to a fair decision. But when JEHOVAH had called for drought, and neither Baal nor any other of their idols could send rain, the matter was already sufficiently plain to every reasonable person. (*Note, Jer. 14:19-22*.)

Troubled, &c. (18) 'They trouble a nation who break the laws of God, not they that defend them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

(*Note, Josh. 7:25,26*.)

Mount Carmel. (19) In the lot of Asher towards the

north of the land. (*Josh. 19:26*.) Not Carmel, in the lot of Judah: (*1 Sam. 25:2*.)

V. 21. *Halt ye, &c.* The metaphor is taken from the unequal walk of a lame person. Many of the people wavered in judgment, and varied in practice; sometimes worshipping JEHOVAH, at others worshipping Baal, as their convictions or interests prevailed: or they endeavoured to form a coalition between them, of which Baal's prophets would probably admit: but to which JEHOVAH would never consent. Elijah therefore called upon them without further delay to determine, whether of the two was the self-existent and eternal God, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world; and to follow him alone, whether JEHOVAH or Baal were he, as there could be no more than one supreme God. (*Notes, Deut. 6:4,5. Josh. 24:14,15. Matt. 6:24*.) To this the people answered nothing: being unwilling to confess their guilt, or offend the king, and not being able to object to what he said, or being ashamed of their conduct.

V. 22. Elijah was the only prophet of JEHOVAH who stood forth at this time; the prophets whom Obadiah preserved, and the prophets of whom we afterwards read, being driven into concealment. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 4. 19:10*.)

V. 23. Elijah conceded the preference, in every external circumstance, to the prophets of Baal, that the victory might be the more conspicuous, to the glory of God alone: for doubtless he acted by direction from heaven. (*Note, Ez. 8:9-11*.)

V. 24. The proposal was so reasonable, that the people at once agreed to it; and thus Baal's prophets were constrained either to comply: or to allow Baal to be an imponent idol, and JEHOVAH the only true God.—*By fire.* (*Marg. Ref. v. Notes, Gen. 4:3-5. Lev. 9:24*.)

V. 26. O Baal, &c. (*Note, Matt. 6:7,8*.) The continued cry of four hundred and fifty prophets, during several hours, with an unmeaning repetition of the words, "O Baal, hear us," with great vehemence, must have formed a most dissonant vociferation; whilst like frantic men, they leaped upon, or round, or up and down, at the altar and sacrifice, according to the worship which they were accustomed to perform!—Some think that the sun was worshipped under the name Baal; and that this encouraged his prophets to expect an answer by fire.

V. 27-29. Elijah mocked, or ridiculed, the false prophets, and ironically observed, that Baal, no doubt, had a very great number of engagements, and therefore was taken up, or at a distance, or asleep; and therefore his votaries would not succeed without greater earnestness and louder cries! (*Notes, 22:15. Ec. 11:9,10. Is. 44:12-17. Mark 7:9*.)—The absurdity of the idolatry was worthy of being exposed to contempt before the people, though the effects of it were most deplorable.—It seems however, that they thought Elijah in earnest in his counsel and determined to follow it; and, still more to please the demon whom they worshipped as God, they cut their flesh, and mingled their own blood with that of their sacrifice, according to the frequent custom of idolaters! But all their efforts proved in vain: though they continued to prophesy, after their manner, till three hours after noonday had passed, showing tokens of being under a supernatural influence; and, at a any support, singing

near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

31 And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things in thy word.

e 19, 10, 14. 2 Chr. 33:16. Rom. 11:3. f Ex. 24:4. Josh. 4:3, 4, 20. Ezra 6:17. Jer. 21:1. E. 37:16-22, 47:13. Eph. 2:20. 4:4-5. Rev. 7:4-8. 21:12. g Gen. 32:23. 33:20. 35:10. 2 Kings 17:34. h 48:1. i Ex. 20:24, 25. Judg. 6:26. 21:4. 1 Sam. 7:9, 17. 1 Cor. 10:31. Col. 3:17. j Gen. 22:9. Lev. 19:8. k Dan. 3:19-25. John 11:39, 40. 19:33, 14. 2 Cor. 4:2. 8:21. * Heb. went, m 32:38. n 29. Ez. 29:39-41. Ezra 9:4, 5. Ps. 141:2. Dan. 8:13. 9:21. 12:11. Acts 3:1. 10:30. o 21. Gen. 28:24. 31:53. 32:9. 46:3. E. 3:6, 15:16. 1 Chr. 29:18. 2 Chr. 29:6, 7. Eph. 1:17. 3:14. 24. 18:43. 17:37. 2 Kings 1:3. 5:18. 19:16. Ps. 57:12. 58:1. 103:22. 139:20. 166:28-30. John 11:42. * 24:29, 36. Gen. 32:24, 28, 28. 2 Chr. 14:11. 32:19. Num. 10. 37:17-20. Dan 9:17-19. Luke 11:8. Jam. 5:16, 17. * Jer. 31:18, 19. Ez.

hymns to Baal along with their absurd and frantic devotions. No doubt Satan could have sent fire, and would if he might have done it; but he can do nothing except what is permitted to him. (Notes, Job 1:9-12, 16. Matt. 8:30-32.) —The evening sacrifice. (29) About three hours before sunset. (Note, 36, 37.)

V. 30. The prophet gave his competitors full opportunity of making a fair trial what Baal could do: but when they had prophesied till almost evening, it was time that he should proceed to show them what JEHOVAH could and would do; and therefore he interrupted them by addressing the people. (Note, 18-20.)

V. 31. (Note, Ex. 20:21-25.) Elijah meant by this exact number of stones, selected to repair, or rebuild, the altar of JEHOVAH which had gone to decay, to show, that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, notwithstanding divisions and apostasies, were yet the people of JEHOVAH, and formed one church and nation: and that they ought to unite in worshipping the God of their fathers, and in opposing all idolatry. The reference to the name of "Israel" given to Jacob, when he wrestled with God and prevailed, was suited to shame the people from their idol-worship, as well as to encourage Elijah's own heart in prayer. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 32:24-30.)

V. 32-35. By forming this trench, or trough, round about the altar, and both filling it with water, and pouring a great quantity upon the altar, the burnt-offering, and the wood, Elijah excluded all possibility of suspicion that any fire had been concealed, and thus rendered the divine interposition more illustrious and convincing.

V. 36, 37. The prophet, by the time chosen for his sacrifice and prayer, avowed his communion with the worshippers of God, at his temple in Jerusalem: and he briefly, but most fervently, besought JEHOVAH on this important occasion to interpose; that the people might be convinced that he was indeed the true God, the God of their fathers, and of the nation; and also that all, which he, his servants, had done, concerning the famine especially, had been in obedience to God's command. This would greatly display the glory of his name, and promote the highest good of his people; since they might henceforth know and worship him, as that God, who had thus turned their hearts back from idolatry unto himself, to worship and serve him alone, and to render the whole praise and glory unto his name. Holy zeal and intelligent good-will to Israel suggested every word, and rendered the prayer peculiarly emphatical; especially when contrasted with the unmeaning and long-continued vociferations of Baal's prophets. (Note, 26.)

V. 38, 39. It is probable, that this fire appeared as lightning, though no cloud was seen: or it was called "the fire of God," from its extraordinary force, and its unparalleled effects; and especially as sent to plead the cause of God, and to expose his worthless rival to contempt. (Marg. Ref. t, u.)—It would be more perspicuous and emphatical to retain the original word, JEHOVAH, in the translation of this chapter. The people were convinced, for the time, that JEHOVAH was the only true God; and they prostrated them-

37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

40 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

41 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

43 And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

44 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud

36:25-27. Mal. 4:5, 6. Luke 1:16, 17. t Gen. 15:17. Lev. 9:24. 1 Chr. 21:28. 2 Chr. 7:1. u 2 Kings 17:34. v 2 Kings 1:12. Job 1:15. Is. 53:9. v Judg. 13:30. 1 Chr. 21:16. 2 Chr. 7:3. x See on 21. John 5:35. Acts 2:37. 4:16. 4 Cor. Appen. head. 2 Kings 10:25. y 2 Sam. on Judg. 5:21. z Deut. 13:5. 18:20. Jer. 48:10. Zech 13:2, 3. Rev. 15:20. 20:10. a E. 9:7. Acts 27:34. b Or, a sound of a noise of rain. 17:1. b See on 1. c 15. Matt. 14:23. Luke 6:12. Acts 10:9. d Gen. 24:52. Josh. 7:5. 2 Sam. 12:16. Dan. 9:3. Mark 14:55. Jam. 5:16, 17. e 19:13. Ezra 9:6. Ps. 59:7. Is. 6:2. 38:2. Dan. 9:7. f Ps. 53. Luke 18:1. g Gen. 32:26. Hab 2:3. Luke 18:7. Eph. 6:18. Heb. 10:35, 37. h Job 8:7. Zech. 4:10.

selves before him with terror, mixed with reverence.—It has been observed, that the fire on this occasion consumed the altar as well as the sacrifice, because oblations were not there steadily to be offered; but at the dedication of the temple, the sacrifice was consumed, and the altar continued. (Notes, Lev. 9:24. 2 Chr. 7:1-3.)

V. 40. Baal's prophets, being Israelites, idolaters, and teachers of idolatry in Israel, were condemned by the prophet to die, according to the express injunctions of the Mosaic law. (Notes, Deut. 13:1-5, 18:20-22.) The people, under the present impression, readily concurred with Elijah, and Ahab did not interpose to prevent the execution of the condemned criminals.—"The four hundred prophets of the groves," were not present on this occasion. Some learned men think, that they were Zidonians, not Israelites; and therefore their attendance had not been insisted on, or they had refused to come.

V. 41. (Note, 17:1.) The idolatry of Israel having received a powerful check, and its chief abettors the prophets of Baal having suffered condign punishment; the prophet declared to Ahab the approach of deliverance from that awful calamity, under which the land had so long groaned; and encouraged him to go and cheerfully refresh himself. (Note, 2 Sam. 21:9-14.) It is probable, that the prophet, who throughout this chapter spake and acted with heroic intrepidity, "being strong in faith, giving glory to God," was too sanguine in his expectations of subsequent success. Ahab's concurrence in all that he had done, or connivance at it, and the people's decided language and conduct, led him to conclude, that he should, as it were, carry all before him, till the worship of Baal was wholly extirpated. This unwarranted expectation made way for the timid conduct and depressed state of mind, which is recorded in the next chapter. (Notes, 19:1-14.) In this chapter he shows what man may be and do, when God upholds and strengthens him; in the next what the same man is, when left to himself. This appears, in the case of Elijah, as clearly, though in a far different way, as in the case of Samson: (Notes, Judg. 16:) and in many things it resembles what St. Paul records of himself. (Notes, 2 Cor. 12:1-10.)

V. 42. In a posture of most profound reverence, the prophet sought of God, by earnest prayer, the blessing of rain upon the parched land; and he continued his fervent supplications in the same place and posture, without having taken any refreshment, as it appears, till he had sensible evidence that his prayer was granted. (Note, Jam. 5:16-18.)

V. 43-45. As Elijah had no servant before he went to Zarephath; some have thought, that the widow's son, whom he had raised to life, had accompanied him. But it appears from the narrative, that he was not old enough; and it is more likely, that a young person from the schools of the prophets attended Elijah on this occasion.—The prophet spake as one assured that his prayer would immediately be answered; and like Jacob of old, he seemed determined not to let the Lord go until he had blessed him. The servant was therefore ordered to go seven times; and he saw no appearance till the last time, when a very small cloud arose,

out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, 'Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee now.

45 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and

'there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

46 And *the hand of the LORD was on Enjah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

* Heb. *The. or. Bird*. 1 Sam. 6:7, 10. Mic. 1:12. 139:40. Num. 25:8. 2 Sam. 21:14. J. 11:23. Josh. 19:18. 2 Sam. 2:9. 2 Kings 9:16. k 2 Kings 3:15. Is.

8:11. Ex. 1:3. 3:14. 1 2 Kings 4:29. 9:1. Job 38:3. Jer. 1:17. 1 Pet. 1:13. m Matt. 22:21. 1 Pet. 2:17. 1 Heb. *till thou come to Jezreel*.

out of the Mediterranean sea, which was near to mount Carmel; this the prophet knew to be the forerunner of the desired blessing, and he sent word to Ahab accordingly.—The rain was no doubt equal to the necessities of the land; and it formed another demonstration that JEHOVAH was the only true God. (Note, 18–20.)

Went up, &c. (43) The transactions of the day are supposed to have taken place at the foot of the mount, near some rivulet, whence water could still be procured. From this place, Ahab went up to some tent or residence to take refreshment; but Elijah went up towards the summit of the mount, where the Mediterranean sea might be clearly seen: yet he sent his servant to some higher crag or eminence to make his observations.

V. 46. The Lord directed and strengthened Elijah, though weak with fasting and fatigue, to show this respect to Ahab; and to run as a footman before his chariot; in order to convince him, that his severe reproofs were consistent with affection and loyalty in secular matters: nor was the prophet afraid of going to Jezreel, where Jezebel was; though he did not come into her presence. It does not appear, that either Ahab, or his attendants, or the inhabitants of Jezreel, offered him any refreshment, or hospitably entertained him. His reception at least was discouraging.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1–16.—The severest judgments will not of themselves humble or change the hearts of sinners; who often grow more hardened under them, even to desperation.—The *imagined* fire of purgatory, therefore, or the *real* torments of hell, possess no purifying efficacy; and the wicked under the anguish of their sufferings will continually increase in wickedness, and accumulate wrath to all eternity. For nothing, except the atoning blood of Christ, can expiate the guilt of sin; nothing, except the sanctifying Spirit of God, can purge away its pollution: and all other expedients are satanical delusions, to keep men from this one "fountain, which God hath opened for sin and for uncleanness."—The enmity of man's heart against God, expresses itself by persecuting those who bear his image and seek his glory: yet he protects them, until their testimony be finished.—It has been the common lot of his prophets and faithful servants, to be lodged in caves or dens of the earth, and fed with bread and water, (if that could be procured,) while the ministers of Satan have rioted in luxury. (Note, Heb. 11:35–38.) Yet the Lord has had a remnant in all places, where any part of his word has been known, in every age of the world: and notwithstanding errors and irregularities, that spiritual worship, and that repentance, fear, and love of his name, which are the fruits of his Holy Spirit, are accepted through the Redeemer, and by faith in him. Thus the remnant in Israel, when that nation had generally apostatized to idolatry, encourages the hope, that there are true believers known unto God, and reserved to him, in those parts of the Christian church, where the ostensible body is most deformed by superstition and idolatry.—If men of eminent piety were found in Ahab's family, and in Nero's palace, we may conclude that the Spirit of God will keep alive the holy flame which he has kindled, in any situation to which a believer can be called. (Note, Phil. 4:21, 22.) We should therefore be very cautious about leaving, or persuading others to leave, the posts assigned in Providence, however perilous or ensnaring; while they can be maintained without sinful compliances, and while they afford opportunities of doing good.—They, who begin early to serve God, are likely to be eminent in their generation: and those who "fear the LORD greatly," devise various methods of usefulness; for they do not shrink from trouble, danger, or expense, in promoting his cause, or protecting and relieving his oppressed and afflicted servants. Providence indeed has often remarkably preserved those who have ventured their lives freely in his service, in times of triumphant wickedness; yet, singular activity, prudence, and fidelity in secular concerns, frequently prove the means of their security. (Notes, Dan. 6:3–5.)—Many are careful to prevent the effects of sin upon their temporal interests, whilst they continue by their crimes to augment the fierce wrath of God, which is the cause of all misery: and ungodly rich men are commonly more careful about their own self-indulgence, than to preserve the multitude of the poor from starving. (Notes, Am. 6:3–8. Luke 16:19–21.) But while sinners remain on earth, the Lord will afford them some respite; that his judgments and mercies may concur, either to lead them to repentance, or to display his justice in their condemnation: and national calamities are often retarded or terminated, for the sake of a despised remnant of believers; for if persecutors could extirpate them all, they would open the flood-gates of divine vengeance upon themselves.—The servants of God may, in his cause, boldly face their most powerful enraged enemies; for they dare not touch them when he

intimidates their hearts, and cannot when he restrains their hands: (Notes, Matt. 14:3–5. Acts 4:13–22. 5:26–39.) and such as fear the Lord, however exalted in life, will greatly respect his faithful servants, though poor and hated by all around them.—They, whose situations have long required them to be cautious of giving unnecessary umbrage, are apt to grow too timid, and to apprehend consequences which are not likely to follow: if, however, they be sincere, they will surmount their fears, and join with their more courageous brethren in doing the will of God.

V. 17–29. The ministers of the Lord have generally been accounted the *troublers* of nations, nay, even of the church, by ungodly rulers: because they oppose prevailing abuses though sanctioned by authority, and denounce the wrath of God against impenitent sinners. Nay, they have frequently been treated as the authors of those calamities, which have come upon men for persecuting them, and neglecting their warnings! But they are able to refute, and even to retort, such charges, when urged to their faces: and to show that those who forsake the commandments of the Lord, and teach others to do so, are the real troublers of the world, of the church, and of themselves and their own families: and when this is done with firmness and solemnity, as by the authority of God, it will often cause the proudest sinner to tremble; to desist from present purposes of violence, and to comply with reasonable requirements.—The condescension of the Lord in repeatedly proving the most evident truths, concerning his being, perfections, the divine authority of his word, and the nature of his worship, is as wonderful as the perverseness of men, which requires such repeated demonstrations: but the fundamentals of religion stand on such manifest grounds of reason and sound argument, that they need fear no fair investigation. It is of peculiar importance, that we come to a decision on such subjects; for whilst we waver respecting them, we must be unstable in all our ways. But we should be equally decided in our practice, else our creed, however orthodox, will be received only by a *dead* faith. If the LORD be God, let us worship him, choose him for our Portion, and devote ourselves to his service: if Jesus be the divine and only Saviour, let us come to him, cleave to him, and depend on him alone for every thing: if the Bible be the word of God, let us reverence, study, and receive the whole of it, and submit our understanding to its teaching: and let us no longer endeavour to serve God and Mammon; to reconcile religion and secret sin; or to believe revelation, to accept of salvation, or to give up ourselves to the service of our Redeemer, by halves, or with reserves. This Satan will be content with, but the LORD abhors it.—The cause of truth is not to be determined by vote, authority, or wealth: one poor prophet or minister for JEHOVAH; hundreds and thousands for Baal, even of those in reputation and favour, and the highest secular or ecclesiastical stations; as well as of those who have possessed wealth and learning, has been a common case! But God will plead his own cause, and that of his witnesses, which will countervail all disadvantages; and his truth is great, and will prevail. In confidence of his support, we may concede every external precedence to our opponents, and boldly stand forth in his cause, without apprehension about the event. It is right, however, to state every thing in so equitable, plain, and convincing a manner, that all may be constrained to say, "It is well spoken," and that the mouths of gainsayers may be stopped.—The absurdities of superstition and false religion might excite our ridicule or mockery, did not their awful effects demand our tears.—The example of Elijah, in this instance, must be imitated with great caution, and only on very peculiar and evident occasions.—The service of Satan, whether in the observations of idolatrous worship, or in the practice of immoralities, whilst it promises indulgence to men's lusts, is cruel to their persons, and tends to torment them even in this world.

V. 30–46. All religious diligence, which is not regulated according to the word of God, as to its grand outlines, however self-denying or plausible, is unavailing: "for he, who gathereth not with the Saviour, scattereth." (Note, Matt. 12:29, 30.) Yet, when it is impracticable for us *exactly* to come up to the scriptural standard; or when we cannot have personal communion with God's people, in his more solemn ordinances: we must come as near as we can to the one, and show our fellowship with the other by such expressions as we are capable of: and the Lord will graciously accept our upright intentions, and dispense with the unavoidable irregularity.—Hypocrites expect to be heard for their much or their loud speaking; but a few words uttered in assured faith, and with fervent affections of zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, or thirstings after the Lord's image and favour, often form "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man, which availeth much." Such principles ought to dictate all our prayers, and we should utterly disregard even our own reputation in the judgment of men; except

CHAPTER XIX.

Ahab shows Jezebel, that Elijah had slain Baal's prophets, and she sends to Elijah, threatening to take away his life, 1, 2. He flies into the wilderness; to weary of being; but being twice strengthened with food brought by an angel, he fasts forty days, and arrives at Horeb, 3-8. There God meets him, preceded by a strong wind, an earthquake, and fire; and, speaking to him in a still small voice, commissions him to awake Hazeel, Jehu, and Elisha, 9-17. Elijah is informed that seven thousand worshippers of JEHOVAH still remain in Israel, 18. Elijah casts his mantle on Elisha, who leaves a cave of his friends, and follows him, 19-21.

AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, 'So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.'

3 And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 ¶ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree: and he requested for himself that he might die: and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree,

behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

6 And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head: and he did eat, and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb the mount of God.

9 ¶ And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the

1. 16:31. 21:5-7. 25. b See on 18:40. c 2:29. 29:10, 11. Ruth 1:17. 2 Kings 6:31. d Ex. 10:28. 15:9. 2 Kings 19:10-12. 22:27. 23:1. e Prov. 27:1. Acts 12:4-6. Jam. 4:13, 14. f Gen. 12:12, 13. Ex. 2:15. 1 Sam. 27:1. Is. 51:12. 13. Matt. 25:7. 70-74. 2 Cor. 12:7. g 4:25. Gen. 21:31. Am. 7:12, 13. h 13:14. Gen. 21:15, 16. John 4:6. i 3. Num. 11:15. 2 Kings 2:11. Job 4:20-22. Jer. 20:14-18. Jon. 4:3, 5. Phil. 1:21-24. * Heb. for his life. k Am. 6:2. Nah. 3:8. Matt. 6:25. Rom. 3:9. 1 Gen. 28:11-15. m Ps. 34:7, 10. Dan. 8:19, 29. 10:9, 10. Acts 12:7. Heb. 1:14. 13:5. n 17:6-9-15. Ps. 37:3. Is. 33:16. Matt.

4:11. 6:32. Mark 6:2, 3. John 21:5, 9. f Heb. b-later. g See on 5. p Tent. 33:25. Ps. 103:13, 14. q Dan. 1:15. 2 Cor. 12:9. r Ps. 24:18. 34:26. Deut. 3:9, 15. Matt. 4:2. Mark 1:13. Luke 4:2. See on Ex. 3:1. 19:18. Mal. 4:4, 5. t Ex. 33:22. Jer. 9:2. Heb. 11:38. u 13. Gen. 3:9. 16:8. Jer. 17:1. v 1:34. x Ex. 20:5. 34:14. Num. 25:11. 1 s. 69:9. 116:139. John 2:17. y 14. 18:4. 30. Jer. 2:30. Hos. 5:11. Mic. 6:16. z 19:4, 22. 20:13, 22, 35, 41, 42, 42:8. Rom. 11:2, 3. a 2. 16:10, 17. b Ex. 19:20. 24:12, 18, 34:2. Matt. 17:1-3. 2 Pet. 1:17, 18.

when it is connected with the credit of religion, the conviction of sinners that our cause is that of God, and the establishment of believers in the faith: but for these purposes we should endeavour to obviate every occasion of suspicion, and to be careful that our good be not evil spoken of.—The awful displays of the divine justice and holiness may terrify and convince the sinner; extort many confessions, and dispose him to external acts of obedience, while the impression lasts: but the view of these attributes, harmonizing with mercy, love, and truth, in Christ Jesus, is needful to draw the soul into self-abasement, affiance, and love. Yet the spirit of God employs both methods, in effecting the conversion of sinners, in order and measure, as he pleases: and in our endeavours for that same blessed purpose, it is generally advisable to inform the understanding and convince the judgment first, and then to address the heart and conscience.—When sinners are deeply impressed with divine truth, they should be earnestly exhorted without delay, to set about those self-denying duties, to which the Saviour calls his disciples.—Under the Christian dispensation, indeed, we must not destroy the lives of men, even though they have deceived others to idolatrous worship. When, however, false teachers are removed, silenced, or put to shame, it exceedingly promotes the revival of true religion: and after effectual measures for public reformation have been used, we may hope for the merciful removal of public calamities.—Faith perceives things imperceptible to sense, and anticipates future and distant blessings: it therefore excites fervent prayers, in which reverence, humility, importunity, and perseverance are requisite in order to success.—The love of faithful ministers to the persons of sinners should not only be manifest to that God, who in secret hears their affectionate prayers for those whom they most severely reprove: but they should show it by every external expression; and be ready to give honour to whom honour on any account is due; and in their private conduct to become the meaneast servants to those, whom, speaking in God's name, they "rebuke with all authority." And he will strengthen his people for every exertion and self-denial, to which his commandments and his providence shall call them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref.) The Lord left this wicked woman, when informed by Ahab of what had been done, to be so intoxicated by rage, that, instead of sending a messenger to apprehend or kill Elijah, she gave him warning and time to make his escape! (Note, Matt. 27:8.) Some indeed think, that she was afraid to venture at the same time on the rage of the people, and the miraculous power, which the prophet evidently and undeniably possessed, by attempting to slay him: but contented herself with threatening him, that he might abscond and occasion her no further interruption, or take further measures, against the worship and worshippers of Baal, and the prophets of the groves: (18:19.) while others suppose she had such an opinion of his intrepidity, that she concluded he would certainly wait the event. But her absolute language, and the imprecation upon herself if she failed, seem more like the outrageous effusion of passion, than the effect of deliberation and design. Without reflecting that she might not live till the morrow, or not be able to find Elijah, or to prevail against him: she swore by the gods that she would put him to death, as if all events were absolutely in her own

power! (Notes, 2 Kings 1:10-17. Prov. 27:1. Jam. 4:13-17.)

V. 3, 4. It seems, that Elijah fled from Jezreel on the very night after the sacrifice, and the fire from heaven, and the abundant rain given in answer to his prayers; and before he had time suitably to refresh himself after the fatigues of the preceding day. Beer-sheba, in the south of Judah, was at a considerable distance from Jezreel, in the lot of Issachar: (Josh. 19:18.) yet he travelled with all speed till he came thither. But there he left his servant, as unable to proceed through weariness: or perhaps he was unwilling to expose him to farther hardship; having, as some think, purposed to end his life in that desolate wilderness, where Israel had wandered forty years.—He had passed through the whole kingdom of Judah, where doubtless pious Jehoshaphat would have welcomed and protected him. But he seems, on this occasion, to have been left to himself for his humiliation; and consequently he was seized with unreasonable terror. Instead of venturing all consequences, assured of the protection of the Almighty; and pushing his advantage, by leading the people to destroy the temple and worship of Baal, and restore the worship of JEHOVAH; he fled from the important service, and impatiently wished and prayed for death! What a contrast to his zeal and intrepidity, as recorded in the preceding chapter! (Notes, 18:40. Num. 11:1-15. Jon. 1:2, 3. 4:1-4, 9-11.) Thus the people, left without a leader, and intimidated by his example, would be too much afraid of Jezebel, to reap those decisive advantages from the miracle, and the events recorded in the former chapter, which might have been hoped for.—When Elijah said "I am no better than my fathers," he seems to have referred to some pre-intimations given him of his translation: but he was willing rather to die, than to live in misery, and to behold, without being able to prevent, the wickedness and ruin of his people: yet he would rather die by the hand of the Lord, than by that of Baal's worshippers, lest they should blaspheme that God whose prophet they had slain.

V. 5-8. The Lord intended that Elijah should visit Horeb, where Moses had fasted forty days and nights; that in him the miracle might be repeated: because as Moses was the lawgiver, so Elijah was in some respects the chief of the prophets. (Note, Matt. 17:3.) God at first miraculously provided his servant with food: (Note, 17:4-6.) and then he supported him without food, or any need or desire of it. (Notes, Ex. 34:28. Matt. 4:3, 4.) As mount Horeb was but a few days' journey from Beer-sheba: the forty days here mentioned seemed to include the whole of the time, which passed till his return out of the wilderness.

V. 9. What doest thou, &c.? Elijah had been secretly guided to mount Horeb, rather than to another place; and probably he sought retirement for meditation and prayer. But this was not at that crisis his proper employment; for he ought by no means to have fled from the land of Israel, but there to have persevered, without dread of consequences, in promoting the cause of true religion. (Notes, Josh. 7:10-12. Neh. 6:10-14. Acts 4:29-31. 8:1.)

V. 10. The prophet pleaded in his own behalf that "he had been very jealous for the LORD," having had his glory exceedingly at heart, and having been deeply grieved, and even filled with holy indignation, at Israel's apostacy. This he had long endeavoured to prevent; and he had now

mount before the LORD. And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away. [Practical Observations.]

15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria:

16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son

of Shaphat of Abe-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

17 And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

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CHAPTER XX

Ben-hadad king of Syria, not satisfied with Ahab's submission, leads a powerful army against Samaria, and wars against it, 1-12. Ahab, directed by a prophet, gains a complete victory over him, 13-21. A prophet warns Ahab to prepare for another assault, 22. The Syrians come again, the next year, with very great preparations; and are opposed by a very small company, 23-27. A prophet assures Ahab of victory, because the Syrians thought JEHOVAH the God of the hills, but not of the valleys, 28. The Syrians are smitten with immense slay, Ahab, and Ben-hadad flee and hide themselves, 29, 30. He administers reproof to Ahab, who makes a league with him, 31-34. A prophet, in a parable, leads Ahab to condemn himself, and then denounces the judgment of God against him for his unreasonable lenity, 35-43.

AN ^aBen-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and *there were* ^bthirty

^a 15:18, 20. ^b 2 Kings 8:7-15. ^c 2 Chr. 16:2-4. ^d Jer. 49:1. ^e Am. 1:4. ^f 16:14. ^g Gen. 14:1-5. ^h Judg. 1:7. ⁱ Ezra 7:12. ^j Is. 10:8. ^k Ex. 26:7. ^l Dan. 2:37. ^m c. Ex. 14:7. ⁿ Deut.

ral interests, and to venture persecution as a prophet of the Lord: and to lead him to count his cost ere he engaged. (*Notes, Matt. 8:18-22. Luke 14:28-33.*) But Elisha's heart was touched by the Holy Spirit, and he was ready to leave all to attend Elijah. He did not ask to wait till the death of his parents, but only to bid them farewell: and, having made a feast for his neighbours of the flesh of the oxen, prepared with their yokes, as the fuel; (in token, that he never meant to return again to that employment;) he followed Elijah, and ministered to him, that under his tuition he might be prepared to succeed him, and in the mean time be a help and comfort to him. (*Notes, 2 Kings 3:11, 12. Matt. 9:9-13.*)—The prophet could now no longer complain, that he was left alone, for the Lord had provided him a companion. (*Notes, Ex. 4:14. Matt. 10:1-4.*)—From the ensuing history it appears, that Elijah and Elisha employed themselves not only in privately instructing the people, but also in founding or superintending seminaries of prophets, in different parts of the land, who might assist them in the work of reformation, and maintain it when they were removed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. No miracles or judgments can finally stop the fury of persecutors: though they be intimidated for a season, when they have respite, and leisure to confer with one another, they grow desperate in proportion as they have been baffled and mortified. (*Notes, Ex. 8:15. 14:5-9. Acts 4:13-22. 5:17-28.*) Nay, such diabolic enmity can inhabit the breasts of females, and has sometimes raged in them with peculiar vehemence! (*Notes, Matt. 14:3-11.*)—Mad passions often defeat their own end, and furious threats prevent the execution of determined malice.—The most eminent believers cannot exercise even those graces, which most distinguish their characters, without the immediate assistance of God: and when in danger of being exalted above measure, they are sometimes left to struggle with temptation without their wonted support. Then the boldest, who before feared no number or power of the adversaries, tremble at the distant prospect of danger; the most zealous are dissatisfied with their employments, and sit down disconsolate and desponding; they the most resigned grow fretful, and even pray in a peevish manner, and want to die, not out of longing for heavenly glory, but from weariness of conflicts and tribulations. But it is shameful for a soldier to wish to be absent from his place in the day of battle, or to expect the victory without the peril and the hardship of the conflict. The Lord, however, bears with his faithful servants, notwithstanding their infirmities; and preserves them for every service which he has allotted them, whatever they wish or fear. As all creatures are at his command, those for whom he engages to provide, can want no good thing; and yet if he pleases, he can support them without either means or instruments. (*Notes, 17:1-16.*) His mercy and power are the same from generation to generation, whether displayed in the same way or not: and he will vouchsafe his gracious presence to his people, into whatever place they are banished. Indeed when they flee from the path of duty, he will meet and rebuke them, but he will not forsake them.

V. 10-14. No former zeal, boldness, or usefulness, will excuse present neglects: yet we are most apt to boast of what we have been and done, when most remiss in present duty! Disappointments in our too sanguine expectations often sour our tempers, as well as render us discontented: and then we are ready to blame others for our failures, and to be severe in our censures and remarks. The zealous minister often finds this heaven corrupting his services: he is sometimes tempted to think all his labour in vain, when he does not see the immediate effect; and to conclude, that he can do no good, because he cannot do all that he hoped for: and when he witnesses much evil in the church, or in that part in which he labours, he often imagines matters to be much worse than they really are. Thus "our hands hang down, and our knees wax feeble;" and we are ingenious in discouraging and disquieting ourselves. But upon reflection, this very experience may explain to us that rebellion of others, which so disconcerts us; and teach us gentleness and long-suffering, without disdaining or despairing of the worst of sinners.—The blessing is from the Lord; and he often works most effectually when proper means are used, with quiet assiduity and perseverance, without any of that bustle and vehemence which excite the public attention. Magistrates should indeed exercise their authority, in promoting true religion, by all hallowed and scriptural means. (*Notes, 2 Chr. 17:7-9. 30:12.*) But attempts to produce reformation, in

and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots; and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it.

2 And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,

3 Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine.

4 And the king of Israel answered and said,

20:1. Judg. 4:3. 1 Sam. 13:5. Is. 37:24. d. Jer. 26:25. Deut. 28:52. 2 Kings 6:24-28. 17:5, 6. e. 2 Kings 19:9. Is. 36:2. f. c. 37:9, 10. g. Ex. 15:9. Is. 10:13, 14

either doctrine or worship, by coercive means, and the secular arm, bearing all down before it, like the strong wind, the earthquake, and the fire, in every case promise more than they effect; and even when the magistrate's authority is regulated and limited in a proper manner, in repressing impiety and immorality, and countenancing zealous ministers in their labours, it only makes way for the "still small voice" of the gospel, by means of which the Holy Spirit performs his gracious work upon the heart. (*Notes, Is. 42:1-4. Rom. 1:13-16. 1 Cor. 2:3-5. 2 Cor. 10:1-6.*) And the minister, when deprived of this protection and support, and driven by persecution into obscure corners, may expect great usefulness, by this power accompanying his labours.—The word of God also is indeed "like a fire, and a hammer, that breaketh the rocks in pieces;" and the whole of it should be preached with zealous plainness and faithfulness: but "the ministration of condemnation," and the awful terrors of eternal vengeance, only precede and make way for "the ministration of righteousness," and the sweet gospel of Christ, attended by urgent persuasions, melting expostulations, and tender invitations, in which the Lord chiefly comes to seal our hearts for himself; and without this little will be done.—We shall do well often to imagine, that we hear the Lord inquire, "What doest thou here?" In scenes of worldly dissipation, in trifling company, in riotous feasting, or where unlawful traffic is carrying on, the Christian can have no good answer ready: nor can the minister, if engrossed by needless worldly business, by trifling studies, or by the pursuits of ambition, preferment, pleasure, or reputation, to the neglect of the important duties of his calling. Nay, if we are at home, when we should be in the pulpit; asleep, when we should be at work; or in company when we should be engaged in prayer and meditation, or reading the Scriptures; such a question must confound us. In short every station has its proper duties, and every portion of time its proper work, and we should frequently call ourselves to account, whether we be in our place and proper employment, as the duty of the season requires.

V. 15-21. It is not easy to convince men of their faults, and silence their excuses or boastings: and whilst the Lord encourages his servants, under their difficulties, he sends them back to their proper work, ashamed of their timidity and neglect; and then he gives them both helpers and success. He has "a remnant, according to the election of grace," which he reserves to himself, and preserves from prevailing abominations. For their conversion and edification he waits and provides: in the mean time impenitent sinners ripen for vengeance; and he raises up instruments to execute it upon them, from whom they shall by no means escape: for the word of God, spoken by his despised ministers, ensures their destruction, more than the sword of any enemy. Nor will he ever desert his own cause, however it seems to be run down: he will furnish men for the most perilous and self-denying services: and those who duly understand the importance of the sacred ministry, will renounce every other honour, pleasure, and interest for the sake of it, though called to labour in the midst of hardships, poverty, and persecution.—Zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls will subordinate, though it will not extinguish natural affections. (*Notes, Matt. 10:37-39.*) The work of the ministry requires the whole man: and when such persons are employed, as have not been regularly educated for it, they are especially concerned to attend the instructions, to frequent the company, and to copy the examples, of aged and approved ministers; and "no man having set his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (*P. O. Matt. 4:12-25. Note, Matt. 8:21, 22.*) In difficult times helpers of inferior abilities may be a great comfort to the discouraged servants of God; and this service is carried on to advantage, when different ministers concur, from the same principles, to seek the same great end of his glory in the salvation of souls. May "the Lord of the harvest send forth many such labourers into his harvest!" Amen. (*Note, Matt. 9:36-38.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1. Ben-hadad signifies *The son of Hadad*; (11:14-22.) yet he is said to have been "the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion." (15:18.)—Perhaps Hadad was his father, and Tabrimon and Hezion his more remote ancestors.—The thirty and two kings were petty princes of the adjacent countries, who were either vassals or allies to the king of Syria.—Ben-hadad seems to have been induced by rapacity to wage war against Ahab; and it is probable that he had wasted the country before he besieged Samaria.—The late terrible famine must have diminished

My lord, O king, according to thy saying, **I am** thine, and all that I have.

5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children;

6 Yet I will send my servants unto thee tomorrow about this time, and they shall search thy house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.

7 Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you; and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold, and I denied him not.

8 And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Harken not unto him, nor consent.

9 Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first, I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

10 And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me.

11 And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.

12 And it came to pass, when Ben-hadad heard this message as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said unto his servants, Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array against the city.

13 ¶ And behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the Lord,

Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thy hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

14 And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand.

16 And they went out at noon. But Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.

17 And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

18 And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.

19 So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.

20 And they slew every one his man: and the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse with the horsemen.

21 And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter. [Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

23 And the servants of the king of Syria said

¶ Lev. 25:35. Deut. 28:48. Jud. 15:11-13. 1 Sam. 13:5,7. 2 Kings 18:14-16. Ps. 83:18. Is. 37:20. Ez. 6:7. Joel 3:17. 11 Or, servants. Gen. 14:14-16. Judg. 7:16-20. 1 Sam. 17:50. 1 Cor. 1:27-29. 11 Heb. bind, or, tie. See on 18:44. r Judg. 7:16. 1 Sam. 14:6. 2 Chr. 14:11. s 19:18. 1 Sam. 14:2. 2 Kings 13:7. Ps. 106:40-43. 1 Sam. 12:16,9. Prov. 22:22-23. Ez. 30:16,17. u 14:15,19. v 1 Sam. 2:3,4. 14:11,12. 17:44. 2 Kings 14:8-12. Prov. 18:12. z 2 Sam. 2:16. y Lev. 26:8. Judg. 7:20-22. 1 Sam. 14:13-15. 2 Kings 7:6,7. Ps. 33:16,46:8. z 1 Sam. 30:16,17. 2 Kings 19:36. a Judg. 3:28. 7:23-25. 1 Sam. 14:23-22. 17:52. 2 Kings 3:18,24. b 18:29,19:10. 22:8. c 2 Chr. 25:9,11. Ps. 27:14. Prov. 18:10. 20:18. Is. 8:9. Joel 3:9,10. Eph. 6:10. d 26. 2 Sam. 11:1. 1 Chr. 20:1. Is. 36:11.

6:8-12. 7:1. 13:23. Is. 7:1-9. Fr. 20:14,22. q 28. 18:37. Fr. 14:15. 16:12. Ps. 83:18. Is. 37:20. Ez. 6:7. Joel 3:17. 11 Or, servants. Gen. 14:14-16. Judg. 7:16-20. 1 Sam. 17:50. 1 Cor. 1:27-29. 11 Heb. bind, or, tie. See on 18:44. r Judg. 7:16. 1 Sam. 14:6. 2 Chr. 14:11. s 19:18. 1 Sam. 14:2. 2 Kings 13:7. Ps. 106:40-43. 1 Sam. 12:16,9. Prov. 22:22-23. Ez. 30:16,17. u 14:15,19. v 1 Sam. 2:3,4. 14:11,12. 17:44. 2 Kings 14:8-12. Prov. 18:12. z 2 Sam. 2:16. y Lev. 26:8. Judg. 7:20-22. 1 Sam. 14:13-15. 2 Kings 7:6,7. Ps. 33:16,46:8. z 1 Sam. 30:16,17. 2 Kings 19:36. a Judg. 3:28. 7:23-25. 1 Sam. 14:23-22. 17:52. 2 Kings 3:18,24. b 18:29,19:10. 22:8. c 2 Chr. 25:9,11. Ps. 27:14. Prov. 18:10. 20:18. Is. 8:9. Joel 3:9,10. Eph. 6:10. d 26. 2 Sam. 11:1. 1 Chr. 20:1. Is. 36:11.

the number of the Israelites, by death and emigration, almost beyond calculation: and by the righteous judgment of God, the remainder were so disaffected to Ahab, or so dismayed by Ben-hadad, that they had retired or fled; and thus they left the capital city in a very defenceless condition.

V. 2-11. Ben-hadad's first message was couched in insulting language. He not only considered Ahab's riches as already his property; but his wives and children, even the goodliest of them, as his slaves. Yet Ahab understood this, only as a claim to dominion over him, and his property or kingdom; and in abject terms he consented to be his vassal, and to do him homage, and pay him tribute. Ben-hadad therefore, (perhaps perceiving his terror and pusillanimity,) grew more insolent, and by a second message demanded the immediate possession and use of them all, for himself and his servants, who would come the next day, and search all the houses and treasures, and carry away what they thought most valuable, whether it belonged to Ahab, or to his people. To this the elders of Israel would not allow the king to consent: the dominion and the public treasures, Ben-hadad might have taken; but to plunder the city and enslave the inhabitants must not be granted. To this answer the king of Syria sent a boasting menace, confirmed with an oath by his idols; implying, that he would enter Samaria with such numbers, that, when the whole city was reduced to a heap of dust, it would not afford them every one a handful: (Notes, Ex. 15:9,10. 2 Kings 19:23,24. Is. 10:12-14.) but Ahab very pertinently reminded him not to exult and triumph, till he had gotten the victory, and had put off his armour; as at present he was only girding it on, and preparing for the battle.

V. 13. Elijah had complained that he was left alone; yet he Lord had other prophets, whom he could send to speak before Ahab. (Note, 19:10.) Probably, Elijah and Elisha were at this time well employed in some distant part of the land; and Ahab and Jezebel were too much engaged, to interrupt their labours or usefulness.—The Lord was pleased to predict the victory to this wicked prince, for his further conviction, that JEHOVAH, not Baal, was the living God; for the punishment of Ben-hadad's insolence; for the honour of his own name, and for the benefit of his true worshippers; and in his long-suffering towards Israel, and compassion for their complicated distresses.

V. 14, 15. Ahab, sensible that the promised victory must be miraculous, inquired, by whom it was to be obtained: and he was directed to employ, not his bravest soldiers, but the servants, or pages, of the chief men in the different provinces: and also himself to lead on the attack. His whole army consisted of only seven thousand men; (the same number with those preserved from idolatry, but not the same persons;) yet none of these were to be employed, till the first assault had been made, and the first advantage gained by this small company of servants! (Notes, Judg. 7:16-22. 1 Sam. 14:6-10.) And under the present impression of terror and hope, Ahab readily obeyed these uncommon orders; though in general he despised and hated both the prophets, and him that sent them.

V. 16-18. It is probable, that Ahab chose to lead out his little troop at noon, when he supposed the Syrians would be at dinner, or reposing themselves.—Ben-hadad, despising the Israelites, was indulging to excess; and on hearing that a small company came out of Samaria, he gave such orders, in haughtiness and intoxication, as were exactly suited to embarrass his officers and soldiers; and to prevent their attacking the assailants with spirit, lest they should slay those whom they had been ordered to take alive! (Marg. Ref. v.) And to make prisoners of those who came out to treat of peace, would have been contrary to all the laws and usages of nations, even in time of war.

V. 19-21. The two hundred and thirty-two servants whom especially Ben-hadad had ordered to be taken alive, slew every one the man who attempted to seize him; and this unexpected resistance, by the secret operation of God upon the minds of the Syrians, so dismayed them, that they yielded the army an easy and decisive victory. (Note, 1 Sam. 14:11-15.) Ben-hadad, after all his boasts and menaces, might be considered as successful, beyond all reasonable expectation, in this respect, that he escaped with life, drunken as he then was. (16. Notes, 1 Sam. 30:16-19.)

V. 22. It does not appear, that Ahab regarded this merciful and seasonable warning, given him by the prophet; or that he made any suitable return for his late unexpected deliverance and success.

V. 23-25. The servants of Ben-hadad, either in flattery as if no human valour could possibly rou

V. 35, 36. This command was given by one of "the sons of the prophets" "in the word of the LORD," to his neighbour, or fellow, to another of the same company, who would know that he spake in the name of the Lord. The refusal therefore was direct disobedience to God, which he was pleased to punish with immediate death, by a lion meeting and slaying him. (*Note.* 13:23—32.) Ahab would doubtless hear of him.

36 Then said he unto him, 'Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

37 Then he found another man, and said, 'Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him.

38 So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face.

39 And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, 'Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, 'Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.

40 And as thy servant was busy here and there, the was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, 'So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.

f 13:21-24, 25. 1 Sam. 15:22-23. g 35. Ex. 21:12. * Heb. smiting and wounding. h 14:2, 29, 30. 2 Sam. 14:2. Matt. 6:16. i Judg. 9:7-20. 2 Sam. 12:1-7. 14:5-7. Mark 12:1-12. k 42. 2 Kings 10:24. l Ex. 21:30. Job 36:18. Ps. 19:7, 8. Prov. 6:33, 13:8. l Ret. 1:18, 19. f Heb. weigh. i Heb. he was not. m 2 Sam. 12:35, 6. Job 15:6. Matt. 21:41, 25:24-27. Luke 19:22. n 38. 2 Sam.

this event: and if one who humanely refused to smite a pious prophet at the command of God was thus punished; he might conclude, that he should not be spared, who disobeyed God, by forming an alliance with a haughty idolatrous king, whom the Lord required him to destroy. It seems that the prophet intended, by being wounded, the better to personate a soldier who had been in the battle, and had deserved well of his king, though he had failed of his duty in one particular. (37.)

V. 33-40. The prophet appeared, either as one wounded in the face, and so covered with a bandage like a veil to disguise himself, as many understand it; or he assumed the character of a mourner, being under condemnation to die, seeing he could not pay the talent of silver required of him; or he united both. His account implied, that the prisoner trusted to his keeping was one of superior rank; and that his officer, or captain, committed him to his care, with this injunction, or warning; yet the prisoner was gone; and Ahab, without reflecting on his own conduct, confirmed the sentence. (Notes, 2 Sam. 12:1-7.)

V. 41, 42. As soon as Ahab discovered who the prophet was, he perceived that he had been drawn in to pass sentence upon himself. Ahab lost his life in fighting against Ben-hadad, who did not fulfil this treaty: (Notes, 22:31-35.) and great evils came upon Israel from the Syrians, whom Ahab might at this time have subjugated, or deprived of power to injure them. (Notes, 2 Kings 6:25-29. 8:12, 13. 10:32-36.)

V. 43. Heavy, &c.] Whilst the Lord secured his own glory, and protected his people; he deprived Ahab of all satisfaction in his deliverance and victory, and filled him with vexation and dismay. He did not repent of his fault, but he was chagrined at the message, and enraged at the messenger. Many think it was Michaiiah, which is not improbable. (Notes, 21:4-6. 22:8. 1 Sam. 14:45, 46.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-21. The indignation of the Lord will surely weaken and dispirit sinners: and those nations especially, which have been favoured with the light of revelation, will be brought low for their iniquity, when they forsake the service of God.—Ungodly men delight to insult over the fallen; success increases their pride and insolence; and thus they too are prepared for vengeance.—Those, who most daringly rebel against God, are often mere cowards when assaulted by their fellow-creatures: and no extremities of affliction, or consulting together on what they should, or should not do, will bring sinners, when left to themselves, duly to consider the real causes of their distress.—Men will part with their most pleasant things, which they most love, to save their temporal lives; and yet they lose their souls, and incur everlasting misery, rather than bestow any labour, or give up any pleasure or interest, to prevent it! (Notes, Matt. 16:24-25. P. O. 21-28.)—Boasting and menacing language generally breeds a weak and foolish mind, exposes men to cutting rebukes, and terminates in abject meanness and disgrace. To glory in what we have done, is pride and vanity; but to glory in what we will do, is extreme ignorance and folly; for no capacity or management can ensure success. (Note, Jam. 4:13-17.)—Drunkards perform great things as far as boasting words can go: and they urge one another on to rash and foolish enterprises, which expose them in every way to detriment and to ruin.—The Lord will secure his own glory, and take care of his own people, notwithstanding the wickedness of the great or the many: he will leave every impenitent sinner without excuse; and he delights to save by unlikely instruments, that his own power may be the more conspicuous. At

41 And he hastened, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets.

42 And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, 'Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

43 And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

CHAPTER XXI.

Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard, and is greatly displeased, because Naboth refuses to part with it, 1-4. Jezebel discovering this, by letters, in Ahab's name, to the elders of Jezreel, causes Naboth to be stoned, as a blasphemer, 5-14. She excites Ahab to take possession of his vineyard, 15, 16. Elijah is sent to meet Ahab, and to denounce the judgment of God against him, and his family, and Jezebel, 17-24. Ahab's enormous wickedness, 25, 26. He externally humbles himself before God, and the judgments on his family are deferred to his son's days, 27-29.

AND it came to pass after these things, that was in Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give

13:19. Job 2:8. Jer. 6:26. o 34. 1 Sam. 15:9-11. p 22:31-37. 2 Kings 6:24. 8:12. 2 Chr. 13:33, 34. q 21:4, 22:8. Euth. 5:13-14, 13. Job 5:9. Prov. 19:3. r 20:35-43. 2 Chr. 25:22. Ezra 9:13, 14. Is. 9:13. Jer. 5:3. s 19:45. Joah. 19:18. Judg. 6:33. 1 Sam. 22:1. Hos. 1:4, 5. c Gen. 3:6. Ex. 30:17. Deut. 5:21. 1 Sam. 5:14. Jer. 22:17. Hab. 2:9-11. Luke 12:15. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. Jam. 1:14, 15.

some seasons, the convictions of the most abandoned may get an advantage over their lusts: for a time they may be restrained from iniquity, may do many things according to the command of God, and even regard the admonitions of his ministers: thus they are sometimes externally favoured; that they may experience the different effect of obedience and of disobedience, for their deeper condemnation, if they relapse into their former crimes.—The Lord inspires counsel and courage, or sends infatuation and dismay, as he pleases: so that the battle is not to the strong; but all calculations are strangely proved erroneous, when this secret influence is not taken into the account. (Note, Ec. 9:11, 12.)

V. 22-43. Fallen man has very confused, absurd, and dishonourable apprehensions of the divine attributes. He conceives of God, as if he were such an one as himself, and is thus emboldened to persist in his rebellion; and the most consummate wisdom, in worldly concerns, often unites with the most contemptible ignorance on religious subjects.—To silence the blasphemies, or to expose the mistakes of his enemies, the Lord sometimes gives temporary success to those who, in another way, despise his warnings and disobey his precepts: but he will not countenance them in their crimes, nor let them finally escape condign punishment.—The whole creation is at war with those who fight against God; and he will surely render contemptible, as well as miserable, the haughtiness of them.—The ambitious are pleased with abject submissions and adulation; and love the society of the most wicked men, who will stoop low enough to them. Thus they are seduced and bribed, not only to disregard the will of God, and to prefer the friendship of his enemies; but to forego the most solid temporal advantages to themselves and their connexions, for the sake of empty words and fair professions! It indeed becomes all to be merciful; and clemency is the ornament of royalty, especially of the kings of Israel, the rulers of God's people: yet clemency to notorious criminals, whilst those who love and serve God are treated with cruelty, is strangely inconsistent; to pretend to be more merciful than the Lord, by sparing those whom he commands to be put to death, is an awful presumption; and to regard those as brethren, whom he has doomed to "utter destruction," is an evidence of great impiety.—In every thing the Lord demands implicit obedience; even the plea of compassion will not excuse rebellion against his will: and, by severe temporal judgments on such as have committed lighter offences, he loudly speaks terror to more atrocious criminals; whom he will at length constrain to decide against themselves. And whatever prosperity they may in the mean time obtain, it will be embittered to them by what they feel, and what they fear; for "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—But may we not here, by an allowable accommodation, hint some profitable instructions? The convinced sinner, not daring any longer to persist in his impotent contest against the Almighty; and unable to flee from him, or to purchase his forgiveness and favour, is almost reduced to despair. Then he hears a report of mercy, abounding in Christ Jesus to the chief of sinners; and in hopes of obtaining a free salvation, with penitent tears and humiliating confessions, he cries out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Becoming acquainted with the gracious appellations of Father, Brother, and Friend of sinners, and the exceedingly great and precious promises contained in the Scripture; he diligently observes, and eagerly catches them, as it were, from the Saviour's lips, and pleads them in humble prayer. Thus he obtains forgiveness; the everlasting covenant is made with him, and all the blessings of the gospel are secured to him: at the same time, he yields himself to the Lord to be his servant, and love constrains him

me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

3 And Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

4 And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased, because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, "I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers." And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, "Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?"

6 And he said unto her, "Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, 'I will not give thee my vineyard.'

7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

[Practical Observations.]

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and

2 Kings 9:27. Deut. 11:10. Eccl. 2:5. Cant. 4:15. * Heb. he good in thine eyes. Gen. 16:8. 1 Sam. 8:8. 29:6. margines. e Gen. 44:17. Josh. 22:29. 24:16. 1 Sam. 12:22. 24:6. 11:1. 1 Chr. 11:19. Job 27:5. Rom. 8:4, 31. 6:2, 15. 7:13. 1 Cor. 6:15. Gal. 6:14. f Lev. 25:23. Num. 36:7. Ez. 46:18. g See on 20:43. Is. 57:21. Jon. 4:1, 9. h See on 3. Num. 22:13, 14. 1 Chr. 4:5-8. Sam. 13:2, 4. Eccl. 6:9. 7:8, 9. Eph. 4:27. Jam. 1:14, 15. k 25. 16:31. 18:4. 19:2. Gen. 3:6. 1 Sam. 13:4. Neh. 2:2. Esth. 4:5. m See on 2. Esth. 6:9-14. 6:12, 13. Prov. 11:20. 1 Tim. 6:9, 10. Jam. 4:2-7. n See on 3, 4. o 1 Sam. 8:5, 4. 2 Sam. 13:4. Prov. 30:31. Eccl. 4:1. 8:4. Dan. 5:19-21. p 15:16. Mic. 1:2, 7. 3. q 2 Sam. 11:14, 15. 1 Chr. 32:17. Ezra 4:7, 8, 11. Neh. 6:5. Esth. 3:12-15. 8:8-13. r Num. 11:16. Deut. 16:18, 19. 21:1-9. s 1. 2 Kings 10:1-7, 11.

to live to his glory.—But alas! most that hear these glad tidings are busy here and there, till the day of salvation is gone; and, not having wherewithal to ransom their souls, they must spend eternity in unavailing lamentations and despair. Nay, even true believers are often so taken up with trifles, as to let seasons of important usefulness glide away unimproved, to the loss both of themselves and of others. May the Lord "teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. Ahab had not long before lost an opportunity of enlarging, securing, and improving his dominions; and now he coveted Naboth's vineyard, to make him an additional kitchen-garden, or pleasure-garden! He seemed, however, to propose equitable terms to the possessor; but his fault lay in desiring it in an inordinate manner. (Notes, Ex. 20:17. Rom. 7:7-12.)

V. 3. Naboth seems to have been a conscientious man, and a worshipper of JEHOVAH, which might render Jezebel the more determined on his destruction. (Note, 8-14.) He valued his vineyard as "the inheritance of his fathers," originally assigned to them by the Lord himself. He might, if in want, have leased out, or mortgaged, his estate till the year of jubilee: (Notes, Lev. 25:23-28. Num. 36:1-9.) but this was not the case; and he was sensible, that if his vineyard became a part of the royal gardens, it would never revert to his family. The Lord had forbidden him to alienate his land; and he plainly gave Ahab the true reason, why he could not comply with his desires; for he would rather seem uncourtous, or offend his prince, than transgress the law of God; whatever otherwise he might have been disposed to do.

The Lord forbid it me.] חלילה לי כדבריהם, profanitas; profanum; vox aliquod abominatis. Respondit Græcis ὁ γενορός. Robertson.—Gen. 18:25. Josh. 22:29. 24:16. 1 Sam. 24:7. 2 Sam. 23:17. Heb. The word implies the idea of impiety; and Naboth seems to have started back from the proposal, with aversion and alarm, as from a temptation to a heinous sin.

V. 4-6. (Note, 20:43.) Ahab, a victorious and prosperous king, was filled with anguish and vexation, because he met with a denial in so small a matter! Such was the conflict of his passions, that he lay down, and, either through sickness or sullenness, would not taste food! He greatly desired the vineyard. His pride was intolerably offended, that one of his own subjects should peremptorily refuse to comply with his proposal; he was ashamed to yield the point in contest; and he was afraid of proceeding to extremities. The effects of these conflicting passions made him very miserable; yet it is probable he would not have attempted violence against Naboth, had not "Jezebel his wife stirred him up." (Notes, Esth. 5:13, 14.)—It is observable, that in relating the cause of his disquietude, Ahab made no mention of Naboth's conscientious reason for his refusal; but stated it as if it had been entirely the effect of insolence and obstinacy!

V. 7. It was indeed unworthy of the king of Israel to 'et

sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth.

9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, 'Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people:

10 And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, 'Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die

11 And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

13 And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, 'Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

15 ¶ And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that

1 Gen. 34:13-17. Is. 53:4. Matt. 2:8. 23:14. Luke 20:47. John 18:28. * Heb in the top of the people. u See on Deut. 19:15. Matt. 26:59, 60. Acts 6:11. x See on Deut. 13:15. Judg. 19:22. y Ez. 22:28. Lev. 24:15, 16. Matt. 26:65. 66. John 10:33. Acts 6:13. z Ex. 1:17, 21. 23:1, 2. Lev. 19:15. 1 Sam. 22:17, 18. 23:20. 2 Kings 10:6, 7. 2 Chr. 21:21. Prov. 29:12, 26. Dan. 3:18-25. Hos. 5:11. Mic. 6:16. Matt. 2:12, 16. Acts 4:5, 29. a See on 8-10. b Deut. 5:20, 19. 16-21. Ez. 27:12, 35:11. Prov. 6:19. 19:5, 9. 25:18. Mark 14:56-59. c Job 15:11. 2, 9. Matt. 9:3. Acts 5:11, 13. d Ez. 10:20. Is. 8:21. Am. 7:10. Luke 38:2. John 19:12. Acts 24:5. e Lev. 24:11, 16. Num. 15:35, 36. Deut. 13:10, 21, 22. 21:34. Josh. 7:24, 25. 2 Kings 9:26. Acts 7:58, 59. f 2 Sam. 11:14-24. Eccl. 8:14.

himself about such a trifle. But this base woman meant to rouse her husband to gratify both his covetousness and revenge. (Notes, 2 Sam. 13:1-4.) She intimated, that he was incapable of managing a kingdom as it became a king, if he hesitated to seize on Naboth's vineyard, and to punish his insolence. (Note, John 11:49-53.) 'What! hast thou not power to crush such an adversary? Arise and enjoy thyself, and leave the business with me; I will speedily settle it to thy satisfaction.' This was her evident meaning, to which Ahab made no objection or opposition.

V. 8-14. Jezebel wrote in Ahab's name, and sealed the letters with his seal, which it seems he allowed her to use when and as she pleased. Thus the elders of Jezreel were required to obey her directions, as they valued the king's favour. She represented Naboth as a dangerous criminal, who must be taken off, without a particular inquiry into the nature of his offence; yet, as he bore a fair character, some charge must be brought against him, which might prevent the people from taking umbrage at his execution. A fast must therefore be proclaimed; as if some horrid wickedness had been discovered, which threatened the city with divine judgments, till solemnly expiated. (Note, Is. 58:3, 4.) This would excite general consternation; and on the day appointed, Naboth must be apprehended; and "men of Belial" procured, (that is, men wholly unprincipled, and free from all restraints of conscience, who would do any thing for hire;) to testify that he had blasphemed God and the king: thus he would be condemned to be stoned for the blasphemy; for the treasonable words his estate would be confiscated; and the elders were required to see the sentence immediately executed. These infamous orders were as infamously obeyed, without hesitation or reluctance; and by elders and nobles of Israel, though in contempt of all religion, law and justice!—It seems they stoned Naboth's sons also, that there might be none to avenge his death, or to demand his estate. (2 Kings 9:26.) When Jezebel cut off the Lord's prophets, she had doubtless injured the magistrates to similar practices, and rewarded their wickedness: so that she did not fear a refusal from the elders of Jezreel. They also knew from whom the orders came, and reported the execution of them to Jezebel, not to Ahab. The elders of the same city, not long after, paid as implicit an obedience to Jehu's orders, in putting to death seventy of Ahab's descendants. (2 Kings 10:3-10.)

Nobles. (8) חרים (from חרם albam esse, albescere; Robertson.) candidi, candidati, togati.—Didst blaspheme. (10) כדבריהם, Note, Job 15.

V. 15, 16. Ahab proved, that he was pleased with the conduct of Jezebel and her agents; and indeed he made it his own, by readily going in person to take possession of the estate, for which the atrocious murder had been committed. (Note, 17-19.)

V. 17-19. Other prophets or sons of the prophets had been sent upon ordinary messages to Ahab; but Elijah himself was employed on this occasion, whose very presence

Jezebel said ^aArise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

16 ^aAnd it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that ^bAhab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it. [Practical Observations.]

17 ^aAnd the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thee.

20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? He answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord.

21 Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,

g. See in 7. h 2 Sam. 1:13-16, 4:9-12, 11:23-27, 23:15-17. Ps. 50:18, Is. 33:15. Ouid. 12-14. Rom. 1:32. 2 Pet. 2:15. 1 2 Kings 1:15, 16, 5:26. Ps. 9:12. Is. 25:21. k 13:32. 2 Chr. 22:9. 1 Gen. 31:1. 4:9, 10. 2 Sam. 12:9. Mic. 3:1-4. Hab. 2:9, 12. l 2:38. Judg. 1:7. 9:37. 12:11. 2 Kings 9:25, 36. Psal. 7:10. 18. 7:13, 16. Is. 5:11. m 1:12, 22, 5. 2 Chr. 18:7, 17. Am. 5:10. Mark 12:12. Gal. 4:1. Rev. 11:10. o 25. 2 King. 17:17. Is. 50:1. 52:3. Rom. 7:14. p 16:30. 2 Kings 21:2. 2 Chr. 33:6. Eph. 4:19. q See in 11:10. Ex. 20:5. 2 Kings 9:7-9. 10:1-7, 11-14, 17, 30. r See in 1 Sam. 25:22-34. s Deut. 32:35. 2 Kings 9:8, 9. 14:25. t 15:29. 16:3, 4, 11. u See in 11:16. 15:30, 34. 16:25. v See in 9:9. 2 Kings 9:10, 30-37. w Ur, ditch. x 14:11. 16:4. Is. 14:19.

would di-may the proud tyrant, and whose strong faith and intrepid spirit qualified him for such a service. (Notes, 18: 17-20.) In the very vineyard of Naboth, even whilst Ahab was seizing on his prey, and surrounded by his officers, the prophet delivered this message to him, for his deeper mortification, and that it might be more noticed by others. He directly charged Ahab with the murder of Naboth, nor did he attempt to deny it, or to excuse himself. The prediction, that dogs should lick the blood of Ahab, certainly implied that he would be cut off by a violent death: but the expression, "in the place where, &c." occasions considerable difficulty: because the city Samaria was at some distance from Jezreel. Some learned men think that the word rendered "the place where," may mean, in like manner as: but this signification of the original word is unprecedented. Others suppose, that the word place is taken in a large sense, for all the adjacent region; and so includes Samaria, where Ahab dwelt, and where he was buried; as well as the city of Jezreel. (22:37, 38.) But may we not say, that, as dogs licked the blood of Ahab, literally, when his chariot was washed in the pool of Samaria; so they licked his blood, as flowing through and from the veins of his son Joram, when Joram was slain by Jehu, and his body thrown into this very spot? (Note, 2 Kings 9:25, 26.)

V. 20. After the slaughter of Baal's prophets, and Elijah's flight from Jezebel, Ahab had returned to his wicked course of life, and he shunned the prophet as his worst enemy: and it does not appear, that Elijah had seen him since those events. (Notes, 22:8, 9.) Before indeed Ahab had bestowed much pains to find the prophet: but being now determined in idolatry, and yet afraid of him, whose prayers had called for drought upon the land, and fire and rain from heaven; (Notes, 17:1. 18:38, 39, 41-44.) and especially still feeling in his conscience the anguish of his cutting rebukes, he even trembled at the thoughts of him. Others, called prophets, had come to him with milder messages, and he thought them more friendly; but Elijah's severity could not be mollified. His presence therefore on this occasion surprised, offended, and affrighted him; and when "his enemy had found him," he expected not to go well away, but to hear some awful judgment denounced against him, for his recent transgression.—Nor did Elijah deny that he was an enemy to his wickedness: he neither paid respect to him, nor was intimidated by his anger or power. He had found him, as a thief caught in the fact; and, in the name of God, he denounced the most tremendous sentence of condemnation on him and on his posterity. (Note, Jer. 2:26-30.) For Ahab had "sold himself" as a willing slave to his lusts. This is very different from "being sold under sin": so that through the remaining power of corrupt nature, a man who "delights in the law of God," and hates all sin, yet "cannot do the things that he would." In the former case, the slavery is voluntary, the will itself is enslaved; in the latter, it is involuntary, and is a man's grief and distress. "To will is present with me: out how to perform that which is good, I find not."—Oh wretched man that I am." (Notes, Rom. 7:13-25.)

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22 And will 'make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation, wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.

23 And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

24 Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

25 But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

26 And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.

27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

28 And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29 Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

Jer. 15:3. Ez. 32:4, 5, 39:18-20. Rev. 19:18. y 16:30-33. 2 Kings 23:25. z See in 20. 2 Kings 17:17. Is. 50:1, 52:3. Rom. 6:19. 7:14. a 7:11:1-4. 18: 31. 18:4, 19:2. b 10:24. 14:1. c 7:28. d 10:24. e 12:14, 2. f Or, made. g 2 Chr. 18:8. Is. 67:1. Jer. 16:1. 14:4. Is. 1:12. 1 Pet. 4:3. Rev. 21:8. h Gen. 12:16. Lev. 18:25-30. 30:23, 24. Deut. 12:31. 2 Kings 16:8, 21:2. 11:20. i 2 Chr. 29:4, 16. Rom. 9:11-14. Is. 56:5-39. Ez. 16:47. d Gen. 37:31. 2 Kings 3:34. 18:37. Jer. 3:6. e 2 Sam. 12:17. Is. 16:15. Is. 22:12. Is. 5:8. Jer. 13:13. 14:38-15. f Jer. 7:17. 10:24. 7:44. h Ex. 10:3. Ps. 18:43, 68:8. margins. 78:34. 7. 1 Pa. 56:15. Ez. 33:10, 11. Mic. 7:18. Rom. 2:4. 2 Pet. 3:9. g See in 21-23. 1 2 Kings 9:25, 35-37. 10:1-7, 11.

Thou hast sold thyself. הוֹסֵדְתָּ; 25. מִכְרָתָהּ, I have sold: כִּיכֶרְכָּם y have sold yourselves, or have been sold. Is. 50:1.

V. 21, 22. Marg. Ref. Notes, 14:9-11. 16:2-6.

V. 23. This circumstance not only predicted the dreadful manner in which Jezebel should be slain, but denoted the worst punishment of sin to be after death. (Note, 2 Kings 9:30-37.)—Jezreel.] In the very place in which Naboth had been murdered. If Jezebel attended Ahab on this occasion, it was, as far as is recorded, the only time in which Elijah spake in her presence.

V. 25, 26. Ahab's crime in respect of Naboth, was not a detached part of his conduct, contrary to the general course of his life, as David's sin in the matter of Uriah had been: but it was a specimen of his continued rebellion against God: (Note, Rom. 7:15-17.) and the gross and open idolatry to which Jezebel had first stirred him up, was even more abominable in the sight of God than his murder and other crimes. Having sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, as if in contempt and defiance of him, he was openly, constantly, and diligently employed in it, as a slave is in his master's business; and it was requisite that his punishment should be as notorious as his crimes had been. (Marg. Ref. k, l.)

V. 27-29. Ahab was greatly terrified at Elijah's message; and at the severe, determined, and solemn manner in which he delivered it: but his humiliation was superficial, and productive of external observances only. He did not, that we find, so much as restore Naboth's vineyard to his heirs; much less did he put away Jezebel, or renounce idolatry, and establish the worship of God. But he rent his clothes, wore sackcloth, and lay in it, fasted, and appeared in public with the dejected air of a penitent.—However, though his humiliation was formal and hypocritical, it acknowledged the justice of God, and his own sin, and put an outward honour on the divine law. Neither Jeroboam nor Baasha had even thus far humbled themselves. Inadequate as it was, Ahab would have acted still worse, if he had vindicated and gloried in his crimes, or attempted to put the prophet to death: and therefore the Lord recompensed his outward temporary repentance with a similar reward; for he granted him a respite of the judgment, as far as it respected his family, and spared him the anguish of witnessing the slaughter of his children. Accordingly, it was his son's blood, not his, which was licked up by the dogs, in the portion of Jezreel. Bp. Patrick. (Note, 17-19.)—Jezebel was too hardened to show any symptoms of remorse on this, or any other occasion. (Note, Acts 24:24-27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. It is natural to us, as fallen creatures, to hanker after those things which are withheld from us; and every accession of wealth or prosperity, increases the violence of this propensity. The commandment indeed, which forbids us to covet, "is holy, just, and good," the fence of our neighbour's property, and of our own peace and integrity. (Note, Ez. 20:17.) But alas! "it is weak through the flesh," and the impetuous torrent of our lusts easily bursts the salutary barrier, and rages the more for having been opposed. (Note,

CHAPTER XXII.

Ahab persuades Jehoshaphat to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1-4. Jehoshaphat proposes to inquire of the LORD; and the false prophets assure Ahab of success, 5-11. At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah, whom Ahab hates, is sent for, 12-13. The messenger's advice to Micaiah, and his answer, 13, 14. Micaiah, adjured by Ahab to declare the truth, predicts his death, and shows that his prophets are deceived by a lying spirit, 15-23. He is reviled, smitten, and sent to prison, 24-28. Jehoshaphat goes to battle in his robes, but Ahab in disguise, 29, 30. Jehoshaphat, mistaken for Ahab, narrowly escapes; Ahab is mortally wounded, and the people are dispersed by proclamation, 31-36. Ahab dies; and dogs lick his blood, 37-38. The acts of Ahab, who is succeeded by Ahaziah, 39, 40. Jehoshaphat's good reign and acts, 41-49. He dies, and is succeeded by Jehoram, 50. Ahaziah's wicked reign, 51-53.

AND they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel.

*a See on 20:34. b 1. Matt. 12:40. 16:21. c 41:44. See on 15:24. 2 Kings 8:18. 2 Chr. 18:1,2. d 4:13. Deut. 4:43. Josh. 20:8. * Heb. silent from taking it. Judg. 16:2. 2 Sam. 19:12. margins. e 2 Kings 3:7. 2 Chr. 18:3. f 2 Chr. 19:2.*

Rom. 8:3,4.) Yet every violation of the precept proves its excellency; as indulged concupiscence opens the door to temptations, makes way for the most atrocious crimes, and prepares misery and destruction for every one who stands in the way of its gratification. If fair means fail to procure the object of inordinate desires, fraud or violence must be employed.—Pride cannot brook opposition; every plea of conscience is treated as mere pretence; and the best intended actions, of the most blameless and excellent persons, are ascribed to the worst of motives. But such passions are serpents cherished in a man's bosom, the bite of which inflicts exquisite torture and death.—Vain indeed are earthly advantages, if the want of a coveted spot of ground for a garden, and the supercilious or conscientious behaviour of an inferior, can rob a prosperous monarch of his own comfort, and render him sick with rage and vexation! (*Note, Esth. 5:13.*) This, however, is wholly the effect of men's lusts and passions, which, like children, are always most restless when most indulged. Providential blessings well answer the end for which they were intended, but cannot form a rational creature's felicity; and that degree of contradiction or disappointment, which would scarcely cause a humble man to heave one sigh, will break a proud man's heart. We should beware then of covetousness, pride, anger, envy, and discontent: we should "watch and pray that we may not enter into temptation;" we should aim to make the spiritual precept, "thou shalt not covet," the barrier in our hearts, as well as in the law of God, against the violation of the other commandments; and not allow ourselves so to desire things lawful, as not to be able to brook a denial or disappointment. (*Note, Matt. 5:27,28.*) Our more intimate connexions are in these respects of the highest importance. In the married state we expect, and should reciprocally impart, sympathy, counsel, encouragement, and assistance: but when, instead of a prudent and pious counsellor, a man has a factor for Satan in the form of an artful, unprincipled, and beloved woman, what fatal effects may not be expected! "Be ye not therefore unequally yoked with unbelievers." It is hard to relate facts respecting ourselves with simplicity and impartiality; but much more difficult to restrain those within the strict limits of equity, who are able to seize on the objects of their desires, without fear of being called to account before any human tribunal. Hence rapines and oppressions have disgraced human nature, and desolated the earth, in all ages; every resistance to the will of a superior, however reasonable, conscientious, and mild, has been condemned as rebellion; and this has occasioned assassinations, massacres, or public executions. A little acquaintance with history, and with human nature, will terminate our astonishment at such transactions; for "nothing is new under the sun;" but they must ever excite our regret, our compassion, and our indignation.

V. 8-16. The most flagrant injustice has generally been committed under the colour of legal forms; and the most horrid crimes have been perpetrated under the mask of piety: because the show of these good things hides the deformity of such transactions as otherwise could never be endured. (*Notes, Matt. 23:14,25-28.*)—Many command and reward villany, who in their hearts despise and detest the mercenary wretches whom they employ. (*Note, Matt. 27:3-5.*) It is grievous that men of Belial abound even in the lower orders of society; but most horrible when judges and nobles deserve this harsh appellation. Yet there will always be found those in every rank who will prostitute their talents, influence, and conscience, to the tyrant who rewards iniquity. (*Notes, Ps. 58:1,2. 82:2-4. Ez. 22:27,28. Mic. 2:1-3. 7:1-4. Matt. 26:57-62.*) Let us then bless God for a limited government, and for security from such outrages of oppression: though, even in Britain, men of Belial, by false testimony and perjury, may deprive us of our property, our liberty, our reputation, or our lives. We should therefore commit all that is dear to us to the Lord's keeping; seek those good things which cannot be taken from us; and wait with cheerful patience for that approaching judgment, when all iniquitous sentences shall be reversed. And let judges, juries, and witnesses beware of being warped in their decisions, verdicts, or testimony, by fear, affection, or interest: for those, who now are placed upon the tribunal, must shortly stand at the bar, to answer before a heart-searching, impartial Judge, for their conduct in their important stations.—Those who rejoice in iniquity, and gladly seize on the profit

2 And it came to pass 'in the third year, that' 'Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.

3 And the king of Israel said unto his servants Know ye that "Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be 'still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?

4 And he said unto Jehoshaphat, "Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.

Ps. 139:21,22. Prov. 13:20. 1 Cor. 15:33. 2 Cor. 6:16,17. Eph. 5:11. 2 John 11. Rev. 2:2,6.

derived from the crimes of others, will be condemned equally with the perpetrators: and the triumphing of the wicked in the success of their villany, resembles the flash of lightning, which leaves the night more dark and gloomy than before: for the Lord beholds and is displeased; and his tremendous threatenings are only preludes to his more tremendous vengeance.

V. 17-29. Such ministers of God as are most decidedly faithful, must expect to be deemed morose, and even malevolent, by sinners, whose consciences have been galled with their plain warnings and rebukes, but whose hearts are wedded to their lusts. Men of this character often count the very persons to be their enemies, whose hearts bleed with compassion for them, and whose secret prayers in their behalf are recorded before God, as a demonstration of their disinterested love for them. Indeed this appears in their being willing rather to incur their keenest resentment, than cease their endeavours to save their souls. If men allow that they hate the minister for his faithfulness, they condemn themselves; but if they dislike him for his excessive severity, and his ill-nature, they are perfectly excusable: and what sinner would not wish to stand fair with his own conscience, and with society? (*Note, 28:8.*) On the other hand, impenitent sinners often account those to be their friends, who speak smooth things, and help them to deceive themselves, and are very lavish in their commendation, by way of contrasting them with those whom they deem their enemies; that it may be thought they love religion, while they hate its firmest friends.—But "the man of God" will neither desire the applause, nor fear the reproach, of those who have "sold themselves to work wickedness," and evince that they are the enemies of God and holiness. His testimony will one day find out those who have rejected it for their condemnation. Terrible things may come upon the willing slaves of sin in this world; but they will surely receive its awful wages in the second death. (*Note, Rev. 20:11-15.*)—At the tribunal of God, the difference will be manifest to all men, between the most lamentable falls of true believers, and the habitual wickedness of ungodly men; and between true repentance and all external, partial, and temporary appearances of it.—Before the searching word of God, the most hardened conscience (with very few exceptions) will sometimes be disquieted, and the stoutest hearts tremble; and for a season sinners will speak and act as if truly penitent. But "by their fruits ye shall know them;" and as the heart remains unchanged, nature will soon return to that course from which it has been violently forced; so that relapses into former iniquities, with continuance and quietness, will evince such hopeful appearances to be widely different from "that repentance, which is unto salvation not to be repented of." Yet, as these concessions outwardly yield the point in contest, and are thus honourable to God, he will notice and recompense them with respites and outward benefits. So that, whilst we are warned to beware of counterfeits, we are encouraged by the abounding grace of God, which he will never withhold from the upright humble soul; seeing he so delights in mercy, that he extends it even to wicked men, as far as consists with his justice, holiness, truth, and wisdom. We may also be animated to abound in the work of the Lord, assured that our labour will not be in vain; since he even recompenses in kind the formal services of his enemies. And finally, may we seek the blessings of the new covenant for the good of ourselves, and of our children after us; whilst wicked men leave their inheritance to their posterity, burdened with the curse of God; and ensure destruction to their own souls.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. *Three years.*] During this time Ben-hadad was, no doubt, recruiting his forces, and preparing for war; having by no means adhered to the treaty which Ahab had made with him.

V. 2. We shall have a better opportunity hereafter of fully considering Jehoshaphat's character. (*Note, 2 Chr. 17:—20.*)—He was very criminal in marrying his son to one of the family of idolatrous Ahab, which probably occasioned his visit at Samaria, with all its consequences. (*Notes, 2 Kings 8:18. 2 Chr. 18:1.*)

V. 3. *Ramoth, &c.*] This seems to have been one of the cities that Ben-hadad had engaged to restore to Ahab; but, having recovered his liberty, he made no scruple of violating his word. (*Note, 20:31-34.*) Ramoth in Gilead was allotted to the tribe of Gad, and appointed by Moses to be

5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, *Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to-day.*

6 Then the king of Israel gathered *the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, 'Go up; for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.*

7 And Jehoshaphat said, *Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might inquire of him?*

8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him: for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.* And Jehoshaphat said, *Let not the king say so.*

9 Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, *Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah.*

[Practical Observations.]

10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, sat each on his throne, *having put on their robes, in a two place in the entrance of*

the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, *'Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.*

12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, *'Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hand.*

13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, *'Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.*

14 And Micaiah said, *As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*

15 ¶ So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, *'shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, 'Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.*

16 And the king said unto him, *How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me*

g Num. 27:21. Josh. 9:14. Judg. 1:1. 20:18, 23, 28. 1 Sam. 14:18, 19. 23:42, Jer. 12:30, 8. 2 Kings 1:3, 3:11. 1 Chr. 10:13, 14. 2 Chr. 18:4-5. Prov. 3:5, 6. Jer. 18:14. 42:2-6. Ez. 14:3, 20:1-3. h 18:19. 2 Tim. 4:3. i 15:24, 23. 2 Chr. 18:14. Jer. 8:10, 11. 14:13, 14. 22:14-17. 28:1-9. Ez. 13:7-16, 22. Matt. 7:15. 2 Pet. 2:1-3. Rev. 19:20. 12 Kings 3:11-13. 2 Chr. 13:6, 7. 14:1-15:10, 14. 1 Cor. 2:11-16. y Num. 22:28. 2 Chr. 18:12, 13. Jer. 23:26, 27, 28. 24:1, 2. 24:4-8. 3:17, 19. Acts 20:26, 27. 2 Cor. 12:17, 4. 2. See on 6. a 18:27. Judg. 10:14. 2 Kings 3:13. 2 Chr. 18:14. Ec. 11:9. Matt. 26:45. b Josh. 6:26. 1 Sam. 11:21. 2 Chr. 18:15. Matt. 26:65. Mark 5:7. Acts 19:13. c Jer. 4:2-6. Matt. 22:16, 17.

27. q 30. Eccl. 5:1, 6:8, 9. Matt. 6:20. 11:8. Acts 12:21. 25:23. * Heb. 10:4. 10:18, 2. 2 Chr. 18:9-11. Jer. 27:14-16. Ez. 13:1-9. a Jer. 28:10-14. x Zech. 1:18-21. Acts 19:13-16. 2 Cor. 11:13-15. 2 Tim. 3:8. 1 Jer. 23:17, 25. 31. 28:25, 26, 27. 21. Jer. 12:6. 22:25, 26. Mic. 3:11. y See on 6. 15:22-36. z Pa. 10:11, 11:1. 11:14. 20:21. Is. 30:15, 17. Hos. 7:3. w 7:13-17. 38. 2:6, 7. 1 Cor. 2:11-16. y Num. 22:28. 2 Chr. 18:12, 13. Jer. 23:26, 27, 28. 24:1, 2. 24:4-8. 3:17, 19. Acts 20:26, 27. 2 Cor. 12:17, 4. 2. See on 6. a 18:27. Judg. 10:14. 2 Kings 3:13. 2 Chr. 18:14. Ec. 11:9. Matt. 26:45. b Josh. 6:26. 1 Sam. 11:21. 2 Chr. 18:15. Matt. 26:65. Mark 5:7. Acts 19:13. c Jer. 4:2-6. Matt. 22:16, 17.

one of the cities of Refuge. (*Deut. 4:43. Josh. 20:3.*) It was also given to the Levites of the family of Merari. (*Josh. 21:35.*) Yet it was at this time possessed by the king of Syria.

V. 4. Jehoshaphat meant nothing more, than to express his readiness to afford Ahab every assistance in his power; as both he and his forces were at his command: but the language seemed to countenance all Ahab's undertakings; or at least to treat all the differences in opinion and conduct between him and Ahab as unimportant! Yet surely there was an essential difference between the reformer of Judah, and the corrupter of Israel! But excessive pliability of temper was the grand defect in Jehoshaphat's character; which exposed him to many temptations, and involved him and his kingdom in many and complicated calamities; and terminated in the extirpation of his whole family, Joash alone excepted. (*Notes, 2 Kings 8:18. 9:27, 28. 10:13, 14. 11:1, 2. 2 Chr. 18:1, 19:2.*)

V. 5. Jehoshaphat had been used to "acknowledge God in all his ways," and not to engage in any important undertaking without inquiring of him by his prophets, or high-priest; and he was not satisfied that Ahab should do otherwise. But what true servant of God could bring an acceptable, or even a tolerable message, to a gross idolater and cruel oppressor, who, for twenty-two years after he came to the throne, had been hardening himself in iniquity, amidst warnings, judgments, mercies, and convictions?

V. 6. It is most probable, that these were the prophets of the groves, who escaped, when the prophets of Baal were slain at the command of Elijah; for certainly they were false prophets. (*Notes, 18:18-20, 40.*) No doubt, they commonly prophesied in the name of Baal, or of some idol: but it seems that occasionally they could speak in the name of the LORD. In this verse indeed the word is not JEHOVAH, but Adonai, which is used with greater latitude: but afterwards both Zedekiah, and the rest of them, used the word JEHOVAH. (11, 12.) Like some modern philosophers and poets, they perhaps would argue, that it was all one, whether the Supreme Being were called Baal, or JEHOVAH, or Jupiter. To accommodate themselves therefore to Jehoshaphat, and to show that they were not bigots, but men of candour and liberality, they would for once prophesy in the name of JEHOVAH. They perhaps allowed Jehoshaphat to be a good sort of man; but he had some narrow prejudices, and would not be satisfied, if they said, 'Go up, for Baal shall deliver it into the hand of the King'; and they would scorn to disagree with him about a trifling variation, which they could make with little trouble, and without expense.—They perceived also which way Ahab's inclinations leaned, and to please him likewise they assured him of success. It is however to be supposed, that the number and valour of Ahab's forces, his alliance with Jehoshaphat, and the scandalous treachery of Ben-hadad, concurred in encouraging his hopes that he should obtain the victory: especially as, notwithstanding his idolatries, he had before been rendered successful. (*Notes, 20:*)

V. 7. Jehoshaphat must have regarded these prophets as deceivers and sycophants, whose interest it was to counsel Ahab to please himself. He knew that Israel was favoured with Elijah, Elisha, and other eminent prophets, though none of them appeared at court; he felt dissatisfied; but being too afraid of giving offence, he seemed to allow that these were

prophets of God, yet he wished to consult some other, if there were any to be found. Perhaps he took occasion, from their using the word Adonai, (which might mean either the God of Israel, or a false god,) to inquire after some other prophet of JEHOVAH: and this might induce them afterwards to change their language in this respect. His subsequent conduct, however, shows that he paid far more regard to them, than he ought to have done, or than they deserved. Indeed, he ought to have decidedly entered his protest against them, and warned Ahab of his danger, if he hearkened to them: as Micaiah did. At least he should have done this, after he had heard Micaiah's message. (*Notes, 17-28.*)

V. 8. Micaiah is never mentioned in the history, except in this chapter and the history in Chronicles: (2 Chr. 18:) yet he doubtless had several times been sent with messages of rebuke and warning to this haughty idolater: (*Note, 9.*) Ahab, therefore, while he allowed, that they might inquire of the LORD by him, acknowledged that he hated him! (*Notes, Is. 30:8-11. John 7:3-10. 15:17-21.*) But Jehoshaphat ventured gently to intimate that he ought not to speak thus: he ought neither to hate him, nor be displeased with his word, nor seek agreeable but useful things; and he hoped on this occasion he would bring an encouraging message.

V. 9. Ahab knew where to find Micaiah, whom he perhaps had put in prison for some of his faithful reproofs. (*Note, 26, 27.*)—Some conjecture that Micaiah was the prophet, who three years before had chagrined Ahab, and that he had kept him in prison ever since. (*Note, 20, 43.*)

V. 10, 11. (*Marg. Ref. q. v. Note, 24, 25.*) Horns, &c. (11) These horns of iron were, probably, intended to represent the joint forces of the two kings, made successful by the power of God. The false prophets imitated the true ones in using external signs, the more deeply to impress the minds of those whom they addressed. (*Marg. Ref. s. t.*)

V. 13, 14. Perhaps this man intended to be friendly to Micaiah: and thought it was a pity, that he should hinder his preference, and expose himself to Ahab's resentment, by a needless or useless scrupulousness. He advised him to show some deference to royalty; to have some respect to the other prophets; and not to affect singularity, or presume that he alone was divinely inspired. But he must have entertained most absurd notions concerning prophecy; either considering the whole to be a mere imposition; or supposing that the truth, will, and purpose of God, could be modelled according to the inclinations of man. If he thought that Micaiah, by speaking that which was good to Ahab, could promote the success of the enterprise, he must have been extremely ignorant. And it was still worse, if he advised Micaiah to please the king, without regard to consequences. Perhaps, he concluded, that the unanimity and confidence, with which so great a number of prophets assured Ahab of success in the name of the LORD, proved them to be in the right; and that it would be foolish in Micaiah to oppose his single voice to such a multitude. And indeed, not only Ahab, but Jehoshaphat himself, seems to have been imposed upon by the same delusive argument; which, in one form or other, has been urged as cogent, if not unanswerable, by very able and sensible men, in every age of the church. He thought he could persuade Micaiah, not to dissent from the rest, lest he should fall under the censure of singularity peevishness,

nothing but that *which is true* in the name of the LORD?

17 And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, 'as sheep that have not a shepherd; and the LORD said, 'These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace.

18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

19 And he said, "Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: 'I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and 'all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left:

20 And the LORD said, 'Who shall 'persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

21 And 'there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

22 And the LORD said unto him, 'Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be 'a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he

said, "Thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also go forth, and do so.

23 Now therefore, behold, 'the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and 'the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

24 But 'Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and 'smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, 'Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?

25 And Micaiah said, 'Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go 'into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

26 And the king of Israel said, 'Take Micaiah, and 'carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

27 And say, 'Thus saith the king, 'I put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with 'bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, 'until I come in peace.

28 And Micaiah said, 'If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, 'Hearken, O people, every one of you.

[Practical Observations.]

d 1 Sam. 9:9. Jer. 1:11-16. Ez. 1:4. Acts 10:11-17. e 34-36. Num. 27:17. 2 Chr. 18:16,17. Jer. 23:1,2. 50:6,17. Ez. 34:4-6. Zech. 10:12. 13:7. Matt. 9:36. f See on 8. Rev. 10:24. 27:22. 29:1. Luke 11:45. g Is. 1:10. 23:14. Jer. 2:4. 29:20. 42:15. Ez. 13:2. Am. 7:16. h 2 Chr. 18:18-22. Is. 6:1. Ez. 1:26-28. Dan. 7:9,10. Acts 7:55,56. Rev. 4:3. i Ps. 103:20,21. Is. 6:2,3. Zech. 1:10. Matt. 18:10. Heb. 1:14. 12:22. Rev. 5:11. * Or, *deceive*. Job 12:16. Jer. 4:10. Ez. 14:9. k 23. Job 1:6,7,21. 1 Job 1:8-11. 2:4-6. John 8:44. Acts 5:3. 4:2 Thes. 2:9,10. 1 Tim. 4:1,2. 1 John 4:5. Rev. 12:9,10. 13:14. 16:13,14. 20:3,7,8,10. m See on 20. Judg. 9:23. Ps. 109:7,2. 2 Thes. 2:11,12. Rev. 17:17. n Ez. 4:21. 10:30. Deut. 2:30. 2 Chr. 25:16. Is. 6:9,10. 44:20. Ez. 14:3-5. Matt. 13:13-15. 24:24,25. o See on 8-11. 20:42. 21:19. Num. 23:19,20. 24:13. Is. 3:

11. p 11. q 2 Chr. 18:23,24. Is. 50:5,6. Lam. 3:30. Mic. 5:1. Mark 14:65. 15:10. John 15:18,20. Acts 23:2. r Jer. 23:10,11. 29:26,27. Matt. 26:68. 27:42. 43. s Num. 31:8. Is. 9:14-16. Jer. 23:15. 28:16,17. 29:21,22,32. Am. 7:17. 2 Pet. 2:1. Rev. 19:20. t Or, *from chamber to chamber*. Heb. *a chamber in a chamber*. 20:30. *marg.* 19. q 2 Chr. 16:10. 18:25-27. Jer. 20:2. 29:28. 37:15. 38:5. Lam. 3:33-35. Mark 6:17-28. Luke 3:20. Acts 5:18. 16:23,24. 21:25-27. 26:10. Eph. 3:1. Rev. 2:10. x Deut. 16:3. Is. 50:5. 102:9. 127:2. Is. 30:20. y Luke 12:45,46. 1 Thes. 5:2,3. Jam. 4:13,14. s Num. 16:29. Deut. 18:20-22. 2 Kings 1:10,12. Is. 44:25. Jer. 28:9,13. Acts 13:10,11. a 18:21-24,36,37. 2 Chr. 18:27. Am. 5:1. Mic. 1:2. Mark 7:14-16. 12:37.

and privacy of spirit. And thus it is in the church at this day." *Bp. Patrick*.—Micaiah however at once silenced the courtier; and with a solemn oath protested, that he would deliver the message of JEHOVAH without any alteration, whatever the king thought of it, and whatever the other prophets might agree in.—A most noble example!

V. 15. *Go, &c.* The prophet did not preface this address, with "Thus saith the LORD;" and Ahab evidently perceived that he did not speak with his usual decision and authority. It was, as if he had said, "You intend to go up against Ramoth-gilead, and your prophets assure you of success; and if I do not, you will disregard my warning, and treat me as an enemy. But you have my good will and good wishes, if they could profit you; and if my conscience would allow me, I too could easily seek your favour, by saying, "Go, and prosper, for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king."—You have a mind to go, and do so: try the truth of their prediction." *Bp. Patrick*. (Notes, 18:27-29. Ez. 11:13,10.)

V. 16. Ahab spake as if he had, on former occasions, thus adjured Micaiah to speak nothing to him, but "that which was true in the name of the LORD;" and with some intimation, that the prophet needed such adjurations. He evidently aimed to be thought, especially by Jehoshaphat, exceedingly solicitous about discovering the will of God. Perhaps Micaiah hesitated, till repeatedly urged to speak; and some think, that he did not receive his message, till the very moment before he delivered it.—The adjuring a person to speak, was equivalent to putting him upon his oath; and calling on him, as in the presence and by the authority of God, to speak all he knew. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Matt. 26: 63-68.*)

V. 17. This vision exactly represented the condition of Ahab's forces, after he was slain; and showed, that Ben-hadad, his pride and revenge being gratified by Ahab's death, would allow the Israelites, when vanquished, and scattered without a leader, to return home in peace. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 36.*)

V. 18. Ahab aimed to persuade Jehoshaphat and himself, that this warning originated from Micaiah's malignity and enmity to him, being similar to the messages which he had formerly delivered; and therefore, that it ought not to be put in competition with the predictions of all the other prophets. (Notes, 21:17-19. Prov. 29:1. Jer. 38:1-6.)

V. 19-23. In order to leave this hardened criminal without excuse, and to give a salutary instruction and warning to others in future ages, Micaiah received and related this vision.—It is not requisite to inquire particularly, concerning what passes in that world where the Lord unveils his glory; for truths, rather than facts, are revealed in such representations. (Note, Job 1:6.)—God had doomed Ahab to fall at Ramoth-gilead, by the army of Ben-hadad, whom he had smoothly spared. (Notes, 20:31-34, 41, 42.) In order to bring him thither, he was pleased to give an evil spirit leave to impose on him, with the hopes of success in that expedition. "The devil and his angels" are always ready for such attempts, and generally use false prophets and teachers as their ministers. (Note, 2 Cor. 11:13-15.) This method the lying spirit proposed upon the present occasion, and prevailed against Ahab, by inducing all his prophets to assure him of victory. And by permitting him to do this,

"the LORD put a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." (22) He neither commanded nor inclined the lying spirit to tempt Ahab's prophets; nor did he put the wickedness into their hearts, or the lies into their mouths. He likewise gave Ahab fair warning; and if he had not hated the truth, and loved a lie, he would not have gone to Ramoth-gilead; but God foresaw he would go, and would perish there.—The prophet "saw the LORD sitting upon his throne," and that made him disregard Ahab upon his throne, and not fear his frown and vengeance; nor the resentment of the four hundred prophets, who must have been enraged, even to madness, at being thus publicly declared to be the ministers of the devil, to deceive and persuade their king to his destruction. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ez. 14:1-11. 2 Thes. 2:8-12.*)

Persuade. (20) פתה. In piel פתה *persuasi, seduxi: Suadere, veris rationibus, vel falsis, et sic est decipere. Hinc פתוהו suadeo.* Robertson. *Judg.* 14:15. 16:3. Jer. 20:7. Heb. (Notes, Gen. 9:27. Jer. 20:7-9.)

V. 24, 25. (Note, 10, 11.) Zedekiah seems to have been the principal person among Ahab's prophets: he therefore highly resented Micaiah's words, and both reviled and smote him in the presence of the king and his nobles; (*Marg. Ref. q.*) nay, in the presence of Jehoshaphat; and yet he met with no rebuke! As one who would appear confident, that he spake by the Spirit of the LORD, he inquired, when and how that Spirit left him to inspire Micaiah. But the prophet meekly answered, that the event would determine which of them spake by the Spirit of God; and he would not need information on that head, when he should conceal himself in the closest recess, "a chamber," or closet, "within a chamber." (*marg.*) for fear of those who sought his life. Probably Zedekiah accompanied Ahab to the war, and this prediction was fulfilled when he fled from the enemy, after Ahab's death. Then he would have leisure to reflect on his own impiety, and the fatal effects of his counsel to his king, for whom he had pretended great friendship. (Notes, Jer. 28:3-17. Ez. 13:6-16. Am. 7:10-13.)—He would hide himself, 'for fear he should be seized, and punished as a false prophet, and the cause of Ahab's death.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 26, 27. Ahab sent Micaiah back to the persons who had him before in custody, one of whom was "Joash, the king's son;" yet nothing is elsewhere said of a son of Ahab of that name. To these, however, he sent orders to "put him in the prison," some place of closer confinement than before; (Note, 9.) and there to treat him with severity in respect of his sustenance, and in other respects, until he should return in peace, probably intending then to put him to death, as a false prophet. Ahab forgot his own counsel to Ben-hadad, when he spake so confidently of returning in peace. (20:11.)

V. 28. Micaiah thus put the difference between himself and Ahab's prophets to the test, and made his appeal to the people at large; that, if the king despised the word of God, they might from his fate learn to reverence it. (Notes, 18:36,37. Num. 16:28-34.)—*People*. יְהוּדִים, *peoples*, meaning both the men of Judah who attended Jehoshaphat, and those of Israel.

V. 29. Jehoshaphat's silent connivance at Ahab's treatment of Micaiah, and his willingness to go with him to battle, after these solemn warnings, were very criminal, and almost unaccountable. Perhaps he feared personal insults; or he

29 So ^bthe king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah ^cwent up to Ramoth-gilead.

30 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, 'I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but ^dput thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel ^edisguised himself, and went into the battle.

31 But the king of Syria commanded his ^fthirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, 'Fight neither with ^gsmall nor great, save only with the king of Israel.

32 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and ^hJehoshaphat cried out.

33 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it ⁱwas not the king of Israel, ^jthat they turned back from pursuing him.

34 And a certain man drew a bow ^kat a venture, ^land smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thy hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am ^mwounded.

35 And the battle ⁿincreased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and ^odied at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the ^pmidst of the chariot.

36 And ^qthere went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, ^r'Every man to his city and every man to his own country.

37 ^s'So the king died, and ^twas brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria.

38 And ^uone washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; ^vand the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the Lord which he spake.

39 Now ^wthe rest of the acts of Ahab, and all

that he did, and ^xthe ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, ^yare they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

40 So Ahab ^zslept with his fathers; and ^{aa}Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 ^{ab}'And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa ^{ac}began to reign over Judah in the fourth year ^{ad}[B.C. 894] of Ahab king of Israel.

42 Jehoshaphat ^{ae}was ^{af}'thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. ^{ag}'And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

43 And ^{ah}he walked in all the way of Asa his father; ^{ai}'he turned not aside from it, ^{aj}'doing that ^{ak}which was right in the eyes of the Lord: nevertheless ^{al}the high places were not taken away; ^{am}for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

44 And Jehoshaphat ^{an}'made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now ^{ao}'the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, ^{ap}'are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

46 And ^{aq}'the remnant of the Sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

47 ^{ar}'There was then ^{as}'no king in Edom: a deputy was king.

48 ^{at}'Jehoshaphat ^{au}'made ships of Tarshish to go ^{av}'to Ophir for gold: but ^{aw}'they went not: for the ships were broken at ^{ax}'Ezion-geber.

49 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.

50 ^{ay}'And Jehoshaphat ^{az}'slept with his ^{ba}fathers, and was buried with his fathers ^{bb}in ^{bc}the city of David his father: and ^{bd}'Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

b See on 2-5. 2 Chr. 18:23. * Or, when he went to disguise himself, and enter into the battle. c 10. Ps. 12:2. d 14:2, 20:38. 1 Sam. 2:3. 2 Sam. 14:2. 2 Chr. 18:29, 35:22. Prov. 21:30. Jer. 23:24. e 20:24. 2 Chr. 18:30. f See on 20:33-42. g See on Gen. 19:11. 1 Sam. 30:2. Jer. 16:6. h Ex. 14:10. i 2 Chr. 18:31. Ps. 50:15, 91:15. 116:1-2, 130:1-4. John 2:1-2. j 31. Ps. 78:10. k Heb. in his simplicity. 2 Sam. 15:11. l 1 Sam. 17:49. 2 Kings 9:24. m Heb. joints and the breastplate. Rev. 9:9. n Heb. made rich. 2 Chr. 18:30, 35:25. margin. Mic. 6:13. o Heb. ascended. 128, 20:42. p Heb. soom. m 17:31. 12:16. 2 Kings 14:12. q 12:24. Judg. 7:7, 8, 21-24. 1 Sam. 4:10. 2 Sam. 19:8. 2 Kings 14:12. r Heb. came. o See on 21:19. Josh. 24:15. 1s. 44: 23:36, 46:25. Jer. 44:21-23. Zech. 14:5. Matt. 24:35. p 14:19. 15:23, 31. 16:20, 20:27. q 10:18, 22. Ps. 45:8. Jer. 27:15. Am. 3:15. 6:4. r See on 2:10.

persuaded himself that in Ahab's court he had no business to intermeddle; or, matters were carried with such violence and precipitation, that he had scarcely time to reflect on his own conduct. (Note, 7.)

V. 30. Perhaps Ahab was secretly alarmed by the solemnity of Micah's address, though he scorned to desist from his enterprise; or he was aware that he should be peculiarly aimed at by the Syrian forces. Under pretence of honouring Jehoshaphat as with the chief command, he made this insidious proposal, that by exposing him to the greatest danger, he might favour his own escape. (Note, 2 Chr. 18: 29.) Such was his friendship! But Jehoshaphat meant no harm, and suspected none: yet in such a case, the wisdom of the serpent was as needful as the harmlessness of the dove. (Notes, Matt. 10:16-18. 1 Cor. 14:20-25, v. 20.)

V. 31. (20:24.) Some have imagined, that Ben-hadad wished to wipe off the disgrace of his own captivity, by making Ahab prisoner in return; and to reciprocate his kindness, in liberating him without ransom. (Note, 20:31-34.) But his proud heart seems to have rankled with a far more malignant resentment; and Ahab's triumphant success against him had excited such hatred, as no subsequent kindness could erase.

V. 32-35. Jehoshaphat in extreme danger cried unto the Lord, and he wonderfully preserved him. "They turned back from pursuing him;" which was to be ascribed to the secret providence of God, . . . who resolved as wonderfully to preserve Jehoshaphat, as to destroy Ahab.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, 2 Chr. 18:30-34, v. 31. 19:1, 2.) But Ahab, notwithstanding all his precaution, could not escape the destined blow. The captains of Ben-hadad knew not where to seek for him: but an arrow shot at random by a Syrian was directed by God, to penetrate the joints of his breastplate, or coat of mail, and to give him a mortal wound.—"Joints of the harness" in the text, seems less proper than the marginal reading,—"Perhaps Ahab did not think that the wound would prove fatal, and was unwilling to intimidate his forces by wholly leaving the field of battle; and therefore probably having retired that his wound might be dressed; he returned, and remained in his chariot till he died.

V. 36. When Ahab's death was known, either Jehosha-

phat, or those who succeeded in command, issued this proclamation, probably with reference to Micah's vision. (Note, 17.)

V. 38. Note, 21:17-19.

V. 39. Ivory house.] It cannot be supposed that this house was built of ivory: but it was so inlaid and ornamented with ivory, that it thence derived its principal elegance, or magnificence. (Marg. Ref. q.)

V. 41-45. Perhaps this general account is here given of Jehoshaphat's reign over Judah, in order to contrast it with Ahab's wicked reign over Israel. The chief blemish in Jehoshaphat's character and conduct is hinted at, when it is said, "He made peace with the king of Israel," not merely engaging to avoid all hostile measures; but entering into the most intimate alliance with him, and confirming the treaty by marrying his son to Ahab's daughter, which introduced much idolatry and wickedness into Judah, brought grief at calamities on the inhabitants, and occasioned the almost entire ruin of Jehoshaphat's family. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 2-5. 2 Chr. 17:-20.)

High places. (43.) 'This error was so deeply rooted, that the best of the kings, till Hezekiah's time, . . . connived at it.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Kings 18:4, 22. 2 Chr. 31:1.)

V. 46. 15:12. Notes, 14:22-24. Deut. 23:17, 18.

V. 47. David had conquered Edom; and it is probable, that till this time the nominal king of Edom had been merely a viceroy of the kings of Judah. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Sam. 8:13, 14.)

V. 48, 49. Jehoshaphat at first joined with Ahaziah, and lost his fleet: but being reproved by a prophet, he would not consent to Ahaziah's proposals the second time. (Note, 2 Chr. 20:35-37.) These ships of Tarshish were made to go to Ophir: yet it is said in Chronicles, they were "made to go to Tarshish." Was there not therefore a Tarshish near Ophir, as well as a place of that name in Spain. (Note, 10:22.)

V. 51. Jehoshaphat began to reign in the fourth year of Ahab, who reigned twenty and two years; (41) yet Ahaziah succeeded Ahab, in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat. This occasions some difficulty; but learned men suppose that the chronology of the kings of Israel was adjusted to that of

B.C.] 51 ¶ Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel.

52 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and

q 40. r 15:25. 2 Kings 1:17. s See on 15:26. 16:30—33. 2 Kings 1:2—7. 1:21, 25. 2 Kings 8:27. 9:22. 2 Chr. 22:3. Mark 6:24. Rev. 3:20. u See on

the kings of Judah. Now Ahab began to reign after Asa had entered on his thirty-eighth year, and Asa died before the end of his forty-first year. (16:29. 2 Chr. 16:13.) And Jehoshaphat began to reign in the same year, which thus was reckoned both to Asa and Jehoshaphat. Ahab therefore is computed to have reigned four years in Asa's time, and eighteen in Jehoshaphat's, including a part of the year in which Asa died, and in which Jehoshaphat succeeded him; though Ahab did not live till Jehoshaphat had fully completed his seventeenth year; having died nearer the beginning of the year, than Asa had done.—It is difficult to make this intelligible to persons not acquainted with the Jewish method of computing time; who, (whether in days or years,) take in both the first and last of the account, as if entire, even though only a small part of each had actually passed. Thus Ahaziah having reigned part of the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and part of the eighteenth, (for he died in the eighteenth,) is said to have reigned two years. (Note, 16:8—14.)

V. 52, 53. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Kings 1:—Baal, &c. (53.) "Which worship had been introduced by his mother Jezebel; beyond the impiety of Jeroboam. Taking no warning by the hand of God against his father, which was very remarkable; nor believing the dreadful threatenings of Elijah against his mother, and their whole family." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 21:17—23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9. They who neglect the word of God, to rely on the promises of ungodly men, generally meet with merited disappointment; but this does not excuse the treachery and ingratitude of those who deceive and injure the very persons that have been criminally kind to them.—There are certain critical seasons, when advantages are placed within our reach; but if we let the opportunity pass we shall in vain attempt to recall it, and our endeavours will only serve to increase our losses. (Note, Ec. 8:6, 7.)—Wicked men court the friendship of the righteous, when they can render their assistance subservient to their own purposes; but their professions of regard must be insincere.—That same compliant spirit, which betrays some pious persons into amity with the declared enemies of religion, renders the connexion peculiarly dangerous to them: they are perpetually persuaded to improper concessions of every kind; and induced to connive at, and even sanction, such converse and conduct, as they ought decidedly to protest against: and the fear of being deemed uncourteous, and the desire of escaping censure, ridicule, or insult, for their religious peculiarities, stop their mouths, and cause them to deviate from sincerity in their expressions of civility or courteousness. Yet these alone are the godly persons whose acquaintance the men of the world will much desire. If, however, we are necessarily placed among profane or infidel characters, we must not yield, either to fear or shame, so as to conceal our dependence on God and devotedness to him; for these mark the difference "between those who serve him, and those who serve him not."—If it were to be decided by vote, what is the true religion, we see plainly that those abominations which God abhors would gain the election, against that worship which he has instituted. Even in the visible church, numbers, authority, and unanimity, have repeatedly been in favour of delusions, nay, destructive heresies, and abominable idolatries, against a single poor despised prophet of the Lord!—It is indeed, in a worldly sense, worth while, for a man of competent talents and address, to employ himself in reconciling men's consciences to their inclinations; and if great men cannot discard their religious scruples, to enable them, by help of some false system, to render them subservient to the commission of sin without remorse. In some places and at some times, such false prophets will be well paid for their delusions; and those, who, from ambition, avarice, or sensuality, "turn away their ears from the truth," and "cannot endure sound doctrine," will "hear" to themselves teachers of this kind, after their own lusts" (Note, 2 Tim. 4:1—5, vv. 3, 4.) that the agreement of so many ministers may engender them to disregard those singular and uncourteous persons who are always robbing them of their comfort, and putting them upon an unnecessary strictness. A few individuals indeed hint, that something is wanting in their favourite instructors; nay, prefer such as they dislike. But then, are not these too scrupulous? Do they not carry matters too far? Do they make proper allowances for human frailty, and peculiar situations? Thus eventually smooth doctrine, united with confidence, ingenuity, and courtly manners, obtains the preference, and opens the way to the favour of the great and of the many. The faithful servants of God must therefore lay their account with hatred, contempt, and insult. They know not to give flattering words, or to call base crimes by soft names, or to buoy up the hopes of hypocrites with insinuating falsehoods: they cannot be silent, when called to speak; but must declare the counsel of God, and not keep

in the way of his mother, "and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin:

53 For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel according to all that his father had done.

14:9—16. 15:34. 2 Kings 3:3. x Judge 2:1—11. 2 Kings 1:2. 3:2. y 16:7. Ps 106:29. Is. 65:3. Ez. 8:3. z 21:29. Ez. 18:14—18.

back any thing profitable, however displeasing. Their conscientiousness will often be ascribed to pride and obstinacy: the language of their tender compassion for souls will be called severity or malevolence; and their plaindealing will be branded as insolence and ill-manners. But they must commit their cause to God: and wicked men, who hate them for the truth's sake, will at length find, that they were their own enemies in so doing, and that in opposing them they strove against the Almighty.

V. 10—28. Unprincipled teachers are sufficiently pliable in matters of religion: they carefully avoid the imputation of bigotry; they make great pretensions to candour, and even treat the most fundamental truths of Revelation as matters of indifference or uncertainty; but the same men are exceedingly tenacious of their own interests, and stubborn in their own concerns. Whereas we ought to be as pliant as the willow, where our own ease, credit, advantage, or indulgence are at stake; and as firm as the sturdy oak, in standing up for the great things, which relate to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.—Those who are rising in the world, or possessed of wealth, are apt to counsel the ministers of Christ, what they ought to speak in the name of the LORD; though they betray their own ignorance and love of the world by every word. We should indeed be accessible and teachable, and willing to take a friendly hint from any man: but when others would persuade us to consult our own ease, and interest, to shun the cross, to prefer courtesy to integrity, and to bend the word of God to the humours of the rich and great; we must recognise the tempter in such counsellors, and by peremptory language stop at once their insidious proposals, by declaring our determination, whatever others do, to adhere to what we consider as the truth and will of our Lord and Judge. (Notes, Am. 7:12—17. Matt. 16:21—23.)—In some cases however we should not be forward to speak: when men evidently do not wish to hear the truth, and appear determinately set against our testimony, it may be enough to express our compassionate good-will, and our fears for them; or to show our disapprobation by silence. But if we are fairly called upon to give our sentiments, we must do it with all seriousness and firmness, without regarding personal consequences.—A believing view of the presence and glory of the King of Heaven, will raise us above the fear of our fellow-creatures, however powerful or enraged; and will enable us to commit ourselves to his protection, in the discharge of our duty, in the midst of apparent danger. But we must not expect exemption from hardship and ill-usage; and need not wonder if we eat the bread of affliction, and are even rewarded with blows, imprisonment, and cruel mockings: and when princes, false teachers, and apostates unite against the servants of God, even the remnant of his people will often be afraid to interfere in their behalf.—Alas! how should we be ashamed to complain of what we in this day call trials, when we consider what the servants of God formerly endured! Yet it will be well, if our exemption from trouble prove not more injurious to us, than persecutions did to them: for we are more easily allured and bribed into unfaithfulness and conformity to the world, than influenced by terrors and threats. Let us then watch and pray, and prepare for temptations of every kind: and be careful that the quietness of our enemies do not arise from our making too many concessions, and going upon their ground, to meet them half way, in order to form the worst of all coalitions.—Nothing can by any means harm us, if we continue faithful, and meekly valiant for the truth: the Lord will remove every aspersion from our characters; and bear testimony to his truth, in his due time: and some will profit by our warnings, though others rush headlong on ruin.—Little do unbelievers suspect how many legions of crafty, malicious, and powerful enemies are unwearied in plotting their destruction; restrained by no hand but that of him whom they despise and disobey. (P. O. Job 16:12.)—The whole multitude of those "who privately bring in damnable heresies," or propagate infidelity with vast industry and ingenuity, speak and write no other things, than are suggested to them by the prompter behind the curtain. Let us then fear suppressing our convictions, and returning back to sin after professions of repentance, lest Satan should thus prevail against us. For if he obtain leave to deceive, the disposition of our hearts to prefer a flattering lie to a humbling truth that opposes our inclinations, will give him such an advantage, that every attempt of others to prevent his success, will only exasperate the mind to persecution or blasphemy.

V. 29—53. Those, who are rebellious against God, and injurious to his people, will not often be very faithful or grateful to their friends. Self-love is their supreme principle, to which all other considerations must be sacrificed; and the children of God are seldom so politic as the children of the wicked one. When, however, the Lord has rebuked his

offending people, he will mark that difference between them and his enemies, which they did not sufficiently observe. "His eyes are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers; but his face is against the workers of iniquity." None "can hide themselves in secret places from him." That which is casual to man, is the appointment of God, to fulfil his word of mercy or of wrath; so that, "men shall say, This hath God wrought, for they shall perceive that it is his work." The deceiver and deceived are his, and the flatterer and flattered shall be taken in the same net, and fall into the same destruction. Alas! what will all riches, monuments, or splendid achievements avail, when God shall

require the sinner's soul? Happy are they in death, who have served him in their generation: but the best of mere men, nay their best actions, are so defective, if not defiled, that "blessed is he" alone "whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered." Yet sincere endeavours to do good are the proper evidences and effects of saving faith: and the concurring reproofs of God's word and rod will lead the upright believer to repent of every transgression, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance: whilst hardened sinners rush forward, unawed, and unmoved, in the ways which have led others before them into everlasting misery.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THIS book is merely a continuation of the preceding, to which it is joined in the Hebrew Canon: the remarks therefore already made on *that*, in a great measure apply to *this*.—It contains the history of above three hundred years.—In Israel the kings were uniformly idolatrous and wicked: and though the labours of Elijah, Elisha, and other prophets, were prospered to preserve a considerable number of the people from the general contagion; yet the measure of their national iniquity was soon filled up; so that they were conquered and carried captive by the kings of the Assyrians, and dispersed among the Gentiles, no more, as a collected body to be restored to their own land. Their country was, after this, planted by the conquerors with a mingled people, who established a corrupt and partial worship of JERUSALEM, from whom originated the nation and religion of the Samaritans. These events began to take place considerably above a hundred years before the Babylonish captivity.—In Judah indeed some remarkable revivals of religion took place under the pious princes of David's family, and by means of the faithful labours of the prophets: but these promising appearances were of short duration; several of the kings were idolatrous and extremely wicked: the priests and Levites exceedingly neglected their important duty; and the people were generally prone to idolatry and iniquity. So that, after the death of Josiah, the nation became almost universally corrupt; and the melancholy account closes with the destruction of the city and temple, the desolation of the country, and the enslaving and carrying away of the inhabitants, by the Chaldeans.—As all the prophets, (commonly so called,) whose writings have been preserved, lived in the latter part of this period; (those excepted who lived during or after the captivity;) and as they continually refer to the facts recorded in this history; we may consider all their predictions as sanctioning, by their accomplishment, the divine authority of the narrative, though it does not contain any express prophecy, the completion of which extended much beyond the term of the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity.

CHAPTER I.

Moab rebels against Israel, 1. Ahaziah, being sick, sends to inquire of Baal-zebub, and Elisha, sent by an angel to deliver the messengers to him from him, in the name of JEHOVAH, who twice calls down fire to consume those who came against him, 5-12. The captain of the third company sues for mercy; and Elisha, encouraged by an angel, goes to Ahaziah, and avails him that he would have been slain, 13-16. Ahaziah dies, and is succeeded by Jehoram, 17, 18.

THEN Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.

2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease.

a Num. 24:17. 2 Sam. 8:2. 1 Chr. 18:2. Ps. 69:8. b 3:4, 5. 9:20-22. c 1 Judg. 5:28. Cant. 2:9. Acts 20:9. d 1 Kings 22:34. marg. 2 Chr. 21:14, 15. Job 31:3. e 3:6, 16. Matt. 10:25. 12:24-27. Mark 3:22. Luke 11:15. Beelzebub. f Judg. 11:34. 1 Sam. 5:10. 1 Kings 11:33. Is. 37:32, 19. g 8:7-9. 1 Kings 14:3. h 15. 1 Kings

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1. After David had subjugated the Moabites, they continued in subjection till the division of the kingdom; when their vassalage and tribute were transferred to the kings of Israel, as those of Edom remained to the kings of Judah. (Note, 1 Kings 22:47.) But after Ahab's death the Moabites revolted. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 34-27. 2 Sam. 8:1, 2.)

V. 2. The lattice, through which Ahaziah fell, is supposed to have had some curious ornamental network, which being decayed, gave way when he leaned upon it.—"Baal-zebub" signifies the lord of a fly or flies. Probably, the country was grievously infested with swarms of flies, and the Ekronites fancied that their idol delivered or preserved them from these. (Note, Ex. 8:21.) Beelzebub, (which is the same name,) is called in the New Testament "the prince of the devils;" and hence we learn that, under these names and images, evil spirits were actually worshipped as gods. (Note, Matt. 12:22-24.)—The Baal generally worshipped in Israel at that time, was the god of the Zidonians; but Baal-zebub was the god of Ekron in Philistia: for they "had lords many,"

3 But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

5 ¶ And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?

6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again

19:57. Acts 8:26. 12:7-11. 18. See on 1 Kings 17:1. k 1 Kings 18:1. 16:16. 5:8, 15. 1 Sam. 17:46. 1 Kings 18:36. Ps. 76:1. m Jer. 2:11-13. Jon. 3:8. "Heb. The bed whither thou art come up, thou shalt not come down from it." n Gen. 2:17. 3:4. Num. 25:65. 1 Sam. 28:19. 1 Kings 14:12. Prov. 11:19. 14:32. Ez. 16:4.

and gods many." It seems that his oracle was then in great repute, as that of Delphos was in Greece some ages afterwards.—Ahaziah did not send to inquire what he was to do in order to his recovery, but merely to know whether he should recover or not. (Notes, 8:7, 8. 1 Kings 14:1-4.) Perhaps he had been making preparations for reducing the Moabites, and was impatient to march against them.

V. 3, 4. When a king of Israel sent to inquire of a heathen oracle, he proclaimed to the Gentiles his want of confidence in JEHOVAH: as if the only nation favoured with revelation, and the knowledge of the true God, had been the only nation in which no God was known! This was peculiarly dishonourable and provoking to the Lord: (Notes, 5:8, 15, 16. 1 Kings 18:36, 37. Ps. 76:1, 2.) and therefore the Lord by his angel commissioned Elijah to answer the inquiry of the messengers, and to send them back to Ahaziah, with the solemn denunciation of his speedy death by the disease which confined him to his bed. The prophet accordingly went and met the messengers, and sent them back with this sentence. And he departed, yet did not conceal himself

unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, 'Thus saith the Lord, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?* 'therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

7 And he said unto them, 'What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you these words?

8 And they answered him, *He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.* And he said, *It is Elijah the Tishbite.*

[Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and behold, he sat on the top of a hill. And he spake unto him, 'Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.

10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, 'If *I be a man of God*, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

11 ¶ Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, 'O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, 'If *I be a man of God*, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the

fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

13 ¶ And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, 'O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.

14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.

15 And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, 'Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, (*is it not because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?*) therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

17 ¶ So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

See on 3.4. 1 Chr. 10:13-14. * Heb. What was the manner of the man? Judg. 8:18. 1 Sam. 28:14. pls. 20:2. Zech. 13:4. Matt. 3:4. 11:8. Luke 1:17. Rev. 11:3. e 6:13. 14. 1 Kings 18:4-10. 19:2. 22:3, 26:27. Matt. 14:3. r 1 Kings 18:42. Luke 6:11. 22. s Am. 7:12. Matt. 26:68. 27:29, 41-43. Mark 15:29, 32. Heb. 11:36. e 2:26. 24. Num. 10:29-30. 1 Kings 18:36-38. 22:28. 2 Chr. 36:16. Ps. 105:15. Matt. 21:41. 23:34-37. Acts 5:3-10. u Num. 11:1. 16:35. Job 1:16. Ps. 106:18. Luke 9:54. Rev. 11:5. x Dan. 3:22. 6:24. Acts 12:19. y Num. 16:41. 1 Sam. 6:9. Is. 38:11. Jer. 5:3. John 18:5-12. Acts 4:16, 17. z See on 1 Sam. 22:

17-19. Prov. 29:12. Is. 32:7. Matt. 2:16. Luke 22:63, 64. a See on 9:10. b Job 15:25-26. Prov. 27:22. Ec. 9:5. Is. 1:4. f Heb. Lord. g Ex. 11:8. N. Am. 12:4-13. 1 Kings 13:6. Is. 60:14. Rev. 3:9. d Ps. 102:17. Jam. 4:7. e 1 Sam. 28:21, 24. Ps. 49:8. 116:15. Prov. 6:26. Matt. 16:25, 26. Acts 20:24. f Gen. 15:1. Kings 18:15. Ps. 27:1. Is. 51:12, 13. Jer. 1:17. 15:20. Ez. 2:6. Matt. 10:28. Heb. 11:27. g See on 3.4. Ec. 4:22, 23. 1 Kings 14:6-13. 21:18-24. 22:28. h 3:1. 8:16, 17. 1 Kings 22:31. i See on 1 Kings 14:19. 22:39.

but continued so near to the same place, that the captains and their soldiers readily found him. (9,10)

V. 5, 6. The speedy return of the messengers convinced Ahaziah, that they had not gone to Ekron; and they punctually delivered the message of God, which Elijah had sent by them, without softening it in the least, or changing a word in it. Something peculiarly venerable in the appearance of the prophet, with the firm solemnity of his manner in speaking to them, seems to have over-awed them; and probably they were convinced, that his words would be verified.

V. 8. Elijah was a hairy man, either in his person, or by reason of the coarseness and roughness of his garments, made perhaps of hair, and girded round him with a piece of undressed skin. In this manner he showed his mortification to the world, and expressed his concern and grief for the idolatry and iniquity of his people. (Note, Matt. 3:4.)

V. 9. This officer called Elijah a "man of God" by way of derision, not out of respect as others did.—Jezebel's name is not mentioned in this transaction; but probably she stirred up her son, as she formerly had done her husband, against the prophets of the Lord.

On the top of a hill.] Some think mount Carmel is meant: but Carmel was far north, or northwest of Samaria, where Ahaziah lay, (Josh. 19:26.) and the road to Ekron lay to the southwest. Had the prophet retired to mount Carmel, the captain could not so readily have found him.

V. 10. No doubt Elijah was moved to call for fire from heaven on these men, by immediate revelation. He was influenced by a holy zeal for the honour of the Lord, which was attacked in his person as a man of God, by the worshippers of Baalim; for if he had been actuated by resentment or selfish passions, the fire from heaven would not have come at his word. (Notes, 2:23, 24. 2 Cor. 13:7-10.)—He had before demonstrated JEHOVAH to be the only true God, by fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice: (Notes, 1 Kings 18:32-39.) yet the nation in general, and especially the rulers, adhered to the worship of Baal: it was therefore proper, that they should receive a more awful proof; and be made sensible that all the enemies of the Lord would at length be destroyed. The officers and soldiers, who were slain, not only deserved death as idolaters, but doubtless they had been the instruments of Ahab and Jezebel in persecution: and the example would have salutary effects on many in Israel. (Notes, Dan. 3:19-23. Luke 9:51-56. Acts 12:18, 19.)

V. 11, 12. It is hard to say, which was on this occasion the more wonderful, the madness of the wounded and enfeebled Ahaziah, when the report of the awful event reached him, or the presumption of this officer and his soldiers: for the second attempt was made in a more peremptory and haughty manner than the foregoing. But perhaps the former calamity was ascribed to chance. 'Indeed it had so happened that terrible lightning, just at that moment, slew the captain and his fifty men.' None of the persons concerned appear to have been convinced that JEHOVAH had sent the

fire from heaven, for this express purpose, in answer to the words of Elijah. (Note, 1 Sam. 6:2-9.)

V. 13, 14. This officer had no courage to refuse obedience to the infatuated tyrant, who ordered him in this desperate service; and yet he dared not attempt any thing against Elijah: he therefore employed humble entreaties, with every expression of respect and submission; and in this manner his life and the lives of his soldiers were preserved. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15, 16. Elijah had so exasperated Jezebel and her party, by putting the prophets of Baal to death; and by the awful sentence on Ahab and Jezebel, and the whole family, denounced in the vineyard of Naboth; that he had no further prospect of doing them good. In general he lived in a retired manner; and laboured among the inferior inhabitants without exposing himself to the rage of the king: but on this occasion, he was especially commissioned to go to him, along with the captain and his fifty. And his presence and authoritative boldness in delivering in person the solemn message before sent by the messengers, so dismayed Ahaziah, that he did not attempt any thing against him: and shortly after he died, (17) according to Elijah's word, for attempting to consult a heathen oracle. (Note, 1 Chr. 10:13, 14.)

V. 17. Jehoshaphat lived some time after this: it is therefore supposed that he admitted his son Jehoram to reign with him, eight or nine years before his death; and Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel, in the second year of that term, or in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. (Notes, 8:16, 17. 1 Kings 22:51.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. Man's revolt from God is often punished by the rebellion of those who owe subjection to him.—Death meets men in the most unexpected places and forms, but always under the direction of the all-wise and righteous God. If reconciled to him by faith in the Saviour, and walking in his ways, "death is ours," and can never come in a wrong time or manner: but to the impenitent and unbelieving he is and must be "the king of terrors."—False religion amuses men's minds, and gratifies a vain curiosity: but the Bible declares the way of acceptance, and the path of duty; and, without informing us of the events of our future lives, or the time and manner of our death, it teaches us to be always ready; and instructs us how to behave under every dispensation of Providence, and thus to find comfort under them all, and derive benefit from them.—With such instructions, and access to the mercy-seat of our God and Father, we have no occasion to consult any of those oracles, which pretend to unfold what God has been pleased to conceal. The believer assured by the word of God that all things shall work together for his good, may rejoice in hope, and look forward with comfort; but the foreknowledge of the afflictions of future life, joined to the terror of final misery, would mar the little enjoyment which the unbeliever has in this world, and torment him before his time. (P. O. Gen. 15:12. 21.)—Men are prone

CHAPTER II.

Elijah when about to be translated, cannot induce Elisha not to attend him in his progress, 1-1. With his mantle he divides Jordan, and they pass over, 8. Elisha allows conditionally of Elisha's request of a double man of the Spirit, and is taken to heaven in a fiery chariot, 9-11. Elisha takes up Elijah's mantle, smites and dries up Jordan with it, and passes over; and is received as Elijah's successor, 12-15. The sons of the prophets in vain seek for Elijah, 16-18. Elisha heals with salt the bad waters of Jericho, 19-22. Bears destroy the children that mock him, 23-25.

AND it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elisha went with Elisha from Gilgal.

2 And Elisha said unto Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said unto him, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el.

3 And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

4 And Elisha said unto him, Elisha, tarry here,

Gen. 5:24. 1 Kings 19:4. Luke 9:51. Acts 1:9. Heb. 11:5. Rev. 11:12. b 1 Kings 18:12. 19:11. Job 38. c See on 1 Kings 19:16-21. d Josh. 4:19. 5:9. e Ruth 1:15. 2 Sam. 15:19, 20. John 6:67, 68. f 4. 6. 3. 1 Sam. 1:26. 17:55. 23:26. g Ruth 1:16-18. 2 Sam. 15:21. 1 John 2:13. h Gen. 28:19. 1 Kings 12:29, 33. 15:12. 15:17. 15:4. 1 Sam. 9:1. 1 Sam. 10:10-12. 19:20. 1 Kings 18:4. 20:35. Is.

to act as if there were no God; and as if they were left to take care of themselves, as well as to spend their lives in following their own inclinations: hence they are so readily induced to yield to every temptation, and to make rapid progress in wickedness, when in pursuit of the objects which they idolize, or when afraid of losing them.—Those who would be valiant for the truth, and in the cause of God, before the great ones of this world, must learn temperance and frugality; and evince that they neither envy nor covet their luxuries and embellishments, but are indifferent about all other things, compared with the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls.

V. 9-18. The conduct of some persons, as impartially recorded in the word of God, appears so infatuated, that we should scarcely be able to credit the account, did we not sometimes witness actions equally unaccountable. Often has it been observed, that men upon a deathbed, and aware that they could not recover, have appeared more trifling, profane, avaricious, morose, fierce, or cruel, than at any former period: so that those around them have been tempted, by their intolerable conduct, to wish them dead before the hour arrived! Some have even seemed to regret with their dying lips, that they could do no more mischief in the world before they left it! And in many other ways men are continually acting in a manner inexplicable, except upon the principles of the wise man; "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart whilst they live, and after that they go to the dead." (Notes, Ec. 9:1-3. Matt. 2:16-18).—Haughty persecutors will always meet with wretches ready to execute their most impious and desperate mandates: and when providential mercies, means of grace, warnings and corrections, leave them thus desperate in enmity against God and his servants, we may be confident that vengeance slumbereth not.—If the wicked face death in its most tremendous forms, to obtain or preserve the favour of an earthly prince, whose "breath goeth forth, and he returneth to his dust, and all his thoughts perish;" what danger and hardship ought we not to welcome in the service of the everlasting God, who can give us the gracious recompense of eternal life. (Notes, Ps. 143:3-6).—There are proper seasons for different methods of behaving towards sinners, and we must ask wisdom of God to direct us; and, as the same action may be either right or wrong, according to the principle from which it springs, we should look well to our own spirits, and be candid in judging our brethren. It is, however, our general rule, "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good."—The judgments of God under the Christian dispensation are commonly spiritual: and the more mildly we behave to those, who insult and injure us for the Lord's sake, the more terrible punishment will be at length inflicted upon them. But our God is ever ready to forgive the humble suppliant, however rebellious he has been; and the way to prevail with him is to bow before him. We therefore should be followers of him, and be ready to pray for and favour our bitterest enemies, especially when under any alarm of conscience they entreat us so to do.—We may safely venture into the presence of our most enraged foes, when he requires us, who has all hearts in his hand: the courage of faith has often struck terror into the heart of the proudest sinner: how then shall any be able to stand before God, when he arises to execute judgment? His words will surely take effect: and while some sinners, being long spared, increase their own condemnation; others are cut off speedily, and hurried into destruction. Both are intended to warn others to seek the Lord whilst he may be found: and his servants will, one way or other, survive and witness the destruction of all his enemies.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. None, Enoch alone excepted, had ever been favoured with exemption from the general sentence denounced against sinful man, "Dust thou

I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

6 And Elisha said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7 And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

8 And Elisha took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

8.18. h Deut. 38:3. i 22:3. j Josh. 6:26. 1 Kings 16:24. Luke 19:1. m See on 2:4, 30. Acts 2:42. 11:23. n See on 3:1. Josh. 1:12. 1. Luke 24:51. John 17:5-7. Acts 1:13. 20:25. o Gen. 48:19. Ec. 3:7. Is. 41:1. Hab. 2:20. p 17. 1 Kings 18:4, 13. q Heb. in right, or over against. r 1 Kings 19:13, 19. f 14. Ex. 14: 21, 22. Josh. 3:16, 17. Ps. 114:5-7. Is. 11:15. Heb. 11:29. Rev. 16:12.

art, and to dust shalt thou return." (Note, Gen. 5:22-24. P. O. 21-32.) But the Lord had given Elisha some previous intimations, that he intended thus to distinguish him, and that the day was at hand. (Note, 1 Kings 19:3, 4.) At that time, he and Elisha were at Gilgal: (Notes, Josh. 5:9. 10:7, 40-43.) and thence Elisha went in circuit to several of the schools of the prophets in different places, to give them his parting exhortations and blessing. Doubtless most of them were established, and all of them were superintended by him. (Note, 1 Kings 19:20, 21).—It is not known how old Elisha was when translated.

V. 2. Elisha might intend by this proposal to make trial of the strength of Elisha's attachment; or perhaps he longed for retirement, and shunned ostentation. But Elisha expressed his determination to enjoy the pleasure and reap the benefit of his company to the last; and, if it might be, to witness his translation: and this he confirmed with a most solemn asseveration. (Notes, Ruth 1:16, 17. 2 Sam. 15:18-22).—As the life and soul of man entirely depend on God, to mention them in a solemn oath, either alone, or along with him, was deemed equivalent to swearing by the name of the Lord. (Notes, Matt. 5:33-37. 23:16-22.)

V. 3. Beth-el.] (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Kings 12:26-33. 13:1, 2.) "In that place where the golden calves were worshipped, God... continued the schools of the prophets among them. For by the sons of the prophets" are meant the scholars of the prophets, whom they educated and trained up in religion and piety. And God... bestowed on some of them the Spirit of prophecy... This was a great testimony of God's love to an apostate people... And it is still more remarkable, that prophets of greater excellency for miracles were continued in Israel, than were in Judah; because they needed them more... It seems to me very probable, that these "sons of the prophets" were such ministers to the prophets as the evangelists were to the apostles; whom the prophets sent to publish their prophecies and instructions to the people, where they could not go themselves." Bp. Patrick.—"The sons of the prophets" at Beth-el, and other places, had received a divine intimation, that Elisha was on that day to be taken from them: and as Elisha was next in precedence after Elijah, sitting nearest under him, or at his feet, while he delivered his instructions; he would be considered as their superintendent, when his master was taken "from his head," or from above him. (Note, Acts 22:1-5).—Elisha however would not allow them to interrupt the composure of Elisha's mind at this solemn season by any lamentations: it is probable, that he forbade them publicly to speak of it, lest multitudes should be collected to witness the event; or he counselled them to be calm, and not to disquiet themselves, for the Lord would make up the loss.

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref.) Jericho.] Notes, 19-22. 1 Kings 16:34.

V. 6. "He hoped for some great blessing from him, when he was carried up to heaven; and therefore continued firm in his resolution, to attend that wonderful change." Bp. Patrick. (Note, 9:10.)

V. 7, 8. These fifty men seem to have hoped to witness Elisha's translation, but this favour was granted only to Elisha. They, however, saw Jordan twice divided, first before Elijah and Elisha, and then afterwards before Elisha alone, by smiting the waters with Elisha's mantle. (Notes, 14. Josh. 3:15-17.)

Mantle. (8) מַטְיָה. In all the places where this word is used, the LXX translate it *ματῆα*, a sheepskin. Heb. 11:37. Gr (Note, 1:8.)

V. 9, 10. Elisha was thus reminded to make his request before Elisha was taken from him: for the prophet did not give the least intimation of being prayed to as an intercessor, after he was gone to heaven; nay, his words imply the con-

9 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me."

10 And he said, "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so."

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces."

13 He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

14 And he took the mantle of Elijah, that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over."

15 And when the sons of the prophets, which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, "The Spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they

came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him."

16 And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men: let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send

17 And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.

18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

[Practical Observations.]

19 ¶ And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.

20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him.

21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.

22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

23 ¶ And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way

a 13:14-19. Num. 27:16-23. Deut. 34:9. 1 Chr. 29:18, 19. Ps. 72:120. Luke 24: 45-51. John 17:13-19. Acts 13: 8, 17. 20, 25, 26. 1 Kings 3:9. 2 Chr. 1:9, 10. John 14:12-14. 16, 17. 1 Cor. 12:31. 2 Deut. 21:17. Zech. 9:12, 12. 8:1. 1 Tim. 5:17. v Mark 11:22-24. John 16:24. * Heb. done hard in asking. x 12. Acts 1:9, 10. v 6:17. Ps. 68:17. 101:34. Ez. 1:4, &c. 10:9. &c. Hab. 3:8. Zech. 6:1-8. Heb. 1:14. v See on 1. a Mark 16:9. b 10. c 13:14. Job 24:30. Prov. 11:11. Ec. 7:19. 26:16-18. Is. 37:4, 15, 21. Acts 27:24. d Prov. 30:4. Mark 16:19. Luke 2:15. 24:51. John 3:13. Acts 1:9. 2 Cor. 5:2. Eph. 4:8. Rev. 11:12. e Job 1:20, 21. Is. 57:1, 2. Acts 8:2. f 8. 1 Kings 10:19. 1 Heb. 11:1. 1 Kings 9:26. marg. g See on 8-10. Josh. 1:1-9. Mark 16:20. John 14:12. Acts 2:33. 3:12.

trary, in a very decisive manner. If the request were not made before he was taken away, it would afterwards be too late. Elisha, therefore, knowing the efficacy of Elijah's prayer, desired him to ask for him a double portion of his spirit. (Notes, Num. 11:25-29. 27:18. 1 Kings 3:5-14.) He seems only to have meant a double portion of the Spirit of prophecy, and of wisdom, courage, faith, and grace, to what was ordinarily bestowed upon the prophets; but as he was to succeed so eminent a person in a most important work, and in arduous times, his desires and expectations might be enlarged by zeal for the honour of God, and for the revival of true religion; so that he was led to use words, which may signify even double the portion which Elijah had possessed; and Elijah's answer seems to imply, that this was the import of them.—It appears from the history, that Elisha wrought twice as many miracles as Elijah had done; and being more constantly among the people, as their example and instructor, for above sixty years, from his first calling by Elijah, he seems to have been favoured with more extensive usefulness than he; though in other respects he may be considered as his inferior. (Note, 13:14.) Thus our Lord said to his apostles, (referring to the extensive usefulness of their labours, compared with that of his personal ministry, and to the number, variety, and long-continuance of the miracles wrought by them,) "Greater works than these shall ye do;" yet was he infinitely greater than they. (Notes, Mark 11:7-11. John 14:7-14.)

V. 11. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1.) Elijah's translation was doubtless performed by the ministration of angels, who caused the appearances and effects here described. The event was a distinguished honour put upon one, who had been peculiarly zealous for the honour of God, and had ventured all consequences in his cause, by opposing the idolatry of an apostate and persecuting age and nation. It was a public attestation of the doctrine of a future state of retributions, for the encouragement of God's suffering people; and it was also a prefiguration of the Redeemer's ascension. (Notes, Luke 24:50-53. Acts 1:9-12.)—The prophet had on one occasion passionately wished to die; but the Lord was graciously pleased to deal with him better than his wishes. He had passed over Jordan to his native country, and was conferring with Elisha, perhaps about the joys of heaven, or the interests of true religion in Israel, when they were thus suddenly interrupted and separated.

V. 12. The manner in which Elijah was taken away, amidst his most interesting discourse, must have been exceedingly affecting to Elisha, who could not but congratulate his felicity. But he had lost one whom he loved and revered as a father; and Israel had lost a reformer, whose labours and prayers did more to preserve the nation from ruin, than chariots and horsemen, however numerous, could have done; and on these accounts he grieved, and expressed his regret by rending his clothes. (Note, 13:14.) Nor was he recon-

ciled to his own and the public loss, by being the president of all the schools of the prophets, or by being assured of a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

V. 13. The prophet went to heaven in the body; yet, as a token of the different state into which he was entered, and the change which had taken place, he dropped his mantle or upper garment. (Notes, 1 Cor. 15:50-54. 2 Cor. 5:1-4.) Elisha had been first called to attend Elijah, by the casting of his mantle over him; and he now received and valued this mantle, as a token of his receiving a double portion of his spirit. (Notes, 9:10. 1 Kings 19:19.)

V. 14. Elisha was inwardly moved to make trial, whether Elijah's words were indeed fulfilled to him; and whether the Lord God, who had wrought such miracles by Elijah, and had just before divided the waters of Jericho when he smote them with his mantle, was with him in like manner. The original is more expressive than the translation, and may be rendered, "Where is JEHOVAH, the God of Elijah, even He?" He is still with me: though Elijah be not here, the God of Elijah is. (Notes, Josh. 3:7. Matt. 28:19, 20.)

V. 15. These "sons of the prophets" had witnessed the division of Jordan, both by Elijah, and afterwards by Elisha; (Note, 7:8.) thence they concluded, that the Spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha; and by bowing to the ground before him, they gave him honour as their superintendent from that time.

V. 16-18. These sons of the prophets might think, that even in case Elijah was finally taken from them, his soul alone was gone to heaven; and that his body might be found, and buried with due honour; but perhaps they also doubted, whether he was really removed; or had only been carried to some other place in a supernatural manner, as he seems to have been on former occasions. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 18:12-16.) Elisha, however, might fear lest they should suspect, if he persisted in refusing their request, that he was influenced by an undue desire of filling Elijah's honourable place; and the event tended to establish his authority.

V. 19-22. Jericho had not long before been rebuilt, in defiance of the curse which Joshua had denounced against him who ventured to rebuild it; and it is probable, that the pleasantness of the situation had been the inducement. (Note, 1 Kings 16:34.) But, as an evidence of God's displeasure, the water was unwholesome; and perhaps in consequence, the ground, (though not otherwise deficient in fertility,) had the property of causing the cattle to cast their young; and as some think, the immature fruit to fall from the trees. It is not unlikely, that similar effects were produced on the women also. (Marg.) But, as the inhabitants had admitted a seminary of prophets among them, these tokens of the divine displeasure were miraculously removed. The new cruse, and the salt, could have no natural efficacy to heal the water, and remove the bad property of the land; but were merely signs of JEHOVAH's powerful operation. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 4: 40, 41. 6:1-7 Ez. 47:1. Matt. 5:13.)

there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, "Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head."

24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and "cursed them in the name of the LORD.

x Job 19:18. Prov. 20:11. 22:6,15. Eccl. 11:10. Is. 1:4. 3:5. Jer. 7:18. y Gen. 21:9. 2 Chr. 36:16. Job 30:1,8,9. Ps. 33:15. Is. 57:3,4. Gal. 4:29. Heb. 11:36. z 1 Matt. 27:29—31,40—43. a 1:10—12. Gen. 9:25. Deut. 28:15—26. Jer. 28:16. 29:

V. 23, 24. Several learned men have endeavoured to prove, that these offenders were not children, but grown up persons: and, no doubt the firstword (עלמים), rendered *children*, is often used in that sense. The addition, however, of the word rendered *little*, seems clearly to evince, that they were not men, but young boys, who had been trained up in idolatry, and taught to despise the prophets of the Lord. They had heard that Elijah was "gone up" to heaven, and they insultingly bade Elisha follow him, that they might be rid of him also; and they reviled him for the baldness of his head. Thus they united the crimes of abusing him for a supposed bodily infirmity, contemptuous behaviour towards a venerable person, and enmity against him as the prophet of God. The sin therefore even of these children was very heinous: yet the greater guilt was chargeable on their parents and teachers; and their fate was a severe rebuke and awful warning to them. If the Spirit of God had not dictated Elisha's solemn curse of them, Providence would not have followed it with so terrible a judgment. (Notes, 1:10. Prov. 26:2.) The children of the city in general seem to have been present; and the insult was perhaps the effect of a pre-concerted plan, to drive the sons of the prophets from Beth-el by ill-treatment. The forty-two children (עלמים), which were devoured, seem to have been only a part of the whole company, and perhaps they were the most guilty. However, the Judge of all the earth surely did right. Had he cut them off by a fever, no one would have objected to it: but, while the dispensation would have been as severe towards them, it would not have been suited, in any adequate measure, to make the same useful impression on the minds of the survivors, or to inculcate the same important instructions to other ages and nations, as this solemn sentence and immediate execution were. (Notes, Num. 31:2. Josh. 6:21. Acts 5:1—11.) It seems that the inhabitants of Beth-el were so over-awed, that they no more ventured to molest Elisha or the sons of the prophets.—*Shebears*. (24) Note, Hos. 13:5—8.

V. 25. (Marg. Ref.) *To Samaria*.] Perhaps, there was a seminary of the sons of the prophets even in Samaria: or Elisha had lodgings in that city, to which he returned after his circuits in other parts, for whatever service might there be performed by him. (Note, 6:32,33.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10. The Lord always acts with perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth; but he does not always deign to explain to us the reasons of his conduct. In exempting sinners from *merited* condemnation, and in conferring *unmerited* blessings, he "divideth to every man severally as he will." (Note, Acts 10:34,35.) We are assured, that they who repent and believe the gospel, shall be saved; that the Lord will honour those who honour him: and if we obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we need not greatly regret that we do not pass the same way to it, as Enoch and Elijah did; being comfortably assured, that we shall be more than conquerors in the last conflict, through him "who hath loved us;" and that at last "death will be swallowed up in victory." (P. O. Gen. 5:21—32. Note, 1 Cor. 15:50—58.)—As we know not the time of our departure, we should give diligence to be habitually ready; and we ought to mind our proper work with greater assiduity, if able, when we perceive that the time approaches. Whether ministers or private Christians, we are called to "serve our generation;" and should aim to leave all around us deeply convinced of the nearness and reality of eternal things, and animated with the desire of glorifying God and doing good; and our example, exhortations, and prayers should especially be directed to these important objects, when we approach the solemn closing scene. (Note, 2 Pet. 1:12—15.) On the other hand, we should gladly embrace opportunities of visiting the deathbeds of eminent believers, that we may learn heavenly wisdom, and catch holy fire, as it were, from their converse and behaviour. But such occasions require seriousness, calmness, and submission to the will of God; and we should learn even to repress our own feelings, rather than distract the minds, or interrupt the devotions and discourse, of the departing Christian. As long as pious persons are with us, we should beg an interest in their prayers; that, by "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ," we may be enabled to tread in their steps, and to be serviceable to the church as they have been. And if from zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, we should covet earnestly to abound still more in grace, wisdom, and usefulness; neither God, nor his dying saints, will blame the largeness of our desires. Nor is this hard in itself, however it may appear to us; for that fullness, whence prophets and apostles derived all their endowments, still remains, and we are invited to ask large supplies from it: (Note, John 1:16.) and those who are called to succeed eminent men in arduous and important stations, and are

And there came forth two ^{she}bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two ^{children} of them.

25 And he went from thence to ^{mount}Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

21—23. Am. 7:17. Mark 11:14,21. Acts 5:9,8,20. 13:9—11. 2 Cor. 10:6. 1,2 Sam. 17:8. Prov. 12:12. 28:15. Hos. 13:8. c Ex. 20:5. 1 Kings 13:24. 19:17,20? 36. d 4:25. 1 Kings 18:19,42.

conscious of their own insufficiency, are peculiarly encouraged to expect a double portion of the Spirit of God, that they may not disgrace their situations, or remain useless in them.

V. 11—18. Angels delight to be employed in removing the saints to their glorious rest, in any way that the Lord pleases. (Notes, Gen. 24:2—9. Luke 16:22,23. Heb. 1:13,14.) Yet the event, which is so joyful to them, often causes painful separations to those who are left behind: many on these occasions are bereft of such, as have been more dear and useful to them, than the tenderest parent: yea, even the public has been deprived of some of its strongest bulwarks, though most men are insensible to the loss. (Note, Is. 57:1,2.) On these accounts it is allowable to grieve: but believers should be warned "not to sorrow, as men without hope;" the separation will at length issue in a more joyful meeting, and the loss shall be made up to them. Though Elijah be removed, "the LORD God of Elijah" lives. Thus, when the Saviour ascended into heaven, he left not his disciples comfortless; but he bequeathed to them his precious gospel, like Elijah's mantle, as the token of the divine power being exerted to subvert the empire of Satan, and to set up the kingdom of God in the world: and he poured out upon them his Holy Spirit, both to qualify them fully for their most important and arduous ministry, and to render their labours abundantly successful. The same gospel still remains with us; and though the miraculous powers are withdrawn, it still is attended with a divine energy for the conversion and salvation of sinners. Oh, may that power be more abundantly experienced, wherever the word of God is truly preached! And may we all seriously inquire, whether it be not suspended, retarded, or removed, through some criminal cause in us!—Having, however, the same exceeding great and precious promises, the same throne of grace, the same Mediator, the same powerful God and Father, as the primitive Christians had; if we have also the same "precious faith," we need not fear breaking through all difficulties, opposing enemies, and at last passing comfortably through the Jordan of death, as on dry ground.—When we perceive men averse to conviction, and bent upon their own schemes, though vain and empty; it is sometimes best to leave them to take their own course; and their fruitless labours and inquiries often most effectually discover to them their mistakes.

V. 19—25. The nature of man, in its best estate, and adorned with all the embellishments of which it is capable, resembles the unwholesome water and soil of Jericho. It is throughout infected with sin, and barren of real good; and man's best actions, till renewed by grace, proceed from selfish and carnal motives, are directed to unworthy purposes, and measured by a false rule. But when that remedy is applied, a blessed change takes place through all the powers of the soul: and repentance, faith, and love of God and man, produce good works, performed from the purest principles, and for the most important ends; and regulated according to the holy law of God, and the example of the Redeemer. In this way sometimes whole towns and cities have assumed a new appearance, through the preaching of the gospel, and by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit; so that the curse of sin and ungodliness has been converted into the blessing of fruitfulness "in the works of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God;" and when this blessing is vouchsafed to seminaries of learning, and places of public education; the fertilizing streams may flow through whole countries, nay into the most distant lands, and produce the most happy change. (Notes, Ez. 47:1—11.)—While the special favour of God evidently rests on those places where his gospel is welcomed; his heaviest wrath will light on those who reject the gracious message, and insult and abuse his ministers. The words and actions even of children, yea, of "little children," are noticed by him. Let then the youngest who read or hear these observations, "stand in awe, and sin not;" let them think of the terror and anguish of the children of Beth-el, when they are tempted to deride the deformed, the lame, or the infirm; when they are induced to show contempt to the aged; and especially when they are about to join those, who revile or ridicule such as ate in reputation for sanctity: for this is to despise the holiness of God in them. And if any have the misfortune to have parents or teachers so wicked, as to set them an example of such profaneness, or to instruct or encourage them to behave in such a manner; let them remember that they should "obey God rather than man;" and that they must answer to him for their offence, whoever commands them to commit it. But words cannot express what strikes the imagination on this awful subject. We can scarcely conceive the horror which seized the parents of Beth-el, on the view of the mangled bodies of their children, whom they had taught that impiety, which brought the dreadful judgment upon them. What then will be the anguish, at the great decisive day, of those parents, who witness the

CHAPTER III.

Jehoram reigns wickedly, 1-3. **Mesha** king of Moab revolts, 4, 5. **Jehoram**, **Jehoshaphat**, and the king of Edom, march against him; and being greatly distressed for want of water, they apply to **Elisha**, who sharply reproves **Jehoram**, but shows respect to **Jehoshaphat**, 6-14. He promises them water, and victory, 15-19. Plenty of water is sent; the Moabites are destroyed by the appearance, and are ignominiously defeated, 20-24. The allied kings destroy the cities, spoil the country, and besiege **Kir-harasth**, 25. The king of Moab, sacrificing his eldest son, causes them to raise the siege, 26, 27.

NOW **Jehoram** the son of **Ahab** began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of **Jehoshaphat** king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.

2 And he wrought evil in the sight of the **LORD**; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of **Baal** that his father had made.

3 Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of **Jeroboam** the son of **Nebat**, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

4 ¶ And **Mesha** king of Moab was a sheep-master, and rendered unto the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs, and a hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

5 But it came to pass, when **Ahab** was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

6 ¶ And king **Jehoram** went out of Samaria the same time; and numbered all Israel.

7 And he went and sent to **Jehoshaphat** the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.

8 And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom.

9 So the king of Israel went, and the king of

Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them.

10 And the king of Israel said, Alas, that the **LORD** hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

11 But **Jehoshaphat** said, Is there not here a prophet of the **LORD**, that we may inquire of the **LORD** by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is **Elisha** the son of **Shaphat**, which poured water on the hands of **Elijah**.

12 And **Jehoshaphat** said, The word of the **LORD** is with him. So the king of Israel and **Jehoshaphat** and the king of Edom went down to him.

[Practical Observations.]

13 And **Elisha** said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the **LORD** hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.

14 And **Elisha** said, As the **LORD** of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of **Jehoshaphat** the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the **LORD** came upon him.

16 And he said, Thus saith the **LORD**, Make this valley full of ditches:

17 For thus saith the **LORD**, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.

a 1:17. 8:16. *Joram*. 1 Kings 22:51. b 6:31, 32. 21:6, 20. See on 1 Sam. 15:19. c 1 Kings 16:33. 21:20, 25. d 9:22, 34. 1 Kings 21:5-15, 25. e Heb. 22. x 2:14. 15:21, 24. 1 Sam. 3:19-21. y 5:8, 15. Is. 49:23. 60:14. Jer. 3:9. g See on 1 Kings 14:16. 15:23, 34. 16:31. h 13:2, 6, 11. 14:24. 15:9, 18, 17, 22. i Kings 12:26-28. 13:33. i Cor. 1:19, 20. j Kings 13:2. 26:13, 14. 2 Chr. 26:10. Job 13:42, 12. k 2 Sam. 8:1. 1 Chr. 18:2. Ps. 60:3. l See on 1:1. 2 Chr. 21:8-10. m 1 Sam. 11:3. 15:4. 2 Sam. 33:1. 1 Kings 20:27. n See on 1 Kings 21:22, 32. 2 Chr. 18:32, 29-32. 19:2. 21:4-7. 22:3, 4, 10-12. o Num. 21:4. Mal. 1:2, 3. p See on 1 Kings 22:47. q Ex. 15:22. 17:1. Num. 20:2, 4. 21:5. 33:14. r Heb. at their feet. Ex. 11:8. marg. Judg. 4:10. r 6:33. Gen. 4:13. Ps. 78:31-36. Prov. 19:3. Is. 8:21. 51:20. s See on 1 Kings 22:7. Ps. 74:9. Am. 8:7. t 1,

everlasting condemnation of their offspring, occasioned by their negligence and wickedness! Let us turn from the dreadful meditation, and take warning to train up our families, with increasing earnestness, "in the nurture and admonition of the **LORD**;" hoping and praying that we shall be enabled, at that important season, to appear before God, and to adopt the language of the prophet, "Behold, I, and the children that thou hast given me."—Indeed the ministers of Christ must and will in all ordinary circumstances continue to bless, and not curse; but the **LORD** is still glorious in holiness, and all creatures serve him; and while he protects his people, even among their enraged foes, he can soon call for instruments of his vengeance on those whom he sees to be ripe for destruction.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. Note, 1:17.

V. 2, 3. **Jehoram** threw aside, but did not destroy, the image of **Baal**; and if he suppressed the worship of **Baal** for a time, in order to please **Jehoshaphat**, and secure his alliance, or through terror at the awful end of his father and brother, it was soon allowed to revive. (Notes, 10:13-31. 1 Kings 16:30-33.) But he was not so eager on that idolatry, or so vehement a persecutor of the prophets and worshippers of the **LORD**, as his predecessors had been; preferring the more politic measures of **Jeroboam**. (Note, 1 Kings 12:26-29.) Yet, it seems, **Jezebel** retained her influence, and promoted her favourite idolatry; though for reasons of state, or being discouraged by various calamities, she acquiesced in her son's measures at the beginning of his reign.

V. 4-6. Marg. Ref. Note, 1:1.—Rams. (4) Or wethers, as some understand it.

V. 7. **Jehoshaphat** used exactly the same words in this answer to **Jehoram**, as he had done to his father **Ahab**. But the ill success of **Ahab's** expedition, his own extreme danger and merciful deliverance, and the sharp reproof given him by the prophet, should have taught him a different conduct. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:4, 30, 32-35. 2 Chr. 19:2, 3.)—As **Jehoram** had put away the image of **Baal**, **Jehoshaphat** perhaps was in hopes of effecting a more complete reformation in Israel, by this compliance: but he thus almost entirely ruined his own family. (Note, 1 Kings 22:41-46.)

V. 8, 9. This way was far about for **Jehoram**, and through a part of the desert in which Israel had wanted water, when they came out of Egypt; and the same difficulty might reasonably have been expected. (Notes, Num. 20:2-5, 14—

3. Josh. 9:14. Judg. 20:8-11, 18, 23, 26-28. 1 Chr. 10:13. 14:10, 14. 15:13. u Gen. 18:4. Josh. 1:1. 1 Kings 19:9. Luke 22:26, 27. John 13:4, 5, 13, 14. Phil. 2:22. x 2:14. 15:21, 24. 1 Sam. 3:19-21. y 5:8, 15. Is. 49:23. 60:14. Jer. 3:9. z Ez. 14:3-5. Matt. 8:29. John 24. 2 Cor. 5:16. 6:15. a Judg. 10:14. Jer. 24:27, 28. b 1 Kings 18:19. 22:6, 10, 11, 22-25. c See on 10. Deut. 32:37-39. Hos. 6:1. d 5:16. 1 Kings 17:1. 18:15. e 2 Chr. 17:3-9. 19:3, 4. Ps. 15:4. f 1 Sam. 15:26-31. 1 Kings 14:5, 8, 20. Jer. 1:18. Dan. 5:17-28. Matt. 22:16. g 1 Sam. 10:5. 16:23. 19:10. 1 Chr. 25:2, 3. Eph. 5:18, 19. h 1 Kings 18:46. Ez. 1:3. 13:4, 22. 8:1. Acts 11:21. i 4:3. Num. 18:16-18. k 1 Kings 18:36-39. Ps. 84:6. 107:35. Is. 41:17, 18. 43:19, 20. 48:21. l Ex. 17:6. Num. 20:8-11.

21. 21:16-18.) **Jehoshaphat** seems to have intended to prevent the revolt, and secure the assistance of the deputy-king of Edom, and to attack the Moabites by surprise: (Note, 1 Kings 22:47.) but he neglected to inquire of the **LORD**, for which he was speedily rebuked. It is probable, that the army either missed the direct road, or was hindered in its march, and turned out of the way which the kings had intended to take, by some unforeseen impediments: or a great drought prevailed in that region, of which they had not been aware.

V. 10. **Jehoram** had planned this expedition, without any divine direction, for his own interest, and had drawn the other two kings into it. Had they succeeded, he would not have given God the glory; yet when calamities came upon him, through his own inadvertency, "his heart fretted against the **LORD**;" but he expressed neither repentance, nor faith, nor submission to the will of God. (Notes, 6:24-33. Prov. 19:3.)

V. 11, 12. Doubtless, the prophet was divinely directed to follow the camp on this occasion. The servant of **Jehoram** was better acquainted with **Elisha**, than his master was; and he was known, as having been the attendant of **Elijah**, to assist him in washing his hands, and other menial offices; yet as appointed to be his successor. (Note, 1 Kings 19:20, 21.) **Jehoshaphat** was now made sensible of his fault in neglecting to inquire of the **LORD**: and the three kings concurred in showing respect to **Elisha**; not ordering his attendance, but waiting on him. (Notes, 5:8-12. Ez. 11:8. Is. 60:10-14. Rev. 3:8, 9.)

V. 13, 14. It is probable, that **Elisha** meant to show **Jehoshaphat** the deficiency and hypocrisy of **Jehoram's** reformation, as his heart still went after the prophets and worship of **Baal**; and he had no real regard for the prophets of God, though he consulted him in his distress. He would not therefore show him any respect or honour, that he might understand how the **LORD** detested his iniquity; but he treated **Jehoshaphat** with respect, though he also was faulty. (Notes, Judg. 10:13-18. Ez. 14:1-5. 20:39.)—Doubtless he was directed to act in his public character, differently from what he would have done as a private subject of **Jehoram's** kingdom. This indeed is implied in the words of the oath, by which he confirmed what he spake. "As the **LORD** of hosts liveth, before whom I stand." (Marg. Ref. d.)

V. 15. The "minstrel" was one skilful in playing on a harp, or some other musical instrument: and it is probable

18 And *th's is but* ^a *a light thing in the sight of the Lord*: ^b *he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand.*

19 And *ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall f^ell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.*

20 And it came to pass in the morning, *when the meat-offering was offered, that behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.*

21 ¶ And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour and upward, and stood in the border.

22 And they arose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side *as red as blood*:

23 And they said, *'This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore Moab to the spoil.'*

m 1 Kings 3:13. Jer. 32:17, 27. Luke 1:27. Eph. 3:20. n 20:10. 1 Kings 16:31. Is. 7:13, 49:6. Ez. 8:17. o 1 Kings 20:13, 28. Is. 7:1-9. p 13:17. Num. 21:17. Judg. 6:16. 1 Sam. 15:3, 23:2. q Deut. 20:19, 20. r Heb. grieves. 25. Ez. 20:39, 40. 1 Kings 13:35. Dan. 9:21. s See on Ps. 78:15, 16, 20. Is. 35:6, 7. t Heb. were cried together. u Heb. gird himself with a girdle. 1 Kings 20:11. Eph. 6:14. v 6:18-20. 7:6. w Heb. des royeft. x Ex. 15:9. Judg. 3:

that he sang the praises of God, accompanied with soft and sweet music.—This was intended to calm the prophet's mind, which had been discomposed with a holy indignation, by recollecting the abominations of Ahab's family; and so to prepare him for those illapses of the Holy Spirit, which he assuredly expected, and accordingly received. (Notes, 1 Sam. 10:5-6. 16:15-23.)

V. 16, 17. With the prophetic promise of a sufficient supply of water, for them, their cattle, and beasts of burden, a commandment was given which required considerable labour, and was a trial of the faith and obedience of the persons concerned. It is useless to inquire whence this water came: He, that caused the rock to pour forth rivers, could never want resources. (Note, Ex. 17:5, 6.) The supply, however, was evidently miraculous: and those who have insinuated the contrary, as if Elisha had merely known that there was water in the place, if they would only dig for it; must suppose that the prophet, whom they attempt to disparage, had more sagacity in matters of this kind, than these three kings, with all their officers, and counsellors, and soldiers.

V. 18, 19. (Marg. Ref.) Providence put in Jehoram's power to execute that severe vengeance upon the revolted Moabites, which he meditated. But it is not certain, whether the words of Elisha implied a permission to do so, or were merely prophetic of the event. (Deut. 20:19, 20.)—It is probable, that much of the land could not be cultivated, till the stones were gathered off: and these, lying in heaps upon the corners of the fields, would speedily be dispersed by a numerous army, and occasion great hindrance and difficulty in the future cultivation of the country.

V. 20. The time of the morning sacrifice at Jerusalem was chosen by the Lord for this miracle, to intimate to the whole company, that the deliverance was vouchsafed them through the sacrifices and the worship there performed. (Marg. Ref. r.)—It may here very properly be noted, that neither Elijah nor Elisha seems ever to have resorted to the worship at the temple, or to have required the people, under the government of the kings of Israel, to do so; though that worship was appointed by God, and it is evident that his spiritual worshippers had respect to it. The peculiar circumstances of Israel were such, that without uninterrupted miracles, or subverting the foundation of the civil establishment, the people could not exactly observe the ritual law. The prophets were therefore directed, by God himself, to accommodate their conduct to these circumstances, and to spend their lives in recovering or preserving the people from idolatry, and in teaching them the grand essentials of acceptable religion. In every age hitherto, considerate and faithful ministers have found it impracticable, for them to rectify every external deviation from what to them appeared most scriptural: but having adverted to the distinction between what is desirable, and what is attainable; and between the essentials of true religion in every age, and matters more circumstantial; they have accommodated themselves to that state of things which they could not alter; and endeavoured to bring men to repentance, faith in Christ, and holiness of life, and to as scriptural an external worship as they could. And, though some of their brethren have censured them, the Lord God of Elijah and Elisha has evidently pleaded their cause, by making them the instruments of numerous conversions, and great revivals of religion: whilst others, scrupulously exact in external forms and earnest to magnify them, have worn out their lives in vainly attempting to new model the church and the world, and have missed their opportunity of more essential usefulness. (Notes, 4:23. 1 Sam. 7:9, 17. 1 Kings 18:43, 37.) In due time the Lord will regulate every thing externally, as well as internally in the best manner: in

24 And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and *smote* the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in *their* country.

25 And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it, and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees: *"only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it."*

26 ¶ And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not.

27 Then he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to *their own* land.

30. 2 Chr. 20:25. Is. 10:14. x Josh. 8:20-22. Judg. 20:40-46. 1 Thes. 5:3, 4. y Or, smote it in even smiling. y 19. Judg. 5:4. z Sam. 8:2. Is. 37:26, 27. z Gen. 28:15, 18. 2 Chr. 32:4. a Deut. 20:19, 20. u Heb. until he left the stones thereof in Kir-haraseth. b Is. 16:7, 11. Jer. 48:31, 38. Kir-haresa. c 9. Am. 2:1. d Gen. 22:2, 13. e Gen. 12:31. Judg. 11, 31, 39. Ps. 106:37, 38. Ez. 16:20 Mic. 6:7. e 1 Sam. 14:33-46. 1 Kings 20:13, 25, 43.

the mean while we must make the best of things: we must aim to be satisfied respecting our own conduct as in the sight of God; to be moderate and candid in our own judgment concerning those who differ from us, and patient under their censures of us; and, learning what that means, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," to be careful not to lose sight of the great end of all religion, for the sake of some of the disputable means of attaining it. For at last nothing "availeth in Christ Jesus, but faith which worketh by love," and "a new creature" manifested in "newness of life." (Notes, Gal. 5:1-6. 6:11-16.)

The way of Edom.] Mount Seir was inhabited by Edom: and some think that plentiful rains on the mountains of Edom supplied the water. But this is uncertain; and mount Seir was not so distant, but that tokens of wind or rain would have been perceived by the army. (17)

V. 22, 23. The sun shining upon the water in ditches, probably in a red soil, had the appearance of blood; and deceived the Moabites, who knew that it was just before a dry valley, and that no rain had fallen: and as combined armies have often quarrelled, and destroyed each other, they hastily concluded this to be the case, and acted as if it had been fully proved to them. "The Moabites easily believing what they wished, imagined they had nothing to do, but to go and gather the spoil, and not to fight at all." Bp. Patrick. God permitted them to be thus infuriated for their destruction. (Note, Judg. 7:16-22. 2 Chr. 20:22-25.)

V. 24, 25. Marg. Ref. Notes, 18, 19, 27.

V. 26. The camp of the viceroy of Edom seems not to have been so well fortified as the camps of the other kings: and therefore the king of Moab, in his extreme danger, thought to force his way through in this direction; but he was not able.

V. 27. It has been supposed that the king of Moab offered in sacrifice the eldest son of the king of Edom, whom he had taken prisoner: but the narrative does not admit of this interpretation. It is evident, that he sacrificed his own eldest son, and the heir apparent of his crown, to procure the assistance of his idols, or to avert their indignation. It has been thought, that a tradition of Abraham's offering his son Isaac, nay, that even a distorted tradition concerning the sacrifice of the Redeemer, gave occasion to those horrid human sacrifices, which have been, and still are, very common in the Gentile world. But this at most could only be the occasion; the cause was twofold: the depravity and blindness of the human heart, and the subtlety and malignity of Satan; in whose worship, as directed by him, it must be a first principle, that the more costly, painful, unnatural, and cruel the oblation is, the more acceptable the sacrifice; because it best gratifies his pride, envy, and malice. (Notes, Lev. 20:2-5. Mic. 6:6-8.)—This horrid sacrifice the king of Moab offered in the sight of the combined armies, that they might see his desperate determination to endure and inflict all extremities, rather than be reduced: his remaining forces were thus fired with indignation against Israel; and perhaps Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, expressed their disapprobation of those severities which occasioned the dreadful deed. In this manner the minds of the assailants being filled with horror, and their measures disconcerted, they, by common consent, raised the siege of Kir-haraseth, the principal city of Moab, before the walls of which these transactions took place. Thus it escaped the destruction which had overwhelmed the other cities: (25) and the allied armies returned home, without having fully completed their design.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. Partial reformations often originate from the

CHAPTER IV.

At Elisha's word the oil of a poor prophet's widow is increased, to enable her to pay her debt, 1-7. He is hospitably entertained by a woman of Shunem, who is rewarded by having a son in her old age, 8-17. The dead rises, and is raised to life in answer to Elisha's prayer, 18-37. Elisha heals the pottage made with poisonous herbs, 38-41; and feeds a hundred men with twenty small barley loaves, 42-44.

NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

2 And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thy handmaid hath not any thing in the house save a pot of oil.

3 Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee, and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

a 38. See on 2-3, 5. 1 Kings 20: 5. b Gen. 22: 12. 1 Kings 18: 3. Neh. 7: 2. Ps. 103: 11, 12. 112: 12. 115: 13. 147: 11. Ec. 8: 12. 12: 13. Mat. 3: 16. 4: 2. Acts 13: 26. Rev. 15: 1, 19: 5. c Lev. 25: 39, 40, 48. Neh. 5: 2-5. 10: 31. Jer. 34: 14. Matt. 18: 25, 30. Jan. 2: 13. d 29: 6, 25, 27. Matt. 13: 34. John 6: 5-7. Acts 3: 6. 2 Cor. 6: 10. e 1 Kings 17: 12. Jam. 2: 5. f 3: 16. John 2: 7. * Heb. scan not. 13: 18. 19. Ps. 81: 10. John 16: 24. g 32: 33. 1 Kings 17: 19, 21. Is. 25: 20. Matt. 6: 6. Mark 5: 40. Acts 9: 40. h John 2: 7-9. 6: 11. 15: 11. 1 Kings 17: 15, 16. Luke 1: 45. Heb. 11: 7. j 4: 43, 44. Matt. 9: 22, 13: 53. 14: 20. 15: 37. Luke 6: 19. 2 Cor. 6: 12.

hope of advantage in temporal things, by the favour of godly men; and even the self-will sometimes renounce those sins, which occasion them loss and trouble; and then detect their own hypocrisy by adhering to those which promise present advantage. True piety, however, disposes men to judge favourably; and this candour is apt to carry them too far; while they indulge the hope of drawing half-converts further into the ways of God, by complying with their inclinations, and cultivating their acquaintance. We should indeed endeavour, by kindness, both to win upon the affections of our neighbours, and to evince the tendency of our religion; yet our conduct in all things should be regulated by the word of God; and it is there declared that "evil communications corrupt good manners;" and we are commanded "to come out, and be separate" from the ungodly.—Worldly men are quicksighted to their temporal interests, but they seek nothing further; and often seduce pious persons to forget their own principles, and to "lean to their own understandings," instead of "acknowledging the LORD in all their ways." But whilst the wicked in their difficulties are ready to "fret against the LORD," as the author of those calamities which their own sin and folly have brought upon them; the believer will be humbled before him for neglect of duties, and disposed to inquire his will and seek his help. And when corrections have brought men to this temper, relief will be afforded them; and their ungodly connexions will often succeed the better on their account.—Those, who would be eminent in the church of the living God, must readily stoop to the meanest service and the hardest labour: for such as have thus distinguished themselves, have generally attained to singular honour and usefulness. (Notes, Matt. 20: 24-28.)

V. 13-27. Many show respect to the ministers of God under heavy trials, who despise them at other times. In that case, they might be justly left to seek help from the worldly idols, the vicious companions, the worthless forms, or infidel principles, which they have preferred to the favour and truth of God: and they should be shown, that with him "there is no respect of persons." The minister may also properly let them know, that he is no stranger to their character, and will pay no court to them, whatever he would do or suffer for their good: and he, who in private life is the allowed inferior, and willing to be the servant of all, when speaking in the name of the Lord, is commissioned to "rebuke with all authority." In all ordinary cases, however, it should be with evident affection and respect; and it is proper so to change the voice, and regulate the conduct, as decisively to mark the difference between the offending believer and the mere hypocrite.—Composure of mind favours the reception of heavenly communications: when the wickedness and misery of man have ruffled us, meditation on the glorious perfections and wonderful works of God is suited to restore the calm: and it is well, when the sweet, but much perverted arts of poetry and music, are used with such caution and propriety, as to favour communion with him.—The Lord will take occasion, from the distresses of his offending servants, to manifest the glory of his power, truth, and love: and, whilst all good gifts are from him alone, we must show our believing expectation, and prepare for their reception, by observing the directions of his word.—It is a light thing for him to preserve his people from becoming a prey to their enemies: he will make them more than conquerors over them all.—Our rule is to do good and not evil to our adversaries: but we shall hereafter behold and rejoice in the destruction of all the enemies of God. And they who are expressly commissioned by him, (as the Israelites of old, and magistrates at present,) to execute his vengeance upon the

5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.

6 And it came to pass when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. *And the oil stayed.

7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

9 And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

10 Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it

wicked, are authorized in those severities, which in others would be extremely criminal.—The Lord will put honour upon his own institutions: and sinners left to themselves are speedily infatuated; for if men could not believe what they wish to be true, without proof, and in defiance of demonstration, "the fool" would not "say in his heart, there is no God."—When sinners are promising themselves peace and safety, sudden and inevitable destruction comes upon them; desperation succeeds their mad presumption; and in Satan's service, and at his suggestion, such horrid deeds have been perpetrated, as cause even the natural feelings of humanity to recoil. We should, however, be careful not to urge the worst of men to extremities, lest we should occasion blasphemies, murder, or suicide: we ought rather to recede from our right, and leave them to the judgment of God.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. The prophets were ministers by selection, and not by entail, as the priests were: yet they seem in general to have married and brought up families; though Elijah and Elisha are supposed to have continued in a single state.—Except the prophets had private fortunes, which probably was not often the case, their incomes must have been very precarious; and would arise either from the donations of pious persons, or from their own manual labour. The people perhaps sometimes gave them the first-fruits, and some other of the oblations, which would have belonged to the priests and Levites, if they had not departed from among them. (Note, 2 Chr. 11: 13-17.) Many of them, however, seem to have been very scantily provided for: and this servant of God, who was of approved piety, not only left his family destitute, but involved in debt. Yet the creditor paid no more regard to the distress of the widow, than to the character of the deceased; nay, perhaps he was the more severe in his demands, because of the attachment of the debtor to the worship of JEROBAH, and his zeal against idolatry. As therefore the widow had no effects, with which to discharge the debt, he proceeded to sell her sons for slaves in order to pay himself. (Marg. Ref. c. Notes, Ex. 21: 2. Neh. 5: 13. Matt. 18: 25-27.)—Elisha had no wealth from which to assist the widow: yet it was proper, for the honour of religion, that the creditor should be satisfied; and the Lord directed him to a method of effectually answering this demand, and of supplying her future necessities.

V. 2. The woman had parted with every thing of value, to satisfy other demands, or to supply her urgent necessities. Probably this oil was a present from some friend of her deceased husband, out of the produce of his olive-yard, but it was utterly insufficient to satisfy the creditor.

V. 3. Not a few.] As many, and as large, as she could procure. (Marg.)

V. 4. Shut, &c.] This direction was given, in order that the woman might avoid interruption and ostentation; and that in retirement, she with her sons might the more leisurely consider and adore the goodness of the Lord. (Note, Matt. 6: 6.)

V. 6. The woman was ordered "to borrow empty vessels not a few;" and, as her neighbours were willing to lend her, we may conclude that she borrowed as many as she thought could be wanted: yet the oil stayed not, till all the vessels were filled. Had her expectations been larger, the supply would have been still more abundant. (Note, 13: 15-19.)

V. 7. The woman would not make use of the miraculous supply, till she had received the prophet's direction: and by his orders she first discharged her whole debt, and then used the remainder for the subsistence of herself and her children. (Marg. Ref. Note, Rom. 13: 8-10.)

V. 8-10. Elisha seems to have generally resided at ow

shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

11 And it fell on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

12 And he said to "Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

13 And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, ^athou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, ^aI dwell among mine own people.

14 And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily ^ashe hath no child, and her husband is old.

15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

16 And he said, ^aAbout this season, according to the time of life, ^athou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, ^amy lord, ^athou man of God, ^ado not lie unto thy handmaid.

^{a.c.} 17 And ^athe woman conceived, and bare a son. ^{a.c.} 18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.

19 And he said unto his father, ^aMy head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother.

[Practical Observations.]

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u 2-21 v 3-5-27, 8-4-5, v 3:11. I Kings 18:43, 19:3, Acts 13:5, x Matt. 10:40-41. 1 Sam. 2:23-25, Rom. 16:2, 1 Thim. 5:12, 13, 2 Tim. 1:16-18, 3-15-18, 8-3-6, Gen. 14:24, 2 Sam. 19:32-38, z 9:5, 2 Sam. 19:13, 1 Kings 2:32, 4:1, 1 Kings 13:13, 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1.

near mount Carmel: but he went his circuits through the land, to visit the seminaries of the prophets, and to instruct the people, which probably was his stated employment, when not sent on some special service. (Notes, 21. 1 Kings 19:20, 21.) At Shunem there lived a woman of wealth and piety, who invited him to come to her house, and with some difficulty prevailed on him. But when he became acquainted with her character, he never failed to call upon her when he journeyed that way. Her husband seems to have been a pious person, but not so zealous and active as she was; and as he confided his domestic affairs to her care, she is chiefly noticed. By his approbation she prepared for the prophet a retired lodging; perhaps perceiving that the hurry of a large family did not suit his contemplative mind.—The plain, simple manner in which the prophet's chamber was furnished, (though he was the patriarch, if I may so speak, of the whole church of Israel,) is worthy of our notice. There was nothing provided for ornament or indulgence, but merely for necessity, for study, and for devotion.—Shunem. (8) In the lot of Issachar. (Marg. Ref. m. Note, Josh. 19:17–23.)

V. 13. Elisha had no doubt acquired considerable influence with Jehoram, or his captains, by the singular deliverance and victory obtained through him: (Notes, 3:4–27.) and, though he would ask nothing for himself, he was willing to show his gratitude in behalf of his kind hostess, by interposing in her behalf, if she had any petition to present.—Perhaps Jehoram's soldiers or tax-gatherers might be oppressive or troublesome in the neighbourhood; and he thought she might desire to seek redress of this, or some other grievance. (Notes, 8:3–6.) Or perhaps he made the proposal, with an intention of manifesting her indifference to temporal interests. Accordingly she answered, that, living safe and contented among her friends and relatives, and those who behaved kindly to her, she had no request to make. Having said this, she seems to have withdrawn; but Elisha further conversed on the subject with Gehazi.

Thou hast been careful. חררה, חרר, tremere, turbare, commoveri cura. Robertson. Probably, the same word was used by our Lord to Martha, rendered ταραχῆς, art troubled, Luke 10:41.

V. 14–17. Gehazi, as having more leisure and opportunity to observe the affairs of the family than Elisha had, discovered what favour would be most acceptable; and he seems not to have doubted the prevalence of his master's prayers in this respect. In addressing his benefactors, Elisha used words, which some think implied, not only the time, but the very day, on which she should embrace a son. (Marg. Ref. Gen. 17:21, 18:14.)—Her answer reminded him of his character, and intimated that she could not suppose he would mock her with delusive expectations: especially as she had expressed no impatience under her trial, and had not so much as mentioned a desire of having children. (28. Notes, Gen. 30:1, 2. 1 Sam. 1:4–8.)

20 And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

21 And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.

22 And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again.

23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.

24 Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.

25 So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite:

26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath shewed it from me, and hath not told me.

u 2-21 v 3-5-27, 8-4-5, v 3:11. I Kings 18:43, 19:3, Acts 13:5, x Matt. 10:40-41. 1 Sam. 2:23-25, Rom. 16:2, 1 Thim. 5:12, 13, 2 Tim. 1:16-18, 3-15-18, 8-3-6, Gen. 14:24, 2 Sam. 19:32-38, z 9:5, 2 Sam. 19:13, 1 Kings 2:32, 4:1, 1 Kings 13:13, 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, 17:1, 18:1, 19:1, 20:1, 21:1, 22:1, 23:1, 24:1, 25:1, 26:1, 27:1, 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, 32:1, 33:1, 34:1, 35:1, 36:1, 37:1, 38:1, 39:1, 40:1, 41:1, 42:1, 43:1, 44:1, 45:1, 46:1, 47:1, 48:1, 49:1, 50:1, 51:1, 52:1, 53:1, 54:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1, 60:1, 61:1, 62:1, 63:1, 64:1, 65:1, 66:1, 67:1, 68:1, 69:1, 70:1, 71:1, 72:1, 73:1, 74:1, 75:1, 76:1, 77:1, 78:1, 79:1, 80:1, 81:1, 82:1, 83:1, 84:1, 85:1, 86:1, 87:1, 88:1, 89:1, 90:1, 91:1, 92:1, 93:1, 94:1, 95:1, 96:1, 97:1, 98:1, 99:1, 100:1.

V. 21. On the bed, &c.] This implied, that the woman had some expectation of her son's being restored to her; as he had at first been given her in so extraordinary a manner; (Notes, 1 Kings 17:17–24, Heb. 11:17, 19.) yet this hope was not sufficiently prevalent to exclude her anguish of spirit, under this unexpected and sudden affliction.

V. 22. The field, where the woman's husband superintended his reapers, was near to the house; as this request must have been made by some messenger.

V. 23. It appears, that on the sabbaths, new moons, and other solemnities, the people were accustomed to assemble in appointed places, to worship God, and to receive instruction from the prophets; and it was thought allowable to use the cattle on the sabbath-day, to go to the prophet, or to these places, if at a distance. (Notes, Ex. 20:8–11.)—It is not certain whether they assembled in synagogues, or private houses; but probably it was done in most parts of the land of Israel.—In Judah, pious people had the advantage of the temple-worship, and the instructions of the priests and Levites; they were generally countenanced and protected by their kings; and they thankfully availed themselves of these advantages. But in Israel, the ruling powers were against them: yet they served God according to their consciences, as their circumstances would admit. (Note, 3:20.)—The afflicted mother would not needlessly distress her husband, by informing him of the death of the child, still hoping, that the restoration of the child, by the miraculous interposition of Elisha, would prevent his grief; but merely said it would be well for her to go: and he had that confidence in her, that he required no further explanation.

V. 24–26. Mount Carmel was at some distance from Shunem; and the words, "Slack not thy riding," imply that the servant also rode or an ass. The word (ῥῆς), rendered Drive, properly means, Lead the way, or, Go before.—Elisha did not expect, to see her at this time: and, being afraid that some calamity had befallen her, sent Gehazi to make very particular inquiries; to which she answered, "It is well, or peace, (שָׁלוֹם)." Some suppose that she only meant to put off Gehazi with this answer, as in part true, in respect of herself and her husband, though not the whole of the case; but it is probable that it was also the language of her faith and submission; as she was persuaded, that the affliction was in mercy, and would terminate well, though her passions conflicted against her better judgment. (Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 10:3.)

V. 27. (Marg. Ref.) It is plain from this verse, that the prophets derived all their supernatural knowledge from immediate communication; and not from any power of discerning, habitually inherent in them.

V. 28. Doubtless the acute feelings of the Shunammite mingled some impatience in these expostulations: yet she meant them as arguments, to prevail with the prophet to come to her relief; being satisfied of the prevalence of his

28 Then she said, "Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

29 Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up thy loins, and 'take my staff in thy hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, 'salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and 'lay my staff upon the face of the child."

30 And the mother of the child said, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, 'I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her."

31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was* neither voice nor 'hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, 'The child is 'not awaked.

32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, 'the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

33 He went in therefore, and "shut the door upon them twain, and 'prayed unto the LORD.

34 And he went up, and 'lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in the house 'to, and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Gehazi, and said, "Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, 'Take up thy son."

37 Then she went in, and 'fell at his feet, and

bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

[Practical Observations.]

38 ¶ And Elisha 'came again to Gilgal. And *there was* "a dearth in the land; and 'the sons of the prophets *were* sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, 'Set on the great pot, and 'see the pottage for the sons of the prophets.

39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found "a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew *them* not.

40 So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, "'O thou man of God, *there is* 'death in the pot. And they could not eat *thereof*."

41 But he said, 'Then bring meal. "And he cast it into the pot; and he said, 'Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And 'there was no 'harm in the pot.

42 ¶ And there came a man from 'Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God 'bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves 'of barley, and full ears of corn in 'the husk thereof. And he said, 'Give unto the people that they may eat.

43 And 'his servitor said, "What! should I set this before a hundred men? He said again, 'Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, 'They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*."

44 So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left *thereof*, according to the word of the LORD.

a Gen. 30:1. b See on 16. c 9:1. 1 Kings 18:46. Eph. 6:14. 1 Pet. 1:13. d 2:14. Ex. 4:17. e Luke 10:4. f Ex. 29:20, 14:6. Josh. 6:4.5. Acts 3:16. 19:12. g See on 2:4. h Ex. 33:12-16. Ruth 1:16-18. 1 Sam. 14:37. 28:6. Ex. 14:3. Matt. 17:24. i Mark 9:19-21. Acts 19:13-17. j Heb. attention. 1 Kings 18:24. k Joh. 11:12. Dan. 12:2. John 11:11, 13, 44. Phil. 3:14. l 1 Kings 17:17. 2 Kings 4:3. John 11:20. m See on 4. Matt. 6:6. n 5:11. 6:17. 1 Kings 17:21. 18:23-27. John 11:41, 42. Acts 9:10. Jam. 5:13-18. o 1 Kings 17:21. Acts 20:10. j Heb. once hither and once thither. p 8:1, 5. 32:1. 1 Kings 17:22. Luke 7:14, 15. 35:5. John 11:43, 44. Acts 9:40. q 2:1. r 1 Kings 17:23. Luke 7:15. Heb. 11:35. s 2:2, 15. 1 Kings 17:24. (2:1. 1 Sam. 7:15, 17. Acts 10:33. 15:35. u 8:1. Lev. 25:26. Deut. 23:22-24. 38-40.

prayers. For, as she had not impatiently desired children, she could not think that her son had been given her without solicitation, merely to become the occasion of her far deeper distress. (Notes, 14-17, 21.)

V. 29-31. It is difficult to determine what the prophet meant by thus sending Gehazi. He had divided Jordan by using Elijah's mantle; and perhaps he thought his own staff, in the hands of Gehazi, would be as efficacious. (Note, 2:14.) Or perhaps he meant to make trial of the Shunammite's faith. Gehazi, however, was ordered to proceed as a man upon urgent business, who may not be delayed even by attention to ordinary civilities: (Luke 10:4.) and he would thus arrive at Shunem some time before Elisha could. He seems to have observed his directions punctually, but in vain; either through his own unbelief; (Notes, Matt. 17:19-21. Acts 19:13-20.) or because the woman had no expectations from him; or because Elisha was faulty in attempting to perform the miracle by a substitute; or, as some think, because the prophet altered his purpose, at the importunity of the woman, and so did not pray for Gehazi's success. (Notes, 5:20-27.)

V. 33-35. It is instructive to compare the manner, in which Elijah and Elisha wrought their miracles, especially in raising the dead, with that of Jesus Christ. Every part of their conduct expressed a consciousness of inability in themselves, and an entire dependence on another, and earnest application to him for his interposition: but Jesus wrought by his own power; "he spake, and it was done." "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" "Talitha, cmi;" "Lazarus, come forth;" (Notes, Mark 5:35-43. Luke 7:11-17. John 11:41-46. Acts 9:36-43.)—On this occasion, Elisha by his great attention, showed his earnest desire of restoring the child to his afflicted mother: and the actions which he employed were significant expressions of his expectation, that God, by communicating life to the body, would enable each part to perform its proper office. The recovery of the child was gradual; life was communicated, and then one symptom and another of it appeared. As his disorder had been in his head, it has been observed that his sneezing might remove the cause of it, and restore him to health also. (Notes, Ex. 37:1-10. Mark 8:22-26.)

V. 36, 37. (Notes, 1 Kings 17:21, 22. Heb. 11:35-38.) The joyful mother not only expressed her high respect for the prophet, but worshipped God also, giving him humble thanks for his great goodness to her: for the words may be rendered, "She fell at his feet, and worshipped."

V. 38, 39. (Marg. Ref. Wild gourds. (39) These are supposed to have been gathered from the plant called *colocynthis*, which is of a most nauseous bitter, and, if taken improperly, operates as a fatal poison. The sons of the prophets seem to have fared very hardly; and in a season

of urgent scarcity they were glad to gather what they could find, and thus one of them ignorantly brought the produce of this noxious plant.

V. 40, 41. It is probable that these men were alarmed, not only by the nauseous taste of the food, but by the effects produced on those who had begun to eat of it.—Yet we may take occasion to remark the goodness of God, in giving us the senses of smelling and tasting, to be, as it were, sentinels to keep watch, that nothing prejudicial may be received into the stomach.—The "meal cast into the pot," was only a token of the divine operation, in changing the taste and properties of the pottage, that his servants might not want a necessary refreshment. (Notes, 2:19-22. Ex. 15:25, 26. Mark 16:17, 18.)

V. 42-44. This would be a considerable present in a time of famine. (Note, 1:—) "Unto whom" (the prophets) 'it is probable, pious persons gave that portion, which was assigned by God for the priests, to whom they could not now carry their first-fruits, they being in the land of Judah. And I suppose the schools of the prophets might be partly maintained by this means.' Bp. Patrick. The loaves seem to have been small; perhaps each intended to be a meal or one man. The supply, however, was deemed greatly inadequate to the company: but the increase was little, compared with the miracles of this kind wrought by Jesus Christ. (Notes, Matt. 14:15-21. 15:32-38.)—The sons of the prophets seem at this time to have become very numerous: but perhaps some of the people, who came from a distance to receive instruction, shared the repast. And this might be one reason of the servant's objection to setting so little food before such a number of persons. (Notes, 1-7. 1 Kings 17:10-16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. It is incumbent on all Christians, and especially on ministers, to submit to Providence in respect of their temporal provision; and, while they trust in God for their daily bread, not to tempt him by negligence or extravagance. They ought not to contract debts for things not absolutely necessary, which they have not a reasonable prospect of discharging: for nothing tends more to bring reproach on the gospel, and excite prejudice against it; nothing more distracts men's minds whilst they live, or more distresses their families when they are dead, than a burden of debt, without effects with which to pay it. Many hardships therefore should be endured, and many pleasant things renounced, rather than that such injurious consequences should be occasioned. Yet, in the mystery of providence, this may sometimes unavoidably prove the case, even of those who are eminent for piety: nor can the strictest prudence avert the calamity; besides, many good men are deficient in worldly

CHAPTER V.

Naaman, captain of the host of Syria, is a leper. 1. By the report of a captive maid of Israel, concerning the prophet, he comes to the king of Israel at Samaria to be healed, 2-7. Elisha sends for him; he goes to him, and is ordered to wash seven times in Jordan: he is angry, but, persuaded by his servants, he complies and is cleansed, 8-14. He acknowledges the true God; offers presents to Elisha, who refuses them, and is sent away in peace, resolving to worship the LORD alone, 15-19. Gehazi, by a lie, obtains presents from Naaman, and is punished by leprosy, entailed also on his descendants, 20-27.

NOW ^aNaaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was ^ba great man ^cwith his master, and ^dhonourable, because ^eby him the LORD had given ^fdeliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, *but he was* ^ga leper.

^a Luke 4:27. ^b 4:8. ^c Ex. 11:3. ^d Euth. 9:4, 10:3. ^e Heb. *before*. ^f Or, *gracious*. ^g Heb. *lifted up*, or, *accepted in countenance*. ^c Prov. 21:31. ^h Is. 10:5. ⁱ Jer. 27:5. ^j Dan. 2:37, 38. ^k John 19:11. ^l Rom. 15:18. ^m Or, *victory*. ⁿ 27. ^o 7:3. ^p Lev. 13:2, 3, 44-46. ^q Num. 12:16-19. ^r 2 Sam. 3:28. ^s 2 Chr. 20:15-23. ^t 2 Cor. 12:7. ^u e 6:23. 13:20. ^v Judg. 9:34. ^w 1 Sam. 13:17, 18. ^x 1 Ps. 123:2.

sagacity, and their unsuspecting simplicity exposes them to the designs of the artful. But, when this is a man's misfortune rather than his fault, he will have a testimony to his integrity in the consciences of all impartial persons; the Lord's people will be inclined to relieve him or his, according to their ability: and God himself will, in some way, interpose to clear up his character, and to provide for his wants.—He who has all hearts in his hand is able, without a miracle, to procure as effectual a supply, as the increase of the widow's oil: and when the ability is given, the creditor, though unreasonable and severe, must first be satisfied, after which the remainder may be enjoyed with comfort.—We should then be careful to perform our present duty, and to commit all our concerns to the Lord: we should study to adorn the gospel in our life and conversation, and he will take care of us and ours: and if he bring us into distress, he will manifest his power and truth in our deliverance. He generally supplies what is requisite for honesty and charity to his people, by blessing them while they are occupying with a little. And the best directed benevolence of man consists, in teaching and helping the poor to make the most of what they acquire by honest industry; but in every way we should show a readiness to relieve those in distress; and to give them our counsel and prayers, when we have nothing else.—If our hearts were more prepared to receive spiritual blessings, and if we, in retirement and fervent prayer, expected larger supplies, we should be more richly replenished.—At length all the vessels of mercy shall be filled with the Lord's goodness: and the Redeemer's all-sufficiency will only be stayed from supplying the wants and saving the souls of sinners, when there are no more inclined to come to him for salvation.

V. 8-17. The ministers of religion should not seek great things for themselves, or court the intimacy of the great, expect to do good to *them*, or *by them*: but they ought to be unwearied in their useful labours, like him "who went about doing good," that all may "perceive that they are holy men of God," simply dependent on him, walking with him, devoted to his service, and seeking his glory. Though backward to form connexions with their superiors, lest they should be taken off from their important work, and entangled in the world; they may yet find a few in that sphere, whose acquaintance may be deemed a privilege. But, whilst they do not refuse their countenance and friendship, they feel, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive;" and they will endeavour to make such returns of gratitude as are in their power, and especially they will seek the blessing of God upon their benefactors: nay, they will go further with man to ask favours in behalf of others, than for themselves. But it is a great happiness to know when it is well with us, and to be content among our friends and relatives, without coveting the splendour or pleasures of courts and public life: and when we have so learned submission to the will of God, as to express no desire for those objects, which others can perceive are wanting to our comfort. The Lord however sees the secret wish, which is suppressed in obedience to his will; and will hear the prayers of his servants in behalf of their benefactors, by communicating unsolicited and unexpected mercies: nor must the promises and engagements of the men of God be deemed fallacious, like those of the men of the world.

V. 18-37. Alas! all earthly comforts are sources of trouble and sorrow: anxious fears counterbalance our pleasure from our beloved children, when most hopeful: and their sudden sickness and death may turn all our joy into poignant anguish. On such occasions it is right to keep silence, or to say that "all is well:" nor must we think it hard to bring up children for the grave, or for the kingdom of heaven.—We indeed cannot expect a present resurrection of our deceased friends: but in many of our troubles we may find relief; in all of them peace and comfort, from the counsel and prayers of the Lord's faithful servants, who can teach us how to turn all our losses into the richest gain. Their company therefore, with the ordinances of God, and the throne of grace, should be doubly welcome to the afflicted and bereaved.—We should treat those with great tenderness whose souls are vexed in them; making allowance for im-

2 And the Syrians had gone out ^aby companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and ^bshe waited on Naaman's wife.

3 And she said unto her mistress, ^c"Would God my lord ^dwere with the prophet that is in Samaria! for ^ehe would ^frecover him of his leprosy."

4 And ^gone went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.

5 And the king of Syria said, ^h"Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took ⁱwith him ten talents of silver,

^a Heb. *ten be ore*. ^b Num. 11:29. ^c Acts 26:29. ^d 1 Cor. 4:8. ^e Heb. *before*. ^f h 8. ^g Matt. 9:2, 3, 11:5. ^h Luke 17:12-14. ⁱ Heb. *gather in*. ^j 17:9-11. ^k Mark 5:19. ^l 16:9, 10. ^m John 1:32-46. ⁿ 4:38, 29. ^o 1 Cor. 1:26, 27. ^p Gen. 11:3, 4, 7. ^q Ec. 2:1. ^r Is. 5:5. ^s Jam. 4:18, 5:1. ^t 8:9. ^u Num. 22:7, 17, 18. ^v 24:11-13. ^w 1 Sam. 9:9. ^x 1 Kings 13:7, 45:3. ^y Acts 8:18-20. ^z Heb. in his hand.

proprieties in their conduct, and impatience in their expressions; and suffer them to open before us their griefs, as well as be ready to attempt their consolation: and in general we should not avoid trouble, nor affect state, by doing those things by others which we are able to do ourselves.—When we have used proper means with diligence and earnestness, we may expect the efficacious blessing of God, both in things temporal and spiritual; but not otherwise.—The gospel of salvation will no more effect the sinner's conversion, without the presence and blessing of God, than the condemning law will: and if the minister be a hypocrite, and destitute of faith, little good can be expected from the most exact external observances: the sinners are "not awakened" will generally be the doleful report. Not so, when the use of appointed means is accompanied by the spirit of fervent believing prayer, and persevering expectation from the Lord; then the change, which takes place in the conduct of many, shall evince that "they are quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."—As the choicest comforts occasion the severest trials, so our heaviest afflictions make way for the sweetest consolations: and, notwithstanding appearances, the Lord will not needlessly grieve his true people, by giving them blessings in order to take them away from them; but it is a comfort under temporal losses to reflect, that we did not inordinately desire the object of which we are bereft.—It is happy and comely when harmony prevails in domestic life; when the husband's authority is tempered with affection and unsuspecting confidence; when the wife answers that confidence with deference and submission, as well as fidelity; and when each party consults the other's inclinations, and both unite in attendance on the ordinances of God, and supporting his cause.

V. 38-44. While the servants of the Lord are contented with mean accommodations, and put their trust in him, he can make their coarsest fare pleasant to them. Let them but observe his directions, and he will not only supply their wants, but extract the death, the evil, from such things as most alarm them. When he pleases, the scantiest provisions shall suffice; and whilst he communicates to us, we should in faith impart a portion to others; and thus all will be clean and salutary to us. But to those, who feed themselves without fear, their table becomes a snare, and perdition entwines around their sensual enjoyments. Aware of this danger, let us learn to use temporal good things with caution and moderation, in dependence on him, by whose blessing alone our food is made wholesome and nutritional.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. The Syrians were idolaters, and often oppressors of Israel; yet the deliverance of which Naaman had been the instrument, is here ascribed to the power and goodness of God. "By him JEHOVAH had given deliverance (or *salvation*, *יְשׁוּעָה*) to Syria." Such is the rational language of the sacred writers: whilst the arguments and phraseology of those in general, who compose what is justly called *profane* history, too evidently show that God is not in all their thoughts. (Notes, Josh. 10:9, 10. Ps. 144:10.)—The leprosy was a loathsome and distressing distemper: and though Naaman was not under the restrictions prescribed for Israel; yet doubtless, he found it a great deduction from the satisfaction which he might otherwise have found in his high preferences and honours. (Notes, Lev. 13:45, 46. Num. 12:11-15.)

V. 1-4. This young damsel, though taken captive, and torn from her relatives and country, and made a slave to Naaman, having, it is likely, been treated with kindness, and employed to wait on his wife, entertained a cordial affection for her master, and earnestly desired the removal of his affliction. Young as she was, she had heard of the piety and miracles of Elisha; and, though he had not cleansed any lepers, she was persuaded he would be inclined to show kindness even to a heathen, and be enabled to effect his cure. Nor did Naaman despise the information as coming from such a quarter. He had doubtless tried to the utmost, what the physicians could do for him, but in vain; and his earnest desire of a cure prevented him from disdaining an application to the prophet of Israel. (Note, Luke 17:11-19.) Either the prophet was at Samaria, when the damsel was taken captive; or the adjacent district is meant.

and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, *that* he rent his clothes, and said, *Am I God*, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 ¶ And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9 So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10 And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

1 Gen. 45:22. Judg. 14:12. Jam. 5:2,3. m 11:14. 18:37. 19:1. Num. 14:6. Jer. 38:24. Matt. 23:5. Acts 14:14. n Gen. 30:23. 32:30. 33:1. 1 Sam. 2:5. Dan. 2:11. Hs. 6:1. o 1 Kings 20:7. Luke 11:54. p See on 7. 2 Sam. 3:31. q 15:16. 1 Kings 17:24. 18:36. r Ex. 11:8. Rom. 11:13. Hos. 12:13. s 3:12. 6:32. Is. 60:14. Eccl. 16:29. 30:37-39. t Matt. 15:23-26. u 2:21. 3:16. 4:41. John 9:7. 1 Cor. 6:11. x Lev. 14:7,16. 51. 16:14,19. Num. 19:4,19. Josh. 6:13-16. y 14. Ex. 4:6,7. z Prov. 13:10. Matt. 8:18. 15:27. Luke 14:11. a Prov. 1:32. Matt. 19:22. John 6:65-69. 13:20. Heb. 12:25. b Prov. 3:7. Is. 55:8,9. 1 Cor. 1:21-25. 2:14-16. 8:18-20. * Heb. *Isaid*, &c. Or, *I said with myself*. He will surely come out, &c. † Heb. *move up and down*. ‡ Or, *Amana*. e 17:2,8,14. Josh.

V. 5, 6. Ben-hadad king of Syria, having heard, probably from Naaman himself, that there was a prophet in Israel, who, it was supposed, could heal the leprosy, seems to have concluded that he must be at the command of the king of Israel, and perform his miracles for his pleasure and advantage: and if the Israelitish maid knew so much of the prophet, the king must have him continually in his presence or in his thoughts. He therefore concluded, that he had only to ask it as a favour of Jehoram, that Naaman might be cured, and it would be granted of course. Naaman also would prefer going in state to the king of Israel, to becoming a supplicant to a poor prophet: yet it seems he intended liberally to reward Elisha for the service.

V. 7. Jehoram interpreted the ignorant language, and absurd request of the king of Syria, into blasphemy against God, as well as malice against himself, and a pretence for waging war against him. Though an idolater, and a very wicked man, he would be thought concerned about the honour of God: and as full of abhorrence of Ben-hadad's supposed crime, "he rent his clothes."—He had either for the moment forgotten the miracles wrought by Elisha; (*Note*, 3:16,17.) or he did not desire to witness any more of them; or he thought this beyond his power: for it seems it was deemed as impracticable, by human skill, to cleanse a rooted leprosy, as to raise the dead. (*Note*, Lev. 13:1,2.) By this concession of the king, the miracle wrought by Elisha became the more illustrious. (*Marg. Ref. n.*)

V. 8. It is probable, that Elisha was at or near Samaria, when Naaman arrived; and the report of what had occurred was directly brought to him. This induced him not to go to Jehoram, but to send, it may be supposed by one of the sons of the prophets, this message to him. Naaman had come into the land of Israel, expecting relief from a prophet of the God of Israel: and Elisha would by no means have him go back disappointed, lest he should conclude that JEHOVAH was like the gods of the nations, and as unable to do good or evil as they were. On the contrary, he would have it known that God had "a prophet in Israel," by whom he performed such cures, as none of the heathen prophets, priests, or physicians could effect; and which were far beyond all the power of the mightiest monarchs.

V. 9-12. The prophet knew how to stoop to the meanest service or person, when it was proper; but Naaman seemed to have come to him with great ideas of his own importance, as if he conferred a favour or honour upon him. Elisha was therefore directed to assume that superiority, which really belonged to him: and to show Naaman, that he was far from being elated by the presence of so great a man; and that he regarded not his rank, desired not his friendship, and would not accept his presents; though, for the honour of the God of Israel, his leprosy should be cleansed, if he would observe the simple direction which he sent him by a messenger. But Naaman thought that the prophet treated him with rudeness and neglect. He had previously formed an idea in his mind of the manner in which the cure would be performed, and this message did not at all answer his expectations. He wanted to be cured as a man of consequence, who was entitled to regard; and not as a poor pensioner, who

11 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 Are not Abana and Parphar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

15 ¶ And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, As the Lord liveth, before

3:15-17. Ez. 47:1-8. Zech. 13:1. 14:8. Mark 1:9. d 3. 1 Sam. 25:14-17. 1 Kings 20:24,31. Job 22:8,9. Jer. 38:7-10. e 2:12. 6:21. 13:14. Gen. 41:43. marg. Mal. 1:6. Matt. 23:9. 1 Cor. 4:15. f See on 10. Ps. 51:2,7. Is. 1:16. John 13:8. Acta 22:16. Eph. 5:26,27. Tit. 3:5. Heb. 10:22. 1 Pet. 3:21. Rev. 7:14. g Job 31:13. Prov. 9:9. 25:11,12. h 2 Chr. 20:22. 1 Sam. 2:5. Heb. 11:7,8. 1 Jo. 3:23. k Luke 4:27. 5:13. Tit. 2:14. 1 Luke 17:15-18. m 8. Josh. 2:9-11. 9:24. 1 Sam. 17:46,47. 1 Kings 18:36. Is. 43:10,11. 44:8,9. 45:6. Jer. 10:10,11. 16:19-21. Dan. 2:47. 3:29. 4:34,35. 6:26,27. Rom. 10:10. Gen. 33:11. 1 Sam. 25:27. 2 Cor. 9:5. marg. o See on 3:14. 1 Kings 17:1. 18:15.

is glad of his alms by whomsoever sent. Abana and Parphar were larger rivers than Jordan, and Naaman thought them more likely to effect a cure: but the rivers of Damascus had not been distinguished by miracles, as Jordan had been; (*Notes*, 2:7,8,14. *Josh.* 3:4.) and Naaman, in his haughtiness and wrath, forgot that JEHOVAH was to cleanse his leprosy by means of his own appointment, and not in a way of man's devising. (*Notes*, Num. 21:6-9. *John* 3:14,15. 2 Cor. 4:7.)

V. 13, 14. This Syrian was favoured with very prudent, respectful, and affectionate servants; and probably he was in general a kind and considerate master, who could bear to be reasoned with by his inferiors. (*Note*, 1 Sam. 25:14-17.) They had, it may be supposed, heard a great deal from the Israelitish maid of Elisha's miracles; and were very desirous that Naaman should make the trial. Being more calm and impartial than he, they perceived that the prophet's directions were simple, easy, and safe. Had the prophet prescribed nauseous medicines, a tedious regimen, or some painful operations, or even some burdensome religious observances; or had he demanded a large sum of money as the price of the cure; they knew that Naaman would have complied without hesitation: how much more then ought he, in reason, to go to Jordan, and wash seven times in its waters? This remonstrance was "a word spoken in due season," and had its full effect: (*Note*, Prov. 25:11,12.) and his cure immediately followed on his obedience; so that the decayed and loathsome parts of his skin and flesh became perfectly sound, and assumed the healthful appearance of the flesh of a child.—'This was the only cure of a leprosy that we read of, till Christ the great Prophet came into the world.' *Bp. Patrick*. Though the remark be not quite correct, it is entitled to consideration. Miriam was cleansed, in answer to the prayer of Moses; but no other instance is recorded. (*Notes*, Num. 12:9-15.)

V. 15, 16. Naaman, having received the cure, returned to Elisha, to express his gratitude, and to give glory to God: and now the prophet went out to confer with him. (*Note*, Luke 17:11-19.) His confession was very expressive and satisfactory. He not only allowed that JEHOVAH was the true God; but also, that there was "no God in all the earth, but in Israel;" the gods of all other nations being helpless, worthless idols.—What an awful representation does this give us of the state of the Gentiles, "without hope, and without God in the world!" (*Note*, Eph. 2:11-13.)—Naaman there fore urged the prophet to take a present, or blessing, of him, as a token of his gratitude; but he most decidedly refused. He did not scruple to receive presents from pious Israelites, and he seems to have accepted Ben-hadad's gift; (*Note*, 8:7-9.) but the case of Naaman was singular. It was of great importance what impressions he, at that crisis, should receive concerning the God of Israel and his worshippers. Elisha had sent for him to confer a benefit on him; and had he taken the present, Naaman might have ascribed this to a selfish motive, and imbibed prejudices; but perfect disinterestedness would have a contrary tendency. (*Note*, 1 Cor. 9:17-18. 2 Cor. 11:7-12.) 'He would have strangers to their religion know, how good the God of Israel was, who made no ser-

whom I stand. I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD.

18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.

19 And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

[Practical Observations.]

20 ¶ But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well?

22 And he said, All is well. My master hath

p 20, 26. Gen. 14:22, 23. 1 Kings 13:8. Dan. 5:17. Matt. 10:8. Acts 8:18—20. 1 Cor. 6:12. 10:33, 34. 2 Cor. 11:9, 10. 12:14. q 12. Rom. 14:1. r Acts 26:18. 1 Thess. 1:1. 1 Pet. 4:3. s 7:2, 17. t 17:35. Ex. 20:5. 1 Kings 19:18. u 2 Chr. 30:18. 1 Kings 21:16. v Matt. 9:16, 17. John 15:12. 1 Cor. 3:2. Heb. 5:13, 14. y Ex. 4:18. 1 Sam. 1:17. 25:35. Mark 5:34. Luke 7:50. 8:48. * Heb. a little piece of ground. Gen. 35:16. marg. s 4:12, 31, 38. Matt. 10:4. John 6:70. 12:6. 13:2. Acts 18:19. 19. v Prov. 25:16. Luke 16:8. John 12:5, 6. Acts 5:2. b 6:31. Ex. 20:7. 1 Sam. 14:38. c Ex. 20:17. Ps. 10:3. Jer. 22:17. Hab. 2:9. Luke 12:15. 1 Tim. 6:9—11. 2 Tim. 4:10. Tit. 1:1. 1 Pet. 5:2. 2 Pet. 2:14, 15. d Luke 7:6. 7. Acts 8:31. 10:25, 26. t Heb. Is there peace? 4:25. 9:17—22. e 1 Kings 13:

vants so good that they did the greatest good to mankind for nothing. Which generous piety was apt to invite others to the worship and service of this great and good God. For it gives great authority to a teacher of virtue, not to be covetous. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—19. Naaman in his first impressions conceived, that there must be a peculiar sanctity in the earth of Israel, having received such benefit from washing in one of its rivers: he therefore asked permission to carry home with him enough of it to build an altar, on which to offer sacrifices to JEHOVAH, whom alone he was determined in future to worship with burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as Israel did. Yet, as holding a high station in Ben-hadad's court, it would be expected that he should accompany him to the temple of Rimmon: and whilst the king, leaning on his arm, should bow before his idol, Naaman could not avoid bowing also. But as he meant to do this, not as an act of worship to Rimmon, but of service to his prince; he hoped the Lord would pardon him in it; and some learned men have thought that his conduct in this respect was justifiable; because he was not an Israelite, and so not under the law of Moses. It is evident, however, that the prohibition of every kind and degree of idolatry, belongs to the moral law, which is universally obligatory. Our strict rule of duty certainly forbids such a conformity; the gospel grants no dispensations; and, in similar circumstances, a Christian would be absolutely required to renounce every advantage and preferment, which could not be retained without such communion with idolaters, and countenance of idolatry: nay, to endure the utmost effects of the persecutor's rage, rather than make such compliances, however palliated by salves and mental reserves. (Notes, Dan. 3:8—18.) The prophet however seems to have perceived, that Naaman was convinced, that even bowing with the king in the house of Rimmon was not right, and he left those convictions gradually to produce their effects; if they were the result of regenerating grace, they would in time bring him to make a more public protest against idolatry, when his faith, judgment, and experience were matured. Moreover, as the whole work was from God in so extraordinary a manner, it is probable, that the prophet declined interposing his private judgment, when he had no immediate directions from heaven respecting it.—“In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that when my lord went into the house of Rimmon, to bow down himself there, and leaned on my hand, I bowed down myself there; that I bowed down myself—the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing.” (Whitby, Note on Luke 12:8.) This would imply, that Naaman had previously favourable thoughts of true religion, and had not been an idolater in other respects; though he had conformed in this particular, which now appeared to him the most heinous of his sins. Yet there is no intimation, that he had not been as gross an idolater as the other Syrians. This translation, which many learned men have endeavoured to establish, disregards the *vau conversive*, which generally changes the preterite into the future. All the versions or ancient translations understand the words of the future, and not of the past.—Elisha seems also to have been silent concerning the earth, which Naaman

sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him.

24 And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and stood before his master: and Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

26 And he said unto him, Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and olive-yards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?

27 The deposity therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

18. Is. 59:3. Jer. 9:3, 5. John 8:44. Acts 5:3, 4. Rev. 21:8. f See on 2:3. 1 Kings 20:35. g 2 Cor. 12:16—18. h See on 5. Ex. 38:24—28. 1 Kings 20:39. i 1 Thess. 2:17. k 12:10. marg. l 15:30, 5. m Or, secret place. n Josh. 7:11, 12, 21. 1 Kings 21:16. Hab. 2:6. Zech. 5:3, 4. o Prov. 30:20. Ps. 33:1. Matt. 26:15, 16, 21. John 13:26—30. p 20:14. Gen. 3:8, 9. 4:9. 16:8. q 22. Acts 5:4. s Heb. not hither or thither. r Ps. 65:11. Prov. 12:19. Acts 5:9. r 6:12. 1 Cor. 5:3. Col. 2:5. s 16. Gen. 14:22. Ec. 3:1—8. Matt. 10:8. Acts 20:38, 39. 1 Cor. 9:11, 12. 2 Cor. 11:8—12. 2 Thess. 3:8. t See on d 1. Josh. 7:25. Mal. 2:3, 4, 8, 9. Matt. 27:3—5. Acts 5:10, 8:20. 1 Tim. 6:10. 2 Pet. 2:3. u 1 Sam. 2:30—36. 2 Sam. 3:28. v 15:5. Ex. 4:6. Num. 12:10.

requested, and probably for the reasons before mentioned. (Note, Matt. 9:16, 17.) Nor was any thing proposed to him, concerning his embracing in other respects the religion of Israel.

V. 20—25. It is probable, that Gehazi was one of the sons of the prophets, had long had the advantage of the society of Elisha, and kept up a profession of piety; yet he remained an avaricious and wicked man, and far worse than the servants of Naaman the Syrian! (Notes, Matt. 26:14—16.) He deemed Elisha foolish, to miss so fair an opportunity of enriching himself, having a right to Naaman's money in return for the cure. But as for himself, he would not be so scrupulous; and with a solemn oath, (even when speaking to himself, which in this case was peculiarly profane,) he declared that he would take somewhat of him. To accomplish his covetous purpose, he soon devised a plausible lie; and Naaman's heart was so affected by the benefit which he had obtained; that he treated even the prophet's servant with the greatest respect, and pressed his acceptance of a larger sum than he petitioned for. In this manner Gehazi appropriated above seven hundred pounds sterling in silver, which he secreted in some convenient place; and he then returned to Elisha with another direct falsehood, as if he could have deceived God, as well as his prophet. (Notes, Acts 5:1—11.) His whole conduct was wicked in a most aggravated degree: he did what he could to disgrace the God of Israel, and to misrepresent his religion: he behaved in a manner most injurious to his master's character: and he not only robbed Naaman, of his property; but he took the most effectual method imaginable to prejudice him against the prophet and true religion, and to induce him to return to idolatry. (Notes, Jer. 7:8—11. John 12:1—8. 2 Cor. 12:16—21.)

Even now. (22) At this very crisis, (as Gehazi pretended) since Naaman had left Elisha's door and had gone perhaps a furlong or two on the way.—The tower. (24) “Secret place.” (Marg.) *סֵתֵר*, Ophel; 2 Chr. 27:3. 33:14. Perhaps this was a sort of storehouse, for such provisions as were brought for the sons of the prophets; of which Gehazi was storekeeper. Like Judas, who kept the bag. (John 13:29.)

V. 26, 27. The Spirit of God showed Elisha what had passed, as plainly as if he had witnessed the whole transaction. (Note, 1 Kings 14:5, 6.)—Considering the distressed state of Israel by reason of the famine, and the low estate of religion, other interests and employments called for Gehazi's attention. The prophets of JEHOVAH were required to show themselves men of another spirit than the false prophets, by a disinterested indifference about the world; and the state of Naaman's mind, and the peculiarity of his case, rendered this action the most ill-timed that could be. (Note, 15:16.)—We may suppose, that Gehazi was inwardly contriving how to lay out his money, in purchasing an olive-yard, or vineyard, that he might exchange the service of Elisha for a more profitable occupation. (Notes, Josh. 7:.) And so he might; but it would be under the stigma and misery of a rooted and dreadful leprosy, entailed upon his posterity in perpetuity, or as long as one of them remained. This was the proper emblem of the polluted state of his soul. (Note, Prov. 21:6.)

CHAPTER VI.

The sons of the prophets prepare to enlarge their dwelling, and Elisha causes them to quit, 1-7. He discloses to Jezebel the counsel of the Syrian king, who sends troops to apprehend him, 8-14. Elisha's servant is terrified; but is encouraged by seeing horses and chariots of fire round his master, 15-17. The Syrians, at Elisha's prayer, are partially blinded; and he conducts them into Samaria, where they regain their sight, and by the prophet's proposal are entertained, and dismissed in peace, 18-33. Ben-hadad besieges Samaria, and reduces it to extreme famine, 24, 25. Women contest about eating their own children; and appeal to the king, who in a rage resolves to kill Elisha, 26-33.

AND ^athe sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, ^bthe place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us.

2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, ^cand

^a See on 2:3. 4:1. 1 Kings 20:35. b 4:38. 1 Sam 19:20. c Josh. 17:14. 19:47. Job 36:16. Is. 49:19. 54:2,3. d John 21:3. Acts 18:3. 20:34,35. 1 Cor. 9:6. 1 Thes. 2:9. 2 Thes. 3:3. 1 Tim 6:6. e 5:23. Judg. 19:6. Job 6:28. f Judg. 4:

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. In whatever manner, or degree, a man is honoured and preferred by the princes of the earth, or made an instrument in Providence of public benefit to others, he can obtain no exemption from trouble. Some bodily infirmity, or distressing disease, or domestic affliction, will counterbalance his advantages, and imbibit his enjoyments: nor can we remedy this vanity and vexation, except by humble submission to the will of God, and believing confidence in his truth, wisdom, and mercy; and the enjoyment of that peace and consolation, which are communicated by "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."—The Lord overrules, to his own glory, those events which originate in man's wickedness: the young, or the poor, are often better acquainted with his servants and service, than the rich or aged; but as he works by despised instruments, so wise men will avail themselves of a useful hint from the lowest of their inferiors.—Kind behaviour to domestics generally ensures a valuable recompense: and no injuries or hardships should indispose us to seek the welfare, or to compassionate the sorrows, of those among whom our lot is cast; especially when they are kind to us. This "little maid" proved a richer treasure to Naaman, than any Ben-hadad could bestow: and good and pious servants are indeed invaluable benefits.—We carry our knowledge of God and of true religion with us, wherever we remove; none can deprive us of these true riches and this blessed liberty; and the meanest believer will find opportunities of glorifying God and being useful to man, if he act consistently with his character and profession: for such a conduct will attract regard from those who are ignorant or careless about religion, and dispose them to attend to his words, particularly in times of affliction. (P. O. Acts 8:1-8).—Those who know the servants of God, will not doubt their readiness to relieve the distressed; and such as know him, are sensible that in answer to their prayer of faith, he frequently removes calamities, and imparts temporal benefits, even to those who serve him not. In these concerns men have keen sensibility, and readily make trial of any *probable* means of relief, though expensive, laborious, painful, and even uncertain: it would be well if they were equally sensible of the power of the divine wrath to which they are exposed, the burden of guilt with which they are chargeable, and the loathsome leprosy of unmortified sin with which they are polluted. (Note, Matt. 8:1-4).—The great ones of the earth are apt to suppose, that wealth, authority, and influence can command every thing: but when they seek those blessings, which the Lord communicates in answer to the prayers of his faithful servants, they will find that nothing can be done in this way; but that they must act as poor and needy persons, and come as humble supplicants for a free gift, and not as lords to demand, or to purchase. (Notes, Matt. 5:3. Jam. 1:9-11.) For the ministers of God must obey man, only so far as the will of their great Master allows them; and in his service they must not be directed or dictated to by any human authority.—The ignorance of many, in spiritual things, is manifested by every part of their conversation: yet we should not impute that to a blasphemous or malevolent intention, which they utter merely because they know no better.—No judges are more severe towards their fellow-sinners, than those who themselves have no fear of God before their eyes: and they are especially quick-sighted to the atrocious conduct of those, whom they suspect of intentions to injure them; and vehement in their declamations against the crimes, of which themselves are not known to be guilty.

V. 8-19. The minister of God should seize every opportunity to evince the truth and importance of his religious principles, and to display the glorious perfections of the Lord: yet he should not appear greatly pleased with the respect shown him by great men; and he ought to be cautious lest, by his language and behaviour, he enhance that pride and vanity which need to be mortified. Rather he should aim to convince them of his earnest desire to do them good; and of his indifference about those external distinctions, which others envy, covet, or are delighted with.—All the commands of God are suited to make trial of men's spirits; especially those which direct a sinner how to apply for the blessings of salvation. These do not accord with the self-importance and self-sufficiency, the carnal prejudices and pompous ideas, of an unhumiliated heart: nor can they be cordially attended to, except by "the poor in spirit," or without that implicit faith which

take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

3 And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.

5 But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.

6 And the man of God said, Where fell it?

8. g 1 Pet. 19:5. 29:11. * Heb. iron. Ec. 10:10. Is. 10:34. h 15. 3:10. Rev. 18:10, 16, 19. 14:7. Ex. 22:14, 15. Ps. 37:21.

produces as implicit obedience. The way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, through faith alone in his name, does not sufficiently gratify or employ *self*, to please the sinner's heart. The method seems to many futile and inadequate: human wisdom and philosophy, (like Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,) can furnish more rational and eligible methods of cleansing: nay, the oporese and austere devices of superstition appear to numbers preferable to "the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness;" and the very proposal shocks and affronts all the sons of pride and self-sufficiency. But the sinner, who is deeply burdened with guilt, and longs to escape the wrath to come, and the service of Satan, would do "great things," if required for that purpose. If pilgrimages, mortifications, and austerities could avail, they would not be evaded: to torture his body, to part with his wealth, or even lay down his life, would be deemed a low price at which to purchase forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation; but none of these things, in *this use of them*, can be accepted. (Note, Mic. 6:6-8.) As, however, the Fountain is opened, and the access free, he will "much more wash and be clean," as the Lord has directed.—Salvation is from the love and power of God, in the way of his appointing and revealing, for his own glory, and in the use of those means which he has instituted. In this manner the believer seeks for it, not neglecting, altering, or adding to the Saviour's directions; and by repeated washings he is made clean from the guilt and pollution of sin: whilst others, neglecting this great salvation, through proud contempt, sensual indulgence, covetousness, or sloth, live and die in their leprosy, and must for ever be excluded from the presence of a holy God. But when sinners are under serious impressions, and as yet prejudiced against the Lord's method of salvation, they should be reasoned with in meekness and love, and persuaded to make trial of it in simplicity. For he will not cast out the humble suppliant, however enormous his former crimes have been, or however weak and wavering his present faith may be.—If masters were courteous and condescending, and servants could give salutary advice with modesty and respect, many evils might be prevented, and the pernicious effects of hasty sallies of passion counteracted.—When temporal troubles and deliverances bring us acquainted with God, and lead us to his service, they are indeed precious blessings; and gratitude to the Lord will dictate liberality to the instruments of his mercies. But different circumstances will render it necessary to adopt different measures. "The man of God" will never allow himself to "covet any man's gold, or silver, or apparel;" but be content with daily bread, and learn to trust for to-morrow. Yet sometimes he will understand that the proffered kindness is the Lord's method of supplying his necessities, that it will be fruit abounding to the benefit of the donor, and that there is a propriety in accepting it as a token of love: (Note, Phil. 4:14-20.) but, at others, the gift will be looked on as a temptation; and he will perceive that the acceptance of it would degrade his character and office, dishonour God, and tend exceedingly to the injury of the giver. In this case he will decidedly refuse it. This is particularly to be adverted to in the case of the great, when they first turn their thoughts to religious subjects. From knowledge of the world, they are apt to suspect all their inferiors of mercenary designs, and naturally suppose that ministers are only carrying on a trade like other men; while the conduct of too many so called confirms them in this sentiment. There is but one way of counteracting this prejudice; and that is by evincing a disinterested spirit, and not asking any thing, and in many cases refusing to accept favours from them, until they have attained a further establishment in the faith; and by always persevering in an indifference to every personal interest.—It is not advisable violently to oppose every mistake which unites with men's first convictions, lest we should damp that earnestness which promises good fruit, when matured by experience, and duly regulated by the gradual teaching of the divine Spirit, attending suitable instruction. We cannot bring men forward faster than the Lord prepares them to receive instruction; and where he works, he will in time lead them to renounce every secular interest, and bear any cross rather than sin against him.

V. 20-27. No outward religious advantages ensure the renewing of the heart; and better servants are frequently found in ungodly families, than in the houses of the most eminent servants of God. "This true, that the latter must, or the

into Samaria, that Elisha said, **LORD**, ^{open} the eyes of these *men*, that they may see. And the **LORD** ^{opened} their eyes, and they saw; and behold, *they were* in the midst of Samaria.

21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, ^{My father, shall I smite them?} shall I smite *tho*?

22 And he answered, Thou shalt not smite *them*: ^{wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow?} ^{Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.}

23 And ^{he prepared great provision for them:} and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. ^{So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.}

[Practical Observations.]

24 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria ^{gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.}

25 And there was ^{a great famine in Samaria:} and behold, they besieged it, until ^{an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.}

26 And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, ^{Help, my lord, O king.}

27 And he said, ^{If the LORD do not help thee}

n Gen. 17. Luke 24.31. o Judg. 24.40—42. Luke 16.23. p 2.12.5.13. 8.9. 13. 11. q 1 Sam. 24.19. 25.8. Luke 9.54—56. 22.49. r Deut. 20.11—16. 2 Chr. 28.8—13. s Gen. 45.22. Josh. 24.12. Ps. 44.6. Hos. 1.7.2.18. 1. Prov. 25.21. Matt. 5.44. Rom. 12.20.21. o 1 Sam. 24.17.19. 2 Chr. 28.22. 1. Prov. 25.21.22. Matt. 5.47. Luke 6.35. 10.29—37. s Gen. 5.9. 5.9. 24.2. s 17.5. 18.9. 25.1. Deut. 28.52. 1 Kings 20.1. 22.31. Ec. 9.14. y 28.29. 7.4. 25.3. Lev. 26.52. 1 Kings 18.2. Jer. 14.13—15.18. 32.24. 52.6. z Ez. 4.13—15. a 2 Sam. 14.4. Is. 10.3. Luke 18.3. Acts 1.23. b Or, Let not the LORD avenge thee. b Ps. 60.11. 29. 118.9. 124.1—3. 127.1. 146.3. Is. 2.22. Jer. 17.5. c Gen. 21.17. Judg. 16. 23. 1 Sam. 1.8. 2 Sam. 14.5. Ps. 144.5. Is. 22.1. d Lev. 96.29. 1. eut. 28.53—

but he was very respectful to the prophet who had put them in his power, and would not act without his permission. When Elisha therefore had shown him the impropriety of slaughtering prisoners of war, whom he had taken captive; much more that of smiting those whom God had led into that situation; he desisted from his purpose: nay, he obeyed the prophet's orders in liberally entertaining and then dismissing the whole army! Let them "go to their masters," and tell him what civility and kindness there is among the people of God.' *Bp. Patrick.* Yet this very man soon after determined to murder this same prophet! (*Notes, 31. Matt. 14.3—11. Mark 6.15—29.*) The Syrians, however, no more attempted to apprehend Elisha: and the soldiers were perhaps so won by his clemency, or afraid of his power, that they ceased from molesting the land by depredations; until Ben-hadad had collected his whole force to besiege Samaria some time afterwards.

V. 24. It seems that Ben-hadad met with little opposition, till he came to Samaria.

V. 25. If the pieces of silver here mentioned were shekels, above ten pounds sterling was, on this occasion, paid for the head of an unclean animal, not generally used in food, and affording very little sustenance; whilst about twelve shillings were given for about three pints of very mean pulse, called dove's dung; or, as some think, of the undigested corn taken from the crop, or craw, of that fowl. However this may be explained, the prices shew the extremity of the famine. It is sufficient to suppose, that each of these bargains was once actually made in the urgency of hunger.

V. 26. *Help, &c.* וְיִשְׁעָה: "Save my lord, O king," 'Save me from perishing by hunger by interposing thine authority in my behalf.'

V. 27. (*Marg.*) This may be understood as the language of passion, or desperation: as if Jehoram had said, 'The Lord will not, and I cannot, help thee; but we must all perish together.'

V. 28, 29. The truth and awful justice of God upon the idolatrous Israelites were displayed in this most horrible transaction. The extremity of hunger, inducing rage and madness, and extinguishing humanity and natural affection, prepared the way for such actions, as at other times the persons themselves would have abhorred the thoughts of. But this was repeatedly foretold as the punishment of Israel's apostasy from God; and more instances of it occur in their history, than in the records perhaps of all other nations. (*Notes, Lev. 26.29. Deut. 28.49—57. Lam. 2.20—22. 4.10. Ez. 5.10.*)

V. 30. The king mourned his own miseries and those of the people, and he assumed the garment of a penitent: (*Notes, 1 Kings 21:27—29. Is. 58:3—7. Joel 2:12—14.*) but he did not renounce his idolatries; and he grew more desperate in his rebellion, through the extremities to which he was reduced.

V. 31. Either Elisha had denounced this judgment upon

whence shall I help thee? out of the barn-floor or out of the wine-press?

28 And the king said unto her, 'What aileth thee? And she answered, 'This woman said unto me, "Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow."

29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.

31 Then he said, 'God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

32 But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, 'See how this "son of a murderer hath sent to take away my head? look when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not "the sound of his master's feet behind him?'

33 And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, 'this evil is of the LORD; what should I wait for the LORD any longer?

57. Is. 9.20. 21. Lam. 4.10. Ez. 5.10. Matt. 24.18—21. Luke 23.29. 1 Heb. 11.38. o 1 Kings 3.26. Is. 49.15. 66.13. f See on 5.7. 19.1. 1 Kings 21.27. Is. 58:5—7. g Ruth 1.17. 1 Sam. 3.17. 14.44. 25.22. 2 Sam. 8.3.35. 19.13. 1 Kings 2.23. h 1 Kings 18.17. 19.2. 22.8. Jer. 37.15.16. 38.4. John 11.50. Acts 23.12. 13. i Ez. 8.1. 14.1. 20.1. 33.31. k 12.5.26. 1 Luke 13.32. m 1 Kings 18.4. 21.10. a 1 Kings 14.6. c Gen. 4.13. Ez. 16.6—8. 1 Sam. 28.6—8. 31.4. Job 1.11. 2.5.5. Prov. 19.3. Is. 8.21. Jer. 2.25. Ez. 33.10. Matt. 27.45. 9 Cor. 2.7.11. Rev. 16.8—41. p Ps. 27.14. 37.7. 62.5. Is. 8.17. 26.3. 50.10. Lam. 3.25.26. Hab. 2.3. Luke 18.1.

Jehoram for his sins; or Jehoram supposed that it was sent in answer to his prayers; or he thought the prophet could help him if he would; or he blamed him, for inducing him to dismiss the Syrian army, when it was in his power; or perhaps Elisha had counselled him in the name of the Lord to hold out the siege, and that he should be delivered. His rage however, against God, vented itself in menacing violence to his faithful servant with an oath, and imprecation on himself, if he did not inflict it.—'He swore he should not live till night.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, 1 Kings 19.2.*)

V. 32, 33. Elisha lodged at Samaria at this time, probably in the school of the prophets, sharing the hardships of that city during the siege and famine; and the elders had resorted to him to entreat his prayers, or to desire his counsel. The Lord revealed to him Jehoram's intentions; and Elisha called him, "the son of a murderer," as proving himself the genuine offspring of Ahab and Jezebel, who slew the Lord's prophets, and murdered Naboth. (*Notes, 1 Kings 14:5. 18.4. 21:7—16.*) At his desire the messenger of Jehoram was shut out, till his master, who as Elisha knew would follow him, perhaps to countermand his order, was arrived. And when he was entered, and perhaps exhorted to hope for deliverance; he in a blasphemous manner answered, that the calamity was from the LORD, who would not deliver them, and that it was in vain to wait for him any longer. Probably he meant to infer, that he might as well put Elisha to death, and surrender to Ben-hadad without further delay. (*Notes, 25. Job 2:9—11. Jer. 2:25. Lam. 3:26—30.*)—As the messenger was excluded till the king arrived, it is evident that the latter was the speaker of these words, and not his servant in his presence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7. God has often increased his church, by the addition of faithful ministers and true believers, in times of great persecution: for the whole glory is secured to him, when the effect is produced without the aid, and notwithstanding the opposition, of human authority, by the preaching of his word, and the operation of the Holy Spirit. (*Note, Zech. 4:4—7.*)—Religion indeed always appears to advantage under the cross; when poverty and affliction are endured with cheerful meekness and patience, and when hard labour and mean fare excite no complaints. When men, honoured by the Lord as instruments of much good to souls, willingly earn their living by working at some honest calling, rather than burden the people; and yet will not entangle themselves with the affairs of the world to acquire riches for themselves or families; their conduct evidently accords to the spirit of true religion, and seldom fails to attract the attention of numbers to persons, who act upon principles, which are contrary to the general propensities of human nature.—Respect to seniors or superiors becomes those especially, who teach others to "render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and to God the things which are God's;" and contentment with poor accommodations, those who inculcate mortification to the things of

CHAPTER VII.

Elisha predicts great plenty in Samaria, and the death of an unbelieving lord, 1, 2. Four lepers venture into the Syrian camp, and bring word that it is entirely deserted, a terror from God having driven away the army, 3-11. Jehoram fears a stranger, sends messengers to examine, and finds the report true, 12-15. The people spoil the Syrian camp; the predicted plenty takes place; and the unbelieving lord, having charge of the gate, is trodden to death, 16-20.

THEN ^aElisha said, ^bHear ye the word of the ^cLORD; Thus saith the ^dLORD, ^eTo-morrow about this time ^fshall ^ga measure of fine flour be ^hsold for a shekel, and two measures ⁱof barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.

2 Then ^aa lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, ^bif the LORD would make ^cwindows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, ^dthou shalt see ^eit with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

3 ^aAnd there were ^bfour leprous men at the

^a See on 6:33, 20:16, 1 Kings 22:19, Is. 1:10, Ez. 37:4, b 18:19, Ez. 8:23, 9:5, 6, 14:13, 16:12, Josh. 3:5, 1 Sam. 11:9, Ps. 46:5, c 6:25, Rev. 6:6, d 4:42, John 6:9, ^e Or, a lord which belonged to the king, leaning on his hand, 5:18, e Gen. 18:12-14, Num. 11:21-23, Ps. 78:19-21, 41, f Gen. 7:11, Mal. 3:10, g 17-20, Deut. 3:27, 2 Cor. 20:20, Is. 1:9, Rom. 3:3, 2 Tim. 3:13, Heb. 3:7, 12:13, 16, h See on 5:1, 8:4, Lev. 13:46, Num. 5:2-4, 12:14, 14, Jer. 8:14, 27:13.

time and sense.—There is that pleasantness in the converse of the eminent servants of God, which can make men forget the pain and weariness of labour: and when condescension to the meanest unites with usefulness to the greatest, and with great eminence in the church of God, it confers a peculiar lustre on a man's character.—A pious and generous mind is more disquieted by occasioning loss to others, than by suffering it himself; and peculiar care should be taken of things borrowed.—Our heavenly Father cares for his people in their most minute concerns, and sympathizes with them in their fears and sorrows: (*Note*, Matt. 10:29-31.) and he peculiarly regards those persons, who are conscientiously afraid of dishonouring religion, through unavoidable poverty, and being unable to render to all their dues.

V. 8-23. The Lord knows, and can easily defeat, the secret machinations of his enemies. And the profession of being his worshippers will sometimes for a season engage his external protection; in order to the confusion of his avowed enemies, and for the sake of that remnant of true believers with whom they are connected. (*Notes*, Ex. 32:7-14, Deut. 32:26, 27, Jer. 14:7-9, Ez. 20:7-9.)—Even the wicked are sometimes willing to be counselled by the servants of God in their temporal concerns, and they experience the advantage of this conduct; but they will not take warning "to flee from the wrath to come," or be persuaded to renounce their favourite sins! Wave this subject, do not trouble their consciences or interfere in those things, in which they choose to indulge themselves, and you may obtain their confidence; nay, they will give up their inclinations in other respects by way of compromise.—As prophets were not without honour save in their own country; so numbers profess to honour those that have obtained a good report in the word of God, who would treat them with scorn or enmity, if they could again revisit the earth. For distance of time or place breaks the force of their reproofs; and they can suppose that other sinners, and not themselves, are intended: but when near, they direct the word to the conscience, with "Thou art the man," and except this produce repentance, it must exasperate. Such men, however, prove the insincerity of their professed esteem, by living in habitual neglect of the truths and precepts, which were delivered by the persons, whom they would be thought to admire. (*Notes*, Matt. 13:54-58, 23:29-33.)—The obstinate rebellion and blindness of fallen man often induce him to strive and expect to prevail against those, whom he cannot deny to be the people of God: but as no outward miracles can extirpate the malignity of the heart, so nothing can injure those whom the Lord protects. Were our eyes opened to behold the world of spirits, we should perceive more formidable preparations against us, than those which alarmed the prophet's servant; even legions of malicious, powerful, and sagacious spirits combined for our destruction: but we should also see an innumerable company of holy angels encamped around us for our defence; and the Almighty God himself our Friend and Protector. Strong faith will supply the want of sight; it realizes both the danger and the security, and with a clear idea of the force of the enemy confidently answers, "Fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them." May God give us this faith, and especially strengthen it in the time of danger, and in the hour of death! But if we are "strong, we should bear the infirmities of the weak," and both encourage and pray for them.

—Increasing experience of the Lord's power and love, and those glimpses of heavenly things with which his people are favoured, gradually embolden them to walk by faith, and not by sight: nor is the power of prayer less, than it was in those ages of miracles, though the Lord answers it in a different way.—It is a mercy to be kept from gross crimes even by ignorance and blindness; and we may pray, that our enemies may be so bewildered and confounded, as to fail of accomplishing

entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, ^aWhy sit we here until we die?

4 If we say, ^aWe will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: ^aif they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, ^bwe shall but die.

5 And they rose up ^ain the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, ^abehold, ^bthere was no man there.

6 For ^athe LORD had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, ^beven the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us ^cthe kings of the Hittites, and ^dthe kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

7 Wherefore ^athey arose and fled in the twilight,

k Jer. 14:18, l 1 Chr. 12:19, Jer. 37:13, 14, m Ezech. 4:16, Jer. 8:14, Jon. 3:9, Luke 15:17-19, n 2 Sam. 14:14, Heb. 9:27, o 1 Sam. 30:17, Ez. 12:6, 7, 12, p Lev. 27:35, 38, Deut. 28:7, 32:33, 30, q 3:23, 19:7, 2 Sam. 5:24, Job 15:21, Ps. 14:5, Jer. 20:3, 4, Ez. 10:5, Rev. 6:15, 16, 9:9, r 1 Kings 10:29, s 2 Chr. 12:23, Is. 31:1, 38:9, t Job 18:11, Ps. 48:4-6, 68:12, Prov. 28:1, Jer. 48:9, 9

their malicious purposes. The gospel itself indeed often occasions the blindness and obduracy of obstinate unbelievers to increase: (*Note*, 2 Cor. 2:14-17.) yet we must pray for them, and persevere in our endeavours to win them over to be friends to us and to the Lord. We should also watch for opportunities to show our friendly disposition towards them; as well as to convince them, that they will be ruined by their own iniquities, if they persist in them.

V. 24-33. The regard which wicked men pay to the servants of God, when they seem to favour them, is frequently turned into bitter enmity under their troubles.—In extreme distress, if they recollect that their affliction is from the Lord, that rage against him, which vents itself in blasphemies, dictates also cruelly against his people. They blame any one as the cause of their calamities, rather than condemn themselves and renounce their sins. If rending their clothes, without a broken and contrite heart; and if wearing sackcloth, without being "renewed in the spirit of their mind," would avail, they would not refuse these external tokens of humiliation: but, while their own impotence alone retards the deliverance, they excuse their proceeding to still more desperate measures, by avowing, that it is in vain to "wait for the LORD any longer."—Alas! what miseries has sin entailed upon mankind! Little do we know what extremities we may be called to endure in this world: what then will be the everlasting wrath of God against his enemies, in the world to come? But if we are reconciled to him, he will help us when all human help fails; in the time of famine we shall be satisfied, and in peril we shall be safe: whilst all the curses of God's book will fall upon the head of presumptuous transgressors. Let us then "seek first the kingdom of God:" let us be thankful for our daily bread, and not contract habits of self-indulgence, nor set our affections on earthly objects; and may the whole word of God, being truly believed, combine to increase in us reverent fear and holy hope, that we may be "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the LORD."

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1. This chapter is a continuation of the subject of the preceding; and immediately as Jehoram had spoken the profane and desperate words before considered, Elisha in his presence and before the whole company gave the merciful assurance contained in this verse. The measure here spoken of is supposed to have contained about a peck, or two gallons; and the prices specified, no doubt, were those of plentiful times: but that corn should be sold so cheap in Samaria, on the morrow, was impossible to any power but that of God. Jehoram however, notwithstanding his rage and desperation, was induced to wait one day longer, to make trial of the prophet's words. (*Notes*, 6:25, 31-33.)

V. 2. This lord was one of the king's most intimate friends, who waited on his person. It is probable that he was an idolatrous despiser of JEHOVAH and his prophet; and perhaps he wanted to persuade Jehoram, that Elisha amused him with the promise of an impossibility, to preserve himself from immediate death.

Thou shalt see, &c.] 'A just punishment of his unbelief. And shall be the portion of those, that believe not the promise of eternal life.' *Ep. Patrick.*

V. 3. While the weightier matters of the law were generally neglected, and idolatry prevailed, the prescribed rule about the exclusion of lepers seems to have been rigorously observed. (*Notes*, Lev. 13:45, 46, Num. 5:1-4.) These men resided in tents *without the wall*; but probably they were admitted *within the gate*, at the times when the Syrians made their assaults. Gehazi is by some supposed to have been one of them, by which means he became acquainted with the king. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, 8:4-6.)

V. 6, 7. The infatuation, which seized the mind of the

and left their tents, and "their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, and fled for their life.

8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it: and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence *also*, and went and hid it.

[Practical Observations.]

9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: "this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning-light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household.

10 So they came and called unto "the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* "no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they *were*.

11 And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

12 ¶ And the king arose in the night, and said "unto his servants, "I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp, to "hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city.

13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they

are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, *I say*, "they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed: and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariot-horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see.

15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and lo, all the way *was* full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians "had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 And the people went out, and "spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour *was sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, "according to the word of the Lord.

17 ¶ And the king appointed "the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate; and "the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him.

18 And it came to pass "as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria:

19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

20 And "so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

o Ps. 20:7-8, 33:17, Am. 2:14-16. x Num. 25:11, 12, Prov. 6:5. Is. 2:20, 21, Matt. 24:16-18, Heb. 6:13. y 5:24, Josh. 7:21, Jer. 41:8, Matt. 13:44, 23:18. z Hag. 1:4, 5. a 6. Is. 41:27, 52:7. Nah. 1:15. Luke 2:10. Phil. 2:4. * Heb. *see shall find punishment*. b 5:26, 27. Num. 32:23. Prov. 34:6, c 11. 2 Sam. 18:26. Ps. 127:1. Micah 1:34, 35. d See on 6:7. e 6:8. Gen. 30:8, 41:33. Kings 20:1, 23. f See on 1. 5:7. g 6:25-28. h Josh. 8:4-12, Judg. 20:23.

whole Syrian army, was equal to the illusion put upon their senses. Probably, by the ministrations of angels, noises were made resembling those of a very large army with numerous chariots and horsemen marching speedily, and ready directly to fall upon them at once, while they were unprepared for battle. But the excessive terror must have been caused immediately by supernatural influence on their minds. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 197. *Ex.* 15:14-16. *Deut.* 2:24, 25. 1 *Sam.* 14:11-15.) It is not known who the kings of the Hittites were, or where they reigned. (*Note*, *Judg.* 1:22-26, v. 26.) Indeed the whole of the supposition was improbable; and in their trepidation the Syrians left even their horses, which might have accelerated their flight!

V. 8, 9. Having satisfied their hunger, and secured as well as they could a rich booty, they began to reflect upon their conduct. They were conscious of having not acted properly, in respect of the distressed inhabitants of the city; and were afraid, lest some evil should come upon them, if they further delayed to make known the good tidings to those concerned.—Some mischief would befall them: either some judgment from God; or some punishment from the magistrates, for prolonging the miseries of the people. (*9. marg.*)

V. 12. If Jehoram had firmly expected that Elisha's words would be verified, he would have concluded that this event was the effect of a miraculous interposition in his favour; though he might properly have taken every prudent precaution against a surprise. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, 1.) But he seems to have had little expectation of that kind, notwithstanding all the miraculous interpositions of God, by means of the prophet, in his behalf.

V. 13, 14. This person strenuously urged in favour of his counsel, that these men and their horses would be no more exposed, than those who remained in the city. Many had been already consumed, and all the rest must die with hunger in a few days, if no relief were afforded: and they might as well be cut off in examining the real state of the Syrian camp, and discovering what had become of the besiegers, as perish tamely and timidly in the city.—It seems, only two horsemen were sent; perhaps no more horses being found fit for the service; or the king would venture no more out of the city.

V. 15. *Notes*, Is. 2:19-21. *Phil.* 3:8-11.

V. 16-20. The people being extremely hungry, and vehemently eager for food, thrust down this nobleman, whilst he attempted, perhaps in a harsh manner, to restrain them from rushing out to plunder the Syrian camp: or, as some think, to regulate the market, which was held at the gate and supplied from the camp. Thus he was trodden to death; and the truth and justice of God were clearly seen in that event. (*Notes*, 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. In extreme distress unexpected relief is often preparing; and whatever unbelievers may imagine, it is not

in vain to wait for the Lord, how long soever he seems to delay his coming.—No temporal deliverances and mercies will eventually profit sinners, except they are led to repentance; and in that case, "where sin hath abounded, grace will much more abound."—We are all prone to judge of God's promises by human probabilities, and to limit his power of performance by our capacity of discerning how it can be done; and whatever increases pride and self-confidence proportionably augments this propensity. Hence the rich, the noble, the wise, and the learned of the world, have generally been the most backward in implicitly crediting the sure testimony of God, and expecting promised mercies in the way of his appointment, and in single dependence on his power, truth, and love, without regarding those apparent impossibilities which lie in the way. But all those who persist in despising either his promised blessings, or this method of obtaining them, will see the felicity of believers without partaking of it. For, though he will pardon the infirmities of his people's faith, while they pray, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief;" yet he will not spare those, who harden themselves and others in rebellion, through their infidel objections and enmity against the truth, however they may enjoy the confidence of earthly princes, or the admiration of mankind.—Men reason justly in their secular concerns: the least probability of preserving life is preferred to certain death, and the lowest condition is considered as better than perishing by hunger. Yet, in the concerns of their souls, they will not be so convinced, even by demonstration, as to bestow pains and put themselves to inconveniences, to escape the wrath to come and obtain eternal life. But the awakened sinner fears an evil infinitely worse than death; and under the greatest discouragements, even when tempted to despair, he learns to argue, "If I go on in sin, or sit down in sloth, or run into worldly dissipation, or have recourse to superstitions, or attempt to establish my own righteousness, I must perish. The mercy of God in Jesus Christ is my only refuge. If I cast myself at his feet and wait his time, who knows but he may save me? And if at last he spurns me, I can but be lost. All else is comparatively worthless: if then I must perish, I will perish under the means of grace, and supplicating his mercy and salvation." (*Eth.* 4:16.) In like manner the believer exposed to the terrors of persecution, reasons with himself: "If I am faithful to the Lord, I can but die, and he will give me the crown of life: but if I deny Christ through dread of death, he will refuse to acknowledge me another day; and I "fear him who is able to destroy body and soul in hell," more than those "who can only kill the body." Thus believers venture themselves into the Saviour's hands, and cleave to him with purpose of heart; whilst others neglect or forsake him.—The Lord can effect his designs by various methods: a terror from him can drive men from their purpose, as effectually as the destroying sword of vengeance; (*Note*

CHAPTER VIII.

The Shunammite, by Elisha's advice, to avoid a famine of seven years, goes to sojourn in Philistia, 1, 2. On her return, she applies to the king who is conversing with Gehazi on Elisha's miracles; and he restores her land, 3-6. Elisha goes to Damascus: Hazael is sent by Ben-hadad to inquire of him concerning his sickness: he predicts Hazael's cruelty to Israel, as destined to be king of Syria, 7-13. Hazael murders Ben-hadad and succeeds him, 14, 15. Jehoram reigns wickedly in Judah, 16-19. Edom and Libnah rebel, 20-22. Jehoram is succeeded by Ahaziah, who reigns wickedly, 23-27. He assists the king of Israel against Syria, and when wounded visits him at Jezebel's, 28, 29.

THEN spake Elisha unto the woman, "whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn where-soever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years.

2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house, and for her land.

4 And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house

*a See on 4:31-35. b Gen. 12:10. 26:1-47:4. Ruth 1:1. c Gen. 41:23-28, 32. e See 19:20-26. Deut. 28:22-24, 38-40. 1 Kings 17:1. 18:2. Ps. 105:16. 107:31. Hag. 1:11. Luke 21:11, 22. Acts 11:29. d Jer. 29:29. e Gen. 41:27. 2 Sam. 21:1. 24:13. Luke 4:23. f 1 Tim. 5:8. g Judg. 3:3. 1 Sam. 27:1-3. h 6:4, 13. 6:28. 2 Sam. 14:4. i 1s. 23:24. Jer. 22:16. Luke 18:3-5. 19:20-27. 7:3, 10. k Luke 9: 23-8. Acts 24:24. 1:2, 14, 20-22, 31:4-16. 4:3-6, 16, 17. 5:14, 27. 6:6-9, 12-17-20, 32. 7:1, 16-20. m 1:35. n Ruth 2:3. Esth. 5:14. 6:11, 12. Prov. 19:9. Ec. 9:11. Matt. 10:29, 30. Acts 8:27. Ec. 3:7. 8:1. e 6:12, 26. 1 Sam. 18:17. Ps. 145:1. *Or, canuch, 9:32. Gen. 37:36. 1 Chr. 28:1. margins.**

19:35.) and we absolutely depend upon him for the due exercise of our senses and faculties, as well as for the continuance of our lives, and the salvation of our souls.—While some, when life is at stake, readily relinquish all which they before held dear; others, when wearing away by incurable or loathsome disease, are as rapacious of gain, as if their lives were secured to them, with every other requisite for enjoyment! (*Note, 5:26, 27.*)

V. 9-20. Natural humanity, and fear of punishment, are powerful checks on the selfishness of the ungody, and tend to preserve some order and regularity in the world. Those however, who have found "the unsearchable riches of Christ," will not delay to report the good tidings to others, that they may partake of that blessedness which is sufficient for all: and from love to him they will gladly communicate their temporal good things to their brethren.—True faith consists with prudent precautions: but unbelief suggests endless and unreasonable suspicions, and puts away those blessings, which are brought nigh to the soul, by the invitations and promises of God. The believer, on the other hand, makes trial of them, and experience confirms his faith: and a change, immensely more felicitating than that which is here recorded, takes place in his state, prospects, comforts, and character. But every word of God, concerning judgment as well as mercy, will speedily be accomplished; and earthly honours will accelerate the ruin of the ungody. May God help us seriously to inquire, whether we are now exposed to his awful threatenings, or interested in his exceedingly great and precious promises; that so we may profit by the warning, or by the encouragement, resulting from that knowledge of our own state and character, compared with the warnings and promises of the holy Scriptures.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. This famine seems to have been sent in the latter part of Jehoram's reign, as a punishment of the pernicious idolatry of both king and people, notwithstanding the miracles which they had witnessed, and the mercies which they had experienced. (*Am. 7:4.*) It continued twice as long as that in the days of Ahab, but was not so extreme. (*Note, 1 Kings 17:1.*)—Elisha was warned of its approach, and counselled his benefactress, now, as it appears, laid a widow, to remove till it was over. (*Notes, Gen. 12:10. 26:1-5. Ruth 1:1-5.*) There was a measure of plenty in the land of the Philistines, whilst Israel was visited with famine: but either they could spare none to sell to their neighbours, or their old enmity made them unwilling to do it. They did not, however, molest such as went to sojourn among them.—Had not Judah also felt the effects of the famine, it is likely that this pious woman would have gone thither to sojourn.

V. 3. As this pious woman firmly believed the words of Elisha, predicting the famine, and acted accordingly; so, when the seven years assigned for its continuance were ended, she returned into her own land, in confidence that the famine would then terminate.

To cry, &c.] Either the lands of the Shunammite had been

and for her land. And Gehazi said, "My lord, C king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

6 And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

[*Practical Observations.*]

7 ¶ And Elisha came to Damascus: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, "The man of God is come hither.

8 And the king said unto Hazael, "Take a present in thy hand, and go, meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, "Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?

10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit, the LORD hath showed me, that he shall surely die.

11 And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

p Dent. 22:2. Judg. 11:13. 2 Sam. 9:7. Prov. 16:7. 21:1. q Gen. 14:15. 1 Kings 11:24. 1s. 7:8. r 6:21. 1 Kings 15:18. 20:1, 34. 22:31. s 1:9, 10. 2:15. 6:12. See on Dent. 33:4. 1 Kings 13:1. t Judg. 16:2. Acts 17:6. u See on 5:5. 1 Sam. 9:7. 1 Kings 14:3. v 1:2, 3. 11-13. 1 Kings 14:1-4. Luke 13:23. Acts 16:30. y See on 1 Kings 19:15. 1 Heb. in his hand. 5:5. z 8:21. 13:14. 16:7. 1 Sam. 25:8. Philen. 10. b 13. Gen. 41:39. Jer. 38:21. Ez. 11:25. Am. 3:7. 7:1, 4, 7, 8; 1. Zeck. 1:20. Rev. 22:1. c 14:16. Gen. 2:17. Ez. 18:13. 1 Heb. and set it. d Gen. 45:2. Ps. 119:136. Jer. 4:19. 9:1, 18. 13:17. 14:17. Luke 19:41. John 11:35. Acts 20:19, 31. Rom. 9:2. Phil. 3:18.

seized, as forfeited to the crown by her emigration; or some of her neighbours or relations had violently seized upon them; or those, to whom she had left the management of her affairs, would neither restore her estate, nor come to account concerning the profits of it. She had therefore at this time occasion to apply to the king, though not formerly; (*Note, 4:13.*) and it was commendable in Jehoram, that he was accessible to such a claimant.

V. 4-6. (*Notes, 5:20-27.*) It was not unlawful to speak to a leper, provided it was done without touching him; and Jehoram, from curiosity, was willing to converse, concerning Elisha's miracles, with so mean a person as Gehazi was; who likewise bore an infamous character, and was covered with a loathsome disease! yet he did not court the prophet's acquaintance, because he disliked his counsels and admonitions, and dreaded his warnings and rebukes. The Lord, however, thus prepared his mind to do this pious woman justice; and his providence is especially to be noted in the singular coincidence of apparently casual events from which most important consequences frequently follow.

V. 7, 8. The prophet doubtless was divinely directed to go to Damascus. Some suppose that he went to counsel and encourage Naaman; and others, that he retired thither during the famine.—Some indeed think that he went to anoint Hazael; but it is probable, that Elijah had performed that service, though Hazael, being young and destitute of power to seize on the kingdom, seems not to have much regarded the transaction. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 19:15-17.*) Ben-hadad, however, was no longer disposed to injure Elisha. The report of the prophet's miracles had excited respect and veneration for him, and perhaps his sickness had softened his mind, so that he welcomed him to his capital, and, according to the custom of the day, sent his chief minister to inquire of him concerning his recovery. (*Notes, 1:2. 1 Kings 14-4.*) It would have been far more rational to request the instruction and prayers of "the man of God."

V. 9. We may infer from the silence of Scripture, that the prophet accepted of this royal present, which must have been of very great value, as the provision which the Lord assigned him in a foreign country, and to enable him to assist the poor Israelites, and the sons of the prophets in their poverty and distresses. (*Note, 5:15, 16.*)

V. 10. Ben-hadad's disease was not of itself mortal, though his life was near its end from another cause. But the prophet either did not know, or did not think it proper to inform Hazael, what that cause would be.—The Hebrew text however is, "Thou shalt not surely recover," or live; "for the LORD," &c. though ancient expositors, both Jews and Christians adopting the reading of the margin, render it as it stands in our version; and indeed this appears to be the true reading. as the prophet's answer was probably intended to be obscure and ambiguous.

V. 11. The prophet fixed his eyes on Hazael's countenance, and for so long a time, that Hazael was scandalized, and Elisha himself, in the foresight of Hazael's wickedness, and

12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth 'my lord? And he answered, Because I know 'the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong-holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt 'dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

13 And Hazael said, But what 'is thy servant 'a dog, that the should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, 'The LORD hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, 'He told me that thou shouldst surely recover.

15 And 'it came to pass 'on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, 'so that he died; and 'Hazael reigned in his stead. [Practical Observations.]

16 ¶ And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, 'Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah 'began to reign.

17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

18 And he walked 'in the way of the kings of Israel, as did 'the house of Ahab: for 'the daughter of Ahab was 'his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, 'for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children.

20 ¶ In his days 'Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and 'made a king over themselves.

• See on 4:28. 1 Kings 18:13. f 10:32,33, 12:17, 13:3,7. Am. 1:3,4. g 15:16. Pa. 137:9. Is. 13:16,19. Hos. 10:14. 13:16. Am. 1:13. Nah. 3:10. h 1 Sam. 17:43. 2 Sam. 9:8. Pa. 22:10,20. Is. 56:10,11. Matt. 7:8. Phil. 3:2. Rev. 22:15. [Jer. 17:9. Matt. 26:33—35. k See on 10. 1 Kings 19:15. Mic. 2:1. 110:5,25. Matt. 25:16. m 13. 1 Sam. 16:12,13. 24:4—7,13. 26:9—11. 1 Kings 12:28—37. n Pa. 38:4. Mic. 2:1. g 2:24. 15:10—14,25,30. 1 Kings 15:28, 16:10,18. Is. 35:1. p 13. 1 Kings 19:15. q 1:17. 1 Kings 22:50. 2 Chr. 21:1—20. * Heb. reigned. r 3:2. s 1 Kings 22:52,53. * 9:7,8. 21:13,13. 2 Chr. 21:13. Mic. 6:16. t 26. 1 Kings 22:25. 2 Chr. 18:1. 19:2. 21:6. 22:1—4. u Gen. 6:1—5. Deut. 7:3,4. See on 1 Kings 11:1—5. Neh. 13:27,28. v 19:34. 2 Sam. 7:12,15. 1 Kings 11:56. 15:4,5. 2 Chr. 21:7. Is. 7:14. 37:35. Jer. 35:25,26. Luke 1:32,35. † Heb. candle, or,

of the miseries of Israel, burst into tears. (Note, Luke 19:41—44.)

V. 12, 13. Hazael felt at that time no inclination to the brutal ferocity and cruelty of which Elisha spoke; and he wondered that the prophet should suppose him capable of tearing and devouring, like some fierce and greedy dog, rather than a rational creature. But Elisha answered, "The Lord hath showed me, that thou shalt be king over Syria." Or, "The Lord hath made me to see thee king over Syria." And when advanced to the throne, being engaged in war with Israel, and exasperated by their resistance, he would be tempted to cruelties, of which at present he had no thought. (Note, Jer. 17:9,10.) Some indeed think Hazael only meant, that he was high rank under Ben-hadad would have enabled him to perform them, had his passions been sufficiently excited; and he was evidently startled at the mention of the cruelties, which the prophet predicted would be perpetrated by him. (Marg. Ref. Note, Am. 1:3—5.)

V. 14, 15. Hazael misreported Elisha's answer, having doubtless already formed the intention of murdering Ben-hadad, and seeking an opportunity of effecting his purpose. By the method that he employed of murdering him, he prevented any alarm, or any marks of violence appearing on the body.—Elisha's intimation might give Satan an occasion of suggesting this villany to Hazael; but it was not the cause of his crime, and formed no excuse for it. Had he been of David's disposition, he would have waited in the path of duty, till the Lord had performed his word, in that manner which pleased him. (Notes, 1 Sam. 24:4—7. 1 Kings 11:37. 12:2,3,26—29.) Thus he soon manifested the rapacity and cruelty of the dog, of which he desired to be thought incapable. (Notes, 12:13. Is. 56:9—12. Mic. 3:5—7.)—It is supposed, that Ben-hadad had no son; that Hazael was in great favour with the people, and with the army especially; and that, for a time at least, he escaped the suspicion of having murdered Ben-hadad.

V. 16, 17. Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, began to reign with his father before the death of Ahab, so that Ahaziah the son of Ahab died in the second year of his reign, or in the eighteenth of Jehoshaphat. About five years after he seems to have been more solemnly admitted to the exercise of the royal authority, within two years of his father's death. This took place when Jehoram was thirty-two years old, and from that time he reigned eight years; though he reigned only five or six, as sole king after the death of his father. (Note, 1:17.)

V. 18. The daughter, &c.] Perhaps Jehoshaphat hoped

21 So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him: and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents.

22 Yet 'Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then 'Libnah revolted at the same time.

23 And 'the rest of the acts of Joram, and a that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

24 And Joram 'slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and 'Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 ¶ In the 'twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.

26 'Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned 'one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was 'Athaliah, the 'daughter of Omri king of Israel.

27 And 'he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as did the house of Ahab: for he was 'the son-in-law of the house of Ahab.

28 ¶ And 'he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against 'Hazael king of Syria in 'Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram.

29 And king 'Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds 'which the Syrians had given him at 'Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And 'Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was 'sick.

lamp. See on 1 Kings 11:36. y 22. 3:9. 2 Chr. 21:3,10. z 2 Sam. 8:14. 1 Kings 22:47. a See on Gen. 27:40. b 19:8. Josh. 21:13. 2 Chr. 21:10. c 15:36. 3 Sam. 1 Kings 11:41. 14:22. 15:23. 2 Chr. 21:11—20. d See on 1 Kings 2:10. 11:43. 14:20,31. e 1 Chr. 3:11. 2 Chr. 21:17, 25:23. Jehoshaphat. 22:6. Asorah. f See on 16:17. 9:29. 2 Chr. 21:20. g 2 Chr. 22:2. h 9:21—27. 2 Chr. 22:5—8. i 11:13—16. † Or, granddaughter. k See on 18. l 18. 2 Chr. 22:3. Ec. 7:26. 2 Cor. 6:14—17. m 3:7. 1 Kings 22:4. 2 Chr. 18:2,3,31. 19:2. 22:5. n 12:13. 1 Kings 19:17. o Josh. 21:38. 1 Kings 11:13. 22:3. p 9:15. q Heb. sheweth. r The Syrians had wounded. † Called Ramoth. 28. q 9:16. 2 Chr. 22:6,7. † Heb. wounded. 1 Kings 22:34.

by thus marrying his son to Ahab's daughter, to cement a peace between the two kingdoms, and to bring back the Israelites to the worship of God at Jerusalem: but it was an unhalloved measure, and produced a contrary effect, in introducing idolatry into Judah, and most ruinous consequences to Jehoshaphat's posterity. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:2. 2 Chr. 19:2. 21:4. 22:5.) This affinity gave occasion to the same names in both families. Each had a Jehoram and an Ahaziah; but they all took after the house of Ahab.

V. 19. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Kings 11:12,13,34—36. v. 36.

V. 20—24. (Notes, 3:8,9. 1 Kings 22:47.) Notwithstanding Jehoram's decisive victory over the Edomites, he could not re-establish his authority over them. Perhaps he was hindered by the revolt of Libnah; (Note, 2 Chr. 21:8—11.) and by fears of further insurrections in his own kingdom, where he was become extremely odious. Thus the prophecy of Isaac was fulfilled, after Edom had been subject to Israel about a hundred and fifty years: nor did the Jews again acquire the dominion over Edom, till long after the Babylonish captivity. (Marg. Ref. y. a. Note, Gen. 27:39,40.)—Jehoram was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the sepulchres of the kings. (Notes, 2 Chr. 21:12—20.)

V. 26. Perhaps Omri adopted and educated Athaliah, who was his granddaughter, and the daughter of Ahab.

V. 28, 29. (Notes, 9:21—28.) Ahaziah was Jehoram's youngest son; his other sons having all been slain before his death. (Note, 2 Chr. 22:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6. Temporal deliverances are only respites, and, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," is a warning of universal application. (Note, John 5:10—14.)—When the Lord calls for judgments; famines, pestilences, wars, tempests, and earthquakes, obey his word: and if he contends he will overcome; for he will prolong the affliction, and make it more and more severe, until the sinner be either humbled or destroyed. (Note, Lev. 26:24.) When he "rendereth a fruitful land barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," he takes care of the remnant of his people, and abundantly recompenses their kindness to his servants for his sake; and they will also gladly embrace opportunities of requiting their benefactors, especially by their counsels and prayers: but open enemies sometimes escape better, than hypocrites or apostates.—Where the moral law of God is not violated, a real necessity will justify many deviations from the letter of ritual appointments: but believers will not choose to "reside longer among ignorant and ungodly

CHAPTER IX.

A young prophet, by Elisha's orders, goes to Ramoth-gilead; anoints Jehu as king over Israel, and directs him to exterminate Ahab's family, 1-10. Jehu acquiesces the captains, in procuring wine, and marches in haste to Israel against Joram, 11-16. Joram sends messengers to Jehu, who detain them, 17-20. He and Ahaziah meet Jehu; who kills Joram, and casts him into the field of Naboth, 21-25. Ahaziah is slain at Gur and buried at Jerusalem, 21-25. Jezebel, by Jehu's orders, is thrown out of the window, and trampled under foot, 30-33. She is eaten by dogs, as Elijah had predicted, 34-37.

AND Elisha the prophet called one of "the children of the prophets, and said unto him, **Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thy hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead:**

2 And when thou comest thither, look out there "Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber;

3 Then take the box of oil, and **pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, "I have**

a 4:1, 6:1-3. See on 1 Kings 20:35. b 4:9. 1 Kings 18:46. Jer. 1:17. Luke 12:35-37. 1 Pet. 1:13. c 1 Sam. 10:1, 16:1. 1 Kings 1:39. d 8:24, 29. 1 Kings 22:4, 20. e 14. 1 Kings 19:17. f 5:1. * Heb. *climber in a chamber*. 1 Kings 20:30. g 22. 25. *margine*. g x. 29:7. Lev. 8:12. 1 Sam. 16:1. 1 Kings 19:15. h 8:13. 1 Sam. 9:16. 15:1. 17. 16:12. Ps. 75:7. Prov. 8:15, 16. Jer. 27:5-7. Dan.

people than is needful, even when they behave kindly to them; but gladly return to the ordinances of God, and the communion of the saints. (*Notes*, Ruth 1:4-10.)—We know not what changes await us: we may soon be deceived by those who have hitherto been faithful to us, and need the help of those on whom we have not heretofore had any dependence.—The love of worldly riches induces men to various methods of fraud and oppression, and breaks through the most powerful obligations, or the strongest relative ties. Hence the benefit of magistracy, to preserve equity and order among mankind. Believers may, on important occasions, avail themselves of their privileges as members of the community; provided they are not actuated by covetousness or resentment, do not manifest a contentious spirit, and make no appeal in a doubtful cause, or in matters of no great importance. (*Note*, Matt. 5:38-42.) and rulers should award justice without respect of persons, and compel the injurious to restitution.—But the Lord himself will plead the cause of the defenceless and the oppressed, of the fatherless and the widow: he often effects his purpose by influencing the hearts of princes in their favour; and the most casual or trivial incident, which conduces to it, may prove an occasion of exciting praise and gratitude for his providential goodness.—The gratification of curiosity is more pleasing to the carnal mind, than the mortification of worldly lusts: and hypocrites, apostates, or profligates, on some occasions, will be pleased with conversation on religious topics, provided they have no reference to their own conscience, character, or conduct. (*Notes*, John 4:16-20. P. O. 16-26.) Thus they countenance each other in ungodliness, or buoy up presumptuous hopes: whilst they cannot endure the instructions, and will not imitate the example, of those teachers whom they most profess to admire.

V. 7-15. The Lord can procure his people a welcome, and spread them a table, even amidst their enemies; who, on some occasions, and especially in affliction, may be inclined to show them great kindness and respect. Yet few, even in that case, derive real benefit from their instructions, and disposition to do them good: but some honour redounds to God, and outward advantages accrue to his servants; who may without scruple receive them, as from him, when they are not required to flatter, or in any other way to act inconsistently with their profession.—Those who love God and man, must often weep upon a survey of the wickedness and misery of mankind; and a particular foresight of the state of the church, and of the world, would augment their sorrow. But little are men, when not exposed to temptation, aware of the desperate wickedness of their own hearts! They do not conceive themselves capable of those enormities, to which at present they feel no inducement; and it is deemed an insult upon them to suppose they are. But when the powerful attraction of great imaginary advantages approaches the carnal mind, the latent depravity begins to move; and they will surely come into contact, unless hindered by external obstructions, or by the power of God upon the heart. Then, the greedy dog, the ravening wolf, the subtle fox, the poisonous serpent, or the filthy swine, form feeble emblems of human depravity: the persons, who before were most inoffensive, become guilty of far greater rapacity, treachery, or cruelty, than the worst of these animals; and in their cooler moments doubtless often reflect with horror and astonishment at their awful progress. Those who, as mortified limbs, are continually cut off from the body politic, once no more thought of such criminality and condemnation, than any reader of these observations: and we are any of us capable, if left to ourselves, of the worst crimes perpetrated by the vilest pests and scourges of the world! This should remind us, "not to be high-minded but to fear," and to trust only in the Lord to preserve us from the deceitfulness of our own hearts. As the desire of greatness is a dangerous temptation, which has induced many to perpetrate

anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.

4 So the young man, *even* the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead,

5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were* sitting; and he said, "I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.

6 And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, "I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord, *even* over Israel.

7 And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that "I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel.

2:24, 4:35. 5:18. John 19:10, 11. 1 Sam. 16:2. Matt. 2:13. 10:16. J. Judg. 9:19. k Acts 23:18, 19. l See on 3. 1 Kings 1:34. 2 Chr. 22:7. Ps. 2:6. *marg.* 1a. 45:1. m 1 Kings 3:8. 10:2, 14:7. 16:2. n Deut. 32:35, 43. Ps. 94:1-7. Matt. 23:35. Luke 17:7. Rom. 12:19. 13:4. Heb. 10:30. Rev. 6:9, 10. 18:20. 19:2. o 33-37. 1 Kings 18:4, 21:15, 25.

the basest crimes; so power, however obtained, generally alters men's manners for the worse; and their inclinations to vice commonly increase, in proportion as they are able to commit it, without control, and with impunity. We ought therefore to be content and thankful in more obscure situations; and those, who are called to this dangerous pre-eminence, have need of double watchfulness and fervency in prayer.—When iniquity is conceived in the heart, means will be devised for its perpetration: and flattering language often cloaks the most malignant purposes: for sinners in general are satisfied with concealing their crimes from man, regardless of the all-seeing eye of God.—It is, in every case, an awful cruelty to flatter those with the hope of life, whom we suppose to be near dissolution: because they ought to be preparing for that important change, and to be counselled and warned so to employ their few remaining days or hours.

V. 16-29. When pious men choose wives for themselves, or take any measures in the marriage of their children, they should remember that their remote posterity are concerned, and that an improper choice may entail misery and ruin upon them.—Indulged children seldom prove wise or good men; and it is not often expedient to advance young people, needlessly and prematurely, to authority. Inferiors and dependents are often employed to chastise our rebellion against God, by their ill behaviour to us. He will not, however, break his promise or forsake his cause; but, whilst wicked men, from generation to generation, perish in their sins, the Son of David, the Light of his church, and of the world, ever lives to protect, bless, and comfort his people. May all the changes, troubles, and wickedness of the world, make us more earnest in securing an interest in his great salvation!

NOTES.—CHAPTER IX. V. 1. Elijah, many years before, had been commissioned to anoint Jehu, as a king of a new family, immediately appointed by God to reign over Israel, and to execute vengeance on the family and adherents of Ahab. (*Note*, 1 Kings 19:15-17.) But, a respite having been granted that prince, when he externally humbled himself before God, it seems, the anointing of Jehu was deferred likewise. (*Note*, 1 Kings 21:27-29.) so that this service now devolved on Elisha, as Elijah's successor and representative. But it required secrecy, and it was not proper he should perform it in person: as one of "the sons of the prophets," who was little known, might have a far better opportunity of escaping, if suspected by Jehoram's friends.—Elisha lived above forty years after this: (*Note*, 13:14.) and, probably, was not incapacitated by age or infirmities, for the labour and activity required on this occasion, but was for other reasons induced, or directed, to send a deputy. (*Marg. Ref.*)—When the ancients used great expedition, they girded up the skirts of their long upper garments with a girdle round their loins. (*Note*, 1 Pet. 1:13-16.)

V. 2, 3. Jehoram having retired from the army, (8:29.) Jehu seems to have been left first in command, having been long employed by Ahab's family. The directions given this young prophet were explicit; especially as to the secrecy to be observed, and the measures to be adopted for his own safety. (*Marg. Ref.*) The service was indeed peculiarly perilous: and Samuel had used caution, in a measure much less offensive. (*Note*, 1 Sam. 16:1, 2.)

V. 5-10. Jehu was engaged in converse or consultation with the other captains, when thus addressed by a person, it is probable, of mean appearance: yet when the young prophet said, "I have an errand" (or a word) "to thee, O captain," he readily went aside with him to learn his business. And immediately the prophet anointed him, explained the meaning of that transaction, and gave him an express commission from God. In all this, no doubt he exactly adhered to his instructions. (*Marg. Ref. n.s.*)—Israel, though generally idolatrous, was still "the people of the Lord." They were called by his name, and had a remnant of his worshippers among them: and Jehu was thus warned to use his authority in

8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel:

9 And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah:

10 And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, *Is all well?* wherefore came this *mad fellow* to thee? And he said unto them, *Ye know the man, and his communication.*

12 And they said, *It is false; tell us now.* And he said, *Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel.*

13 Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.

14 So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria.)

15 But king Joram was returned to be healed

¶ See on 1 Kings 14:10, 11, 21-22. q 14:26. Deut. 32:36. 1 Kings 14:10, 11, 15-20, 21-22. s 1 Kings 15:3, 4, 11-12. 135:36. 1 Kings 21:23. Jer. 22:19 v 3. Jer. 3:26. s 17:19, 22; 4:26; 5:21. y 1a. 59:15. marg. Jer. 29:26. Hos. 9:2. Mark 3:21. John 10:20. Acts 17:18, 36-24. 1 Cor. 4:10. 2 Cor. 5:13. z See on 6-10. a Matt. 21:7, 8. Mark 11:7, 8. b 2 Sam. 15:10. 1 Kings 1:34-39. Ps. 47:5-7. 98:6. * Heb. reigneth. c 31. 8:12-15, 10:9, 15:30. 1 Kings 15:27. 16:7, 9, 16. d 8:23. 1 Kings 22:3. e Heb. Jehoram. e 8:29. 2 Chr. 22:6. f Heb.

obedience to God, and to promote true religion. The family and adherents of Ahab were criminals condemned by the Supreme Judge; Jehu was appointed to execute the sentence; the kingdom was his recompense for the service: and, as far as he acted according to the instructions given him, he needed not fear contracting guilt, or regard any reproach or opposition to which he might be exposed. The murder of the prophets and worshippers of God was more insisted upon, in this indictment, than even the worship of Baal. Jehoram had been spared many years, but he continued impenitent; though not so wicked as Ahab, who was punished in his posterity. Jezebel had retained her authority, and persisted in idolatry, and in her enmity to JEHOVAH and his servants; though less spoken of in the reigns of her sons, than in that of her husband. Long space had been given her, but she had not repented; and her measure of iniquity was now full, and her awful doom most expressly denounced. (Marg. Ref. 35, 36. Notes, 1 Kings 21:23. Rev. 2:20-23.)

V. 11. *This mad fellow.* It is probable, that there were some peculiarities in the young prophet's manner and address, which made the captains conclude that he was one of the "sons of the prophets," and speak of him in this language; and some reference might be had to those vehement actions, which the prophets sometimes used, when influenced by the Spirit of prophecy: (Note, 1 Sam. 19:19-24.) but it seems rather to have resulted from profane contempt of religion, as it may be supposed they were generally idolaters. Indeed, without excepting him who "spake as never man spake," those, who have faithfully delivered the Lord's message to sinners, have in all ages been treated as madmen. (Marg. Ref. y.) They are so indifferent about those objects, which attract the senses, and which man naturally desires and pursues; and so engaged about those things which are invisible, and therefore generally neglected as if unreal; their judgment, conversation, maxims, and conduct are so contrary to those of other men; and they venture and endure so much, in pursuit of interests and objects of which others have no conception; that worldly men naturally conclude them to be mad, when they deem them honestly in earnest. (Notes, Mark 3:20, 21. 2 Cor. 5:13-15.) The charge however is often brought in self-defence: for, admitting the principles and practice of the devoted servants of God to be reasonable, wise, and necessary to happiness, the inference is undeniable; that the ambitious, the sensual, the covetous, the dissipated, the worldly, and the ungodly of every description, are fools and madmen to all intents and purposes.

Ye know, &c. Perhaps Jehu meant, that the captains knew the man to be a prophet; and must suppose that he came to admonish and instruct him: or he might intend to evade the question, as if the prophet's errand had nothing peculiar in it: but they would not be thus satisfied, knowing that something more was communicated to him. This is the common interpretation.—It may, however, be questioned, whether Jehu did not suspect that the young prophet acted in concert with the captains: and that they were previously acquainted with the man and his communication.

V. 12, 13. When the captains urged Jehu further, he

in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, If it be your minds, then let none go forth nor escape out of the city to go to tell it in Jezreel.

16 So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

17 And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take a horseman and send to meet them, and let him say, *Is it peace?*

18 So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it peace?* And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.

19 Then he sent out a second on horseback which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it peace?* And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.

20 And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously.

21 And Joram said, Make ready. And his

smote. e Heb. no escape, go, &c. 1 Sam. 27:9-11. f 8:29. 2 Chr. 22:6, 7. g 2 Sam. 13:31. 18:24. Is. 21:6-9, 11, 12, 56:10, 62:6. Ez. 33:2-9. Acts 20:26-31. h 7:14. i 19. 1 Sam. 16:4. 1 Kings 2:1, 3. Luke 10:5, 8. k 19:32. Is. 48:22, 59:8. Jer. 16:5. Rom. 3:17. l Or, marching. Hab. 1:6. 3:2. 11:16. Fe. 9:10. Is. 54:16. Dan. 11:44. ¶ Heb. in madia sa. ** Heb. blind. 1 Kings 20:14. marg. Mic. 1:18.

declared the business of the young prophet, with a frankness and boldness, which seem to have arisen from a divine energy on his mind; for, if the captains had not coincided with him, the discovery might have proved fatal to him. Some kind of faith in the word of God, spoken by the prophet, seems to have animated him to this hazardous undertaking, of which it does not appear that he had had any previous intention: and the minds of his companions also were surprisingly disposed to concur with him, by making him a kind of throne, and proclaiming him king with sound of trumpets. It is probable, that this was done on the top of some edifice, from which the people were generally informed of such public transactions as were proper to be communicated to them. Thus the conspiracy was openly avowed. While Jehoram had rendered himself odious by his crimes and oppressions to the nation in general; it may be supposed, that he was also unpopular in the army, through his severity and cruelty.

V. 14. It is evident that Ramoth-gilead was at this time in the hands of the Israelites: (15) but it is not certain, whether they had just taken it; or whether Hazael had raised the siege of it, having attempted in vain to retake it.—Jehoram's absence from the army proved of fatal consequence to him: he "escaped the sword of Hazael, but Jehu slew him." (1 Kings 19:17.)

V. 15-17. (8:28, 29.) Jezreel lay at a considerable distance from Ramoth-gilead, with the river Jordan between. Yet Jehu concerted his plan with such prudence, and executed it with such despatch; his adherents came so cordially into his interests, and so faithfully kept his counsel; and the people in the neighbourhood were either so ignorant about his intentions, or so regardless of them; that Jehoram received no tidings of his march, till Jehu's distant approach was perceived by the watchman! But the matter was of the Lord, and could not fail of success.

I see a company. (17) *A troop, or army,* as the word נֶחֱם signifies.

V. 18, 19. Perhaps Jehoram feared, lest the Syrians had obtained the victory over his troops, and driven them away from Ramoth: but Jehu, by compelling his messengers to turn behind him, prevented his obtaining any information, and increased his perplexity.

V. 20. *Furiously.* Some have rendered this, *He driveth slowly.* But Jehu was a vehement man, yet keen and sagacious, a fit instrument for his peculiar work. His approach might be seen at a great distance from a watchtower, as he came with an armed force; and it is most probable, that he travelled with as much celerity as he could.—The original word is exactly rendered in the margin, *in madness; or* from the same root as that above translated, *mad fellow.* (11.)

V. 21. Jehoram had no sufficient force to oppose Jehu's army, and he seems to have acted rashly in going out to meet him. But he still dreamed of peace, and was impatient to know, whether Jehu returned defeated by the Syrians, or triumphant over them. Thus Jehu's design was facilitated, and perhaps bloodshed prevented: and thus, according to the

chariot was made ready. And ^aJoram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and ^amet him in ^athe portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, ^aIs it peace, Jehu? And he answered, ^aWhat peace, so long as ^athe whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are so many?

23 And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, ^aThere is treachery, O Ahaziah.

24 And Jehu ^adrew a bow with his full strength, and smote ^aJehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he ^asunk down in his chariot.

25 Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, ^athe Lord laid this burden upon him;

26 Surely I have seen yesterday the ^ablood of Naboth, and the blood ^aof his sons, saith the Lord; and ^aI will requite thee in this ^aplat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord.

27 ^aBut when ^aAhaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the ^agarden-house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. ^aAnd they did so at the going up to Gur, which is by ^aIbleam. And he fled to ^aMegiddo, and died there.

m 2 Chr. 22:7. ^a Heb. found. Num. 20:14. *margin*. n 25. 1 Kings 21:1-7, 13, 14, 19. o *See on* 18. p *See on* 18. Is. 57:19-21. q 1 Kings 16:30-33, 18:4, 19:1, 21:8-10, 35. Nah. 3:4. Rev. 2:20 17:4, 18:3, 33. r 11:14. 2 Chr. 23:13. ^a Heb. *filled his hand with a bow*. s 1 Kings 22:34. Job 20:23-25. Ps. 21:20. Prov. 21:30. Ec. 8:12, 13. 1 Thes. 5:3. ^a Heb. *bowed*. t 1 Kings 21:15-21-29. Is. 13:1. Jer. 33:33-35. Nah. 1:1. Mat. 1:1. Matt. 11:30. ^a Heb. *blood*. u Deut. 24:16. 2 Chr. 24:25, 25:4. x Ex. 20:5. Deut. 5:9. Ex. 18:19. ^a Or, *portion*. y 8:29. Num. 16:26. 2 Chr. 22:7-9. Prov. 13:20. 2 Cor. 6:17. z 1 Kings 21:2. a Josh. 11:1. Judg. 1:27. b 23:29, 30. Judg. 1:27. 5:19. 1 Kings 4:12. c 12:21. 14:19, 20, 23:30. 2 Chr. 25:28, 35:24. d 8:16, 24:25, 2 Chr. 22:1, 2.

purpose of God, Jehoram was slain in the portion of Naboth; probably near the place where he and his sons had been put to death. (Notes, 25, 26. 1 Kings 21:17-19.)

V. 22. Idolatry is in Scripture called *whoredom*; and, when committed by the professed people of God, *adultery*, to denote the Lord's abhorrence of it. Jezebel's idolatries had been manifold and long-continued; and, as some think, attended by prostitution, according to the shameless practices of the Gentiles in their worship: of Jezebel's personal character in this respect nothing further is recorded. (Notes, Rev. 2:20-23. 14:8. 17:1, 2.) The words, *witchcrafts*, may allude to the fascinating artifices that harlots use to allure men to wickedness; by which her various methods of seducing the Israelites to idolatry seem to be intended. For this purpose she doubtless employed promises, presents, caresses, and flatteries; and on the other hand, frowns, threats, and persecutions; by which great multitudes were induced to conform to her religion, and join in her spiritual whoredom. As Jehu had been long unsuspected, in the court of Ahab and his sons, he probably had never before in any way protested against the worship of Baal.—Jehoram was answerable for Jezebel's crimes, because he countenanced and imitated them, instead of using his authority to repress them. (Note, 1 Kings 15:10-13.)

V. 23, 24. *Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 22:32-35.* V. 25, 26. In the vineyard of murdered Naboth, of which Jehoram seems to have kept possession, his body was left unburied, to be devoured by dogs, or beasts of prey: and the dogs, in some sense, licked the blood of Ahab, as flowing from the wounds of his son. (Note, 1 Kings 21:17-19.)—The words of the prophets were called *burdens*, as predicting a heavy burden of misery to the guilty party, which he could neither endure nor remove. (*Marg. Ref. t. Note, Jer. 23:33-40.*)—It is probable that Jehu had seldom reflected on Elisha's words during the intervening years, till these events brought the substance of them fresh to his recollection.

Rode together. (25) Ahab's guard were wont to ride in pairs, two and two; and Jehu and Bidkar rode at that time together, and heard Elijah's words. *Bp. Patrick.*

The blood of his sons. (26) This evidently implies that Naboth's sons were put to death along with him: for to suppose, that the words only mean that they were deprived of their estate, and so impoverished, and as it were starved, is altogether unreasonable. (Note, 1 Kings 21:8-14.)

V. 27, 28. Ahaziah was Ahab's grandson by Athaliah; and being also an idolater, he was within Jehu's commission. So that, being found with Jehoram, he shared his punishment; though, as son to pious Jehoshaphat, he was allowed an honorable burial. The circumstances elsewhere recorded concerning his death, render it probable that he was not

28 And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 And ^ain the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

[Practical Observations.]

30 ^aAnd when Jehu was come to Jezreel, ^aJezebel heard of it; and she ^apainted her face, and ^atired her head, and looked out at a window.

31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, ^aHad ^aZimri ^apeace, who slew his master?

32 And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, ^aWho is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three ^aeunuchs.

33 And he said, ^aThrow her down. So they threw her down: and ^asome of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot.

34 And when he was come in, ^ahe did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now ^athis cursed woman, and bury her: for ^ashe is a king's daughter.

35 And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of ^aher hands.

36 Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, ^aThis is the word of the Lord, which he spake ^aby his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel:

37 And ^athe carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

e 1 Kings 19:1, 2. ^a Heb. *put her eyes in painting*. Jer. 4:30. Ex. 23:40. (Is. 3:18-34. Ex. 24:17. 1 Tim. 2:9, 10. 1 Pet. 3:3. g 1 Kings 16:9-19. h *See on* 18-22. i Ex. 3:25. j 1 Chr. 12:18. 2 Chr. 11:12. Ex. 118:6. 124:1, 2. ^a Or, *chamberlains*. k 1 Chr. 2:15, 31. Acts 12:20. l *See on* 1 Kings 21:11, 126. 7:30. Is. 25. 10. Lam. 1:15. Mic. 7:10. Mal. 4:3. Matt. 5:13. Heb. 10:29. m 1 Kings 18:41. Ruth. 3:15. ym. 6:4. n 1 Kings 21:25. Prov. 10:7. Is. 65:15. Matt. 25:41. o 1 Kings 16:31. p Job 31:3. Acts 12:23. q *See on* 1 Kings 21:23. ^a Heb. *by the hand of*. r 14:33. Lev. 6:36. 2 Sam. 12:25. r Ps. 83:10. Ec. 6:3. Is. 14:18-20. Jer. 8:2. 16:4. 22:19. 36:30. Ex. 32:23-30.

slain, till Jehu had inflicted vengeance on Jezebel at Jezreel. (Notes, 30-37. 2 Chr. 22:7-9.)

Garden-house. (27) It seems, that Ahab, notwithstanding Elijah's awful message to him, and his external humiliation, proceeded with his plan of forming Naboth's vineyard, or part of it, into a garden of herbs; and this house is supposed to have been built on it, for the accommodation of those who kept it. (Notes, 1 Kings 21:1, 2, 27-29.)—*Died there.* Ahaziah was taken at Megiddo, and brought to Jehu, who slew him, probably at Jezreel. But he died with the others of the house of Ahab, which is supposed to be here meant.

V. 29. Jehoram began to reign over Judah, in the fifth year of Jehoram king of Israel: it is probable, in the very beginning of it; and he died, and was succeeded by Ahaziah, in the eleventh or twelfth year of Jehoram; that is, the close of the eleventh, or beginning of the twelfth. This space is called *eight years*, as comprising six whole years, and a portion of two others, computed according to the reigns of the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30-37. Jezebel had no way of escaping or resisting Jehu: she therefore aimed to outrage and intimidate him. Instead of assuming the habit of a mourner, or a suppliant, she arrayed herself in all the magnificence of royalty, and stationed herself in a conspicuous place to wait his arrival. She used the method, customary in the east, of giving herself a majestic appearance, by a kind of paint which dilates the eyebrows, and makes the eyes look large and bright. And when Jehu approached the place, she accosted him by saying, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" Zimri had destroyed the house of Baasha, and had soon after fallen before Omri the father of Ahab: (Note, 1 Kings 16:8-19.) but Zimri had had no commission for what he did; and Jehu was expressly ordered to take vengeance on the house of Ahab. He was not therefore to be thus intimidated: for finding upon inquiry, that her chamberlains were ready to join him; (being either mercenary men who were willing to purchase his favour, or being weary of Jezebel's imperious and haughty disposition;) he ordered her to be thrown from the window, and thus she was dashed to pieces, and trodden under foot by the horses. "See how suddenly courtiers change with the fortune of their master." *Bp. Patrick.*—Afterwards, when he thought of burying her, in honour of her royal extraction, he found himself disappointed; for her mangled body, (having probably been plundered of its costly attire,) was entirely torn in pieces, and devoured by dogs. This reminded him of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which he had before forgotten: and he observed that her carcass was to become as dung upon the face of the earth.—This was a dreadful and most ignominious end, worthy of one who ^aled been such a

CHAPTER X.

Jehu, by letters to the elders, causes Ahab's seventy sons to be slain at Samaria, and their heads to be brought to Jezreel, 1-7. He shows this to be a fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy, and destroys all Ahab's kindred in Jezreel, 8-11. In his way to Samaria he slays forty-two of Ahab's brethren, 12-14. Attended by Jehonadab, he slays all that remained to Ahab in Samaria, 15-17. He assembles all the worshippers of Baal by stratagem, puts them to death, and breaks down Baal's images and temple, 18-28. He follows the sins of Jeroboam; yet the kingdom to the fourth generation is promised him, for destroying the house of Ahab, 29-31. Hazael smites Israel, 32, 33. Jehu dies, and Jehoahaz succeeds him, 34-36.

AND Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children, saying,

2 Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and

there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;

3 Look even out the best and meekest of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.

4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?

5 And he that was over the house, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.

a Judge, 9:30, 10:4, 12:14. *b* 5:3. *c* 1 Kings 13:32, 16:29, 2 Chr. 22:9. *d* See on 5:6. *e* Deut. 17:16, 18:1. *f* 1 Kings 21:8-14. *g* Heb. nourishers. *h* See on 5:6. *i* Deut. 17:14, 15. *j* Sam. 10:24, 11:15. *k* 2 Sam. 2:8, 9. *l* 1 Kings 1:24, 25, 12:20. *m* 2 Sam. 12:12.

curse to Israel and Judah, but had brought the heaviest curses upon herself; and who was a specimen, and in some respects a type, of all ringleaders in idolatry, and tempters to that crime. Yet "this cursed woman," the daughter of a king, was also the wife of a king, the mother of two kings, the mother-in-law of a king, and the grandmother of a king, all in her own life! So vain are all earthly honours and distinctions!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The long-suffering of God enhances the condemnation of those who are not led by it to repentance. (*Notes, Rom. 2:4-6. 9:22, 23.*)—In his appointed time he will raise up and qualify suitable instruments for performing his purpose, whether of vengeance or of mercy.—The faithful servants of God must stand prepared for arduous and perilous undertakings; and obedience to his commandments must have the precedence before all other duties. But, as the written word is at present our only rule of duty, it seldom happens, that we are required to act, even in *apparent* violation of our relative obligations to princes, parents, masters, or other superiors; except in professing those truths, and attending on those ordinances, which they may disapprove, discountenance, or prohibit, or in keeping aloof from those superstitions, or worldly places and practices, which they would enjoin.—Yet if, after all endeavours "to render honour to whom honour is due," we should be reproached or ill-treated for our conscientious obedience to God, we must bear it with meekness and patience: (*Notes, Acts 4:13-22, 19:23-28. 5:29-31, 41, 42.*) and when in danger of persecution, we are allowed to flee from it. They, who are employed as ministers, will be the most exposed in these respects: for the message of the Lord, meeting sinners in the midst of their worldly pursuits, singles them out, by an application to their hearts and consciences, as if they were addressed by name: (*Note, 2 Sam. 12:7.*) and while some are thus separated from their companions, and by the union of the Holy Spirit, prepared for the service of God; others are marked out, in the midst of their prosperity, as in danger of eternal misery. Whilst, however, we conscientiously adhere to our instructions, we shall be accepted, and preserved as long as is really good for us.

V. 11-29. Every man should well consider to what work the Lord calls him, and in what manner and for what ends he ought to do it. His special commission justifies the severest executions of his enemies: but our general instructions to do good, and to bless, and to overcome evil with good, point out to us more delightful services, in which we should thankfully abound from day to day. Yet the vengeance of God will fall with peculiar weight upon the head of those that oppress and persecute his people and ministers; who may deem themselves highly favoured, if they are only reviled, and reproached as fools and madmen. Satisfied with the testimony of their conscience, and the Lord's gracious acceptance, they may rejoice and be exceedingly glad, at being thus ranked with prophets, apostles, and the Saviour himself: and instead of resenting the opprobrious terms, as an intolerable affront, may glory in them as the most honourable distinction. (*Notes, Matt. 5:10-12. 1 Pet. 4:12-16.*) They should, however, be extremely careful to avoid all ridiculous and unreasonable words and actions, that they may give no just occasion to such malignant and injurious charges; which, when unmerited, cannot possibly injure them, except they make them angry, contentious, discontented, or reluctant to their duty.—The Lord often secretly disposes men to concur in his designs, in a manner contrary to their former conduct, and to all human probabilities: and then such events, as would otherwise have been impracticable, are speedily and easily accomplished, and to ask advice, is often the readiest way of obtaining concurrence and assistance. Prudence, united with vigour and despatch, promises success in the most arduous designs; and a disposition to "drive furiously," may sometimes fit a person for peculiar services, which would not so well suit the temper of more sedate and amiable persons: yet in general it is no commendation of a man's character, or qualification for the most desirable kinds of usefulness.—While sudden destruction is rapidly approaching, sinners are still saying, Peace, peace: but what peace can there be to the impenitent workers of iniquity, and to those who have

tempted others to join them in rebellion against God?—Notorious sinners entail judgment on their posterity unto the third and fourth generation, especially when these walk in the steps of their progenitors.—The circumstances of temporal judgment are sometimes remarkably calculated to call to remembrance the crimes for which they are inflicted: so that the most superficial observers must perceive the justice of God in them, and acknowledge that the Scriptures are fulfilled. How will it then be in "the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render unto every one according to his works?" And if we would escape the destruction of the ungodly, we must avoid all intimate acquaintance with them; for "a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

V. 30-37. Some haughty transgressors have so long prospered in their crimes, and domineered over all around them, that they suppose they can outbrave all opposition, and defy even the justice of God himself. Their hearts grow more hardened and insolent, when they are evidently upon the brink of destruction: and an unhumiliated spirit, in alarming and humiliating circumstances, is a distinguishing mark of those, who "are appointed unto wrath."—They who carefully adorn their persons "by painting the face," "tiring the hair, and putting on of apparel," whilst their souls are polluted with the guilt and deilement of innumerable, unrepented, unpardoned, unmortified iniquities, should sometimes turn aside to view themselves in this mirror, and to contemplate the conduct and fate of Jezebel: especially those who use these arts to seduce others from the ways of truth and righteousness. Such persons, however noble, wealthy, beautiful, or successful, are emphatically *accursed*; under the curse of God themselves, and the cursed instruments of bringing others into the same condemnation.—Persons of royal extraction or authority, naturally annex the idea of *sacred* to their distinctions; yet they often pay no regard to the *sacred* service and honour of the King of kings: but how can they expect the conscientious obedience of their subjects, whilst they are in a state of actual rebellion against their Sovereign; and attempting to corrupt the morals and principles of the people? Indeed traitors are justly execrated, and seldom prosper: but the Lord often uses them as the instruments of his righteous vengeance against ungodly princes.—Court-favourites are commonly a fickle, uneserving people. For the sake of emolument, they are very assiduous and lavish in their flatteries: but when a revolution takes place, they often betray, or even murder, the same unhappy persons, to secure themselves, or to obtain still greater preferment! This is especially to be feared by those who render themselves odious through insolence and wickedness; and who are only served out of slavish fear or mercenary hope.—Let proud tyrants and oppressors study this chapter with fear and trembling: the loftiest will be brought low, and every one of them, in his turn, must give an account unto God, with whom "is no respect of persons." The anguish of Jezebel's death, and the disgrace of her mangled limbs, faintly shadow forth the misery and contempt, which at and after death will be the portion of those, who have been "the terror of the mighty in the land of the living;" whose very memory shall rot in infamy. This the believer will foresee and expect; and at length all the world shall witness it with astonishment. May we flee from that "wrath which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" and seek to secure an interest in those precious promises, that will assuredly be performed in due season!

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1-7. These seventy persons were Ahab's descendants by several wives, probably including the sons of Jehoram. They resided at Samaria, as a more secure situation than Jezreel: or as some think, they fled thither from Jezreel, when Jehoram was slain: attended by the rulers or elders of Jezreel, who might be supposed most attached to the interests of the family; and by those who had superintended their education. Doubtless, many of the elders were the same persons, who had put Naboth and his sons to death in obedience to Jezebel; and, their consciences and principles having been debauched by such services, they were equally ready to murder the family of Ahab at Jehu's command. (*Note, 1 Kings 21:8-14.*) Jehu seems to have been aware of their base disposition; and he wrote letters to

6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. (Now the king's sons being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city which brought them up.)

7 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel.

8 ¶ And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning.

9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who slew all these?

10 Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the Lord hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah.

11 So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

12 ¶ And he arose and departed, and came to

Samaria. And as he was at the shearing-house in the way,

13 Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah, and we go down to salute the children of the king and the children of the queen.

14 And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing-house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them. [Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thy hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot.

16 And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord. So they made him ride in his chariot.

17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, still he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spake to Elijah.

18 ¶ And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much.

19 Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let

* Heb. for me. See on 9:32. Matt. 12:30. Luke 9:50. k Num. 25:4. See on 1 Kings 21:10-11. 1 Deut. 5:9. Josh. 7:24, 25. Job 21:19. Is. 14:21, 22. Rev. 9:20-23. m 9:11, 1. 1 Kings 21:21. 2 Chr. 21:14. Matt. 14:8-11. n 2 Sam. 11:13-21. 1 Kings 21:14. Mark 6:52. o Deut. 21:22. p 1 Sam. 19:3. Is. 5:3. q See on 9:14-24. Hos. 1:4. r 1 Sam. 3:14. 15:22. Jer. 44:28, 29. Zech. 1:6. Mark 13:31. s See on 9:7-10. 1 Kings 21:21-24, 25. t Heb. by the hand of. 9:35. marg. † Or, acquaintance. ‡ 23:20. 1 Kings 18:19, 40, 42, 46. Rev. 19:20. 26:10. u Josh. 10:30. 11:8. 1 Kings 14:10, 15, 23, 26. 11:21, 22. Job 18:19, 20. 109:13. Is. 14:21, 22. § Heb. house of shepherds binding sheep. || Heb. found.

them, that by killing the young princes by their hands, he might avoid odium, and prevent further bloodshed, and forward the completion of his purpose: for as Samaria was strongly fortified, and defended by a much more powerful garrison than Jezreel; it might have stood out against him for a long time, and at last have been reduced with great difficulty, if the princes had courageously defended it. He was indeed commissioned to destroy all the house of Ahab, and he was not at all scrupulous about the means of doing it: otherwise he would have hesitated at employing men to serve him, with such base treachery and murder. But regardless of this, he, by an intimidating challenge, assured them, that if they attempted to protect their royal charge, the matter must be decided by the sword. He knew their strength, and he would have them to be aware of his resolution. As, however, they did not fear the vengeance and power of God, but the courage and success of Jehu, whom they despaired of resisting, they unreservedly submitted to him. Nor did they, when they received his second letter, so much as beg that others might be appointed to slay the young princes; but, as it seems, without reluctance, at the first word, beheaded them all. Doubtless they had brought them up delicately, repeatedly avowed their attachment to them, and bestowed many flattering encomiums upon them. (Note, 9:30-37.) They probably expected a reward from Jehu; but they seem to have been slain among the other adherents of Ahab's family. (17)—Most of these princes must have been grown men, though some might be minors or children.

V. 8-10. The heads of Ahab's sons, having been laid in a place of public concourse, would occasion much amazement and many inquiries: which gave Jehu an opportunity of addressing the multitude on the subject. He meant to abate the odium of his own conduct towards the family of Ahab, by contrasting it with the atrocious treachery and cruelty of those professed friends, who had been so entirely confided in by Ahab and his family. At the same time he reminded them, that the whole was a performance of the word of the Lord by Elijah, which would receive a still more exact completion: instead, therefore, of condemning the persons employed in this bloody work, they ought to adore the truth and justice of God, and submit to his will. Thus he likewise avowed his purpose of going on with what he had begun: but, as the commission given him by the prophet was not publicly known, he did not mention it. (Notes, 9:5-10, 25, 26. 1 Kings 21:17-26. Hos. 1:4, 5.)

V. 11. Priests.] These seem to have been the priests, or prophets, of Baal and other idols, who had eaten at Jezebel's table, and who presided over all the others. As they were strongly attached to Ahab's family, Jehu may be supposed to have put them to death from reasons of state, rather than from zeal against idolatry.

V. 13, 14. All the sons of Jehoram, the father of Ahaziah, had been slain by the Philistines, during the life of Jehoram; (Notes, 2 Chr. 21:16-20. 22:1.) but these persons seem to

9:24, 29. 9:21-27. 1 Chr. 21:17, 22, 1-10. * Heb. the peace of. y 10:11. 1 Kings 20:13. z 18:18. 11:2. 1 Chr. 22:10. ** Heb. and. 13:31. margine. a Jer. 35:8, 14. 19. Jonadab. b 1 Chr. 2:55. † Heb. blessed. See on Gen. 31:5. 47:17, 10. c 1 Chr. 12:17, 18. John 21:15-17. Gal. 4:12. d Ezra 10:19. Ez. 17:18. Gal. 2:9. e Acts 8:31. f 81. 9:7-9. Num. 23:4. 24:13-16. 1 Kings 19:10, 17. Prov. 27:2. Matt. 6:2. Rom. 10:2. g See on 11:9, 8. Pa. 109:8, 9. Mal. 4:1. h See on 10:9, 25, 26. 1 Kings 21:21. 13:2. 1 Kings 18:31, 32. 18:19, 22, 40. k Job 13:7. Rom. 3:8. Phil. 4:8. 13:13. 1 Kings 22:6. m 21. n 11.

have been the sons of Ahaziah's brethren, or his nephews. They belonged however to the family of Ahab, and fell within Jehu's commission. (Marg. Ref. x.) They supposed Jehoram and Jezebel to be still living in prosperity, and were going in a company to see them: and thus they met their doom, and were slain by Jehu.

V. 15, 16. (Notes, Jer. 35.) Jehonadab was eminent for his cordial attachment to the worship of JEHOVAH, and for a life of strict piety, and deadness to the world. Having therefore heard that Jehu was executing the predicted vengeance upon the house of Ahab, he seems to have entertained hopes of a thorough reformation, and was desirous of giving his cordial support to so good a work: and he went to meet Jehu, who, with apparent piety, pronounced a blessing upon him; inquiring whether he met his sincere affection with reciprocal cordiality. (Marg. Ref.) Indeed some think, that Jehonadab first blessed Jehu, as Jacob had blessed Pharaoh; and that then Jehu addressed him. (Note, Gen. 47:7.) Being, however, satisfied with Jehonadab's answer, he took him up into his chariot; secretly elated, as it seems, with the concurrence of so pious a person, and expecting by his influence to acquire the full confidence of the people. But, had he intended effectually to reform religion, he would doubtless have sent for Elisha, to counsel him and concur with him; and his neglect, in that particular, was no favourable indication of his designs. He seems to have ostentatiously boasted of his "zeal for the Lord," and wanted to have it noticed: (Notes, Num. 24:16. Prov. 27:2.) but in reality he was influenced by carnal policy, united with a temporary conviction, and not by genuine, pious zeal.

V. 17. The rulers and elders of Samaria readily allowed Jehu and his company to enter the city, and surrendered all its strong-holds and forces up to him: but as no exception is mentioned, when, it is said, "He slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria," it is generally and probably concluded, that he slew the traitorous rulers and elders also. Many love the treachery, who despise or detest the traitors; and none, when their purpose is answered, afterwards trust them. (Note, Matt. 27:3-5.)

V. 18-20. The kings of Israel, who had seized the throne by conspiring against their predecessors, had commonly invited or exceeded their idolatry; and this gave plausibility to Jehu's stratagem: but it was a measure which cannot be justified or at all excused. It would have been sufficient, if he had destroyed the temples and images of Baal, and put to death the known abettors and ringleaders of his worship, and every one who should afterwards attempt to revive it. But to draw them into a snare, by a direct falsehood, and to tempt them to commit idolatry, that he might slay them in the very act, was "to do evil, that good might come," and resembled the abhorred maxim of those who maintain, that faith is not to be kept with heretics. (Notes, Josh. 9:19, 20. 2 Sam. 13:22-29. Rom. 3:5-8.)

V. 21. Numbers doubtless had been drawn in to bow the

none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal: whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. ^aBut Jehu did *it* in subtlety, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

20 And Jehu said, ^aProclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*.

21 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. ^aAnd they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another.

22 And he said unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth ^avestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.

23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

24 And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, ^aIf any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go, his life shall be* for the life of him.

25 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, ^aGo in, and slay them; ^alet none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.

26 And they brought forth the ^aimages out of the house of Baal, ^aand burned them.

27 And they brake down the ^aimage of Baal and brake down the house of Baal, and made it ^aa draught-house unto this day.

28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

29 ^aHowbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who ^amade Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were ^ain Beth-el, and that were in Dan.

30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, ^aBecause thou hast done well in executing *that which is* right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab ^aaccording to all that was in my heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

31 But Jehu ^atook no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for ^ahe departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

32 ^aIn those days the LORD began to ^acut Israel short: and ^aHazeel smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

33 From Jordan ^aeastward, all the land of ^aGilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and ^athe Manassites from Arzer, which is by the river Arnon, ^aeven Gilead and Bashan.

34 Now ^athe rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, ^aare they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

35 And Jehu ^aslept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And ^aJehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

36 And ^athe time that Jehu reigned over ^aIsrael in Samaria was twenty and eight ^ayears.

^a See on 18:24, 12:11, 13:15-15:12, 16:18, 1:18, 2:3, ^a Heb. Sanctify. 1 Kings 18:20, 21:12, 22:12, 1:11, ^a Job 3:2, 11-11, Rev. 16:16, ^a 1 Kings 16:2, 2:12, 16:27, ^a Job, ^a Gal. that they shall march to march. ^a Ex. 28:2, Matt. 22:11, 12:12, 24:42, ^a Ex. 9:5, 5:5, ^a Deut. 13:8-11, ^a Ex. 22:31, 22:16, 18:17, ^a Heb. march, ^a Heb. sanctify, 1 Kings 14:24, ^a 19:18, 2:20, 5:21, ^a 18:1, 24:7, 11, ^a Lev. 26:30, ^a Deut. 7:5, 25, 1 Kings 16:32, 17:2, 34:7-7, ^a 1 Kings 16:11, ^a Dan. 2:35, 29, ^a 13:21, 11, 21, 15, 19, 21, 25, 17, 22, 1 Kings 12:30-30, 13:33, 34, 14:16, ^a Gen. 29:9, ^a Ex. 32:21, 1 Sam. 2:24, Mark 5:24-26, 1 Cor. 9:9-13, Gal. 2:12, 13, ^a c Ex. 32:4, Hos. 5:5, 10:5, 13:2, ^a d 1

Kings 10:22, ^a 1 Kings 21:29, ^a Ex. 29:18-20, ^a Hos. 1:4, ^a 1 Sam. 15:18-24, 1 Kings 10:42, 21:22, ^a g 35, 13:10, 14:23, 15:8, 12, ^a Heb. observed not, ^a Deut. 4:15, 23, 1 Kings 2:4, ^a Ps. 39:1, 119:9, Prov. 4:23, ^a Heb. 2:1, 12:15, 11:1, ^a 5:33, 10:12, 13, 2 Chr. 6:16, ^a Neh. 10:29, ^a Ps. 76:10, ^a Ex. 36:27, ^a Dan. 9:10, ^a 1 See on 29:3, 3, 1 Kings 14:16, ^a Heb. cut off the ends of, ^a m 12:12, 13:22, 1 Kings 19:17, ^a Heb. toward the rising of the sun, ^a Num. 32:33-42, ^a 1:1, ^a 3:12-17, ^a Josh. 13:9-12, ^a 11 Or, even to Gilead, ^a c Am. 1:3, ^a c 12:19, 13:8, ^a See on 1 Kings 11:41, 14:19, 29, ^a p See on 2 Sam. 7:12, 1 Kings 1:21, 2:10, 14:20, 31, 13:1, 7, ^a Heb. the days were.

knee to Baal, in order to obtain the favour, or escape the displeasure of their rulers, who did not cordially approve of that idolatry, though indifferent about the worship of JEHOVAH. And these would keep away till Jehu's intentions were more manifest: but the zealous idolaters were judicially infatuated, and attended. Their number must have been small, compared with the state of things in the first days of Elijah: but Jehoram was not so zealous for the worship of Baal, as Ahab had been; and the incessant labours of Elisha, and the sons of the prophets, must have produced very great effects.—Some expositors, however, think that by the servants of Baal, (as in the original,) his worshippers in general are not meant, but the persons who ministered to the prophets and priests of Baal, as the Levites and Nethinims did to the sons of Aaron.

V. 22. *Vestments.*] The prophets, priests, and servants of Baal wore distinguishing garments, in which they were accustomed to perform their religious services. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Zeph. 1:4.*)

V. 23. *None of, &c.*] This was spoken in a dissembled zeal to preserve the purity of the worship of Baal: but had not the idolaters been judicially infatuated, they must have suspected some design concealed under such a precaution.

V. 24, 25. (*Note, 1 Kings 20:41, &c.*)—Perhaps, all the servants of Baal were not collected, nor all others separated, till the sacrifices were placed upon the altar; and therefore they were permitted to go through with their worship.—We may suppose that Jehonadab so much approved the substance of Jehu's service, that he was willing to allow for the informality with which it was performed: otherwise he certainly could not approve of his dissimulation, or his attendance on an idolatrous sacrifice with apparent satisfaction. When the captains and men, employed by Jehu, had slain all the priests and servants of Baal, within the precincts of the temple, (which a small company of armed men might readily do, some watching at the gates to intercept those who attempted to escape, and others entering sword in hand among a defenceless confined company;) and had made themselves sure that they were all dead, by casting out their bodies; they hastened to "the city of the house of Baal" to complete Jehu's design. For it seems that the buildings around the temple of Baal and the courts of the temple, which had been erected for the accommodation of his priests and their attendants, were so numerous, as to form a kind of city by themselves.

V. 26, 27. *Marg. Ref.—A draught-house.* (27) The citizens thenceforth made a practice of carrying all the filth and rubbish of Samaria to that place, in contempt and abhor-

rence of the idolatry which had been there committed. (*Marg. Ref. &c.*)

V. 28. After this, the worship of Baal does not appear to have ever been restored in the kingdom of Israel, though other idolatry abounded.

V. 29-31. Had Jehu acted from genuine zeal for the honour of God, in destroying the worship of Baal, he would also have put down the worship of the golden calves; that idolatry being as expressly forbidden by the *second*, as the other was by the *first* commandment. But that was a politic and profitable sin, and it appeared dangerous to attempt any thing against it. In his general conduct also "he took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD . . . with all his heart," so that his religious zeal was partial, politic, and selfish. The LORD, however, sent a prophet to assure him, that he had done right, in executing vengeance on Ahab's family, as well as in destroying the worship of Baal; and to promise him a suitable recompense. Accordingly, his family sat on the throne of Israel longer than any other family did, either before or after: as the fourth generation reached to above one hundred years from the time when Jehu ascended the throne. (*Notes, 15:8, 12.*) Yet, in other respects these very actions of Jehu were deemed deserving of punishment. (*Note, Hos. 1:4, 5.*) The repetition used concerning Jeroboam, "who made Israel to sin," emphatically shows the extreme criminality of his conduct in the sight of God, as thus opening the way, and setting the example, for all the idolatries of Israel, till that kingdom was subverted. He was, in some respects, answerable for the whole.

V. 32-36. Hazeel smote that region, which lay east of Jordan: but he did not desolate it: this was afterwards done by the kings of Assyria. (*Note, 1 Chr. 5:25, 26.*) At this time he committed those barbarities which Elisha had predicted, and we may suppose that the miseries of Israel were very great. (*Notes, 8:12, 13. Am. 1:3-5.*) But from the period, when Jehu ceased to do the work assigned him by God, his actions and might are no further noticed in sacred Scripture, and the account of his reign is very compendious. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. How soon are the most flourishing families and kingdoms desolated, when God arises to execute his judgments!—Such as bequeath his blessing to their children in answer to their prayers, and as a gracious recompense of their faith and charity, provide in a far better manner for them, than those who leave estates to their evil descendants, burdened with the indignation of the Lord, for their injustice, oppression,

CHAPTER XI.

Athaliah murders the seed royal of Judah: but Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, is preserved by Jehoshaphat in the temple. 1-3. Jehoiada the high priest, in the seventh year, having taken proper measures, anoints and crowns him, 4-12. Athaliah, pressing into the temple, is seized and slain; 13-16. Jehoiada makes a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people; and destroys the worship of Baal, 17, 18. Joash reigns in peace, and the people rejoice, 19-21.

AND when ^bAthaliah ^bthe mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose ^cand destroyed all the ^cseed royal.

a 2^d Chr. 22:10, 24:7. b 8:26, 9:27. c Matt. 2:13, 16, 21:38, 39. * Heb. seed of the kingdom. 25:25. marg. Jer. 41:1. d 2 Chr. 22:11. Jehoshaphat, the high priest. f 12:12. Jehoshaphat. g 8:19. Prov. 21:30. Is. 7:6, 7. 37:35. 65:8, 9. Jer.

and impiety.—The selfishness of the human heart gives peculiar energy to those temptations, which powerfully assail their hopes and fears as to this life. Where this principle has the ascendancy, men may be induced to such treachery and cruelty, as before they never thought of; and those, who influence their inferiors to practise iniquity for them, need not to be surprised if they commit similar crimes against them. But nothing except faith, fear of God, love to his name, and the hope of eternal life, can give a decided victory over all temptations; and enable us to obey the Lord, and venture all consequences in his service.—Those who have done things really, or apparently evil, are often disposed to draw in others to act in a manner more evidently and grossly iniquitous; and then to conclude, that they shall be acquitted by righteous judges, not being themselves so atrociously criminal. Yet the law of God, and not any conduct of man, is the rule by which our actions are to be judged; and, though tempters generally prove accusers, a moiety of the guilt of every crime perpetrated at their instance, properly belongs to them.—We readily perceive the propriety of submitting where we are unable to withstand, and of taking warning by the examples of those who have in vain opposed the will of earthly princes; at least we are naturally disposed at any price to pacify their displeasure. But are not sinners sensible that they cannot stand against the indignation of the Almighty? And yet they persist in rebellion against him, and will not take proper measures, or make proper submissions, to avert his wrath and recover his favour!—If we call ourselves the servants of earthly potentates, they expect that our obedience to their mandates should evince the sincerity of our professions; and if we are the Lord's, we must show that we are devoted to him by doing his will; and he never did, nor can command any thing unjust or unreasonable.—In the most awful transactions however, even though attended by the basest villanies, the truth and justice of God ought to be acknowledged; nay, true faith assures us of them, even when to us imperceptible: for no word of God can fall to the ground, but all will be performed; and then his glory will be conspicuous to the whole world.—We should dread and abhor the man who had murdered our parents or children, the wife of our bosom, or our beloved friends; and who had aimed a dagger at our hearts, and having repeatedly wounded us, still avowed his purpose of assassinating us. But when we look back upon our deceased relatives, or forward to our own dissolution; when we reflect on the sufferings which we or ours endure or fear, or on those miseries which render the earth like one great hospital, slaughter-house, and burying-ground; when we consider the innumerable millions of human bodies, which have been consigned to the tomb, and are reverted to the dust; and the immense multitudes daily following: yea, when our believing thoughts make excursions into the invisible world, and survey the miseries of fallen angels, and departed souls consigned to the place of torment: or when we look forward to the resurrection and the final judgment, and view the innumerable millions of the wicked, appalled with horror and despair, attending to the awful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil, and his angels:" in short, when the aggregate of all the misery in the whole creation, through eternal ages, has been considered, and the question occurs, "Who slew all these?" the answer will be, **SIN!** TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW has made all this havoc, and introduced all this misery into his most perfect creation; and, worse than all this, **SIN** has crucified the **LORD OF GLORY**. Shall we then lodge this viper in our bosom, and madly seek for happiness from the cause of all possible misery? Rather we should abhor and dread it with that complete detestation, which would render its distant approach more formidable to us than any temporal pain or affliction imaginable.

V. 15-36. Men of eminent godliness should countenance every work of public reformation; and wise men will value their presence and assistance. But they are frequently too hasty in their concurrence, and too sanguine in their expectations, when those in exalted stations stand forth as the professed friends of religion: and thus they are drawn in to sanction those wrong measures which they are unable to prevent, to the discredit of the common cause.—Hypocrites and self-deceivers are often ready to say to eminently pious persons, "Come and see our zeal for the **LORD**;" when they are only aiming, by the assistance of a party, to establish their own authority and reputation, or other secular interests. And when men's professions are very strong, their progress very rapid, and their zeal tarnished with ostentation, or leavened with subtlety and a fickle or ferocious demeanour; they may justly be suspected, and need to be watched and admonished

2 But ^aJehoshaba, the daughter of king ^aJoram, sister of Ahaziah, took ^bJoash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons ^cwhich were slain; and ^cthey hid him, ^ceven him and his nurse, ^bin the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

3 And he was with her hid in the house of the **LORD** six years. ^aAnd Athaliah did reign over the land.

39:17, 21, 26. b See on 1 Kings 6:5, 6, 8, 10. Jer. 35:2. Ez. 40:45. 12 Chr. 22:12. Ps. 12:8. Mal. 3:15.

by those, who would avoid subsequent painful reflections. Vehemence and severity indeed were in some measure consistent with the awful executions which a righteous God commanded in these ancient times: yet the manner, in which his orders were performed, might indicate a very improper spirit. Zeal, however, in the cause of God, is worthless, except it be tempered with humility, meekness, kindness, and a peaceable frame of mind: as furious contentions and bitter recriminations cannot adorn the gospel, or meet the divine acceptance; for neither the wrath nor the falsehood of man can "work the righteousness of God." (Notes, Luke 9:51-56. Jam. 3:13-18.)—Hypocrites betray themselves by their earnestness about one part of religion, and their indifference about others: and generally profitable or plausible sins are spared, while those, which would injure them with their party, are cast off. Yet the church, and the world, may reap advantage from their partial obedience: and God will not remain as it were indebted to them; but will recompense their external services with external rewards, and at the same time visit their sins with deserved punishments. Much more then will he recompense the upright services of his believing people, who may be encouraged by this consideration to abound in his work.—The servants of Satan are often open enough in avowing what master they serve; it is therefore shameful and deplorable, when the servants of the Lord are unwilling that men should know that they are employed by him.—If the wicked could so separate the people of God from their company, as to let none remain in it, we might be sure that destruction was preparing for them: but what blessed ordinances should we have, if no servants of sin and Satan crept in among the worshippers of the Lord! Generally, if not always, we must say, "Ye are clean, but not all." Nay, many are useful to the souls of others, who themselves prove apostates and cast-aways. The Lord grant that this may not be the case with the writer, or any of the readers, of these observations!

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. (Notes, 9:27, 28. 10:13, 14.) It is probable that Athaliah was left in authority, when Ahaziah went to visit Jehoram: and, being informed that he was slain, she proceeded to destroy "all the seed royal," or the seed of the kingdom; that is, all who could claim the kingdom, as descended from David's royal race. This seems to include all the males whom Athaliah knew to belong to that family, especially in the line of Solomon and Rehoboam, without excepting even her own grandchildren by Ahaziah. Some think, an impious revenge actuated her; and that, as God had ordered the family of Ahab, (whose daughter she was), to be destroyed; so she was determined to extirpate that family which he especially favoured. But it is more certain that she was influenced by ambition, and desired to reign without a competitor; and to be able to defend herself against Jehu, by whom she must think herself marked for destruction. By this concurrence of events, Jehoshaphat's alliance with the house of Ahab proved almost the total ruin of his family; and of the house of David, from whence the Messiah was to descend! To appearance, and in Athaliah's intention, it was exterminated; and indeed that branch, which descended from Jehoshaphat, was so interwoven with Ahab's devoted family, that without a favourable construction of the sentence, none of them could have been spared: for Jehoshaphat's other sons had been slain by Jehoram, as soon as he had got possession of the throne, so that all who survived were the descendants of Ahab as well as of Jehoshaphat. (Note, 2 Chr. 21:4.) But by an act of grace, as it were, Joash, being both a branch of the house of David, and of that of Ahab, was considered as belonging to the former family, and snatched as "a brand from the burning." (Notes, 3:7. 1 Kings 22:1-4.)—Some think that he was left for dead among the other victims of Ahab's ambition; but being taken away, he revived and was recovered: or else he was removed when they were slaying the others, and either was not sought for, or could not be found. Jehoshaba, though the daughter of Jehoram, (whether by Athaliah, or some other wife is not certain), had been married some time before to Jehoiada the high-priest; God, thus preparing for the protection of Joash, before the danger became apparent.—Jehoshaba concealed Joash in some of the chambers set apart for the use of the priests, within the precincts of the temple, where he remained in safety; Athaliah not suspecting that any male branch of the family survived.

V. 3. It seems that the degenerate race of Judah did not oppose the usurpation of this vile woman! We are informed of nothing respecting Athaliah's conduct, during her continuance in authority, but that she supported the worship of Baal, as a genuine daughter of Jezebel.

4 ¶ And ^{the} seventh year Jehoiada sent ^{and} fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and showed them the king's son.

5 And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do: a third part of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the water of the king's house;

6 And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down.

7 And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep the watch of the house of the Lord about the king.

8 And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and the that cometh within the ranges, let him be slain. And be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in.

9 And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

10 And to the captains over hundreds did the priests give king David's spears and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord.

2 Chr. 23:1. 19. 1 Chr. 9:13. m Acts 5:24,25. n 17. 23:3. Josh. 24:25. 1 Sam. 18:3. 23:18. 2 Chr. 15:12. 25:10. 34:31,32. Neh. 9:38. o Gen. 50:25. 1 Kings 18:10. Neh. 5:12. 10:29. p 1 Chr. 9:25. 25:8. 34:32. 24:3-6. Luke 1:8,9. q 19. 18:18. r 1 Kings 10:5. Jer. 25:10. Ez. 44:2,3. 45:2,3. 1 Chr. 25:13-19. 2 Chr. 23:4,5. * Or, from breaking up. 1 Or, companies. Heb. hinds. s See on 5. 2 hr. 23:6. t 15. Ez. 2:14. 1 Kings 2:28-31. 2 Chr. 23:7. u See on 4. 2 Chr. 23:8. x 1 Sam. 31:9. 2 Sam. 8:7. 1 Chr. 26:26,27. 2 Chr. 6:1. 23:9,10. y 10. 1 Chr. 23:10. z 2 Chr. 6:12. Ez. 3:16. Joel 2:17. Matt. 23:35. Luke 11:51. a 24. 2 Chr. 23:11. b 2 Sam. 1:10. 12:30. Ezech. 2:17. 6:8. Ps. 21:3. 89:39. 132:18. Matt. 27:29. Heb. 2:9. Rev. 19:12. c Ez. 25:16. 31:18. Deut. 17:13-20. Ps. 78:5. Is. 8:16,20. d 9:3. 1 Sam. 10:1.

V. 4. Jehoiada, as high-priest, and as having the lawful heir to the crown under his care, was fully authorized to act on this occasion. Indeed Jehosheba herself had a far better right to the throne, than Athaliah.—All the persons, whom Jehoiada first employed, seem to have been Levites; though others, by their means, were afterwards brought to concur. (Note, 2 Chr. 23:1,2.) For the Levites were numbered, and arranged in companies under their several heads, called *captains*, or *leaders*; and they attended upon the service of the temple, in rotation, by weekly courses. (Notes, 1 Chr. 23:2—p. 25:1—6. 26:6—12, v. 6.) These were first informed by Jehoiada, that the king's son was in the temple, and that he intended to place him on the throne; and he proposed to make a solemn agreement with them before God, to which they readily assented, and bound themselves by oath to fidelity. Perhaps Athaliah's government had grown intolerably oppressive; or Jehoiada perceived that its continuance threatened the destruction of religion: therefore the priests, and the chief of the Levites, as most immediately engaged for the support of that cause, went among their brethren, to prepare their minds to attempt a deliverance.

V. 5—9. The Levites attended in their courses every week; one company coming in at the beginning of the sabbath, and another going out at the close of it. But Jehoiada employed both companies on this occasion; such only excepted, as were only necessary to perform the ordinary services.—By "the king's house" some understand the chamber in which Joash resided; others the royal palace, from which there was an entrance into the court of the temple. This was guarded by one division of those who came in on the sabbath to prevent a surprise; another was set to guard "the gate of Sur," or, the foundation; and another to protect the temple and courts from injury; or, as the original may mean, to guard the breach, which had been made in the temple, or its out-buildings. (2 Chr. 24:7.) Others of those Levites who went out on the sabbath, were stationed to guard the king himself, with orders to slay any one who attempted to come within their ranks. Two-thirds are mentioned of these Levites, as some of them might have urgent calls to return to their families. These arrangements no doubt were supposed suitable, and sufficient to secure the temple from being polluted by the guards or favourites of Athaliah, whilst Jehoiada and his sons were engaged in crowning and anointing Joash. (Notes, 12. 2 Chr. 23:11.)—By employing the Levites almost exclusively, all suspicion was precluded: and, as the throne belonged to the family of David, not only by hereditary succession, but by the special appointment of God; and as these rights, and all the interests of the kingdom of Judah, and even the worship of God, were basely trampled upon by a murderous and idolatrous woman,

11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.

12 And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony: and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the Lord.

14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets. And Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason!

15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord.

16 And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

17 ¶ And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people.

16:13. 2 Sam. 2:4. 5:3. 1 Kings 1:39. 1 Sam. 4:20. Acts 4:27. 2 Cor. 1:21. Heb. 1:9. e Ps. 47:1. 98:8. Is. 55:12. f 1 Kings 1:34. Ps. 72:15-17. Dan. 3:9. 6:21. Matt. 21:9. g Heb. Let the king live. 1 Sam. 10:24. 2 Sam. 16:16. margin. h 2 Chr. 23:12-15. h 23:3. 2 Chr. 34:31. 10:11. See on Num. 10:1-10. i 1 Kings 1:39,40. 1 Chr. 12:40. Prov. 25:2. Luke 19:37. Rev. 19:1-7. 1:12. 9:23. 1 Kings 18:17,18. m 4:9,10. 21 hr. 23:9,14. n See on 8. o Ez. 9:7. p 2 Chr. 23:15. q Judg. 1:7. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. Rev. 16:5-7. r See on 4. Deut. 5:2,3. 29:1-15. Josh. 24:25. 2 Chr. 15:12-14. 29:10. 34:31. Ezra 10:3. Neh. 5:12. 13:9-30. 10:22,29. s 1 Sam. 10:25. 2 Sam. 5:3. 1 Chr. 11:3. 2 Chr. 23:16. Rom. 13:1-6.

of the devoted house of Ahab; they were fully justified in these devoted measures against her. Perhaps they were likewise assured of the concurrence of the people, when matters were ripe for their interposition.

V. 10. It is probable, that these were arms which David had taken from his conquered enemies, and dedicated to the Lord, by way of ascribing the honour of his success to him. (Marg. Ref. x.) This tends to confirm the interpretation before given, concerning these captains: namely, that they were not military officers, as some suppose; but the leaders of the several courses and companies of the Levites, who did not usually wear the weapons of war. (Note, 4.)

V. 12. Coronation is not before this expressly mentioned, in the appointment of any king, either in Judah or Israel; but it seems to have been customary: for the crown, as one of the insignia of royalty, is repeatedly mentioned. (Marg. Ref. b.) No doubt, "the testimony" signifies the book of the law; and Joash was instructed by this significant action, that he received his authority from God, and was accountable to him for it, according to the rule of his word. (Note, Ez. 31:18.) He was also anointed, in token of his divine appointment to the kingdom; as Athaliah's usurpation had interrupted the succession. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Kings 1:38, 39, v. 39. 1 Chr. 29:21-25.) When this had been done, not only the priests and Levites, but the people who had witnessed the transaction, shouted for joy and clapped their hands, and wished their king life and prosperity. (Marg. Ref. Note, Matt. 21:8-11.)

V. 13—16. Athaliah, after the manner of her mother Jezebel, instead of fleeing with feminine timidity, when she heard the noise and suspected the occasion; went directly into the temple, unattended by a guard, as if she could by her presence over-awe and confound the conspirators; but by this rashness she rushed upon her death. (Note, 9:30-37.)—The people, it seems, were assembled, perhaps to celebrate some of their solemn feasts; and they, with their princes or magistrates, cordially united with Jehoiada, and the priests and Levites. When Athaliah saw Joash stand in the place appropriated to the king's use, she was aware of what had taken place; and expressed her abhorrence of the supposed treason by word and deed, in hopes of inducing the people to take her part. But her conduct had been so odious and unnatural, that none favoured her: and at the word of Jehoiada she suffered the punishment due to her complicated crimes. Doubtless, Jehoiada acted in all this business by the direction and according to the will of God.—It is probable that the Levites executed the sentence; and great care was taken not to pollute with blood the court of the temple.

V. 17—20. Jehoiada embraced this opportunity of engag

18 And ^a the people of the land 'went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images ^b brake they in pieces thoroughly, and ^c slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest ^d appointed officers over the house of the LORD.

19 And he ^e took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came ^f by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And ^g he sat on the throne of the kings.

20 And all the people of the land ^h rejoiced, and the city was in quiet; and they ⁱ slew Athaliah with the sword ^j beside the king's house.

21 ^k Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.

g 9:25-28, 18:4, 23:4-6, 10-14. 2 Chr. 23:17, 34:4, 7. u 16:4. Ek. 32:20. Deut. 19:3. Is 2:2. Zech. 13:2. x Deut. 13:5, 9. 1 Kings 18:40. Zech. 13:3. y 2 Chr. 23:18-20. z Heb. offices. z See on 5, 2 Chr. 23:6, 19. b 1 Kings 1:13. 1 Chr. 29:23. Jer. 17:25. 22:4, 30. Matt. 19:28. 25:31.

giving the young king and the people, in the most solemn manner, to renew their national covenant with the Lord, that they would worship and serve him alone; as well as perform their reciprocal duties to each other in the fear of God. As the protector and near relation of Joash, he was authorized to act for him, and the whole compact was deliberately ratified, as in the presence of God. (Notes, 23:3. Deut. 29:10-15. Josh. 24:25. 2 Chr. 15:12-15. Neh. 10:1.) When this was concluded, they proceeded to destroy the worship of Baal, which Athaliah had established in Judah; breaking down the idolatrous temple and images, and slaying the priest of Baal at his altars; without imitating or emulating Jehu's subtlety in detecting his worshippers. (Note, 10:18-20.) The people were greatly rejoiced at this happy revolution, and matters were soon brought to a quiet settlement. (Notes, 2 Chr. 23.) Nothing is recorded of the burial of Athaliah; but in every respect she was treated with neglect and abhorrence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. When the thirst of dominion predominates, it extinguishes both common humanity and natural affection, and steels the hearts of parents, yea of mothers, against their own children or descendants. Nor can the most humane conceive how they should act, if brought within the magnetic influence of powerful temptations, through opening prospects of gratifying ambition and the thirst after power and dignity, united with fear, envy, resentment, or other vehement passions. We should therefore repress the first emotions of this aspiring temper, and pray without ceasing to be kept out of the way of temptation. And we may also learn to be thankful to God, for restraining others and ourselves, from acting forth all the desperate wickedness of the human heart, which otherwise would produce effects unspeakably horrid.—What fatal consequences flow from matrimonial connexions, or intimate acquaintance with atrocious sinners! The mischiefs, which may thus be entailed upon children and remote posterity cannot be ascertained; and may extend even to the ruin of the interests of true religion, in those places where before it flourished. These reflections should add energy to the Lord's prohibition of these incongruous alliances. Yet, he mixes his severest judgments, upon his professed people and offending servants with mercy: in the midst of opposition he provides for the performance of his promises: and the extremities, to which his cause may be reduced, are permitted, to illustrate the glory of his power and truth, in preserving and recovering it.—The most successful villany will be short-lived: and, though in that little time dreadful havoc may be made in society, and irreligion or false religion may apparently be established upon the ruins of true godliness; yet the cause of God cannot be kept down, but, like the fabled phoenix, it will revive from its ashes with renewed youth and vigour.—One pious man may, on some emergencies, become an instrument of most extensive good: especially when regard to the glory and worship of God, is united with prudent contrivance, and well-concerted measures.—In urgent cases, general rules of external propriety may be dispensed with: and ministers ought always to lead the way in opposing the prevalence of wickedness, and in promoting equity, and submission to lawful governors, as well as in promoting true religion.—To what peculiar dangers are those in exalted stations exposed, through the ambition, treachery, and cruelty of men! We may therefore be thankful to be placed with our families in an obscure situation, beneath envy or jealousy.—Princes should be reminded, when intrusted with authority, of their accountableness to God for the use of it: and every opportunity should be embraced to enforce a conscientious regard to his word.

V. 13-21. Evil will hunt out the wicked to destroy them; and they are often hardened and infatuated to rush upon their own destruction.—The most abandoned, on some occasions, express abhorrence at the supposed crimes of others, especially when committed against themselves; but it is neither treason, nor cruelty, to execute vengeance upon usurpers and

CHAPTER XII.

Jehoash reigns well so long as Jehoiada lives, 1-3. He gives orders that the temple should be repaired; yet the priests neglect the service; but he devises a plan for defraying the expense, and completes the work, 4-16. He gives the consecrated treasures to Hazael, to divert him from assaulting Jerusalem, 17, 18. He is slain by his servants, and succeeded by his son Amaziah, 19-21.

IN the seventh year of Jehu, ^a Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

2 And ^b Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

3 But ^c the high places were not taken away. the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

4 ^d And Jehoash ^e said to the priests, All ^f the

c See on 14, 2 Chr. 23:24. Prov. 11:10. d See on 15, e 4, 22-1. 2 Chr. 24:1, a 9:27, 11:1, 34:21, 2 Chr. 24:1, b 11-12, 1 Chr. 3:11, Joash. c 14:3, 2 Chr. 24:1, 17-22, 25:2, 26:4. d 14:4, 18:4. 1 Kings 15:14, 22:43. 2 Chr. 31:1, e 22:4, 2 Chr. 29:4-11, 35:2. f 18. 1 Kings 7:51. 1 Chr. 18:11, 2 Chr. 15:18, 31:12.

paricides, and to restore the authority to its rightful possessor.—As "one sinner destroyeth much good;" so the removal of one ringleader in iniquity may prepare the way for great reformation.—It is our duty to engage ourselves and each other, and all those over whom we have acquired influence, in as firm and solemn a manner as possible, to be the Lord's people: and when we begin with a due regard to religion, relative duties will be the better understood and performed. Yet they should be plainly declared and enforced, without the exception of those which subsist between the prince and people.—The rectifying of scandalous abuses, and the punishment of notorious criminals, form an introduction to the revival of true godliness. External regularity will afterwards more easily be re-established; and the effectual blessing of God may be expected. The way for a people to be joyful and at peace, is to engage cordially in the service of God; for "the voice of joy and thanksgiving, is in the dwellings of the righteous;" but "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 2, 3. Jehoiada acquired such influence over Joash, or Jehoash, by his services and counsels, in his younger years, as retained him in good behaviour, so long as he lived to give him advice. But the latter part of his life, after Jehoiada's death, was extremely wicked; and all the good of his best days, was of that kind which springs from transient convictions, and external influence, or that which hypocrites do to be seen of men. (Notes, 2 Chr. 24:17-26.) His reign, however, should by no means be numbered with those of the worst kings of Judah: for he repressed idolatry, and maintained the worship at the temple; though he did not abolish the irregular worship of God in the high places; which indeed was never done till the days of Hezekiah. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 18:4, 22.) Jehoiada lived and retained his influence, during two thirds at least of the years that Joash reigned.

V. 4, 5. The temple had been suffered to go to decay, during the reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah, and the usurpation of Athaliah; and her sons, doubtless encouraged by her had impiously broken down some part of the buildings, to adorn the house of Baal with the most costly materials of the temple; as well as spoiled its consecrated treasures to enrich those of their idols. (2 Chr. 24:7.) But Jehoash, having had his life preserved in the precincts of the temple, seems to have had a strong desire of seeing it restored to its ancient splendour: whilst Jehoiada perhaps was more intent to promote the internal part of true religion.—The money, which Jehoash ordered the priests to collect from the people, seems to have arisen from the sale of such furnishings as were not fit for sacred use; from the half shekel apiece levied of all the people; from the redemption of things dedicated; from the redemption of those who were vowed to the Lord by a singular vow; and from voluntary contributions. (Marg. Ref. g, h. Notes, Ex. 13:11-16. 30:11-16. Lev. 27:2-27.)—As some of these were the dues of the priests, whose incomes must have been greatly diminished by the defection of the ten tribes; that circumstance might render them more disaffected to the business, and negligent in it.

V. 6-12. Jehoash's orders must have been very long neglected; for nothing was done effectually, till the twenty-third year of his reign, or the thirtieth of his life. It is probable, that the priests appropriated considerable sums to their own use, which they received for the repair of the temple; till the people lost all confidence in them, and would give them no more money on that account. Jehoiada himself appears to have been remiss in this affair; but his great age would necessarily render him less capable of active services. (Note, 2 Chr. 24:15, 16.) The priests, however, readily consented to the alteration proposed by Jehoash; and a proclamation having been made for the collection of a half shekel from each male above twenty years of age; (2 Chr. 24:6, 9. Note, Ex. 30:11-16.) and a chest so placed, that the money might be either put in by those that brought it, or by the priests in their presence; large sums were soon collected, and

money of the 'dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even* the money of every one that passeth *the account*, the money that every man is set at, *and* all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD,

5 Let the priests take it to them, every man of his acquaintance; and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.

6 But it was so, that in the ³⁵⁵three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.

7 Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiaha the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

8 And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.

9 But Jehoiaha the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD.

10 And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high-priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the LORD.

11 And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD.

12 And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to

buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it.

13 Howbeit, there were not made for the house of the LORD bowls of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD:

14 But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD.

15 Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully.

16 The trespass-money and sin-money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'.

17 ¶ Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem.

18 And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem.

19 ¶ And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Sila.

21 For Joazachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehoabab the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

Chr. holy things. Heb. holinesses. Lev. 5:15, 16, 27:12-27, 31. g Ex. 30:12-13. 2 Chr. 24:10. 1 Heb. of the souls of his estimation. Lev. 27:2-8. h Ex. 5:12, 35:5, 22:25, 26:3. 1 Chr. 28:3-9, 17. Ezra 1:6, 2:59, 7:16, 8:25-28. Luke 9:1-4. 1 Heb. according upon the heart of a man. 2 Chr. 24:15. k 12, 24, 6. 1 Kings 11:27. 2 Chr. 24:7. l 58, 12. 5 Heb. twentieth year and third year. 11 Sam. 2:29, 30. 2 Chr. 29:34. Is. 58:10-12. Mal. 1:10. Phil. 2:21. 1 Pet. 5:2. n 2 Chr. 24:5, 6. n 2. 114. 2 Chr. 23:1, 24:16. o 1 Chr. 21:3. p 2 Chr. 24:8. Mark 12:41. 2 Chr. 24:10. q 22, 23, 24, 25, 18. 1 Chr. 15:18, 24. Jer. 35:1, 2. 21. 1 Heb. threshold. Ps. 84:10. marg. s 19-2, 23, 32. 2 Sam. 5:17, 30, 23. r Or, secretary. s Heb. bound up. s 23. t 22:5, 6. 2 Chr. 24:11, 12, 34, 9-11.

applied by Jehoiaha and the king's secretary to the repairs of the temple. (*Marg. Ref.*)—As the chest is said in Chronicles to have been "set without at the gate," and that the "princes and people cast" the money into it; it has been thought, that the chest was at first placed in the inner court; so that the money still generally passed through the hands of the priests; but that not being satisfactory, it was removed to a situation, where all had ready access to it. (2 Chr. 24:8, 10.)

V. 13-15. It seems that orders were given to the workmen, that the repairs of the temple should first be completed, before any vessels were made; though it is probable that these were much wanted; but when the workmen had set the temple "in its state," they punctually brought the surplus of the money to the king and Jehoiaha, without requiring to be called to an account; and then such vessels were made as had been taken away by Athaliah and her sons. (2 Chr. 24:7, 14.) The conduct of these workmen was highly commendable; and formed a contrast to that of the remissness and selfishness of the priests and Levites as above noticed.—*Silver*. (13) *Notes*, Ex. 25:33-30. Num. 7:13, 14.

V. 16. (*Marg. Ref.* c.) Besides the money paid as amends to the priests for trespasses committed in holy things; it is thought that persons, living at a distance, sent money to them to purchase trespass-offerings and sin-offerings, and sacrifice them in their name. And, as they commonly sent more than the sacrifice cost, the surplus became a perquisite, under the name of trespass-money and sin-money. (*Hos.* 4:8.)

V. 17, 18. Probably, the expedition of Hazael, here intended, is the same as that of the Syrians, which is recorded in Chronicles: (2 Chr. 24:23, 24.) and, if so, the success of it, and the calamities brought on Judah by it, were far greater, than this short account seems to describe them. It took place, however, after Jehoash's apostasy; and he made no scruple of spoiling the temple of the remains of its treasures, to purchase Hazael's departure. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. 24:17-22.)

V. 20, 21. The Syrians left Jehoash "in great diseases;" and his servants (probably some relations or friends of Jehoiaha, who deeply resented the murder of his son Zechariah) took that opportunity of slaying him.—Joash was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings;

†† Heb. brought it forth. n 1 Kings 5:17, 18. Ezra 3:7, 5:8. Luke 21:5. 11 Heb. went forth. 2 Chr. 24:14. y See on Num. 7:13, 14. 1 Kings 7:48-50. Ezra 1:9-11. z See on Num. 10:2. a 22, 7. b 2 Chr. 34:12. Neh. 7:2. Matt. 24:45. Luke 16:1, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 4:2, 3. John 5. c Lev. 5:15-18, 7:7. Num. 5:8-10, 18:8. Hos. 4:8. d See on 8:12-15. e 1 Sam. 27:2. 1 Kings 2:39, 40, 1 Chr. 5:13, 18:1. f Jer. 42:15. Luke 9:51, 53. g 2 Chr. 24:23, 24. h 16, 15, 16. i 1 Kings 15:18. 2 Chr. 16:2. §§ 11 b. went up. 18:23. See on 1 Kings 11:41, 14:19, 29. k 14, 5. 2 Chr. 24:25, 27, 27, 33, 24. 111 Or, Bet-millo. Judg. 9:6. 2 Sam. 5:9. 1 Kings 11:27. 12 Chr. 24:26. Subad. m 2 Chr. 24:25. Shimith. n 2 Chr. 24:27.

'because he had forsaken God, and slain one of his prophets. *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. 24:25-27.) Millo seems to have been a general name of public buildings for convening the people; and this Millo in the way to Sila, was a distinct place from Millo in the city of David. (*Marg. Note*, 2 Sam. 5:9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Wise and pious instructors and counsellors are a singular benefit to young persons, especially when called to fill up important stations: and it is a happy case, when they acquire a proper influence, and make an unexceptionable use of it. Indeed, restraining men from outward crimes, and inducing them to external good actions, does not imply conversion of the heart to the love of God, and delight in his holy service: yet it prevents much mischief, and occasions extensive benefit to the community; and often precedes, and is made the means of, men's internal renovation.—A too favourable regard to customary violations of the divine law, and the fear of consequences in making innovations, often influence pious men to let slip the favourable opportunity of effecting still greater good: and mere formalists have frequently exceeded true and eminent believers, in their active earnestness about the externals of religion: for, in old age especially, they are apt to yield to the love of ease and peace, or to discouragement through reiterated disappointments, and so to become remiss. —The building or repairing of convenient places for divine worship falls peculiarly within the sphere of princes and nobles: and, if done from a proper principle, it is a good work which will not lose its reward: yet many abound in such useful services, whose hearts are not right in the sight of God.—Too often have nominal ministers been convicted of seeking their own interests, rather than those of religion. As a body, they must be suspected: and therefore should carefully avoid the appearance of this evil, lest they lose the confidence of the people, and become useless and contemptible. (*Notes*, Md. 1:9-11. 24-29.) It is most grievous, that the disinterested fidelity and punctuality of tradesmen and mechanics should shame the mercenary conduct of priests; or that the activity and zeal of laymen should expose the lukewarmness and indifference of the clergy! These things are not the fault of the ministerial office, but of the human nature, which that office will not change. But the collective

CHAPTER XIII.

Jehoahaz reigns wickedly over Israel, 1, 2. Israel is oppressed by Hazael, but relieved in answer to Jehoahaz's prayer, 3-7. Jehoahaz dies, and is succeeded by his son Joash, 8; who reigns wickedly, dies, and is succeeded by his son Jeroboam, 10-13. An account of a visit paid by Joash to Elisha on his deathbed, who by a sign assured him of three victories over the Syrians, 14-19. Elisha dies; the Moabites invade the land; and a dead man is raised to life, on touching his bones, 20, 21. Hazael, who had oppressed Israel, dies, and Joash gains three victories over his son Ben-hadad, 22-25.

B. C.] ^{886.} **I**N the ^{886.}three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, ^{886.}Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.

B. C.] ^{849.} **2** And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

3 ¶ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all their days.

4 And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

5 (And the LORD gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime.)

6 Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.)

7 Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by thrashing.

8 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, and his note

written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

10 ¶ In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah, began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years.

11 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin; but he walked therein.

12 And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might where- with he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

13 And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

14 ¶ Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!

15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Israel, Put thy hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

* Heb. twentieth year, and third year. 8:26, 10:36, 11:4, 21. a 10:35, b 11. See on 10:29. 1 Kings 12:26-33. 14:16. † Heb. walked after. Hos. 5:11. c Lev. 26:17. Deut. 4:24-27, 27:25. Judg. 2:14, 3:8, 10:7-14. Is. 10:5, 6. Heb. 12:29. d 22. See on 8:12, 13. 1 Kings 13:17. e 24:25, f Num. 21:7. Judg. 6:6-7, 10:10. Ps. 78:34. Is. 26:16, Jer. 2:27. g Gen. 21:17, Ex. 3:7. Judg. 10:15-16, 1 Chr. 33:12, 13, 19. Ps. 50:15, 106:44, Jer. 33:3, b Gen. 81:43, Ex. 3:9, Is. 63:9, 122:14, 26, k 25, 14:25, 37. Neh. 9:27, Is. 19:20. Ob. 21, Luke 2:11. l Heb. yesterday and third day. Ex. 4:10. Deut. 19:4. 1 Sam. 19:7. 1 Chr. 11:2, margin. l See on 10:29, 17:20-23. Deut. 32:13-16. g Heb. he walked. 1 Kings 15:3, 16:25, m 10:16, 18:4, 23:4. Deut.

7:5, 1 Kings 16:33. † Heb. stood. n 1 Sam. 15:6, 7, 15:19-23, 1 Kings 20:15, 27, Is. 36:8. o 8:12, 10:32. p Ps. 18:42, Is. 41:2, 15:16, Joel 3:14, marg. Am. 1:3. q 10:34, 35. r 1 Kings 11:41, 14:19, 20:26, 31. r 13, 10:35. 1 Kings 14:13. s 10, 14:8. Jehoahaz. ¶ Alone. * In concert with his father. l See on 2:6, 3:3, 10:29. u 14-25, x 14:8-16, 2 Chr. 25:17-24. y See on 2 Sam. 7:12, 1 Kings 1:21, 2:10, 14:31. z 14:28, 29. a See on 9, b 20:1. Gen. 48:1, John 11:3, Phil. 2:26, 27. c Ps. 121, Is. 57:1. Zech. 1:5, Acts 13:36. d 12, 6:21. Prov. 11:11, Ex. 14:14, 22:30, Mark 8:20. † Heb. Made time good to ride. a 4:24. Gen. 24:34. Ps. 144:1. f 15:10, 14:10. John 2:5-8, 11:39-41. g Ex. 4:2, 17. Judg. 7:9 -20, 2 Sam. 5:24, 1 Cor. 1:18, h 1 Sam. 4:1, 1 Kings 20:26, 30.

body is placed in a conspicuous station, and their faults are not easily concealed; and, as more is expected from them than from others, they meet with less allowance, and indeed their misconduct admits of less excuse. It is therefore most for their own credit and comfort, and for the honour of their profession, to stand aloof from those concerns in which large sums of money are employed. (P. O. John 12:1-8. 2 Cor. 8:16-24.) At least all works of piety and charity should be so managed, that those who contribute to them, may be assured their money is honestly and prudently expended: and they deserve commendation, who are faithful in such matters. —May the Lord preserve us from the disgraceful and wretched doom of the hypocrite and apostate! May our hearts be sound in his statutes; and may our "path shine more and more unto the perfect day!"

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1. Joash king of Judah began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu; (12:1.) but it was probably in the beginning of the year; and if Jehu reigned a little above twenty-eight years, Joash might have entered on his twenty-third year, when Jehu died and was succeeded by Jehoahaz.

V. 3. *All their days.*] Or, "all his days;" for there is nothing answering to *their* in the original; and Joash the son of Jehoahaz delivered Israel from Ben-hadad. (22-25.)

V. 4, 5. Jehoahaz, while he deprecated the wrath of God, and entreated the removal of his heavy judgments, seems not to have attempted any reformation. If, however, this took place towards the conclusion of his life, his faith and repentance might not have time to produce their genuine fruits; and this is probable; for the deliverance, in answer to his prayer, was not granted till the reign of his son Joash, the "saviour" or deliverer, here spoken of; as it appears from the subsequent narration.—Yet some think Joash began to deliver Israel during the life of his father. (22-25.)

V. 6. Either the grove, which Ahab had dedicated to Baal, was still used in idolatry, or another was prepared for that purpose. (1 Kings 15:13, 16:33. Notes, 17:16. Deut. 16:22.)

V. 7, 8. Jehoahaz seems to have defended himself valiantly against Hazael, though without success: this might provoke the cruelty, which Elisha had foretold: and it eventually increased the miseries of Israel. (Marg. Rf. Notes, 8:12, 13. 10:32-36. 1 Sam. 13:13-15.)

V. 10. The seventeen years of Jehoahaz reach to the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of Joash king of Judah; but Jehoahaz of Israel began to reign in the *thirty-seventh* year of Joash of Judah: Jehoash must therefore have reigned some time along with his father.

V. 12. Notes, 14-19. 14:8-14. 2 Chr. 25:17-24.

V. 14. If Elisha was called to follow Elijah no more than seven years before the death of Ahab; and if he died as soon as Joash mounted the throne, he prophesied at least sixty-six years! but many think that this took place towards the close of the reign of Joash. From the beginning of the reign of Jehu to Elisha's sickness and death, (that is, at least, for more than forty-five years,) his name is never once mentioned; but without doubt he was very usefully employed, especially in superintending the schools of the prophets. There is ground to conclude, that great numbers were converted to God by his labours; though the bulk of the nation conformed to the idolatry established by authority. (Note, 10:21.) Neither Jehu nor Jehoahaz paid any attention to the prophet: yet they were not persecutors, and probably they respected his character. Being, however, employed in state affairs, and determined to maintain the idolatry of the golden calves, they were not disposed to hearken to his admonitions: and he expressed his disapprobation of their conduct by keeping at a distance. (Notes, Eph. 5:8-14. 2 Thes. 3:6-9.) But when Joash heard that he was apparently near death, at a time when Israel was brought very low by iniquity, he seems to have considered the dispensation as a divine rebuke; and, under the prevalence of present convictions, he visited and lamented over him, in the very words which Elisha had used when Elijah was removed; (Note, 2:12.) acknowledging him to be the chief deliverer of Israel, whose death would more expose them to ruin, than all Hazael's successes. Yet we read of nothing, in the character or conduct of Joash, to warrant a conclusion, that this was more than a transient impression upon his mind, which soon wore off without producing any abiding good effect.

V. 15-19. In this prophetic transaction, the use of the "bow and arrows" denoted that Joash was to be the instrument of Israel's deliverance, by military valour and enterprise: the prophet's directing the king in shooting, and laying his hands upon him, implied that he was to follow the direction of the prophet, and that God would give him success. The

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, 'Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, 'Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

20 ¶ And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 ¶ But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

23 And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

11e. 20:2-4. Ez. 4:1-10. 5:1-4. 12:1-7. k. 4:6. Ex. 17:11. 11:9-15. 4:16-40. 6:9. m. Lev. 10:16. Num. 16:15. Mark 3:5. 10:14. n. 25. Mark 6:5. o. 2 Chr. 24:16. Acts 8:2. p. 5:2. 9:23. 24:2. q. 3:24-27. Jude. 3:12. 6:3-6. * Heb. went down. r. 4:35. Is. 26:19. Ez. 37:1-10. Matt. 27:52,53. John 5:25,28,29. 11:44. Acts 3:15. 19:12. Rev. 11:11. s. See on 3-7. 8:12. Ps. 106:40-42. 114:27. Ex. 33:19. 34:6,7. Judg. 10:16. Neh. 9:31. Is. 86:15. Is. 30:18,19. Jer. 12:

arrow shot eastward, marked the situation of the place where the deliverance was to be wrought, and intimated that the eastern coasts of the land of Israel would be rescued from the king of Syria; (*Note*, 10:32-36.) though his dominions, which lay chiefly to the north of Canaan, would not be taken from him: and the smiting of the arrows upon the ground was significant of the use that Joash would make of his first victory, by which his enemies were cast down to the ground before him, whether he would effectually crush their power, or imitate the impolitic lenity of Ahab. (*Notes*, 1 Kings 20:31-43.) Probably Joash was not informed that his victories would equal the times, which he smote with the arrows; and perhaps considering the action as trivial and unmeaning, he smote but thrice, which displeased the prophet, and, as it were, limited the king's successes. His conduct expressed the state of his mind, as not firmly believing the words of the prophet, or not duly valuing the promised deliverance. (25)

In *Aphek*. (17) Aphek was near to Philistia to the west of Samaria: (*Marg. Ref. h.*) but a decisive victory over Hazael and the Syrians, in that place, made way for Joash's rescuing the regions towards the east out of their hands.

V. 20, 21. 'They laid the body by Elisha's, for fear, if they proceeded to the sepulchre prepared for this man, they should fall into the hand of the Moabites. . . . God restored him, in an instant, to perfect health: for he stood upon his feet; and, it is likely, walked home with those who brought him to be buried.' *Bp. Patrick*.—This extraordinary miracle, wrought by the touch of the dead body of Elisha, (which by the ritual law could only render a man unclean,) declared that he was as much beloved as Elijah, though he had not been translated; and that the Lord was his God, after death as well as before; and thus intimated both the immortality of the soul, and the final resurrection of the body. It might also intimate that many mercies were reserved for Israel, in answer to Elisha's prayers, and in consequence of his labours for them in his lifetime. (*Notes*, Luke 20:27-38, v. 36. Acts 5:12-16. 19:8-12.)

V. 23. The reason here assigned, for the deliverance granted to Israel, seems to imply that there was nothing either in Joash, or his subjects, (except their miseries,) to induce the Lord thus to favour them. (*Marg. Ref. t-y.*) The deliverance was granted, not from regard to the covenant ratified at mount Sinai, which had been grossly violated; but out of respect to the covenant ratified with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, long before the entrance of the Mosaic law. (*Notes*, Lev. 26:41-45.) Nor was the success of Joash any thing more, than a respite for the present from the judgments which impended over them. (*Notes*, 4:5. Judg. 10:15,16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

"The Lord is slow to anger and of great mercy;" yet he will by no means acquit obstinate transgressors; and his just anger is the cause of all human misery. When deep affliction excites a cry for deliverance, he will hearken; for he is gracious and compassionate, and delights in mercy, and can speedily give a deliverance out of every trouble. But if he answer the mere cry of distress for temporal relief, much more will he regard the prayer of faith for spiritual blessings: and, as he so long remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and spared the posterity for the sake of their pious ancestors, notwithstanding their manifold provoca-

24 So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

CHAPTER XIV.

Amaziah reigns well, yet not like David, 1-4. He justly punishes his father's murderers, 5, 6. He gains a victory over Edom, 7. He readily challenges Jehoash king of Israel, and, obstinately persisting, is vanquished and taken prisoner by him; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the treasures of the temple spoiled, 8-14. Jehoash dies, and is succeeded by Jeroboam, 15. Amaziah is slain by conspirators, 17-20. His son Azariah is made king, and builds Elath, 21, 22. Jeroboam's wicked reign, 23, 24. He restores the coast of Israel, 25-27. He dies and is succeeded by his son Zachariah, 28, 29.

IN the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.

2 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did.

15. Lam. 3:32. Mic. 7:13,19. u. Ex. 2:24,25. 1 Kings 8:28. v. Gen. 13:16,17. 17:9. Ex. 3:6,7. 23:13. Lev. 26:42. Deut. 32:36. 18. 16:5. Mic. 7:30. Luke 1:54,55,72,73. x. 17:18. 24:20. Ps. 51:11. Matt. 25:41. 2 Thes. 1:9. * Heb. face. y. Ps. 125:3. Luke 18:7,8. † Heb. returned and took. z. 18:19. a. 15:13. 10. b. 1 Chr. 3:12. 2 Chr. 25:1. c. 12:2. See on 1 Kings 11:4. 15:3. 2 Chr. 25. 2,3. d. 2 Chr. 24:2,17,18. 25:14-16. Jer. 16:19. Zech. 1:4-6. 1 Pet. 1:18.

tions; much more will he remember Jesus and the covenant which he mediated, and for his sake pardon the abundant transgressions of all, who by true faith stand in a spiritual relation to him. All other privileges and distinctions can only avail to retard the deserved vengeance: the Lord may not destroy sinners, or cast them from his presence "as yet;" but without being "partakers of Christ" the Saviour, they must at length perish.—The true believer, though chastened for his transgression, shall not be left to perish for ever; but being "delivered from the hand of his enemies, he shall serve God without fear, in righteousness and holiness, before him all his days."—Wicked men prosper in their schemes, till the Lord's purposes respecting them are accomplished; and then they are removed, or ruined, without any difficulty. There is such excellency in true and eminent godliness, that it often excites the esteem and respect of those, who cleave to their sins. Persons even of this character, while under convictions, will feel and acknowledge, that the servants of God are their best friends, and the most valuable part of society. But this language of conscience is soon silenced by the clamorous voice of their passions.—Some parts of the lives of eminent believers are more conspicuous than others; but in the general tenor of them, they aim to glorify God and do good to man. Yet the most devoted will be ashamed, that they have not been more earnest; and the most useful must regret, that the world has received so little benefit from them. Indeed, reflection on the prevalence of wickedness and misery, on every side, with the prospect of still more dreadful judgments upon all the workers of iniquity, must fill the heart of every pious and benevolent man with deep concern.—Yet the good seed, which faithful ministers sow in their lifetime, may spring up after their death; and they may often take encouragement from the prospect of their prayers being answered after they are removed: yet their removal is frequently the signal for calamities to break forth; as the recall of an ambassador precedes a declaration of war. However, living or dying, the true people of God are blessed, and blessings to others: and those who, like the Saviour, pass through death and the grave to glory, are not less favoured, than if they were immediately received up to heaven in the body.—But the death and burial of Jesus alone has efficacy to disarm the king of terrors of his power to hurt, and to sanctify the tomb, as a safe repository for the believer's body, till the general resurrection. Through him all blessings come from a reconciled God to believing sinners: if we use his appointed means in the obedience of faith, and be not straitened in our desires and expectations of help from him, through unbelief, we shall not be straitened in him, but shall be "able to do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us." Then shall we beat down our enemies, and trample them as the mire in the streets, till our deliverance be complete, and our rejoicing in the Lord abundant. May he give us strong faith, that our hearts may be established and comforted; and that we may greatly glorify his name, and be serviceable to his people on earth, in our way to the heavenly inheritance!

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1. Joash king of Israel began to reign about four years before Amaziah king of Judah: but he is supposed to have reigned part of the time with his father Jehoahaz; and Amaziah succeeded to the throne of Judah in the second year after the death of Jehoahaz king of Israel. See, as Amaziah survived Joash only fifteen years,

4 Howbeit, *the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice, and burnt incense on the high places.

5 ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, *that he slew *his servants which had slain the king his father.

6 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

7 He *slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, and took *Selah by war, and called the name of it *Joktheel unto this day.

8 ¶ Then *Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, *Come, let us look one another in the face.

9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, *The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

10 Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and *thy heart hath lifted thee up: *glory of this, and tarry at home: for *why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?

11 But *Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at *Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth to Judah.

e See on 12. 14, 43. f Gen. 9:6. Ex. 21:12-14. Num. 35:33. g 12:20, 21. h 2 Ch. 25:34. i Deut. 21:15. Ez. 18:12, 20. j 2 Ch. 25:11, 12. k 2 Sam. 8:13. l 1 Chr. 18:12. m 60: title. n Or, the creek. o Josh. 15:58. p 2 Ch. 25:17-22. q In 11, 2 Sam. 2:14-17. Prov. 13:10, 17:14, 18:5, 20:18, 25:8. r Job. 9:25-17. s Sam. 12:1-4. t 1 Kings 1:35. Ez. 20:49. u Deut. 8:14. v 2 Ch. 26:12, 25. w Prov. 16:18. Ez. 28:25, 17. Dan. 5:20-23. Hab. 2:1. Jon. 4:6. p Ex. 8:9. Jer. 9:23, 24. Jam. 1:9. q Heb. thy house. r 2 Ch. 35:21. Prov. 17:14, 20:3. 26:17. Luke 14:31, 32. s 2 Ch. 25:16, 20. t Josh. 21:16. 1 Sam. 6:9. u Heb. smitten. v 1 Sam. 1:10. w 2 Sam. 18:17. x 1 Kings 22:35. y 25:6, 2 Ch. 25:11.

(17) either the sixteen years of Joash's reign must be reckoned from his father's death; (*Note, 13:10.*) or, as some think, Amaziah's reign is computed from the time that his father Joash became incapable of managing public affairs. (*2 Ch. 24:23-27.*)

V. 3, 4. Amaziah, like his father Joash, began apparently well, and ended very ill. He supported and regularly attended the worship of JEHOVAH; yet not with the fervent piety of David: neither did he destroy the high places; where, probably, priests and Levites officiated in sacrificing and burning incense. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 12:2, 3.*)

V. 5, 6. Amaziah did not at first venture to punish the conspirators, who had slain his father; and it seems they continued at court as if they had done no wrong, and feared no danger; having only avenged the death of Jehoahaz's son on Jehoash, without attempting to injure Amaziah, or deprive him of the kingdom. (*Note, 12:20, 21.*) But when he found himself sufficiently established in authority, he very properly punished them: but in doing this he strictly adhered to the command of God, in not punishing their children with them. (*Note, Deut. 24:16.*)—These references to the very words of the law, as they now stand in the books of Moses, should not be unnoticed. Undoubtedly these books were extant, and well known, when this history was written.

V. 7. The name which Amaziah gave to Selah, signifies *Obedience to God*; in which it is probable, he referred to his obedience to the word of God by the prophet in dismissing the auxiliaries of Israel, and considered his victory as the reward of it: but his behaviour, in the whole transaction, and afterwards, very little agreed with this name. (*Notes, 2 Ch. 25:5-16.*) *Valley of salt.* *Marg. Ref. i.*

V. 8. The peace between Judah and Israel had continued from the time of Asa, during above a hundred years: and, though the affinity formed by Jehoshaphat with the house of Ahab had been of fatal consequences to the royal family of Judah; yet, on the whole, peace had been far more conducive to the welfare of both nations, than the ruinous wars which preceded and ensued. Perhaps Amaziah bore resentment against the family of Jehu, for the slaughter of his relations: he had also received injurious treatment from the Israelites, whom he had engaged in his service, and sent back, having been forbidden to employ them. (*Notes, 2 Ch. 25:6-10, 13.*) Perhaps he hoped to reduce Israel again under the dominion of the family of David. But, if he had not been actuated by a vain ambition, he would have made his complaints, and demanded satisfaction, and not have sent this foolish challenge. In effect, he informed Joash, that he scorned to attack

12 And Judah was *put to the worse before Israel; and *they fled every man to their tents.

13 And Jehoash king of Israel *took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh; and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from *the gate of Ephraim unto *the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

14 And he took *all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

[*Practical Observations.*]

15 ¶ Now *the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

16 And *Jehoash slept with his fathers, and *was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and *Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

17 ¶ And *Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash king of Israel fifteen years.

18 And *the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

19 Now *they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

20 And they brought him on horses: and *he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

21 ¶ And all the people of Judah took *Azariah, which was sixteen years old, and *made him king instead of his father Amaziah.

33:11, 36:6, 10. Job 40:11, 12. Prov. 16:18, 29:23. Is. 2:11, 12. Dan. 4:37. Luke 14:11. x 2 Ch. 25:23, 24. Neh. 8:16. 12:39. y Jer. 31:38. Zech. 14:10. z 24:13, 25:15. 1 Kings 7:51, 14:26, 15:18. a 18:23. marg. b See on 10:34, 35. 1 Kings 14:19, 20. c See on 2 Sam. 7:12. 1 Kings 1:21. d See on 13:9. e 13:13. Hos. 1:1. Am. 1:1. 7:10, 11. f 12:23, 13:10. 2 Ch. 25:25. g 13:8, 12. 1 Kings 17:41, 14:29. h 12:40, 21. 15:10, 14, 25, 30. 21:23. i 2 Ch. 25:27, 28. j Josh. 10:31. Mic. 1:13. k 8:24. s 23, 12:21. l 1 Kings 2:10, 11:43. 2 Ch. 21:20, 26:23, 35:20. m 15:13. 2 Ch. 26:1. Uziah. Matt. 1:8, 9. Ozias. m 21:24. 1 Ch. 3:12.

him at a disadvantage: but wished him to bring forth all his forces, and make a fair trial of their military skill and valour in a pitched battle. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 2:14-16. 2 Ch. 25:17-24. Prov. 13:10, 17:14, 20:18, 25:8-10.*)

V. 9, 10. Joash rebuked Amaziah's pride, with an arrogance equally unreasonable. The thistle, a useless weed, which may by chance wound the foot of the incautious passer, was made the emblem of the kingdom of Judah, and of the ancient and honourable house of David; while the house of Jehu was represented as a stately cedar! The thistle 'having drawn blood on some poor traveller, and sorely afflicted him, (as Amaziah had done the Edomites,) grew very proud, and would be no longer one of the shrubs, but equal to the most goodly trees.' *Bp. Patrick.* Joash intimated, that if Amaziah, upon his casual success against the Edomites, had presumed to solicit an alliance with him, he would have considered his proposals in the same light, as if the thistle should aspire to unite families with the cedar; and the meanest of his soldiers should have chastised his insolence, and crushed him, as easily as a wild beast of the forest could trample down the thistle: how much more then, when Amaziah dared to challenge him to battle, would he bring destruction upon himself!—There was, however, much good sense in Joash's counsel. Let Amaziah rest satisfied with the reputation which he had acquired, and not meddle or rashly involve himself in a contest with his neighbour, who was disposed to peace, which would terminate in the disgrace and ruin of himself and his kingdom. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11-14. As Amaziah prepared for war, it became necessary for Joash to oppose him: in consequence Amaziah's army was completely routed, many lives were thrown away, Amaziah was made prisoner, Jerusalem was taken, and its fortifications to a large extent demolished, and the very temple plundered of its treasures and sacred vessels, by the rapacious and profane conqueror.

Came to Jerusalem. (13) 'Bringing Amaziah with him; and letting the inhabitants know, (as Josephus saith,) that he would slay him before their eyes, if they did not immediately open their gates unto him; which was accordingly done.' *Bp. Patrick.*

Hostages. (14) 'The sons, I suppose of the principal persons of the city, for a security that they would . . . give him no disturbance.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17-20. Joash, it seems, set Amaziah at liberty; and he survived Joash fifteen years. But the ill success of his rash expedition rendered his people disgusted to him, which at length produced a conspiracy, or open revolt, which drove

22 He built ^aElath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

^b c. 23 ¶ In ^cthe fifteenth year of Amaziah ^d23. the son of Joash king of Judah, ^eJeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel ^fbegan to reign in Samaria, and ^greigned forty and one years.

24 And he did that which was evil ^hin the sight of the LORD: ⁱhe departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

25 He restored the coast of Israel ^jfrom the entering of Hamath ^kunto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant ^lJonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of ^mSath-kephar.

26 For the LORD ⁿsaw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was ^onot any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

27 And the LORD ^psaid not that he would ^qblot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but ^rhe saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

n 15:6, Deut. 2:3. 1 Kings 9:25. 2 Chr. 25:2. *Elath*. o 17. p 27. Hos. 1:1. Am. 1:1. 7:9-11. ^a Now he began to reign alone. q 21:6. Gen. 38:7. 1. Ent. 9:18. 1 Kings 21:25. r See on 13:2, 6, 11. s Num. 13:21. 34:7, 8. Ez. 47:18-19. Am. 6:14. t Gen. 14:3. Deut. 3:17. u Jon. 1:1. Matt. 12:39, 40. 16:4. *Jonas*. x Josh. 13:13. *Gittar-kephar*. y 13:4. Ez. 3:7, 9. *Isaiah*. 10:16. Ps. 108:13-15. Is. 63:9. z Deut. 32:35. 1 Kings 14:10. 21:21. a 13:23. Hos. 1:6. b Ex. 32:32, 33. Deut. 9:14. 35:19. 39:20. Ps. 69:28. Rev. 8:5.

him from Jerusalem to Lachish; whither the insurgents pursued him: and when they had slain him either they brought him thither, or suffered him to be brought, to Jerusalem to be buried. (*Marg. Ref. h-k. Note, 2 Chr. 25:25-27.*)

V. 21. *Azariah*, or *Uzziah*, (words of similar meaning, the one signifying, *The help of the Lord*, and, the other, *the strength of the Lord*.) is thought by some to have been very young, not more than four years of age, when his father was slain; and they suppose that he was not made king till about twelve years afterwards. Thus he began to reign in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam; though his father was slain in the fifteenth year of Jeroboam. (23. 15:1.) But the years of Azariah's reign are reckoned from his father's death; and therefore others suppose, that Jeroboam reigned along with his father Joash eleven or twelve years; so that reckoning his reign from this time, Azariah began to reign in his twenty-seventh year, though only fifteen or sixteen years after he began to reign alone. (23. 15:1. *margins*.)

V. 22. *Elath*.] This was a town upon the Red Sea, convenient for commerce, which the Edomites or Syrians had taken away from the kings of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is supposed that Amaziah had taken it, when he conquered the Edomites; but had not been able to derive much advantage from it, because of subsequent troubles; and that Azariah, after Amaziah's death, rebuilt and fortified it.

V. 23, 24. Jeroboam the second reigned much longer than any other of the kings of Israel.—^aAs he had the name, so he trod in the steps of him, who first corrupted Israel with idolatry. ^b*Bp. Patrick*.—Joash, in giving this name to his son, seems almost to have pointed out to him the conduct, which he would have him adopt.

V. 25. The various enemies of Israel had encroached on their borders, from the northern to the southern extremity of the country belonging to the ten tribes; from Lebanon to the dead or salt sea, which had been the plain of Sodom: but, Jeroboam, encouraged by the predictions of Jonah, drove back these enemies, and recovered the country. (*Preface to Jonah*.)

V. 26, 27. Joash had been successful, both against the Syrians and Judah. But probably the Syrians, not being totally subdued, still carried on destructive hostilities against Israel: and the neighbouring nations, as the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, made continual incursions, and plundered whatever they could seize upon; so that the most valuable treasures of the Israelites were pillaged, those who seemed to have taken refuge in the safest places were destroyed, and there were none to help them. But as the time for their final dispersion was not yet come, the Lord saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, notwithstanding his idolatries.—*Blot out*. (27. *Notes, Ex. 32:30-33. Deut. 29:19, 20.*)

V. 28. Damascus and Hamath belonged to Judah, in the reigns of David and Solomon. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 8:3-11. 1 Kings 4:21.*) and Jeroboam so effectually subdued the Syrians, that he obtained possession of them for Israel; which called *recovering* them, because, though divided in government, Judah and Israel were still to be considered as one people.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. Many appear righteous unto men, whose inward parts are very wickedness, and whose base conduct at length betrays their hypocrisy. Yet the Lord gives due commendation to the actions which accord to his law, because *they say* they honour him.—Where his judgments are most evidently righteous, the wickedness of the instruments may

28 ¶ Now ^athe rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered ^bDamascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, ^care they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

29 And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, ^deven with the kings of Israel; and ^eZachariah ^fhis son ^greigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XV.

Azariah's good reign, 1-4. He is smitten with leprosy; and Joash his son governs for him, and succeeds him, 5-7. Zachariah reigns ill, and is slain by Shallum; and the fulfilment of the word of God to Jehu is noticed, 8-12. After one month, Shallum is slain, and succeeded by Menahem; who treats his opposers with savage cruelty; reigns wickedly; becomes tributary to Pul, king of Assyria; dies, and is succeeded by his son Pekahiah, 13-22. Pekahiah reigns ill, and is slain, and succeeded by Pekah, 23-26. Pekah imitates the sins of his predecessor; Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, carries captive part of Israel; and Hoshea kills and succeeds Pekah, 27-31. Jotham reigns well in Judah, 32-35. He dies, and is succeeded by his son Ahaz, 36-38.

IN the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2 Sixteen years old was he when he began to

c 5:1. 13:5. Hos. 1:7. Tit. 3:4-6. d See on 15. e 2 Sam. 8:6. 1 Kings 11:24. 1 Chr. 18:5, 6. 2 Chr. 8:3, 4. f 15:8. g After an interregnum of eleven years a 8. 14:16, 17. ^a This is the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's partnership in the kingdom with his father, who made him co-ruler at his going to the Syria wars. It is the sixteenth year of Jeroboam's monarchy. b 14:21. 2 Chr. 26:1. 3. Uzziah.

deserve punishment by the sword of the magistrate: and "the Judge of all the earth" may do many things consistently with his justice, and in his omniscience, unerring wisdom, and all-sufficiency, which would not be right for shortsighted, feeble mortals to imitate. It will appear, however, in the day of final retributions, that no one has suffered who did not deserve it, and that none perish but for their own sins.—Unsanctified success increases pride; pride excites contentions; and these are the sources of trouble and iniquity in private life: but when they arise between princes, they become the misery of whole kingdoms; and the blood of thousands is lightly esteemed by vainglorious mortals, who seek to be admired and extolled by men as foolish and worthless as themselves.—The effects of pride in others are often insufferable, even to those who are equally proud themselves; and all naturally delight in expressing contempt for such, as avowedly aim to outshine their neighbours.—We might smile at the ridiculous methods, which arrogant worms take to vaunt themselves, and to express their contempt of their rivals for fame; did not the fatal effects of such competitions call for our lamentations, and the vain boastings of those who follow peace are most tolerable, because most harmless. But did men consider from whom, and for what, their talents and successes were given, and how prone they are to abuse them, and did they understand how mean, guilty, and polluted man is, at his best estate, their boastings must needs be excluded. In reality, all the distinctions between one sinful man and another would not be worth noting, except for the sake of relative obligations, and the peace of society: but what images can shadow forth the absurdity and madness of those, who by their daring crimes seem to challenge the Almighty to the conflict, and to rush upon the thick bosses of his buckler? Or, who could have conceived such an amity and union, as the Lord invites us wretched sinners to enter into with himself, through the mysterious union of the divine and human nature in our Emmanuel?—In all our undertakings, we should previously consider our ability to accomplish them: and rather rest satisfied with moderate advantages, or inferior reputation, than risk the consequences of beginning what we are not able to finish, which is indeed to "meddle to our hurt." (*Notes, Prov. 17:14. Luke 14:28-33.*) But caution is especially needful, when if we fail of success, we cannot suffer alone, but must involve many in our calamities: and those who will not take fair warning and good advice, even from an insulting enemy, may too late wish they had.

V. 15-29. Wicked princes and nations are frequently successful, because opposed by others more guilty than themselves.—The proud are often visited with most humiliating providences; and if not humbled by them, their destruction is inevitable. Yet even in those places, where ungodliness is generally prevalent, the Lord takes notice of the extreme bitterness under which men groan, and spares them from time to time, that his goodness may lead them to repentance. Especially, is he thus long-suffering to those nations, where he has a remnant of true believers.—But the lives and successes of wicked men are contracted within narrow limits, and they are soon "driven away in their wickedness," one after another. And though the Lord will never blot out the name of his true Israel from under heaven, but will always raise them up helpers, that the enemy may never prevail against his cause on earth: yet there is an appointed period to his patience and long-suffering; beyond which he will no longer bear with impenitent sinners, corrupt professing churches, or wicked nations; but will proceed to deal with them according to the most awful denunciations of his holy word

reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

4 Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

5 ¶ And the LORD smote the king, ^aso that he was a leper unto the day of his death, ^band dwelt in a several house. And ^cJotham the king's son was over the house, ^djudging the people of the land.

6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* ^ethey not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

a. c.] 7 So Azariah slept with his fathers; and ^fthey buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

P. c.] 8 ¶ In ^gthe thirty and eighth year of ^hAzariah king of Judah did ⁱZachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, ^jas his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and ^ksmote him before the people, and ^lslew him, and reigned in his stead.

11 And ^mthe rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, *they are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

12 ⁿThis *was* ^othe word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, ^pThy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation. ^qAnd so it came to pass. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uziah king of Judah; and he reigned ^ra full month in Samaria.

e 12:23, 14:34, 2 Chr. 25:4. d 14:4, 18:4. 1 Kings 15:14, 22:43. 2 Chr. 17:6, 32:12, 34:3. e 2 Sam. 3:29. 2 Chr. 26:16-20. Job 34:19. f 5:37. Num. 12:10. g 7:3. Lev. 19:46. Num. 12:14. Deut. 34:8, 9. h 2 Chr. 32:31. i 2 Sam. 3:15, 15:4. 1 Kings 3:9, 24. Ps. 72:15. k See on 14:18. 2 Chr. 26:15. l 2 Chr. 23:23. 1s. 6:1. Uziah. m 1. 14:16, 17, 21. * There having been an interregnum for eleven years. n 14:29. o See on 10:29, 31, 13:2, 11. 14:24. p Am. 7:9. q 14:25, 30, 9:24, 31. 1 Kings 15:28, 16:9, 10. Hos. 14:5. 14:24. See on 14:25. r 10:30. t 13:1, 10, 13, 14, 29. u 9:25, 30, 37, 10:10. Num.

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1. Marg. Notes, 14:21.

V. 2-7. (Notes, 2 Chr. 26:1—Two and fifty years.) (2) The long reign of Azariah must be considered as very advantageous to Judah, when contrasted with the state of Israel during the same period.

A several house. (5) Retired, but spacious, where he had liberty to recreate himself, though excluded from public business.

V. 8. Amaziah reigned fifteen years after Jeroboam came to the crown of Israel; (14:17.) so that the death of Jeroboam, who reigned forty-one years, coincided with the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh year of Azariah. An interregnum of about eleven years must therefore be allowed for, in the kingdom of Israel, between the death of Jeroboam, and the succession of his son: either because of his youth, or through the factious temper of the people. (Marg.)

V. 12. Notwithstanding the wickedness of Israel, and the persevering idolatry of Jehu and his descendants, the Lord would not proceed to execute vengeance upon them, till the predicted period. (Marg. Ref. Note, 10:29—31.) And bad as Jehu's family was; the times, during which they reigned, were by far the best that Israel experienced from their separation from the family of David to their final dispersion.

V. 13-16. Marg. Ref.—Tiphshah. (16) A city called Tiphshah, near the Euphrates, was one boundary of Solomon's dominions. (Note, 1 Kings 4:24.) But that was so far distant from Tirzah, that some other city of the same name, situated in Canaan, is supposed to be here meant. If, however, Menahem attempted to recover all that had been lost to Israel, after the death of Solomon, he might march to Tiphshah, on the Euphrates; and this might give occasion to the king of Assyria to invade his dominions.—All the women, &c.] This savage barbarity was exercised by Menahem against the inhabitants of those cities, which did not immediately submit to his usurped authority.—Things were now hastening to a fatal crisis in the kingdom of the ten tribes. After the death of Elisha, true religion evidently began to decline; and neither the labours, nor the writings, of the succeeding prophets could stop the rapid increase of immorality, idolatry, or profaneness, which inundated that people. This chapter gives such an account of their public affairs, as will afford the attentive reader great assistance in

14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, *they are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

16 ¶ Then Menahem smote ^aTiphshah, and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he smote *it*; and ^ball the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

17 In ^cthe nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria.

18 And he did *that which was* ^devil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

19 And ^ePul the king of Assyria came against the land; and ^fMenahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him ^gto confirm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And Menahem ^hexacted the money of Israel, even of all ⁱthe mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

21 ¶ And ^jthe rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

23 ¶ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.

24 And he did *that which was* ^kevil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

24:19, Zech. 1:6. Mark 13:31. John 12:35, 12:37. 1 Cor. 1:18. v 1. Assyria. Matt. 13:9. Ozing. t Hebrews. 1 Kings 15:15, Job 30:15. Ps. 55:23. Prov. 28:17. v 1 Kings 11:17. 1s. 21:9. Jer. 17:24. 2 Sam. 10:10. a See on 11. 1 Kings 11:29, 22:48. b 1 Kings 14:1. c See on 8:12. Am. 1:13. d 13. e See on 9. f 1 Chr. 5:25, 26. 1s. 9:1. g 12:18, 16:8, 17:3, 4, 18:16. Hos. 5:13, 8:9, 10:10. h 14:5. Jer. 17:5. i 12:35. j Heb. caused to come forth. k Ruth 2:1. 2 Sam. 19:32. Job 1:3. l 17:24. 1s. 14:17. m See on 14:25. n 21:19. 1 Kings 15:25, 16:8, 22:51. Job 20:5. o See on 9:13.

understanding the writings of those prophets, who lived during that period, viz. Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, and Amos.

V. 19, 20. The king of Assyria, coming to invade Israel, seems to have found the people much disaffected to Menahem, who must have been odious for his cruelties; but he, having made submission to Pul, and engaged for the payment of one thousand talents of silver, (nearly four hundred thousand pounds,) obtained his assistance in subjugating the Israelites, and was thus confirmed in the kingdom; and then by force he extorted the money from his richer subjects. Thus the kingdom was impoverished, and the people exasperated; and that powerful prince having been so well paid for invading the land, left an example to his successors, which they followed till they had totally desolated the country.—The kingdom of Assyria is here mentioned, for the first time, after the building of Nineveh by Nimrod. (Note, Gen. 10:8—12.) And this shows, that the history, given by many writers, of a very prosperous and large monarchy, lasting for much above a thousand years previous to this time, is in great measure a romance. David and Solomon met with no opposition from the kings of Assyria, in establishing their kingdom, even to the Euphrates. Nor is Assyria once mentioned in their history. Assur indeed helped the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, on some occasions; but yet the very connexion implies, that it was of itself not very considerable. (Note, Ps. 83:6—8.) But it seems that Nineveh had by this time become a very great city, and no doubt the king of Nineveh had acquired a considerable territory. (Jon. 1:2. 3:3, 4. 4:11.) And some think that Pul was the king, when Jonah prophesied against Nineveh. It is not, however, agreed, whether he was one of the ancient line of Assyrian kings; or whether he was one of those who effected that revolution, which, all allow, took place about this time; and so was the father of Tiglath-pileser. The latter indeed seems most probable; but such darkness and uncertainty rest on this part of ancient history, that the most learned men differ exceedingly in their opinions on the subject. (Notes, 1 Chr. 5:25, 26. 2 Chr. 28:16—18.)

Of each man fifty shekels. (20) 'He gave to the king of Assyria so many shekels for every man . . . in his army. So they' (the Hebrew words) 'run exactly, "to give to the

B. C.] 25 But ⁷⁸⁶ Pekah the son of Remaliah, ⁷⁸⁶ captain of his, ⁷⁸⁶ conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

26 And ⁷⁸⁶ the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.

27 ¶ In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, ⁷⁸⁶ Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.

B. C.] 28 And he did that which was ⁷⁸⁶ evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel, came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took ⁷⁸⁶ Hion, and ⁷⁸⁶ Abel-beth-maachah, and ⁷⁸⁶ Janoah, and ⁷⁸⁶ Kedesh, and ⁷⁸⁶ Hazor, and ⁷⁸⁶ Gilead, and ⁷⁸⁶ Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and ⁷⁸⁶ carried them captive to Assyria.

30 And Hoshea the son of Elah ⁷⁸⁶ made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, ⁷⁸⁶ and ⁷⁸⁶ smote him, and slew him, and ⁷⁸⁶ reigned in his stead ⁷⁸⁶ in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

p. 27 ⁷⁸⁶ 28:6. ⁷⁸⁶ q 9:5. 1 Kings 16:9. ⁷⁸⁶ r See on 10: 9:14. ⁷⁸⁶ s See on 15: 1:2. ⁷⁸⁶ t 13:23. ⁷⁸⁶ 25:37. ⁷⁸⁶ Is. 7:1, 9. ⁷⁸⁶ v See on 9:18. 13:2, 6. 21:2. ⁷⁸⁶ x 16:7. 1 Chr. 5:6. ⁷⁸⁶ y 10:14. ⁷⁸⁶ z 11:1. ⁷⁸⁶ 1. Tiglath-pileser. ⁷⁸⁶ Is. 31:1. ⁷⁸⁶ 2. 1 Kings 15:20. 2 Chr. 16:4. ⁷⁸⁶ 3. Sam. 25:17. ⁷⁸⁶ 4. Josh. 16:5, 7. ⁷⁸⁶ 5. Josh. 19:36, 37. ⁷⁸⁶ 6. Josh. 11:1. ⁷⁸⁶ 7. 10:14. ⁷⁸⁶ 8. Josh. 1:2. ⁷⁸⁶ 9. Num. 32:1, 40. ⁷⁸⁶ 10. Deut. 3:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 11. 1:3, 13. ⁷⁸⁶ 12. Josh. 20:4. ⁷⁸⁶ 13. 1 Kings 15:21. ⁷⁸⁶ 14. 9:1, 2. ⁷⁸⁶ 15. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 16. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 17. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 18. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 19. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 20. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 21. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 22. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 23. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 24. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 25. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 26. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 27. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 28. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 29. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 30. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 31. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 32. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 33. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 34. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 35. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 36. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 37. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 38. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 39. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 40. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 41. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 42. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 43. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 44. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 45. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 46. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 47. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 48. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 49. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 50. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 51. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 52. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 53. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 54. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 55. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 56. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 57. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 58. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 59. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 60. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 61. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 62. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 63. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 64. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 65. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 66. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 67. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 68. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 69. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 70. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 71. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 72. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 73. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 74. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 75. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 76. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 77. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 78. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 79. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 80. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 81. 1:15. ⁷⁸⁶ 82. 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CHAPTER XVI.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, 1-4. Rezin and Pekah war against him; and Rezin takes Elath, 5, 6. Ahaz hires Tiglath-pileser against them, who takes Damascus and slays Rezin, 7-9. Ahaz sends a pattern of an altar from Damascus; and Urijah, the high-priest, makes one like it for burnt-offerings; restoring the brazen altar, for Ahaz to inquire by, 10-18. Ahaz builds an idolatrous temple for the king of Assyria, 17, 18. He dies, and is succeeded by his son Hez-ekiah, 19, 20.

IN the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father.

3 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel.

4 And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 ¶ Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.

6 At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.

7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.

8 And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the

treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria.

9 And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

10 ¶ And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.

11 And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus.

12 And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.

13 And he burnt his burnt-offering and his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace-offerings upon the altar.

14 And he brought also the brazen altar, which was before the Lord, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of the altar.

15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the king's burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of

a 15:27-30, 32, 33. b See on 15:38. c 2 Chr. 28:1. Is. 1:1, 7:1. Hos. 1:1. Mic. 1:1. e 14:3, 15:3, 34. 15:3, 22:2. 1 Kings 3:14, 9:4, 11:4-5, 15:3, 2 Chr. 17:3, 21:2, 21:4. d 8:18. 1 Kings 12:28-30, 16:31-33, 21:25, 26, 22:52, 33. 2 Chr. 22:3, 28:2-4. e 17:17, 23:10. Lev. 18:21, 20:2. Deut. 12:31, 18:10. 2 Chr. 32:36. f 106:37, 38. Jer. 32:35. Ez. 16:21, 20:26, 31. g 21:2, 11. Deut. 12:31. 1 Kings 12:2, 2 Chr. 33:2. f 106:35. Ez. 16:47. g Deut. 12:2. 1 Kings 14:23. Is. 57:5, 7. 55:4, 66:17. Jer. 17:2. Ez. 20:23, 24. h 15:37. 2 Chr. 23:5-15. Is. 7:12. 1 Kings 11:35, 18:4. Is. 7:4-6, 14, 36, 9:10, 9:6, 7. k 14:22. Deut. 28:1-3. h 20:1. 1 Kings 9:26. 2 Chr. 26:2. 1 See on 15:29. i Heb. Tiglath-pileser. j 1 Chr. 5:26. 2 Chr. 28:20. Tiglath-pileser. m 1 Kings 20:42, 33. n Ps. 146:3-5. Jer. 17:5. Lam. 4:17. Hos. 14:3. o 17:18, 12:17, 18.

obtained and secured by doing mischief and diffusing misery. Yet in these horrid scenes, the truth and justice of God are manifest: they perfectly accord to the character of human nature given in the Scriptures, and form a confirmation of their divine original.—“For the wickedness of the land many are the princes thereof,” whose crimes and sufferings are the punishment of the sins both of the governors and governed. (Note, Prov. 28:2.) “A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person, shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.” (Note, Prov. 28:17.) For a time wicked men may prosper, to execute the vengeance of God on other sinners, and then others will be raised up to execute vengeance on them; as criminals, or the refuse of society, are commonly employed for public executions.—The most innocent sufferers from man's wickedness must plead guilty before God, and may often read his just displeasure in the injustice and cruelty of their oppressors.—Proud men cannot endure contradiction, and the ambitious are exasperated by opposition: yet often, in aiming at independence and supreme authority, they crouch with the basest submissions, and bring themselves into the most abject dependence on strangers and enemies, who from mercenary motives, at first assist, and then enslave them.—Death in various forms hurries men to God's judgment-seat: the righteous are then taken from the evil to come, and enter into rest; and it is a mercy to be spared the anguish of witnessing the miseries that are coming on corrupted churches and nations. But the wicked are stopped in their career, that they may do no more mischief, and their lamp is put out in utter darkness.” May we live the life of faith and holiness, and die the death of the righteous, that “an entrance may be ministered to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 2. “He did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father.” “as might have been expected from the good education, which no doubt, so pious a man as Jotham his father gave him; who left him an excellent example.” *Bp. Patrick.* Ahaz was an entire contrast to his ancestor David, and a disgrace to his family.

V. 3, 4. Ahaz imitated the kings of Israel, in worshipping idols and rebelling against the Lord. It is said in Chronicles that he “burnt his children in the fire,” and here that he “made his son to pass through the fire,” to consecrate him to the demon which he worshipped. (2 Chr. 28:1-4. Notes, Lev. 18:21, 20:3-5.) In short he copied the crimes of the

18:15, 16. 2 Chr. 16:2, 28:20, 21. p Ps. 7:15, 16. Is. 7:17, 8:7, 8. q 2 Chr. 28:5. Am. 1:3-5. r Heb. *Dymmeke*. s Is. 22:6. Am. 8:7. t Is. 7:16, 9:11. c Deut. 12:30. 2 Chr. 23:22-25. Jer. 10:2. Ez. 23:16, 17. Rom. 12:2. 1 Pet. 1:18. u Ez. 24:4, 39:43. f 1 Chr. 28:11, 12, 19. 106:39. Ez. 43:8, 11. Matt. 15:6, 9. x 1 Kings 21:11-13. 2 Chr. 17:25, 18:17. Jer. 23:11. Ez. 22:26. Dan. 3:7. Hos. 4:6, 5:1. Mal. 2:7-9. Gal. 1:10. y Is. 5:2. z 1 Kings 13:1. 2 Chr. 26:15-19, 28:23, 25. a Num. 19:4-7. b Lev. 1:2, 3. c Heb. the peace-offering which were his. c 40:6, 29. 2 Chr. 1:5, 4:1. Matt. 23:35. d 10:12. e 3:20. Ez. 29:38-41. Num. 28:2-10. Dan. 9:21, 27, 11:31, 12:11. f Lev. 4:13-26. 2 Sam. 6:17, 18. 1 Kings 3:4, 8:64. 2 Chr. 7:4, 5, 29:21-24, 32, 35. Ez. 46:4, 7:12-14.

Canaanites, whom God had destroyed by Israel; (Note, Lev. 18:24-30.) and not only allowed, but set the people an example of, a variety of idolatrous practices. Hezekiah was born some years before the death of Jotham; if he was the son here intended, he was past his infancy at the time. (Note, 18:2.) He, however, proved an eminently pious prince, and an entire contrast to his most wicked father. (Notes, 18:-20.)

V. 5. The Lord brought these enemies against Ahaz for his crimes: their successes, and the miseries of Judah were very great, immense numbers being slain and taken prisoners; and Ahaz was extremely terrified. But they could not take Jerusalem, dethrone Ahaz, and destroy the family of David, as they had intended: for this was contrary to the purpose, the promises, and the prophecies of God. (Notes, 2 Chr. 28:5-19. Ps. 76:10. Is. 7:1-9.)

V. 6. (Note, 14:22.)—The word “Jews” is here first used. It is literally the *Judeans*; that is, the men of Judah; as all those, who adhered to the family of David, were called, to distinguish them from the subjects of the kings who reigned over the ten tribes, called Israel.—The general custom among even learned writers, of calling the nation of Israel *Jews*, from the days of Moses, and even before, is inaccurate and unscriptural.

V. 7-9. (Notes, 15:19, 20, 29.) As the king of Assyria brought Ahaz into abject dependence on him, and both weakened him and drained his treasury, it is said that “he distressed him, but strengthened him not.” (2 Chr. 28:20, 21.) though he averted the present storm.—From this time Syria ceased to be a kingdom; and the region formed successively a part of the kingdom of Assyria, of Chaldea, or of Persia; till it was subjugated by Alexander the Great; after whose death a new kingdom of Syria was formed, which with all his other dominions, at length became a part of the Roman empire. (Note, Dan. 7:6.) Ahaz feared danger to his kingdom from Syria, and sought help from Assyria; whence indeed the greatest danger was to be apprehended. (Note, Is. 7:17-25.)

Kir. (9) ‘A place in ... the upper Media, as Josephus tells us.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10-16. (Notes, 2 Chr. 25:14-16. 28:22, 23.) Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of the vanquished Syrians, perhaps when he went to Damascus to congratulate Tiglath-pileser on his success. There he saw an altar, in the temple of some of their idols, which appeared to him more magnificent or convenient than that which Solomon had made according to the

the sacrifice: and the brazen altar shall be ^{for} me to inquire by.

16 Thus did ^Uurijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.

17 ¶ And king Ahaz ^{cut off} ^{the} borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down ^{the} sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones.

18 And ^{the} covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the Lord for the king of Assyria.

19 ¶ Now ^{the} rest of the acts of Ahaz, ^{3. c. 7.} which he did, ^{are} they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

20 And Ahaz slept, with his fathers, and ^{was} buried with his fathers in the city of David: and ^{Hezekiah} his son reigned in his stead.

g 18:4. Gen. 44:5. 2 Chr. 33:6. Is. 2:6. Hos. 4:13. h See on 11. Acts 4:19. 5:29. 1 Thea. 2:4. Jude 11. i 2 Chr. 28:24. 29:19. k 1 Kings 7:27—39. 2 Chr. 4:14. 1 25:13—24. 1 Kings 7:23—25. 2 Chr. 4:15. Jer. 52:20. m 11:5. 1 Kings 10:5. Ez. 46:2. n 15:6. 7:36, 38. 20:20. 21. See on 1 Kings 14:29. o 21:18, 26. 2 Chr. 32:27. p 18:1. 1 Chr. 3:13. 2 Chr. 29:1. Is. 1:1. Hos. 1:1. Mic. 1:1.

will of God. At the command of Ahaz, with which he sent a model of the altar from Damascus, probably adorned by many figures of idols, the wretched high-priest, Urijah, without scruple or hesitation, prepared one like it, with which he profaned the court of the temple; and when Ahaz returned, the altar of God was removed to make way for it. It is uncertain whether sacrifices were offered to the gods of Damascus on this altar, or whether the oblations were presented to **JEHOVAH** alone.—It seems that Ahaz professed a purpose of converting the former altar into an oracle, at which he might inquire: as the church of Rome, by *adoring the host*, has converted the Lord's supper into the most absurd and detestable idolatry, under the pretence of *honouring* it. (Note, 18:4.) Some however think that Ahaz only meant, that he would take advice what to do with the altar: and tradition reports that he demolished it, and made a sundial (called the sundial of Ahaz) of the brass. (20:11.) But this is uncertain, and not probable: for we do not read, that Hezekiah made any altar, as in that case he must have done. In the whole transaction, the high-priest was willing to oblige the king by servile compliances; and did not, as far as it appears, need either menaces, or promises, or even bribes, to procure his concurrence! 'There are always some men to be found, that will comply with the most wicked commands.' *Bp. Patrick*. He might have said, some priests, and chief priests and high-priests. (Note, 2 Chr. 26:16—23.)

V. 17, 18. Ahaz pillaged and defaced the temple, and its courts, and sacred utensils, in various ways, either to supply his necessities with the plunder, or to express his enmity against the worship of the Lord. (2 Chr. 28:24, 25.) The covert of the sabbath, and the entry, seem to have been accommodations for the king and his attendants to repair to the temple-service. To please the king of Assyria, who it is probable paid him a visit, he turned these another way, or to other uses. (Notes, 1 Kings 10:5. Ez. 46:1—3.)

V. 20. Ahaz died young; and it has been observed that no king of Judah reached David's age of seventy years, though some of them reigned longer than he had done: but the age of Asa is not recorded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The word of God affords abundant encouragement to pious parents to give their children good instructions, enforced by good examples, and to pray for them: and these means are so generally made effectual, as sufficiently to verify the proverb, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Note, Prov. 22:6.) Yet there are exceptions recorded in the Scriptures, to remind us, that every man is born in sin, and that the grace of God alone can change the heart: in order that we may expect the blessing from him only. On the other hand some who have been, as it were, early dedicated to Satan, and initiated into his service, have, by the victorious grace of God, been made eminent examples of faith and piety: and every accurate observer of mankind, in places favoured with the light of the gospel, has remarked instances of both. The infatuated slaves of sin heedlessly proceed in those paths, whence others have been hurried into destruction. But we need not wonder that men violate the law of God, in the indulgence of their natural passions, when they cannot be restrained from disobeying him in the most *unnatural* cruelty to themselves and their own children: nor should the insolence and obstinacy of prosperous sinners excite astonishment; seeing so many sin more and more, while severely suffering under the effects of former crimes!—Such is man's carnal enmity against God, that he will have recourse to any expedient, or make the most abject submission to his fellow-creatures, rather than humble himself before God, and seek help from him! But the relief thus obtained, tends to enfeeble and enslave men the more; and it often accelerates, as well as increases, that ruin which it seemed to retard.—Our natural propensity to some sort of

CHAPTER XVIII.

When becomes tributary to Shalmaneser, conspires with the king of Egypt against him, and is shut up in prison by the king of Assyria, 1—4. Shalmaneser besieges Samaria; and after three years takes it, and carries Israel captive into Assyria and Media, 5, 6. The crimes, which brought this punishment from God on his people, 7—23. The strange nations, planted in the land, are plagued by lions, 24, 25; but, instructed by a priest of Israel in the worship of the Lord, they serve him along with their own idols, 26—41.

IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began ^Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.

2 And he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the Lord, ^{but} not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

3 ¶ Against him came up ^Shalmaneser ^{king} of Assyria; ^{and} ^{Hoshea} became his servant, and ^{gave} him ^{presents}.

4 And the king of Assyria ^{found} conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So ^{king} of Egypt, and ^{brought} no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done

Matt. 1:9, 10. Ezekias. a 15:30. 18:9. b 3:2. 10:31. 13:3, 11. 15:9. 18:21. 2 Chr. 30:5—11. c 18:9. Hos. 10:14. *Shalman*. d 15:19, 20. 16:7. 18:13. 19:36. 37. Is. 7:7, 8. 10:5, 6, 11, 12. e 16:8. 18:14—16, 31. * Heb. rendered. 1 Or, tribute. 2 Sam. 8:2, 6. f 24:1, 20. Ez. 17:13—19. g 18:21. Is. 30:1—4. 31:1—3. Ez. 17:15. h 18:14, 15.

religion is not easily extinguished: but, except it be regulated according to the word and by the Spirit of God, it produces the most absurd superstitions, or the most detestable idolatries, or at best it quiets the sinner's conscience, and amuses his mind, with a round of unmeaning ceremonies, frequently connected with the most immoral practices. Even *infidels* have been remarkable for credulity; and the *capacity of believing*, when not exercised on the truth, frequently embraces the most ridiculous falsehoods. But whether kings are impious, or superstitious, or infidel, or sacrilegious, they generally meet with priests of their own stamp, who court their favour by assisting their iniquities or idolatries! Yet such mercenary timeservers and men-pleasers, who bear the name and wear the garb of ministers, are guilty of a greater breach of trust, and the prostitution of a more sacred character, than even the wicked princes whom they flatter and embolden in their sins: as their conduct is, in the highest degree, dishonourable to God, and ruinous to man, they merit the deepest contempt and detestation; and assuredly they will "receive the greater damnation," except by a miracle of grace they are brought to repentance.—The arrogant self-wisdom, which induces men to new model divine ordinances after their own vain imaginations, is insufferably provoking to that "God, who resisteth the proud;" and that external magnificence, which carnal minds affect in his worship, obscures the real glory of heavenly things, excites false ideas of the divine character, and turns men aside from that spiritual service, which alone the Lord accepts and delights in. (Notes, John 4:21—24.) Thus new ways of worshipping God very speciously introduce gross idolatries; as the church of Israel, and that of Rome, among other examples, have abundantly evinced. But when men forsake God, they forsake their own mercies: and if those who have been trained up in the ways of God, forsake his house and ordinances; and, affecting to be wiser than their pious parents, turn things into another channel, associate with more fashionable companions, and seek to acquire the favour, assistance, or commendation of ungodly men; there is reason to fear that sudden destruction is coming upon them, from which they shall by no means escape. (Notes, 21:1—3. 1 Kings 12:6—15. Ez. 2:18—23.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (Note, 15:30.) During more than eight years after the slaughter of Pekah, Hoshea was kept out of possession of the kingdom, or was unsettled in it: and the years of his reign are reckoned from his establishment on the throne, and not from the death of his predecessor.

V. 2. We are told by the Jewish writers, that the golden calf had before this been carried away from Dan; (Notes, Hos. 10:5—8.) that Hoshea did not enforce that idolatry as his predecessors had done; and that he allowed the Israelites, who were so disposed, to go up to Jerusalem to worship. (Note, 2 Chr. 30:6—9.) He, however, did "evil in the sight of the Lord;" though he was not in all respects so wicked as his predecessors. Whether an idolater, or not, he was ungodly; and his murder of Pekah, and usurpation of the kingdom, merited the punishment which he endured: whilst the people were fully ripe for destruction; and the guilt, which had been accumulating for ages, was punished in that generation. (Note, Zech. 5:5—11. P. O.)—In finally destroying the kingdom of Israel, during the time of that king, who was less wicked than the rest; the Lord showed that he punished the crimes of the people at large, and not those of their princes only, as many might be ready to imagine. (Note, 2 Sam. 24:1, 2.)

V. 3. It is most probable that Shalmaneser was the son of Tiglath-pileser.—Menahem had given his predecessor Pul footing in the land, and encouragement to come again; by raising a large sum of money for him, and by rendering his kingdom dependent on him. Ahaz king of Judah likewise, by purchasing the help of Tiglath-pileser, had procured the de-

year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up; and bound him in prison.

5 ¶ Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.

6 ¶ In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

[Practical Observations.]

7 For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods.

8 And walked in the statutes of the heathen whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their

cities, from the tower of the watchman to the fenced city.

10 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger:

12 For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and this covenant that he made with their fathers, and this

1 Kings 12:2, 3. d 1 Kings 13:1. 2 Chr. 28:25. Jer. 44:17. e 21:6. Ps. 78:56—58. f Ex. 20:3—5, 34:14. g 1 Chr. 5:7—9. h Deut. 4:15—19, 23—25, 12:4. i 2 Chr. 8:19, 31:21. Neh. 9:29, 30. Ps. 50:7, 81:8, 9. Jer. 42:19. Acts. 20:21. 1 2 Chr. 36:15, 16. Jer. 3:8—11. Hos. 4:15. k Deut. 4:26. Josh. 23:16. Judg. 6:10, 10:1. 2 Chr. 38:14—16. Neh. 9:26. Ps. 105:35—41. Ps. 22:2 &c. Hos. 4:1—3, 9:5—14. 16:2. 1 Kings 11:13. 2 Chr. 36:5. s 7:20 &c. Deut. 20:2. 1 Jos. 10:5. m 16:3, 10, 21:2. Lev. 18:3, 27—30. Deut. 12:30, 31. 18:9. 1 Kings 12:28. 16:31. 21:26. Jer. 10:2. x Hos. 5:11. Mic. 6:16. y Deut. 13:6, 27:15. Job 31:27. Hos. 7:2. z 13:8. Hos. 12:11. 16:4. Ex. 54:13. Lev. 26:1. 1 Kings 14:23. Is. 57:5. h Heb. statutes. b Deut. 16:21. Mic. 5:14. c See on 1 Kings 14:23.

Deut. 12:2, 3. d 1 Kings 13:1. 2 Chr. 28:25. Jer. 44:17. e 21:6. Ps. 78:56—58. f Ex. 20:3—5, 34:14. g 1 Chr. 5:7—9. h Deut. 4:15—19, 23—25, 12:4. i 2 Chr. 8:19, 31:21. Neh. 9:29, 30. Ps. 50:7, 81:8, 9. Jer. 42:19. Acts. 20:21. 1 2 Chr. 36:15, 16. Jer. 3:8—11. Hos. 4:15. k Deut. 4:26. Josh. 23:16. Judg. 6:10, 10:1. 2 Chr. 38:14—16. Neh. 9:26. Ps. 105:35—41. Ps. 22:2 &c. Hos. 4:1—3, 9:5—14. 16:2. 1 Kings 11:13. 2 Chr. 36:5. s 7:20 &c. Deut. 20:2. 1 Jos. 10:5. m 16:3, 10, 21:2. Lev. 18:3, 27—30. Deut. 12:30, 31. 18:9. 1 Kings 12:28. 16:31. 21:26. Jer. 10:2. x Hos. 5:11. Mic. 6:16. y Deut. 13:6, 27:15. Job 31:27. Hos. 7:2. z 13:8. Hos. 12:11. 16:4. Ex. 54:13. Lev. 26:1. 1 Kings 14:23. Is. 57:5. h Heb. statutes. b Deut. 16:21. Mic. 5:14. c See on 1 Kings 14:23.

struction of the kingdom of Syria, which was of small extent and force, compared with that of Assyria: and thus every rampart was broken down, which could exclude the Assyrians from the land of Israel and Judah. (Notes, 15:19, 20. 16:7—9.)

V. 4. So is supposed to be the same person as is called Sabacus, or Sabacon, in pagan writers. He was king of Ethiopia; but he invaded Egypt, took possession of the kingdom, and reigned there for a long term of years.—About this time, or rather earlier, the rivalry began between the kings of Egypt and the monarchs of different nations, who successively were powerful in Asia, to the north, or northeast of Canaan; which, lying between the contending powers, was for many ages brought into dependence on the one or the other of them. (Notes, 2 Chr. 35:20—24. Dan. 11:5. Zech. 9:3.) But the people, contrary to the commands of God, were more disposed to unite with the Egyptians, than with any of their opponents.—Had Hoshea endeavoured to effect a thorough reformation in Israel; and then, in dependence on God, had he openly attempted to shake off every foreign yoke; he might possibly have succeeded. But the manner, in which he attempted to change one yoke for another, without returning to the LORD, or seeking his assistance, formed a mixture of perfidy, impolicy, and ungodliness; and proved the immediate occasion of his ruin and that of his people. It seems probable, that Shalmaneser by some means took Hoshea prisoner, before he laid siege to Samaria: and that Hoshea ended his days in a prison. His name is the same as that by which Joshua was at first called: (Notes, Num. 13:16,) so that the settlement of Israel in Canaan, and the expulsion of the ten tribes from it, occurred under the government of persons originally of the same name.

V. 5, 6. The inhabitants of Samaria doubtless endured great extremities, in the long siege and terrible destruction of the city: but the brevity of the sacred historian seems significantly to intimate, that the LORD did not now notice their affliction as he had done before the measure of their iniquities was filled. (Notes, 14:26, 27. 18:9—12. Hos. 8:7, 8. 10:14, 15. 13:15, 16. Mic. 1:5—7.)—When Shalmaneser had taken Samaria, and become absolute master of the whole land, he formed the project of changing the inhabitants, and in part accomplished it; but it was more fully completed by Esarhaddon, his grandson, several years afterwards. (Ezra 4:2.) It is, however, here spoken of by anticipation. Yet it seems, that some of the poorer Israelites were at last left in the land, many of whom were incorporated with the new inhabitants. (2 Chr. 34:6, 7.) But, as the northern part of the country, called Galilee, was in the time of Christ inhabited by persons acknowledged to be of the seed of Israel, who went up to Jerusalem to worship; whilst the middle of the country was occupied by the Samaritans, who were of another origin and religion; it is probable that the new inhabitants did not so fully occupy the northern, as the middle parts of the land.—Probably, the Israelites, who were carried captive to a great distance, in the dominions of the conqueror, were chiefly incorporated among the nations: yet some of them seemed to have retained the knowledge of their original, and of part of their religion; and either to have returned with their brethren after the Babylonish captivity, or to have united with those Jews, who were afterwards dispersed in many different countries of the world. (Note, Ezra 2:64. Luke 2:36—38.)—Some, nowever, think, that incorporated bodies of them are still existing.

V. 7—11. The iniquities of Israel were many and aggravated: but their apostasy from God to idolatry especially formed the violation of the national covenant. The LORD had, as it were, graciously espoused them to himself: but this spiritually adultery excited his jealousy; and, by persisting in it, they provoked him to give them a writing of divorce, and to put them away. (Note, Jer. 3:6—11.) They had, as a nation, experienced his power and love in delivering them from Egypt, and giving them Canaan; and they had witnessed and executed his vengeance upon the idolatrous Canaanites; yet, in disobedience to express and repeated commandments, they had ungratefully and absurdly worshipped their idols. They had also willingly obeyed the orders of idolatrous kings to worship the golden calves and Baalim. (Note, Hos. 5:11, 12.) They had likewise committed much secret idolatry, in addition to that which was established by law; and especially they had worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, which as the hosts or armies of God, stationed in the visible heavens, are employed to fulfil his will: (Note, Deut. 4:19.) and finally, they so multiplied their temples, or altars, that they were found in every village, and at every shepherd's lodge, where he watched his flocks and fruits. (Is. 1:8. Note, Hos. 12:10, 11.) as well as in the fenced cities. Thus "they wrought wicked things," as if they had expressly intended "to provoke the LORD to anger;" so that at length the predicted and denounced judgments came upon them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 12—14. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Neh. 9:26—30. Zech. 1:5, 6.) The people rejected the testimonies of God which he testified against them; and they did not believe in him, or depend on him for protection, according to his promises. They hoped to sin with impunity, and concluded that the service of the LORD would be unprofitable. They not only violated the law, by presumptuously doing those things, concerning which "the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing;" (Note, Num. 15:30, 31.) but they persisted in their rebellion and idolatry, and hardened their hearts in impenitency. (Notes, Jer. 8:4—7. Ez. 18:30—32. Rom. 2:4—6.) "To harden the neck," is a metaphor taken from the stiffness of the neck of an ox, when with his full strength he resists the attempts of the husbandman, to put the yoke upon him, or to bring him to draw in it: and it aptly represents the self-will, earnestness, and stubbornness, with which the presumptuous sinner sets himself to rebel against God, in the midst of warnings, convictions, judgments, and mercies. (Note, 2 Chr. 30:8—9. Prov. 29:1. Is. 48:3—5.) "This was the original of all the sins they committed; they did not believe God's prophets, but hearkened to deceivers." Ep. Patrick.

V. 15. Became vain.] By making and worshipping lifeless images, the people became senseless, like unto them: and by worshipping imagined deities under these images, they learned to imitate all the vices ascribed to those demons. Thus among the Greeks and Romans, the worshippers of Bacchus revelled in intemperance, those of Venus rioted in licentiousness, and those of Mars delighted in shedding human blood. The case is the same with modern idolaters. By worshipping Satan under all these names, they were conformed to the very nature, and imbibed all the hateful qualities, of that arch-apostate and rebel. (Note, Rom. 1:24—32.)

V. 16. It is probable that the words (אִשִּׁימָה וְאִשִּׁימָה) rendered a grove and groves, (10) mean some kind of images

testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed ^avanity, and ^bbecame vain, and went after the heathen that ^cwere round about them, ^dconcerning ^ewhom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them ^amolten images, even two calves, and made ^ba grove, and ^cworshipped all the host of heaven, and served ^dBaal.

17 And ^athey caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and ^bused divination and enchantments, and ^csold themselves to do evil, ^din the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and ^aremoved them out of his sight: there was none left but ^bthe tribe of Judah only.

19 Also ^aJudah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but ^bwalked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

20 And the LORD ^arejected ^ball the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and ^cdelivered them into the hand of spoilers, ^duntil he had cast them out of his sight.

21 For ^ahe rent Israel from the house of David: and ^bthey made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and ^cJeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin ^da great sin.

22 For the children of Israel ^awalked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;

23 Until ^athe LORD removed Israel out of his sight, ^bas he had said by all his servants the prophets. ^cSo was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day.

[Practical Observations.]

24 ¶ And ^athe king of Assyria brought men from

^aBabylon, and from Cuthah, and from ^bAva, and from ^cHamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt ^din the cities thereof.

25 And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that ^athey feared not the LORD; therefore ^bthe LORD sent lions among them, which slew ^csome of them.

26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, ^aand placed in the cities of Samaria, ^bknow not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land.

27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither ^abone of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.

28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt ^ain Beth-el, and ^btaught them how they should fear the LORD.

29 Howbeit, every nation ^amade gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

30 And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima,

31 And ^athe Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites ^bburnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

32 So they feared the LORD, and ^amade unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the

Deut. 32:31. 1 Sam. 12:21. 1 Kings 16:13. Ps. 115:8. Jer. 10:5, 15, 16. Jer. 2:5. Rom. 1:21-23. 1 Cor. 8:4. 1 Tim. 2:9. 1 Pet. 2:1. 1 Kings 12:28. Ps. 10:18-22. Is. 44:9-20. y 10. 1 Kings 11:23. 15:13. 16:33. 22:40. Jer. 2:8. 3:10. 17:25. 18:18. 1 Kings 16:31. 22:57. Is. 16:3. 21:6. Lev. 19:21. 2 Cor. 3:6. Ps. 106:7, 18. Ez. 20:23. 21:37. 37:39. 42:16. Deut. 18:10-12. 2 Kings 3:6. Is. 19:17. 15:12. Jer. 27:9. Mic. 5:12. Acts 16. Gal. 5:20. 1 Kings 21:24. 25:1. Is. 50:1. 61:1. 62:6. 12:3. 37:37. Jer. 29:23-28. 32:31-33. 34:1. 39:17. Jer. 15:1. 16:3. 21:6. 1 Kings 11:32. 12:28. 12:30. Hos. 11:12. 1 Kings 14:23. 2 Kings 21:11. 18. Jer. 2:8. 3:8-11. Ez. 16:51. 32:22-26. 23:13. 1:8. 18:27. Neh. 9:2. k 15. 1 Sam. 17:24. 6. 16:1. Jer. 6:30. Rom. 11:1. Jer. 1:16. 10:13. 16:3. Is. 45:25. Jer. 31:46. 37:33. 26:46. 28. 13:37. 15:19-20. 29. 13:9. 2 Chr. 28:5, 6. n See on 18. Deut. 11:12. Jon. 1:3, 10. Matt.

set up in the temples originally built in groves; and not the trees which formed the grove. (Notes, 21:7,8, v. 7. 1 Kings 14:22-24.)

V. 17. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 16:3,4. *Ex.* 22:18. *Deut.* 18:9-12.—*To provoke, &c.*] The people acted, as if their express intention had been to provoke the Lord to anger: they had sold themselves as slaves to Satan, to work evil in the sight of God, that they might in every thing displease him as much as possible. (Notes, 7-11. 1 Kings 21:20, 25, 26. Jer. 7:19. *Ex.* 8:17.)

V. 18. *The tribe of Judah only.*] That is, the tribe of Judah, with the Benjamites, Levites, and others, who were incorporated along with Judah into one people.

V. 19-23. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 1 Kings 11:12, 13. 12:16, 26-33. 14:15, 16. Ps. 51:11.

V. 24. (Note, 5, 6.) Shalmaneser seems to have carried away all the chief men, and the bulk of the nation; but to have left some poor remains of the Israelites, who dwelt in the land, during the remainder of his reign, and the busy reign of Sennacherib. But Esarhaddon more entirely removed the old inhabitants, and peopled the country from different parts of his dominions: and by that time Babylon, which had formed a distinct kingdom, was brought under the government of the king of Assyria, and some of these new inhabitants were removed from thence. (Notes, 2 Chr. 33:11. *Ezra* 4:10).—The cities in the region of Samaria had not been destroyed, but reserved for the new inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25, 26. These colonists had met with no remarkable judgments, when they served idols in their own countries; but they now possessed the land, which JEHOVAH had called by his own name; and he was pleased to show them, that Israel had not been dispossessed, because he was not able to defend them, but because he had given them up to ruin for their sins. It was also proper they should be convinced, that they had no right to their new possessions, except by JEHOVAH's allowance; and that he expected that they should do him homage for their estates: and therefore a number of lions were let loose upon them, as soon as they entered the land. The desolations of war would naturally make way for the increase of wild beasts: but these lions assaulted the people in so remarkable a manner; that they reasonably and truly

25-41. 2 Thea. 1:9. o 1 Kings 11:31. 14:8. Is. 7:17. p 1 Kings 12:19, 20. 2 Chr. 10:15-19. q See on 1 Kings 12:28-30. 14:16. 2 Chr. 11:14, 15. r Geo. 20:9. Ex. 32:21. 1 Sam. 2:17, 24. Ps. 25:11. John 19:11. s See on 3:3. 10:21. 13:2, 6, 11. 15:9. t See on 18:20. u See on 13. 1 Kings 13:2. 14:16. Hos. 1:4-9. Am. 5:27. Mic. 1:8. x 6. 18:11, 12. y *Ezra* 4:2-10. z 30. 2 Chr. 33:11. a 31. 13:34. Is. 37:13. *Josh.* b 19:13. Is. 10:9. 36:19. c 6. Matt. 10:5. d 23. 32:34. 41. *Josh.* 22:25. Jer. 10:7. Dan 6:26. Jon. 1:9. e 2:24. 1 Kings 13:24. 20:36. Jer. 15:3. *Ez.* 14:15. f See on 24. g 27. 1 Sam. 8:9. 10:25. Am. 8:14. h *Judg.* 17:13. 1 Kings 13:31. 15:2. 2 Chr. 11:15. 1 Kings 12:28-32. k Is. 26:13. Matt. 15:14. 1 *Fa.* 115:4-8. 155:15-18. Is. 44:9-20. Jer. 10:5-5. Hos. 8:5, 9. Rom. 1:23. m See on 24. n See on 17. o 1 Kings 12:31. 13:33.

concluded, that they were sent by "the God of the land" to punish them for not serving him. (Notes, *Judg.* 16:23, 24. 1 Kings 20:23-25. *Dan.* 5:1-4.)

V. 27, 28. It is not at all probable, that this instructor was a priest of the family of Aaron, or that he taught the people from the book of the divine law, as some have thought. One of the priests "carried away from Samaria" is expressly mentioned. And the person selected, had, most likely, been one of the priests, either of the golden calf at Beth-el, or of some high place in that neighbourhood: accordingly he resorted to Beth-el as his residence, when sent to teach the people to worship the God of the land, having doubtless assistants in the business.—It is, however, probable, that he did not teach them to worship JEHOVAH by images; though we can only know what he taught, by the result: but it is evident they were led to consider JEHOVAH as the local tutelary god of the land, one among a group of other deities; instead of worshipping him as the one, true, eternal, almighty, and glorious Creator, Governor, and Judge of the world. (Note, Jer. 10:6-8, 11. *Zeph.* 2:11. *Zech.* 14:4-9.) They probably learned to offer sacrifices, with some external regard to the ceremonies of the Mosaic law, but without understanding the meaning and use of the sacred ordinances: but it is not certain whether circumcision was introduced among the Samaritans at this time, or at a later period. (Notes, 41. *Neh.* 13:23-30.) Along with these and such like observances, they were allowed, or they assumed, the liberty of serving their own idols, according to the customs of their several tribes.

V. 29-31. Learned men have framed many conjectures concerning the meaning of the several names here made use of, and the idols and idolatries signified by them. But such obsolete abominations, with which every thing brutal, cruel and licentious was connected, are not worth understanding. (Notes, *Ex.* 23:13. *Josh.* 23:7. Jer. 10:11. *Zech.* 13:2, 3.)

V. 32. After the example of Jeroboam, these men chose the priests of JEHOVAH from the lowest of the people; (1 Kings 13:33.) whilst probably, the chief nobles were ambitious of the honour of being priests to their favourite idols!

V. 33-40. The new inhabitants of the land imitated the idolatrous Israelites, by associating their idols with JEHOVAH

high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.

33 They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.

34 Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel;

35 With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them:

36 But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power, and stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and him

shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

37 And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods.

38 And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods.

39 But the LORD your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.

40 Howbeit they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.

41 So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

p29. 23:19. 1 Kings 13:32. q 1 Kings 18:21 Hos. 10:2. Zeiph. 1:5. Matt. 6:24. Luke 16:13. * Or, who carried them away. r See on 25:27, 28, 33. s Gen. 32:28. 33:20. 35:10. 1 Kings 18:31. Is. 48:1. t 15. Ex. 19:5, 24:6-8. Deut. 23:10-15. Jer. 31:33-34. Heb. 8:6-13. u Ex. 20:4, 5. 24:13-17. Deut. 4:23-27. 13:1, &c. Josh. 23:7, 16. x Jude. 6:10. Jer. 10:5. y See on Ex. 6:8, 9-15. Deut. 5:15. Jer. 32:21. Acts 4:30. z Lev. 19:32. Deut. 6:13. 10:20. 12:5, 6, 11.

VAH, as the objects of worship. The remainder, however, of the verses seems to relate to the Israelites after they were carried captive. They still persevered in idolatry and disobedience; and not being purified, were left to be consumed in the furnace.—It is said, that the Israelites “did not fear the LORD” (34) yet the heathens, who followed their example, are said “to have feared the LORD.” (32, 40.) The Israelites did not so much as fear the wrath of the almighty God: but on the other hand the poor Pagans feared the power of his wrath, and to avert it paid him some ignorant worship, according to the wretched instructions given them. As this was an external acknowledgment of his power and Godhead, and a homage paid to him, he was pleased in consequence to withdraw his judgments from them.

V. 41. Some ascribe these words to Jeremiah, the supposed writer of this part of the history, others to Ezra after the captivity. However, these *Cuthcans*, (as the Jews call them from *Cuthah*, 24.) maintained this mongrel religion till after that later period, and so were proper successors of idolatrous Israel, the professed people of God. About four hundred years before Christ, a temple was built by them, in competition with the temple at Jerusalem: for, having been joined by a number of apostate Jews, and a priest of the family of Aaron, they renounced gross idolatry, and became schismatical worshippers of JEHOVAH, receiving some parts, and rejecting others, of the Jewish Scriptures.—(Notes, 27, 28. Neh. 13:23-30.) It is not requisite to decide, whether there were any true godliness among them: but, as a people, “they knew not what they worshipped, for salvation was of the Jews.” (Notes, John 4:19-24.) Christ commanded his disciples, whom he sent forth in his lifetime, not to enter into any city of the Samaritans: yet he himself spent two days at Sychar, one of their cities; (Note, John 4:39-42.) and the apostles after the day of Pentecost did not regard the Samaritans as Gentiles; for they preached in their cities before the conversion of Cornelius. (Notes, Acts 1:4-8. 8:5-8. 10:1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. The long-suffering of God, instead of leading sinners to repentance, often renders them more secure: for, having long transgressed with impunity, they conclude that there is no danger; and thus they “treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.” (Notes, Ec. 8:11-13. Rom. 2:4-6.)—Ungodly men are not all alike abandoned to flagrant enormities: but the least criminal deserve worse than the most severe temporal calamities; and consequently none have any right to complain, if God, the righteous Sovereign shall see good, in their days to execute upon a guilty people the accumulated vengeance of many generations. For when the appointed measure of iniquity is filled up, the Lord will forbear no longer. Then kings and people reciprocally suffer on account of each other's crimes; and their causes and interests are no more separable, in the great concerns of national judgments and mercies, than those of the head, or heart, and the several members of the human body. (P. O. 2 Sam. 24:1-9.)—When the service of God, which is perfect freedom, is renounced, men become slaves to the vilest and most tyrannical of masters; and sinners, left to themselves, never attempt any thing more than a change of one tyrant for another; not having the most remote idea or expectation of complete liberty in the service of God. The extravagant profligate sometimes, in advancing years exchanges the bondage of his sensual lusts, for the yoke of avarice or ambition; and the immoral and profane may commence Pharisees, or hypocrites: but mere nature can advance little further than this. Yet the gospel calls us, not only to break our league with every lust, and to renounce every sinful connexion, however formed, confirmed, or palliated by specious pretences; but to efuse obedience to every superior who would require us to sin against God: which if we would do, we must seek the effectual assistance of his special grace. In all other cases the Lord marks with disapprobation men's violations of agree-

ments, and refusal of obedience to those whom his providence has placed over them: and peridious attempts for deliverance, from trouble or thralldom, commonly terminate in deeper misery and ruin.

V. 7-23. When God arises to judgment, all opposition is vain, and only tends to prolong or increase misery. He keeps an exact register of our advantages, as well as of our sins and their aggravations: and when the day of retribution arrives, he will produce the whole account; that all the world may see “he hath not done without cause, all that he hath done” against the workers of iniquity: for the day of his wrath will be the revelation of his righteous judgment; and indeed his justice in the temporal sufferings of guilty nations is frequently evidenced in the same manner. (Note, Ez. 14:22, 23.)—No authority or example can bear men out in breaking the commandments of God: but the judgments which they have known to be executed upon sinners; the favours conferred on themselves; and the testimony of the Lord's ministers, warning, exhorting, and inviting them to repent and to turn to God, will aggravate the guilt of those, who harden their hearts in disobedience.—Enormous as the outward wickedness of the world evidently is, the secret crimes, and sinful thoughts, desires, and purposes of mankind are immensely worse.—Murders, rapines, adulteries, thefts, robberies, and treason, are atrocious evils, which, for the good of society, are marked with a black brand of infamy: yet, in the balance of unbiassed reason, as well as in holy writ, ingratitude and enmity to God, proud rebellion against him, and contempt, neglect, or defiance of him; and all the idolatry, or impiety, which result from these propensities, violate still higher obligations, with far deeper malignity, and spring from the worst state of the heart imaginable. These evils will therefore be peculiarly considered, in the condemnation of the wicked—especially of such as have been favoured with revelation, and the ordinances of God; and who have been his professed people, outwardly dedicated to him, and admitted into covenant with him.—Without turning from every evil way, and unreservedly keeping the commandments and statutes of God, there can be no true godliness: yet, this conversion must spring from a belief of his testimony, both concerning “his wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,” and concerning his mercy in Jesus Christ, to all who repent and embrace this salvation. The rejection of his statutes and covenant is always the effect of unbelief; through which sinners harden their hearts against the fear of God, exclude the desire of his favour, and obstinately set themselves to break his commandments; and thus following lying vanities, become worthless and base, like their worldly idols.—When sinners have resolutely turned away from God, they not only commit those sins, which promise present advantage or gratification; but they transgress without any conceivable temptation, as if they purposely devised to provoke the Lord to anger: and, having sold themselves to do evil, they serve Satan, with greater self-denial, and violence done to their most rational natural affections, than ever could be required of them in the service of God. He peculiarly abhors those, who seduce or drive others, by any means, from following him, and cause them to sin against him; and generations yet unborn may curse the inventors of any false religion, or plausible system of infidelity, as the occasions of their everlasting perdition: nay, bad examples alone, may render men chargeable with this tremendous guilt of murdering the souls of others; for human nature is far more ready to copy the evil than the good, and to listen to tempters than to monitors. How circumspcctly then should we walk, seeing such dreadful consequences may ensue, for ages to come, in various ways, from our misconduct!

V. 24-41.—When the Lord casts off his professing people, or delivers them into the hands of their enemies, he will take care of his own glory: and he can let their mighty conquerors know, that they have not prevailed against them for

CHAPTER XVIII.

Hezekiah reigne well, abolishes idolatry, and prospers, 1—8. In his time Sennacherib is taken, and Israel carried captive, 9—12. Sennacherib invades Judah, and Hezekiah pays him tribute, 13—16. Rabshakeh, sent by Sennacherib, in an insulting and blasphemous speech, aims to induce the people to revolt, 17—35. Hezekiah's servants hold their peace, and rend their clothes, 36, 37.

NOW it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi the daughter of Zachariah.

3 And he did that which was aright in the

n 9, 15, 30, 17, 1, b 16, 20, 1 Chr. 3:13, 2 Chr. 29:1, Matt. 1:9, 10, Ezekiel 2 Chr. 29:1, *Abijah*, d 20:3, Ex. 15:26, Deut. 6:18, 2 Chr. 31:20, 21, Job 33:27, Ps. 119:125, *1 Sam. 1:1*, *1 Kings 3:14*, *11:4, 38*, *15:5, 11*, *2 Chr. 29:2*, *1 Sam. 1:14*, *15:14*, *16:1*, *17:1*, *18:1*, *19:1*, *20:1*, *21:1*, *22:1*, *23:1*, *24:1*, *25:1*, *26:1*, *27:1*, *28:1*, *29:1*, *30:1*, *31:1*, *32:1*, *33:1*, *34:1*, *35:1*, *36:1*, *37:1*, *38:1*, *39:1*, *40:1*, *41:1*, *42:1*, *43:1*, *44:1*, *45:1*, *46:1*, *47:1*, *48:1*, *49:1*, *50:1*, *51:1*, *52:1*, *53:1*, *54:1*, *55:1*, *56:1*, *57:1*, *58:1*, *59:1*, *60:1*, *61:1*, *62:1*, *63:1*, *64:1*, *65:1*, *66:1*, *67:1*, *68:1*, *69:1*, *70:1*, *71:1*, *72:1*, *73:1*, *74:1*, *75:1*, *76:1*, *77:1*, *78:1*, *79:1*, *80:1*, *81:1*, *82:1*, *83:1*, *84:1*, *85:1*, *86:1*, *87:1*, *88:1*, *89:1*, *90:1*, *91:1*, *92:1*, *93:1*, *94:1*, *95:1*, *96:1*, *97:1*, *98:1*, *99:1*, *100:1*, *101:1*, *102:1*, *103:1*, *104:1*, *105:1*, 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rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

8 He smote the Philistines, *even* unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchman to the fenced city.

[Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.

B. C. 720. ¶ And at the end of three years they took it; *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, (that is, the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel,) Samaria was taken.

11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:

12 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and they would not hear them, nor do them.

B. C. 713. ¶ Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me I will bear. And the king of

p 20. 16,7. q 2 Chr. 28:18. Is. 14:29. * Heb. Azza. r 17:9. 2 Chr. 28:10. Is. 5:2. s 1. 17:4-8. t 17:8. Hos. 10:14. Shalman. u Hos. 13:16. Am. 3:11-8. 4:1-3. 6:7-9. 1:4. Mic. 1:6-9. 6:16. 7:13. v 17:6. 19:11. 1 Chr. 6:36. Is. 7:18. 8:4. 9:3-21. 10:5,11. 37:12. Hos. 8:8,9. 9:3. Am. 5:1-3,6,25-27. Jer. 4:3. z 17:23. Deut. 8:20. 11:28. 29:24-28. 31:17. Neh. 9:17. In. 1. 19. Jer. 3:8. 7:23. Dan. 9:6-11. Mic. 3:4. 2 Thea. 1:8. 1 Pet. 2:8. 4:17. y Num. 16:7. Deut. 34:5. Josh. 1:1. 2 Tim. 2:24. Heb. 3:5,6. z 2 Chr. 32:1. Is. 36:1. † Heb. Sanherib. a Is. 7:17. & 8:7,8. 10:5. Hos. 12:1,2. b 7. 1 Kings

agreements to that prince, would not stand to the agreement which his father had formed. (Notes, 16:7-9. 17:3,4.) Having set about a complete reformation of religion, and confiding in the Lord's assistance, he refused submission to any foreign potentate: and, as the king of Assyria would call this *rebel-ling* against him, that term is here used. But it does not appear that Hezekiah violated any treaties; and the king of Assyria could have no just claim to rule over the king of Judah. Some think, however, that he was too precipitate in this measure; being rather elated by his prosperity in other transactions.

V. 8. (Marg. Ref.) The Philistines had recovered strength, in the unsettled state of affairs in Israel and Judah; but Hezekiah again reduced them to subjection. (2 Chr. 28: 18. Is. 9:12. Note, Is. 14:28-32.)

V. 9-12. Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria, in the beginning of the fourth year of Hezekiah, and the seventh of Hoshea; so that the *three years' siege* was concluded, by the end of the sixth of the former, and the ninth of the latter prince. (Notes, 1. 17:1-11.)—The desolations of Israel would tend to dispose the Jews to concur with Hezekiah, and thus facilitate his endeavours for reformation, as well as quicken him in them.

V. 13. A few years after the reduction of Samaria, Shalmaneser died, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib. Shalmaneser doubtless would have attempted to subjugate Hezekiah; but he was otherwise employed, and this leisure was given to Hezekiah, to effect his reformation without interruption. (Notes, 2 Chr. 29:—31.) Sennacherib, as soon as he mounted the throne, emulated his father's military honours, and imitated his example. He therefore purposed to treat Jerusalem and Judah, as Shalmaneser had done Samaria and Israel; and it pleased God to chastise the lukewarmness, hypocrisy, or reluctance, with which many of the Jews concurred in Hezekiah's reformation, and to try his faith, and that of other believers, by permitting this potent monarch to reduce the other fenced cities and strong holds of Judah, and to threaten Jerusalem with a siege. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:1. Is. 7:17-25. 8:8-8. 10:5-14,28-34. 36:1,2.)

V. 14-16. Some expositors charge Hezekiah with criminality, in revolting from the king of Assyria; but he seems rather to have sinned by yielding to him in so timid a manner. He evidently distrusted God's protection: (Note, Gen. 12:11-16.) and by confessing to the haughty conqueror that he had offended, and was ready to submit to any imposition that he laid upon him; and by hiring his departure with his own treasures, and the gold of the temple, he invited and encouraged his further impositions. The event shows, that if he had boldly stood out, and committed his cause to God, he would have been protected. But though Hezekiah's conduct might perhaps be reprehensible; yet it served to render Sennacherib's subsequent violence more inexcusable. Probably,

Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

15 And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

16 At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ And the king of Assyria sent Tartan, and Rabsharis and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem: and they went up, and came to Jerusalem: and when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.

18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

19 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?

20 Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

21 Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff

20:4. Prov. 29:25. Luke 14:32. c 12:18. 16:8. 1 Kings 15:15,18,19. 2 Chr. 16:9. d 1 Kings 6:31-35. 2 Chr. 29:3. † Heb. them. e 2 Chr. 32:9-11. 20:1. 36:2. f Heb. heavy. g 20:20. Is. 7:3. 22:9-11. 36:2. g 19:2. Is. 22:20-24. 36:3. 32:37. 2. Is. 22:15-19. 1 Or, secretary. 2 Sam. 8:17. marg. 1. 2 Sam. 8:16. 20:24. 1 Kings 4:3. 2 Chr. 34:8. 1. 2 Chr. 32:10. Is. 10:8-14. 36:4. 37:13. Dan. 4:30. k 22:30. 30. 19:10. 2 Chr. 32:7,8,10,11,14-16. Ps. 4:2. Is. 36:4. 37:10. 1 Or, talkest. * Heb. word of the lips. † Or, but counsel and strength, are for the war. Prov. 21:30,31. 1:14. ‡ Heb. trustest thee. m Is. 36:6. Ez. 29:6,7.

Ahaz had cut off the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple, and Hezekiah had replaced it: yet he too, in this emergency, cut it off to purchase peace. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Chr. 32:3-8.)

V. 17. This second invasion is computed by some learned men to have been three years after the former agreement; during which time Sennacherib was occupied in other wars. But it seems more probable from the narrative, that he returned the ensuing year. (Note, Is. 36:2.) Having, however, accomplished his other projects, and being lifted up with pride, he was determined, without provocation, to reduce Judah and Jerusalem, and to treat the inhabitants as his father had done those of Samaria. (Notes, Is. 10:8-14. 33: 5-9.) He therefore sent his commanders with a large army to camp against that city, being himself engaged in besieging Lachish; (2 Chr. 32:9.) and they were instructed to summon Hezekiah to surrender at discretion, having doubtless particular orders what to say to him or his envoys, on that subject.

Stood by the conduit, &c.] 'They took up their headquarters, as we now speak, by the conduit, or canal, into which water was derived from the upper fishpond or pool, which was in the highway to the field, where the fullers, after they had washed their clothes in the pool, were wont to spread them.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 18. Hezekiah, though summoned to a personal conference, did not choose to trust himself with his perfidious and domineering invaders; and therefore he appointed commissioners, or deputies, to attend in his name. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Sam. 8:15-18. Is. 22:15-25. 36:3.)

V. 19. Rabshakeh, &c.] This man is reported by tradition to have been an apostate Jew; which supposition, if well grounded, may account both for his fluency in speaking the Hebrew tongue, and concerning the God of Israel; and for his unblinded enmity against true religion.

V. 20, 21. It does not appear that Hezekiah, after the preceding agreement, had refused to pay tribute to the king of Assyria, or had attempted to shake off his yoke; but when he found him determined to destroy Jerusalem and enslave its inhabitants, he refused to surrender at discretion, and prepared to stand a siege; and this was deemed rebellion and the most unreasonable presumption! (Note, 1 Kings 20:2-11.) Rabshakeh supposed that Hezekiah had neither counsel nor strength for such a war; and indeed he did not place his dependence on his own wisdom, or on the number and valour of his troops.—Hoshea had confided in the king of Egypt, and had been deceived and ruined by that confidence. (Note, 17:4.) and if Hezekiah had done the same, he might have proved to him like a bruised cane, which deceives those who lean upon it, and not only lets them fall, but pierces or wounds their hands. (Note, Ez. 29:6,7.) He, however, did not put his trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen; though,

of this bruised reed, *even* upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it; so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

22 But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem?

23 Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.

24 How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?

25 Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.

27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

28 Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a

loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

29 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Harken not unto Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

32 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

35 Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?

Is. 30.2, 7.31:1-3. o 17:4. Jer. 46:17. p 5. Dan. 3:15. Matt. 27:43. q 4. 2 Chr. 31:1. 32:12. Is. 36:7. 1 Cor. 2:15. Heb. hostages. r 1 Sam. 17:42-44. 1 Kings 20:10, 18. Neh. 4:2-5. P. 123, 3, 4. Is. 10:13, 14. 35:8. Jer. 18. 19. Dan. 2:37, 38. 4:2, 27. t 21. See on Deut. 17:16. Is. 31:13. 36:6-9. Jer. 37:7. 42:14-18. Ez. 17:15, 17. u Ps. 20:7, 8. v 15:6, 92, &c. y 6:13, 15. 2 Chr. 35:21. Is. 10:5-6. x Ezra 4:7. Is. 36:11, 12. Dan. 2:4. y 6:25. Deut. 28:53-57. Ps. 73:8. Lam. 4:8. Ez. 4:13. t Heb. the water of their feet. z 2 Chr. 32:18. Is. 36:13-18. a 19. Ezra 7:12. Ps. 47:2. Is. 10:9-13. Ez. 29:3. 31:3-10. Rev. 19:16. b 2 Chr. 32:11, 15. Dan. 3:15-17. 6:16. John

19:10, 11. 2 Thes. 2:4. c 22. 19:10, 22. Ps. 4:2. 11:1. 22:7, 8. 71:9, 11. Mat. 27:43. Luke 23:35. d 19:32-34. f Or, Seek my favour. Heb. Make with me a blessing. Gen. 32:20. 33:11. Prov. 18:16. e 1 Kings 4:20, 25, 27. Zech. 3:10. f Or, pit. f 11. 17:6, 23. 24:14. 16. 25:11. g Ex. 3:8. Num. 13:26, 27. 14:8. Deut. 8:7-9. 11:12. 23:13, 14. i Or, deceive. 28. h 19:12, 17, 18. 2 Chr. 32:14-17. 19. Is. 10:10, 11. 36:19-20. 119:13. Num. 13:21. 2 Sam. 8:9. Jer. 46:23. k 17:24-25. Am. 1. 36:18. 19. 37:11, 12, 18, 19. 117:6. 23:24, 30. 31. 19, 12, 13. m Ex. 5:2. 2 Chr. 32:15. Job 15:25, 26. Is. 10:15. 37:23-29. Dan. 3:15.

probably many of his nobles were disposed to that measure, and some engagements of that kind had before been attempted. (Notes, Is. 30:1-7. 31:1-5.)—Vain words. (20) "Word of the lips." Marg.

V. 22. The Assyrians had learned that Hezekiah professed to confide in God: and Rabshakeh combatted that confidence, by inquiring how he could presume to expect assistance from him, whose altars and high places he had destroyed? (Notes, 4. 2 Chr. 31:1.) For he ignorantly supposed that the Lord would be pleased, and deem himself honoured, in proportion to the number of the temples and altars dedicated to him, though erected contrary to his express command; and therefore he concluded that Hezekiah had forfeited God's protection, by that very reformation which ensured it. (Notes, Num. 23:1, 2, 4-6. 1 Cor. 2:14-16.) As none of the kings who supported the worship of JEHOVAH, and reformed religion, had ventured to take away the high places, this gave the greater plausibility to the objection. (Note, 4.)

V. 23, 24. If Hezekiah would give security, that he would submit in case of failure, Rabshakeh vaunted that he would send him two thousand horses, provided he could find men to ride them. By this he meant to insult and expose Hezekiah's inability to resist the immense army of Sennacherib; or even a small detachment of it, under the command of the least of his captains. But the Israelites were forbidden to multiply chariots and horses, and Hezekiah had learned to depend on a firmer support. (2 Chr. 32:6-8. Notes, Deut. 17:16. Ps. 20:6-8.)

V. 25. Rabshakeh intended to discourage the people, and to induce them to a revolt. Samaria had been destroyed according to the denunciations of JEHOVAH, and Shalmaneser had been considered as his instrument in that destruction. The Jews also were menaced with judgments for their sins, and Rabshakeh affected to believe, that Sennacherib was commissioned to execute similar vengeance on Jerusalem. (Note, 2 Chr. 35:20-24. Is. 36:10.) But there was no truth in his assertion, which the late effectual reformation might inspire the people with confidence to disregard; and the implicity of pretending, that Sennacherib came by the command of JEHOVAH, when he was entirely instigated by ambition, resentment, and rapacity, and when he treated God himself in the most blasphemous manner, was horrible profaneness. (Notes, 19. 4:25-28. 2 Chr. 32:9-16, v. 15. 17-22, v. 19. Is. 10:5-15.)

V. 26. The ambassadors fully understood the drift of Rabshakeh's discourse, and reasonably and mildly required him to make his proposals to them in the Syrian language; and not to address himself to the people, who were not proper judges in such matters, by speaking in the language of the Jews. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 27. These were hyperbolic expressions, denoting the

utmost extremities of famine, which the people must expect to endure, in case they dared to resist the king of Assyria. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.)

V. 28-35. Rabshakeh supposed that the Assyrian monarch had overpowered the gods, as well as the kings, of all the nations which they had subjected; and that JEHOVAH was no more powerful than the rest of them: and therefore if the Jews regarded Hezekiah's persuasions, and expected help from the LORD, they would certainly be deceived, for he would never be able to deliver them. What mean thoughts of the infinite God, and what arrogant thoughts of himself, must have possessed the mind of Sennacherib, who doubtless had instructed his servant to speak of him in this style! The gods of Hamath, &c. were mere idols, not able to do good or evil. The people of Samaria had provoked the Lord to sell them into the hands of their enemies; and the idols, which they had chosen, were indeed unable to defend them: but, soon after, the new inhabitants experienced to their loss, that the God of their land could, if he had so pleased, have delivered Samaria out of the hand of the king of Assyria. (17:25, 26. 19:17-19. 2 Chr. 32:19.) Surely, if this proud worm had not been intoxicated with success, he must have admitted, that somewhere in the universe there was a power superior to that of mortal man! and if so, it must be highly irrational thus to set at defiance "all that was called God, or worshipped!" But, by this blasphemy the Lord was expressly engaged in the cause; and his honour required him to crush the self-important wretch, who dared to exalt himself against him; so that the greatest kindness imaginable was done to the king and the people of Judah, by this language of impiety and defiance. (Notes, 19:14, 14-19, v. 19. 25-29. Ps. 79:8-13. Is. 10:15-19.)—The proposal made to the people was not very alluring, unless they could be previously terrified with the dread of impending destruction: for Rabshakeh avowed the intention of extorting more money from them, and only of permitting them to continue in their own land, till the king had leisure to remove them to another: and the fertility of that other country was not likely to be very useful to those, who were to be captives and slaves in it. But who could have depended upon the word of such a man, if he had made more equitable proposals?—Rabshakeh, however, argued very plausibly on his own principles, and his eloquence has been much admired: but when a man addresses himself to an uninformed populace, and has sufficient effrontery, and no reserves as to what he says, be it ever so false, impious, or malignant, provided it is suited to inflame their passions, to excite their fears or terrors, and to set them against the rulers whom God has placed over them; eloquence requires comparatively no great talent or genius.

V. 36, 37. Hezekiah was aware what sort of language

36 But the people ^{held} their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah,

a. Ps. 38:13, 14. 39:1. Prov. 9:7. 26:4. Am. 5:13. Matt. 7:6. o. 5:7. 22:11, 19.

Rabshakeh would employ, and had wisely counselled his envoys, and commanded the people, to hold their peace; lest they should get engaged in a reviling contention, or provoke him to further impiety. 'This was a wise order; . . . and it was no less pious: for Hezekiah believed that God would answer for himself, not in words, but in such deeds as would demonstrate that he was above all gods.' *Bp. Patrick*. In abhorrence, however, of his blasphemy, and in grief for the afflicted estate of the nation, the ambassadors rent their clothes, and returned to the king. (*Notes*, Is. 33:7—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. In times of increasing impiety we should not despond, as if things must necessarily proceed from bad to worse; for the Lord is able to give them an unexpected and effectual turn. From the most abandoned families he sometimes raises up the brightest ornaments and most useful friends of true religion, to illustrate the sovereignty and power of his grace: and when parents have been notoriously profane and wicked, their children should not hesitate to express, *by an opposite conduct*, a decided disapprobation of their crimes, and to counteract to the utmost the effects of them on others; whether they have occupied a public, or a more private station in society: for, when the honour of God is concerned, the reputation of the nearest relatives is entitled to a very subordinate regard. (*Notes*, Matt. 10:37—39. *Luke* 14:25—27. *2 Cor.* 5:16. *Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Pet.* 1:17—21.)—It is not enough, that we do not imitate the conduct of atrocious offenders, or that we tread in the steps of those, who have upon the whole served God sincerely: but we should aim high; and, in aspiring at that eminence which the Scripture proposes, we should set before our eyes the most approved patterns, whose actions are there recorded; that we may follow those who have most nearly followed Christ, and most effectually served God and their generation; and thus become good examples for others to copy. (*Note*, 1 *Thes.* 1:5—8.)—In attempting personal or public reformation, those things should be removed or avoided, which have proved occasions of evil, though not sinful in themselves. Human depravity is prone to pervert the bounty of Providence into fuel for sinful lusts; and, in some circumstances, is equally propense to abuse the peculiar mercies of God into occasions of superstition and idolatry. It is natural to fallen man to put the creature in the place of the Creator, and to regard the instrument, rather than the Author, of our comforts: and though this is more evidently absurd when the instrument is irrational or inanimate: it is equally idolatrous, when the most exalted of intelligent agents are thus unduly honoured. However excellent, useful, or deserving of honour, such creatures have been; when they are thus idolized, their comparative meanness and worthlessness ought to be exposed, and the abuse of them treated with the deepest indignation and abhorrence: nay, it were better that the most exalted creature should perish, than that God should be dishonoured by having the least of his glory given to another. Much more then, should every monument of his former mercies be extirpated, when it becomes the occasion of fatal delusions: and the perversion cannot otherwise effectually be prevented; but the propriety of such a measure is still more conspicuous, when the relic, or the custom, was originally the creature of superstition, a mere human invention, perhaps the result of fraud and imposture. True faith needs not such aids to devotion: the word of God, daily meditated upon, leads the mind to realize past, future, and invisible things, as if present: thus every good end proposed by other expedients is answered, without the danger to which they expose us: and the simple scriptural use of the sacramental signs, and pledges of heavenly things, may effectually be preserved from such abuse, and answer every purpose, which can be obtained by presenting the objects of our faith to our bodily senses, in any way not warranted by the word of God; which only tends to distract the mind, to interrupt the simple exercise of faith, to excite spurious affections, to deprave the imagination with gross and false notions of heavenly things, and to introduce, either absurd superstition, or wild enthusiasm.—Those, who most entirely trust in God, will feel themselves most effectually emancipated from other dependences, and from the dominion of every other master: and will be encouraged to resist every enemy and rival, "that they may cleave to the LORD, and not depart from following him, and keeping his commandments."

V. 9—16. While the interests of religion decline or are run down in one place, the Lord takes care that they shall revive and flourish in another. The judgments, which desolate degenerate churches and nations, instead of injuring his cause, tend to warm, animate, and embolden others in personal religion, and in attempting public reformation: nay, they often facilitate the work of active instruments in religious revivals, by intimidating opposers, and exciting those who were indifferent, or reluctant to assist.—Yet, the believer, when pursuing heavenly things, and seeking the glory of God, with the greatest simplicity and most vigorous affections

which was over the household, and Sheona the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

Gen. 37:29, 34. Job 1:20. Is. 33:7. 36:21, 22. Jer. 36:24. Matt. 26:65.

must stand prepared for trouble. For a time, he may enjoy the sunshine of peace and prosperity, to encourage him in his labour of love, and to enable him to bring it to some establishment; and "whatsoever he doeth" shall eventually "prosper." But, when the Almighty is pleased to remove his restraining hand, Satan and wicked men will assault him, with rancour and vehemence proportioned to his zeal and success: and the Lord often permits them to do this: for he regards not so much the present transient feelings of his beloved servants, as the final happy and glorious event of their trials and conflicts. Nations also may meet with public calamities, when true religion is most vigorously and successfully promoted, by the general concurrence of all orders of men. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* 20:1—4. *Ps.* 44:17—22.) The secret dislike, the hypocrisy, and the lukewarmness of numbers, require correction: while trials tend to purify the faith and hope of upright persons; to bring them to greater simplicity in their zeal for the honour of God, and in their dependence on his help; and to increase the fervency of their addresses at the throne of grace: and thus they make way for the fuller display of the glory of God in their deliverance. Yet, in such trying situations the strongest believers are apt to waver, to make improper concessions, and to speak and act unadvisedly.—Whatever is withheld or withdrawn from God, which has been or ought to be devoted to him, in order to purchase exemption from trouble, or peace with the enemies of his church, will eventually occasion our shame, and involve us in greater difficulties.

V. 17—37. No dependence can be placed on the engagements of the covetous or ambitious: and all attempts to purchase their favour, or to sooth them into peace, are vain. When it is in their power, they will find some pretence for seizing on those possessions which they covet, while every acquisition increases their insatiable rapacity. Success in wickedness elates them with pride and insolence; they forget that they are men, or have any superior; and treat all as enemies or rebels, who do not implicitly comply with their exorbitant demands. Our only safety then consists, in committing our persons, property, connexions, reputations, liberty, and every thing which we value, into the powerful keeping of our God, in the exercise of faith, and by adhering to the path of duty.—"The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison; it setteth on fire the whole course of nature, and is set on fire of hell." What pride, reproaches, lies, impiey, atheism, and blasphemy have, in all ages, been vented by it, to the dishonour of God, and the unutterable injury of mankind. We may form some estimate of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, from the horrible language which is uttered by the lips of men: "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (*Notes*, Matt. 12:31—37. *Jam.* 3:3—6.) May the Lord replenish our hearts with his grace, that out of that good treasure we may speak such things, and such only, as may "minister grace unto the hearers!" If, indeed, "as the fool hath said in his heart, there were no God," it would in general be vain and presumptuous for the weaker to resist the stronger: but, as "the Lord doeth what he will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" so, "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong." All confidence in man may justly be exploded, as leaning on a broken staff, which will not only fail, but also wound: and dependence on our own counsel and might, whatever proportion they may bear to those of our opponents, is equally vain and fallacious. But our God never fails those who trust in him: in this confidence the believer, when more conscious of his own extreme debility, than his insulting foes can conceive, may boldly defy the most potent of them; and if they deride this dependence on the omnipotent God, they only engage him, "for his own name's sake," the more decisively to fight against them; and to turn their vauntings and threatenings into confusion, dismay, and ruin.—When they, who have domineered over their fellow worms, presume to assault those whom the God of heaven protects; they will soon feel their inability to resist his power, or to endure the weight of his indignation. Yet many who atheistically, or impiously, deny his existence, blaspheme his truths, or condemn his authority; inconsistently, upon other occasions, advance claims to his favour, and express their expectations that he will prosper their wicked devices! Because they have succeeded in exposing or seducing hypocritical and degenerate professors of Christianity; they triumph as if they had, or soon should, completely ruin the cause of vital godliness, and prevail against the house of David and his king dom, which is founded upon an immovable foundation. Numbers also, ignorantly and absurdly, suppose those things to be pleasing to God, which he most abhors; because they form their judgments on the deductions of their own understandings, or on the traditions and authority of men, and not on the plain and sure testimonies of the sacred Scriptures. "For the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to the natural man." Hence they embolden themselves, and endeavour to discourage scriptural worshippers, upon the mos

CHAPTER XIX.

Hezekiah in distress sends to desire Isaiah's prayers, and receives an encouraging answer, 1-7. Sennacherib, going to oppress the king of Ethiopia, sends a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, 8-13. His prayer on the receipt of it, 14-19. Isaiah, in the name of God, rebuking the proud blasphemies of Sennacherib, foretells his overthrow, and the prosperity of Zion, 20-34. An angel destroys the Assyrian army, 35. Sennacherib is slain by his own sons, in the temple of his idol, 36, 37.

AND it came to pass, "when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.

4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left.

a Is. 37:1. b 5:7. 18:37. 1 Sam. 4:12. Ezra 9:3. Job 1:20. Jer. 36:24. Matt. 26:55. c 6:30. Gen. 37:34. 1 Kings 21:27-29. Esth. 4:1-4. Ps. 35:13. John 3:8. Matt. 11:21. d 2 Chr. 7:15-16. Job 10:20, 21. e 18:18-22. 13:14. Is. 37:2-5. f 2 Chr. 32:23. Matt. 4:14. Luke 9:4. *Ezra*. g Is. 1:1. 2:1. h 18:29. Ps. 39:11. 126:34. Jer. 30:5-7. Hos. 9:15. 6:1. * Or, pronunciation. Ps. 95:9. Heb. 3:15. 16. i Is. 26:17, 18. 66:9. Hos. 13:13. k Gen. 22:14. Deut. 32:35. Josh. 14:12. 1 Sam. 14:6. 2 Sam. 18:12. 118:17-17. m 22. 1 Sam. 17:45. Ps. 50:21. 74:18. n 2 Chr. 32:20. Ps. 50:15. Jer. 33:3. Ex. 36:37. Jam. 5:16, 17. o 17:5, 6. 18:

false and preposterous grounds. Such cavils, objections, and arguments have no weight with the established believer: and therefore these men pretend to despise him, that they may address the prejudices and passions of the ignorant, unstable, and unthinking multitude, with whom their specious declamations go further than either solid arguments or scriptural testimonies. They endeavour to insinuate, that the persons, who labour to prevail with them to trust and serve God, according to the plain meaning of his holy word, are deceivers, to whom they cannot safely attend: and, while they are only aiming at the gratification of their own ambition or avarice, they profess great compassion and kindness for them, are lavish of good words, and set before them alluring prospects of felicity. But, it is often best to leave persons of this description to rail and blaspheme, without directly answering; because such attempts ordinarily increase their self importance, and tend to disseminate still more widely the effect of their poisonous tenets; while a decided expression of abhorrence of their guilt generally forms the best testimony against them. The matter must be left to the Lord, who has all hearts in his hands: he will plead his own cause, and that of his truth and people; and our safety and duty consist in committing ourselves into his hands, by humble submission, believing hope, and fervent prayer.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1. Hezekiah, by rending his garments and clothing himself in sackcloth, expressed his abhorrence of Rabshakeh's blasphemy; his grief for the afflictions of his people; and his humble consciousness of his own and his people's unworthiness, and need of pardoning mercy; while he wholly depended upon God for protection.

V. 2. Isaiah had at this time prophesied almost fifty years, if he entered upon that office only a short time before the death of Uzziah: for he prophesied, in the days of Uzziah, who died about 758 before Christ; and these transactions occurred about 712. (Notes, Is. 1:1. 6:1-4, v. 1.) It must be supposed that Hezekiah had often consulted him: and the nature of this message implies a previous acquaintance, and a mutual confidence. (Note, 18:4.) Isaiah's visits to Hezekiah, at and after his sickness, are thought by some to have taken place before this, though recorded afterwards; (20:) and many parts of his prophecy evidently refer to these events.—In this emergency therefore Hezekiah sent to Isaiah the prophet, rather than to the high-priest; though he had employed the priests and Levites in his reformation. Perhaps Urijah was still living, or some other high-priest too much resembling him in character. (Note, 16:10-16.) There seems, however, to have been an intended silencing upon the high-priest. Some learned men indeed think, that the appointed method of inquiring of God by the high-priest, was disused from the time that the temple was built: but this can only be collected from the silence of Scripture, as no express declaration to that effect is recorded.—Shebna, who was employed on this occasion, as well as in receiving the message of Rabshakeh, is elsewhere represented in an unfavourable light. (Notes, Is. 22:15-19.) For pious persons cannot always employ such characters, and such only, as they approve. The elders of the priests accompanied the chief officers of the king, in going to the prophet: and they all went to him in the habit of mourners and penitents.

V. 3. It was not only a season of great distress to Israel;

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, "Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, "Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered?

12 Chr. 23:5, 6. Is. 8:7, 8. 10:6. † Heb. found. p Is. 37:6, 7. q 6:16. Ex. 14:13. Lev. 26:8. Deut. 20:1, 3, 4. Josh. 11:6. 2 Chr. 50:15, 17. Is. 40:10-14. 51:7, 12, 13. r 18:35. Ps. 74:18, 23. Rev. 13:6. s 35:37. Job 4:9. Ps. 11:6. 18:14, 15. 50:3. Is. 10:16-18. 11:4. Jer. 51:1. t 7:6. Job 15:21. Jer. 49:14. 51:46. Ob. 1. u 35:37. 2 Chr. 32:21. x 8:22. Josh. 10:29. 19:15. 15:42. y 18:14. Josh. 12:11. 15:39. Is. 37:8, 9. Mic. 1:13. z 1 Sam. 23:27, 28. Is. 37:9. a 18:17. b 18:29. 30. 2 Chr. 32:15-19. Is. 37:10-14. c 17:18. 17:5. c. 18:33, 34. 2 Chr. 32:13, 14. Is. 10:8-11.

but the confidence of the king, in the protection of God, was rebuked by Rabshakeh in the name of Sennacherib, as a groundless presumption, and the name of JEHOVAH was blasphemed on that account. Indeed the affairs of Judah were come to a crisis: every thing valuable was at stake. As the woman in travail, who has not strength to bring forth, must die, if she be not speedily assisted; so, Hezekiah and his people, in their pressing necessity, were utterly unable to do any thing effectual to extricate themselves, and must perish without immediate help from God. (Note, Hos. 13:12, 13.)

V. 4. Hezekiah's confidence in God was in some respects encouraged by the blasphemy of the Assyrians. For though he and his people were unworthy of the divine favour; yet it was proper for the Lord to rebuke and silence the reproachful words which had been spoken. In this hope therefore he entreated and required the prophet to "lift up his prayer," with earnestness and importunity, for the remnant which was left, that the people of God might not be swallowed up and extirpated. Israel had been carried into captivity, and dispersed; and Judah was reduced to extremities; and would God suffer his blasphemers finally to prevail against his worshippers, and entirely to destroy his holy religion? (Notes, Is. 8:6-8. 10:5, 6.)

V. 7. A blast, &c.] Some have supposed that this expression related to the manner in which the Assyrian army was destroyed: viz. by exciting one of those scorching winds which in those countries have been known to destroy great multitudes almost instantaneously. But this is uncertain, and perhaps it only means, that the Lord would destroy all his prosperity, as easily as the pinching gale of wind blasts the tender vegetables: while the death of his numerous forces, probably attended by a report, that Tirhakah and the Ethiopians were marching to assault him, as a terrifying rumour in his ears, would hurry him home with dismay and disgrace. (Notes, 35-37. Job 20:10-29, vv. 23-26.)—As the word, rendered blast, is often translated spirit; some explain the expression to mean, that God would send an angel, or spirit, to destroy Sennacherib's army; but others think it signifies, that God would fill his heart with terror by some supernatural agent. "I will infuse a spirit into him."—The phrase never signifies any thing, but putting a spirit into a person, this was πνευμα δουλίας; (a spirit of fear.) Seeker in By Louth.

V. 8. It is probable, that Rabshakeh marched the army back from Jerusalem to join Sennacherib, when he found that Hezekiah would neither surrender, nor return any answer to his insulting message. (32) For Jerusalem was so advantageously situated, and so well fortified, that, with a moderate garrison, it might have made a stout resistance against any detachment of the Assyrian army: (Notes, 25:1-5. 2 Sam. 5:6-8. Ps. 48:12, 13. 125:2. Lam. 4:12.) though it must probably at length have shared the fate of Samaria, if the Lord had not immediately interposed. The siege, however, was postponed, or not carried on with vigour, till Sennacherib had leisure to come against it in person. In the mean time he had withdrawn from Lachish, (it is not known whether he had taken that city or not;) and was besieging Libnah, another city, which refused to open its gates to the conqueror.

V. 9-13. When Sennacherib had, the first time, levied contributions upon Hezekiah, he marched his army into

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as ^dGozan, and ^eHaran, and Rezep, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar?

13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

[Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, "O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

16 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and the lands.

18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's

hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

20 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.

21 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. [Practical Observations.]

23 By thy messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar-trees thereof, and the choice

d 17:6. 1 Chr. 5:26. e Gen. 11:31. 29:4. Acts 7:4. Charran. f Gen. 2:8. Is. 37:12. Thelasar. Ez. 27:23. g 18:34. Num. 13:21. 34:8. Is. 11:11. Jer. 39:5. 49:23. Zech. 9:2. h 17:24. Is. 37:13. Arphad. i Is. 37:14. k 1 Kings 9:28-30. Ezra 9:5. f. 74:10-11. 91:1-2. 189:1-4. l 2 Sam. 7:18. &c. 2 Chr. 14:11. 30:6. Dan. 9:3, 4. m Gen. 32:53. 33:20. 1 Kings 8:23. 1 Chr. 4:10. Is. 41:17. n Is. 25:22. 1 Sam. 4:4. Ps. 80:1. 89:1. o 5:15. 1 Kings 18:39. Is. 43:10. 44:6, 8. 45:22. Dan. 4:34, 35. p Gen. 1:1. 2:4. Ps. 33:9. 146:6. Jer. 10:10-12. John 1:3. q 37:12. Is. 37:17. r 1 Kings 9:29. 2 Chr. 6:40. Dan. 9:18. s 4. Ps. 79:12. Is. 37:17. Heb. 11:35. t Job 9:2. Is. 5:9. Jer. 26:15. Dan. 2:47. Matt. 14:33. Luke 22:59. Acts 1:27. 1 Cor. 14:25. u 16:19. 17:26. 1 Chr. 5:26. Is. 7:17. 18:10-11. v 2 Sam. 5:21. Is. 46:1, 2. * Heb. given. x Ps. 115:4-8.

Is. 37:18, 19. 44:9-20. Jer. 10:3-9, 14-16. Acts 17:29. y Ex. 9:15, 16. Josh. 7:9. 1 Sam. 17:45-47. 1 Kings 8:43. 18:36, 37. Ps. 67:1, 2. 83:18. Dan. 4:34-37. z 2 Sam. 15:31. 17:23. a 20:5. 2 Chr. 32:20, 21. Job 22:27. Ps. 50:15. 65:2. Is. 58:9. 65:24. Jer. 33:3. Dan. 9:20-22. John 11:42. Acts 10:43. 1 John 5:14, 15. b Is. 23:12. 37:22. 47:1. Jer. 14:17. 18:13. 31:4. Lam. 1:15. 2:13. Am. 5:2. c Ps. 9:14. 137:8. Is. 18. 23:10. 47:5. Jer. 46:11. Lam. 2:13. 2:21. Mic. 4:1. Zech. 9:9. d Job. 16:4. Ps. 22:7, 8. Is. 37:22. Lam. 2:15. Matt. 27:39. e 18:28-35. Is. 5:2. 18. 73. 74. 22:20. f Ex. 9:17. Jer. 30:13. Is. 10:15. H. 13:14. Jer. 26:2-5. Dan. 2:30-23. 2 Chr. 10:7. 2 Thes. 2:4. g Ps. 71:22. Is. 2:24. Jer. 12:15. Is. 51. 5. 1 Heb. theophany. h Is. 17:2. 37:17. 18:23, 23:34. Jer. 2:7. Is. 10:7-11. 14:14. 37:24, 35. Ez. 31:3, &c. i Heb. increase of the chiefest of the earth.

Egypt; probably in resentment against the king, for forming alliances with the vassals of the Assyrians, as he regarded the Jews and the Samaritans to be. After several successes there, while he was besieging Pelusium, an important fortress in that country, he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was marching against him with a great army: and, not choosing to wait his approach, he raised the siege; and returning into Judea, began to commit hostilities there, as it has been before related. But, finding that Tirhakah pursued him as a fugitive, he marched back to encounter him; and, having totally routed his army, he returned to wreak his vengeance on Hezekiah and Jerusalem. This gave the Jews some respite for preparation and for prayer; and afforded Sennacherib an occasion for more deliberately uttering his blasphemy, s, by a letter sent to Hezekiah, when detained for a time from marching against him.—Learned men differ in opinion concerning Tirhakah; whether he were king of Ethiopia, or Cush, to the south of Egypt in Africa, or of the Cushites in Asia. He was however an ally of the king of Egypt. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 18:20, 21, 28-35. 1 Kings 10:1, 2.)

V. 14-19. Notes, 3, 4. 1 Kings 8:33, 34. 2 Chr. 14:9-15. 20:6-12.—Spread it, &c. (14) By this action Hezekiah referred the matter entirely to God, intimating that as his honour was immediately assaulted, he was chiefly concerned to defend it; and by this appeal the king meant to shelter himself and his people under the shadow of the Almighty; that while the Lord pleaded his own cause, he might also deliver them from their enraged enemies. (Notes, 2 Chr. 20:14-17. Ps. 21:13.)

Thou art the God, &c. (15) JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, who dwells between the cherubim, on the mercy-seat, was considered by Sennacherib and Rabshakeh as merely the local deity of a small region; but Hezekiah prayed, that he would arise, and make it appear that he was the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, and the Creator of the world.

Hath sent him, &c. (16) That is Rabshakeh, who probably was sent with this letter.—Cast their gods, &c. (18) Notes, 2 Sam. 5:21. Ps. 115:3-8. Is. 44:12-20. 46:1, 2, 5-9. Jer. 10:3-11. Hos. 8:5, 6.

Now, &c. (19) It would have been comparatively a small matter for Hezekiah and his people to perish; but it would be an evil of infinite magnitude, for all the nations to conclude that JEHOVAH was no more powerful than their worthless idols: and it would be unspeakably honourable to the name of God, to show the difference between the Creator of the world, and these his puny rivals; and to prove, that he only was the LORD almighty, able to save and to destroy. Sennacherib's blasphemous challenge gave a fair opportunity of publicly demonstrating this most important truth; and a plea grounded so directly on the honour of God could not but prevail. (Notes, Ez. 32:11-14. 1 Sam. 17:45-47. Is. 37:20. Matt. 6:9, 10, 13.)

V. 21. The virgin, &c. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, as forming or representing the visible church of God, having his temple and instituted worship among them, are called in one body, "the daughter of Zion," or of Jerusalem. (Marg. Ref. c.) They were safe under his protection and care as a virgin-daughter in the house of a wise and tender parent: and, though the Assyrian attempted brutal violence, they might

treat his efforts with disdain and defiance; might despise them and laugh them to scorn, and menace his destruction by shaking their heads at him. Perhaps the term, virgin, might refer to the state of Jerusalem, as free from idolatry, and reserved for the Lord alone; (2 Cor. 11:1-6, v. 2,) or as having never been exposed to the ravages of an enraged victor. (Notes, Is. 23:12. 47:1-3.) The city of David, or Zion, seems never to have been taken by any assailant, from the time when David got possession of it, till the Babylonish captivity.—The former part of this message is addressed not to Hezekiah, but to Sennacherib, as if present; first by the daughter of Zion, and then by the Lord himself.

V. 22. Sennacherib had both exalted his voice, in reproach and blasphemy against God; and lifted up his eyes, in pride and ambition; as if he even aspired to his throne, and affected equality with him, or even superiority above him. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:9-16, v. 15. 17-22, v. 19. Is. 10:15-19. Ez. 28:2-10. Dan. 5:18-24. 2 Thes. 2:3, 4.) But he did not consider whom he had thus affronted: not the idols of the heathens, which being wood and stone, he had easily cast into the fire; but Israel's holy Protector, who would execute signal vengeance upon him for his bold presumption; and who being the Creator of heaven and earth, could crush as a moth the feeble worm, which had set him at defiance.

V. 23. The Assyrian monarch was elated by his successes; and, on account of the number and valour of his troops, his chariots, and other military preparations, supposed that nothing would be too hard for him to accomplish. He is here introduced as glorying in what he had done, and would do. No mountain, was so inaccessible but he could drive his chariots over it; no forest so impervious but he could level it with the ground; no place so fortified, but he would force his way into it. Some suppose he meant, that he had marched his army through the defiles, or over the craggy summits of mount Lebanon: but others think that by these expressions the temple on mount Zion is intended; and that he gloried, as already indisputably master of the whole land, and as if he had marched his army, and driven his chariots into the mountain of the Lord's house, and dispossessed him of his habitation. The temple may be called Lebanon either because difficult of access, or because it was built with cedars of Lebanon: the removal of all obstructions, by slaying the bravest of Hezekiah's captains, may be denoted, by cutting down the cedars and choice fir-trees; and, "the lodgings of his borders, and the forest of his Carmel," may mean the strong-holds upon the borders of the land; and the fruitful fields, which would come into the possession of the conqueror. For Carmel being situated in a very fruitful part of the land, every fruitful spot seems to have been called by that name. (Marg. Notes, Is. 10:12-15.)

V. 24. Hezekiah had before taken measures to prevent the Assyrians from finding water near Jerusalem. (Note, 2 Chr. 32:3, 4.) But this haughty conqueror boasted, that wherever his armies marched to besiege cities, that by digging deep wells he found water where none had ever been found before, so that he and his army had "drunk strange waters;" and likewise that they dried up all the rivers by which the cities were defended, either by the numbers who drank of them, or by diverting their course into other chan-

fir-trees there! : and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.

24 I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.

25 Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it; and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.

26 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

27 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

28 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

29 And this shall be a sign unto thee, y

Or, the forest, and his fruitful field. Is. 10:18. k Ex. 15:9. 2 Sam. 17:13. 1 Kings 20:10. Dan. 4:30. 1 Or, fenced. 1 Or, Hast thou not heard how I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? Should I now bring it to be laid waste, and fenced cities to be ruinous heaps? 1 Ps. 33:11. 76:10. Is. 10:5, 15, 37:26, 37:45, 46:10, 11, 54:16. Am. 1:11. 14:9. 14:14. 14:18. 14:24. 14:28. 14:32. 14:36. 14:39. 14:42. 14:45. 14:48. 14:51. 14:54. 14:57. 14:60. 14:63. 14:66. 14:69. 14:72. 14:75. 14:78. 14:81. 14:84. 14:87. 14:90. 14:93. 14:96. 14:99. 15:1. 15:4. 15:7. 15:10. 15:13. 15:16. 15:19. 15:22. 15:25. 15:28. 15:31. 15:34. 15:37. 15:40. 15:43. 15:46. 15:49. 15:52. 15:55. 15:58. 15:61. 15:64. 15:67. 15:70. 15:73. 15:76. 15:79. 15:82. 15:85. 15:88. 15:91. 15:94. 15:97. 15:100. 16:1. 16:4. 16:7. 16:10. 16:13. 16:16. 16:19. 16:22. 16:25. 16:28. 16:31. 16:34. 16:37. 16:40. 16:43. 16:46. 16:49. 16:52. 16:55. 16:58. 16:61. 16:64. 16:67. 16:70. 16:73. 16:76. 16:79. 16:82. 16:85. 16:88. 16:91. 16:94. 16:97. 16:100. 17:1. 17:4. 17:7. 17:10. 17:13. 17:16. 17:19. 17:22. 17:25. 17:28. 17:31. 17:34. 17:37. 17:40. 17:43. 17:46. 17:49. 17:52. 17:55. 17:58. 17:61. 17:64. 17:67. 17:70. 17:73. 17:76. 17:79. 17:82. 17:85. 17:88. 17:91. 17:94. 17:97. 17:100. 18:1. 18:4. 18:7. 18:10. 18:13. 18:16. 18:19. 18:22. 18:25. 18:28. 18:31. 18:34. 18:37. 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the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand: and "when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

36 So "Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at "Nineveh.

m. Ex. 12:30. Ps. 76:5-7, 10. n. 7:28, 33. o. Gen. 10:11, 12. Jon. 1:2. Nah. 1:1. 2:8. Matt. 12:41. p. 10. 18:5, 30. Leut. 32:31. 2 Chr. 32:14, 19. Is. 37:37, 38.

bowstrings in pieces, so that they could not fight. So studious were they to pervert the truth, and corrupt the sacred story! *BP. Patrick.*

V. 36, 37. Sennacherib is supposed to have survived this catastrophe for some time; and to have lived under great contempt, but exercising the most odious cruelty towards his subjects. Though he had had such awful demonstration of the power of JEHOVAH, and the impotence of his own idols; yet he adhered to the latter, and died in an act of idolatrous worship: a striking example of the difference between the God in whom Ezekiah trusted, to whom he prayed, and by whom he was miraculously delivered, in the most urgent extremity; and the god of Sennacherib, who could not defend him in his own capital, during profound peace, from the sword of his sons, even while employed in acts of religious worship!—Some have conjectured, that Sennacherib had vowed to sacrifice his sons to his idol, and that they murdered him in self-defence: and then escaped into the adjacent mountains of Armenia, or Ararat. (*Note, Gen. 8:4, 5.*)—Esarhaddon seems to have been a man of much better character than his father. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. In times of great distress and prevailing impiety, strong expressions of poignant sorrow and deep humiliation are peculiarly seasonable: for, "the LORD calls to weeping, and mourning, and girding with sackcloth," and the contrary spirit and conduct are irrational, offensive, and tokens of a profane, sensual, and selfish heart. (*Note, Is. 22:8-14.*)—They, who best know the efficacy of fervent believing prayer, will most desire the supplications of others for them; and especially of those, who have long been eminent for piety and simplicity, and zealous for the glory of God. Alas! few kings are very earnest to form alliances with the faithful and devoted ministers of religion, against their hostile invaders; yet, they are of more real utility than increasing numbers of brave and disciplined troops: and whenever princes, prophets, and people unite in prayer, in real dependence on God, and a disposition to give him the praise; a prosperous event may be confidently expected, notwithstanding their own weakness, and the rebukes and insults of haughty enemies.—The Lord "resisteth the proud," and will vindicate his own cause against those who reproach, defy, or blaspheme his name; or who rival him, and rob him of his glory.—The more we are humbly conscious that we cannot help ourselves, but must be miserable and perish without his aid; the more simple will be our dependence on him, and the more fervent our applications to him, whether in temporal or spiritual exigencies.—"Man's extremity is therefore God's opportunity;" and while his servants can speak nothing but terror to the proud, the profane, and the hypocritical; they have comfortable words to say to the discouraged believer. "Be not afraid: thine enemies are God's enemies, and thy cause is his cause: in glorifying himself, he must protect and save those who trust in him. He delights in giving the very blessings for which thy soul is athirst: and with the breath of his mouth he can slay the wicked, and blast all the machinations of earth and hell against his church."—The Lord finds wicked men other employment, when he would give his servants a respite from conflict and persecution: and even those projects, which are in themselves most trifling or most detestable, often so engross the minds, occupy the time, and fill the hands of the ungodly, as to detain them from attempting that mischief to the cause of God, to which otherwise they would be disposed. But their pursuits of wealth, of honour, of pleasure, or of learning, do not prevent their discovering the enmity of their hearts, or filling up the measure of their sins: and when this is done, they are taken away, and their place knows them no more.—The blasphemies which many utter, are not unmeaning words, as they suppose, but the natural produce of their depraved hearts: and therefore they reiterate them, and grow more outrageous in them, when recent occasions are afforded. Absurd as it appears, worldly men do really think, that those who trust in God will be deceived; and they presume upon success, while they despise him, and set him at defiance! Impunity and prosperity inspire confidence and arrogance; and men expect to prevail against all who resist them, because in some instances they have been successful! (*Note, Ec. 8:11-13.*)

V. 14-22. We can easily say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" but in the crisis of danger, when the eye of sense perceives no way of escape, without removing mountains, and effecting apparent impossibilities, faith is constrained to maintain a severe conflict against unbelief, even in the experience of the most established believers. But prayer is the never-failing resource of the tempted Christian; whether he be called to struggle with outward difficulties, or to engage in the more distressing warfare with his inward enemies. At the mercy-seat of his almighty Friend he opens

37 And it came to pass, as he was wor-^[n.c.] shipping in the house of "Nisroch his god, ^[709.] that Adrammelech and Sharezer "his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of "Armenia. And "Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

q. 2 Chr. 32:21. * Heb. Ararat. Gen. 8:4. Jer. 51:27. r. Ezra 4:2.

his heart; before him he particularly *spreads* the case; to him he makes his appeal: and when he can discern that the glory of God is engaged on his side, his faith gains the victory, and he again exults in the assurance, that he never shall be moved. He knows the difference between JEHOVAH, whose mysterious nature and harmonious perfections are revealed in the sacred Scriptures; and all those idols, which are the work of men's hands, or the creatures of their imaginations. Infidels may indeed triumph over superstition, hypocrisy, and every form of worthless profession: and they may vaunt and boast, as if they could, with equal ease and certainty, prevail against the truths and spiritual worship of God our Saviour. But, whether they employ the terrors of persecution, or the more specious armour of blasphemous reproaches, sarcastic wit, or proud reasonings; their assaults are vain against the faith and prayers, the holy lives, and scriptural preaching of the Lord's true servants. "The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God," not only to repel the assaults of Satan and his ministers, whether they assume the form of the roaring lion, the subtle serpent, or the angel of light; but to subvert his strong-holds, and "to cast down imaginations," (*or reasonings,*) "and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (*Note, 2 Cor. 10:1-6.*) No weapon that is formed against the church can prosper: and the daughter of Zion, whilst untainted with idolatry or hypocrisy, and faithfully reserving herself for him, who has "espoused her in righteousness, and faithfulness, and loving kindness," may despise and defy the feeble efforts of all assailants, and confidently predict their speedy and terrible destruction. Oh, that such persons would consider, "whom they have reproached and blasphemed!" whom they have opposed and provoked to wrath! "against whom they have exalted their voice, and lifted up their eyes on high!" They may think that he is altogether such a one as themselves: but they will find, that he is "the Holy One of Israel." He sees their inmost thoughts; he discerns the rage and enmity of their hearts; as well as hears the stout and arrogant words, which they instigate each other to speak against him: and what will they do, when from his awful tribunal he shall give the mandate, "These mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me!" (*Note, Luke 19:11-27, v. 27.*)

V. 23-37. The greatest exploits of men are unworthy of notice, compared with the most ordinary works of God: the most powerful and successful of his enemies undesignedly accomplish his secret purposes, or express predictions; and prosper only till they have filled up their part of his universal plan. Some the Lord employs, contrary to their own intentions, as executioners of his vengeance, "to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps;" and therefore their opposers prove weak, timid, or infatuated; but, when they have accomplished their work, (perhaps with hearts full of rage against him, who had exalted and prospered them;) their turn comes next, and others execute vengeance upon them: or he deals with them by his own hand, as with some great Behemoth or Leviathan, and restrains, confines, or enfeebles them, as he sees good. But his believing people, safe under his protection, and living upon his grace and providential bounty, are employed as willing instruments to perform his works of goodness and mercy, which when finished shall meet a sure reward. Whilst all creatures here below subserve their good; and nature itself is made to transcend her usual limits, or alter her settled course, to supply their wants; and while the mighty angels are administering spirits, sent forth to protect them, or avenge them on their enemies: they, in their places, would imitate the prompt obedience, and "delight to do the commandments" of God, "hearkening unto the voice of his word."—But all creatures, yea, the holy angels, and the Lord of angels himself, fight against those who fight against his church: nay, those objects on which they chiefly depend, and those persons from whom they expect the greatest kindness, will concur in effecting their destruction; and every respite will finally add to their infamy and misery.—The cause of God, however reduced, will surely revive: the remnant of every generation will yield an increase to that which succeeds; and at length "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The zeal of the Lord of hosts, which appointed and sent the mighty Saviour, is engaged to make his salvation triumphant over all opposers, and to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory: not now for "his servant David's sake," but for the sake of his "beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased." May our hearts be prepared as good ground, that his word may strike root in them, and bring forth fruit in our lives! then we shall witness the full completion of all those prophecies, of which he has already given us so many signs and earnest, while with exulting millions we shall sing "Hallelujah! toe Lord God omnipotent reigneth." and "the

CHAPTER XX.

Hezekiah, when sick, is warned by Isaiah to prepare for death; 1; but praying, he receives the promise of fifteen years added to his life, and of deliverance from the Assyrians, 2-7. In confirmation the shadow on the wall's dial goes back ten degrees, 8-11. The king of Babylon sends to congratulate Hezekiah, who shows the ambassadors all his treasures, 12, 13. Isaiah reproves him for this, and foretells the Babylonian captivity, 14-19. Hezekiah dies, and is succeeded by Manasseh, 20, 21.

IN those days ^awas Hezekiah sick unto death. And ^bthe prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, thus saith the Lord, ^c'Set thine house in order; for ^dthou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then ^ehe turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying,

3 ^fI beseech thee, O Lord, 'remember now how ^g'I have walked before thee ^hin truth and with ⁱa perfect heart, and have done ^jthat which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah ^kwept ^lsore.

4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle ^mcourt, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

5 ⁿ'Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, ^o'the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, ^p'the God of David thy father, ^q'I have heard thy prayer: ^r'I have seen thy tears: behold, ^s'I will heal thee; on

the third day ^tthou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord.

6 And ^u'I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and ^v'I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

7 And Isaiah said, 'Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid ^wit on the bile, and he recovered.

8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, ^x'What ^yshall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?

9 And Isaiah said, ^z'This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

10 And Hezekiah answered, ^{aa}'It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

11 And Isaiah the prophet ^{ab}cried unto the Lord: and ^{ac}'he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the ^{ad}dial of Ahaz.

[Practical Observations.]

^a 2 Chr. 32:24. ^b Is. 38:1. John 11:1-5. Phil. 2:27, 30. ^c b 19:2, 20. ^d Heb. give charge concerning thine house. 2 Sam. 17:23. ^e Is. 38:1. ^f margins. ^g Jer. 18: 7-10. ^h 1 Kings 4-10. ⁱ d 1 Kings 8:9. ^j Is. 50:15. ^k Is. 38:2, 3. Matt. 6:6. ^l e Gen. 41:1. ^m Neh. 3:19. ⁿ Is. 13:22, 31. ^o Ps. 27:7. ^p 89:47, 50. ^q 119:49. ^r Is. 63:11. ^s Gen. 5:22. ^t 9:17. ^u 1 Kings 24:30. ^v Job 14:8. ^w Luke 1:8. ^x 2 Chr. 31:20, 21. ^y Ps. 32:2. ^z Hos. 6:2. ^{aa} Is. 38:7, 8. Matt. 16:1-4. ^{ab} Mark 8:11, 12. ^{ac} 1 Kings 17:20, 21. ^{ad} 2 Chr. 18:9. ^{ae} Mark 9:23, 29. ^{af} John 14:12. ^{ag} Is. 14:15. ^{ah} 11:20, 21. ^{ai} 18: 38-39. ^{aj} Acts 9:40. ^{ak} a Josh. 10:12-14. ^{al} 2 Chr. 32:24, 31. ^{am} Is. 38:8. ^{an} § Heb. degrees.

kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Amen, and amen. (Notes, Rev. 11:15-18, 19:1-6.)

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1. Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, and he lived fifteen after this sickness: it must therefore have happened in the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth year of his reign; about the time of Sennacherib's first invasion of Judea. (18:13.)—It is not likely, that all the events recorded in the two preceding chapters occurred within a part of one year; yet, this must have been the case, if Hezekiah's sickness was subsequent to the destruction of the Assyrian army. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:24-26. Is. 38:6.)—The expression, "Set thine house in order," ^aor, ^bcommand concerning thine house, was a direction to Hezekiah, to make without delay, a full and final settlement of his domestic and civil concerns, that nothing might interrupt his mind, or take it off from the exercise of devotion, in the nearer approaches of death; and yet, that nothing might be neglected, which related to the interests of survivors. Hezekiah's disorder was in itself mortal, and must have terminated in death, without a miracle: the prophet therefore spoke according to the natural tendency of the disorder, and not according to the Lord's secret purposes. Hezekiah's prayer showed, that he did not consider the sentence to be irreversible.

V. 2. It is probable that Hezekiah turned his face to the wall of his chamber, (which might be towards the temple,) merely that he might have more freedom and privacy in pouring out his heart before God.

V. 3. Hezekiah evidently prayed, that he might recover, though he expressed himself with submission to the will of God: and doubtless he was very unwilling to die at that time. To account for this, it has been said, that believers under the Old Testament, having dark views of the eternal world, might be expected to die with more regret than those under the New: but facts by no means support this supposition; for Abraham, Jacob, Aaron, Moses, Joshua, David, and others, seem to have left the world with as much joyfulness as Paul himself. We must, therefore, ascribe Hezekiah's reluctance to die, either to the state of his mind, or to the circumstances of his family and the nation. Nothing appears peculiarly to have distressed him, in the view of immediate death, as to the state of his own soul. But the circumstances of his family, and the state of affairs in Israel seem to solve all the difficulty. Probably, at that time Hezekiah had no son; for Manasseh, who succeeded him, was not born till three years after. (21:1.) By his death, therefore, this branch of David's family would have been extinct, and the succession must have been continued in a more remote and obscure branch of it: and this would have been a discouraging rebuke to him, as if he had forfeited the covenant of royalty. It is a general and probable opinion, that the nation was at this time threatened with an assault by the whole force of the king of Assyria; they therefore needed a commander, who united wisdom, courage, and faith, to head them in such an emergency: and if he were removed, and they were left to a disputed succession, and the weakness of an usurped or opposed government, there could be little prospect, but that Jerusalem would share the fate of Samaria. With great earnestness and perseverance, Hezekiah had wrought his reformation to a hopeful establishment: but he might fear, lest the instability of the people, and the dissensions of the nobles, would subvert all, if he were taken away

at this crisis. He therefore desired to live, not for his own sake so much as for that of his family and people, especially for the interests of true religion; and he prayed to that effect, with many tears, as well as with great fervency. (Notes, Is. 38:1-3, 9-20.) The Lord knew, and Hezekiah could appeal to him, that he had walked before him in sincerity and uprightness of heart; having used all his authority and influence, with zeal and earnestness, to suppress idolatry and wickedness, and by every scriptural means to promote the worship and service of God; and that he had done what was good in his sight, being an example to his people. The consciousness of his integrity gave him confidence; and he begged the Lord to remember the fruits of grace which had been produced, and to spare him, that he might be yet more fruitful and useful. (Notes, 2 Chr. 30:23-27. 31:20, 21. Neh. 13:14, 31. 2 Cor. 1:12-14.)

V. 4, 5. Notes, 2 Sam. 7:1-5.—*The captain.* (5) This title implies that Hezekiah was spared, that he might lead the people to victory, by the prevailing weapons of faith and prayer. (Marg. Ref. Note, Josh. 5:13-15.)—*I have heard, &c.* (Note, Is. 65:24, 25.) The Lord knew his heart, and saw that he would be disposed, in the first place, after his recovery, to go up to his courts to return thanks for the mercy, and therefore he suited the message to his secret desires and intentions. (8) He should recover his strength so fast, as to be able in three days' time to go up to the temple, and give God thanks for his cure. Bp. Patrick.

V. 6. Hezekiah was the only person, that we read of, who was previously informed how long he was to live. Such information would be of very bad tendency to ungodly men; and it would not be either comfortable or useful to a believer unless animated with vigorous faith, and glowing zeal for the honour of God. Doubtless, this pious king made a good use of his knowledge, and waited the appointed period of his days with calm resignation; but we need not envy him this peculiar privilege. He was not more than fifty-four years old when he died.—God would also defend Jerusalem, as with a shield, against all the power and rage of the Assyrian king, for the glory of his own name, and for the sake of his servant David. (Notes, 19:34. Is. 38:5.)

V. 7. It seems that Hezekiah's sickness was a species of the plague, accompanied with a bile of fatal tendency: whether this application was *medicinally* proper, or not, doubtless it was rendered effectual by miracle; or rather, it was a token of the divine operation by which he was healed.

V. 8. As the Lord was graciously pleased frequently to confirm his promises by signs, Hezekiah desired one in this case; not in unbelief, but for the confirmation of his wavering faith. (Notes, Josh. 6:36-40. Is. 7:10-12.)

V. 9-11. The dial of Ahaz, it is probable, was placed full in Hezekiah's view, and the sun shining upon it: and he was allowed to choose, whether the shadow should go forward, or backward, ten degrees; that is, half hour lines, as it is conjectured. The progression of the shadow with accelerated speed, though evidently miraculous, seemed not so extraordinary to Hezekiah as its retrograde motion, which he preferred, and which accordingly took place. We are not concerned to determine how God produced this effect: if he saw good, he was able to cause a temporary change in the motion of the earth and heavenly bodies: (Note, Josh. 10:12-14.) and

12 ¶ At that time ¹Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, ²king of ³Babylon, ⁴sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: ⁵for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and ⁶showed them all the house of his ⁷precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and ⁸all the house of his ⁹armour, and all that was found in his treasures: ¹⁰there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.

14 ¶ Then ¹came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, ²What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from ³a far country, ⁴even from Babylon.

15 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, ¹All the things that ²are in my house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them.

b. Is. 39:1. *Berodach-baladan*. c 2 Chr. 32:31. d Gen. 10:10, 11:9. Is. 13: 1, 19. 4:4. e 2 Sam. 8:10, 10:2. f Is. 39:1. g 2 Chr. 32:27. Is. 39:2. * Or, *epitaphy*. 1 Kings 10:2, 10, 15, 25. † Or, *jewels*. Heb. *resels*. h 2 Chr. 32: 25, 26. Ec. 7:20. i Is. 39:3-8. k 5:25, 26. 2 Sam. 12:7, &c. 2 Chr. 16:7- 10, 25:7-9, 15, 16. Ps. 141:5. Prov. 25:12. Jer. 26:18, 19. Am. 7:12, 13. Mark 6: 15, 19. 1 Dent. 32:49. Josh. 9:2, 9. Is. 13:5, m 15. Josh. 7:19. Job 31:33. Prov. 28:13. 1 John 1:8-10. n 7:1. 1 Kings 22:19. Is. 1:10. Am. 7:16. o 24:

some think that the same effect was produced in other places, especially at Babylon. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:30-33, v. 31. Is. 38:8.)—It appears from Herodotus, that the Egyptians had observed some few instances, in which the course of the sun and moon was very different from what was usual; though their traditions of them were greatly distorted, and wholly unlike the real facts, as recorded in Scripture.

V. 12, 13. The king of Babylon seems at this time to have reigned independent; but he was in danger of being reduced under the power of the Assyrian monarch: yet, in process of time Babylon acquired the pre-eminence, and swallowed up the Assyrian empire. (Notes, 17:18. 17:24. 23:29, 30. 2 Chr. 33:11. Is. 39:1.) This prince, having heard of Hezekiah's sickness, and the miraculous circumstances of his recovery, and knowing that he had refused submission to the Assyrians, seems to have proposed to enter into a confederacy with him against that potent nation, "and Hezekiah hearkened unto them," as inclined to accede to their proposals. He was too well pleased with this flattering embassy; and, in order to convince the ambassadors, who brought the letters, that he was a desirable ally, he showed them all his treasures, and armour, and preparations for war of every kind. This resulted from pride and ostentation, and might have led to an improper alliance with an idolatrous prince. He seems likewise to have missed the opportunity of instructing the Chaldeans concerning the perfections of ¹JEHOVAH, who had wrought the miracles which had excited their attention; and concerning his authority, law, and worship; and of showing them the absurdity and evil of idolatry, especially their worship of the sun, which was evidently the creature and servant of the God of Israel. (Notes, 2 Chr. 32:24-26. Is. 39:2.)—Though Hezekiah's sickness preceded Sennacherib's invasion and overthrow, it is probable that this embassy arrived after that event; when Hezekiah's exhausted treasures had been abundantly replenished by the spoil of the Assyrians. (Note, 2 Chr. 32:27-29.)

V. 14, 15. Hezekiah did not resent the prophet's interference in state affairs; (Notes, 2 Chr. 16:7-10. 25:14-16.) for he revered his person, confided in his prudence and affection, and desired to hear the will of God from him. In his answer, he intimated, that he had counted it an honour to receive ambassadors from a far country. (Note, Josh. 9:3-15.)—Perhaps, he was not at first conscious of having done wrong; yet, in reviewing and relating his conduct, he was made deeply sensible of his sin and folly. (Note, 2 Chr. 32:30-33, v. 31.)

V. 17, 18. Considering the small and unsettled power of the king of Babylon, at this time, compared with that of the Assyrian kings, who seemed about to establish a permanent dominion over all the adjacent countries; nothing could be more unlikely, than the accomplishment of this prediction; yet in somewhat more than a hundred years it was exactly fulfilled!—All the remaining treasures and the vessels of the temple, and furniture made by Solomon, or supplied by subsequent kings, with all the treasures of the palace, and riches of the city, were carried to Babylon; and Daniel and his companions, some of whom were descended from Hezekiah, became eunuchs in the king of Babylon's palace. (Note, Dan. 1:3-7.)—Hezekiah dreaded the power of the Assyrians; but he was more disposed to expect help, than to fear ruin, from the king of Babylon. If this transaction occurred before Sennacherib's overthrow, as many suppose, (Note, 12:13.) it took place previously to Hezekiah's emptying his treasures, to hire Sennacherib's departure, on his first invasion of the land. (Note, 18:14-16.) The chief reason for assigning this date to it, is, that the power of the Assyrians, after the

16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, ¹Hear the word of the ²LORD.

17 Behold, the days come, that all that ³is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, ⁴shall be carried into Babylon: ⁵nothing shall be left, saith the ⁶LORD.

18 And of ⁷thy sons that shall issue from thee which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and ⁸they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, ¹Good ²is the word of the ³LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, ⁴Is it not good, if ⁵'peace and truth be in my days?

20 ¶ And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how ¹he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, ²are they not written ³in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

21 ¶ And Hezekiah ¹slept with his fathers: and ²Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

13, 25:13-15. 2 Chr. 36:10, 18. Jer. 27:21, 22, 52:17-19. p 24:12, 25:6. 2 Chr. 33:11. q Dan. 1:3-7. r Lev. 10:3. 1 Sam. 5:18. Job 1:21. Ps. 39:9, 1am. 3: 22, 30. † Or, *Shall there not be peace and truth*, &c. 7. s Exh. 9:30. Jer. 33:6. Zech. 8:19. Luke 2:10, 14. t Chr. 32:4, 30, 32. Neh. 5:16. Is. 22:9-11. u 8: 23, 15:6, 26. 16:29. 1 Kings 14:19, 15:7, 23. x 21:18. 1 Kings 2:10, 11:43, 14:31. 2 Chr. 26:23. y 21:1.

destruction of Sennacherib's army, ceased to be formidable; yet Hezekiah's conduct implied, that he chiefly feared danger from that quarter. But indeed, after that blow, the Assyrian power was far greater than that of any of the neighbouring countries; and Hezekiah might desire to form a league to defend himself and his kingdom against it.

V. 19. Hezekiah humbly and submissively allowed the justice of the sentence, and the goodness of God in the respite; and gratefully acknowledged his unmerited kindness, in the peace, prosperity, and continuance of true religion in his days. Yet the prospect, respecting his family and nation, must have occasioned him many painful sensations. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 20, 21. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Chr. 32:34, 30-33.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. 'In the midst of life we are in death':—happy then are they, and they alone, who are habitually prepared for that event! Yet even to them, it is desirable to be apprised of its immediate approach: that they may settle all their temporal concerns, for the peace and benefit of their survivors; and then meet the separating stroke, with that calmness, and in that frame of spirit, which may most impress and edify surrounding friends.—If the Lord seem in his providence to command us "to set our house in order, for we must die, and not live;" and yet afterwards unexpectedly prolong our days; our preparation in that case will neither mar the comfort, nor lessen the usefulness, of our future lives.—It is frequently required of ministers, to intimate to sick persons the probability, or supposed certainty, of their approaching dissolution; as well as to assist them in improving the visitation, and in preparing for the event: and should such intimations afterwards prove erroneous, they ought not to be censured; for they can only speak according to their judgment, and deliver that message from God, which *appears to them* suited to the case of those whom they address.—Though miracles, properly so called, have ceased; yet the Lord hears the prayer of faith for the sick, and sometimes remarkably prospers simple means, used in dependence on his blessing. And though physicians, (for prophets are not now sent from God to inform us in these matters,) should give little encouragement respecting the recovery of beloved and useful persons; we may still continue to pray for them: for, "with God all things are possible," and the most sagacious of men are often found mistaken. In respect of ourselves, it is generally best to be willing to depart, and to pray especially for spiritual blessings in behalf of ourselves and others. Yet there may be cases, in which men may with propriety be importunate for the continuance of life and health, in order to complete designs of public and allowed utility, which appear likely to be frustrated if they should be removed; or when in any way the important interests of families, churches, or nations *appear to them* connected with their lives. Yet, as we are all liable to mistake in these concerns, submission to the divine will ought invariably to be united with such petitions: and nothing else should make any man desirous to live in this wretched world, who knows that he is ready for a better.—The mercy of our God, and the merits of our heavenly Advocate, form the sinner's never-failing plea at the throne of grace: yet, the consciousness of *sin* in our professed faith and piety, gives confidence in this; of trial; and may, on some occasions, be pleaded before him, without the imputation of pride or self-righteousness.—Secret earnest prayer is the approved and successful method of obtaining relief and comfort, in seasons of the deepest distress. and sometimes the Lord immediately turns the mourning of the humble supplicant into joy and thanksgiving. He always hears the prayers and sees the

CHAPTER XXI.

Manasseh reigns very wickedly and idolatrously, 1-9. Prophets are sent to predict judgments upon Judah because of his wickedness, 10-16. He dies and is succeeded by Amon, 17, 18. Amon reigns wickedly, 19-22. He is slain by his servants; the people put the conspirators to death, and make his son Josiah king, 23, 24. Amon's acts and burial, 25, 26.

MANASSEH was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzi-bah.

2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

3 For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared

a 20:21. 1 Chr. 3:13. 2 Chr. 32:33, 33:1. Matt. 1:10. *Manasseh.* b 1 Prov. 5:19. a 62:4. *marg.* c 7, 16:16-24. 22:17. 2 Chr. 33:2-4. d Lev. 18:25-28. *Notes.* 12:31. 2 Chr. 35:14. Ez. 16:51. e 16:4, 22. 2 Chr. 32:12, 34:3. f 10:15-20. g 18:27-29. h 23:18, 27. *Marg.* 6:16. h 17:12-23. 2 Chr. 4:19. 17:3. 2 Chr. 34:5-5. i 16:10-18. Jer. 32:34. j Ex. 20:24. Deut. 12:5.

tears of the broken in heart; and will give health, length of days, and temporal deliverances, as much, and as long, as they are truly beneficial.—The minister of Christ must deliver his Lord's message, even when it contains alarms and rebukes; but he delights to be the messenger of joy and consolation, to those whom his word has previously wounded.—If we would have promised mercies, we must observe the *instituted means*; for these, being connected with the end by the express promises of God, are far more certainly efficacious, when used properly, than any of these means which produce their effect in the ordinary course of Providence: and yet, the latter ought not to be neglected, lest we tempt rather than trust the Lord.—Recovery from sickness should always be publicly acknowledged, by first "going up to the house of the LORD," to render the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, if it can be done: yet alas! few observe this rule, and many of those few do it as a formal task; while re-established health is employed in scenes of diversion or business, if not more directly devoted to the service of Satan by licentious pleasures. (*Note, Luke 17:11-19.*) But the true believer values the ability and opportunity of attending on the ordinances of God, and will go up with a glad and thankful heart; (*Notes, Ps. 118:17-24.*) and will value that, more than any other privilege of health.—True faith is not without its misgivings, so that the strongest believers desire to have theirs more strengthened: and in their experience, the Lord is pleased sometimes to give those evidences of his power, truth, and love to them, which establish their hearts as effectually as miraculous signs did of old. All creatures are his servants, to minister to the good of his children; and in answer to their prayers he can, in innumerable ways, render them subservient even to their spiritual benefit.

V. 12-21. Alas! how seldom do we make suitable returns to the Lord for his condescending mercies to us! Ambition and ostentation too generally intrude, where thankfulness alone should occupy the heart; and we are often chargeable with pride, vanity, and carnal confidence, when we do not suspect ourselves.—It is very difficult to possess distinctions in rank, wealth, elegant furniture, or any thing valued by men, without a secret self-preference, and a desire that others should admire the possessor's ingenuity, taste, magnificence, or felicity. This foolish pride the Lord will rebuke and correct in those whom he loves; and especially when they idolize the opinion of ungodly men, and court their acquaintance, because they profess to esteem and admire them. But it is hopeful, when persons in superior rank will endure to be reasoned with, and reproved by those, who in outward circumstances are greatly their inferiors: for generally such interference, however well meant and prudently conducted, excites resentment. If we could look into futurity, it would damp our joy in present prosperity: and we may expect vexation from every object, in proportion as we have been inordinately pleased with it.—Our regard to posterity, and our grief for the gloomy prospects before us, in the church or the world, must not render us unmindful of our present mercies, or induce impatient murmurs. Our God has wise and righteous reasons for all he does, or permits to be done; and if we enjoy peace, and the advantages of true religion in our days, we should be very thankful. Shortly, our trials and services will end together. Our space is limited, though its limits are unknown to us, and then we shall sleep with our fathers. And "blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord; . . . for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!"

NOTES.—**CHAP. XXI.** V. 1, 2. It is uncertain whether Hezekiah had any other children than Manasseh, or any other wives than Hephzi-bah, whose name signifies *My delight is in her.* (*Is. 62:4.*) Doubtless, Manasseh had been properly educated during the lifetime of his father; and the rudiments of religious knowledge which he then imbibed, though they exceedingly aggravated the guilt of his enormous impiety, idolatry, and cruelty, might prove the seeds of his subsequent repentance: at least we may be sure, that his pious father offered many prayers for him, which at length were answered. (*Notes, 2 Chr. 33:12-17.*)—It would be pleasing to his youthful mind to inherit a prosperous kingdom

up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

4 And he built altars in the house of the LORD of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

7 And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD

2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Kings 8:29. 9:3. Ps. 76:68, 69, 132:13, 14. k 23:4, 6. 1 Kings 6:36. 7:12. 2 Chr. 33:5, 15. Ez. 40:28, 32, 37, 47. 42:3. 43:5. 44:19. 1:16:3. 17:17. Lev. 18:21. 20:2, 3. 2 Chr. 23:3. 33:6. m Lev. 19:26, 31. Deut. 18:10-14. n 1 Chr. 10:13. 1a. 8:19. 19:3. Acts 16:16. o 24:34. Gen. 13:13. p 23:6. 2 Chr. 33:7, 15.

so early in life; but this circumstance proved extremely prejudicial to him, and was still more ruinous to his people. (*Notes, P. O. Luke 15:11-16.*) The event, as well as the testimony of the prophets, evinces, that Hezekiah's reformation had been complied with in a reluctant and hypocritical manner, especially by many of the chief men: and that the nation was ripening fast for destruction. The nobles, upon whom the regency, or the counselling of the young king, must necessarily devolve, seem to have been disposed to idolatry and by humouring and flattering Manasseh, they trained him to concur with their wishes, and probably to go much beyond them. (*Notes, 2 Chr. 24:17, 18. Matt. 23:15.*) Soon after Hezekiah's death, his reformation was subverted; and the king proceeded from bad to worse, till he was carried captive to Babylon. Thus Hezekiah, though a prince of eminent piety and excellence, was the son of a very wicked father, and the father of a still more wicked son! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. It is probable, that Manasseh was taught to consider his father's attachment to the temple, as the effect of a weak and bigoted mind. It appeared to the nobles more convenient, liberal, and magnificent, to have a variety of temples and altars; than to be confined to meet with the poorest of the people, from all parts of the land, at Solomon's temple. (*Notes, 1 Kings 12:26-29. 2 Chr. 24:17, 18. Is. 29:13-16.*) In contempt therefore of his father's memory, the king rebuilt the high places, which had been piously destroyed. (*Notes, 18:1, 22. 2 Chr. 31:1. Ec. 2:12-17.*) Yet this seemed but a light thing, and he soon proceeded to copy Ahab's idolatry, and even greatly to exceed it. (*Note, 1 Kings 16:30-33.*)

V. 4, 5. In order, as it were, the more directly to insult the God of Israel, Manasseh built altars to his idols, and to the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars; (*Note, Deut. 4:19.*) not only in Jerusalem, where the Lord had recorded his name; but even in the courts of the temple itself; both that into which the priests and Levites, and such as brought sacrifices entered, and that in which the other worshippers assembled. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Chr. 33:6-8.*)

V. 6. *His son.* "His children." 2 Chr. 33:6. Amon was not born till the thirty-third year of Manasseh's reign, which is generally computed to have been subsequent to his captivity and repentance. (1, 19.) If so, some other son was thus dedicated to his idol, perhaps with some of his daughters likewise, of whom nothing is recorded. But it may be doubted whether Manasseh's captivity was so long before his death: the general character of his reign in Scripture, and the very imperfect reformation which afterwards took place, seem to render that opinion improbable; and there is no scriptural information concerning the date of his captivity, or even the name of the Assyrian king who carried him captive: so that perhaps Amon was the son here peculiarly intended. (*Note, 2 Chr. 33:1.*)

Observed times, &c.] (*Notes, Ex. 22:18. Deut. 18:9-12.*) The persons who practised, or pretended to, these several methods of holding correspondence with invisible agents, or obtaining information from them, were Manasseh's oracles: and he inquired of them, instead of consulting the Lord by his prophets, or by the high-priest. No doubt, they humoured his vanity, and aimed to gratify his curiosity, without teaching him his duty, or reproving him for his sins. In this he went beyond all his predecessors. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 10:13, 14. 2 Chr. 33:3, 10.*)

V. 7, 8. *Notes, 2 Sam. 7:8-11. 1 Kings 6:11-13. 9:3-6. Ps. 78:69.*

Of the grove. (7) אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה. Perhaps this was a model of some grove, used for idolatrous worship: though it is commonly supposed to have been the image of one of Manasseh's idols. (*Note, 17:16.*) Some think that it was a wooden image of Ashteroth, or Astarte. (*Note, Judg. 2:11-13.*)—Manasseh seems to have placed this image in the temple itself. Thus he purposely affronted the Lord, and set him at defiance; making the idol his rival, to intercept the adoration of his worshippers.

V. 9. Manasseh proposed one idolatry after another; and the people in general readily complied, both to obtain his

said to David, and to Solomon his son, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever :

8 Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers ; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.

9 But they hearkened not : and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations, whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ¶ And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets, saying,

11 "Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols :

12 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab : and I will wipe Jerusalem, as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.

14 And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies ; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies ;

15 Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, because the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

q 4. 23:27. 1 Kgs 8:29,44. 9:3,7. 2 Chr. 7:7,15,20. Neh. 1:9. Ps. 74:2, 78:68. 89:1,2,11. 131:1. 2 Sam. 7:10. 1 Chr. 17:9. 2 Chr. 33:8. Is. 26:25. 66:1. Jer. 2:2,16. 4:1. 7:1. 10:25. 11:1. 16:1. 23:7. 31:11-16. Is. 1:19. Jer. 7:3. 23:17. 27:1. 28:1. 29:22. 36:35-25. 37:2. 2 Chr. 36:16. Ezra 9:10,11. Neh. 9:2,24. Ps. 11:1. 131:1. 139:1. 140:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 164:1. 165:1. 166:1. 167:1. 168:1. 169:1. 170:1. 171:1. 172:1. 173:1. 174:1. 175:1. 176:1. 177:1. 178:1. 179:1. 180:1. 181:1. 182:1. 183:1. 184:1. 185:1. 186:1. 187:1. 188:1. 189:1. 190:1. 191:1. 192:1. 193:1. 194:1. 195:1. 196:1. 197:1. 198:1. 199:1. 200:1. 201:1. 202:1. 203:1. 204:1. 205:1. 206:1. 207:1. 208:1. 209:1. 210:1. 211:1. 212:1. 213:1. 214:1. 215:1. 216:1. 217:1. 218:1. 219:1. 220:1. 221:1. 222:1. 223:1. 224:1. 225:1. 226:1. 227:1. 228:1. 229:1. 230:1. 231:1. 232:1. 233:1. 234:1. 235:1. 236:1. 237:1. 238:1. 239:1. 240:1. 241:1. 242:1. 243:1. 244:1. 245:1. 246:1. 247:1. 248:1. 249:1. 250:1. 251:1. 252:1. 253:1. 254:1. 255:1. 256:1. 257:1. 258:1. 259:1. 260:1. 261:1. 262:1. 263:1. 264:1. 265:1. 266:1. 267:1. 268:1. 269:1. 270:1. 271:1. 272:1. 273:1. 274:1. 275:1. 276:1. 277:1. 278:1. 279:1. 280:1. 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CHAPTER XXII.

Josiah reigns well, 1, 2. He provides for the repairs of the temple, 3-7. Hilkiah finds the book of the law, which is read to the king; who is alarmed, and sends to inquire of God, by Huldah, the prophetess, 8-14. She foretells the destruction of Jerusalem, but speaks peace to Josiah, 15-20.

JOSIAH was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah, of Boscath.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

B. C.] 3 ¶ And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,

4 Go up to Hilkiah the high-priest, that he

a 1 Kings 13:2. 2 Chr. 34:1-2. Jer. 1:2. Zeph. 1:1. Matt. 1:10. *Josias*. b 11: 21, 21:1. Ps. 3:2. Ec. 10:16. Is. 3:4. c Josh. 15:39. *Boskath*. d 16:2. 18:3. 2 Chr. 17:3. 29:2. Prov. 20:11. e 1 Kings 3:6. 11:38. 15:5. f Deut. 5:32. Josh. 1:7. Prov. 4:27. Ez. 18:14-17. g 1 Chr. 34:3-8. h 1 Chr. 6:13. 9:11. 2 Chr. 34:9-18. 12:4. 39-11. 2 Chr. 24:8-12. Mark 12:41-42. j 1 Chr. 9:19. 26:13

their own masters, and of obtaining early possession of riches or power, that they may indulge their inclinations and self-importance; and too often, from such motives, are secretly rejoiced at the death of their parents. But this generally ruins the comfort of their future lives, and renders them the instruments of immense mischief to those who are unhappily connected with them. It is much safer and happier, when youth is sheltered under the fostering care of affectionate and prudent parents, or of faithful guardians and tutors; till greater maturity of age and experience gives a more hopeful prospect of discretion. Though such young persons are less indulged, caressed, and flattered, and are laid under restrictions unpleasant at the time; they may live to be thankful for the restraints, under which at present they are impatient.—None are more abandoned than those, who become wicked after a religious education; for they cannot have quietness in vice, till by desperate courses they have effectually stupified their consciences: and in every case, the greater the obstacles which are surmounted, before men attain to the undisturbed indulgence of their lusts, the more lost they are afterwards to all sense of shame or decency. But the Lord will put his fear into the hearts of his true people, that they shall not finally depart from him: (*Note, Jer. 32:38-41.*) yet in the reformation of collective bodies, numbers are mere time-servers, such as “believe for a season, but in temptation fall away.” (*Note, Matt. 13:20, 21.*)—The mind of man is disposed to vibrate from one extreme to another; as the descending stone falls with a force proportioned to the height to which it was raised: so that times of remarkable revival in religion have often been succeeded by those of most notorious infidelity, impiety, and profligacy.—The ambition of excelling prompts sinners to aspire after pre-eminence even in crimes: and men are capable of glorying in having gone beyond all their predecessors in iniquity, and in refining upon the blasphemy and sensuality of former times, or of contemporary rivals in vice!—An infidel neglect of true religion, is often connected with the most absurd credulity and ridiculous superstitions!—Some daring sinners not only seek to gratify their lusts, but seem desirous of forcing their crimes upon the notice of the Almighty; as if ambitious of provoking his indignation by every token of contempt and defiance! and they peculiarly delight in seducing others to commit the same wickedness, as if ambitious also of promoting the ruin of their souls!—The vain glory of young persons often appears in affecting to be wiser than their prudent and pious parents, by reversing all their plans, and especially by treating with contempt their religious singularities, as they suppose them to be.—But these are the ways in which men expose their own folly, and bring ruin upon themselves: thus they forfeit the Lord's favour and protection, and fall under his dreadful indignation: and all the mischief which they have done to others will recoil upon themselves, to their increasing guilt and condemnation; except a timely repentance prevent the fatal consequences.

V. 10-26. If temporal judgments are so dreadful when foreseen or reported; what will be the horror of that day, when “the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain!” (*Note, Is. 26:20, 21.*) Yet, in the severest vengeance, the Lord proceeds by rule and measure, and does not punish either nations or individuals beyond their deserts.—External privileges, instead of benefiting those who neglect the obedience of faith, will immensely enhance their guilt and punishment.—The Lord will cast off any professing people, who dishonour him by their crimes, and who persecute his servants: but he will never desert his cause on earth.—When sinners disregard the invitations and exhortations of God's ministers, they are constrained to denounce his awful vengeance. Then resentment will be awakened in the hearts of the proud and rebellious, and faith and patience will be peculiarly requisite: but the servants of the Lord will overcome all, “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.”—It is inconceivable what wickedness some men

may ‘sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people:

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work, which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,

6 Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

7 Howbeit, there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

8 ¶ And Hilkiah the high-priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

—19. 2 Chr. 8:14. Neh. 11:19. Ps. 84:10. * Heb. *threshold*. k 12:11-14. 112:5. 2 Chr. 24:7, 12, 13, 27. Ezra 3:7. m 12:15. 2 Chr. 24:14. n Ex. 36:5, 6. Neh. 7:2. Prov. 38:20. Luke 16:10-12. 1 Cor. 4:2. 2 Cor. 8:20, 21. 2 Tim. 2:2. o Deut. 31:24-26. 2 Chr. 34:14, 15.

have lived to commit, who yet have not only been spared, but pardoned: (*Notes, Dan. 4.*) such transgressors cannot forgive themselves, but would live and die covered with shame and self-abhorrence for all their crimes.—Whether the Lord bear long with presumptuous offenders, or whether he more speedily cut them off in their sins; all those who persist in forsaking him, and in refusing to walk in his ways, must perish: and the wickedness of the parent often occasions the destruction of the children. It is well, however, when the removal of the ungodly makes way for better characters: yet those who, *instigated by any corrupt passion*, execute deserved vengeance upon wicked men, will bring deserved vengeance upon themselves also.

NOTES.—**CHAP. XXII.** V. 1, 2. Josiah was seated on the throne by those, who brought his father's murderers to justice, and who doubtless were friends to the family of David: for “the people of the land,” must be understood to mean, at least, a majority of the elders and great men assembling, and, with the approbation of the people, declaring to whom the right of succeeding to the throne belonged. It may be supposed, that some of the nobles were concerned in the conspiracy against Amon, or favoured the cause. (*Note, 21. 20-24.*) We may therefore conclude that the persons, intrusted with Josiah's education, were at least averse to idolatry, and favourable to the worship of JEROVAH. Perhaps his mother was a pious person, and instilled good principles into his tender mind. By the blessing of God, however, on the means used, he was very early brought under religious impressions, and set about the work of public reformation: and the event of his succession when a child was widely different from that of Manasseh. (*Notes, 21:1-3.*) For his character was most excellent: he copied the faith, zeal, and piety of his ancestor David, and kept the middle path, without diverging to any of those extremes to which human nature is prone. (*Notes, 18:3, 5, 6.*) And had the people as cordially concurred in his reformation, as he entered upon and persevered in it, blessed effects would have followed: but they were given up to the most infatuated idolatry and wickedness, and his efforts only served to evince the incurable wickedness of that generation. (*Notes, Jer. 3:6-11. 6: 27-30. Ez. 24:12, 13.*)—We can obtain but a superficial knowledge of the state of Judah from these compendious historical records, unless we compare them with the writings of the contemporary prophets.

V. 3-7. Josiah began to seek the Lord in the eighth year of his reign, and to attempt a public reformation in the twelfth; so that considerable progress had before been made in destroying the idols, which filled Judah and Jerusalem to an almost inconceivable degree: but in his eighteenth year he proceeded to reinstate the temple and its worship in their former splendour, and the principal reformation in his reign was effected at this time. (*Note, 2 Chr. 34:3-7.*)—The money was collected by voluntary contributions, as in the time of Jehoshaphat: but the Levites proved more active and faithful, than the priests had then been; and the workmen were no less worthy of confidence. (*Notes, 12:4-15. 2 Chr. 34:8-13.*)

V. 8-11. The inquiries and controversies, which this account of finding the book of the law has occasioned, seem to have been quite unnecessary. If it were conceded, that no other complete copy existed in all the world, at the time when this book was found, it would not in the *smallest degree* invalidate the authenticity of that part of holy writ: because all the succeeding writers of the Scriptures, with Christ himself and his apostles, have given the sanction of their testimony to its divine original. All the cavils and objections therefore of infidels, grounded upon this circumstance, mean nothing; except they are intended to demonstrate their inbred enmity to the sacred Scriptures.—It is highly probable, that copies of the law were at that time very scarce, through the idolatry of the former reigns, and the lamentable ungodliness of the people. It may also be reasonably conjectured, that the priests had made abstracts from it, of the outlines of their

9 And ²Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.

10 And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And ²Shaphan read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

[Practical Observations.]

12 And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and ²Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and ²Achbor the son of ¹Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

13 Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went unto

Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of ²Tikvah the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe, (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me,

16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.

17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard;

19 Because thy heart was tender and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent

p. 12, 25-22. Jer. 26:24, 29-3. 35:10-12. 39:14, 40:11. 41:2. Ex. 8:11. 4. Gen. 18:13. * Heb. melted. r. Deut. 31:9-13. 2 Chr. 34:13. Neh. 8:1-7, 14. 13:1. Jer. 36:21. a. Deut. 17:18-20. Jer. 13:18. 22:12. 2 Chr. 34:19. Jer. 36:24, Joel 2:13. Jon. 3:6-7. u. 19:23. 2 Chr. 34:19-21. Is. 37:1-4. a. See on 9. Jer. 28:22-24. 2 Chr. 34:20. ¹Abdon. 1 Chr. 21:12. 37:17. Ez. 14:34. 20:7-8. 1 Chr. 10:13, 14. Ps. 32:14. Prov. 3:6. Jer. 21:12. 37:17. Ez. 14:34. 20:7-8. Am. 3:7. a. Ex. 20:5. Deut. 4:23-27. 29:23-28. 31:17, 18. Neh. 8:8, 9. 9. Dan. 9:5, 6. Rom. 3:20. 4:15. 7:9. b. 2 Chr. 29:6. 34:21. Ps. 106:6. Jer. 16:12. 44:17. Lam. 5:7. Dan. 9:8, 10. e. Ex. 15:20. Judg. 4:4. Mic. 6:4. Luke 1:41. k. 2:36. Act. 21:9. 1 Cor. 11:5. d. 2 Chr. 34:22. ¹Tikhiah. ²Hasah. 1 Heb. garm nith. 2 Kings 10:22. Neh. 7:72. 5 Or, second part. e. 1:6, 16. Jer. 23:23.

worship, without specifying particulars, or inserting the solemn sanctions annexed to each of them. This would spare them the trouble of transcribing, or studying, or reading to the people, the whole book; and, as these abstracts would come into common use, few people would look any further. But had not a universal traditional recollection of the law, and in general of its contents, prevailed in the nation; how could the book, when found, have obtained proper and implicit credit as the word of God by Moses? In the dark ages of popery this was precisely the case: the liturgies and rituals contained a few selected portions of Scripture; and not only were the people kept in the dark as to the entire contents of the Bible, but few even of the priests had ever read it through, and numbers of these had never seen a complete copy of it. The same naturally becomes the case still, (notwithstanding the multiplication of copies of the Bible by the art of printing, and its public allowance in the vulgar tongue, and the commendable pains bestowed by pious persons to disperse them;) whenever any set of men become strenuous for one part of religion in preference to the rest. They, who are the oracles of each party, insert in their writings those portions of Scripture, which are supposed to inculcate the doctrines for which they contend; but keep out of sight, perhaps without design, those passages which as strongly declare what they undervalue, overlook, or are prejudiced against. And these writings form the religion of the zealous friends of that party, while the rest of the Scripture is comparatively neglected or forgotten. Indeed we all are disposed to have favourite passages of Scripture, to which we are more attentive than to the rest: so that without great care we shall be led into this error.—And may it not be hinted with propriety, that some text-books, which were well designed, are yet capable of a dangerous abuse? I mean those books, which give a text of Scripture for every day, with pious observations upon it. Many read these in family worship, instead of the Bible itself; and others, it is likely, do the same in their closets: but numbers are thus undesignedly led to substitute a part for the whole; the abstract with an exposition, instead of the book of the law: whereas “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (Note, 2 Tim. 3:14-17.) The proper use of such books is to suggest subjects for pious meditations and ejaculations, in the intervals of conversation and business.—The book, which Hilkiah found, seems to have been the original book of the law, deposited by Moses at the side of the ark; (Note, Deut. 31:26.) but which in those distracted times had been removed, either for concealment, lest it should be destroyed by the idolaters, or in contempt by those who were turning every thing into confusion. Some argue that this circumstance occasioned Josiah's consternation: but he certainly acted like a man who had never seen the law before; and this most likely was the case, though there might be copies dispersed among his subjects. It is probable his reformation had hitherto been conducted by such abstracts, as have been mentioned, or by traditional knowledge. If the kings of Judah had observed the rule of transcribing the law with their own hands, very

salutary effects might have been produced; but it seems to have been entirely neglected, as well as the command to read the law publicly to the people, every year at the feast of tabernacles. (Notes, Deut. 17:18. 31:9-13. Neh. 8:1-18. 9:3.)

—It is supposed that the portion, which was first read to Josiah, was the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy: and these were doubtless well suited to convince him, that the guilt and danger of his people was much greater than he had apprehended, and to induce the expressions of fear, sorrow, and humiliation, which he showed. We may conclude, that he afterwards conducted his reformation with more exactness; as he now wrought by rule, and was aware of the imminent danger to which he and his subjects were exposed.

V. 12, 13. Very little is recorded concerning the high-priests, as active instruments in reformation, and reviving true religion. Hilkiah indeed seems to have been a man of good character; though it is likely, not well acquainted with the divine law. (Marg. Ref.) Josiah, however, never proposed inquiring of the Lord, by him and the breastplate of judgment; nor did Hilkiah object, when sent with others to inquire of a prophetess. Either he was ignorant, that to inquire of God was one distinguishing part of his office; or he humbly thought himself unworthy to perform it; or this method of inquiry was considered as obsolete; having fallen into disuse, perhaps, from the too general want of true piety in the high-priests, who had been superseded in this respect by the prophets raised up in constant succession. (Note, 19:2.)—²Ahikam. (12) Note, Jer. 26:24.

V. 14. Huldah, &c.] Jeremiah and Zephaniah prophesied at this time; but perhaps being young, and newly entered on their work, they were of inferior note; or they were elsewhere employed. (Notes, Jer. 1:1-3. Zeph. 1:1.)—The ordinary ministry, both under the Old and New Testament, is confined to men: but the Lord is not bound by those restrictions which he imposes upon us; and he has often conferred on women the spirit of prophecy. (Marg. Ref. c. Notes, 1 Cor. 14:34, 35. 1 Tim. 2:11-14.)—Huldah was doubtless a person of eminent piety, and well known to be a prophetess. She was a married woman, and her husband being keeper of the wardrobe, might make her better known to Josiah, who perhaps had before this consulted her.—Whether the word rendered “the college” means an institution at Jerusalem, in some respects similar to the schools of the prophets in Israel; or whether it only denotes, according to the marginal reading, the part of the city in which she lived, is not agreed. The latter opinion, however, seems most probable, as the same word (מִכְשֶׁר) is in the next chapter translated “of the second order.” (Note, 23:4.)

V. 15-20. The sentence denounced concerning the desolations of Jerusalem was irrevocable: but as Josiah acted in a manner which showed that he was a man of a broken heart and a tender conscience, a true penitent, and a real believer, he would be spared the anguish of witnessing those dire calamities. (Notes, 1 Kings 21:27-29. Is. 17:15, 16. 66:1-2. Jer. 36:20-25. Ez. 9:3, 4.) Though he was slain in battle, yet he died in peace with God, and went to glory. As he was not forty years old when he died, and 1 th. 6:23. 1

thy clothes, and wept before me; 'I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

20 Behold therefore, 'I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be 'gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Jeoliah reads the law in a solemn assembly gathered for that and similar purposes, 1, 2. He enters into covenant with God; and abolishes idolatry in Judah, 3-14. He burns men's bones on the altar at Beth-el; fulfils the prediction of the prophet sent to Je-ohaz; destroys the high places in Samaria, and slays the priests, 15-20. He celebrates a solemn passover, 21-23. He puts away wizards, &c. 24; and reviveth all his predecessors, 25. The wrath of God against Judah is yet unquenched, 26-28. Josiah is slain in battle by Pharaoh-necho, and succeeded by Jeh. ahaz, 29, 30; who reigns wickedly three months, is led away prisoner by Pharaoh into Egypt, and succeeded by Jehoiakim, 31-34; who taxes the land for Pharaoh's tribute, and reigns wickedly, 35-37.

AND *the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

*g Num. 25:6. Judg. 2:4, 5. 20:26. Ezra 9:34. 10:1. Neh. 8:9. Ps. 119:136. Jer. 5:1. 13:17. 14:17. Luke 19:41. Rom. 9:2, 3. 19:20. 20:5. 4 Gen. 25:3. Deut. 31:16. 1 Chr. 17:11. 2 Chr. 34:28. 35:23, 29, 30. Ps. 37:37. Is. 57:1, 2. Jer. 22:10, 15, 16. a Deut. 31:28. 2 Sam. 6:1. 2 Chr. 29:20. 30:2. 34:23, 30. * Heb. from small even unto great. b Gen. 19:11. 1 Sam. 5:9. 30:2. 2 Chr. 15:13. Euth. 1:5. Job 5:19. Ps. 115:13. Acts 26:22. Rev. 20:12. c Deut. 31:10-13. 2 Chr. 17:9. Neh. 8:1-8. 9:3. 13:1. d 22:8. Deut. 31:25. 1 Kings 8:9. e 11:14, 17. 2 Chr. 23:13, 34.*

struction of Jerusalem took place within twenty-three years after, he might have lived to that time, according to the ordinary course of nature. But as his piety and zeal could not avail to prevent that catastrophe, he was mercifully 'taken away from the evil to come.' (*Marg. Ref. Note, Is. 57:1, 2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-11. Those who have been favoured in their tender years, with prudent and pious instructors, have very great cause for gratitude: for that circumstance is immediately ordered in Providence, without their even appearing to choose it for themselves, and frequently in opposition to their inclinations; yet it commonly proves the means of determining both the comfort and usefulness, and the happy close, of their future lives.—The Lord frequently demonstrates the sovereignty of his grace, by raising up the brightest ornaments of his church from the most degenerate families.—It is a peculiar favour to be brought to seek and serve God in early life, and to be led to copy closely the best examples.—It is incumbent on us to keep the narrow way, and to avoid the extremes which are found on the right and on the left: and great watchfulness is requisite so to shun self-righteous pride, as to keep clear of antinomian abuse of the gospel. In escaping from superstition, we are in danger of running into inexpedient indulgence, or irreverence to things sacred. Fierce and contentious zeal, in some men, leads others to sooth themselves in lukewarmness, indolence, and timidity: and in numberless ways, when avoiding one evil, we are prone to run into another; or so to attend to one part of religion, as to neglect others, and thus to mar that proportion and symmetry, which are its peculiar ornament. But if, with all our circumspection, we are kept from great and mischievous mistakes; we must give all the praise to him, who leads his people "in the midst of the paths of judgment." (*Prov. 8:20.*)—The interests and passions of men raise up so many obstructions, that public reformatations commonly move heavily; and can only be effected by perseverance, gradually, and as the zealous reformers obtain influence, and establish their characters by "patient continuance in well-doing."—Yet, in the worst of times, we meet with examples of liberality, fidelity, and integrity, which are worthy of praise and imitation.—The prevalence of impiety, infidelity, superstition, or licentiousness, renders the word of God a neglected book; and that neglect reciprocally augments these evils. And when professed ministers grow careless, selfish, or superstitious, the people of course become generally ignorant of the sacred oracles: and far more, when they employ their influence, and exert their authority, to keep the Scriptures, as translated into the language of their several countries, out of the hands of the common people; and to discountenance the study of them; and when they endeavour to obstruct those who would circulate, and encourage the study of, the oracles of God. Alas! that this stigma of popery should disgrace so many rulers and teachers of our protestant church! But whenever the clergy in general, and those of superior authority and reputation in particular, shall make it their great business, to call the attention of the people to the Scriptures, and to bring them acquainted with the whole of them; their conduct will have a most extensive effect, in preventing the influx of vice, and in promoting true knowledge and genuine piety. "For the word of God is quick and powerful;" and being "sharper than any two-edged sword," it penetrates the heart and conscience with irresistible energy. (*Notes, Jer. 23:28, 29. Heb. 4:12, 13.*) By the holy law is the knowledge of sin, and by the blessed gospel is the knowledge of salvation. When the former is understood, in its strictness, extent, excellency, and awful sanction, the sinner perceives his guilt, is convinced that the great wrath of the Lord is kindled against him for his transgressions; and begins to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" This excites his attentive regard to the ministry and ministers of the gospel: who point

2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and all the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both *small and great: and the read in their ears all the words of *the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.

3 'I And the king *stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, *to walk after the LORD, and to keep *his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. 'I And all the people stood to the covenant.

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high-priest, and the *priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, *to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made

31, 32. f Ex. 24:7, 8. Deut. 5:1-3. 29:1, 10-15. Josh. 24:25. 2 Chr. 15:12-14. 23:16. 29:10. Ezra 10:3. Neh. 9:38. 10:25, &c. Jer. 50:5. Heb. 8:8-13. 12:24. 13:20. g Deut. 8:19. h Deut. 4:45. 5:1. 6:1. Ps. 19:7-9. i Deut. 6:5. 10:12. 11:13. Matt. 22:35, 37. j Ex. 24:3. Josh. 24:24. 2 Chr. 34:32, 33. Ec. 8:2. Jer. 4:2. k 1 Chr. 24:4-19. Matt. 26:3. 27:1. l 1 Sam. 22:4. 1 Chr. 26:1-19. m 21:3, 7. 2 Chr. 33:3, 7. 34:3, 4.

out to him "Jesus Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness, unto every one that believeth." And when the sinner has been taught to trust and love the Saviour, he will thenceforth walk in newness of life.—The scarcity of the written word did not excuse Israel's degeneracy and idolatry, because it was the effect of it; "the people loved to have it so;" but the abundance of Bibles with which this land is favoured, will exceedingly aggravate the guilt of our national impiety, infidelity, and licentiousness: for what greater contempt of God can we show, than to refuse to read his word, when put into our hands; or reading it, to refuse to believe and obey it?

V. 12-20. The ministers of religion must communicate to the people whatever they have learned respecting the will of God, whether alarming or encouraging: otherwise they do not "declare his whole counsel," nor "keep themselves pure from the blood of all men."—Kings and rulers being personally as much concerned as their subjects to humble themselves before God, to know his will, and to seek his salvation; and their conduct being of still greater importance to others; those who minister before them in sacred things, should especially instruct them in the whole of divine revelation: and they are guilty of the basest and most cruel unfaithfulness, to them and to millions, if from regard to their own safety or emolument, they keep back offensive truths.—Those princes who are acquainted with able and faithful servants of God, and who are not deterred by evil counsel from consulting them, and from encouraging them without needless ceremony to speak the whole truth, best consult their own good, and that of their subjects.—It is also becoming when superior stated pastors and rulers of the church discard prejudice and jealousy, respecting those among their inferiors, or of other orders in society, whom God endows with peculiar spiritual gifts for the edifying of his people; when, instead of standing upon character and precedence, and hindering others from regarding their advice, they take the lead in honouring the grace of God in them, and gladly receive their profitable instructions. Such are wise men, and will daily grow wiser; because they are conscious that they have not attained, but need continual accessions to their measure of divine knowledge and grace: but those who are too great or too proud to learn, even from their inferiors, are likely to live and to die without true wisdom.—In communicating his special blessings, the Lord does not restrict himself to age, or sex, or order, or condition in society; but "divideth severally to every one, as he will;" and true sanctity consists in separation from sin, and devotedness to God; and not in seclusion from society, or from that state which he has pronounced honourable.—There are kinds and degrees of guilt, which the Lord will not pardon, either in individuals or nations; and the discovery of men's iniquities will fully demonstrate the justice of his most tremendous vengeance on them. But a tender, broken, and contrite heart, a humble consciousness of having deserved wrath, and an earnest application for mercy, are things which "accompany salvation," and will never be rejected by our gracious Lord and Saviour. (*Note, Heb. 6:9, 10.*) Whatever persons of this character ear, suffer, or witness, or in what way soever they are removed out of the world, they shall be gathered to the grave in peace, and shall enter into the rest reserved for the people of God.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. *Note, Deut. 31:10-13.—The prophets.* (2) It may be supposed, that Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Huldah, and others were present on this occasion, encouraging and assisting the king in his pious undertaking: yet it is probable, that the king neither employed them, nor the priests, in reading the law to the elders of the people, at least not exclusively; but that he performed the service personally as the principal reader, though others might be employed in the same manner, in different stations; 'for it is not likely that one man's voice could reach so great a multitude.' *Bp. Patrick. (Note, Acts 2:14-21.) The*

for "Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of "Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto "Beth-el.

5 And he "put down "the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the "planets, and to "all the host of heaven.

6 And he brought out "the grove from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon "the graves of the children of the people.

7 And he brake down the houses of "the Sodomites that were by the house of the Lord, "where the women wove hangings for the grove.

8 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from "Geba to "Beer-sheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

n 17:16. Judg. 2:13. 1 Kings 16:31. 18:19, 26, 40. 19:18. Is. 27:9. Jer. 7:9. o 2 Sam. 15:23. John 18:1. *Celron*. p 1 Kings 12:29. Hos. 4:15. Am. 4:1. *Heb. caused to cease*. 1 *Heb. Chemarim*. Hos. 10:5. *marg.* Zeph. 1:4, 5. *Or, twelve signs, or, constellations*. q See on 21:34. Jer. 34:12. 44:17-19. *Heb. Zeph.* Judg. 7:7. 1 Kings 11:23, 16:33. Jer. 17:2. *Ex.* 32:20. *Deut.* 7:25, 9:21. 10:27. 2 Chr. 34:4. n Gen. 19:4, 5. 1 Kings 14:24. 15:12, 22:40. 2 Chr. 34:33. Rom. 1:26, 27. x *Ex.* 35:25, 26. *Ex.* 16:16. Hos. 2:12. *1 Heli. houses*. y Josh. 21:17. 1 Kings 15:22. 1 Chr. 6:60. Is. 10:29. Zech. 14:10. z Gen.

opinion, that he only engaged others to rend the law, seems to be taken from modern refinements, and sentiments of royal dignity; and not from facts, good sense, or the examples of pious princes in those days. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. 6:12-22. 1 Kings 8:10-61. *Ex.* 1:1.) For such is human nature, that so trivial a circumstance as the rank of the reader or speaker, will frequently excite greater attention than matters of acknowledged superior importance.—Though Josiah was assured that no reformation could prevent the desolations of Jerusalem; yet he would do what he could to prolong her state, to rescue a remnant as brands out of the burning, and to sow good seed, which might afterwards produce a reformation even among the dispersed captives.

V. 3. (*Marg. Ref.*) The prophets, priests, and elders, and through them the whole nation by their representatives, bound themselves at this time, in the most solemn manner, to renounce and abolish every species of idolatry, to re-establish the worship of God according to the law, and to serve him in righteousness and true holiness. We learn from the event, that the most of those present, who "stood to the covenant," were hypocritical in the transaction; being induced to concur, in order to please the king, or to avoid his displeasure and the reproach of singularity; or by some transient impression upon their minds. Yet Josiah did well in requiring them thus to engage, as far as they could be prevailed on without compulsion. A great deal of outward wickedness would be prevented; many individuals would receive essential benefit; and in every way the name, worship, and law of God were honoured: while those who acted hypocritically, and violated their engagements by apostasy, were accountable to God for their conduct. (*Notes*, 11:17-20. *Deut.* 29:10-15. *Neh.* 10:1.) Indeed, no effectual means can be used of doing extensive good, which will not eventually prove an occasion of deeper guilt and condemnation to many. (*Notes*, John 15:22-25. 2 Cor. 2:14-17.)—*Pillar*.] (*Marg. Ref.* e.) "At the entrance of the court of the priests, by a marble pillar." *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 4. "The priests of the second order," seem to have been the heads of the several courses, which served in rotation, under the person next in succession to the high-priesthood, who acted upon emergencies as deputy to the high-priest. These were the chief priests mentioned so often in the New Testament. (*Notes*, 1 Chr. 24:1-19. *Ezra* 2:36-39.)—Josiah in his former well-meant attempts for reformation, had probably removed the idols, and abolished the worship of them in Jerusalem: but perhaps he had supposed, that the vessels and other valuables might be reserved for the use of the temple. Being, however, now more fully instructed in the law of God, he destroyed all these vessels, however costly, by fire; and in his progress through the land, he carried the ashes to Beth-el, the beginning of idolatry to Israel, as established by public authority; in order to render both the place, and these ashes contemptible and abominable to the people. (*Notes*, 1 Kings 12:26-33. 13:1-10.)

V. 5. *Chemarim*, the name of these priests, (*marg.*) is supposed to be derived from the black garments which they wore, and by which they were distinguished from the priests of JEHOVAH, who wore garments of white linen. (*Notes*, *Ex.* 28:40. *Hos.* 10:5, 6. *Zeph.* 1:4.)

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9 Nevertheless, "the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, "but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled "Topheth, which is in "the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man "might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

11 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to "the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the "chamberlain, which was in the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

12 And the altars that were "on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars "which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, did the king beat down, and "brake them down from thence, and "cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

13 And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of "the mount of corruption, which "Solomon the king of Israel had builded for "Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for "Chemosh the abo-

21:31. 26:33. *Judg.* 20:1. 1 Kings 19:3. a *Ex.* 44:10-14. *Mal.* 2:8, 9. b 1 Sam. 2:36. *Ex.* 44:29-31. c Is. 30:33. Jer. 7:31, 32. 19:11-13. *Tophet*. d Josh. 15:8. 2 Chr. 28:3. 33:6. Jer. 19:2. 32:35. *Matt.* 5:21. *Gr.* e 16:3. 17:17. 21:6. *Lev.* 18:21. *Deut.* 18:10. *Jer.* 32:35. *Ex.* 16:21. 20:28, 31. 23:37-39. f 3. 2 Chr. 11:5. 34:4. *Marg.* *Ex.* 8:16. *11 Or, dunce, or, officer*. g *Deut.* 22:8. *Jer.* 19:13. *Zeph.* 1:5. h 21:5, 21, 32. 2 Chr. 33:5, 15. *11 Or, van from thence*. i See on 6. *11 That is, the mount of olives*. j 1 Kings 11:7, 8. *Neh.* 13:26. k *Judg.* 2:13. 10:6. 1 Sam. 7:4. 12:10. 1 Kings 11:5, 33. 1 Num. 21:29. *Judg.* 11:24. *Jer.* 48:7, 13, 16

Planets.] מוֹלִיט. (*Marg.*) Different opinions are held concerning the meaning of this word, which is found here only.

V. 6. *Marg. Ref. Note*, *Ex.* 32:20.—*The graves, &c.*] The graves of the worshippers of these idols are meant. This was another expedient, to render these idols and the idolaters alike vile and abominable to the spectators.

V. 7. *Note*, 21:7, 8, v. 7.—*Hangings, &c.*] It is supposed that these hangings were intended for tents, in which the devotees of the demons perpetrated the most detestable species of lewdness, as a part of their religion, and as near as possible to the house of the Lord itself! This was even worse than making that holy place a den of thieves. (*Notes*, *Ex.* 8:7-14. *Matt.* 21:12, 13. *P. O.* 12-16.)

V. 8. It is probable that these high places were defiled, by casting the bones or dead bodies of men into them. Thus the people in general would be preserved from going thither, where they had so expressly been declared abominable; though presumptuous persons should rebuild them.—Josiah showed his impartiality, when he destroyed those high places at the gates of the city, which seem to have been erected under the patronage of a considerable person, entitled "the governor of the city."

From Geba, &c.] (*Marg. Ref.* y, z.) The northern and southern borders of the kingdom of Judah.

V. 9. It does not appear that these priests had been guilty of idolatry, but of irregularly and illegally worshipping JEHOVAH in the high places, instead of at the temple. To deter others from this inveterate practice, they were excluded from their sacred functions; but not put to death, or deprived of their maintenance, though it is uncertain what portions were allotted them. (*Notes*, *Lev.* 21:17-24. *Ex.* 44:10-16.)

V. 10. *Notes*, *Lev.* 18:21. 20:2-5.—*Topheth, &c.*] This place derived its name from a word, which signifies a drum; because they used to drown the cries of the children, who there passed through the fire, or were burned in it, by the sound of drums. (*Notes*, *Is.* 30:33. *Jer.* 7:32, 33.)

V. 11. The worshippers of the sun represented that luminary, by a man seated in a chariot drawn by swift and furious horses; and therefore they dedicated to him horses and chariots. The kings of Judah had imitated this custom, and kept the horses of the sun at the entrance of the temple: and a person, who, as it seems, was very honourably provided for, was employed to take care of them! But Josiah took away the horses and burned the chariots.

V. 12-14. Manasseh, after his repentance, had removed the altars from the courts of the Lord: but it is probable that Amon had replaced or rebuilt them, and they retained the name of their original deviser. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. 33:15-17, 21-25.) The high places which Solomon had built, had doubtless been in part at least demolished: but the idolatrous kings had rebuilt or repaired them, and dedicated them to the same idols, and called them by Solomon's name; perhaps glorying that they copied the example of so illustrious a prince. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, 1 Kings 11:1-8.) The sacred writer seems to call the hill on which these high places were erected, and which is supposed to have been the mount of Olives, "the mount of corruption," because of the abominations there committed. All these, as well as the altars, which had been made

mination of the Moabites, and for ^mMileom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king detile.

14 And ^hhe brake in pieces the ⁱimages, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with ^hthe bones of men. [Practical Observations.]

15 [¶] Moreover, ^hthe altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove.

16 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

17 Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, ⁱIt is the sepulchre of the man of God which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.

18 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones ^halone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.

19 And all ^hthe houses also of the high places that were in ^hthe cities of Samaria, which ^hthe kings of Israel had made ^hto provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.

20 And ^hhe slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

m Zeph. 1:5. *Malcham*, n Ex. 23:24. Num. 33:52. Deut. 7:5, 25, 26. 2 Chr. 34:3, 4. ^h Heb. *statues*, o 16. Num. 19:16, 18. Jer. 8:1, 2. Eze. 39:12-16. Matt. 23:27-28. p 10:31. 1 Kings 12:29-33. 14:16. 15:30. 21:22. q See *on* 6. v 1 Kings 13:1, 2. Matt. 24:35. John 10:35. e 1 Kings 15:3, 30. f Heb. *to escape*, t 1 Kings 13:11-22, 31. u 17:9. 1 Kings 12:31. 13:32. x 2 Chr. 30:6-11, 31:1. 34:6. y 8:18. 1 Kings 16:33. Mic. 6:16. z 17:16-18. 21:6. Ps. 78:58. Jer. 7:18, 19. Ez. 8:17, 18. a 10:25. 11:18. Ex. 22:20. Deut. 15:5. 1 Kings 18:40. Zech. 13:2, 3. ^h Or, *scrificed*, 1 Kings 13:2. Is. 34:6. b 2 Chr. 35:1, &c. c Ex. 12:3, &c. Lev. 23:5-8. Num. 9:5, 28:16-25.

on the flat roofs of their houses, for more retired idolatrous worship, Josiah cleared away entirely, and used every method of rendering the places, where idolatry had been committed, contemptible and vile.

V. 15-20. Josiah had evidently some authority over a great part of the country, which the ten tribes had occupied; (2 Chr. 34:6.) but it is not certain, whether this was by grant from the king of Assyria, or by the willing subjection of the inhabitants: the former, however, appears the more probable. (Note, 29:30.) On this occasion he exactly accomplished the prediction of the man of God concerning him, delivered about three hundred and sixty years before: and though he may be supposed to have designed that accomplishment; yet so wicked a man as his father could have had no such intentions, in giving his son the name of Josiah. (Notes, 1 Kings 13:2, 23-32.)—It seems that many Israelites had collected together in several parts of the land; and especially, that the idolatrous priests had resorted to Beth-el to renew their old idolatry. (Notes, 17:24-28.) These Josiah put to death, perhaps with others from the land of Judah who were notoriously guilty. By burning men's bones upon their altars he endeavoured to render their idolatry detestable to all the inhabitants; that they might be induced to join themselves to the Jews in the worship of God at Jerusalem: for nothing was so polluting by the ceremonial law, as a dead human body, or any part of one. (Note, Num. 19:11.)—It has been justly observed, that if Josiah had entertained the same notions of the sanctity of relics, which have so long prevailed among professed Christians; he would have bestowed at least as much pains in honouring the bones of the old prophet from Judah, as he did in disgracing those of the idolatrous priests. But he thought it enough to let the bones of the man of God lie quietly in his grave.

V. 21-23. Having made all necessary preparation, Josiah proceeded to lead the attention of the people to their solemn feasts; and this first passover was celebrated with extraordinary zeal and exactness, and by immense multitudes; so that in all respects it exceeded every passover which had been observed from the days of Joshua. It must be supposed, that in the reigns of the idolatrous kings, this and the other sacred festivals were often entirely neglected; yet, under the judges, and during the reign of the pious kings, they were observed; but in no instance, with such regularity and zeal, and by so great numbers as at this time. (Notes, 2 Chr. 30: 18.)

21 [¶] And the king commanded all the people saying, ^hKeep the passover unto the LORD your God, ^has it is written in the book of this covenant.

22 Surely ^hthere was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days ^hof the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;

23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah ^{wherein} this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 [¶] Moreover, ^hthe workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the ⁱimages, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, ^hthat he might perform the words of the law, which were written in ^hthe book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 And ^hlike unto him was there no king before him, ^hthat turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, ^haccording to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.

26 [¶] Notwithstanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the ^hprovocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.

27 And the LORD said, ^mI will remove Judah also ^hout of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ^hMy name shall be there.

28 Now ^hthe rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, ^{are} they not written in the book ^[B. C. of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?] ^{610.}

29 [¶] In his days ^hPharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to

Deut. 16:1-8. d 2 Chr. 35:18, 19. e 2 Chr. 30:1-3, 13-20. 35:3-17. f 21:3. 6. 1 Sam. 28:3-7. Is. 8:19. 19:3. Acts 16:16-18. § (Or, *teraphim*, Gen. 31:19. Judg. 17:5. 18:17, 18. Hos. 3:4. g Lev. 19:31. 20:27. Deut. 18:10-12. Is. 8:20. Rom. 3:20. Jam. 1:25. h 22:8-13. 2 Chr. 34:14-19. i 18:5. j 3. Deut. 4: 29, 6:5. 1 Kings 2:4. 15:5. Jer. 29:13. k Neh. 10:29. Mal. 4:4. John 1:17. 7: 19. l 21:11-13. 22:16, 17. 24:3, 4. 2 Chr. 36:16. Jer. 3:7-10. 15:1-4. j Heb. *angels*, m 17:19, 20. 18:11. 24:3. 25:11. Deut. 29:27, 28. Ez. 23:32-35. n Ps. 51:11. Jer. 31:37. 33:34. Lam. 2:7. o See on 21:4, 7. 1 Kings 8:29. 9:3. p See on 26:20. q 35:34. 2 Chr. 35:20-24. Jer. 46:2.

V. 24. (Marg. Ref.) The whole narrative marks the care with which this pious prince had studied "the book of the law," after it was found; the diligent investigation which he made to detect and destroy every thing forbidden in it; and the exactness, as well as earnestness, with which his reformation was conducted. Had the princes and people been as sincere and zealous as their king, the happiest effects would have followed. (Notes, Jer. 3:6-11. Zeph. 1:5-8.)

V. 25. Hezekiah excelled all the kings of Judah for entire confidence in God; and Josiah surpassed all others in zeal for reformation, and in an unblemished life, being attentive to obey the precepts, and promote the glory of God, with his whole heart and soul. (Note, 18:5, 6. 2 Chr. 31:20, 21.) 'Hezekiah himself was not so exact, and did not make such a thorough search as he did after all idolatrous practices.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 26, 27. Josiah lived above thirteen years after this great reformation, and to the end retained the people in the external worship of God: (2 Chr. 34:33.) but in general they relapsed secretly into many of their former idolatries and iniquities; and, as a collective body, they were not greatly amended in the sight of a heart-searching God.—They had heartily concurred in the idolatries and crimes of Manasseh, but they had not imitated his repentance: on the other hand they had hypocritically joined in Josiah's reformation, and were ripe, upon his removal, to join the apostasy of his sons. (Note, 25.) Manasseh's wickedness therefore was accounted national, and filled up their measure of iniquity; whereas Josiah's piety was personal, and the hypocrisy and apostasy of the people aggravated their guilt and hastened their ruin. (Notes, 21:13-16. 22:15-20. 24:3, 4.) But though the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, so as to spare Jerusalem from desolation, and the Jews from captivity; yet this event proved a kind of crisis in their disease: and while the wicked perished in vast numbers, the remnant was purified; and Josiah's reformation probably had a very happy effect, in raising up many persons to join this small remnant, which proved the precious seed of their future church and nation.

V. 29, 30. Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, assisted by the Medes, is supposed, before this time, to have conquered the Assyrians and destroyed Nineveh. Thus he became king of Assyria also: and some learned men are of opinion, that after Manasseh was freed from captivity, the kings of Judah reigned over the country formerly possessed by the ten tribes

the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.

30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

31 ¶ Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

32 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

33 And Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a

tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.

35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-nechoh.

36 ¶ Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

37 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

1 Ec. 8:14, 9:12, 10:7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

as tributaries and allies to the kings of Babylon.—Josiah might therefore consider himself as under engagements to the king of Assyria, as well as unwilling that the contending parties should march their armies through his country: he however lost his life in the attempt. Megiddo was situated in the lot of Manasseh, in a northern part of the land: (*Judg.* 1:27.) but at this time it seems to have been under Josiah's government. Perhaps Josiah disguised himself, that the king of Egypt might not know him; but he, having discovered him, singled him out for slaughter. When he had received his mortal wound, he was carried out of the battle, and he died by the way to Jerusalem. (*Note*, 2 Chr. 35:20—24.)—It has commonly been observed that our young king Edward VI. greatly resembled Josiah. He gave indeed singular evidence of wisdom and piety far beyond his years: but he was taken away at the age when Josiah first began to seek the Lord; and we can only conjecture what he would have been and done, if he had been spared to reach the age at which Josiah was slain.—The people of the land placed Jehoahaz, or Shallum, the second son of Josiah on the throne in preference to his elder brother Jehoiakim: (*Note*, 22:1, 2.) probably, because he was deemed to be of a more active and martial temper. And to confirm their irregular proceedings, they anointed him, as if he had been immediately appointed by God: (*Note*, 1 Kings 1:38, 39, v. 39.) but alas! the season of the Lord's graciously giving them pious kings to reign over them was elapsed, and all Josiah's sons proved wicked, impolitic, and unsuccessful. As Zedekiah was no more than twenty-one years old, when he was made king, after Jehoakim had reigned eleven years, and Jeconiah his son a short time; (24:18.) he of course was younger than Jehoahaz, though mentioned before him in Chronicles. (1 Chr. 3:15.)

Josiah went against him. (29) 'Being afraid he intended to invade his country in his passage, or to divert him from his expedition against the Babylonians, with whom he was in league: it is likely the latter was the reason.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Pharaoh-necho: ... Megiddo.] 'Whom Herodotus ... calls Nekos; (*Necos*) and mentions the fight which he had with the Syrians *en Mygdalum*.' (*Magdolum*.) *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 33. Jehoahaz had assumed the regal authority without Pharaoh's consent, and perhaps attempted to continue the war against him; which appears probable, because he was bound at Riblah, at the northern extremity of the promised land. Pharaoh, by some means, took him prisoner, deposed him, and sent him bound into Egypt, where he ended his days: (*Notes*, Jer. 22:10—12. Ez. 19:2—9.) and the land was put under tribute, in token of its subjection to the king of Egypt. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 34. 'Jehoiakim' means the same as 'Eliakim;' except that the latter is compounded with the word translated God, the former with a part of the name JEHOVAH. Pharaoh seems not to have wished Jehoiakim to renounce his religion; but chose to distinguish him, as the ruler of that people, who professed to worship JEHOVAH.—Hitherto the kingdom of Judah had descended in a direct line from father to son: and this is the first instance of one brother succeeding another. (*Preface*, 1 Kings.)

V. 37. In the prophecy of Jeremiah the extreme wickedness of Jehoiakim is fully shown. (*Notes*, Jer. 26: 36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14. Nothing ought to discourage our endeavours to promote a revival of true religion. If declining churches and nations cannot be rescued from impending judgments, a few individuals may be snatched as "brands from the burning;" and if ministers, in their several stations, fail of general or aching usefulness, and have continually the prospect of being removed: many a one may, in the mean time, receive important benefit, and prove the seed of a future revival, even in that very place.—As sinners cannot be preserved from eter-

nal destruction, without repentance; so degenerate nations cannot be rescued from public calamities, without general reformation. To effect this it is the interest of princes to promote the knowledge of God in their dominions; and it is no degradation of their dignity, personally to take an active part in such attempts; which will induce numbers of every order in the community to concur.—All external obligations to the service of God may be entered into with a hypocritical, or self-righteous spirit: yet this should not make us object to such engagements ourselves, or averse to propose them; but only make us cautious in what manner we do it, and careful to inculcate the same caution upon others. It is safe to bind ourselves solemnly to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments; because these are previous indispensable duties, (*Note*, Num. 30:2.) and some are thus rendered more earnest in attending to them: but the word of God must be the rule and standard in every thing; not only as to the duty itself, but also as to the motive and manner of doing it.—In those nations, which profess to worship God, and which are favoured with the light of revelation, we need only to investigate with diligence, and compare the result of our observations with the word of truth, to discover such enormous and multiplied abominations, as could never have been conceived upon a distant and superficial view, or a judgment formed by other rules. Even in worshipping congregations, an exact scrutiny would commonly bring to light such evils, as before were never suspected; but the most humiliating discoveries will be made, by an exact inquiry into our own hearts and conduct. That man, who previously deemed his behaviour unexceptionable and his heart good, if he can be engaged in diligent self-examination and watchfulness, daily beholding himself in the mirror of God's word, and for a long time comparing with it his thoughts, intentions, dispositions, words, and actions; will experience increasing convictions of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of his heart, and of the exceeding sinfulness of his whole life. And if he set about amendment, in dependence on the mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ, and according to the rule of the Bible, he will, as he proceeds, find still more and more to be done; and to the end of his life perceive, that he is very far off from the perfect righteousness of the holy law. Nor are any persons disposed to object to this unfavourable statement, but such as are either unacquainted with the rule, or strangers to a serious examination of their conduct by it. (*Note*, Jer. 17:9, 10. P. O. Ez. 8: Notes, Rom. 7:7—12. Jam. 1:22—25.) Imperfection is stamped upon all human goodness, and the greatest reformations hitherto seen on earth, have left many things unreformed.—The scriptural history may well excite the hatred and disgust of the proud admirers of the human heart and understanding; as it presents to our view a very mortifying picture of the blindness of man's mind, as well as of the perverseness of his will, and the depravity of his affections. But suppose the appeal made to other histories, or to universal observation and experience:—if the records of Greece and Rome were presented to our view, as a detail of facts, without the varnish of declamation and panegyric; if the conduct of these celebrated nations, in public and private life, throughout their term of notoriety, were impartially compared with the just and holy law of God; would not their idolatries and immoralities be found to exceed even those of Israel? (*Note*, Rom. 1:28—32.) Would they not picture human nature as blind and depraved as the Bible does? And do not all the enormities bestowed on them, arise from man's disposition to "call good evil, and evil good, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness?" (*Note*, Is. 5:20.) Pride, ambition, rapacity, cruelty, and revenge, have even been canonized by poets, and orators, and historians; and idolatry, impiety, brutal excess, and unnatural lusts have been called by soft names, and excused, if not vindicated by these elegant and ingenious ancients. Otherwise

CHAPTER XXIV.

Jehoiakim submits to Nebuchadnezzar, but afterwards rebels, 1. God hastens the fulfilment of his predictions against Judah, 2-4. Jehoiakim dies, and is succeeded by Jehoiachin, 5, 6. The king of Babylon prevails against the king of Egypt, 7. Jehoiachin reigns wickedly, 8, 9. Jerusalem is taken; as the king, with his family and treasures, and the sacred vessels, and chief persons of Judah, is carried captive to Babylon, 10-16. Zedekiah is made king, reigns wickedly, and rebels against the king of Babylon, 17-20.

In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant *c. c.* three years: then he turned and rebelled *608.* against him.

2 And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah, to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord,

*a 17:5. 2 Chr. 36:6. Jer. 25:13, 46:2. Dan. 1:1. c 6:23. 13:20, 21. Deut. 28:49, 50. 2 Chr. 33:11. Job 1:17. Is. 7:17, 13:5. Jer. 35:11. d 20:17, 21:12-14. Is. 6:11, 12. Jer. 25:9, 26:6, 20, 32, 23. Mic. 3:12. * Heb. the hand of his. e 18:25. Gen. 50:20. 2 Chr. 24:24, 25:16. Is. 10:5, 6. 45:7. 46:10, 11. Am. 3:6. f 23:26, 27.*

the conclusion is as irrefragable from the study of profane history, as from the records of God's word, that "the imagination of man's heart is only evil from his youth;" and that all the real godliness, or goodness, which has ever been found on earth, has been derived from the new creating Spirit of Jesus Christ.—Persons of eminence, of whatever kind, have need to be very careful what they sanction: for numbers, in distant ages and nations, may be emboldened to transgress, by acceding to their sentiments, or by imitating their examples: and the reflection, of doing extensive mischief for generations to come, would in that case, be a painful prerogative of superior talents, rank, or reputation.—In using all our influence decidedly to suppress abuses, and to oppose iniquity, we should show all allowable tenderness to the persons of men: yet man must not pretend to more mercy than his Maker, by sparing those whom he orders to be punished.—In reducing our conduct, or that of others, to the standard of Scripture, in evident and important matters, no allowance must be made for customary, reputable, ancient, or fashionable abuses: difficulties also must be encountered, hardships endured, self-denial exercised, and opposition and every worldly interest disregarded: no man must be known after the flesh; nor any attention paid to persuasions, complaints, remonstrances, or reproaches; nor even to prejudices, except in matters of subordinate consequence. Therefore courage, constancy, and patience, are requisite for such attempts; and these, when genuine, can only spring from grace and faith, and be given in answer to prayer, without which every undertaking of this kind will be fruitless.—Not only should gross abominations be precluded; but every temptation or occasion of sin should be removed, whatever be the secular loss or expense, if we would effectually glorify God, and do good: and every method should be adopted to fill men's minds with abhorrence of iniquity, and to show plausible abuses in a contemptible and detestable light: especially where godly people are liable to be seduced into pernicious compliances.

V. 15-37. The predictions of Scripture may be so long ere they are accomplished, that the expectation of the event may seem to expire; but they will all be punctually fulfilled in their season: and it must give singular encouragement to the pious, when they find themselves evidently employed in bringing about that accomplishment.—Ungodly persons may, even after death, be more respected for their connexion with the servants of God; but the Judge of all will not regard such distinctions.—When gross iniquities are renounced, and a credible profession of faith, repentance, and devotedness to God are made, men may be deemed prepared for the most solemn ordinances of his worship: though no human care or penetration can exclude formal hypocrites; such attendance on the worship of God is externally honourable to him, and useful to numbers: and, as he will know how at last to separate between the tares and the wheat, we must leave them to grow together till the harvest. The scrutinizing eye of the zealous servant of God will continually find many abuses to be rectified: and we must still press forward, both in personal and public reformation. Those who attempt this with their whole heart, in humility and simplicity, may hope to be useful to others, and shall certainly be accepted themselves; and as there are degrees of excellency among true believers, so they will receive a proportionable recompense. But when the sins of a collective body are come to a crisis, no human endeavours can avert the wrath of God: and when eminent and useful persons are prematurely taken away, it forebodes public calamities. (*Note, Is. 57:1, 2.*) The best of men may be misled into unadvised meddling with matters not properly belonging to them: but if we are habitually living by faith, and walking with God, even should we be taken away in consequence of any indiscretion, it will not prevent our dying in peace, and being received to glory.—Piety is personal, the effect of special grace. The children even of the most pious parents inherit original depravity; nor can education, instruction, or example prevent its effects, without regeneration: yet abundant encouragement is given to the diligent use of the appointed means of grace, in respect of our children.

which he spake by his servants the prophets.

3 Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

4 And also for the innocent blood that he shed, (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood,) which the Lord would not pardon.

5 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?

6 So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: *[B. C. 609.]* and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

7 And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had

lev. 26:33-35. Deut. 4:26, 27, 28, 63, 29:26. Josh. 23:15. Jer. 15:1-4. Mic. 2:10. g 21:2-11. h 21:16. Num. 35:33. i Jer. 15:1, 2. Lam. 3:42. j 2 Chr. 36:8. Jer. 22:13-17. 26:36. k Jer. 22:18, 19. 36:30. l Jer. 37:5-7. 46:2.

(*Notes, Gen. 18:17-19. Prov. 22:6.*)—When those who have stood in the gap are removed, judgments often follow like an inundation: and a little time and slender abilities frequently suffice to undo all the external good, which pious men, of excellent capacities, have been labouring, with unremitting endeavours, for a course of years to effect. (*Notes, Ec. 2:18-23. 9:13-18.*) Blessed be God, that good work, which he begins by his regenerating Spirit, cannot be disannulled; but, notwithstanding all changes and temptations, shall be performed unto the day of Jesus Christ.

NOTES.—**CHAP. XXIV. V. 1.** Pharaoh-nechoh, after Josiah's death, obtained a victory over the king of Babylon, and for some time retained Judea and Syria in subjection. But not long after, Nabopolassar seems to have associated his son Nebuchadnezzar with him in the kingdom, that by him the war with the Egyptians might be conducted with greater vigour. For when Daniel had been three years under tuition at Babylon, and had afterwards been introduced to Nebuchadnezzar, he interpreted the dream of that prince in the second year of his reign: yet Daniel had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar the king. (*Note, Dan. 2:1.*) Two distinct dates respecting the beginning of his reign must therefore be admitted; and it appears that he was made king two or three years before his father died.—Nebuchadnezzar having obtained decisive advantages against the Egyptians, attacked Jehoiakim, as an ally of Nechoh, and, having taken him prisoner, he "bound him in fetters to carry him to Babylon;" (*2 Chr. 36:6, 7.*) but upon his submission he released him, and carried away some of the gold and silver vessels of the temple, and some of the most considerable persons of the land. Among the latter were Daniel and his companions. (*Notes, Dan. 1:1-7.*) This is the first epoch of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim, and he reduced that prince in his fourth year. After this, Jehoiakim served the king of Babylon three years, and in his eighth year he rebelled against him, about three years before his death. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. It may be supposed, that these nations had been subjected to the king of Babylon; and were encouraged by him to attack the revolted Jews, while he was otherwise employed. But the Lord's secret disposal of their hearts to these attempts alone is noticed. It is probable that Jehoiakim was harassed by them during the remainder of his days; and perhaps he was at last slain in some sally against them, when they approached Jerusalem; and so left unburied, or otherwise very disgracefully treated. But some think, that after the transactions here recorded, Nebuchadnezzar carried him to Babylon, and at length put him to death, and treated his dead body most ignominiously. (*Note, Jer. 22:13-19. 36:30, 31.*)

V. 3, 4. Manasseh's idolatry became a national sin, as publicly enforced by persecution, which filled Jerusalem with the innocent blood of those who refused compliance. The chief men of Judah were involved in this guilt, and had neither repented, nor been brought to justice for it: thus, accumulated and atrocious murders remained unpunished, as a load of guilt upon the land: (*Notes, Num. 35:31-34. Deut. 21:1-9. Ez. 22:3-5, 24-28.*) and both the princes and people were in general more disposed to imitate Manasseh's idolatries and persecutions, than his repentance. Therefore, though the Lord had pardoned the personal wickedness of penitent Manasseh, he would not pardon the unrepented national guilt, of which he had been the occasion, and in some sense the author. (*Note, 23:26, 27. 2 Chr. 33:11-19.*)

Out of his sight. (3) Out of that land in which his worship had been established, and the special tokens of his gracious presence so wonderfully vouchsafed. (*Notes, Deut. 11:12. Ps. 51:11.*)

Would not pardon. (4) לאֶחֱפֹאֵר. The Lord, in his wisdom and righteousness, did not see good to pardon this national guilt, in those circumstances; but judged it proper to inflict condign punishment for it: but the personal sins of such as repented and sought mercy, were pardoned notwithstanding this determination. (*Notes, Ez. 18:34, 19-32.*)

V. 6. As Jehoiakim was "buried with the burial of an

taken "from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

[Practical Observations.]

8 ¶ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Ne-hushita, the daughter of Elnahath of Jerusalem.

9 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

10 ¶ At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.

11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

12 And ¶ Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

13 And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and

all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

15 And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, these carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

16 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

17 ¶ And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

18 Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Harputal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

19 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiachim had done.

20 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem, and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

m Gen. 15:13. Num. 34:5. Josh. 15:4. 1 Kings 4:21. Is. 27:12. n 1 Chr. 3:16. Jer. 24:1. Jeroniah. Jer. 22:24, 28. 37:1. Coniah. Matt. 1:11, 12. Jechonias. o 2 Chr. 36:9. "Heb. came into siege. 25:2. p 2 Chr. 36:10. Jer. 24:1. 29:1, 2. 33:17, 18. Ez. 17:12. q Or, eunuchs. q 25:27. Jer. 52:31. 1 Nebuchadnezzar's. r Jer. 35:1. 52:28. r 20:17. Is. 39:6. Jer. 20:5. s 25:13-15. Ezra 1:7-11. Jer. 37:16-21. 28:34, 45. Dan. 5:2, 3. t 1 Kings 7:48-50. 2 Chr. 4:7-22. u 2 Chr. 36:2.

ass;" the expression, "slept with his fathers," can only mean that he died, without determining what became either of his soul or body. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2.)

V. 7. The king of Egypt having been driven back into his own land, and confined there; the kings of Judah were left entirely at the mercy of Nebuchadnezzar: so that policy, as well as their most solemn engagements, demanded their peaceable submission, and their resignation to the correcting hand of God in that dispensation. (Notes, Ez. 17:2-21.)

V. 8-16. Jehoiachin, or Jechoniah, seems to have mounted the throne on the death of his father, without waiting for the king of Babylon's consent. But it was like going on board a sinking ship. He had just time enough to manifest his evil disposition, and was then attacked by the king of Babylon: who probably, was provoked by his thus assuming the authority, and suspected him of designing to revolt: so that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, first by his captains, and then personally. And either by surrender, or upon some deceitful engagement, Jechoniah went forth to him, and was carried captive to Babylon. After all the depredations to which the temple had been exposed, some of the vessels that Solomon had made, remained in the treasures of the temple: but all, except what were in immediate use, seem at this time to have been seized, and some of them cut in pieces, and sent to Babylon. And those, afterwards mentioned, might be such as had been before this carried away, or such as were found at the complete destruction of the temple and city. (25:14, 15. Ezra 1:7-11. Jer. 28:3, 6. Dan. 5:1-4.) It is no where said, what became of the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat: but in some way these were destroyed; for all allow, that there was no ark in the temple built after the captivity; and it is not improbable, that at this time the gold of the ark, &c. was cut off, and taken away. This event took place in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, (12) and forms a second epoch to be regarded in computing the duration of the captivity. (Notes, 2 Chr. 36:21. Ezra 1:1-4. Dan. 1:1, 2.)—The chief and the most useful of the people were carried to Babylon, that the land might be reduced to absolute dependence on Nebuchadnezzar. Seven thousand soldiers, one thousand craftsmen and smiths, and two thousand persons of superior rank, may make up the sum total of ten thousand. Some learned men, however, suppose, that there were ten thousand carried captive from Jerusalem alone, besides a thousand craftsmen and smiths; and also seven thousand from the rest of the land.—Jeremiah speaks of three thousand and twenty-three, who seem to have been carried away the year before, out of the open country. (Note, Jer. 52:24-30.) Among the rest Ezekiel was at this time made a captive. (Note, Ez. 1:1-3.)

V. 17. Jehoiachin was succeeded by his uncle, the youngest son of Josiah.—"Mattaniah" signifies the gift of JEHOVAH: "Zedekiah," the righteousness of JEHOVAH: and the king of Babylon, by giving him this name, meant either an appeal to the justice of God against him, if he violated his engagements; or to refer to the judgments, which he had heard were denounced against Jerusalem by a righteous God.

V. 20. "God was so highly displeased with this wicked people, that he permitted Zedekiah to break his faith with

9:10. Jer. 24:1-5. 52:7. Ez. 1:1, 2. v 1 Sam. 13:19-22. x 25:12. Jer. 39:10, 40:7. 52:16. Ez. 17:14. y See on 8. Esth. 2:6. Jer. 22:24-28. z Or, eunuchs. z Jer. 29:2. 52:28. a 2 Chr. 36:10, 11. Jer. 37:1. 52:1. b 1 Chr. 3:15, 16. c 23:34. 2 Chr. 36:4. d 23:31. e 25:27. f 2 Chr. 36:12. Jer. 24:8. 37:38. Ez. 21:23. 39:17. Ez. 8:14-17. Deut. 3:30. g 2 Chr. 36:12. 1 Cor. 1:20. 2 Thes. 2:9-11. h 2 Chr. 36:13. Jer. 27:12-15. 58:17-21. Ez. 17:15-20.

Nebuchadnezzar, and to rebel against him, forgetting for what cause he changed his name." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 17:4. 2 Sam. 17:7-14. v. 14. 24:12. 2 Chr. 25:14-16. Is. 19:11-15. Ez. 17:3-21. 21:25-27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. When the Lord leaves men to the blindness of their own minds, and to the lusts of their own hearts; some are inflated to adopt and obstinately persist in the most destructive measures, and others are hurried on by ambition, avarice, or resentment, to execute upon them the vengeance which had been predicted.—Multiplied murders, sanctioned by authority, and persevered in with impunity, form a species of national wickedness which the Lord will not pardon; especially when false religion is established by law, and persecuting statutes are enacted or revived, and executed against his true worshippers: and when this is not merely the act of a few oppressors, but the people in general "love to have it so." Yet, even this may be endured by the long-suffering of the Lord for many generations; till the whole accumulated load falls upon a devoted people, with direful destruction.—Blessed be God, there is no degree or kind of personal guilt, which he will not pardon to the true penitent; for it is "impossible to renew unto repentance" such as have committed "the sin unto death." (Notes, Heb. 6:4-6. 1 John 5:14-18.) But it is very distressing for those who have obtained forgiveness of their own transgressions, to reflect that they have been the guilty occasion to others, by their examples, influence, or persuasions, of those sins, which, being continued in, the Lord will not pardon; and of which they have no power to bring them to repent. The good Lord preserve us from sin and temptation, and above all from being tempters to others! And may this reflection stir up young persons to seek and serve God without delay, lest they should do that mischief, which, if they themselves should live to repent, they will never be able to undo.—When God arises to judgment all resistance will be ineffectual; and the folly, as well as the wickedness, of every worldly dependence, will be manifest: but his justice will never appear in its full glory, till that day, when "he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." (Note, 1 Cor. 4:3-5.) In the mean time, we are incompetent judges of the divine procedures; and ought to wait with silent patience.—Wicked men soon discover the temper of their hearts, and give evidence of what they would do if they were spared: therefore the Lord often cuts them off, to prevent further mischief; and thus hinders them from "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath." But when their power is taken away, and their lives are spared, though in poverty and misery, it may be an infinite mercy to their souls. (Notes, 25:27-30. Jer. 24:4-7.)

V. 8-20. The gradual approach of divine judgments affords sinners space for repentance, and believers leisure to prepare for properly meeting the calamity: but it only evinces the desperate obduracy and obstinacy of those, who are not deterred from their sins by all which they witness or experience.—God delights in his ordinances, so long as they prove means of grace to those who are favoured with them; but he abhors them, when they degenerate into a lifeless form. and that, which to the carnal eye appears most glorious in reli-

CHAPTER XXV.

Jerusalem is besieged and taken; Zedekiah flees, and is made prisoner; his sons are slain, his eyes are put out, and he is carried in chains to Babylon.
 1-7. The temple, palace, and city are burned, the walls are broken down, and the remnant of the people left captive, except a small number of the poor, 8-12. The residue of the sacred vessels and treasures are carried away, 13-17. The nobles are slain at Riblah, 18-21. Gedaliah who is left governor, being treacherously slain, the rest flee into Egypt, 22-25. After many years, Balthazar shows great kindness to Jehoiachin, 27-30.

AND it came to pass ^ain the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, ^bthat Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

^{a, c} 2 And the city was besieged unto the ^{eleventh} year of king Zedekiah.

3 And on ^{the ninth day of the fourth month} the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.

4 ¶ And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about;) and the king went the way toward the plain.

5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

8 ¶ And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, (which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house, burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen.

13 And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.

14 And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

15 And the firepans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away.

16 The two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord; the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

17 The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

18 ¶ And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door:

19 And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of

2 Chr. 36:17. Jer. 24:23-39:1, 52:4-5, Ez. 24:12, 10. 1 Chr. 6:15. Jer. 27:8-32:28, 43:10, 51:34. Ez. 26:7, Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 4:1, &c. c. 1s. 29:3. Jer. 32:24. Ez. 4:1-8, 21:22-24. Luke 19:43-44. d. Jer. 32:2, 52:6. Zech. 8:19. Jer. 26:25. Jer. 32:33. Lam. 4:4-10. Ez. 4:8-17, 5:10-12, 7:15, 14:21. f. Jer. 37:31, 39:2. g. Jer. 5:10, 39:25, 52:6, 7. Ez. 33:31. f. Jer. 26:17, 38. Deut. 23:25, 32:24-25, 30. Jer. 39:4-7, 15. Ez. 12:12. 1 Jo. 30:16. Jer. 24:8, 39:5, 52:8. Am. 2:11-16. k. 2 Chr. 33:11. Jer. 21:7, 34:21-22, 38:23. Lam. 4:19, 20. 1:20, 21, 31-25, 27. 1 Se. in 23:33. * Heb. spake judgment with him. in Gen. 21:16, 44:34. Deut. 28:34. Jer. 26:34, 39:6, 7, 52:10, 11, n. Jer. 32:4, 5, 34:3. Ez. 12:18. 1 Heb. made blind. o. Judg. 16:21. 2 Chr. 33:11, 36:6. Ps. 107:10, 11, 148. s. Ez. 7:27, 17:18-20. p. Jer. 52:12-14. Zech. 8:19. q. 2 Chr. 39:9-14.

gious worship, is often in his account a vile abomination.—Wicked men become curses to each other; and the nearer their intimacy or relation, the greater will be the anguish of those who sin and perish together.—External pre-eminence, in times of public calamity, often gives the precedence in suffering; but riches, dignity, authority, and superior abilities, will assuredly increase the sinner's condemnation; for to whom much is given, of him will the more be required. Let us then neither envy nor covet such precarious advantages, but be warned to improve every talent intrusted to us. Let us in these awful events contemplate the truth of the Scripture, and "flee from the wrath to come;" embrace and plead the precious promises of God; and by patient continuance in well-doing, wait for the Saviour's mercy unto eternal life!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1-5. Jerusalem was so fortified by nature and art, that notwithstanding the enfeebled state of the inhabitants, and Nebuchadnezzar's great power and military skill, it could not be taken till the besieged were incapacitated by famine to make any further resistance. (Notes, Lam. 4:10, 12.) In the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah, we shall have an opportunity of more fully considering the circumstances of this catastrophe, and indeed the whole of this compendious history: it suffices in this place to observe, that the obstinacy, impiety, and misery of the besieged were alike great, and almost unparalleled. (Notes, Jer. 37:38, 39:1-10.)—The king and his remaining forces endeavoured to escape by some private gate, which the enemy had not observed, or did not guard; but his attendants were dispersed, and he was taken prisoner. (Notes, Lam. 4:20. Ez. 12:1-16.)

V. 6, 7. Nebuchadnezzar, having placed Zedekiah on the throne, and made him engage to be faithful to him, tried and condemned him as a traitor, in the presence of his ministers and counsellors (Notes, 2 Chr. 36:13. Jer. 39:1-10. Ez. 17:15-21, 21:25-27.) and, having slain his sons in his sight, as the last spectacle which he should ever behold, and which might ever after haunt his afflicted imagination, he put out his eyes, and sent him in chains to Babylon. (Notes, Jer. 32:4, 5, v. 5. 34:1-5. 38:1-6, 20-23. Ez. 12:8-16.) Here

40:1-4, 52:12-16. Lam. 4:12. † Or, chief marshal. g. 2 Chr. 36:19. Ps. 74:5-7, 79:1. Is. 64:11. Jer. 7:14, 26:9. Lam. 1:10, 2:7. Mic. 3:12. Luke 21:5-6. Acts 6:13, 14. 1 Jer. 34:22, 37:10, 39:8, 52:13. Am. 2:5. u. Neh. 1:3. Jer. 5:10, 39:8, 52:14. x. Jer. 37:12, 39:9, 52:15. Ez. 5:2, 12:15, 16, 22, 16, 6. Heb. fallen away. y. 24:14. Jer. 38:10, 40:7. Ez. 38:24. z. 20:17, 2 Chr. 36:18. Jer. 27:19, 52:17-20. Lam. 1:10. a. 1 Kings 7:15, 21, 41. 2 Chr. 4:12, 13. b. 1 Kings 7:23-45. 2 Chr. 4:2-6, 14-16. c. Ex. 27:3. 38:3. 1 Kings 7:48-50. 2 Chr. 4:20-22, 24:14. d. Ex. 27:33. Num. 7:13, 14. 1 Kings 7:48-51. 2 Chr. 24:14. Ezra 1:9-11. Lam. 5:2, 3. Heb. the one sea. e. 1 Kings 7:47. f. 1 Kings 7:16. Jer. 52:21-25. g. 1 Chr. 6:14. Ezra 7:1. Jer. 52:24. h. Jer. 21:1, 29:25, 29. † Heb. threshold. ** Or, eunuch. 1 Jer. 52:25.

he ended his life, probably not long after; for no more is recorded concerning him. Zedekiah left daughters at Jerusalem, who went down with Johanan to Egypt; and doubtless died there. (Jer. 41:10, 43:6.)

V. 8-10. Nebuzar-adan seems to have arrived at Jerusalem on the seventh day of the month, but he began to execute his commission on the tenth. (Jer. 52:12.)—The king of Babylon, enraged at the long and obstinate defence, which the Jews had made, determined that this city should be no more inhabited, to cause him or his successors so much trouble and expense in future. (Notes, Ezra 4:12-24.) He therefore gave orders to level the city with the ground, without sparing even the temple, either for its sanctity, antiquity, or magnificence! Thus he performed the words both of the later prophets, and likewise the predictions of Moses. This is computed to have been four hundred and twenty-four years from the time when Solomon laid the foundations of the temple. Josephus informs us, that the second temple was destroyed by the Romans, on the same day of the same month.

V. 12. Note, 22-26.

V. 13-17. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Kings 7:13-51. Jer. 52:17-23.) By this it appears, that Nebuchadnezzar did not purpose wholly to desolate the land; but by destroying Jerusalem to deprive the nation of the power of resistance, and so to continue in it a feeble company of men to cultivate the earth.—But his design, in this respect, was defeated, that the purpose and predictions of God might be accomplished. It is not known what became of the ark; but it was not afterwards found. (Notes, 24:6-16. Ezra 1:7-11. Hag. 2:6-9.)

Without weight. (16) The quantity of brass was so great, that its weight was not ascertained. (1 Kings 7:47.)

V. 18-21. Marg. Ref.—Five. (19) Seven men are mentioned by Jeremiah; (Note, Jer. 52:24-27.) but perhaps five were of superior rank to the others; or were more distinguished as the favourites and counsellors of Zedekiah. All these persons were put to death as accessories to his rebellion.

V. 22-26. Nebuchadnezzar is ended to preserve some inhabitants in the land; but it was he Le d's purpose that it

them that were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land that were found in the city:

20 And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah:

21 And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land.

[Practical Observations.]

22 ¶ And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, ruler.

23 And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

24 And Gedaliah swore to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and

serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

25 But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed of Royah, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.

26 And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

27 ¶ And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

28 And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon;

29 And changed his prison-garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

30 And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

* Heb. *and the king's face*. Esth. 1:14. † Or, *scribe of the captain of the host*. Jer. 52:26, 27. Lam. 4:16. k 17:20. 23:27. Lev. 26:33—35. Deut. 4:26. 28:36, 64. Jer. 24:9, 10. 23:9—11. Am. 5:27. ‡ Jer. 40:5, 6. m 25. Jer. 39:14. 41:2. n 2:12. 2 Chr. 34:20. Jer. 26:24. o Jer. 40:7, 8, 11, 12. p 2 Sam. 14:11. 19:23. Jer. 40:9, 10. Ezr. 33:24—29. q Jer. 40:9, 42:6. r Zech. 7:5. 8:19. s Jer. 40:15, 16. 41:1—

15. † Heb. *of the kingdom*. 11:1. ‡ Jer. 41:16—18. 42:14—22. 43:5—7. u Jer. 24:5, 6. 52:31—34. x Prov. 21:1. y Gen. 40:13, 20. § Heb. *good things with him*. z Jer. 27:6—11. Dan. 2:37. 5:18, 19. a 24:12. Gen. 41:14, 42. Esth. 4:4. 8:15. 14:6, 13. Zech. 3:4. Luke 15:22. b 2 Sam. 9:7. c Neh. 11:32. 12:47. Dan. 1:5. Matt. 6:11. Luke 11:3. Acts 6:1. d Gen. 48:15, 16.

should be desolated. (12. *Notes*, Jer. 25:8—10.)—Ishmael, being of the royal family, could not endure to see any shadow of authority possessed by another, while he was excluded; and therefore he murdered Gedaliah, who seems to have been a wise and good man. His father Ahikam had been Jeremiah's protector; and the prophet had by choice joined his company. (*Notes*, Jer. 26:24. 40:6.)—After this event, the Jews, rejecting the word of the Lord by Jeremiah, fled into Egypt, for fear of the resentment of the king of Babylon; and there they either miserably perished, or were lost among the natives, and thus God performed his purpose and predictions of desolating the country, contrary to the intentions of the instruments, which he had hitherto employed. (*Notes*, Jer. 39:—42.) The small numbers, mentioned in all the accounts of these events, lead the mind to a most melancholy reflection on the multitudes who must have perished, and been driven into other lands, by the distresses of the Jews, previous to this catastrophe.

V. 27—30. It is recorded that Nebuchadnezzar, after his recovery from the miraculous insanity with which he had been visited, committed his son to prison for maleadministration during that period; (*Notes*, Dan. 4:28—37.) and that there he contracted an acquaintance with Jehoiachin. God had foretold, that the captives at Babylon would be more favoured, than those who remained at Jerusalem: and thus Jehoiachin was at length more favoured than Zedekiah. (*Notes*, Jer. 24:)—Many captive or tributary kings abode at Babylon, but Jehoiachin was treated with greater kindness and respect than any of them, either out of personal affection, or from regard to the ancient race of the kings of Judah. (*Note*, Jer. 52:31.)—As Evil-merodach reigned but two years, it is probable Jehoiachin did not live long after this. (*Note*, Ezra 1:1—4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21. If repeated warnings and afflictions leave the sinner's heart more obdurate than before, it is an evidence that his ruin is at hand. (*Note*, Prov. 29:1.)—Those advantages, which inspire confidence in the ways of wickedness, will eventually aggravate the possessor's misery: for no power can resist, no craftiness can elude, those whom God appoints to be the executioners of his vengeance.—If rebellion against earthly princes deserve penalties so severe, as by common consent have, in all ages and nations, been inflicted upon those who were guilty of that crime: who can estimate what or how much punishment is due to rebellion against our Creator, Benefactor, and Sovereign!—Precious as our eyes are to us, they may possibly be reserved to witness such scenes, as may make us wish, that they had been previously closed, in darkness or in death. But surely no sight can be so distressing, as the misery of our children, when occasioned

by our own misconduct!—God overrules, and imperceptibly guides, even the anger and the resentment of men to execute his righteous purposes for his own glory. In the day of his indignation, he utterly disregards populous cities, magnificent palaces, and fertile countries: nay, he permits his avowed enemies to destroy his sanctuaries, to prevent the administration of his ordinances, and even to extinguish the very light of his gospel, in those places, where these estimable advantages have long been despised, neglected, or perverted. But he will still preserve his true religion, though perhaps among the poor and despised alone.—As the Lord "spared not the angels, that sinned;" as he has doomed the whole race of fallen men to the grave, and all unbelievers to hell; and as "he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all;" we need not wonder at any desolation or miseries which, for sin, he may see good to bring upon guilty nations and churches.

V. 22—30. The secret working of Providence disappoints the politic or humane purposes of such as purpose to spare those whom God intends to destroy: and, while some are left to their ungoverned passions, and others to their groundless fears and infatuated devices, "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."—No state of misery on earth can be called absolutely hopeless or comfortless. In hell alone this blackness of darkness is to be found for ever. During our most dismal and tedious nights of adversity, we may hope for the cheerful dawning of prosperous days; especially, if our afflictions lead us to repentance: for God has all hearts in his hands, and, as he sees good, can incline them to kindness.—The believer in this world is, as it were, imprisoned with sins, temptations, and tribulations, sometimes for many a tedious year: but death, as the servant of Jesus Christ, comes for his enlargement. Then, the prison-door is opened, his fetters are loosed, his prison-garments changed for the robes of salvation and glory; his head is lifted up, and his throne advanced above the chief of the kings of the earth; and he shall be eternally feasted upon the fulness of joy, which is to be found in the presence and favour of the Almighty. Indeed, even here, the Saviour grants to the trembling, distressed, and enslaved sinner, who comes and trusts in him, a blessed release from condemnation and bondage: he bestows on him liberty, change of raiment, royal immunities, and heavenly provisions, day by day; and these are intended as earnest and foretastes of those "pleasures, which are at his right hand for evermore." In short, sin alone can hurt us, and Jesus alone can do good to sinners. May God help us to believe; and to wait, in patient hope, for the blessed season, when, being made more than conquerors by his grace, we shall "sit down with the Saviour upon his throne, even as he hath overcome, and hath sat down with the Father upon his throne."

THE FIRST BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

It is generally agreed, that the books of the Chronicles were compiled by Ezra, after the Babylonian captivity; and that they consist of extracts from the public records of the Jews, and the writings of preceding prophets. Some passages appear to have been in *sermo* in the very words of the original record, which was written before the captivity; and a few names seem to have been added to the genealogies, after the death of Ezra. (1 Chr. 3:19—24.) The original name is (רַבְרִי הַיָּמִים) *The words of the days*, which signifies *Journals*, or *Annals*; and it is not improperly rendered *Chronicles*, or *Records of the times*. Anciently, the whole formed 1 but one book in the Hebrew Bible; but the Septuagint divide it into two, and call them *The Books of things which have been left out*; yet this is less proper than the original name; for there are many repetitions of facts before recorded, as well as further historical information. These repetitions, however, must not be deemed superfluous; for most of them in some degree, and some of them exceedingly, elucidate the preceding history: and the few, that seem not wanted in this respect, are suited to connect the whole into one narration, without referring to other books; which would be peculiarly useful, when copies of the whole Scriptures were both scarce and expensive.—In the genealogies there are several *literal* or *verbal* variations, from those found in other parts of Scripture: but it is evident, that many persons had more than one name, and were called by one or the other indiscriminately; and the spelling and pronunciation, in most languages, change considerably in a course of years. Some variations in the numerals have already been noted; and we are sometimes constrained to allow, that, probably, a trivial error of the transcriber has taken place; but there is no variation, which in the least interferes with our faith or practice, or weakens the external or internal evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scripture in general, or of these books in particular.—It was evidently a principal design of the sacred writer, in these records, to bring into one view, and comprise in a narrow compass, whatever immediately related to the nation of Israel, to each of the twelve tribes, and to the family of David, with reference to the settlement in the land after the captivity; and to ascertain the descent of the promised Messiah: and in both these respects, the genealogies would be very useful. Until Christ came, all the genealogies of that nation were preserved correct and authentic: but since that period, the Jews have none which can be depended on. The types were then fulfilled in the great Antitype; the kingdom and priesthood were permanently united in his person; and the nation soon forfeited their peculiar temporal advantages, by rejecting their King: and as their genealogies were no further useful, they were left to be involved in oblivion or uncertainty.—Many things might be very plain and useful to the ancient Jews, which appear obscure and uninteresting to us. Should it be allowed, that a small part of the Scripture was profitable to the church in some ages and places, but not at all in others, it would be no impeachment of the divine wisdom and goodness: and if we cannot understand or get any benefit from certain portions; it is more reasonable to blame our own dullness, than, so much as in thought, to censure them as useless.—The first book commences with genealogies from Adam, till long after the captivity; many of which are collected from other parts of Scripture. The advancement of David to the throne upon Saul's death, is next related: and a much fuller account is given of his internal government of the kingdom; especially in the regulation concerning the priests and Levites, in the service of the sanctuary; the preparation that he made for the building of the temple; and the exhortations to Solomon his successor, and to the elders of Israel with which he closed his days, than in the preceding histories. And the sacred writer seems to have dwelt on these subjects the more fully, in order to stir up a holy emulation in his contemporaries, in restoring the worship at the temple to its ancient order and purity. So that in this book, "the man after God's own heart" shines much brighter, than in the second book of Samuel, and the beginning of the first of Kings.—The genealogies, given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, may be supposed to refer in many respects to those in this book. And when it is said that Zachariah was "of the course of Abia," the reference is still more indisputable. (24:10. Luke 1:5.)—The prophecies contained in it coincide indeed with those in the second of Samuel and in the Psalms; and therefore cannot be adduced as full proofs of its divine inspiration: but the sentiments which pervade it are perfectly scriptural; and we are sure it formed a part of the Jewish Scriptures, when our Saviour and his apostles appealed to them, as "The oracles of God."

B. C. 4004.

CHAPTER I.

The genealogy, from Adam to Noah and his sons, 1—4. The sons of Japheth, 5—7; of Ham, 8—16; and of Shem, 17—23. A genealogy from Shem to Abraham and his sons, 24—28. The sons of Ishmael, 29—31; and of Keturah, 32, 33. The posterity of Abraham by Esau, 34—37. The sons of Seir, 38—42. The kings and dukes of Edom, 43—54.

ADAM, ^aSheth, ^bEnosh,
2 ^cKenan, ^dMahalaleel, ^eJered,
3 ^fHenoeh, ^gMethuselah, ^hLamech,
4 ⁱNoah, ^jShem, Ham, and Japheth.

n. c.] 5 ^kThe sons of Japheth; Gomer, and
2346.] Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal,
and Meshech, and Tiras.

6 And the sons of Gomer; ^mAshchenaz, and
ⁿRiphat, and Togarmah.

7 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and ^oTarshish, ^pKittim, and ^qDodanim.

8 ^rThe sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim,
^sPut, and Canaan.

9 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah,
and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha. And the
sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

^a Gen. 4:25, 26; 5:3, 8. Luke 3:38. ^b Seth. ^c Gen. 5:9—11. Luke 3:38. ^d Enos. ^e Gen. 5:12—14. Luke 3:37. ^f Cainan. ^g Gen. 5:15—17. Luke 3:37. ^h Maleleel. ⁱ Gen. 5:18—20. Luke 3:37. ^j Jared. ^k Gen. 5:21—24. Heb. 11:5. Jude 14. ^l Enoch. ^m Gen. 10:25—27. Luke 3:37. ⁿ Methuselah. ^o Gen. 5:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^p Gen. 10:25—27. Luke 3:37. ^q Tiras. ^r Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^s Put. ^t Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^u Canaan. ^v Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^w Seir. ^x Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^y Dedan. ^z Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{aa} Sheba. ^{ab} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ac} Dedan. ^{ad} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ae} Sheba. ^{af} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ag} Dedan. ^{ah} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ai} Sheba. ^{aj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ak} Dedan. ^{al} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{am} Sheba. ^{an} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ao} Dedan. ^{ap} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{aq} Sheba. ^{ar} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{as} Dedan. ^{at} Gen. 10:28—31. 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Luke 3:38. ^{ho} Sheba. ^{hp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{hq} Dedan. ^{hr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{hs} Sheba. ^{ht} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{hu} Dedan. ^{hv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{hw} Sheba. ^{hx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{hy} Dedan. ^{hz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ia} Sheba. ^{ib} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ic} Dedan. ^{id} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ie} Sheba. ^{if} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ig} Dedan. ^{ih} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ⁱⁱ Sheba. ^{ij} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ik} Dedan. ^{il} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{im} Sheba. ⁱⁿ Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{io} Dedan. ^{ip} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{iq} Sheba. ^{ir} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{is} Dedan. ^{it} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{iu} Sheba. ^{iv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{iw} Dedan. ^{ix} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{iy} Sheba. ^{iz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ja} Dedan. ^{jb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jc} Sheba. ^{jd} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{je} Dedan. ^{jf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ji} Sheba. ^{jj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jk} Dedan. ^{jl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jm} Sheba. ^{jn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jo} Dedan. ^{jp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jq} Sheba. ^{jr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{js} Dedan. ^{jt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ju} Sheba. ^{jv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{jw} Dedan. ^{jx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{iy} Sheba. ^{iz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ka} Dedan. ^{kb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{kc} Sheba. ^{kd} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ke} Dedan. ^{kf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{kg} Sheba. ^{kh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ki} Dedan. ^{kj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{kk} Sheba. ^{kl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{km} Dedan. ^{kn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ko} Sheba. ^{kp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{kq} Dedan. ^{kr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ks} Sheba. ^{kt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ku} Dedan. ^{kv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{kw} Sheba. ^{kx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ky} Dedan. ^{kz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{la} Sheba. ^{lb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lc} Dedan. ^{ld} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{le} Sheba. ^{lf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lg} Dedan. ^{lh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{li} Sheba. ^{lj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lk} Dedan. ^{ll} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lm} Sheba. ^{ln} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lo} Dedan. ^{lp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lq} Sheba. ^{lr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ls} Dedan. ^{lt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lu} Sheba. ^{lv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{lw} Dedan. ^{lx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ly} Sheba. ^{lz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ma} Dedan. ^{mb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mc} Sheba. ^{md} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{me} Dedan. ^{mf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mg} Sheba. ^{mh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mi} Dedan. ^{mj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mk} Sheba. ^{ml} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mn} Dedan. ^{mo} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mq} Sheba. ^{mr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ms} Dedan. ^{mt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mu} Sheba. ^{mv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{mw} Dedan. ^{mx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{my} Sheba. ^{mz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{na} Dedan. ^{nb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nc} Sheba. nd Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ne} Dedan. ^{nf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ng} Sheba. ^{nh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ⁿⁱ Dedan. ^{nj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nk} Sheba. ^{nl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nm} Dedan. ^{no} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{np} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nq} Sheba. ^{nr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ns} Dedan. ^{nt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nu} Sheba. ^{nv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{nw} Dedan. ^{nx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ny} Sheba. ^{nz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oa} Dedan. ^{ob} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oc} Sheba. ^{od} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oe} Dedan. ^{of} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{og} Sheba. ^{oh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oi} Dedan. ^{oj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ok} Sheba. ^{ol} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{om} Dedan. ^{on} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oo} Sheba. ^{op} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oq} Dedan. ^{or} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{os} Sheba. ^{ot} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ou} Dedan. ^{ov} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ow} Sheba. ^{ox} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{oy} Dedan. ^{oz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pa} Sheba. ^{pb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pc} Dedan. ^{pd} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pe} Sheba. ^{pf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pg} Dedan. ^{ph} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pi} Sheba. ^{pj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pk} Dedan. ^{pl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pm} Sheba. ^{pn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{po} Dedan. ^{pp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pq} Sheba. ^{pr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ps} Dedan. ^{pt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pu} Sheba. ^{pv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{pw} Dedan. ^{px} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{py} Sheba. ^{pz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qa} Dedan. ^{qb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qc} Sheba. ^{qd} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qe} Dedan. ^{qf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qg} Sheba. ^{qh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qi} Dedan. ^{qj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qk} Sheba. ^{ql} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qm} Dedan. ^{qn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qo} Sheba. ^{qp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qq} Dedan. ^{qr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qs} Sheba. ^{qt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qu} Dedan. ^{qv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qw} Sheba. ^{qx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{qy} Dedan. ^{qz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ra} Sheba. ^{rb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rc} Dedan. rd Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{re} Sheba. ^{rf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rg} Dedan. ^{rh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ri} Sheba. ^{rj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rk} Dedan. ^{rl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rm} Sheba. ^{rn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ro} Dedan. ^{rp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rq} Sheba. ^{rr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rs} Dedan. ^{rt} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ru} Sheba. ^{rv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{rw} Dedan. ^{rx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ry} Sheba. ^{rz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sa} Dedan. ^{sb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sc} Sheba. ^{sd} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{se} Dedan. ^{sf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sg} Sheba. ^{sh} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{si} Dedan. ^{sj} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sk} Sheba. ^{sl} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. sm Dedan. ^{sn} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{so} Sheba. ^{sp} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sq} Dedan. ^{sr} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ss} Sheba. st Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{su} Dedan. ^{sv} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sw} Sheba. ^{sx} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{sy} Dedan. ^{sz} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ta} Sheba. ^{tb} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{tc} Dedan. ^{td} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{te} Sheba. ^{tf} Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{tg} Dedan. th Gen. 10:28—31. Luke 3:38. ^{ti} Sheba. ^{tj} Gen. 10:28—31. 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Luke 3:38. ^{vc} Sheba. ^{vd} Gen. 10:28—

name of the one *was* Peleg; because in his days the earth was divided: and his brother's name *was* Joktan.

20 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazermaveth, and Jerah,

21 Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,

22 And ¹Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

23 And ²Ophir, and ³Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.

24 ¹Shem, Arphaxad, ²Shelah,

25 ³Eber, ⁴Peleg, ⁵Reu,

26 ⁷Serug, ⁸Nahor, ⁹Terah,

27 ¹⁰Abram; the same *is* Abraham.

28 The sons of Abraham; ¹Isaac, and ²Ishmael.

29 ³These *are* their generations. ⁴The first-born of Ishmael, ⁵Nebaioth; then ⁶Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

30 Mishma, and ⁷Dumah, Massa, ⁸Hadad, and Tema,

31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These *are* the sons of Ishmael.

^{B.C.} 1553. 32 ¹Now ²the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and ³Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; ⁴Sheba, and ⁵Dedan.

33 And the sons of Midian; ¹Ephah, and Ephraim, and Henoah, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah.

34 And ¹Abraham begat Isaac. ²The sons of Isaac: Esau, and ³Israel.

35 ¹The ²sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

36 The sons of Eliphaz; ¹Teman, and Omar, ²Zephi, and Gatan, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek.

37 The sons of Reuel; Lahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

38 And ¹the sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and ²Ezar, and Dishan.

39 And the sons of Lotan; ¹Hori, and ²Homam; and ³Timna *was* Lotan's sister.

40 The sons of Shobal; ¹Alian, and Manahath,

and Ebal, Shephi, and Unam. And the sons of Zibeon; ¹Aiah, and Anah.

41 The sons of Anah; ¹Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; ²Amram, and ³Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

42 The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and ²Zavan, and Jakan. The sons of Dishan; ¹Uz, and Aran.

43 ¹Now these *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before *any* king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.

44 And when Bela *was* dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

45 And when Jobab *was* dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead.

46 And when Husham *was* dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.

47 And when Hadad *was* dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

48 And when Samlah *was* dead, ¹Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

49 And when Shaul *was* dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

50 And when Baal-hanan *was* dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* ¹Pai; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

51 ¹Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke ²Aliah, duke Jetheth,

52 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

53 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

54 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. ⁵These *are* the dukes of Edom.

CHAPTER II.

The sons of Israel, 1, 2: of Judah, 3-12: of Jesse, 13-17: of Caleb, the son of Hezron, 18-20: of Hezron, by the daughter of Machir, 21-24: and of Jeremiah, Hezron's son, 25-33. The posterity of Shimeon, by his daughter, 34-41. Another branch of Caleb's posterity, 42-43. The sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, 50-54. The families of the Kenites, 55.

¹THESE *are* the sons of ²Israel; ³Reuben, ⁴Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,

2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

* That is, Division. 1 Gen. 10:26-27. Hazermaveth. y Gen. 10:28. Obal. 10:29. 1 Kings 9:24. 10:11. 1 Chr. 2:24. Job 22:24. Ps. 45:9. Is. 13:12. o Gen. 2:11. 25:18. 1 Sam. 15:7. y Gen. 11:10-26. q Luke 3:35. Salm. y Luke 3:35. Huri. y Luke 3:35. Phaleg. y Luke 3:35. Rigau. y Luke 3:35. Saruch. y Luke 3:34. Nahor. y Luke 3:34. Phara. z Gen. 11:27-32. 17:5. Josh. 24:2. Neh. 9:7. a Gen. 17:19-21. 21:3-5. 12. b Gen. 15:11-16. 21:9. 10. c Gen. 25:12-16. d Gen. 28:9. Nebajoth. Is. 60:7. e Ps. 120:4. Cant. 1:5. Is. 21:17. f Is. 21:11. g Gen. 25:15. h Gen. 37:28. Ex. 2:15. Num. 22:4-7. 25:6. 31:2. Judg. 6:1-6. 1 Kings 10:1. Job 6:19. Ps. 72:10. Is. 60:6. Jer. 25:33. 48:8. Ez. 23:13. 27:20. k Is. 60:6. 1 Gen. 21:2, 3. Matt. 1:2. Luke 3:34. Acts 7:8.

might be intended to intimate that we are all of one blood and nature, though of different families.

V. 24-27. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 11:10-32. 17:5, 6.*) ¹Shem... was the most eminent of Noah's sons, whom he solemnly blessed; the Messiah being to spring from him. (*Gen. 9:26.*) For from Adam the promise of the Messiah was translated to Seth; and from Seth to Shem; from Shem to Eber; from whom the Hebrew nation, some think, derived their name; and had this precious promise committed to their trust, above all other nations in the world. *Bp. Patrick. (Note, Gen. 11:6-9.)*

V. 28-33. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 16:12. 17:18-21. 21:20. 21. 25:1-6, 16, 18.*

V. 34-37. *Notes, Gen. 25:20-34. 36:1-19.—Timna, and Amalek. (36)* Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, and another of *Israel*. (*Gen. 36:12.*) The words here, therefore, seem to mean, *Of Timna, Amalek. (39)*

V. 38-42. *Notes, Gen. 36:20, 24.*

V. 43-54. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 36:31-43.*) When he sacred historian had given the genealogy of Abraham, ne father of the faithful; he briefly mentions Abraham's descendants by Ishmael, by Keturah, and by Esau, with some coincident matters: but he speedily leaves these subjects, to confine himself to the chosen people of God, and the line of the Saviour; in comparison with whom, the nations most renowned for arts or arms seem entirely disregarded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we are descended from that "one man, by whom sin and death entered into the world;" so we all resemble and imitate him: and this should remind us how sinful and frail we are; and excite us to repent, to value the Saviour, to despair of happiness in this miserable world, to seek those things which are above, and habitually to prepare to meet death, who is, to all unbelievers, "the king of terrors." For, as an invincible conqueror, he has already transmitted the

bodies of innumerable millions to the grave, and their souls to the tribunal of God and to the eternal world; and is even now ready to deal with us in like manner. (*Note, Rom. 5: 20, 21.*) But while we are spared, we should regard every human being as a brother, a fellow-sinner, and a fellow-sufferer, without respect to climate, complexion, party, character, or even personal injuries: and, with expanded benevolence and compassion we should aim to alleviate misery, to increase comfort, to promote peace, and to be instrumental to the salvation of men, by our example, prayers, and the improvement of our several talents.—Short is our passage through time into eternity:—we are no sooner born, than we begin to die; and all earthly distinctions will speedily be reduced to a level, as the rough weed, the green blade, and the gaudy flower fall before the indiscriminating scythe! May we then be distinguished as the Lord's people, who are his portion, and whom he delights to honour and bless.—The inconceivable multitudes of the human race, which have peopled or shall people the earth through successive generations, will ere long assemble before the judgment-seat of Christ, and be divided as easily, and as certainly, "as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats:" then the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." May we then so "look for these things, as to give diligence that we may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless!"

NOTES.—CHAPTER II. V. 1, 2. *Notes, Gen. 29:32-35. 30:1-24. 32:28. 35:17, 18.*

V. 3, 4. (*Notes, Gen. 38.*) The descendants of Judah are first mentioned; for that tribe (like him who was to spring from it) was in all respects to have the pre-eminence. (*Notes, Gen. 49:8-10.*)—*Shelah. (3.) Note, 42.*

V. 5, 6. *Marg. Ref.—The sons of Zerah, &c. (6)* It is uncertain whether Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Ithra, the sons of Mahol, of whom we read, (*1 Kings 4:31.*) were re-

3 The sons of Judah; ¹Er, and Onan, and Shelah: *which* three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er the first-born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the Lord, and he slew him.

4 And ²Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him ³Pharez and ⁴Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five.

5 The sons of Pharez; ⁶Hezron, and Hamul.

6 And the sons of Zerah; ⁷Ziuri, and ⁸Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.

7 And the sons of ⁹Carmi; ¹Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing ²accursed.

8 And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.

9 The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; ¹Jerahmeel, and ²Ram, and ³Chelubai.

10 And Ram begat ¹Amminadab, and Amminadab begat ²Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah;

11 And Nahshon begat ¹Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,

12 And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse.

13 ¹And Jesse begat ²his first-born ³Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and ⁴Shimma the third,

b.c.] 14 Nathaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 109 15 Ozem the sixth, ⁷David the seventh:

16 Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Ashael, three.

17 And Abigail bare ¹Amasa: and the father of Amasa was ²Jether the Ishmaelite.

b.c.] 18 ¹And ²Caleb the son of Hezron begat 1470 ³children of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth: her sons are these; Jeshur, and Shobab, and Ardon.

19 And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him ⁴Ephrath, *which* bare him Hur.

20 And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat ⁵Bezaleel.

21 ¹And afterwards Hezron went in to the daughter of ²Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was threescore years old; and she bare him Segub.

22 And Segub begat ³Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.

23 And he took ⁴Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath and the towns thereof, *even* threescore cities. All these

belonged to the sons of Machir the father of Gilead.

24 And after that Hezron was dead in ¹Caleb-ephraiah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife bare him ²Ashur the father of ³Tekoa.

25 ¹And the sons of ²Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram, the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Abihah.

26 Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

27 And the sons of ³Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.

28 And the sons of ⁴Onam were Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.

29 And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail; and she bare him Ahban, and Molad.

30 And the sons of ⁵Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And ⁶the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.

32 And the sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai; Jethur, and Jonathan: and Jethur died without children.

33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

34 ¹Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters: and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.

35 And ²Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife; and she bare him Attai.

36 And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat ³Zabad,

37 And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,

38 And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,

39 And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah,

40 And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,

41 And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishamah.

42 ¹Now the sons of ²Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, were Mesha ³this first-born, *which* was the father of ⁴Ziph; and the sons of Mesha; ⁵the father of Hebron.

e 9:5, Gen. 38:2-10, 46:12, Num. 26:19, 20, d Gen. 38:13-30, Ruth 4:12, Matt. 1:3, *Thamar*, e 9:4, Num. 26:21, Ro h 4:18, Neh. 11:4, *Perez*, Matt. 1:3, Luke 3:33, *Pharez*, f 9:6, Num. 26:13, 20, Neh. 11:24, Matt. 1:3, *Zarah*, g Gen. 46:12, Num. 26:21, Matt. 1:3, Luke 3:33, *Ezrah*, h Josh. 7:1, 17:18, *Zaidi*, i 1 Kings 4:31, *Darda*, k 4:1, 1 Josh. 7:1-5, *Achan*, m Pent. 7:26, 13:17, Josh. 6:18, 7:11-15, 22:20, o 25-33, o Ruth 4:19, Matt. 1:3, Luke 3:33, *Amnadaab*, r Num. 1:7, 2:3, 7:12, 17:10, Ruth 4:20, Matt. 1:4, Luke 3:32, *Nahshon*, s Ruth 4:21, Matt. 1:4, 5, Luke 3:32, *Salmon-Boaz*, t 10:4, Ruth 4:22, 1 Sam. 16:1, Is. 11:1-10, Matt. 1:5, Luke 3:32, Acts 13:22, Rom. 15:12, u 1 Sam. 16:6, 17:13, 28, v 27:18, *Ethi*, x 20:7, *Shimea*.

mote and eminent descendants of Zerah; or whether different persons, bearing nearly the same names, are there intended.

V. 7. (Notes, Josh. 7:1, 10-24.) Achan, who sinned in the accursed thing, is here called *Achar*, or the troubler; with reference to Joshua's words to him. (Note, Josh. 7:25, 26.) Carmi is said in Joshua to be the son of Zaddi, who is here called Ziuri. (6.)—The genealogies of Judah are very copious; because David, the progenitor of the Messiah, was of that tribe; and the whole nation of the Jews, to this day, is composed of such as either descended from Judah, or incorporated with those who did. (Note, 2 Kings 16:6.)

V. 8. "Sons" here signifies *descendants*. These might be numerous, though but one son is mentioned.

V. 9-12. Hezron, the son of Pharez. (5) (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ruth 4:17-22.)

V. 15. Jesse had eight sons; (1 Sam. 16:10.) but it is probable, that one died before David came to the throne. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. Jether is generally supposed to have been an *Ishmaelite* by birth, but an *Israelite* by religion. (Note, 2 Sam. 17:25.)

V. 18-20. This Caleb, or Chelubai, (9) was not the same as Caleb the son of Jephunneh, whose posterity is afterwards mentioned. (4:15.) He must have lived some time before Israel left Egypt; as Bezaleel, who was the principal person employed in constructing the tabernacle, was his great-grandson; the son of Uri, the son of Hur, the son of Caleb. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 31:1-5.)

V. 21. "The father of Gilead" means, the prince of Gilead, or the father of a large portion of the inhabitants. The term occurs frequently in this sense, throughout the sub-

1 Sam. 16:9, *Shammah*, y 1 Sam. 16:10, 11, 17:12-14, z 1 Sam. 26:6, 2 Sam. 2:18-22, 3:39, 16:39-11, 19:22, x 2 Sam. 17:23, 19:13, 20:4-12, 1 Kings 2:5, 32, b 2 Sam. 17:25, *Ithraon Israelite*, c 8, *Chelubai*, 42, d 24:50, 4:4, Mic. 5:2, *Ephraim*, e Ex. 31:2, 36:1-2, 37:1, 38:22, 2 Chr. 1:5, f Gen. 50:23, Num. 26:29, 27:1, 32:39, 40, Deut. 3:15, t Heb. took, g Num. 32:41, Deut. 3:14, Josh. 13:30, h Josh. 13:13, i 19:18, 19, 1 Sam. 30:14, j 4:5, k 2 Sam. 14:2, Am. 1:1, l 9, m 25, n 25, o 25, p 34:35, q 31, r 11:41, s 9, *Chelubai*, 18, 19, 24, t Gen. 49:3, f x 4:22, 23, Rom. 8:29, Heb. 12:23, u Josh. 15:24, 1 Sam. 23:19, 26:1, x 23:24, 45, 49, 52, 8:29, Ezra 2:21-25, Neh. 7:25-38.

sequent genealogies; as the reader will readily perceive by consulting the marginal references. (Notes, 42-53.)

V. 22. Jair was descended by his father from Jutan, and properly belonged to that tribe; but Hezron, his grandfather, married a wife of the tribe of Manasseh; and Jair, as descended from her, united himself to that tribe, and at length inherited among them. (Note, Num. 32:41.)

V. 23. Jair seems to have taken Geshur, Aram, and some other places, from those who before possessed them. (Num. 32:39-42, Deut. 3:14, Josh. 13:24-32.)

V. 24. Ashur was the posthumous son of Hezron, by Abiah, whom he married in his old age. (1) But he became a man of consequence; and his descendants principally peopled, or ruled over, Tekoa.

V. 25-33. Nothing further is recorded of the persons mentioned in these verses. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 34-41. It does not appear that Sheshan had more than one daughter, whom he gave in marriage to his servant, an Egyptian; who, it is probable, was a proselyte to the true religion, and had been faithful to him. But, as a numerous progeny might spring from this one daughter, the plural number is used, as it was before observed to be in the case of sons. (Note, 8.)

V. 42-49. This Caleb, being the brother of Jerahmeel, was the same person of whom we read before. His children by Azubah and by Ephraim, had been enumerated: (Note, 18-20.) so that "Mesha, his first-born," seems to have been born to him by another wife, whom he married before either Azubah or Ephraim.—The Jews, when they returned from the captivity, were principally of the tribe of Judah; and as these genealogies might be exceedingly useful to them,

43 And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.

44 And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkam; and Rekem begat Shammai.

45 And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Bethzur.

46 And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.

47 And the sons of Jhdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.

48 Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.

49 She bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeaz: and the daughter of Caleb was Achsah.

50 ¶ These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah; Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim,

51 Salma the father of Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of Beth-gader.

52 And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons; Hareph, and half of the Manahethites.

53 And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites: of them came the Zerahites, and the Eshtaulites.

54 The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.

55 And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These are the Kenites that came of Hephzibah, the father of the house of Rechab.

† Josh. 15:53, 58, 18, 19, 43. a 46. Gen. 25:5, 6. b See in 42. c Josh. 15:31. Is. 10:31. *Mudmeshim*. d Josh. 15:57. 2 Sam. 21:6. *Gileph*. e 19:20. *Ephrah*. f 13:15, 56. Josh. 15:59, 60. 1 Sam. 7:1. g 44. h Gen. 35:12. Ruth. 1:19, 24, 4. i Matt. 2:16. John 7:42. * Or, *Reahai*. 4:2. † Or, *half of the Menuchites*. or, *Haisi-hammenuchoth*. i 11:40. 2 Sam. 23:38. k Josh. 15:33. 19:41. Judg. 19:23, 16:31. 15:1. m 11:30. 2 Sam. 23:29. Ezra 2:22. Neh. 7:26, 12:28. n 19:1. *Athories*, or, *erema of the house of Josh.* Josh. 16:2. o Ezra 7:5. Jer. 9:8. p 43:10. q Judg. 1:16. 4:11. 1 Sam. 15:6. q 2 Kings 10:15. Jer. 33:2-5. 19. a 2 Sam. 3:2-5. b 2 Sam. 13:1, 29. c 1 Sam. 25:43, 27:3. d Josh. 15:56. e 2 Sam. 3:3. *Chitenb*. f 1 Sam. 25:39-42. g 2 Sam. 13:1, 20-28, 38. 18:14, 18:33. 19:4-10. h 2:23. Josh. 13:13. i 2 Sam. 14:23, 32. 15:6. 1 Sam. 3:4. 1 Kings 15:24, 25. j 2 Sam. 3:3. k 2 Sam. 2:11. 5:4, 5. l 1 Kings 2:11. 1:14. 4. 2 Sam. 5:14. *Shammuh*. m 2 Sam. 7:2-4. 12:1-15. Luke 3:31. n 28:5.

No doubt they were extracted from ancient public records of allowed authenticity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

The cities, of which these persons are said to have been fathers, were all situated in Judah; and this confirms the preceding interpretation. (*Note*, 21.)

Achsah. (49) "Caleb the son of Jephunneh" had a daughter called Achsah, who was married to Othniel, at the time when Joshua completed the division of the land. (*Notes*, Josh. 15: 16-19.) But Caleb the son of Hebron lived some ages before (*Note*, 18-20.) and his daughter Achsah was a different person.

V. 50. Caleb, here spoken of, was the grandson of him before mentioned, and brother to Uri, the father of Bezaleel; the same as erected the tabernacle. (9, 18, 19, 42.)

V. 52, 53. The inhabitants of these cities consisted in general of Shobal's descendants; or they were the principal persons among them. This seems to be equivalent to the phrase, "the father of Ziph, of Beth-lehem, &c." (42, 43.)

V. 54. The word rendered "the house of Joab," seems to be a proper name, *Beth-job*; for a place, not a family, is evidently meant;—*Beth-job*; so these words, we translate "the house of Joab," should be rendered; for he is not speaking of Joab's family, but of Caleb's. *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 55. *The Kenites*, &c.] (*Notes*, *Judg.* 1:16. 4:11. *Jer.* 35:1-7, 18, 19.) It seems that some of the Kenites, the posterity of Hobab, incorporated with Judah, and became expert in writing, and eminent in their knowledge of the law of God.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No length of time will expunge the guilt or infamy of those who do evil in the sight of the Lord, are troublemakers of his people, and die in their sins. But, as the Saviour was pleased to assume human nature, by descent through so many a heinous transgressor, and thus to be "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," as well as a sacrifice for sin, all manner of wickedness shall be purged away from those who believe in his name.—Frequently the last become first, and the first last; and atrocious sinners have in every age been transformed into the most eminent believers.—Difficulties, blemishes, and disgraces in the beginnings of life, or on the entrance of any undertaking; and remarkable blots in the origin of families; have often proved as foils to the lustre, success, or eminence, with which they were afterwards favoured. In the same wise, righteous, and merciful sovereignty, the Lord advances or depresses the branches of families; prospers or renders unsuccessful our temporal pursuits;

CHAPTER III.

The sons of David, 1-9. His line to Zedekiah, 10-16. The sons and successors of Jeconiah, 17-24.

NOW these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the first-born Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second, Daniel of Abigail the Carmelitess:

2 The third, Absalom the son of Maachah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur: the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith:

3 The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the sixth, Ithream by Eglah his wife.

4 These six were born unto him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.

5 And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel:

6 Ithra also, and Elishama, and Eliphelet, 7 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia, 8 And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine.

9 These were all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and Tamar their sister.

10 ¶ And Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son,

11 Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son,

12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son,

13 Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,

14 Amon his son, Josiah his son.

15 And the sons of Josiah were, the first-born

6. 2 Sam. 12:24, 25. o 2 Sam. 11:3. *Bath-sheba*. Matt. 1:6. p 2 Sam. 11:3. *Elime*. q 14:5. 2 Sam. 5:15. *Elishama*. r 14:5. *Eliphelet*. s 2 Sam. 5:15, 16. t 14:7. *Beethda*. u 14:7. 2 Sam. 5:16. *Eliphelet*. v 2 Sam. 5:13. y 2 Sam. 13:1-20. z 1 Kings 11:43. 14:31. Matt. 1:7. *Reboam*. a 1 Kings 15:1. *Abiam*. 2 Chr. 13:1. *Abiah*. b 1 Kings 15:8. 2 Chr. 14:1. c 1 Kings 15:24. 2 Chr. 17:1. Matt. 1:8. *Josaphat*. d 1 Kings 22:50. 2 Chr. 21:1. *Jehoram*. e 2 Kings 8:24. 2 Chr. 21:17. *Jehoshaphat*. f 2 Kings 11:21. 2 Chr. 24:1. g 2 Kings 14:1. 2 Chr. 25:1. h 2 Kings 14:21. 2 Chr. 26:1. *Jeziah*. Matt. 1:8, 9. *Ozias*. i 2 Kings 15:32. 2 Chr. 27:1. Matt. 1:9. *Joash*. k 2 Kings 16:1. 2 Chr. 28:1-5. Matt. 1:9. *Achaz*. l 2 Kings 18:1. 2 Chr. 29:1. Matt. 1:9. *Ezekias*. m 2 Kings 21:1. 2 Chr. 33:1. Matt. 1:10. *Manasse*. n 2 Kings 21:19. 2 Chr. 33:20, 21. o 2 Kings 22:1. 2 Chr. 34:1. Matt. 1:10, 11. *Josias*.

replenishes or diminishes our households, and renders them a comfort or a trial to us. Submission to his will is our duty and wisdom; but it is the privilege of the true believer alone to maintain this happy frame of mind. In Christ, however, there is neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Gentile: all who come to him are equally welcome to his salvation; all are equally privileged, in proportion to their faith, love, and devotedness to him: and it is a peculiar favour for poor strangers to be made "scribes well instructed in the kingdom of God," and to be fitted also for usefulness to others. In short, the whole, that is truly valuable, consists in the favour, peace, and image of God; and a life spent to his glory, and in promoting the welfare of our fellow-creatures.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1-9. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. 3:1-5. 5:13-16.) David's other sons by Bathshua, or Bath-sheba, are mentioned before Solomon, though younger than he; because the genealogy is resumed from him. Probably David called one of them Nathan, out of respect to the prophet of that name, whom he loved the better for his faithful reproof. Mary the mother of Jesus was descended from Nathan, not from Solomon. (*Notes*, Luke 3:23-38.) The two sons, which are here mentioned, more than in Samuel, probably died young; as there are two called Elishama, and two Eliphelet. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It seems that David had children by his concubines, whose names are no where recorded.

V. 10-15. (*Marg. Ref.*) Johanan seems to have died young. Shallum is also called Jehoahaz. He was older than Zedekiah, though mentioned after him. (*Note*, 2 Kings 23: 29, 30, v. 30.)

V. 16. As the sons of Jeconiah are enumerated in the next verses, and as Zedekiah, a son of Jeconiah, is not elsewhere mentioned, it is thought by learned men, that "his son" here means his successor.

V. 17, 18. Many commentators take it for granted, that Salathiel, or Shealtiel, actually descended from Nathan, and was only the adopted son of Jeconiah; that Solomon's line was extinct; and that Joseph, the husband of Mary, sprang from Nathan, as well as she. They ground this sentiment on these reasons: Jeremiah is supposed to have pronounced Jeconiah childless; but perhaps a satisfactory solution of that difficulty may be adduced. (*Note*, Jer. 22:28-30.) Again, it is argued, that St. Luke mentions Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, in the genealogy of Mary. But to this it may be answered, that it is scarcely the shadow of an argument to say, because a father and son are of the same names in one genealogy, as they are in

Johanan, the second ¹Jehoiakim, the third ²Zedekiah, the fourth ³Shallum.

16 And the sons of Jehoiakim; ¹Jeconiah his son, ²Zedekiah his son.

17 ¹And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, ²Salathiel his son.

18 Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

19 And the sons of Pedaiah were ¹Zerubbabel, and ²Shimei; and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister:

20 And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechia, and Hesadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.

21 And the sons of Hananiah; ¹Peletiah, and ²Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnon, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.

R.C. 122 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah; ¹Hattush, and ²Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.

23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and ¹Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.

24 And the sons of Elioenai were Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Delaiah, and Anani. seven.

CHAPTER IV.

The posterity of Judah, in the line of Hezron, Carmi, and Hur, 1-4. The posterity of Ashur, Hezron's son, 5-8. Jabez, and his prayer, 9, 10. Other descendants of Judah by Pharez, 11-20. The posterity of Shileh, Judah's son, 21-23. The sons of Simeon and their cities, 24-28. They conquer Gedor and the Amalekites, 29-43.

THE sons of Judah; ¹Pharez, Hezron, and ²Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal.

2 Kings 23:34. *Elitakim.* 2 Chr. 35:5. Jer. 22:12. q 2 Kings 24:17, 18. *Matt. 22:11.* 2 Chr. 35:11. r 2 Kings 23:34. 2 Chr. 36:1. *Jehonahs.* Jer. 22:11. a 2 Kings 21:8, 25:27. 2 Chr. 35:9. *Jehoiachin.* Jer. 22:24, 28. *Coniah.* Matt. 1:11. *Jacksonia.* 1 Is. v Ezra 3:2, 5:2. *Shentiel.* Matt. 1:12. x Ezra 2:2, 3:2. *Ithai.* 1:12-14. 2:24. *Zech.* 4:6-9. Matt. 1:12, 13. *Zorobabel.* y Neh 10:22. z Ezra 3:2. ¹Or, *Hakiah.* a 2:5. Gen. 38:29, 46:12. Num. 35:20. 21. Ruth 4:18. Matt. 1:3. Luke 3:33. *Pharez.* *Ezerom.* b 2:9. *Chelubai.* 2:18. *Caleb.* c 2:52. *Hur* eh. d 2:53, 54. Josh. 15:33. Jude. 13:25. e *Jude.* 15:11. 2 Chr. 11:8. f 18:39. Josh. 15:36. g 2:19, 50. h See on 2:24. i Gen.

another, therefore they were the same persons, when no other part of the genealogy supports, or can possibly accord with, the conclusion. Salathiel, the father of Zorobabel, mentioned by St. Luke, was "the son of Rhesa, the son of Joanna, the son of Judah;" this Salathiel was "the son of Assir, the son of Jeconiah."¹ Rhesa (*Luke* 3:27.) "... is not found among the eight children, that are here reckoned up." *Bp. Patrick.* Matthew says, *Jeconiah begat Salathiel*; and it will be harsh to interpret this of mere adoption, or of less than being his progenitor; and here are several other sons, or descendants, of Jeconiah mentioned, who cannot all have been adopted. Upon the whole it scarcely admits of a doubt, that the line from Solomon to Joseph was uninterrupted; and that the two families met in Jesus, the real son of Mary, and the supposed and legal son of Joseph. (*Notes, Matt. 1:2-17. Luke 3:23-38.*)

V. 19-24. Perhaps Pedaiah was Salathiel's son, Jeconiah's grandson, and Zerubbabel's father: but, being of small note, his name is omitted in the other genealogies, which is a common case. Nothing is known except the names of the persons afterwards mentioned; but several of them must have lived a long time after the captivity, perhaps later than the days of Ezra. St. Matthew evidently deduces the line of Joseph from a different branch of the same stock: that is, from another branch of Zerubbabel's descendants. (*Matt. 1:13-16.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the large families of wise, eminent, and pious men, many persons prove too insignificant to attract our notice, and others so vicious as to excite our grief and indignation. They therefore, who have no children, may hence learn submission to the will of God: for if, by that appointment, they are destitute of some comforts, they are also exempted from a variety of anxieties and trials. And those, to whom God has given children, may learn to bring up their offspring for him to the best of their power, recommending them to his care and blessing: nor should they indulge the hope of much comfort from them, any more than seek great things for them, in this vain and vexatious world. Yet, upon the whole, the attentive and accurate observer will perceive that the posterity of the righteous enjoy advantages, sometimes for many generations, in consequence of the piety of their progenitors: so that this is the best way of laying up an inheritance for our beloved offspring.—Nothing more distinguishes the real believer from the slave of sin, than the manner in which each of them behaves towards a faithful reprover: the former, upon reflection, will love and revere him as his best friend; the latter will habitually hate him as his enemy. (5. 2 *Sam.* 12: 1-7, 13. 1 *Kings* 21:20. 22:8. *Ps.* 141:5.) But all our gratitude to the instruments of our mercies should be ultimately directed to the glory of God: and all the prosperity of ourselves and our families will eventually terminate in misery, unless it

2 And ¹Reaiah the son of Shobal begat ²Jahath, and Jahath begat Ahumai, and ³Lahad. These are the families of the ⁴Zorathites.

3 And these were of the father of ¹Etam, Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi:

4 And Penuel the father of ¹Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of ²Hur, the first-born of Ephraim, the father of Beth-lehem.

5 And ¹Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.

6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hopher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.

7 And the sons of Helah were Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.

8 And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

9 ¹And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name ²Jabez, saying, Because ³I bare him with sorrow.

10 And Jabez ¹called on ²the God of Israel, saying, ³Oh that thou wouldest ⁴bless me indeed, and ⁵enlarge my coast, and that ⁶thy hand might be with me, and that ⁷thou wouldest ⁸keep me from evil, ⁹that it may not grieve me! And ¹⁰God granted him that which he requested.

11 ¹And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton.

12 And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah,

34:19. Is. 43:4. Acts 17:11. * That is, *Sorrowful.* h 2:23. Gen. 3:16. 25:18. 1 Sam. 4:21. 1:16:8. Gen. 12:8. Job 12:4. Ps. 55:16. 99:6. 116:2-4. Jer. 33:3. Rom. 10:12-14. 1 Cor. 1:2. m tien. 32:28. 33:30. 1 Sam. 1:17. Is. 41:17. t Heb. *If thou wilt.* s. *Luke* 19:42. n Gen. 12:2. 32:28. Ps. 72:17. Acts 3:24. Eph. 1:3. o Josh. 17:14-18. Jude. 1:27-36. Prov. 10:32. p Ps. 119:170. Is. 41:10. John 10:25. q Gen. 48:16. Prov. 30:8, 9. Matt. 6:13. Rom. 12:19. 16:19. 2 Tim. 4:18. t Heb. do me. r Ps. 32:34. 51:8, 12. Matt. 26:75. John 21:17. 2 Cor. 1:7. Eph. 4:30. Rev. 3:19. s 1 Kings 3:7-13. Job 22:27, 28. Ps. 21:4. 65:2. 66:19, 20. 116:1, 2. Matt. 7:7-11. Eph. 3:20.

centre in union with the Son of David, the King of Israel, and the Saviour of sinners.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. *Carmi* seems to mean the same person before called Chelubai, and Caleb. (*Marg. Ref. Notes.* 2:18-20, 42-49, v. 42.)

V. 2-4. The Zorathites were the inhabitants of Zorah, but they in general descended from Shobal, or were subject to him. "The father of Etam," seems to imply, that the persons spoken of were the sons of one, who was lord of Etam, and progenitor of its principal inhabitants.—Hur appears to have been the grandfather of Salma, who before was called the father of Beth-lehem. (*Note.* 2:52, 53.)

V. 5-8. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 9, 10. Nothing is recorded concerning the parentage or family of this remarkable person: but, as he was eminent for valour, success, wisdom, or piety, it is probable, that the Jews did not want information concerning him. It must be supposed, that he lived soon after Israel took possession of Canaan; and when they were greatly straitened by the remains of the ancient inhabitants. His mother, having suffered much in her pregnancy or travail, called him "Jabez," or, *Sorrowful*; (*marg.*) but her sorrow was emphatically turned into joy, if she lived to see how eminent and excellent a man he proved. His achievements are not recorded; but his prayers are, for our instruction and imitation. He was a genuine son of Jacob, who wrestled, and so prevailed with God, refusing to depart without a blessing, and on that account was surnamed Israel. (*Notes, Gen. 32:24-30.*) From a full heart, Jabez earnestly entreated the God of Israel to "bless him indeed;" and neither to send him away without a blessing, nor merely to bless him, like Esau, with temporal blessings. (*Note, Gen. 27:38.*) He seems to have been constrained to fight against the Canaanites: but he conducted the war with faith and prayer; and he entreated the Lord to be with him, and both to enlarge his coast, and to preserve him from disastrous events, which might occasion grief unto him.—Believers, under the Old Testament, saw, in the land of Canaan, a type of heaven; in their wars was represented the conflict of God's people with their enemies: and every clause of his prayer may be applied to, and doubtless was intended for, more noble and spiritual requests, and thus he became honourable, as well as prosperous, in Israel.—The Jews think that Jabez was an eminent doctor of the law, and that "the scribes which dwelt at Jabez" were his disciples. (2:55.)—This instructive example, in the midst of genealogies, to us so abstruse, seems like the fragrant rose, surrounded by thorns, or as refreshing streams in the desert: and it appears a recompense intended for the careful student of God's word, who diligently and reverently examines the whole, comparing one part with another, without disregarding or undervaluing any.

and Tehinnah, the father of 'Irnahash. These *are* the men of Reclah.

13 And the sons of 'Kenaz; Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; 'Hathath.

14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the 'valley of 'Charashim; for they were craftsmen.

15 And the sons of 'Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even 'Kenaz.

16 And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

17 And the sons of Ezra *were*, Jether, and Mered, and Ephraim, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.

18 And his wife 'Jehudijah bare Jered *the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of 'Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.

19 And the sons of *his* wife *Hodiah the sister of Naham, the father of *Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.

20 And the sons of Shimon *were* Amnon and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were* Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

21 ¶ The sons of 'Shelah the son of Judah *were*, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea.

22 And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Seraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubi-lehem. And *these* *are* ancient things.

23 These *were* *the* potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.

24 ¶ The sons of Simeon *were*, 'Nemuel, and Jamin, 'Jarib, 'Zerah, and Shaul:

25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.

26 And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.

27 And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children,

neither did all their family multiply *like* to the children of Judah.

28 And they dwelt at 'Beer-sheba, and Mola-dah, and Hazar-shual,

29 And at 'Bilham, and at Ezem, and at Tolad,

30 And at 'Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at 'Ziklag,

31 And at Beth-marcaboth, 'and Hazarsusim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities unto the reign of David.

32 And their villages *were* 'Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities:

33 And all their villages that *were* round about the same cities, unto 'Baal. These *were* their habitations, and *the* genealogy.

34 And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah,

35 And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel.

36 And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohai, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah,

37 And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah:

38 These *mentioned* by their names *were* princes in their families: and the house of their fathers increased greatly.

39 ¶ And they went to the entrance of 'Gedor, *even* unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

40 And they found fat pasture and good, and *the* land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for *they* of 'Ham had dwelt there of old.

41 And *these* written by name came in the days of 'Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because *there was* pasture there for their flocks.

42 And *some* of them, *even* of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to 'mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

43 And they smote *the* rest of the Amalekites that *were* escaped, and dwelt there *unto* this day.

* Or, the city of Nahash. † Josh. 15:17. Judg. 1:13. 3:9-11. † Or, Hathath and Meonothai, who begat. † Or, inhabitants of the valley. § That is, craftsmen. 2 Kings 24:14. Neh. 11:35. u Num. 19:630. 14:6-10:24. 30. Josh. 14:6-14. 15:13-20. Judg. 1:12-14. li Or, Uzinaz. v 19:6:57. Josh. 15:50. Eshbemoa, 21:14. 1 Sam. 31:28. ¶ Or, the Jewess. x 4:39. Josh. 15:58. y Josh. 15:34. 35:48. Socho. ** Or, Jehudijah. 18. z Josh. 15:44. 1 Sam. 23:1. &c. a 2:3. 9:5. Gen. 38:5. 48:12. Num. 26:20. Neh. 11:5. Shilo-rit. b 14. Ps. 81:6. c Gen. 45:10. Ex. 6:15. Jemuel. d Num. 36:12-14. Jachin. e Gen. 46:10. Zolair. †† Heb. unto. Num. 2:4. 13. 26:14, 22. 1 Josh.

15:28. 29. 19:2, 3, 9. g Josh. 19:3, 4. Balah-Ezem-Eltolad. h Josh. 19:4. Bethul. i 12:1. Josh. 17:31. 19:5. 1 Sam. 27:6. 30:1. Neh. 11:38. j Josh. 19:5, 6. Hazarsusim. Beth-lebaoth. Shuruben. k Josh. 19:7. Ether. Remmon. l Josh. 19:8. m Hazar-beer. †† Or, as they divided themselves by nations among them. §§ Heb. coming by name. 5:24. Gen. 6:4. m 4:18. Josh. 12:13. Cedar. 15:38. n Judg. 18:7-10. o Gen. 9:22. &c. 10:6. Ps. 78:51. 10:3:23. p 38-38. q 2 Kings 18:8. Is. 14:28-32. r Num. 32:1-4. s Gen. 36:8, 9. Deut. 1:2. t Ex. 17:14-18. Deut. 25:17-19. 1 Sam. 15:7, 8. 30:17. u Gen. 38:12. v Deut. 32:6. Judg. 1:26. 2 Chr. 5:9. Jer. 44:6. Matt. 27:8. 28:15.

Grieve me. (10) זכר. The verb from which his name Jabez was derived, and the noun translated sorrow. (9)

V. 13. Kenaz is supposed to have been the son of Chelub.

(11. Notes, Josh. 15:16, 17, v. 17. Judg. 3:9, 10, v. 9.)

V. 14. [Craftsmen.] (Marg.) Smiths, carpenters, and other artificers, may be included under this general term.

(Note, 22:23.)

V. 17, 18. Ezra seems to have been the person before called Asareel, (16) or, as some think, his son.

She bare. (17) That is, Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh bare to Mered: (18) for these appear to have been Ezra's grandsons. Many think that Pharaoh was the name of an Israelite; yet it is not impossible that Mered might marry a daughter of an Egyptian king, by some of his concubines.—Father of, &c.] Notes, 2:21, 42-49, v. 49.

V. 20. Shimon is supposed to have been another son of Mered, by Hodiah, or Jehudijah. (18, 19.) As the name signifies a Jewess, (18, marg.) it rather favours the opinion, that Bithiah was not a Jewess, but an Egyptian.

V. 21. The sacred historian had mentioned the descendants of Judah by Zerah: (2:6-8) and having more copiously given the genealogies of Judah's posterity by Pharez, he here mentions briefly a few of the line of Shelah, the son of Judah, by the Canaanitish woman whom he married; and who was his eldest surviving son. (Notes, Gen. 38:4, 5, 11-16, 24. Neh. 11:4-6.)

V. 22, 23. Perhaps these families, in the time of David, or Solomon, when Moab was subjected, had dominion there; but in process of time they were so reduced, as to subsist by the meanest employments. Their honour and dignity "were ancient things;" for at the time when this was written, they were brought very low.—Some think that they remained near Babylon, after the return of Judah from the captivity, "among plants and hedges," for the sake of doing the work of the Per-

sian kings.—(10) It was common in those ages, and still is in many places, for particular trades and professions to be continued in families, through successive generations.

V. 24. The families of Simeon are mentioned next to those of Judah, because their inharitances adjoined to each other. (Marg. Ref. Note, Josh. 19:1-9.)

V. 30, 31. Ziklag was at first given to Simeon: (Josh. 19:5.) but the Philistines took it, and gave it to David; so that from this time it belonged to Judah. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Sam. 27:5, 6.)

V. 34-38. These were eminent men among the Simeonites; and perhaps leaders in that expedition, which is next recorded.

V. 39-43. Part of the Simeonites joined the house of David when the ten tribes revolted: (Note, 2 Chr. 15:9.) and, being greatly increased in the time of Hezekiah, they possessed some of the ancient Canaanites, who still kept possession of a plentiful and peaceful country, fit for the feeding of cattle.—Perhaps this tract belonged to the Simeonites in the division of the land, and at length they got possession of it. Some however think, that a country towards Arabia, without the borders of the promised land, is intended. It seems that the remains of the Amalekites, after the general destruction of them made by Saul and David, had settled near to the Edomites, in mount Seir: but this remnant was extirpated by a small company of Simeonites.—Some think, that the kings of Babylon permitted this part of Simeon to remain unmolested in their possessions, through the captivity, even to the time of Ezra: but perhaps Ezra extracted the words, "unto this day," from the ancient records without altering them.—The habitations. (41) Or the Meunim, or Moabites. (Heb.—Judg. 10:12. 2 Chr. 26:7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Children should consider how much their parents, espe-

CHAPTER V.

Judah and Joseph preferred before Reuben, who forfeited his birthright, 1, 2. Reuben's descendants; some of whom vanquish the Hagarites, 3—10. The chief men of Gad, and their habitations, 11—17. Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, obtain a victory over the Hagarites, 18—22. The habitations and chief men of that half of Manasseh, 23, 24. The captivity of the two tribes and half, for their sins, 25, 26.

NOW the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, (for *he was the first-born*; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, *this birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel*: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

2 For *Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler*; but the birthright *was Joseph's*.)

3 The *sons, I say*, of Reuben the first-born of Israel: *were, Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.*

4 The *sons of Joel*; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

5 Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son, *b. c.* 6 Beerah his son, whom *Tilgath-pileser* ^{740.} king of Assyria carried away *captive*: he *was* prince of the Reubenites.

7 And his brethren by their families, (*when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned*) *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,

8 And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in *Arero*, even unto *Nebo*, and *Baalmeon*.

9 And eastward he inhabited unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates: *because their cattle were multiplied in the land of b. c.*

10 And in the days of Saul they made ^{1060.} war with the Hagarites, who fell by their

hand: and they dwelt in their tents *throughout* all the east *land* of Gilead.

11 ¶ And the children of Gad dwelt over: against them, in the land of Bashan unto Saleah

12 Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.

13 And their brethren of the house of their fathers *were*, Michael and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.

14 These *are* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;

15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.

16 And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of *Sharon*, upon their borders.

17 All these were *reckoned* by genealogies in the days of *Jotham* king of ^{B. C. 750.} Judah, and in the days of *Jeroboam* king ^{B. C. 750.} of Israel.

18 ¶ The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of *valiant* men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, *were* four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.

19 And they *made* war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and *Nephish*, and Nodab.

20 And *they were* helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for *they cried* to God in the battle, and he *was* entreated of them; *because they put* their trust in him.

a 2:1. Gen. 29:32, 46, 8, 49:3. Ex. 6:14. Num. 1:5, 16:1, 26:5. b Gen. 35:22, 49:4. Lev. 18:8, 20:11. Deut. 27:20, 1 Cor. 5:1. c Gen. 48:15—22. Deut. 21:17. d Gen. 25:23. 1 Sam. 16:5—11. e Gen. 49:8—10. Num. 2:3, 7:12. Judge. 1:2. Ps. 60:7, 108:8. f 1 Sam. 16:11, 10:12. 2 Sam. 8:15. Ps. 78:68—71. Jer. 23:5, 6. Mic. 5:2. Matt. 2:6. Heb. 7:14. * Or, prince. g Gen. 46:9. Ex. 6:14. Num. 26:5—9. h Gen. 46:9. Phallu. i 26. 2 Kings 15:29, 16:7. Tiglath-pileser. k 17. l 4. Shemaiah. m Num. 32:34. Deut. 2:36. Josh. 13:15—21. Is. 17:2. n Gen. 32:38. Deut. 32:49, 34:1. Is. 15:2. o Josh. 13:15, Ex. 25:9.

cially their mothers, suffered for them, before they became capable of reflection; and they should endeavour by every means to requite them, as much as possible, by kindness, and by aiming to be a comfort to them, in their whole conduct. But it is basely ungrateful, (though alas! very common,) willingly to cause them still more exquisite and durable anguish, by ill-behaviour. Those events, which at first occasion most sorrow, often terminate in the greatest comfort: we should not therefore yield to despondency, but "hope to the end," and expect to extract good from every apparent evil.—But it is natural for us to record our sorrows rather than our mercies; though, considering our guilt and sinfulness, we may reasonably wonder that the latter are so many, and the former so few.—"The honour, which cometh from God," is introduced by the gifts of wisdom, faith, and piety; and when these are bestowed, men will at length be honourable, whether they be renowned and prosperous, or not.—We go about our proper work in a right manner, when we use lawful and suitable means for success with all assiduity, and seek a blessing on them by fervent prayer.—A concurrence of all earthly good things cannot "bless us indeed:" the true felicity, which our hearts should eagerly desire, consists in the favour, image, and presence of God; and we should pray for this, as resolved not to depart without it. The pardon of sin, the gift of righteousness, and the first-fruits of the Spirit, form the beginning of this happiness: but the world, Satan, and m-dwelling sin, crowd, and straiten us on every side, and keep us from the possession of our inheritance. We should then beg of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" to enlarge our coast, that we may attain to greater holiness, liberty, comfort, and usefulness; and acquire a more decisive victory over our enemies. And if his "hand be with us," if his power be exerted in our cause, we shall be protected, upheld, and enabled to withstand, and to gain ground against, the confederated forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil. We may very properly, with resignation, pray to be kept from the evil of *suffering*, which is grievous to nature; but the evil of *sinning* most affrights and disquiets the spiritually minded: this extorts their bitterest groans and complaints; against this they most earnestly pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And, being kept from *be* burden of a guilty conscience, and the anguish of having dishonoured and offended the God of their salvation, they can the better bear up under other trials, as supported by that "peace of God which passeth all understanding." Blessed be the Lord, he is ever ready to grant and to exceed our prayers for promised blessings: and we are our own ene-

mies, if we do not ask and expect great things from him, through the Saviour's name.—In this checkered world indeed, there is nothing durable or substantial: but possessing the hope of unchangeable felicity, we may cheerfully acquiesce in the Lord's allotment of our worldly settlement and occupations. Nor is it desirable to advance our children much above our own rank; for those, who at one time have dominion, may at another become dependent on the worst of men for a penurious maintenance: whereas honest labour, in some regular and useful calling, best preserves that mediocrity which is most comfortable, and most advantageous to our spiritual concerns. Let us then adhere to the kingdom of "the Son of David;" for this "Prince of peace" will supply the temporal wants of his people with every thing truly desirable, and make them happy for ever, while his curse will pursue all his enemies to their utter destruction.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The double portion, which belonged to the first-born, having been forfeited by Reuben, Jacob's eldest son by Leah, was given to Joseph, his eldest son by Rachel, whose descendants had a double portion in Canaan; Jacob having adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, to be, as his own sons, heads of two distinct tribes. (Notes, Gen. 48:5—7. 49:3—12, 22—26.)—Yet, as the chief Ruler, or Prince, even the Messiah, of whom David and his royal race were progenitors and types, was to descend from Judah; the genealogy began with him, and not with either Reuben or Joseph. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3—8. Very brief extracts are made from the registers of Reuben, and of several other tribes: because, it is probable, but few persons of these tribes, returned from the captivity to settle in Canaan: and therefore only a few of these tribes were concerned in the genealogies, compared with the numbers of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, of whom the Jews after that event principally consisted. It may be supposed, that Ezra's contemporaries would see the reason why the persons selected should be named, and not others; though we can assign none.—This chapter contains all that relates to the two tribes and a half, which settled to the east of Jordan. (Notes, Num. 32: Josh. 22.)

V. 9. The inheritance of Reuben extended to the borders of that desert, which reached even to the Euphrates.

V. 10. Note, 18—22.

V. 11—17. (Marg. Ref.) Part of the genealogies of Gad, whence these extracts were taken, seems to have been made during the time that Jeroboam the second reigned over Israel, and the rest when Jotham reigned in Judah.

V. 18—22. The Hagarites were the descendants of

18 And the sons of Kohath, *were* ^bAmram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

19 The sons of Merari; ^cMahli, and Mushî. And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers.

20 Of Gershon; ^dLibni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,

21 ^eJoah his son, Iddo his son, ^fZerah his son, ^gJeaterai his son.

22 The sons of Kohath; ^hAmmînadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,

23 Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son,

24 Tahath his son, ⁱUriel his son, Uzziath his son, and Shaul his son.

25 And the sons of ^jElkanah; Amasai, ^kand Ahimoth.

26 ^lAs for Elkanah; the sons of Elkanah; ^mZophai his son, and ⁿNahath his son,

27 ^oEliab his son, Jeroham his son, ^pElkanah his son.

28 And the sons of Samuel; the first-born ^qVashni, and Abiah.

29 The sons of Merari; ^rMahli, Libni his son, Shimea his son, Uzza his son,

30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

31 And these *are they* ^swhom David set ^tover the service of song in the house of the LORD, ^uafter that the ark had rest.

32 And they ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, ^vuntil Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: ^wand *then* they ^xwaited on their office according to their order.

33 And these are they that waited with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites; ^yHeman a singer, the son of ^zJoel, the son of ^{aa}Shemuel,

34 The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of ^{ab}Eliel, the son of ^{ac}Joah,

35 The son of ^{ad}Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai,

36 The son of Elkanah, the son of ^{ae}Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,

37 The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of ^{af}Ebiasaph, the son of ^{ag}Korah,

38 The son of ^{ah}Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

39 And his brother ^{ai}Asaph, who stood on his right hand, *even* Asaph the son of Berechiah, the son of Shimea,

40 The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchiah,

41 The son of ^{aj}Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of ^{ak}Adaiah,

42 The son of ^{al}Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei.

43 The son of ^{am}Jahath, the son of ^{an}Gershon, the son of Levi.

44 And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand: ^{ao}Ethan the son of ^{ap}Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch,

45 The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah,

46 The son of Amzi, the son of Beni, the son of Shamer,

47 The son of Mahli, the son of Mushî, the son of ^{aq}Merari, the son of Levi.

48 Their ^{ar}brethren also the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 ^{as}But ^{at}Aaron and his sons offered ^{au}upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on ^{av}the altar of incense, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* most holy, and to ^{aw}make an atonement for Israel, according to that ^{ax}Moses the servant of God had commanded.

50 And these *are* the sons of Aaron; ^{ay}Elcazar his son, ^{az}Phinchas his son, Abishua his son,

51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,

52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitup his son,

53 ^{ba}Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

54 ^{bb}Now ^{bc}these *are* their dwelling-places throughout their ^{bd}castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, ^{be}of the families of the Kohathites: for theirs was the lot.

55 And they gave them ^{bf}Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

56 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

57 And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely*, Hebron, *the city* of refuge, and ^{bg}Libnah with her suburbs, and ^{bh}Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs,

3 23. 22-12. c 23:21. 21-26. Ex. 6:19. *Nahath*. Num. 3:20. 26:57-58. d 17. 12. *Ethni*. 1 Sam. 1:1. *Tohu*. a 31. *Eliel*. 1 Sam. 1:1. *Elihu*. 1 Sam. 1:1. 19:20. p 33. 1 Sam. 8:2. *Joel*. q 19. Num. 3:33. r 15:16-22. s 1 Sam. 1:1. 16:1. 2 Sam. 6:17. Ps. 129:8-14. t 16:4-5. 37-42. Ps. 68:24. 25. u 10. 1 Kings 6:4-13. v 9:33. 35-31. 2 Chr. 29:25-30. 31:2. 35:15. *Exra* 3:11. 6:18. *Neh*. 11:17-23. 12:27-25. 45-47. Ps. 134:1-2. 135:1-3. ^c Heb. *stood*. x 15:17-19. 16:41. 42. 25:1-5. 2 Chr. 5:12. 29:14. Ps. 89: title. y 23. *Vashni*. z 28. 1 Sam. 1:20. 28. *Samuel*. a 27. *Eliab*. b 28. *Nahath*. c 28. *Uzziah*. d 28. *Uzziah*. e 28. *Uzziah*. f 28. *Uzziah*. g 28. *Uzziah*. h 28. *Uzziah*. i 28. *Uzziah*. j 28. *Uzziah*. k 28. *Uzziah*. l 28. *Uzziah*. m 28. *Uzziah*. n 28. *Uzziah*. o 28. *Uzziah*. p 28. *Uzziah*. q 28. *Uzziah*. r 28. *Uzziah*. s 28. *Uzziah*. t 28. *Uzziah*. u 28. *Uzziah*. v 28. *Uzziah*. w 28. *Uzziah*. x 28. *Uzziah*. y 28. *Uzziah*. z 28. *Uzziah*. aa 28. *Uzziah*. ab 28. *Uzziah*. ac 28. *Uzziah*. ad 28. *Uzziah*. ae 28. *Uzziah*. af 28. *Uzziah*. ag 28. *Uzziah*. ah 28. *Uzziah*. ai 28. *Uzziah*. aj 28. *Uzziah*. ak 28. *Uzziah*. al 28. *Uzziah*. am 28. *Uzziah*. an 28. *Uzziah*. ao 28. *Uzziah*. ap 28. *Uzziah*. aq 28. *Uzziah*. ar 28. *Uzziah*. as 28. *Uzziah*. at 28. *Uzziah*. au 28. *Uzziah*. av 28. *Uzziah*. aw 28. *Uzziah*. ax 28. *Uzziah*. ay 28. *Uzziah*. az 28. *Uzziah*. ba 28. *Uzziah*. bb 28. *Uzziah*. bc 28. *Uzziah*. bd 28. *Uzziah*. be 28. 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58 And ^aHilen with her suburbs, ^bDebir with her suburbs,

59 And ^aAshan with her suburbs, and ^bBethshemesh with her suburbs:

60 And out of the tribe of Benjamin; ¹Geba with her suburbs, and ^aAlemeth with her suburbs, and ^aAnathoth with her suburbs. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen cities.

61 And ^aunto the sons of Kohath, *which were* ¹pleft of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half tribe, *namely, out of the half tribe* of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.

62 And to the sons of ^aGershom throughout their families *were given* out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

63 Unto the sons of ^aMerari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

64 And ^athe children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities ^awith their suburbs.

65 And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, ^athese cities, which are called by their names.

66 And ^athe residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.

67 And they gave unto them, *of the cities of* refuge, ^aShechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* also ^aGezer with her suburbs,

68 And ^aJokineam with her suburbs, and ^bBethhoron with her suburbs,

69 And ^aAjalon with her suburbs, and ^aGathrimmon with her suburbs:

70 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; ^aAner with her suburbs, and ^aBileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

71 Unto the sons of Gershom *were given* out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, ^aGolan in Bashan with her suburbs, and ^aAshtaroth with her suburbs:

72 And out of the tribe of Issachar, ^aKedesh with her suburbs, ^aDaberath with her suburbs,

73 And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs:

74 And out of the tribe of Asher; ^aMashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,

75 And ^aHukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs:

76 And out of the tribe of Naphtali; ^aKedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and ^aHammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

77 Unto the rest of the children of Merari *were given* out of the tribe of Zebulun, ^aRimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs:

78 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, *were given* them out of the tribe of Reuben, ^aBezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and ^aJahzah with her suburbs,

79 Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mo-phaaath with her suburbs:

80 And out of the tribe of Gad; ^aRamoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and ^aMahanaim with her suburbs,

81 And ^aHeshbon with her suburbs, and ^aJazer with her suburbs.

CHAPTER VII.

The sons of Issachar, 1-5; of Benjamin, 6-12; of Naphtali, 13, and of Manasseh, 14-19. The sons of Ephraim, of whom some were slain by the men of Gath, 20-22. His sons by Beriah, 23-21. Their habitations, 28, 29. The sons of Asher, 30-40.

NOW ^athe sons of Issachar were Tola, and ^aPaah, Jashub, and Shiunron, four. [B. C. 1700.]

2 And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jalmal, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit*, of Tola: *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; ^awhose number *was* in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred.

3 And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five; all of them chief men.

4 And ^awith them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men*: for they had many wives and sons.

5 And their brethren among all the families of Issachar *were* valiant men of might, reckoned in all, by their genealogies, fourscore and seven thousand.

6 ^aThe sons of Benjamin; Bela, and ^aBecher, and ^aJediael, three. [B. C. 1700.]

4.9. k Josh. 21:28-29. Kishon. Daberah. Jarvuth. Engannim. 1 Josh. 21:30. Mishal. m Josh. 21:31. Hekker. n Josh. 12:22. 19:37. 21:32. 21:34. 4.6. Kedesh-naphtali. o Josh. 21:32. Hammoth-d. r. Karan. p Josh. 21:34. 35. Joknean. Karith. Dimnah. Nohhal. q Dent. 4:4. Josh. 20:8. 21:36. r Josh. 21:36. 37. Jahzah. s Josh. 21:38. 39. 1 Kings 22:3. 2 Kings 9:1. t Gen. 32:2. Josh. 21:33. 2 Sam. 17:24. 27. 19:32. u Num. 21:25. 22:37. 2 Sam. 2:21. Josh. 13:20. Neh. 9:22. Cant. 7:4. x Num. 32:1, 3. Josh. 13:25. 21:39. a. Gen. 46:13. Phueah. Job. Num. 26:23. 24. Pua. b 21:1-5. 27:1, 23. 24. 2 Sam. 24:1-9. c 12:32. d 8:1, &c. Gen. 46:21. Num. 26:38-41. e 10:11.

g Josh. 15:51. 21:15. Holm. h Josh. 12:13. 15:49. i Josh. 21:16. Ain. k Josh. 15:10. 21:16. 1 Sam. 11:12-19. 1:36. Josh. 21:17. m Josh. 21:18. Ammon. n 1 Kings 2:25. l. 10:30. Jer. 1:1. 11:23. 37:12. o 1, 2, 18, 33. p 66. Josh. 21:4, 5, 20-26. q 71-76. Josh. 21:27-33. r 77-81. Josh. 21:34-40. s Josh. 21:41. 42. t Num. 35:2-5. u 57-60. x 61. y Gen. 35:4. Josh. 20:7. 21:21. z Josh. 12:12. 16:3. 10. 21:21. a Josh. 21:22. Kishon. b Josh. 10:11. 16:5. 1 Sam. 13:18. c Josh. 10:12. d Josh. 21:24. e Josh. 21:24. f Josh. 21:25. Tanech. Gathrimmon. f Josh. 7:11. Ibleam. g Dent. 4:43. Josh. 20:25. 21:27. h Dent. 1:4. Josh. 9:10. 21:27. Be-shether. i Josh. 19:32. 21:32. Joziz.

among whom he dispersed the Levites, who were peculiarly devoted to this service." *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Josh. 20: 21):*—Juttah and Gibeon are here omitted. Perhaps they lay in ruins when the book was written: so that only eleven cities from Judah and Benjamin are enumerated; though thirteen were allotted to the priests in the days of Joshua. (*Josh. 21: 16, 17, 19.*)

V. 67-81. Either some of the cities, or their names, had been changed since the time of Joshua: but, as Mr. Henry observes, Salop and Shrewsbury, Sarum and Salisbury, are as different names for the same places, as any in these catalogues; yet those, who live in their vicinity, are not at all confused by them.—Some cities also are here mentioned, as having belonged to Ephraim, which in Joshua are spoken of as cities of Dan: but various changes in such matters would occur in a course of ages.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In the judgment of God, none of the human race are more honourable or valuable, than those who consistently minister in holy things. And though many, who bear this sacred character, render themselves insignificant by their indolence, contemptible by their covetousness, or odious by their profligacy, or bring the divine vengeance upon themselves by offering "strange fire before the Lord;" (*Note, Lev. 10:1, 2.*) yet, instead of that order being despised on these accounts, those who are singularly humble, diligent, disinterested, zealous, and valiant for the truth, ought to be treated with the greater respect; and of this, God himself has condescended to set the example in his holy word.—None of the Lord's people, and especially of his ministers, should be unemployed: they who, through want of ability or change of circumstances, are precluded from one method of glorifying God, should set themselves to devise another. And if they deem nothing,

which may conduce to the advancement of true religion, too laborious, mean, disgusting, or discouraging: if they be disposed to be "instant in season, and out of season;" to instruct, or encourage, one, ten, or ten thousand, in public, or in private, in a cottage, an hospital, a prison, or a palace; in safe and easy, or in difficult and perilous circumstances; if they consider nothing too little to be attended to, and nothing too arduous to be attempted; and if they do all in sincerity, humility, and simplicity of spirit, they cannot long be unoccupied or useless. But, nothing can be a more pleasant and honourable work, than to excite or assist the devotions of the pious, and to lead them to abound in thanksgivings and praises to the Lord.—If a rich inheritance, or the important station of a magistrate or civil governor, could with propriety be quitted for such a service, the enlightened understanding must perceive it to be an honourable and advantageous exchange; for this is the delightful employment of those above, who are arrived at their eternal rest.—They, who have shown themselves peculiarly disinterested in the cause of God and his people, should be peculiarly considered by their brethren, and their families respected for their sakes. But, though Christians and ministers may be very useful to the church, while "they wait in their offices," none but our great High-Priest can make atonement for sin, none can be accepted, save through his atonement and mediation.—While ministers are bound to wait on their ministering, according to the work of their place; the people are equally bound, in their several stations, to strengthen their hands, and to contribute without grudging to their comfortable maintenance: and in every good work, equality and unanimity will render the burden light, and conduce to the comfort of all concerned, as also to render their endeavours more generally useful.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-5. (*Marg. Ref.*) When

7 And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour; ^{a. c. 7} and ^{1917.} were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.

8 And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Josh, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these *are* the sons of Becher.

9 And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred.

10 The sons also of Jediel; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jesh, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

11 All these the sons of Jediel, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *were* seventeen thousand and two hundred soldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.

12 ^bShuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir, and Hushim, the sons of ^aAher.

13 ^cThe sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and ^dShallum, the sons of Bilhan.

14 ^eThe sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom ^{b. c.} she bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramites, ^{1653.} bare ^fMachir the father of Gilead:

15 And Machir took to wife the sister of ^gHuppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah; and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad; and ^hZelophehad had daughters.

16 And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.

17 And the sons of Ulam; ⁱBedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

18 And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and ^jAbiezer, and Mahalah.

19 And the sons of Shemida *were* Ahian, ^{b. c.} and Shechem, and Likhii, and Aniam. ^{1600.}

20 ^kAnd the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son,

21 And Zabab his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that *were* born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.

22 And Ephraim their father *"mourned* many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

23 ^lAnd when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bare a son, and ^mhe called his name ⁿBeriah, because it went evil with his house.

24 (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built ^oBeth-horon the nether, and the upper, and ^pUzzen-sherah.)

25 And Rephah *was* his son, also Resheph and Telah his son, and Tahan his son,

26 Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,

27 ^qNon his son, ^rJehoshua his son.

28 ^sAnd their possessions and habitations *were* ^tBeth-el, and the towns thereof, and eastward ^uNaaran, and westward ^vGezer, with the towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof:

29 And by the borders of the children of ^wManasseh, ^xBeth-shean and her towns, ^yTaanach and her towns, ^zMegiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. ^{aa}In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.

30 ^{ab}The sons of Asher; ^{ac}Imnah, and ^{ad}Isuah, and ^{ae}Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah ^{1700.} their sister.

31 And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father of Birzavith.

32 And Heber begat Japhlet, and ^{af}Shomer, and Hotham, and Shua their sister.

33 And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath. These *are* the children of Japhlet.

34 And the sons of ^{ag}Shamer; Abi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

35 And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

36 The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnephar, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,

37 Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and ^{ah}Ithran, and Beera.

38 And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.

39 And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.

40 All these *were* the children of Asher, heads of *their* father's house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And ^{ab. c.}the number throughout the genealogy of them ^{1617.}

(21:1—5. 2 Chr. 17:17, 19. g Judg. 3:15, &c. h 15. Gen. 46:21. Muppim. Huppim. Num. 26:39. Shupham. Hupham. 1. Iri. k Num. 26:38. Ahiram. 1. Gen. 46:24. Num. 25:48. Jahzeel. m Gen. 46:24. Num. 26:49. Shilem. n Gen. 46:24. 35:22. 46:34. o 2 Sam. 2—23. Gen. 50:23. Num. 26:23—34. 27:1. 32:39—42. Deut. 3:13—15. Josh. 13:31. 17:1—3. Judg. 5:14. p 12. q Num. 26:33. 27:1—12. 1 Sam. 12:11. a Num. 26:30. Jezer. Judg. 6:11. 24:34. 8:2. c Num. 26:35—36. 1 Kings 37:34. x 4:9. Gen. 35:18. 1 Sam. 4:21. ^{1600.} That is, in *Num.* y Josh. 16:3, 5. 1 Kings 9:17. 2 Chr. 8:5. a Num. 13:8, 16.

David numbered the people, (*Notes, 2 Sam. 24:1—9.*) the effective men of Issachar amounted to 87,000; 22,600 of whom descended from Tola his eldest son; but whether the 36,000 (4) *were* descendants of Tola by Uzzi; and the 22,600, his descendants by Tola's other sons; or whether another of Issachar's sons is intended, does not clearly appear: for Uzzi *was* the son of Tola and grandson of Issachar. Izrahiah and his five sons are spoken of as five sons of Uzzi. (3.) If the former be meant, which seems the more obvious meaning, by far the greatest part of the tribe of Issachar descended from Tola.

V. 6—11. The persons mentioned seem not, strictly speaking, to have been the sons of Bela and Becher; but renowned persons among their descendants, or such as were progenitors of those who returned from Babylon. (*Notes, 8:1—5. Gen. 46:21.*)

V. 12. *Aher.* Aher signifies *another*, and it has been conjectured that these *were* Danites, 'the sons of another tribe'; especially as Hushim is named as the only son of Dan. (*Gen. 46:23.*) And they suppose, that the name of Dan was not mentioned, because his descendants first established idolatry. But Zebulun, as well as Dan, is here omitted; perhaps, because none of either of these tribes returned at first from Babylon.—Though the Benjamites had been almost destroyed, in the first days of the judges, they soon became numerous and powerful. (*Notes, Judg. 20: 21:*)

V. 13. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 14, 15. Ashriel *was* Manasseh's eldest son by his wife, who is not named: but a Syrian concubine *was* the mother of Machir, from whom the whole of that numerous tribe seems to have descended: for Ashriel *as* the son of Manasseh is

not mentioned elsewhere; and Zelophehad "the second" *was* a descendant of Machir, two generations having intervened between them: for he *was* the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir. (*Num. 26:29—33. Notes, Num. 27:1—11. 36:1—12. Josh. 17:1—6.*)—"Of Asriel the family of the Asrielites." (*Num. 26:31.*) This Asriel *was* a descendant of Machir by Gilead. Machir married a descendant of Benjamin.

V. 18. Hammoleketh seems to have been the sister of Gilead: though some think she *was* the sister of Bedan. (17)

V. 21, 22. Ezer and Elead seem to have been the sons, or grandsons, of Ephraim, and not his more remote descendants; for it is evident that he *was* living when they *were* slain. Some think, that they supposed the time *was* arrived for the nation to inherit Canaan: and so made an unsuccessful invasion of it. But, it is more likely, that some inhabitants of Gath, who had been natives of Egypt, made an incursion into Goshen, to commit depredations on the cattle of Israel, and slew those who defended them. Thus Ephraim, that *was* intended to be a very numerous and prosperous tribe, *was* at first diminished.

V. 24. Some female descendant of Ephraim had affluence, influence, and liberality, to rebuild three cities for her brethren. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25—29. (*Marg. Ref.*) "Rephah *was* his son," (25) 'that is, the son of Beriah.' "... 'Jehoshua,' (27) 'for whose sake his pedigree seems to be thus largely deduced. Bp. Patrick.

V. 30—40. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Events frequently occur entirely beyond our expectations

that were apt to the war *and* to battle *was* twenty and six thousand men.

CHAPTER VIII.

The sons and chief men of Benjamin, 1-32. The family of Saul and his descendants by Jonathan, 33-40.

1 *c.* **N**OW Benjamin begat ^aBela his first-born, ^bSheshai the second, and ^cAharah the third,

² Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.

³ And the sons of Bela were, ^dAddar, and Gera and Abihud,

⁴ And Abihusha, and Naaman, and Aboah,

⁵ And ^eGera, and ^fShephuphan, and HURAM.

⁶ And these *are* the sons of ^gEhud: these *are* the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of ^hGeba, and they removed them to ⁱManahath:

⁷ And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.

⁸ And Shaharaim begat *children* ^jin the country of Moab, after ^khe had sent them away; Hushim and Baara *were* his wives.

⁹ And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham,

¹⁰ And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These *were* his sons, heads of the fathers.

¹¹ And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal.

¹² The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built ^lOno, and Lod, with the towns thereof:

¹³ Beriah also, and ^mShema, who *were* heads of ⁿthe fathers of the inhabitants of ^oAjalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:

¹⁴ And Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth,

¹⁵ And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader,

¹⁶ And Michael, and Isphah, and Joha, the sons of ^pBeriah;

¹⁷ And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber,

¹⁸ Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;

¹⁹ And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,

²⁰ And Elenai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,

²¹ And Adajiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of ^qShimhi;

²² And Ishpan, and ^rHeber, and Eliel,

²³ And Abdon, and ^sZichri, and Hanan,

²⁴ And Hananiah, and Elam, and Anthothiah,

²⁵ And Iphedeah, and Penuel, the sons of

Shashak;

²⁶ And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah,

²⁷ And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.

²⁸ These *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief *men*. These *dwelt* in Jeru-
salem.

²⁹ And at Gibeon dwelt ^tthe father of Gibeon, whose wife's name *was* Maachah.

³⁰ And his first-born son ^uAbdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab,

³¹ And Gedor, and Ahio, and ^vZacher.

³² And Mikloth begat ^wShimeah. And ^xB. c. these also dwelt with their brethren in Jeru-
salem, over against them.

³³ And ^yNer begat ^zKish, and Kish bega Saul, and ^{aa}Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua and ^{ab}Abinadab, and ^{ac}Esh-baal.

³⁴ And the son of Jonathan *was* ^{ad}Merib-baal and Merib-baal begat ^{ae}Micah.

³⁵ And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and ^{af}Tarea, and Ahaz.

³⁶ And Ahaz begat ^{ag}Iehoadah; and ^{ah}Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, ^{ai}B. c. and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza.

³⁷ And Moza begat Binea: ^{aj}Rapha *was* his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

³⁸ And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these *were* the sons of Azel.

³⁹ And the sons of Eshek his brother *were*, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

⁴⁰ And the sons of Ulam *were* mighty men of valour, ^{ak}archers, and had ^{al}many sons, and sons' sons, a hundred and fifty. All these *are* of the sons of Benjamin.

^a 7:6-12. Gen. 46:21. ^b Num. 26:38. ^c Aharah. ^d Gen. 46:21. ^e Num. 26:40. ^f 7:12. ^g Shupham. Num. 26:39. ^h Shupham. ⁱ 7:10. ^j Judg. 3:20. ^k 4:1. ^l 6:60. ^m 2:52. ⁿ 1:1. ^o Ruth 1:1. ^p 2:56. ^q Ezra 2:33. ^r Neh. 6:2. ^s 7:37. ^t 1:21. ^u Shimhi. ^v m 2:49. ^w 32:4. ^x n Josh. 19:42. ^y Aja-lon. ^z o 13. ^{aa} p 13. ^{ab} Shema. ^{ac} q Josh. 15:53. ^{ad} 18:28. ^{ae} Judg. 1:21. ^{af} Neh. 11:1, 7-8.

and contrary to probabilities; the dispensations of Providence *seem* to run counter to the promises, in order that their performance may be the more observed and admired; and often a good cause is unsuccessful, while the wicked triumph in the success of their villany: but the day of judgment will clear up, and rectify, all such apparent obliquities in the divine administration.—Those who live long often become like the decaying tree, which stands till all its branches are withered, or broken off one after another. But, though the premature death of our children must necessarily be afflictive, and it behooves us all mutually to comfort each other; yet, we should not mourn as men without hope; for the Lord is able to make up all our losses. Considering our state on earth, we may properly call all our children *Beriah*; (*marg.*) for “man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards.” But the supports, consolations, and prospects, which the gospel brings to believers, are sufficient to counterbalance every evil, and to render both life and death tolerable, if not joyful.—As men readily venture their lives to preserve their cattle or property; surely we should be willing to renounce, venture, and suffer any thing, for the sake of Jesus Christ and his precious salvation.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-5. (*Note*, 7:7-11.) The tribe of Benjamin adhered to Judah, in the division of the kingdom, and returned with the Jews from Babylon: and, as the history is about to open with the translation of the kingdom from Saul of that tribe, to David of Judah; we have here a more copious account given of it than of several other tribes. But either some of the sons of Benjamin had several names, or those called his sons were his more remote descendants. Gera, called his son in Genesis, is here mentioned as his grandson by Bela; (*Note*, Gen. 46:21.) but the whole subsequent genealogy is obscure. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6-10. Ehud, the son of Gera, (5) was the judge of Israel, who slew Eglon king of Moab; (*Notes*, Judg. 3:15-30.) perhaps, in consequence, he acquired dominion over the Moabites, and some of his descendants lived among them. These having many children, removed several of them, and settled them in different places during their own lives.

^r 9:35, 36. ^s Jekiel. ^t 9:36, 37. ^u 1:57. ^v Zechariah. ^w 9:38. ^x Shimeon. ^y 9:39. ^z 1 Sam. 9:1. ^{aa} 14:50, 51. ^{ab} 1 Sam. 9:1. ^{ac} Acts 13:21. ^{ad} Cia. ^{ae} 1 Sam. 14:49. ^{af} 31:2. ^{ag} 1 Sam. 14:49. ^{ah} 1:ut. ^{ai} 2 Sam. 2:8. ^{aj} 4:12. ^{ak} 1st-Isaiah. ^{al} 2 Sam. 4:4. ^{am} 9:6. ^{an} 19:24-30. ^{ao} Mephibosheth. ^{ap} 2 Sam. 9:12. ^{aq} Michah. ^{ar} d 9:41. ^{as} Tahrea. ^{at} e 9:42. ^{au} Jarah. ^{av} f 9:43. ^{aw} Rephaiah. ^{ax} g 12:2. ^{ay} 2 Chr. 14:8. ^{az} h Ps. 127:3-5. ^{ba} 128:3-6.

V. 11-28. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 29-40. There are no genealogies remaining of any of the kings of Israel, after the division of the kingdom. But, we have here not only a genealogy of Saul, but also an account of his descendants by Jonathan, and Meribbaal, or Mephibosheth, and his son Micah, for several generations. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. 9:1, 2. 14:47-52.) Perhaps David took care to record what passed in his days, and his descendants recorded what came after, in honour of Jonathan, David's covenanted generous friend. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 9:35-44. 2 Sam. 9:16:—4. 19:24-30.) “Conradus Pellicanus makes this reflection:—‘That hence we may learn, it is an unnecessary labour scrupulously to inquire after these things, from which we can reap no fruit, and of which we may be ignorant without danger. Especially in the matter of these genealogies, the reason of which is long since expired, together with the tribes to which they belong. As for the certainty of our belief, which depends upon the authority of the holy Scriptures, that stands firm and constant, though some things, by the length of time, be so obscure, that they are not now exactly understood; especially in the difference we find in the proper names of persons and places, which without prejudice to the faith may be neglected.’” *Bp. Patrick*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord desires to exalt those who have been abased, and to honour those who adhere to him, and to the King whom he has placed upon his holy hill of Zion, to his chosen people, and to his instituted worship. Numbers of renowned names are now buried in oblivion; but as God honours some of those, who have been faithful and useful in their generation, by recording their names in the sacred Scriptures; so he writes the names of all his people in the book of life. May this be our privilege, however unnoticed in the partial histories of mankind!—Alas! what will it avail those, who perish in an unequal contest with the Almighty, to be admired as men of valour and activity by their fellow-creatures! Let us seek to make our peace with God; and for his sake, and after his example, to forgive our enemies, and to *be* a *deceit*

CHAPTER IX.

The original of the genealogies of Israel and Judah, 1. The first settlers in the land after the captivity, 2. The first who dwelt at Jerusalem, of the other tribes, 3-9; and of the priests and Levites, with their charge and service, 10-34. A repeated account of Saul's family, 35-44.

SO all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

¶ Now the first inhabitants that dwelt in their possessions in their cities were the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims.

And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh:

Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.

And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the first-born, and his sons.

And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.

And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.

And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah;

And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men were chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

¶ And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin,

And Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God;

And Adaiah the son of Jeroham the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah, and Maasai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer;

a Ezra 2:59, 62, 63. Neh. 7:5-6. Matt. 1:1-16. Luke 3:23-38. b 2 Chr. 33: 11, 36; 9, 10-18-20. Jer. 39:9, 52:14, 15. Dan. 1:2. c Ezra 2:70. Neh. 7:73, 11:3. d Josh. 9:21-37. Ezra 4:3, 58, 59:20. Neh. 7:60, 73, 11:3, 21. e Neh. 11:1, 4-9. f 2 Chr. 11:16, 30, 11:18. Neh. 8:7, 10:13. h 2:5, 4:1. Gen. 46:12. Num. 26: 20. Neh. 11:4, 6. Pev. i Num. 36:20. Shelanites. Neh. 11:5. Shilon. k 2:4, 6. Gen. 38:30. Zarah. Num. 26:20. l Neh. 8:4, 10:30. 11:7. m Neh. 11:10, 12:19. Joinirib. n 6:9-15. Neh. 10:2, 11:1. Seraiak. o 24:5. Num. 4:15, 16, 28, 33. 2 Kings 23:4, 25:18. Neh. 11:11. Acts 5:24, 26. p Neh. 11:12, 13. Meshillemith. q 2:14. Ezra 2:37. Neh. 7:40. * Heb. mighty men of valour. 26:30, 32. Neh. 11:14. r Neh. 11:15. s Neh. 10:11, 11:15, 12:24. t See on 6:19, 23, 63. Num. 26:

respect to their memories: and still more to express affection and gratitude to those who have been kind and useful to us, not neglecting the credit and interests of their posterity.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1. This verse seems to be the sacred writer's account of the book, or books, from which he had transcribed the preceding genealogies. Both Israel and Judah had been thus reckoned or registered; and he had made extracts from the books of the two kingdoms, which had been written before the captivity. (Note, Neh. 7:5, 6.) The ten tribes had been carried into regions at a considerable distance from Babylon: but they were, at the time to which this refers, in general, subject to the kings of Babylon. (2 Kings 17:6. 18:11. 19:12, 13. Am. 5:25-27.)

V. 2. The persons who first, after the captivity, regained possession of their cities and lands, contained among them, not only Jews properly so called, but many Israelites from the other tribes; and also a number of priests, Levites, and Nethinim. (Notes, Neh. 11:1-3.)—The Nethinim were the remainder of the Gibeonites, with others perhaps joined with them, who were given as servants to the priests and Levites. The word signifies given, or dedicated persons. (Notes, Josh. 9:27. 1 Kings 9:20-22. Ezra 2:55-58. 8:20.)

V. 3-9. From the subsequent names of the priests and Levites, it is probable, that the sacred writer is speaking of the transactions recorded by Nehemiah; (Note, Neh. 11: 4-6.) yet the names here mentioned so differ from those in the parallel passage, that it can hardly be supposed the same persons are always meant.—But, in these matters there are difficulties, which are perhaps incapable of a satisfactory solution at this distance of time, though the whole might be plain to those, for whose use it was principally intended.

Uthai, Sc. d. 'Now he sets down their names; and first those of the tribe of Judah.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 11. "The ruler of the house of God" does not signify the high-priest, but "the second priest," who officiated for him when incapacitated; or one of the chief priests, who superintended the affairs of the temple in all ordinary cases. (Marg. Ref. Note, Neh. 11:10-15.)

V. 12-18. Several names seem to be omitted, in the

13 And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;

15 And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph;

16 And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.

17 And the porters were, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahimian, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief;

18 Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi.

19 And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the Lord, were keepers of the entry.

20 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the Lord was with him.

21 And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

22 All these, which were chosen to be porters in the gates, were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.

23 So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the Lord, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.

24 In four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.

57. u Neh. 11:17, 32. Micha. 12:25. v 25:2. Neh. 10:12. Zaccur. 11:17. Zabdi. 12:35. Zaccur. x Neh. 11:17. Abda.—Shammua. 12:25. y 23:1, 3, 6. 2 Chr. 35: 15. z 2:51. Neh. 7:26. 12:24-30. a 2:7, 26. Neh. 11:19. b 19. c 1 Kings 10:18. 2 Kings 11:19. d 41:3, 3. 15:12. Acta 3:11. d 26:12-19. e 6:22, 23. f Num. 26:9-11. Ps. 42:4-19. g Heb. threehills. 1:4. 8:110. mize. g 2 Kings 11:9-15. 2 Chr. 23:4-10. h 25:7, 13-19. i Num. 3:32. 4:16, 28, 35. 31:6. k Num. 23:11-13. l Sam. 16:18. Acta 7:10. 126:14. m 16:35. Neh. 11:25-30. 12:28-29, 41. n 9:25. 25:28, 13:21. o 1 Sam. 9:9. p Heb. founded. 6 Or, turn. 26:31. p 23:32. 2 Chr. 23:19. Neh. 12:45. Ez. 44:10, 11, 14. q 26: 14-18.

genealogies of these persons, and others introduced, which are elsewhere omitted: but the names are so far the same, as to show that the transactions recorded by Nehemiah are intended. (Notes, Neh. 11:10-19. 12:1-11.)

V. 19-21. It has been conjectured that the Jews, upon their return from Babylon, prepared a tabernacle for the worship of the Lord, before they had courage or ability to rebuild the temple. But the inspired historian evidently spoke of the times of Nehemiah; and the temple had been finished many years before.—The word tabernacle may, therefore, refer to the sanctuary erected by Moses, which the temple, built after the captivity, more resembled, than it did Solomon's magnificent edifice. Indeed, the sanctuary at first was only a tent, or tabernacle, when Phinehas superintended it, in time past; yet, "the Lord was with him." (Notes, Num. 3:32. 4:27, 28. 31:4-6.)—This seems to have been mentioned, as an instruction and encouragement to the priests and Levites, in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah: for there can be no reasonable doubt that Phinehas the grandson of Aaron was intended.—Among numerous instances in which the Word of the Lord is used, by the Jewish paraphrasts, personally for JEHOVAH, the following may be added: 'In the Targum, The Word of the Lord was his Helper,—From whence Beckius frames this argument,—that if he who was with Phinehas was JEHOVAH the true God, and this Word was with Phinehas; then the Word, in the opinion of this paraphrast, was JEHOVAH the true God.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 22. Samuel seems to have made some regulations respecting the attendance of the Levites, before those which David afterwards established: indeed, some think, that David received those instructions from Samuel, according to which he regulated the courses of the priests and Levites. (Marg. Ref.)—When the Jews returned from Babylon, they ordered these matters with respect to those appointments.

V. 23. (Marg. Ref.) The expression here used, "the house of the tabernacle," is considered by many as confirming the opinion before mentioned, that a tabernacle was erected, after the captivity, till the temple was finished. (Note, 19-21.) No doubt can, I suppose, be made as to the fact: but,

25 And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after *seven* days from time to time with them.

26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in *their* set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.

27 ¶ And they lodged round about the house of God, because *the charge was* upon them, and *the opening thereof every morning pertained* to them.

28 And *certain* of them had *the charge* of the ministering vessels, that they should *bring* them in and out by tale.

29 *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and *the oil*, and *the frankincense*, and the spices.

30 And *some* of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.

31 And Matthithiah, one of the Levites, who *was* the first-born of *Shallum* the Korahite, had the set office over the things that were made *in* the pans.

32 And *other* of their brethren, of *the sons* of the Kohathites, *were* over the *show-bread*, *to* prepare it every sabbath.

33 And these *are* the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers *were* free: for *they were* employed in *that work* day and night.

34 These *chief fathers* of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem.

35 ¶ And *in* Gibeon dwelt *the father* of Gibeon Jehiel, whose wife's name *was* Maachah: and *Kish*, and *Baal*, and *Ner*, and *Nadab*,

37 And *Gedor*, and *Ahio*, and *Zechariah*, and *Mikloth*.

38 And Mikloth begat *Shimeam*. And they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren.

39 And *Ner* begat *Kish*; and *Kish* begat *Saul*;

r 2 Kings 11:5,7. 2 Chr. 23:8. * Or, trust. 22:31. † Or, storehouses. s 26: 20-27. 2 Chr. 31:5-12. Neh. 10:33,39. 13:5. ‡ 23:32. Rom. 12:7. 1 Sam. 3:15. Mal. 1:10. x 26:22-26. Num. 3:25-37. Ezra 9:25-30. Neh. 12:44. 13:4,5. † Heb. bring them in by tale, and carry them out by tale. § Or, vessels. v Ex. 27:20. z Ex. 30:23-38. a Ex. 30:23. 33:35-38. 37:29. b 17: 13. † Or, trust. 22:26. † Or, on flat plates, or slices. Lev. 2:5,7. 6:21. c 6: 33. &c. * Heb. bread of ordering. d Ex. 25:30. 1 Ev. 24:5-8. e See on 8:31-33. 15:16-22. 16:4-6. 25:1, &c. Ezra 7:24. f Neh. 11:17,22,23. † Heb. upon them. g Ps. 134:1,2. 133:1-3. h 13. Neh. 11:1-15. i 8:29-40. k 2: 23,24,45. 50-52. l 39. See on 8:33. m 8:31. Zacher. n 8:32. Shimeam. o 1 Sam. 14:50,51. p 10:2. 1 Sam. 13:22. 14:1,49. Iehui. 31:2. q See on

if the sacred historian wrote of Nehemiah's time, whatever allusion he might make to that fact; it is certain that the temple had been completed many years before.—When David made those regulations concerning the courses and services of the Levites, there was no temple; but the ministrations were performed at the tabernacle; and perhaps on that account, “the house of the tabernacle” is mentioned.

V. 24-25. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 26; V. 27-29. The gold and silver vessels, and other treasures appropriated to the service of God, were deposited in the treasuries of the sanctuary; and the Levites lodged around it, as the appointed guard of them, as well as to be ready for their work. (26:20-28. *Note*, Ezra 8:24-27.)

V. 30. The Levites kept guard over the deposit of spices and frankincense, as well as over the other treasures; but the priests compounded the holy oil and incense. (*Notes*, Ezr. 30:22-38.) It seems, however, that Bezaleel of Judah, made them in the time of Moses. (*Ezr.* 37:1,29.)

V. 31-33. *Marg. Ref.—Singers*. (33.) A number of the Levites were employed, by rotation, in singing praises to the LORD; and they seem to have continued the service, night and day; and consequently were exempted from other employments, and also from paying tribute. (*Marg. Ref.—g. Note*, Ezra 7:24-26. Ps. 134:—) Moses commanded nothing concerning singers or musicians; and he forbade any to add to his words; but this could only mean *uninspired persons*; for no doubt God, by his prophets, might add, diminish, or alter, as he saw good.

V. 35-44. (*Note*, 8:29-40.) This repetition seems to have been intended merely as an introduction to the ensuing history.

Ner, &c. (39) (1 Sam. 14:50,51.) Perhaps Abiel, the father of Kish, was also called Ner.—Ner, the father of Abner or Abiner, (*my father Ner*), was Saul's uncle, not his grandfather.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In remembering the miseries of man, we should be careful

And Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua, and Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

40 And the son of Jonathan *was* Merib-baal, and Merib-baal begat Micah.

41 And the sons of Micah *were* Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, and Ahaz.

42 And Ahaz begat Jarah: and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

43 And Moza begat Binea; and Rephaiah [B. C. his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 900.]

44 And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan: these *were* the sons of Azel.

CHAPTER X.

Saul's defeat and death, 1-7. The Philistines about his dead body, 8-10. The men of Gath-gidron recruit, with the bodies of his sons, 11, 12. Saul's sin; for which he died, and the kingdom was transferred to David, 13, 14.

NOW the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.

2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul.

3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded on the archers.

4 Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword and fell upon it.

5 And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.

6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.

7 And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their

8:33. r See on 8:34-36. s 8:36. Jehoahab. t 9:37. Rapha. a 1 Sam. 28:1,29:1,2,31:12. * Heb. wounded. b 8. 1 Sam. 28:4,31:1. 2 Sam. 1:5. 21:21,12. c 8:33. 9:33. 1 Sam. 14:6,39,40. 2 Kings 23:29. Is. 57:1,2. d 1 Sam. 14:49. Iehui. e Ex. 20:5. 2 Kings 25:7. f 1 Sam. 31:3-6. 2 Sam. 1:4-10. 16:21. † Heb. shooters with bows. Heb. found. g Gen. 49:23. h 1 Judg. 9:54. i Judg. 15:18. 1 Sam. 14:6. 17:26,36. 2 Sam. 1:20. § Or, mock. Judg. 16:21,23-25. k 1 Sam. 31:4. 2 Sam. 1:14-16. l 5. 2 Sam. 1:9. 10. 17:23. 1 Kings 16:18. Matt. 27:4,5. Acts 1:18. 16:27. m 1 Sam. 4:10,11,18. 12:25. Ps. 9:1,2. Hos. 13:10,11. n Lev. 26:31,36. Deut. 28:33,43. Judg. 6:2. 1 Sam. 13:6,31:7.

not to lose sight of his transgressions, that the justice of God in them may be acknowledged and adored.—When sinners repent and forsake their sins, they are in the way of being extricated from trouble; and the affairs of church and state are likely to be well ordered, when men of all ranks and orders in the community concur in endeavours for that purpose.—Whatever politicians may suppose, no description of men are more essential to the real welfare of the state, than conscientious ministers of religion; and that service requires very able men, of clear heads and steadfast minds. God will raise up such persons, in those nations which he peculiarly favours; and qualify some for rulers in his church, and others for subordinate services: and it is well, when every one knows, and diligently attends to, his proper work, without envying or contemning any of his brethren. To be “a doorkeeper in the house of the LORD” is an honourable employment; and if he be with us, it will both be comfortable to us, and profitable to others; but without this, our services will be formal, and our souls miserable.—If employed in the service of the sanctuary, we have a charge to keep, as well as a work to do; and those, who “watch for men's souls, as they that must give account,” are intrusted with that which is unspeakably more valuable, than the richest treasures of silver and gold. They should therefore reside upon the spot, as much as possible; in order to be near and ready for their work, at every hour as occasion may require. To prepare bread for the sanctuary in their stated public preaching, may perhaps be only expected from them every sabbath; but some parts of their work must be useful every day; and they should generally be exempted from other cares and employments, that they may give themselves wholly to the word of God and prayer. (P. O. Acts 6:1-7.) Blessed be his name! if indeed we be now true believers, we shall for ever, (not in rotation, but altogether,) without interruption or cessation, praise him night and day, in his temple above.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1-12. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 1 Sam. 31:—All his house died, &c. (6) “All his men,”

cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

9 And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.

10 And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

11 And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

13 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it;

14 And inquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

CHAPTER XI.

David, by general consent, is made king over all Israel, at Hebron, 1-3. He takes Zion from the Jebusites; dwells there, and prospers, 4-9. The names and achievements of his principal warriors, 10-47.

THEN all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

2 And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.

3 Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the Lord by Samuel.

4 And David and all Israel went to Jeru-

salem, which is Jebus; where the Jebusites were the inhabitants of the land.

5 And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David.

6 And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.

7 And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it, The city of David.

8 And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city.

9 So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.

10 These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam the Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain by him at one time.

11 And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam the Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain by him at one time.

12 And after him was Elcazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, who was one of the three mightiest.

13 He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines.

14 And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines: and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance.

15 Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

16 And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Beth-lehem.

1 Sam. 31:8. 2 Kings 3:23. 2 Chr. 20:25. p 4. 1 Sam. 31:9, 10. 2 Sam. 1:20. Matt. 14:11. q Judg. 16:23-24. Dan. 5:2-4, 23. r 1 Sam. 31:10. Asharoah. s 1 Sam. 5:2-7. t 1 Sam. 11:1-11. 31:11-13. 2 Sam. 2:4-7. u Gen. 35:8. 2 Sam. 21:12-14. v Gen. 50:10. 2 Sam. 3:35. * Heb. transgressed. y 1 Sam. 13:12. 15:3-23. z 1 Sam. 28:7-20. a Ex. 22:18. Lev. 19:31. 20:6. Deut. 18:10-14. 2 Kings 21:6. Is. 8:19. Acts 8:9-11. 16:16-18. b Judg. 10:11-16. 1 Sam. 29:6. Ez. 14:3-6. c Ps. 17:13. Is. 10:7-15. d 1 Sam. 13:14. 15:23. 16:11-13. 22:17. 2 Sam. 3:9, 10, 5:3. f Heb. Jari. g 12:25-40. 2 Sam. 5:1. h Num. 13:22. 2 Sam. 21:15, 19. 1 Kings 2:11. c Gen. 29:14. Deut. 17:15. Judg. 9:2. 2 Sam. 19:12, 13. Eph. 5:30. * Heb. both yesterday and the third day. d Num. 27:17. 1 Sam. 18:13. Is. 55:4. John 10:4. e 1 Sam. 16:1, 13. 2 Sam. 7:7. Ps. 78:72. Is. 40:11. Mic. 5:2, 4. Matt. 2:6. f Or, rule. f 2 Sam. 2. g 1 Kings 3:9. 14:7. g 2 Sam. 5:5. h 1 Sam. 11:15. 2 Kings 11:7. 2 Chr. 23:3. i Judg. 11:31. 1 Sam. 23:18. k 1 Sam. 16:18. 2 Sam. 2:4. l 2 Kings 23:30. m 1 Sam. 23:18. 28:17. * Heb. by the hand of. m 2 Sam. 5:8-10. n 5. Josh. 15:63. 18:28. Zebul. Judg. 1:21. 19-10-12.

o Gen. 10:16. 15:21. Ex. 3:17. p 1 Sam. 17:9, 10, 36. q 1 Kings 8:1. 2 Chr. 5:2. Ps. 2:6. 9:11. 48:2, 12, 13. 78:68. 87:2, 5. 125:1, 2. 132:13. Lam. 4:11, 12. Rom. 9:33. Heb. 12:22. Rev. 14:1. r 7. 2 Sam. 5:9. 6:10, 12. Ps. 122:5. s Josh. 15:16, 17. 1 Sam. 17:25. * Heb. head. t 2 Sam. 2:18. 3:27. 8:16. 30:23. u Ps. 2:6. v That is, Zion. v 1 Sam. 9:6, 20. l Kings 5:15. 11:37. 2 Kings 12:20. f Heb. revivd. Neh. 4:2. * Heb. went in going and incoring. 2 Sam. 3:1. 5:10. Job 17:9. Is. 9:7. y 9:20. Ps. 46:7, 11. Is. 8:9, 10. 41:10, 14. Rom. 8:31. 2 Sam. 23:8. f Heb. held strongly with. a 12:38. 2 Sam. 3:17, 18, 21. b 1 Sam. 16:12-14. c 27:2. 2 Sam. 23:8. The Tachmonite, Adino, the Ezrite. f Or, son of Hachmoni. d 27:4. Dodo. 2 Sam. 23:8. e 8:4. f 13:21. 2 Sam. 23:17-19, 23. g 1 Sam. 17:11. Ephes-dammim. s Or, stood. h 1 Sam. 14:23. 19:5. 2 Sam. 10:10. 2 Kings 5:1. Ps. 18:50. i Or, salvation. Ps. 144:10. Prov. 21:31. * Heb. Or, captains over the city. 2 Sam. 23:15. l Josh. 12:15. 1 Sam. 22:1. Mic. 1:15. k 14:9. 2 Sam. 5:18, 22. Is. 17:5. l Josh. 15:8. the giants. m 1 Sam. 22:1, 23:25. Ps. 142: 1. 1 Sam. 10:5. 13:4, 22.

in Samuel. All that were present with him in the battle; and his family had received such a blow, that it never recovered itself again. For though Ish-bosheth reigned over a part of the country, yet it was not in any splendour. Bp. Patrick.

V. 13, 14. This history is repeated as an introduction to that of the kingdom of David. The Lord is said to have slain Saul, because he sentenced him to death, and gave Satan leave to tempt him to be his own executioner.—Is it possible, more strongly to mark the excessive criminality of consulting witches, conjurers, fortunetellers, or sorcerers of any kind, real or pretended, than by representing Saul's conduct in this respect, as one principal reason of his rejection and awful end? (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Sam. 28:3-10.)

He inquired not, &c. (14) That is, he did not persevere in inquiring of the Lord; but gave it up as hopeless, and had recourse to the consulting of a witch. He was remiss and negligent, saying, If God will not hear me, I will go and consult a familiar spirit. Laniado, a Jew, in Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord punishes none except sinners; and no sinners can escape, who do not humbly cast themselves upon his mercy: but when transgressors inquire of God, and earnestly seek deliverance in his appointed way, they will certainly prevail; and if they be involved in domestic or national calamities in this world, they will be saved from the wrath to come.

Alas! many "reject his counsel, and will none of his proof," till he leaves them to "eat of the fruit of their own ways, and to be filled with their own devices;" and numbers, who profess to seek the Lord, are so superficial in doing it, so soon weary of it, and so ready to listen to Satan's temptations, that God accounts it no inquiry at all. May we "seek the Lord, whilst he may be found," and till we have obtained

pardon, peace, and sanctifying grace; and are enabled to renounce all fellowship with the works and prince of darkness. And may the good Lord deliver us from unbelief, impatience, and despair, and teach us to trust in him, to obey and submit to his will: and to render due honour and kindness to all, whatever their behaviour to us may have been! Thus waiting on him, we shall obtain a kingdom that cannot be moved, being beyond the reach of the incessant changes and revolutions of sublunary things.

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1-3. In this recapitulation of the transactions, with which David's reign over all Israel was introduced, no mention is made of Ish-bosheth, or Abner, or of the seven first years after Saul's death: (Notes, 2 Sam. 1:4-4) but the narrative begins with his being submitted to, as God's appointed king, and as such anointed at Hebron, by the concurrence of the whole nation. (Notes, 2 Sam. 5:1-3.) It is here added, "according to the word of the Lord by Samuel." (Notes, 1 Sam. 13:13-15. 16:6-13.)

V. 4-8. Notes, 2 Sam. 5:6-9.—Joab, &c. (6) It is evident that Joab was, before this, high in authority under David; but he was, as a reward of his courage and conduct on this occasion, established commander-in-chief over the whole army.

V. 9. (2 Sam. 5:10.) David's increasing greatness, with the cause of it, is here emphatically stated.

V. 10-14. Note, 2 Sam. 23:8-12.—Who strengthened, &c. (10) "Those valiant men . . . that assisted him" (David) "in his advancement, and helped to establish him in his authority. They were such, in all likelihood, as had accompanied him, during his persecution by Saul, when they gave David many proofs of their valour and affection as they also did afterward." Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15-19. Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Sam. 13:15-11.

17 And David ^{longed}, and said, Oh that one would give me drink ^{of} the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that is at the gate!

18 And the three ^{brake} through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but ^{poured} it out to the Lord,

19 And said, ^{My God forbid} it me, that I should do this thing: ^{shall} I drink the blood of these men ^{that have put their lives} in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. ^{These things} did these three mightyest.

20 ¶ And Abishai the brother of Joab, ^{he was} chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three.

21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: ^{howbeit} he attained not unto the first three.

22 ^{Benaiah} the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of ^{Kabzeel}, who had done many acts; he slew two ^{lion-like} men of Moab: also he went down and ^{slew} a lion in a pit in a snowy day.

23 And he slew an Egyptian, ^{a man of great} stature, ^{five cubits} high; and in the Egyptian's hand was ^{a spear} like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and ^{slew} him with his own spear.

24 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mightyest.

25 Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, ^{but attained not to the first three}: and David set him over his guard.

26 ¶ Also the valiant men of the armies were Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

27 Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the ^{Pelonite}, Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the ^{Antothite},

29 Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the ^{Ahohite},

30 Maharai the Netophathite, Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

31 Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, that per-

o Num. 11:4, 5. 2 Sam. 23:15, 16. Ps. 143:6. p Ps. 42:1, 2. 63:1. Is. 12:3. John 4:10, 14. q 1 Sam. 19:5. Cant. 8:5. Acts 20:24. 21:13. 2 Cor. 5:11, 15. r 1 Sam. 23:17. s 2 Sam. 23:17. 1 Kings 21:3. Rom. 6:1, 2. t Lev. 17:10, 11. Job 31:31. Ps. 72:14. Mark 14:24. John 6:55. * Heb. with their lives. Rom. 16:4. u Judg. 5:18. 1 Cor. 15:30. x See on 12. y 2:16. 1 Sam. 28:6. 2 Sam. 2:18. 3:30. 18:2. 20:8. 21:7. 23:19. z Matt. 13:8, 23. 1 Cor. 15:41. a 27:5, 6. b 1 Sam. 6:18. 20:23. 22:30-23. 1 Kings 1:8, 28. 2:30, 34, 35. b Josh. 15:21. c Heb. treat of deeds. c 12:8. 2 Sam. 1:23. d Judg. 14:5, 6. 1 Sam. 17:34-36. e Heb. man of measure. e Deut. 3:11. 1 Sam. 17:4-7. f 20:5. g 1 Sam. 17:51. h 21. i 2 Sam. 20:23. k 27:2. 2 Sam. 2:18-23. 3:30. 23:24. l 2 Sam. 21:19. m 2 Sam. 23:25. Shammoh the Harorite. n 2 Sam. 23:25. Pallite. o 27:5.

V. 20-25. Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Sam. 23:18-24.

V. 26-47. (Note, 2 Sam. 23:25-39.) The marginal references and readings, show the principal differences between this part of the chapter, and the passages referred to. Several names are added to the catalogue of worthies. It is probable, the persons intended were something less famous than those mentioned also in the second book of Samuel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the time arrives for the performance of God's word, those persons who before were the most adverse to the things predicted, will concur in accomplishing them.—Kings should remember, and have need to be reminded, that they are not advanced for their own aggrandizement or self-indulgence; but that they should, with activity and vigour, provide for the defence and welfare of the nations over which they reign.—The desire of applause and pre-eminence seems to be the highest motive, of which carnal men are capable: but those, who are born from above, are actuated by purer and nobler principles. Yet, in seeking the glory of God and the good of man, by endeavouring to advance the kingdom of Jesus the Lord's anointed; they most effectually secure their own honour and exaltation.—The kingdom and glory of Christ will surely wax greater and greater, (the Lord of hosts being with him,) till all his enemies are put under his feet, and all his friends placed with him upon his throne.—The way to be truly great is to be really useful; and to give the use and glory of all our talents and services to the Lord: and if we be, at length, preserved from the destruction of the wicked, we shall perceive that the Lord has saved us with a great deliverance. May he teach us to repress all our earthly desires, to govern our appetites, to acknowledge candidly our mistakes, and

tained to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,

32 Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite,

33 Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliabba the Shaalbomite,

34 The sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,

35 Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal the son of Ur,

36 Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

37 Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai,

38 Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Haggeri,

39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah,

40 Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

41 Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai,

42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,

43 Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshiaphat the Mithnite,

44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite,

45 Jedaiel the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite,

46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite,

47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite.

CHAPTER XII.

The companies which came to David at Ziklag, 1-23. The armed troops that came to him at Hebron, 23-40.

NOW ^{these are} they that came to David ^{to Ziklag}, while he yet kept himself ^{close} because of ^{Saul} the son of Kish: and they were among ^{the mighty} men, helpers of the war.

2 They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left ^{in hurling} stones, and shooting arrows out of a bow, even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

3 The chief was Abiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite; and Zeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite,

4 And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, ^{a mighty} man

p 27:12. 2 Sam. 23:27. Anethothite. q 27:11. 2 Sam. 23:27, 28. Mehunnai.—Zalmori. r 12. s 27:13. t 27:15. Heldai. 2 Sam. 23:29. Hele. u 2 Sam. 23:29. Ittai. x 2 Sam. 23:30. Hiddai. y 2 Sam. 23:31. Abi-albon. z 2 Sam. 23:31. Berhumite. a 1 Sam. 23:32. Jashen. b 2 Sam. 23:33. Shinar. c 2 Sam. 23:34. Eliphelet. Ahabai. d 2 Sam. 23:35. Hezrai.—Purari the Arthite. e 2 Sam. 23:36. Izai the son of Nathan. f Or, the Haggerite. g 2 Sam. 20:26. Jairite. h 2 Sam. 11:6. &c. 23:39. i Or, Shimrite. a 1 Sam. 27:6. 2 Sam. 1:1. 4:10. b Heb. being yet shut up. b 8:33. 9:39. c 11:10, 19, 24, 25. d Judg. 3:15. 20:16. e 1 Sam. 17:49. f Or, Hasmah. f 1 Sam. 11:4. 2 Sam. 21:6. g 11:33. h 11:28. i Josh. 9:3, 17-23. k 11:15.

completely to rectify them when discovered; and to be gentle and tender to others, and only severe against our own sins. Attached to the person and cause, and obedient to the orders of our King and Captain, may we endure hardship, be valiant for the truth, and so "fight the good fight of faith, that we may lay hold on eternal life;" and have our names enrolled with honour in the records of the heavenly Jerusalem!

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. The sacred writer here goes back in the history to the times which preceded the death of Saul, and records some particulars not mentioned in the books of Samuel, respecting David's advancement to the throne.—Several considerable persons resorted to him at Ziklag; (Marg. Ref. a, b,) and either joined his small troop, or assured him of assistance when it became necessary.—Some of these were Benjamites, and related to Saul, who were either induced through a firm belief of the word of God by Samuel respecting him; or by indignation at the base treatment which David met with from Saul, to the disgrace of their family and tribe; or because they perceived, that the Lord was departed from Saul, and was with David of a truth. The hand of God was, however, very conspicuous, in raising him up friends from this tribe, whence he might have expected the most determined opposition.—Use both, &c. (2) Notes, Judg. 3:15-18. 20:16.

V. 4. Perhaps Saul had conferred some honourable distinction on thirty of his most valiant captains; as David afterwards did on the same number of his: and Ismaiah was placed over this illustrious company. For Abiezer (3) seems to have been the chief of those who came to David at that time.—I suppose, there were thirty Benjamites came over to David at one time, and this was their leader. Ep. Patrick

among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabab the Gederathite,

5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite, 6 Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,

7 And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains;

9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third,

10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,

11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,

12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabab the ninth,

13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh.

14 These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over a hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.

15 These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east, and toward the west.

16 And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David.

17 And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.

18 Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, O Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers: for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.

[Practical Observations.]

19 And there fell some of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines upon advisement,

sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads.

20 As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jedaiel, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zithai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.

21 And they helped David against the band of the rovers: for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host.

22 For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.

23 And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord.

24 The children of Judah that bare shield and spear were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war.

25 Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.

26 Of the children of Levi four thousand and six hundred.

27 And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites, and with him were three thousand and seven hundred.

28 And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains.

29 And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.

30 And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers.

31 And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.

32 And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their commandment.

J Josh. 15:95. m 4:18-39. Josh. 15:58. n 16:11-16. 1 Sam. 23:14, 23:22, 23:23. o Heb. of the host. p 2 Chr 25:5. Jer. 46:9. q 11:22. 2 Sam. 1:23, 17:10, 23:23. Prov. 28:1. r Heb. as the roes upon the mountains to make haste. q 2 Sam. 2:18. Prov. 6:5. Cant. 8:14. s Or, one that was least could resist an hundred, and the greatest a thousand. Lev. 26:8. Deut. 32:30. r Josh. 3:15, 4:18. Jer. 12:5, 49:19. s Heb. allied over. s 2. t See on 8. u Heb. before them. 1 Sam. 16:4. 2 Sam. 3:20-25. 1 Kings 2:13. 2 Kings 9:22. Ps. 121:2. x 1 Sam. 13:1-3. 2 Kings 10:15. Ps. 88:11. 2 Cor. 13:11. Phil. 1:27. y Heb. one. Jer. 32:30. Acts 4:32. z Cor. 1:10. ** Or, violence. y Gen. 31:42-53. 1 Sam. 24:11-17, 26:32-34. Ps. 78:1. Pet. 2:22. z Zech. 3:2. Jude 9. a Judg. 6:31. 13:25. y Heb. clothed Amasai. b 2:17. 2 Sam. 17:25. 19:13, 20:4, &c. Amasa. c 2 Kings 10:5. d Ruth 1:16. 2 Sam. 15:21. 2 Kings 9:32. Matt. 12:30.

V. 8. Into the hold, &c.] These Gadites came to David, either to Ziklag, or to some of those natural fortresses in which he secured himself, before he went into the land of the Philistines. (Marg. Ref. n.)

Faces of lions, &c.] They had a fierceness in their countenances, which terrified their enemies; who durst not look them in the face, but ran away as soon as they saw them. But they could not save themselves by flight, being pursued so swiftly by these men, that they overtook them and slew them. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. p, q.)

V. 14. Either these persons had the command, some over a hundred men, and others over a thousand, before they came to David; or he preferred them afterwards, in consideration of their services; or the passage may be understood according to the marginal reading.

V. 15. The lot of Gad was to the east of Jordan: and it is probable, that these men crossed the river towards the west, or into the land of Canaan properly so called. (Notes, Num. 32.) It seems also, that some great emergency required their immediate interposition; but it is not stated what enemies they opposed.—Perhaps, during some part of Saul's reign, the Philistines and other tribes, made incursions into the land of Israel; and these resolute Gadites hastened to assist their brethren. Or perhaps they were coming to join David, in his extreme danger; and, being opposed by Saul's adherents, they put them to flight, and pursued them in every direction. (Note, 8.)

V. 16—18. David had experienced much treachery even from those of his own tribe, and was therefore put on his guard; but he very frankly avowed his suspicions, and ap-

e Gal. 6:16. Eph. 6:23-24. f 1 Sam. 25:28-29. 2 Sam. 5:2. Zech. 8:23. John 6:67, 68. g 1 Sam. 8:12. 22:7. 1 Kings 9:22. h 1 Sam. 29:2-4. i Heb. on our heads. 1 Sam. 29:11. k Ez. 18:21. Deut. 1:15. 33:17. s Or, with a band. 1 Sam. 30:1-17. m 20:5, 24. 11:10, 21, 22. n 2 Sam. 2:2-4. 3:1. Job 17:9. o Gen. 32:2. Josh. 5:14. Ps. 148:2. p 11:13. 2 Sam. 5:1-3. q Or, captains, or men. Heb. heads. q 10:14. r 11:10. 1 Sam. 16:11, 12, 13. 2 Sam. 3:16. Ps. 2:6, 89:19, 20. ** Or, prepared. s 9:20. 2 Kings 11:4, 5, 25:18. t 6:49-57, 27:17. u 6:8, 53. 2 Sam. 8:17. 1 Kings 1:8, 2:35. Ps. 44:15. ** Heb. brethren. 2 Gen. 31:23. y Heb. a multitude of them. 2 Sam. 2:8, 9. y Heb. men of names. Gen. 6:4. x Josh. 17: y Gen. 49:14. Ezech. 1:15. Ez. 12:12-14. Mic. 6:9. Matt. 16:3. Luke 12:56, 57. z Prov. 14:8. Eph. 5:17. a Prov. 24:5. Ec. 7:19. 9:18.

pealed to the consciences of those concerned. If they came peaceably to assist him, he would cordially unite with them; and the time would come, when he should be able to recompense them: but as he was conscious he had not injured either Saul or his country; he reminded them, that if they came to betray him, the God of their fathers would surely avenge his cause upon them. Then Amasai, their leader, animated by a special impulse of the Spirit of God, answered him in the name of all the rest. He declared that they were entirely attached to his person and interest; and cordially desired the prosperity of him, and of all who helped him; not only as his cause was just, but as they were persuaded that it was the cause of God, and would prevail: and they desired to share the conflicts and the successes of David and his friends. Accordingly David received and preferred them.—It is not certain, whether Amasai was, or was not, the same as Amasa, elsewhere mentioned. (Marg. Ref. b.)

V. 19. Notes, 1 Sam. 29:2-6.

V. 20, 21. These captains of Manasseh seem to have met David, as he was returning from the army of the Philistines to Ziklag. It is probable, that they did not bring their companies with them; yet they both assured him of future assistance, and very seasonably helped him against the Amalekites who had spoiled Ziklag. (Notes, 1 Sam. 30.)

V. 22. Such numbers resorted to David, after Saul's defeat and death, and they were so loyally attached to David, so united with each other, and so powerfully illustrious and valiant, that they resembled "the host of God;" that is, his legions of angels. Some consider it merely as a Hebrewism for a very great army.

33 Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: *they were* not of double heart.

34 And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them with shield and spear thirty and seven thousand.

35 And of the Danites expert in war twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.

36 And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand.

37 And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, a hundred and twenty thousand.

38 All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king.

39 And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them.

* Or, rangers of battle, or ranged in battle. † Or, set the battle in array. ‡ Heb. without a heart, and a heart. Ps. 122, John 1:37. § Or, keeping their rank. b 5:1, &c. Num. 32:33-42. Deut. 3:12-16. Josh. 13:7-32. 14:3. 22:1-10. c 1 Kings 3:51. 11:4. 2 Kings 20:3. Ps. 101:2. d See on 17:18. Gen. 49:8-10. 2 Chr. 30:12. Ps. 110:3. Ez. 11:19. e Gen. 26:30. 31:54. 2 Sam. 6:19. 19:32. f 2 Sam. 18:1. 17:27-29. † Or, victual of meat. g 1 Sam. 25:18. h 1 Kings 1:40. 2 Kings 11:29. Prov. 11:40. 29:2. Jer. 25:55. Luke 19:37, 38. Rev. 19:5-7.

V. 23-40. Some learned men understand this passage, or at least a part of it, as relating to the time when David was made king over Judah, on his first coming to Hebron: but it seems entirely to refer to his being made king over all Israel, after the death of Ish-bosheth; for there was no such union of the several tribes, on the former occasion, as is here described. (Notes, 2 Sam. 2:1-4. 5:1-3.)—At that time great numbers came to David from each of the tribes of Israel: but in different proportions, according to the degree of the cordiality and zeal of each tribe. It is probable, that so small a number of Judah was present, in order that David's own tribe, over which he had now reigned seven years, might not appear to impose a king on their brethren. There was a considerable number of Levites assembled; but not at all in proportion to the multitude of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who appeared on this occasion under a leader named Jehoiada, probably appointed by Abiathar the high-priest: while Zadok, who was afterwards high-priest, being now a young man, headed a company of chief men, perhaps of the line of Eleazar. So greatly had that family increased, notwithstanding the slaughter which Saul had not long before made of them, (Notes, 1 Sam. 20:6-19.) that almost four thousand attended on this occasion!—The Benjamites in general had favoured the house of Saul; and numbers of them still waited for an opportunity of reviving the claim of that family, in some of its branches; for so the latter part of the twenty-ninth verse may be interpreted.—The leaders of Issachar were intelligent men, who understood the signs of the times; and perceived that it was both the duty and political interest of Israel, to advance David to the throne: and, having great authority in their tribe, they induced them to a unanimous concurrence in this measure; though they do not seem to have brought them to Hebron. Besides the numbers, who doubtless on various accounts were kept away, though cordially attached to David, there were three hundred and fifty thousand armed men, all heartily devoted to his service; who placed him upon the throne of Israel, with every expression of joy and affection.

Not of double heart. (33) 'All sincerely affected to David; though there were so many of them.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, Jam. 1:5-8.)—On asses, &c. (40) No mention is made of horses, as employed on this occasion.—There was joy in Israel.] Their hearts were enlarged with joy, to see an end of their division, by their union under such a king, as they might reasonably hope would procure great happiness to them.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-18. Earthly princes in general honour with marked distinction such persons, as have faithfully adhered to them in seasons of difficulty and danger: and, in like manner, Jesus Christ will confer peculiar honour upon those, who embrace and adhere to his gospel, in times of persecution and distress; who deny themselves, renounce their worldly interests, break through difficulties, and bear the cross, for his sake and after his example.—Courage, strength, agility, ingenuity, or superior mental endowments, are valuable to the possessors and to the community, only when, being considered as talents committed to them by the great Lord of all, they are conscientiously improved in promoting the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind; for, when misused or neglected, they prove occasions of increasing condemnation. Long experience of the deceitfulness of mankind will teach caution to every reflecting person; but we should be afraid of growing unreasonably suspicious: and if we have a clear

40 Moreover, they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel.

CHAPTER XIII.

David, with the princes and people, with great solemnity and zeal, fetches the ark from Kirjath-jearim, 1-8. Uzza is smitten, David is disconcerted, and the ark is left at the house of Obed-edom, 9-14.

AND David consulted with the captains of a thousand, and hundreds, and with every leader.

2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that *are* left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which *are* in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

3 And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul.

a 12:14, 20, 32. 2 Sam. 6:1. 2 Kings 23:1. 2 Chr. 29:20, 34:29, 30. b 1 Kings 12:7. 2 Kings 9:15. Prov. 15:22. Philm. 8, 9. c Ex. 16:23. 2 Sam. 7:2-5. * Heb. break forth, and send. d 10:7. 1s. 37:4. e 15:2-14. Num. 4:4, &c. 2 Chr. 31:4, &c. † Heb. the cities of their suburbs. f 5:4-81. Num. 32:2-3. † Heb. bring about. f 1 Sam. 7:1, 2. Ps. 132:6. g 1 Sam. 14:18, 36, 37. 22:10, 15. 23:2. 4, 9-12.

conscience, and use moderate precautions, we may trust in God to defend us from the effects of secret treachery, as well as of open violence; while we should readily forgive former injuries, and unite with those, who profess a disposition to be at peace with us, and to help us. But, when we cannot but suspect men's intentions in courting our friendship, it is best, in some cases, frankly to remonstrate with them as in the sight of God. This may sometimes intimidate the insincere, and give the upright an opportunity of clearing up their characters; while suspicions, harboured in secret, or only whispered among friends, are often injurious to the suspected person, and always troublesome to ourselves. Integrity and affection will frequently, when the case requires it, dictate such frank, unreserved, and energetic language, as to afford full satisfaction: and then, cordial union, in promoting one common cause, succeeds jealousies, distance, and the debility of distrust.—Peace or victory, prosperity and felicity, are ensured to those whom God helps, and to all who concur with them. If under the influence of his Spirit, we, on that account, desire to have our lot among them, and declare on their side; and if we uprightly embrace the cause of Christ; his heart will be kind unto us, and he will receive and advance us in due season.

V. 19-40. The cause of our King appears to a carnal eye weak and obscure, and his subjects have been hitherto comparatively few: but his kingdom and glory will, ere long, rapidly advance; and his host become, like "the host of God," innumerable and invincible.—The advancement of wise and good men to authority, is justly considered as a cause of great and general joy; and joy naturally enlarges the heart in cheerful liberality. Thus the Saviour's exaltation to the throne of glory filled the hearts of his people with gladness: nay, the sinner's willing submission to him, ushers in a day of joy and gladness, in which his brethren share, and to which they contribute. But, what a joyful time will that be, "when all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him!" Every individual, in the innumerable throng, will participate and add to the joy of all the rest: and nothing short of the perfect purity and harmony of heaven, can give us a higher idea of true happiness. Meanwhile, happy are they, who have understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do: who wisely perceive it to be their duty and interest, to submit to and trust in Jesus Christ the Son of David: who renounce all inconsistent connexions, pursuits, and employments for his sake; and unreservedly employ all their influence and ability to promote his cause from love to him and to their brethren: whose love also abounds in knowledge and in all judgment, so that their beneficent endeavours are directed by heavenly wisdom, through an acquaintance with the word of God, and a maturity of experience and observation: and who consequently know how to attempt every thing in that manner, and at those seasons, which are suited to give it the greatest effect. This is to unite "the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove;" and "if any man lack this wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1-4. It is probable, that David consulted with his principal friends and officers, about bringing back the ark, immediately after he had got possession of mount Zion, and had fixed his residence there: yet it appears, from comparing the different parts of the narrative, that he did not accomplish the design till some time after being retarded by the incursions of the Philistines, and by

4 And also the congregation said that they would do so: for ^{the} thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. [Practical Observations.]

8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

9 And when they came unto the thrashing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

11 And David was displeased because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day.

12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

CHAPTER XIV.

Hiram sends timber and builders to build David a house, 1. He prospers in his kingdom, takes more wives, and has several children, 2, 3. The names of his sons, 4-7. He gains two signal victories over the Philistines, 8-17.

Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him a house.

2 And David perceived that the Lord had

confirmed him king over Israel, for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.

3 And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.

4 Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,

5 And Ithar, and Elishua, and Elpalet,

6 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

7 And Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphaz.

8 And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out against them.

9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

10 And David inquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into my hand? And the Lord said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thy hand.

11 So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by my hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim.

12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

13 And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

14 Therefore David inquired again of God: and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them against the mulberry-trees.

15 And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.

16 David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.

1 Sam. 18:20. 2 Sam. 3:36. 2 Chr. 30:4. marg. Ruth. 8:5. 12 Sam. 1:1. 1 Sam. 34:5-8. Josh. 13:3-6. Shihor. 1 Kings 4:21. Jer. 2:18. Shihor. 1 Sam. 34:8. Josh. 13:3. 1 Kings 3:6. 2 Kings 25:24. Hamath. m 6. 1 Sam. 6:21. 7:1. Josh. 15:9-16. 2 Sam. 6:2. Baale. o Ex. 25:22. Num. 7:89. 1 Sam. 4:4. 2 Kings 19:15. Ps. 80:1. 99:1. Is. 37:16. p Ex. 20:24. 23:21. Num. 7:27. 1 Kings 8:16. Heb. make the ark to ride. q 15:12-13. Num. 4:15. 1 Sam. 6:7-8. 2 Sam. 6:3. 1 Sam. 7:1, 2. r 15:10-24. 1 Sam. 10:5. 2 Sam. 6:5. 2 Kings 3:15. Ps. 47:5. 68:25-27. 150:5. s Heb. songs. t 15:23. 16:5. 22:35. 25:1-6. Dan. 3:5-7. Am. 5:23. 6:5. u 2 Sam. 6:6. Nachon. v Or. hook it. x 15:13-15. Num. 4:15. Josh. 6:6. y Lev. 10:1-3. Num. 16:35. 1 Sam. 6:19. 2 Sam. 26:16-20. 1 Cor. 11:30-32. z 2 Sam. 6:7-9. Jon. 4:4, 9. 6. That is, the branch of Uzza. a Gen. 32:32. Dent. 31:6. Josh. 4:9. h Num. 17:12. 13. 1 Sam. 5:10. 11. 6:20. Ps. 119:120. Is. 6:5. Luke 5:8, 9. c 1 Kings 8:27. Job 25:5. Matt. 23:24. d Heb. removed. e 15:18. 16:5. 26:4, 8. 2 Sam. 6:10-11. e 2 Sam. 4:3. f Gen. 30:27. 39:5. Prov. 3:9-10. Mal. 3:10, 11. g 2 Sam. 5:11-12. 1 Kings 5:18-12. 2 Chr. 2:11, 12. Huram. h 22:2. 1 Kings 6:16, 19, 18. 2 Chr. 2:3, 9-10. Ezra 3:7. c 17:1. 2 Sam. 7:2. 1 Kings 7:1-12.

other hinderances. (Notes, 2 Sam. 5:6, 12.) He did not judge it expedient, to act merely by authority in so important a concern: but, by consulting his friends, he ensured their ready concurrence, and that of their several connexions, and also of the priests and Levites. During Saul's reign, or the latter part of it at least, the ark had been neglected, and even David had inquired of God by the high priest at a distance from it; (Notes, 1 Sam. 23:1-6, 9-13. 30:7-10. 2 Sam. 2:1-3.) while Saul concerned himself very little in any way about religion. Thus the regular way of inquiring the will of God, by the high priest, with the breastplate of judgment, before the ark in the sanctuary, had been long neglected.

V. 5-11. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Sam. 6:1-11.—Shihor, &c. (5) Marg. Ref. k. Note, Josh. 13:1-5.—A new cart, &c. (7) They had so long been without it (the ark) that they had forgot how it ought to be carried. Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-7. When we set out in life, or obtain any temporal advancement, we should first inquire, how we may honour God and do good, and enjoy the divine blessing, in our several situations, and in the use of our possessions. Princes especially ought to adopt the most useful measures which they can devise to promote true religion by their example and authority, that they may have the Lord high unto them in all they undertake. This can only be done by consulting with others, and engaging them to concur in measures of acknowledged utility, and evidently consistent with the word of God; and by reminding, encouraging, and charging the ministers of religion, to attend to their impo tant duties in their several

situations, that good examples and good instructions may abound throughout the land. When such things, being mildly proposed, seem good to the leading men, we may hope that they are from the Lord, and expect that many other persons, being called upon, will voluntarily assist; and that thus the gospel will excite general attention, without any of the anti-christian weapons of compulsion.—In rectifying abuses, it is generally best to shun personal reflections and severe accusations: they appear malevolent, and excite opposition. Suffice it to show, that things needful have been neglected, and that it is proper for us to attend to them: and, in public transgressions, humility will teach a man to consider himself as in some measure guilty, and more readily to condemn himself than others.—Even good men, in doing their duty, are liable to mistakes, and to act in an improper spirit: and rebukes, though merited and needed, often excite murmurs, discouragements, and hard thoughts of God. May we then, with redoubled diligence, seek to become acquainted with the whole word of God, and to make it “the lantern of our path” may we walk humbly and circumspectly, avoid rashness and presumption, rejoice in our priviledges with trembling, be patient under divine rebukes, persevere in well doing without discouragement, and seek the forgiveness and acceptance in every service, from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus! Thus will the gospel, which is to many “the savour of death, become to us “the savour of life,” and the source of all blessings in time and to eternity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1-16. (Notes, 3:1-9. 2 Sam. 5:11-25.) The events, recorded in this chapter, are supposed to have taken place in the order assigned to them

for 'song': he instructed about the song, because he *was* skilful.

23 And Berechiah and Elkanah *were* 'door-keepers for the ark.

24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and 'Obed-edom and Jehiah *were* doorkeepers for the ark.

25 ¶ So 'David and the elders of Israel, and the 'captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of 'Obed-edom 'with joy.

26 And it came to pass, when 'God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that 'they offered 'seven bullocks and seven rams.

27 And David *was* clothed with 'a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and 'Chenaniah the master of the 'song with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen.

28 Thus all Israel 'brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord 'with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

29 ¶ And it came to pass, as the 'ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at

a window, saw king David 'dancing and playing and 'she despised him in her heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

The ark being placed in its tent, David offers sacrifices, and liberally feeds the people, 1-3. He appoints singers and musicians to praise the Lord, 4-6. The psalm of thanksgiving then used, 7-36. The priests, singers, and porters appointed to minister continually before the ark, 37-42. David dismisses the people, 43.

SO 'they brought the ark of God, and set it 'in the midst of the tent that David pitched for it: and 'they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God.

2 And when David had made an end of offering 'the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, 'he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.

3 And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, 'to every one a loaf of bread, and good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

4 ¶ And 'he appointed *certain* of the Levites to 'minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise 'the Lord God of Israel:

5 'Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattathiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel with 'psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;

6 Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests 'with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

7 ¶ Then 'on that day David delivered first

* Or, for the carriage: he instructed about the carriage. 1 Heb. *lifting up*, 16, 17. r 357, 8. s 9:21-23. 2 Kings 22:4, 25:18. Ps. 84:10, 116:6. Num. 10:2. 2 Chr. 5:12, 13. Ps. 81:3. u 18, 23. x 2 Sam. 6:12, 13. 1 Kings 8:1. y Num. 31:14. Ps. 115:1. 1 Sam. 8:12, 10:19. 22:7. Mic. 5:2. z 13:14. a 13:11, 12. Ps. 127:15, 16:11, 15. 2 Chr. 20:27, 28. Ezra 6:16. Ps. 95:1, 2. 100:1, 2. Ps. 3:4, 14. b 29:14. 1 Sam. 7:12. Acts 26:22. 2 Cor. 2:16. 3:5. c 2 Sam. 6:13. Ps. 66:13-15. d Num. 23:1, 24:29, 29:32. Job 42:8. Ez. 43:23. e 1 Sam. 2:18. 2 Sam. 6:14. f 22. g Or, carriage. 22. g 2 Sam. 6:15. h 16. 13:8. 2 Chr. 5:12, 13. Ezra 3:10, 11. Ps. 47:1-5. 68:25, 98:4-6. 150:3-5. i 17:1. Num. 10:33. Deut. 31:28. Josh. 4:7. Jude, 20:7. 1 Sam. 4:3. Jer. 3:16. Heb. 9:4. k 2 Sam. 6:16. l 1 Sam. 18:27, 39:11-17. 25:44. 2 Sam. 13:14.

which either signify treble and bass, or some particular tunes, or the construction of the instruments to which the compositions were adapted. (Notes, Ps. 6: title. 46: title.)

V. 22. Chenaniah seems to have been the *precentor*, and the principal instructor of all the company in singing: though Heman, Asaph, and Ethan had the chief authority over the singers and musicians of the families of the Levites. (Marg. Ref. v. 17.)

V. 23, 24. Perhaps Berechiah and Elkanah were stationed on mount Zion, to open the doors of the tent, when the ark approached to it; and when the singers called on them for admission. (Note, Ps. 24:7-10.) And Obed-edom and Jehiah were afterwards appointed stately to guard the door of the tent, that none might enter, but according to the law.—The blowing of the trumpets was exclusively the office of the priests. (Marg. Ref. t. Note, Num. 10:2-10.)

V. 26. The Levites offered these sacrifices on their own account, besides those which David offered. (Note, 2 Sam. 6:12, 13.) Thus they acknowledged the unmerited goodness of God, in enabling them with safety to perform the service allotted them; probably being conscious, that Uzzah had been smitten, as much through their fault as for his own.—Some think that they rested seven days, and offered a bullock and a ram each time. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 27, 28. Note, 2 Sam. 6:14, 15. V. 29. (Notes, 2 Sam. 6:120-23.) 'She was a proud woman, and 'tis likely had no great sense of religion, which in the reign of Saul . . . was much neglected.' *Bi. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most zealous and useful reformers have, in all ages, been left to make mistakes, which inferior persons could easily discern; and especially, before their judgments were matured by experience and observation. Satan avails himself of these errors to prejudice the minds of men against their whole character and work: and the artifice readily succeeds with those, who are in quest of some specious pretence, for despising and opposing the humbling truths and the holy service of God. But, we should hence infer, that nothing perfect can be expected from mere men; and we should neither be offended at the miscarriages blended with laudable and useful endeavours; nor yet vindicate or adopt every sentiment and practice, which have been sanctioned by respectable and eminent men: but, we should compare all, as well as we can, with the word of God; and by that criterion distinguish between the precious and the vile. Wise and good men, however, will profit by rebukes; having discovered, they will honestly confess their mistakes, and acknowledge that they 'did not seek the Lord after the due order;' and, upon recollection, they will both justify him in his sharpest corrections, and proceed with their work with greater circumspection. It indeed, seems one of the greatest attainments of human nature, to search out, confess, rectify, and profit by, our own mistakes and miscarriages.—The Lord's choice of us, in every sense in which that expression is used or under-

m Ex. 15:20. Ps. 30:11, 149:3, 150:4. Ec. 3:4. Jer. 30:18, 33:11. n 2 Sam. 6:20-23. Ps. 68:7-9. Acts 2:13. 1 Cor. 2:14. 2 Cor. 5:13. o 2 Sam. 6:17-19. 1 Kings 8:6. 2 Chr. 5:7. b 15:1, 12. 2 Chr. 14. Ps. 132:8. c 1 Kings 8:5. 2 Chr. 5:6. Ezra 6:16-18. d Lev. 1:3. e Gen. 14:19, 20:7, 47:10. Num. 6:23-27. Josh. 22:6. 2 Sam. 6:18. 1 Kings 8:55, 56. 2 Chr. 29:29, 30:18-20, 27:1. Luke 24:50, 51. Heb. 7:7. f 2 Chr. 30:24, 35:7, 8. Neh. 6:10. Ez. 45:17. 1 Pet. 4:9. g 15:16. 23:2-6. 24:3. h 37-42. 23:37-42. Num. 18:1-6. i 18. Ps. 38:70. title. 103:2, 105:5. j 18. 62:6, 7. 1 Gen. 17:7. k 29. 33:20. marg. 1 Kings 8:15. Ps. 72:18. 106:48. k See on 6:39. 15:16-21. l 1-6. * Heb. *instruments of psalteries and harps*. 15:20, 21. 2 Chr. 5:13. 1 Num. 10:8. 2 Chr. 5:12, 13. 15:12. 29:36-42. m 2 Sam. 23:1-2. 2 Chr. 29:30. Neh. 12:24.

stood, implies our being chosen to *services*, as well as *privileges*; and plain and serious admonitions, from those who lead the way by a good example, and whose rank and character give weight a d authority to their words, will often excite the remiss to diligence, and the ignorant and heedless to learn and attend to their duty.—But alas! pre-eminence is generally privileged with supineness and indulgence: and too often, examples of avarice, pride, and licentiousness, become infamously conspicuous, through the rank of those who set them; diffusing their baleful influence, like a destructive pestilence, among the subordinate members of the community. We have all, however, our proper place, work, and talent; every servant should know well his own business, and punctually execute it; and this cannot be done without attention to the Scriptures, and preparation of heart by the sanctification of the Spirit, vouchsafed in answer to our prayers.—Every thing we engage in, must be undertaken in dependence on the mercy and grace of God through the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer: and, as "it is of the LORD's mercy, that we are not consumed," so, if we go successfully and comfortably through any service, we must remember that God has helped us, and give him the glory; for without him we can do nothing. When God accepts our persons and our works, makes our hearts joyful in himself, and renders our services beneficial to his church; we may indeed expect, but need not regard, the scoffs and reproaches of unbelievers: and we must learn to bear them with patience, and to persevere in our compassionate prayers for those, who are true enemies to their own souls by opposing the cause of God, which we are honoured to promote.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-3. Notes, 2 Sam. 6: 17-19.

V. 4-6. These Levites were appointed "to record," or to put the people in remembrance of the wonderful works of God for Israel, as well as to thank him and praise his name. (Note, Is. 62:6, 7.) Doubtless, David acted as a prophet in regulating this part of divine worship; and his example will not justify uninspired men, in introducing human inventions into the worship of God, and imposing them by their own authority; for when Hezekiah made similar arrangements, he only enforced what David had appointed. (2 Chr. 29:26-28.) Yet it is evident that the other kings of Judah, and Nehemiah after the captivity, in many things commanded and directed the Levites and priests, and even the high-priest, in respect of their ministrations; and that when they exercised this authority in religious concerns, according to the word of God, they were approved and commended for so doing. As this is no where enjoined on rulers in the law of Moses; it seems by no means exclusively to belong to that dispensation, but to be the proper improvement of the talents intrusted to them; while an unscriptural exercise of this authority constituted an abuse and perversion of their talents. (Neh. 2: Kings 16:10-16. 2 Chr. 15:12-19. 29:12, 15, 21-24. 30:2, 31:2-4, 20, 21. 44:20-28. 35:1-9. Neh. 13:7-13, 28-31.

this psalm, to thank the LORD, 'into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

8 'Give thanks unto the LORD, 'call upon his name, 'make known his deeds among the people.

9 'Sing unto him, sing 'psalms unto him, 'talk ye of all his wondrous works.

10 'Glory ye in his holy name : 'let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

11 'Seek the LORD and his strength, 'seek his face continually.

12 'Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and 'the judgments of his mouth ;

13 O 'ye seed of Israel, his servant, ye children of Jacob, 'his chosen ones.

[Practical Observations.]

14 He is 'the LORD our God ; his judgments are in all the earth.

15 Be 'ye mindful always of his covenant ; the

n Ps. 12:18. *titles.* o See on Ps. 105:1—15. p Ps. 124. Acta 9:14. 1 Cor. 1:2. q 1 Kings 8:13. 2 Kings 19:19. Ps. 67:2—4. 78:3—6. 145:5—6. r Ps. 95:1, 2. 96:1. 2. 98:1—4. s Matt. 26:30. Eph. 5:19. Col. 3:16. Jam. 5:13. t Ps. 40:10. 71:17. 18. 96:3. 145:4—6. 12. u Ps. 34:2. Is. 45:25. Jer. 9:23. 24. 1 Cor. 1:30. 31. Gr. x 28:9. Prov. 8:17. Is. 45:19. 55:6, 7. Jer. 29:13. Matt. 7:7, 8. y Am. 5:5. Zeph. 3:2, 3. z 2 Chr. 6:41. Ps. 63:55. 78:61. a Ps. 4:6. 27:8, 9. 67:1. b 8:5. Ps. 102:2. 111:1. c P. 12. d Is. 13:20. 75:13, 7. Rom. 11:33. Rev. 16:7. 19:2. e Gen. 17:7. 2:13. 11:1. 39:10—12. f Ex. 19:5, 6. Deut. 7:6. Ps. 135:4. 1 Pet. 2:9. f Ex. 15:2. Ps. 68:1. 57:7. 100:3. 118:26. g 12. Ps. 48:10, 11. 97:8, 9. h Ps.

Ex. 45:18—25.)—The use of *instrumental music* in the worship of God was evidently prior to the ceremonial law; and therefore could form no part of it, or be abrogated with it; and though it is not required in the New Testament; yet it seems no way inconsistent with it, provided it be suited to the solemnity and seriousness of our religious rejoicing, and so regulated as really to assist the exercise of devout affections. The sad abuse of making, what is called *secured music*, a matter of mere *carnal diversion*, with some other subordinate evils of the same kind, form the strongest arguments against it. (*Note, Ex. 15:1.*)—The trumpets alone were appointed in the law, and had a typical meaning. (*Note, Num. 10:2—10. P. O. 1—10.*)

V. 7. The psalm, which was sung on this solemn occasion, is composed of extracts from several psalms. (*Marg. Ref.*) To the twenty-second verse inclusive is nearly the same as the former part of the cv. Psalm: from the twenty-third verse to the thirty-third, it accords to the xcvi. Psalm; and the conclusion, to that of the cvi. Psalm. Probably David had these by him, with many others, for his own private use; and he composed from them a song of praise and thanksgiving, to record the mercies of the Lord, suited to the solemnity. But afterwards he gave the other psalms also, one after another, into the hands of the chief singers, for the benefit of the people who attended the worship performed before the ark.

To thank the Lord. 'To give him thanks (as Conradus Pellicanus well glosses) for all his benefits, he had bestowed on his people Israel, and which he intended to bestow on all the people of this world by his Son Christ. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8, 9. In these verses the inspired and enraptured Psalmist excited the people, and taught them to animate each other, in blessing the God of Israel for all his mercies, and in celebrating his glorious perfections, which are worthy to be known, admired, and extolled; and which render him the meet object of the universal and entire love, worship, confidence, and obedience of all rational creatures. He also exhorted them to meditate, and converse frequently, on the wonderful works of JEHOVAH, and to proclaim them before others; to call on him in all their wants and dangers; and by every means to adore and praise him. (*Notes, Ps. 96:1—4. 105:1, 2. Is. 12:4—6.*)

V. 10. To "glory in God," is to value our relation to him, as our honour and privilege, far above all other distinctions; to make that alone the ground of our confidence and exultation; to account ourselves in this more happy, more honoured, and more favoured, than any other people. To "glory in his holy name," is to rejoice and exult in his immutable wisdom, justice, truth, and love. (*Notes, Is. 45:23—25. Jer. 9:23, 24. 1 Cor. 1:26—31. Phil. 3:1—7. v. 3.*) And even they, who are only beginning to seek the Lord, may rejoice that he is upon a mercy-seat, ready to receive their submissions, to hear their prayers, to forgive their sins, to supply their wants, and to save their souls. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11. "Seeking the LORD" implies an earnest and diligent endeavour to obtain the knowledge and favour of God, according to the revelation made of him in his word; the renewal of the soul to holiness by his grace, the safety to be enjoyed under his omnipotent protection, and the comfort and support of his Spirit under all trials and temptations, till his strength has perfected the work of his mercy in the full salvation of both body and soul; when present glimpses of his glory, and experience of his love, shall be perfected, by beholding the full display of that glory, and enjoying the full effects of that love, in heaven for ever. (*Notes, Ps. 142:3. 27:8, 9. Is. 55:6, 7. Matt. 6:33, 34. 7:7—11.*)—The gracious aid and pro-

word which he commanded to 'a thousand generations;

16 Even of the covenant 'which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob, 'for a law, and to Israel for 'an everlasting covenant;

18 Saying, 'Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the 'lot of your 'inheritance;

19 When ye were but 'few, even 'a few, and strangers in it.

20 And when 'they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people:

21 'He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, 'he proved kings for their sakes,

22 Saying, Touch not 'mine anointed, and do my 'prophets no harm.

23 'Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; 'show forth from day to day his salvation.

24 'Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

25:10. 44:17. 105:8. Mal. 4:4. 1 Deut. 7:9. k Gen. 15:18. 17:2. 26:3. 28:13, 14. Ex. 3:15. Neh. 9:8. Luke 1:72, 73. Acta 3:25. Gal. 3:15—17. Heb. 6:13—18. 1 Ps. 78:10. Gen. 17:7, 8. 2 Sam. 23:5. Is. 55:3. Heb. 13:20. n Gen. 12:7. 13:15. 17:8. 28:13. 34:1. 35:11, 12. o Heb. cord. Mic. 2:6. p Num. 26:58—56. Deut. 32:8. q Heb. men of number. r Gen. 34:30. Acta 7:5. Heb. 11:13. s Gen. 12:10. 20:1. 46:3, 5. t Gen. 31:24. 29:42. u Gen. 12:17. 20:3. Ex. 7:16. 17:13—18. v 1 Kings 19:16. 1 John 2:27. w Gen. 20:7. 27:39, 40. 48:19, 20. 49:8—10. x See on Gen. 9:6—13. Ex. 15:21. Ps. 30:4. Is. 12:5. y Ps. 40. 10. 71:15. Is. 51:6—8. z 2 Kings 19:19. Ps. 22:27. Is. 12:2—6. Dan. 4:1—3.

tion of JEHOVAH were ensured to Israel, when they sought him as dwelling between the cherubim above the ark: therefore the ark itself is called "his strength" and this implies, that we must "seek the Lord," through Christ, and according to the gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. "The judgments of his mouth," may either mean, the righteous laws and statutes given to Israel, or the just vengeance which God denounced and executed on his enemies, in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in Canaan. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Deut. 7:6—8. Is. 41:8, 9.*)

V. 14. Israel, as the peculiar people of JEHOVAH, were bound to worship and obey him; and ought to glory and rejoice in him. Indeed, his word and his works, both of mercy and vengeance, which had become known and renowned among the nations far and wide, suggested powerful motives both of warning and encouragement, to his professed servants. He also governs the whole earth in justice and in judgment: and is continually executing, in his providence, deserved punishment upon offending nations and individuals. His judgments were made known in all the earth, in a most striking manner, when Christianity was established in the world, while the nation of the Jews, and the idolatrous Gentiles, who opposed the cause of Christ, were exposed to the most terrible and durable calamities.

V. 15—19. (*Note, Ps. 105:8—15. v. 8.*) The covenant of JEHOVAH with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, engaged to their posterity the inheritance of Canaan. This was *absolute*, as a law which required prompt obedience. Their descendants must inherit the land; but, which of their generations, or for how long a time that should be, depended on other circumstances, which were declared and stipulated by the Sinai-covenant. (*Notes, Gen. 17:1—12. 26:2—5. 28:13—15. Ex. 19:5. 24:6—8. Jer. 31:31—34. Gal. 3:15—18. Heb. 6:16—20. 8:7—13.*)—"What he had first promised to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac, by a solemn oath, he established to Jacob by an inviolable law, to endure for ever. *Bp. Patrick.* A thousand generations is a large definite number taken for an indefinite one; (*Deut. 7:9.*) and this language was suited to lead the thoughts of pious Israelites to the eternal inheritance typified by Canaan. The oath, by which the Lord condescended to ratify this engagement, showed the immutability of his counsel, and represented the covenant of grace, as irreversibly confirmed with every true believer.—David called upon the people to remember this covenant; that, considering from how small beginnings through how many and formidable difficulties, and after how many delays, the engagement of the Lord had been fulfilled; they might be animated to praise him, encouraged to trust him, and induced to cleave to and obey him.

V. 20—22. (*Notes, Gen. 20:1—7. 26:11.*) The Patriarchs were the Lord's anointed, as they were believers, prophets, and types and ancestors of Christ; in respect of the Lord's choice of them, his grace bestowed on them, and their spiritual consecration to his service; though they were not externally anointed with oil, that we read of. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 John 2:20—29.*)

V. 23, 24. Having taken a suitable passage from one psalm, to stir up the congregation to celebrate the praises of God, for his special mercies to Israel; David introduces another psalm, and adds a solemn call to all the inhabitants of the earth to join in his praises, as the only living and true God, the Creator and Judge of the world, and the God of salvation; and from day to day to make known his glory and salvation still more widely. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ps. 96:1—4.*) "Let not only the Israelites praise him, but all the people of the earth acknowledge their great Creator; proclaim his

23 For ^{the} great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised : ^{he} also is to be feared above all gods.

26 For all the gods of the people ^{are} idols : but the LORD made the heavens.

27 Glory and honour are in his presence ; strength and gladness are in his place.

28 Give unto the LORD ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

29 Give unto the LORD ^{the} glory due unto his name : bring an offering, and come before him : worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

[Practical Observations.]

30 Fear ^{before} him, all the earth : the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice : and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.

32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof : let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

a Ps. 89:7, 145:3-6, Is. 40:12-17, Rev. 15:3-4, b Ex. 15:11, Ps. 66:3-5, 76:7, Jer. 5:22, 10:6-10, Rev. 15:4, c Lev. 19:4, Ps. 115:4-9, Acts 19:26, 1 Cor. 8:4, d Is. 42:5, Jer. 10:11, 12, e Ps. 81, 16:11, 83:2-3, John 17:24, f Ps. 27, 4-6, 28:7, 43:2-4, g Ps. 96:6, h Ps. 29:1, 2, 68:34, i Ps. 66:1-2, 67:4, 86:8-10, 98:4, 100:1-2, Is. 11:10, j 29:10-14, Ps. 115:1-2, 1 Cor. 15:10, 2 Cor. 12:9, 10, Eph. 1:6, 17-19, Phil. 4:13, k Ps. 89:5-8, 108:3-5, 148:13, 14, Is. 6:3, Rev. 4:9-11, 5:12-14, 7:12, l 1 Kings 8:41-43, Ps. 68:30, 31, 72:10, 15, Is. 60:4, 7, m Ps. 95:2, 100:4, n 2 Chr. 20:21, Ps. 29:2, 50:2, 96:6, 9, 110:3, Ez. 7:20, 24:25, o See on 23, 25, Ps. 96:9, Rev. 11:15, p Ps. 33:9, 93:1, 148:5, 6.

promised salvation by Christ without intermission.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 25, 26. The power and majesty, the authority and eternity, the omniscience, omnipresence, and unchangeableness of God, are his greatness : as his justice, wisdom, truth, goodness, and mercy, form his holiness. In both respects he is altogether glorious, and infinitely exceeds the most exalted praises, and even the comprehension, of the noblest of all created intelligences. Thus he is the sole object of fear, and reverential worship, and adoring love ; while all others, to whom divine worship ever was rendered, are either senseless stocks, fallen angels, or mere creatures, who cannot help their worshippers, or punish their despisers. (Notes, Ps. 96:5, Jer. 10:6-8, 11-15, Rev. 15:1-4.)

V. 27. (Ps. 96:6.) Wherever the Lord displays his presence by his works, he shows the glory and honour of his perfections : but, in heaven, where his presence is manifested, in a manner to us inconceivable and ineffable, his glory and honour beam forth upon the blessed inhabitants, so as to transform them fully into his holy image of light, purity, and felicity, and to be reflected back in their rapturous unceasing worship and service of him. This is, in a feeble way, imitated and emulated, "in his place," his sanctuary, his church on earth. There his power and beauty are in a measure displayed ; and the true believer, beholding in Christ Jesus the glory of the Lord, "is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord ;" and thus is both made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and enjoys the earnest of it. (Notes, Ps. 27:4-6, 50:1, 2, 63:1-4, 2 Cor. 3:17, 18.)

V. 28, 29. This is an exhortation to all who then heard, and all who now hear or read it, to "ascribe to JEHOVAH the tribute of praise and adoration, which he demands as his due ; to allow that all glory belongs to him, and that all power resides in him, or is derived from him ; and to render to him that gratitude, love, and service, which is due to him from all, as their Creator and hourly Benefactor. (Notes, Ps. 29:1, 2, 96:7-9.) This cannot be withheld without the basest ingratitude.—"All the kindreds of the earth" form but one family, and ought to unite in the service of their common Father. But all had sinned and fallen under condemnation ; yet, through the Redeemer, who was promised from the beginning, all were invited to approach the Lord with their worship and oblations at his sanctuary. This may be called, "the beauty of holiness," from the especial presence of the Lord, dwelling above the ark between the cherubim, upon the mercy-seat, as Israel's God ; as typifying the human nature of Jesus Christ ; and representing the believer's heart, now become "an habitation of God through the Spirit." When, however, we approach the Father, upon a mercy-seat, through the sacrifice and mediation of the Son, and under the influences of the Holy Spirit ; then, and then only, do we, in the full meaning of the words, "worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."

V. 30. Let all men fear the power, justice, and majesty of God : let them fear his wrath, and flee for refuge to his mercy ; let them reverence his authority and excellency, and learn to worship and obey him. (Notes, Gen. 22:1, 12, 1 Kings 8:41-43.) If this were done, it would render the moral state of the world as stable and immovable, and keep every thing in as great order and regularity, as his creating and upholding word has established the natural state of it : and to this the gospel is suited to bring all who embrace it. (Note, Ps. 75:2, 3, 96:10.)

V. 31, 32. Wise, righteous, and good kings, and equitable laws, impartially administered, make prosperous nations ; and all good subjects must rejoice in a government of this description ; but traitors and criminals tremble on that very account.

33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth.

34 O give thanks unto the LORD ; for he is good ; for his mercy endureth for ever.

35 And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

36 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

37 ¶ So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required :

38 And Obed-edom with his brethren, three-score and eight : Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah to be porters :

Is. 49:8, Jer. 10:12, Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3, q Ps. 19:1, 89:5, 148:1-4, Luke 24:13, 14, 15:10, r Ps. 97:1, 98:4, Luke 2:10, s Ps. 53:1, 2, 96:10, 99:1, 145:1, Is. 33:2, Matt. 6:13, Rev. 1:6, 16:1, Ps. 43:4, 59:7, u Ps. 99:3, 148:9, 10, Is. 44:23, x Ps. 96:12, 13, Ez. 17:23-24, y Ps. 98:9, 2 Thes. 1:3, 10, 2 Tim. 3:14, Rev. 11:17, 18, z Ezra 3:11, Ps. 106:1, 107:1, 118:1, 136:1, ec Jer. 33:11, a Ps. 14:7, 53:6, 79:20, b Ps. 105:45, Is. 43:21, Eph. 1:12, 1 Pet. 2:6, 9, c 9:10, Ps. 44:8, Is. 45:25, 1 Cor. 1:31, d 1 Kings 8:15, 36, Ps. 72:19, 108:48, Eph. 1:3, 1 Pet. 1:3, e Deut. 37:15-25, Neh. 8:6, Jer. 29:6, 1 Cor. 14:16, f See on 4-6, 15:17-24, 25:1-6, g 2 Chr. 8:14, Ezra 3:4, h 13:14, 26:4-8, i 25:3

The Lord, who reigns over all, is perfect in his character, his law, and his administration : this alone would be cause of universal joy, if all men were loyal and obedient ; but it speaks terror to the sinner's conscience. Yet, as the Lord reigneth in Jesus Christ upon a throne of grace ; even sinners, yea, the chief of sinners, may rejoice, when, desirous of forgiveness and reconciliation, they are made humbly willing to become his subjects : so that men, of all nations on earth, are called on to join the gladness of the blessed inhabitants of heaven ; and in exulting joy to proclaim, "that the LORD God omnipotent reigneth." (Notes, Ps. 97:1, 2, 99:1-3.)

V. 32, 33. All the parts of nature are here poetically addressed, by the royal prophet, to join the universal song of joy and praise ; in their several ways, to welcome JEHOVAH as the Sovereign of the universe ; and to wait the great decisive day, when he will come, as the Saviour of his people, to judge the world in righteousness. (Notes, Ps. 96:11-13, 98:7-9, 148: Is. 55:12, 13.) Perhaps all the different ranks and descriptions of the human species, who have feared the Lord, and hoped in his mercy, and who will then unanimously rejoice in the consummation of their felicity, are here intended under figurative expressions. The first coming of Christ likewise, with the calling of the Gentiles, and the surprising and most happy change effected by the gospel, in the moral and religious state of the world, as preparatory to his second coming, seems also to have been predicted. Indeed, nothing but the plenteous goodness of God, the perpetuity and eternity of his mercy in Christ Jesus, can encourage a sinner to desire his appearing as a Judge ; all therefore except true believers must tremble at the thoughts of that solemn season, in proportion as they understand the nature of that judgment, and attentively meditate upon it : and they will be driven to desperation when it shall arrive.

V. 34-36. (Notes, Ps. 136:1-3, Jer. 33:10, 11.) Many Israelites, even when David came to the throne, might be dispersed in other nations, by the frequent wars waged with their neighbours. And he prayed that they might be gathered from their dispersions, to join in this joyful worship. (Notes, Ps. 147: 106:47, 48.) Perhaps the Spirit of God, who spake by the Psalmist, intended the gathering of Israel from future and greater dispersions ; and it may well be accommodated to the present state of that nation, and our hope of their future calling into the church ; as well as to the collecting together of believers from all the nations of the earth, to bless and adore the God of Israel, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. We can scarcely enlarge our thoughts to conceive the effect, which these high praises of God, sung by so vast a multitude, with harmonious elevation of heart and voice, upon this joyful occasion, must have produced. It naturally leads our thoughts to the songs of the redeemed of the Lord in glory ; and perhaps we are not, in this world, capable of more just and spiritual ideas of them, than are suggested by this subject, though we may be sure that they are unspeakably more sublime and refined. (Notes, Ps. 41:11-13, v 13, 89:52.)

V. 37-43. Abiathar was high-priest at this time ; and it is probable he resided at Jerusalem. Abiathar the high-priest attended upon David, that if he had any occasion to consult the divine majesty, he might be ready to do it for him. Bp. Patrick.—The stated worship before the ark consisted principally of psalmody and music, over which Asaph presided. But Zadok, of Eleazar's line, as next in authority under the high-priest, resided at Gibeon, where the tabernacle and the brazen altar still remained : (Note, 2 Sam. 6:17.) and there, with the other priests, he took care that all the sacrifices prescribed by the law should be regularly offered.—Psalmody was constantly performed here also, under the direction of Heman and Jeduthun : and they had

39 And ¹Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, ²before the tabernacle of the LORD, ³in the high place that *was* at Gibeon,

40 To ¹offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually ²morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;

41 And with them ¹Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were ²expressed by name, ³to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy *endureth* for ever;

42 And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with ¹trumpets and cymbals, for those that should make a sound, and with ²musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun were ³porters.

*k See on 12:28. 121:29. 2 Chr. 1:34. m 1 Kings 3:4. n Ex. 29:38-42. Num. 28:3-8. 1 Kings 18:29. 2 Chr. 24:31-3. Ezra 3:3. Ez. 46:13-15. Dan. 9:21. Am. 4:4. * Heb. in the morning and in the evening. o 37: 6:30-47: 25: 1-6. p 12:31. Num. 1:17. Ezra 8:20. q See on 34. 2 Chr. 5:13. 7:3. 20:21. Ps. 103:13. Luke 1:50. r 2 Chr. 29:25-28. Ps. 150:3-5. s 25:6. * Heb. for the gate. t 2 Sam. 6:19, 20. 1 Kings 8:56. u Gen. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. Ps. 101:2.*

with them the sacred trumpets, which seem to have been kept by them, though used by none but the priests.—When David brought the ark from obscurity, he was directed to convey it to Jerusalem, because it was to be stationed there. As he intended immediately to build a temple for its reception, he did not remove the tabernacle of Moses thither; but prepared a temporary tent, perhaps formed in the same manner: and when he was not allowed to build the temple, he made no alteration, but attended to both separately all his days. It seems that these regulations were made and declared, before the people separated, and were continued from that very day. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 6:20. 1 Kings 3:4.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. The public revival of religion, and the pure worship of God, being countenanced and protected by the powers that be, are joyful events to believers: and when their hearts are enlarged with gratitude to God, they will also be expanded in liberality towards men, and disposed to pray for them, and to do good to them for his sake.—It is a good and pleasant thing to be thankful, and we should carefully record and frequently review the Lord's mercies, to us and to his church, that we may be excited to abound in joyful praises: and ministers are especially appointed, by the Son of David our King, to animate and assist the people thus to glorify and rejoice in God, by preaching to them the gospel of salvation, and by every other means in their power.—The streams of mercy, of which we partake, should be traced back to that Fountain of love whence they are derived; and, in thanking the Lord for his benefits to us, we should celebrate the glorious excellences of his nature. This will also encourage our own faith and hope, and excite the attention of others to observe and admire his marvellous works: therefore we should be unreserved and open, in singing and speaking forth the praises of our God.—Riches, pre-eminence, wisdom, and strength, are precarious blessings, in which we must not glory and rejoice: but "let him that glorieth, glory" in his relation to "the Lord" our Salvation. To know, love, and belong to him constitutes the chief honour and happiness of man; and forms "that good part which shall never be taken from us." While the assured believer boldly glories in the righteousness, mercy, truth, and power of his reconciled God, let the trembling sinner rejoice also; for he casts out none that come, and saves all who trust in him. But, let us all learn to seek him diligently; and continually: not only that we may rejoice in his favour; but that we may be strengthened by him, to perform every service, and to triumph over all our inward and outward enemies. Indeed, we could no longer distrust either his mercy, or his power, if we duly remembered his works of old; especially the marvellous work of redemption, through Jesus Christ, which has eclipsed all former displays of his wisdom, truth, and love. Nor are "the judgments of his mouth" less worthy of our attention, than "the operations of his hands": by them we are instructed and directed; and even the denunciations of his wrath, and the execution of his righteous vengeance on sinners, "warn us to flee from the wrath to come," and to "give diligence to make our calling and election sure:" whilst his mercies are recorded, to enliven our gratitude and encourage our hope; as the happy and chosen servants of God, who are "followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (*Notes, and P. O. Heb. 6:13-20.*)

V. 14-29. The all-sufficient God is the Portion and the everlasting recompense of his true people; while his worship and service form the solace of their souls in this evil world. "He is ever mindful of his covenant," and he makes it a law to himself, an invariable rule of his conduct towards them: and if we were duly mindful of it, we should derive great encouragement from his promises, and from that oath which he has interposed for the "strong consolation of all those, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them:" while love and gratitude would, as an inward law in our minds, command and constrain our most devoted obedience.—Those who are interested in his promise of eternal

43 And ¹all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned ²to bless his house.

CHAPTER XVII.

David, purposing to build a temple, is encouraged by Nathan, 1, 2. The Lord afterwards, by Nathan, prohibits it; but with many encouraging promises, 3-15. David's prayer and thanksgiving, 16-27.

NOW it came to pass, ¹as David sat in his house, that David said to ²Nathan the prophet, Lo, ³I dwell in a house of cedars, but ⁴the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains.

2 Then Nathan said unto David, ¹Do all that is in thine heart; ²for God is with thee.

3 ¹And it came to pass the same night, that ²the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and ¹tell David my servant, ²Thus saith

a 2 Sam. 7:1, 2. Dan. 4:4, 29, 30. b 29:23. 2 Sam. 12:1, 25. 1 Kings 19:23, 24. c 14:1. Jer. 22:15. Hag. 1:4, 8. d Ps. 132:5. Acts 7:46. e 5: 15:1. 16:1. Ez. 40:19-21. 2 Sam. 6:17. 2 Chr. 1:4. f 22:7, 29:2. Josh. 9:14. 1 Sam. 16:7. Ps. 20:4. 1 Cor. 13:9. g 1 Sam. 10:7. 2 Chr. 7:3. Zech. 8:23. Luke 1:28. h Num. 12:6. 2 Kings 20:1-5. Is. 30:21. Am. 3:7. i Is. 55:8, 9. Rom. 11:33, 34.

life, by faith in Jesus Christ, will be carried through all difficulties, and rendered superior in all conflicts, though in themselves they are few and poor. Here, they wander as strangers and pilgrims; but, compared with them, the most potent monarchs are accounted mean and vile, in the judgment of God. They have received the unction of his Holy Spirit; his seal is affixed to them, and no man can injure them with impunity: nay, nothing can possibly harm them, but all things shall eventually work together for their good. (*Notes, and P. O. Rom. 8:28-39.*) Let us, however, be careful of prematurely concluding, that we are numbered with them; and seriously appeal to our consciences and experience, whether "the Lord of the whole earth be" that Lord whom we desire to obey: and whether salvation by Jesus Christ from deserved wrath, from Satan, sin, and this present evil world, be our daily prayer, hope, and rejoicing. Do we perceive and adore the glory of the divine perfections, and rejoice in celebrating his praise? And do we yield ourselves to his service; depending on his mercy and grace, and lamenting that we love him no more and serve him no better? All this, and immensely more, is due to him; for he is infinitely great, holy, and good; all our praises are beneath his excellency; and nothing can be compared with his uncreated majesty. Let us then devote all we have and are to him, and aim to worship him "in the beauty of holiness."

V. 30-43. The LORD our God is greatly to be feared. All the earth shall stand in awe of him: for his wrath against the workers of iniquity is intolerable and eternal; but "in his favour there is life, in his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore." He is glorious as our Creator and Judge, but more glorious as a Saviour: in that character sinners may approach and worship him, with acceptance and comfort; and men on earth, as well as the holy inhabitants of heaven, may rejoice in his universal and everlasting kingdom; because in Christ Jesus, "he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever." Oh, that there were such a heart in us and in all men, thus to fear him and to hope in his mercy; that we might look forward with comfort and exultation to our meeting him upon his awful judgment seat! He is continually collecting, before his throne, that chosen remnant, which the Saviour has redeemed unto God with his blood, from all the nations of the earth; and there, being freed from sin, admitted to the beatific vision, and filled with love, and gratitude, and joy, they sing eternal praises to his name. As we successively depart this life, may our souls be gathered unto them; and may that time speedily arrive, when the scattered Jews shall at length be gathered into the church, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, to "give thanks to his holy name, and to glory in his praise!" Amen, and Amen.—In this life believers enjoy, from time to time, earnestness and foretastes of heavenly bliss; but, when they cannot reach such fervent affections and exalted strains, they must steadily persevere in using the means of grace, as sinners "beholding the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:" and the continual attendance of his appointed ministers, in his courts, is not only right in itself, but an encouragement to the faith and hope of his people, and a help to their praises and thanksgivings. Finally, it is well, when one duty prepares the soul for another; when public worship renders us more constant and spiritual in family worship and secret devotion; and when the effects of the whole appear in our conduct in relative life and in society.

NOTES.—*CHAP. XVII. V. 1-6.* This chapter almost entirely answers to the seventh of the second of Samuel; many minute variations indeed are found; but those only which are more material need here be noticed. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 7:1-7.*) *Tent to tent, &c. (5)* In the wilderness, the ark was taken out of the tent, when the camp of Israel marched; and was returned into it, when they rested.—It was afterwards taken from the tabernacle at Shiloh, and then stationed at Kirjath-jearim, doubtless in a tent prepared for it; thence David removed it to another tent on mount

the LORD, 'Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in:

5 For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day: but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

6 Whosoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedars?

7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel:

8 And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.

9 Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning,

10 And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore, I tell thee, that the LORD will build thee a house.

11 And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

12 He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever.

13 I will be his Father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee:

14 But I will settle him in my house, and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

16 And David the king came and sat before

the LORD, and said, Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

17 And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God: for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.

18 What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant.

19 O LORD, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things.

20 O LORD, there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

21 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem, to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?

22 For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God.

23 Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

24 Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.

25 For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him a house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.

26 And now, LORD, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

27 Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blestest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed for ever.

1. 26:7, 8, 26:2, 2 Sam. 7:4, 5. 1 Kings 8:19. 2 Chr. 6:9, 9. k 2 Sam. 7:6. 1 Kings 8:27. 2 Chr. 2:6. 6:18. Is. 66:1, 2. Acts 7:44-50. * Heb. been. 1 Ex. 40:2, 3. 2 Sam. 6:17. 1 Kings 8:4, 16. m Ex. 33:14, 15. 40:35-38. Lev. 26:11, 12. Num. 10:35-36. Deut. 33:14. 2 Cor. 6:16. Rev. 21. n Judg. 2:15-18. 1 Sam. 12:21. Mic. 7:7. Judges. Acts 13:20. o 11:2. Ps. 78:71. Jer. 23:24. Ez. 34:2. Mic. 4. Matt. 2:6. marg. p Ex. 3:1-10. 1 Sam. 17:15. 2 Sam. 7:8. Ps. 78:70, 71. Am. 7:14, 15. Matt. 4:18-22. Luke 5:10. q Heb. from after. q 2 Sam. 6:21. Matt. 2:6. r 1 Sam. 15:14, 23. 2 Sam. 7:9. 8:8, 14. Ps. 45:7, 11. s 1 Sam. 26:10. 31:6. 2 Sam. 22:39-41. t 17. 2 Sam. 7:13. Ezra 4:20. Ps. 71:21. 75:7. 113:7, 8. Luke 1:52. u Jer. 31:13, 12. Ez. 34:11. x Ps. 44:2. Jer. 24:6. 31:41. y Ez. 36:14, 15. 37:25. Am. 9:15. z Ps. 89:22. Eph. 2:2, 3, 5, 6. a Is. 49:17. 60:18. b Ex. 1:13, 14, 2, 23. c Judg. 3:8. 4:3. 6:3-6. 1 Sam. 13:9, 6, 19, 20. d Is. 19:5. 60:23. 116:1. e Ex. 1:21. 2 Sam. 7:11. Ps. 127:1. f 28:15, 28. Ez. 13:36. g Gen. 15:15. Deut. 31:16. 1 Kings 1:21. 2:10. Acts 2:29. h 28:5. 2 Sam. 7:12, 13. 12:24, 25. 1 Kings 8:20. Ps. 132:11. Jer. 23:5, 6. Rom. 1:3, 4. i 22:9, 10. 28:6-10. 1 Kings 5:5. 2 Chr. 3:4. Ezra 3:12. Zech. 6:12, 13. John 2:19-21. Act. 7:47, 48. Col. 2:9. j Is. 89:4, 29, 36, 37. Is. 9:7. Dan. 2:44. 1 Cor. 15:26. Rev. 11:15. 12 Sam. 7:14. Ps. 89:35, 27. Heb. 1:5. m Ps. 2:7, 12. Luke 9:25. John 3:35. n 2 Sam. 7:15, 16. 1 Kings 11:12, 13, 36. o 12. 10:14. 1 Sam. 15:28. p Ps. 2:6. 89:36. 1 Sam. 1:32, 33. Heb. 3:6. q 2 Sam. 7:17. Jer. 23:23.

Zion. (16:1-3. Notes, 1 Sam. 7:1, 2. 21:1, 2. 2 Sam. 6:10, 11, 17.)

V. 7-15. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Sam. 7:8-16.—I took, &c. (7) Notes, 2 Sam. 12:7. Ps. 78:70-72. Is. 51:1-3. Eph. 2:11-13.—Name, &c. (8) Notes, Gen. 12:1-3. Ps. 71:20, 21.—But I will, &c. (14) In the parallel passage the Lord says to David, "thy house, and thy kingdom;" but here "my house, &c." The Lord was Israel's King; and David and Solomon were his vicegerents, as well as types of the Messiah, in whose church and kingdom all these promises and predictions have their grand fulfilment: which shows "that this principally belonged to the Messiah, of whom David was but a figure." Bp. Patrick.

V. 16, 17. (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:18, 19.) Thou hast, &c. (17) In the parallel passage we read, "Is this the manner of men, O LORD God?" It was not the manner of men to raise a poor shepherd to be a renowned and powerful king. Some expositors, however, suppose, that David here referred to the Messiah himself, the Seed of the woman, the greatest of the human race, being also "the Lord from heaven;" in whose line God had placed David as the progenitor, and had honoured him as the type of his anointed King. "Thou hast looked upon me according to the manner of the Man who is of high degree, O LORD God." (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:19. Ps. 110:1. 1 Cor. 1:5, 45-49. Phil. 2:5-11.)

V. 18-24. Notes, 2 Sam. 7:20-25. Thy servant's sake. (19) "For thy word's sake," in Samuel.—The promise, in fulfilling which God conferred these benefits on David and

Acts 20:27. r 2 Sam. 7:13. 2 Kings 19:14. s Gen. 32:10. Ps. 144:3. t Judg. 6:15. 1 Sam. 9:21. u Gen. 42:15, 16. 1 Sam. 7:12. Acts 26:2. 2 Cor. 1:10. x 7, 3. 2 Sam. 7:19. 12:4. z 2 Kings 3:4. Is. 49:6. y 11-15. Eph. 3:20. z 8. 1 Kings 8:13. Ps. 78:70-72. 89:19, &c. Phil. 2:9-11. 1 Sam. 2:30. 2 Sam. 7:20-24. b 1 Sam. 16:7. Ps. 139:1. John 21:17. Rev. 2:23. c Is. 37:35. 42:1. 49:3, 6. d Matt. 11:28. Eph. 1:3-11. 3:11. e Heb. greatness. 29:11, 12. Ps. 111:3, 5. e Ex. 15:11, 18:11. Deut. 3:24. Ps. 39:6, 8. Is. 40:12, 25. Jer. 10:6, 7. f Deut. 4:35, 39. 1 Sam. 2:2. Is. 43:10. 44:6. 45:5, 22. g Ps. 44:1. 78:3, 4. Is. 68:12. h Deut. 4:7, 32-34. 34:26-29. Ps. 147:20. 1 Ex. 3:7, 8. 19:4-6. Deut. 15:15. Ps. 77:15. 107:34. 111:9. Is. 63:9. Tit. 2:14. k Neh. 9:10. Is. 48:9, 32. Jer. 20:10, 10. l 1 Vent. 4:34. Ps. 65:5. 68:3. 71:14-3. Is. 64:3. m 1 Vent. 71:2. Josh. 10:42. 21:43-45. 21:11, 12. Ps. 44:2, 3. n Gen. 17:7. Ex. 19:5, 6. Vent. 7:6-8. 26:18, 19. 1 Sam. 12:22. Jer. 31:31-34. Zech. 13:9. Rom. 9:4-6. 25:26. 1 Pet. 2:9. o Gen. 32:2. 2 Sam. 7:25-29. Ps. 119:49. Jer. 11:5. Luke 1:38. q 2 Chr. 6:33. Ps. 21:13. 2:19. Matt. 6:9, 13. John 12:28. 17:1. Phil. 2:11. l Pet. 4:11. q Jer. 31:1. Heb. 8:10, 11:16. s Heb. revealed the ear of. 1 Sam. 9:15. r See on 10. s Heb. 10:17. Ez. 36:37. 1 John 5:14, 15. t Ex. 34:6, 7. Tit. 1:2. Heb. 6:18. u Or, it hath pleased. u Gen. 27:33. Ps. 72:17. Rom. 11:29. Eph. 1:3.

his race, was first given from love to him, as a type of Christ, "his Servant in whom his soul delighteth." "He had passed his word to David by his prophets out of his own mere goodness, without any other motive. It may be also thought to signify, for the sake of the Messiah, who is the word of God, and by way of eminence is called his Servant. Is. 42:1. 49:5. Bp. Patrick.

What one nation, &c. (21) Notes, Deut. 4:6-8, 34-40.—A God to Israel. (24) The Lord, as the "God of Israel," not only required worship and obedience; but he was himself the all-sufficient Friend and Portion of his chosen people.

V. 25-27. Notes, 2 Sam. 7:26-29. Luke 1:26-38.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repetitions in the word of God may be considered as tacit reproofs of our negligence, forgetfulness, and unteachableness. Indeed, we are very backward to get familiarly acquainted with every part of the sacred volume, and very prone to forget what we have read; so that we need to be taught again what we seem to have already learned: and for all these reasons it is very useful to have the same important truths, precepts, and examples enforced on us, in different parts of the Scriptures. If, in reading any chapter, or hearing any sermon, we learn nothing new; yet are reminded of those things of which we had lost sight, and stirred up to the exercise of faith and holy affections, and to the more diligent, fervent, and delightful practice of our several duties—very important purposes are answered. (Note, 2 Pet. 1:12—15. P. O. 12—18. Note, 3:1-4.) It may however, suffice

CHAPTER XVIII.

David subdued the Philistines, and makes the Moabites tributary, 1, 2. He smites Hadarezer and the Syrians, 3-8. Tou, king of Hamath, sends his son to David with presents, which he dedicates with the spoil, unto God, 9-11. He puts garrisons into Edom, 12, 13. He reigns in equity, 14. His principal officers, 15-17.

NOW ¹after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

² And he smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, and ³brought gifts.

⁴ And David smote ⁵Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to establish his dominion ⁶by the river Euphrates.

⁷ And David took from him a thousand chariots, and ⁸seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also ⁹houghed all the chariot-horses, but reserved of them ¹⁰a hundred chariots.

¹¹ And when ¹²the Syrians of ¹³Damascus came ¹⁴to help Hadarezer king of ¹⁵Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.

¹⁶ Then David put ¹⁷garrisons in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. ¹⁸Thus the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.

¹⁹ And David took the ²⁰shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

²¹ Likewise from ²²Tibath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, ²³wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

²⁴ Now when ²⁵Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah;

²⁶ He sent ²⁷Hadoram his son to king David, to ²⁸inquire of his welfare, and to ²⁹congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer ³⁰had war with Tou); and ³¹with him ³²all manner of vessels of gold, and silver, and brass.

³³ ¶ Then also David ³⁴dedicated unto the Lord,

a 2 Sam. 8:1, 2. b 1 Sam. 5:9. 27:4. 2 Sam. 1:20. 8:1. Metheg-ammah. c Num. 31:17. Judg. 3:23, 30. 2 Sam. 8:2. Ps. 60:8. Is. 11:14. d 1 Sam. 10:27. 1 Kings 10:25, 26. 2 Kings 1:5. 2 Sam. 8:2. Ps. 68:29. 72:9-10. Is. 16:1. e 2 Sam. 8:3. Hadoram. f 1 Sam. 14:47. 2 Sam. 10:6. Ps. 60: title. g Gen. 15:18. Ex. 23:31. h 2 Sam. 8:4. seven hundred. i Deut. 17:16. Josh. 11:6, 9. Ps. 20:7. 33:16, 17. k 1 Kings 4:26. 10:26. l 2 Sam. 8:14. 1 Kings 11:23, 24. m Heb. Darnesek n Is. 8:9, 10. o 3. 1 Sam. 14:47. q See on 3. Ps. 18:43, 44. p 17:8. Ps. 121:6. Prov. 21:31. r 1 Kings 10:16, 17. 14:26-28. 2 Chr. 9:15, 16. 12:30. s 2 Sam. 8:8. Beita. Berothi. t 22:14. 1 Kings 7:15-47. 2 Chr. 4:2-6, 12-18. Jer. 52:17-23. u 2 Sam. 8:9. Toi. v Or, Joram. 2 Sam. 8:10. w Or, salute. im. g Heb. bless him. h Heb. was the man of wars. v 2 Chr. 9:3, 23, 24. Is. 39:1. i 2 Kings 12:15. 2 Chr. 27:29. Ex. 35:21-24. 2 Sam. 8:11, 12. 1 Kings 7:51. k 2 Kings 12:15. 2 Chr. 24:1. Mic. 4:13. z 30:12. y 1 Sam. 27:9. 30:13, 20. Ps. 83:6, 7. z 16:2. 11:20. 1 Sam. 26:6, 8. 2 Sam. 3:30. 10:10, 14. 16:9-11. 19:21, 22.

to observe in this place, that persons of eminent piety will still be devising and attempting one service after another for the honour of God, and to promote the best interests of mankind; accounting themselves to have done nothing, while so much remains to be done: that Christ alone begins and finishes his work, and perpetually unites in his own person all those offices which are requisite for the welfare of his church; but that mere men have, for a short space, certain portions of service allotted them, which they cannot exceed: that God accepts and rewards those good desires, which he is pleased for wise reasons to frustrate: that his favour and his image ennoble the meanest of his people, above "the estate of men of high degree;" that we cannot possibly desire more for ourselves, or for the church, than he has promised: that true grace desires all this, and wants no more; and true faith, in vigorous exercise, seeks, asks, expects, and waits for it all, in the way which God has prescribed: and that, if we serve the Lord, as a God over us in dependence on his mercy through Jesus Christ, he will be a God to us; and those whom he blesses, will be blessed for evermore. For this blessedness may we look, with patient submission and joyful expectation, amidst the trials of life, and in the hour of death; and may the same be continued to our children and posterity after us, through successive generations!

NOTES.—**CHAP. XVIII. V. 1.** In the parallel passage, Gath is called Metheg-ammah, or the *bridle of Ammah*, as built on a natural strong-hold, called Ammah, and intended to *bridle*, or keep in subjection, the adjacent country. (*Note, 2 Sam. 8:1.*)—The rest of this chapter, which is for substance the same as the eighth chapter of the second of Samuel, has already been commented on. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. *Establish his dominion.* (3) In Samuel, "Recover his border."—Seven thousand. (4) In the parallel pas-

sage, "with the silver and the gold that he brought from all these nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek."

12 *Moreover, Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of salt eighteen thousand.*

13 *And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. Thus the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.*

14 *So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people.*

15 *And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, recorder;*

16 *And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Abimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Shavsha was scribe;*

17 *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were chief about the king.*

CHAPTER XIX.

David sends ambassadors to comfort the king of Ammon, who abuses and insults them, 1-5. The Ammonites and Syrians are vanquished by Joab, and Abishai, 6-15. The king of Syria sends another army, which David conquers, slaying its commanders, 16-18. The Syrians submit to David, 19.

NOW it came to pass after this, that ¹Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.

² And David said, ³I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him.

⁴ But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, ⁵Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?

⁶ Wherefore Hanun ⁷took David's servants, and ⁸shaved them, and cut off their garments in

20:6, 21:17. 23:18. ¶ Heb. Abishai. 19:11. marg. a 2 Sam. 8:13. Ps. 60: title. 3:9. b 2 Kings 14:7. 2 Chr. 25:11. c 6. 1 Sam. 10:5. 13:3. 14:1. 2 Sam. 23:14. 2 Cor. 11:34, 42. d Gen. 25:23. 27:29. 37:40. Num. 24:18. e See on 6. Ps. 18:48-50. 121:7. 122:1. f 12:38. g 2 Sam. 8:15. Ps. 78:7, 72. Is. 9:7. 32:1, 2. Jer. 22:15. 23:5, 6. 33:15. h 11:6. 2 Sam. 8:16. 1 Kings 4:3. i Or, remembrance. k 2 Sam. 8:17. Ahimelech. l 2 Sam. 20:25. 1 Kings 2:35. m 2 Sam. 8:12. Seraiah. 20:25. Sheraiah. 1 Kings 4:3. Shieha. n 2 Sam. 8:18. 15:18. 20:7, 23. 23:19-23. 1 Kings 1:38, 44. 2:34, 35. o Zeph. 2:5. ¶ Heb. at the hand of. 28:28. marg. a 1 Sam. 11:1. 12:12, 12. 2 Sam. 10:1-3. b 1 Sam. 30:26. 2 Sam. 6:1, 7. 2 Kings 4:13. Path. 6:3. Ec. 9:15. c Gen. 19:37, 38. Deut. 23:3-6. Neh. 4:3, 7. 13:1. d 1 Sam. 29:4, 9. 1 Kings 12:8-11. e Heb. In thine eyes doth David. f 1 Cor. 13:5-7. g Gen. 42:1-13. Josh. 2:1-3. Judg. 1:23, 24. 18:2. 8-10. h Ps. 35:12. 109:4, 5. h Lev. 19:27. Is. 15:2. Jer. 41:5. 45:57. 11s. 20:4. 47:2, 3.

sage, "Seven hundred." (*Notes, 2 Sam. 8:3, 4.*)—*Brazen sea, &c.* (8) *Notes, 1 Kings 7:15-47.*

V. 9-17. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Sam. 8:9-18.*—*Dedicated.* (1) "David ... had in his heart to build a splendid house for God's habitation. And when he was prohibited by God to do it, ... he could not satisfy himself without doing something towards it; by preparing materials for it, and consecrating a great deal of treasure to be employed in the building, and no other use." *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 22-5, 14. P. O.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," shall, in due time and manner, have all other things added unto them. Communion with God, and his consolations, are intended to animate us to diligence in our proper work, and vigour in our spiritual warfare.—Earthly possessions are often lost by attempting to establish them: and sinners ruin themselves by encouraging and assisting one another, in rebellion against God, and opposition to his cause. Our good fight of faith, under the Captain of our salvation, will assuredly terminate in everlasting triumph and peace. But the happiness of Israel, through David's victories and equitable administration, very faintly shadowed forth the felicity of the redeemed in the realms above, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, and Jesus shall reign in the midst of them for ever and ever, and they shall behold, and share, the joy and glory of his kingdom. (*Heb. 12:2. Notes, Matt. 25:19-23. Rev. 3:20-22.*) Let us then, without delay, join ourselves to him, trusting and serving him constantly and faithfully, that at length we may be for ever with him.

NOTES.—**CHAP. XIX. V. 1-5.** *Notes, 2 Sam. 10:1-5. V. 6. Syria-machah.* ¶ Or, *Aram-machah.* Machach (or Machathi) lay to the east of Jordan, and had been allotted to Manasseh: but it is probable, that the Syrians

the midst hard by their buttocks, and ¹sent them away.

5 Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry ^{at} Jericho until ^{your} beards be grown, and ^{then} return.

6 ¶ And when the children of Ammon saw that they ^{had} made themselves ^{odious} to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent ^a thousand talents of silver, to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of Zobal.

7 So they ^{hired} thirty and two thousand chariots, and ^{the} king of Maachah and his people, who came and pitched before ^{Medeba}. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.

8 And when David heard of it, he sent ^{Joab}, and all the host of the mighty men.

9 And the children of Ammon came out, and ^{put} the battle in array before the gate of the city: and ^{the} kings that were come ^{were} by themselves in the field.

10 Now ^{when} Joab saw that the ^{battle} was ^{set} against him before and behind, he chose out of all ^{the} choice of Israel, and put ^{them} in array against the Syrians.

11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abishai his brother, and they set ^{themselves} in array against the children of Ammon.

12 And he said, ¶ If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

13 Be ^{of} good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and ^{let} the Lord do ^{that which} is good in his sight.

14 So Joab and the people that were with him drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and ^{they} fled before him.

15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, ^{they} likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 ¶ And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that were beyond the river: and ^{Shophach} the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them.

17 And it was told David: and he gathered all

Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set ^{the battle} in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him.

18 But the Syrians ^{fled} before Israel: and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand ^{men which fought} in chariots, and forty thousand ^{footmen}, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

19 And when ^{the} servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither ^{would} the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

CHAPTER XX.

Rabbah is taken, and a colled, and the inhabitants are treated with great severity. 1-3 Three giants are slain by David's servants, in three battles against the Philistines, 4-6.

AND ^{it} came to pass, that ^{after} the year ^[B. C. 1035.] was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and ^{wasted} the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged ^{Rabbah}. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And ^{Joab} smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.

2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found ^{it} to weigh a talent of gold, and ^{there were} precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

3 And ^{he} brought out the people that were in it, and cut ^{them} with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that ^[B. C. 1018.] there ^{arose} a war ^{at} Gezer with the Philistines: ^{at} which time ^{Sibbechai} the Hushathite slew ^{Sippai}, ^{that was} of the children of ^{the} giant: and they were subdued.

5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of ^{Goliath} the Gittite, whose spear's staff was like a weaver's beam.

6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man ^{of} great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was ^{the} son of the giant.

7 But when ^{he} ^{defied} Israel, Jonathan the son of ^{Shimea}, David's brother, slew him.

8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and ^{they} fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

1 Kings 16:31. n. 1 Kings 16:32. n. 1 Kings 16:33. n. 1 Kings 16:34. n. 1 Kings 16:35. n. 1 Kings 16:36. n. 1 Kings 16:37. n. 1 Kings 16:38. n. 1 Kings 16:39. n. 1 Kings 16:40. n. 1 Kings 16:41. n. 1 Kings 16:42. n. 1 Kings 16:43. n. 1 Kings 16:44. n. 1 Kings 16:45. n. 1 Kings 16:46. n. 1 Kings 16:47. n. 1 Kings 16:48. n. 1 Kings 16:49. n. 1 Kings 16:50. n. 1 Kings 16:51. n. 1 Kings 16:52. n. 1 Kings 16:53. n. 1 Kings 16:54. n. 1 Kings 16:55. n. 1 Kings 16:56. n. 1 Kings 16:57. n. 1 Kings 16:58. n. 1 Kings 16:59. n. 1 Kings 16:60. n. 1 Kings 16:61. n. 1 Kings 16:62. n. 1 Kings 16:63. n. 1 Kings 16:64. n. 1 Kings 16:65. n. 1 Kings 16:66. n. 1 Kings 16:67. n. 1 Kings 16:68. n. 1 Kings 16:69. n. 1 Kings 16:70. n. 1 Kings 16:71. n. 1 Kings 16:72. n. 1 Kings 16:73. n. 1 Kings 16:74. n. 1 Kings 16:75. n. 1 Kings 16:76. n. 1 Kings 16:77. n. 1 Kings 16:78. n. 1 Kings 16:79. n. 1 Kings 16:80. n. 1 Kings 16:81. n. 1 Kings 16:82. n. 1 Kings 16:83. n. 1 Kings 16:84. n. 1 Kings 16:85. n. 1 Kings 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CHAPTER XXI.

David, tempted by Satan, requires Joab to number the people, 1-4. The number is returned to the king, 5, 6. God is displeased, and David owns his fault, 7, 8. The Lord, by Gad the prophet, proposes three judgments to David, who chooses three days' pestilence, 9-13. Seventy thousand are cut off; and David, seeing the destroying angel, intercedes for the people, 14-17. Directed by God, he buys Ornan's threshing-floor; and sacrifices: fire consumes the oblation, and the plague is stayed, 18-21. He again sacrifices there, leaving to go unto Gibeon, 22-30.

AND ¹Satan stood up against Israel, and ²provoked David to number Israel.

² And David said to ³Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from ⁴Beer-sheba even to Dan; and ⁵bring the number of them to me, ⁶that I may know it.

³ And Joab answered, ⁷"The Lord make his people a hundred times so many more as they be; but, my lord the king, ⁸are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? ⁹why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?"

⁴ Nevertheless ¹⁰the king's word prevailed against Joab. ¹¹Wherefore Joab departed, ¹²and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

⁵ ¶ And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all ¹³they of Israel were ¹⁴a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah ¹⁵was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

⁶ But ¹⁶Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to ¹⁷Joab.

⁷ And ¹⁸God was displeased with this thing, therefore ¹⁹he smote Israel.

⁸ And David said unto God, ²⁰I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, ²¹do away the iniquity of thy servant: for I have done very foolishly.

⁹ ¶ And the Lord spake unto ²²Gad, David's seer, saying,

¹⁰ Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three ²³things; ²⁴"choose the one of them, ²⁵that I may do it unto thee.

¹¹ So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, ²⁶"Choose thee

²⁷either ²⁸three years' famine; or three months ²⁹to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh ³⁰thee; or else three days ³¹the sword of the Lord; ³²even the pestilence, in the land, and ³³the angel of the Lord

¹ 2 Sam. 24:1. 1 Kings 22:29-32. Job 1:6-12. 2:4-6. Zech. 3:1. Matt. 4:3. Luke 22:31. John 13:2. Acts 5:3. James 1:13. Rev. 12:10. ² Luke 11:53. Heb. 10:21. ³ See on 2 Sam. 24:2-4. ⁴ 2 Judg. 20:1. 1 Sam. 3:20. 2 Sam. 3:10. 17:1. 24:15. 1 Kings 4:25. 2 Chr. 30:5. ⁵ ⁶ 27:23-24. ⁷ Deut. 8:13-17. 2 Chr. 32:25-29. Prov. 29:23. 2 Cor. 12:7. ⁸ 19:13. ⁹ 11:14. Prov. 14:28. Is. 26:15. 49:19. ¹⁰ Gen. 20:9. Ex. 32:21. Num. 32:10. 1 Sam. 2:24. 1 Kings 14:16. ¹¹ Ex. 4:1. Ex. 1:17. Deut. 3:18. Acts 5:29. ¹² See on 2 Sam. 24:3-8. 17:2. 23:24. 2 Sam. 24:9. ¹³ m. Num. 1:47-49. ¹⁴ n. 2 Sam. 2:7. 11:5-21. 20:9, 10. ¹⁵ * Heb. ¹⁶ And it was evil in the eyes of God concerning this thing. ¹⁷ 2 Sam. 11:27. 1 Kings 15:5. ¹⁸ 14. Josh. 7:15. 13:2. 22:16-26. 2 Sam. 21:14. 24:1. ¹⁹ 2 Sam. 12:13. Ps. 51:11. 32:5. ²⁰ 2 Sam. 12:13. Luke 15:18. 1 John 1:9. ²¹ Ps. 51:1-3. Hos. 14:2. John 1:28. ²² Gen. 34:7. 1 Sam. 13:13. 26:21. 2 Sam. 13:13. 2 Chr. 16:9. ²³ 29:29. 1 Sam. 9:9. 2 Sam. 24:11. ²⁴ * Heb. stretch out. ²⁵ Josh. 24:15. Prov. 1:29-31. ²⁶ n. Num. 20:12. 2 Sam. 12:10-12. 1 Kings 13:21, 22. Prov. 3:12. ²⁷ 2 Chr. 13:1. ²⁸ * Heb. Take to thee. ²⁹ y. Lev. 26:25-29. 2 Sam. 21:1. 1 Kings 17:1. 2 Kings 1:1. 1 Sam. 14:25. ³⁰ Lev. 25:17. 35:37. Deut. 35:15. 35:51. 52. ³¹ Jer. 42:16. ³² 16. Is. 66:16. Jer. 12:12. 47:6. ³³ b. Lev. 26:16. 35. Deut. 28:22, 27. 85. Ps. 91:6. Ex. 14:19-21. ¹ c. 15:16. Ex. 12:23. 2 Kings 19:35. Matt. 13:49, 50.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

A pious and benevolent mind cannot possibly *delight* in mentioning the transgressions of useful and eminent men. So that if truth and candour will permit, and if no good purpose can be answered by speaking, persons of this character will choose to be silent; though they will by no means deny, excuse, or extenuate the sins of any man, when they cannot honestly conceal them. It however proves a malignant or an unfeeling mind, to be always searching into the miscarriages of others, especially those of superior reputation, in the world, or in the church.—The conflicts of believers, like those of David, will be successive, as long as they live here; and sometimes the sharpest are reserved till the last: and their victories will be gradual, as their enemies will still be renewing their assaults, and recovering their strength.—Though the Lord severely correct the sins of his own believing people, he will not leave them in the hands of their enemies; his assistance far more than counterbalances all the advantages, in number and strength, of those that defy his Israel; and all that trust in him shall be made more than conquerors, through him that loveth them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 1. (*2 Sam. 24:1, 2.*) It is said in 2 Sam. 24:1. that God, being angry with Israel, moved David, that is, suffered Satan to move him. This is sufficiently explained there. Only here the phrase *stood up* is to be observed; which was the posture of those who

destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. ¹Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

¹³ And David said unto Gad, ¹⁴"I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the Lord; for very ¹⁵great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man."

¹⁴ ¶ So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel ¹⁶seventy thousand men.

¹⁵ And God sent an angel ¹⁷unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, ¹⁸"It is enough, stay now thy hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of ¹⁹Ornan the Jebusite."

¹⁶ And David lifted up his eyes, and ²⁰saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, ²¹who were clothed in sackcloth, ²²fell upon their faces.

¹⁷ And David said unto God, ²³"Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but ²⁴as for these sheep, what have they done?" Let thy hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and ²⁵on my father's house; but not on thy people, ²⁶that they should be plagued.

¹⁸ ¶ Then ²⁷the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, ²⁸that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

¹⁹ And David ²⁹went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord.

²⁰ And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. ³⁰Now Ornan was thrashing wheat.

²¹ And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and ³¹bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

²² Then David said to Ornan, ³²"Grant me the place of ³³this threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: ³⁴that the plague may be stayed from the people."

²³ And Ornan said unto David, ³⁵"Take it to

Acts 12:23. Rev. 7:1-3. ¹ d. 2 Sam. 24:13, 14. ² e. 2 Kings 6:17. 7:4. Esth. 4:11. 15. John 12:27. Phil. 1:23. ³ f. Heb. 15:1. ⁴ g. Ex. 34:6, 7. Ps. 86:5, 15. 103:8. 130:7. Lam. 3:32. Job. 3:9. 4:2. Mic. 7:18. Hab. 3:2. ⁵ i. Gen. 22:1. Deut. 5:7. 51:1, 2. 69:13, 16. 106:7. Is. 57:6, 13. 7:15. ⁶ h. 2 Chr. 28:9. Prov. 12:10. Is. 47:6. 1 Num. 16:49. 2 Sam. 24:15. ⁷ i. Ex. 12:30. Num. 25:9. 1 Sam. 6:19. 2 Kings 19:35. ⁸ e. 2 Sam. 24:16. Jer. 7:12. 29:9, 18. Matt. 23:37, 38. ⁹ 1 See on Gen. 6:6. ¹⁰ Ex. 32:14. Judg. 2:18. 10:16. ¹¹ f. 79:38. Jer. 18:7-10. m. Ex. 9:28. 1 Kings 19:4. Ps. 99:13. Mark 14:41. ¹² n. 2 Sam. 24:18. ¹³ Arounch. 2 Chr. 31:1. ¹⁴ o. Ex. 14:19, 20. 2 Kings 6:17. ¹⁵ p. 1 Kings 21:27. 2 Kings 19:1. Ps. 35:13, 14. Job. 3:6-8. ¹⁶ q. Num. 14:5. 16:22. ¹⁷ r. 8. 2 Sam. 24:17. Is. 51:4. Ex. 16:63. ¹⁸ s. 1 Kings 22:17. Ps. 44:11. ¹⁹ t. 2 Sam. 24:1. ²⁰ u. Gen. 44:33. Ex. 32:32, 38. John 10:11, 12. Rom. 9:3. 1 John 5:20. ²¹ v. Ex. 20:5. 2 Sam. 12:10. Ps. 51:14. Is. 29:7, 9. ²² y. Josh. 22:18. ²³ z. 11. Acts 8:26, &c. ²⁴ w. 15. 2 Sam. 24:18. 2 Chr. 31:1. ²⁵ 2 Kings 5:10-14. John 2:5. Acts 9:6. ²⁶ x. Or, When Ornan turned back and saw the angel; then he, and his four sons with him hid themselves. ²⁷ c. Judg. 6:11. ²⁸ d. 1 Sam. 23:23. 2 Sam. 24:18-20. ²⁹ f. Heb. Give. 1 Kings 1:2. ³⁰ e. 2 Sam. 24:21. ³¹ f. Num. 16:49. 25:9. ³² g. Gen. 23:4-6. 2 Sam. 24:22, 23. Jer. 32:8.

charged or accused any person of a crime, in a court of justice. See 1 Kings 22:21. Thus Satan is represented as "the accuser of the brethren," in the book of the Revelation; and here to lay some sin to the charge of the Israelites, which he represented to God as a reason to punish them. For it is the way of the holy Scripture, thus to bring down these things, and accommodate them to the lowest capacities. *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, Job 1:9-12. Zech. 3:1-4. Rev. 12:1-2.)

V. 2-6. Notes, 2 Sam. 24:3-9.—Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? (3) This part of Joab's expostulation with David is not found in Samuel; and it shows, that Joab, amidst all his crimes, had considerable knowledge in religion, and much sagacity in discerning the motives, and presaging the consequences, of other men's conduct. (*Marg. Ref. h.*)—The king's word was abominable to Joab. (6) *He did all this against his will; and at last the work was so odious unto him, that he was quite tired with it; and therefore broke off, before he took the numbers of these two tribes! *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 7, 8. Notes, 2 Sam. 11:27. 12:13. 24:10.—He smote Israel. (7) *He resolved to punish them; because it was for their sins, that God permitted David to indulge himself in this vanity. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9-17. Notes, 2 Sam. 24:11-17.

V. 18-25. Notes, 2 Sam. 24:18-25.—Saw, &c. (20) The destroying angel was rendered visible, not only to David and

thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is good in his eyes*: lo, I give *thee* the oxen also for burnt-offerings, and the thrashing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering; I give it all.

24 And king David said to Ornan, 'Nay; I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that which is thine* for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.

25 So ¹David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.

26 And David ²built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven ³by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.

27 And ⁴the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

28 ¶ At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

29 For ⁵the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for ⁶he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

CHAPTER XXII.

David makes large preparations for the temple, 1-8. He instructs Solomon and charges him to build it, 8-16. He commands the elders of Israel to assist him, 17-19.

THEN David said, 'This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel.

2 And David commanded to gather together the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel; and he set ¹masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.

3 And David ²prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance ³without weight;

4 Also ⁴cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre brought much cedar-wood to David.

5 And David said, ⁵Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house *that is* to be build for the LORD *must be* exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will *therefore* now make preparation for it. So ⁶David prepared abundantly before his death.

6 ¶ Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel.

7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, ⁷it was in my mind to build a house ⁸unto the name of the LORD my God:

1 Sam. 6:14. 1 Kings 19:21. Is. 28:27, 28. 1 Gen. 14:23. 23:13. Deut. 16:16, 17. Mat. 1:12-14. Rom. 12:17. k 2 Sam. 21:24, 25. 1 Ex. 20:24, 25. 24:4, 5. m 1 Sam. 7:8, 9. Ps. 51:15. 91:15. 99:6. Prov. 15:8. Is. 65:24. Jer. 33:3. n Lev. 2:24. Judg. 6:21, 13:30. 1 Kings 18:38. 2 Chr. 7:1. o 15:16. 2 Sam. 24:16. Ps. 103:20. Heb. 1:14. p 12:20. Jer. 47:6. Ez. 21:30. Matt. 26:52. John 13:11. Is. 40:1, 55. r 16:39. 1 Kings 3:4. 2 Chr. 1:13. s 16:13:12. Deut. 10:12. 2 Sam. 6:1. Job 13:21. 21:6. 23:15. Ps. 119:124. Jer. 12:25. 22. Rev. 1:17. 15:4. 22:15. 22. 22:17. Deut. 12:5-7. 11. 2 Sam. 24:18. 24:18. 3. 15:6. Ps. 78:61. 67-69. 123:13, 14. John 4:20-22. b 2 Chr. 18:22. c 1 Kings 9:20, 21. 2 Chr. 2:17. 5:7, 8. Is. 61:5, 6. Eph. 2:12, 19-22. d 14:1.

2 Sam. 5:11. 1 Kings 5:17, 18. 6:7. 7:9-10. 2 Kings 12:12. 22:6. Ezra 3:7. e 29:27. f 14:1. 1 Kings 24:1. 2 Chr. 4:18. Jer. 22:30. g 2 Sam. 5:11. 1 Kings 5:6-10. 2 Chr. 2:3. Ezra 3:7. h 29:1. 1 Kings 3:7. 2 Chr. 13:7. i 1 Kings 9:8. 2 Chr. 2:5. 7:21. Is. 61:11. Ez. 7:20. Hag. 2:3, 9. Luke 21:3. k Deut. 31:2-7. Ec. 9:10. John 3:30. 4:37, 38. 9:4. 13:1. 2 Pet. 1:13-15. l Num. 27:18, 19, 23. Deut. 31:14, 23. Matt. 26:15-20. Acts 1:2. 20:25-31. 1 Tim. 5:21. 6:13-17. 2 Tim. 4:11. m 17:1. 28:2. 29:3. 2 Sam. 7:2. 1 Kings 8:17-19. 2 Chr. 6:7-9. Ps. 132:5. Acts 7:46. n Deut. 12:5, 11, 21. 1 Kings 8:16, 20, 29. 9:3. 2 Chr. 2:4. Ezra 6:12.

the elders of Israel, but to Ornan, (or Araunah,) and his sons also. Indeed, it is probable, that this awful vision of the angel, with a "drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem," continued apparent to all the inhabitants, till David had offered the appointed sacrifices. The variations in the narrative are noted in the exposition of the parallel passage in Samuel.

V. 26. The fire from heaven was an emblem of divine vindictive justice against sinners: but, this fire consuming the sacrifices, and sparing the offenders, who thus pleaded guilty and sought mercy, was the highest token of the Lord's acceptance of the sacrifice, and a type of our salvation by the propitiary sufferings of Christ for us. (Notes, Gen. 4:3-5. Lev. 9:24. 1 Kings 18:38, 39. 2 Chr. 7:1-3.)

V. 28-30. David had in general been used to sacrifice at Gibeon: (Notes, 16:37-43. 1 Kings 3:4.) but on this emergency he was afraid to leave Jerusalem, lest the angel should smite the inhabitants: and having been accepted at the thrashing-floor of Ornan, he continued afterwards to offer sacrifices there. (Note, 22:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

So long as we abide on earth Satan has access to us, through the remains of sin in our hearts, and especially of pride: and the Lord has wise and righteous reasons for permitting the influence, under certain restrictions, to tempt his servants. As far as he obtains this permission, he is unwearied in his malicious efforts to deceive, to defile, or to distress us: and he can vary his devices in many plausible ways: but, he does us more harm as a seducer than as an accuser, as a subtle serpent than as a roaring lion. We are therefore called upon to be sober and vigilant, and to pray always that we "enter not into temptation;" and, as men advance in rank and reputation, authority, or usefulness, they have need to redouble the guard, and to be more watchful and instant in prayer than ever; for the enemy levels his assaults especially against those who are eminent in character, or fill up public stations, in the church or in the community; because their falls involve numbers either in sin or suffering.—It is a mercy to be speedily made sensible of our guilt, when we have been left to transgress: but no confession or humiliation can secure us from present sufferings, when we have committed such crimes as appear abominable even to ungodly men, and bring an open scandal upon our profession.—By thus yielding to temptation we bring ourselves into dreadful straits, from which we can by no means extricate ourselves: yet, even in this case, there is encouragement for us to leave our cause in the hand of the Lord, that he may do with us as he pleases; "for very great are his mercies."—Of all the painful consequences of transgression, none in this world can be more distressing to an ingenuous mind, than to see those whom we most love, and desire the most to do good to, suffering heavily through our sins. But even under the anguish of this trial, we must not allow ourselves to murmur, or to despond.—The Lord has righteous reasons for his dispensations, though mysterious to us: and therefore they, who are reciprocally suffering through each other's sins, should unite together in humiliation before

him, and in fervently deprecating the effects of his indignation from each other. This forms the proper employment of every individual, in times of general calamity: and when public honour has thus been rendered to the righteous Author of national sufferings, his merciful interposition may be expected. He knows how to educe good from evil, and to overrule our sufferings, nay, even our sins, for the good of our souls, and the promotion of true religion.—The fear of impending vengeance, from the wrath of an offended God, is naturally calculated to drive men from him. But in subservience to the gospel, and through the influence of the Spirit of God, it concurs in showing sinners the preciousness of Christ; disposing them to forsake all for him, and afterwards enlarging the mind in grateful obedience to him, who has saved them from so great a destruction. Those who shelter their souls, as it were, under the atonement of his sacrifice, who "suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust," will be safe from danger, even in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, and none are losers, by being willing to part with all for the sake of Christ, or to dedicate all to his service.—When the urgency of our affairs constrains us to act contrary to our previous methods and rules, or to our inclination, we shall frequently learn afterwards, that, by so doing, we were preparing the way for some important benefit from the Lord to us or to others: and in the observance of his directions, we may confidently expect acceptance and returning comfort.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Lord, having pointed out the place, where he would have sacrifice offered for averting the pestilence, and having "answered by fire from heaven;" David was assured, probably by immediate inspiration, that it was his will, the temple should be built by Solomon on this very spot. It had immediately before been in the possession of a *Jebusite*, which was an intimation of mercy intended for the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. (21:18.)—It does not appear, whether David removed the ark thither with its tent, or whether it remained in its former place.—Henceforth this became the spot, which God "chose to place his name there," and where sacrifices were regularly offered, as, long as that dispensation lasted. (Notes, Deut. 12:5-7. 2 Chr. 3:1, 2. Ps. 78:67-69. John 4:19-24.)

V. 2-5. David though denied the honour of building the temple, yet out of love to so good a work, employed himself in making every kind of preparation for it. (Notes, 18:9-17. v. 11. 28:11-18. 29:1-9.)—The strangers, here mentioned, seem to have been the remnant of the old inhabitants, who, having submitted to David, had their lives spared, and had been reduced to bondage. (Note, 1 Kings 9:20-22.)—David procured much cedar-wood for the temple; but Solomon had occasion for a great deal more. (Marg. Ref.)—According to the nature of that introductory dispensation, and for an emblem of the spiritual glory of Christ and his church, Solomon's temple was built with great magnificence: that, being renowned through all countries, strangers might be induced to visit it, and thus become acquainted with JEHOVAH, and his true worship. Solomon also would need every encouragement and assistance for so

8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: 'Thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and 'I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be 'Solomon, and 'I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10 'He shall build a house for my name; and 'he shall be my son, and 'I will be his father; and 'I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

[Practical Observations.]

11 Now, my son, 'the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only 'the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, 'that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13 Then 'shalt thou prosper, if thou take heed 'to fulfil the statutes and judgments, which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: 'be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

o 28:3. Num. 31:19,20,24. 1 Kings 5:3. p 17:4-10. 9 Sam. 7:5-11. q 17:11. 28:7. 2 Sam. 7:12,13. r 1 Kings 4:20,25. 5:4. s 7:7. t 1 Kings 4:26. u 28:12. 45:7. 57:19. 66:12. Hag. 2:9. t 17:12,13. 28:8. 1 Kings 5:5. 8:19,20. Zech. 6:12,13. n Ps. 89:26,27. Heb. 1:5. x 17:14. 28:7. Ps. 89:36,37. l 4:7. y 16:28,20. Is. 26:12. Matt. 1:23. 28:20. Rom. 1:5,33. 2 Tim. 4:22. 2 Kings 3:9-12. 2 Chr. 1:10. Ps. 72:1. Prov. 2:5,7. Luke 21:15. Jam. 1:3. a 1 Pet. 4:6. 1 Kings 11:1-10. Prov. 14:8. 1 John 2:2. b 28:7. Josh. 1:7,8. marg. 1 Kings 2:3. Jer. 22:3,4. c Matt. 3:15. Acts 13:22. Gal. 6:2. Jam. 2:8. d 28:20,20. Deut. 31:7,8. Josh. 1:6-9,18. 1 Cor. 16:13. Eph. 6:10. 2 Tim. 2:1. 'Or,

great a work, as succeeding to the throne of Israel when young, and being called to perform so arduous and important a service; that he might not be retarded from entering on it in an early period of his reign. (Note, 1 Kings 3:5-14.)

V. 6-10. (Notes, Num. 27:18,19. 2 Tim. 4:1-8.) David was a type of Christ in his conflicts, victories, and the destruction of his obstinate enemies: but Solomon represented the Saviour triumphant, glorified, and giving peace and felicity to his willing subjects. In this latter character "the Prince of peace" erects his spiritual temple; and as he is accorded to the nature of the Christian dispensation, and to the character of Jesus, both of which were represented in this transaction, that the temple should be built by a peaceable prince, than by a successful warrior. Yet, David in his wars did the work and sought the honour of God, and was eminently serviceable to his people; and he was desirous also of building the temple. (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:1-5,12-16. 12:24,25. 1 Kings 8:17-21. Zech. 6:12,13.)

Hast shed blood. (8) 'Though David's wars were warranted, and succeeded by God in an extraordinary manner; yet it did not suit so well with the divine Majesty to have a house built him by one who had shed so much blood, as by one that reigned in peace and quietness: so that he might be an emblem of the King of peace, the Lord of the church, who was prefigured in all such great transactions.' Bp. Patrick.

For ever. (10) 'This can belong to none in the proper and full sense of the word, but Christ alone. For Solomon reigned but forty years, and after that his kingdom was torn in pieces. Therefore to Christ the author to the Hebrews applies them, Heb. 1:5. Bp. Patrick.

V. 11, 12. David had given Solomon exhortations and instructions; but the powerful influence of divine grace alone could form him to that wisdom, piety, and zeal, which such a work required. This he earnestly prayed for in Solomon's behalf, and taught him to pray for and confidently to expect: for the language may be understood as an assurance that it would be so; as well as a prayer that it might be so. The connexion also of the several particulars is well worthy of notice. The Lord must give the wisdom and understanding, in order that he might keep the charge and the law: for this would be the genuine and sure effect, and thus prosperity would be the result. (Notes, 13. 1 Kings 3:5-14. Ps. 72:4.)

V. 13. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 28:7,8. Josh. 1:7,8.) Conscientious obedience to the commands of God, on scriptural principles, both secures final success, and inspires present courage and confidence.

V. 14. The gold and silver here mentioned, if computed by the ordinary weight of the talent, would amount to eight or nine hundred millions sterling; and this enormous quantity would have more than sufficed to erect an edifice, as large as the temple itself apart from its courts, of solid gold and silver. Compared therefore with the size of the temple, and with the gains of Solomon, when the precious metals became common at Jerusalem; (1 Kings 9:14,28.) it is generally concluded, either that some mistake has taken place in the numeral letters, or that a talent of inferior weight and value is meant.—David had collected this treasure for the temple in his trouble,

14 Now behold, in my 'trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD 'a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron 'without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15 Moreover, 'there are workmen with thee in abundance, 'hewers and workers of stone and timber, and 'all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16 Of 'the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, 'there is no number. 'Arise, therefore, and be doing, 'and the LORD be with thee.

17 'David also commanded 'all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying,

18 'Is 'not the LORD your God with you? 'and hath he not given you rest on every side? 'for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued 'before the LORD, and before his people.

19 Now 'set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; 'arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, 'to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built 'to the name of the LORD.

poverty. 2 Cor. 8:2. e 28:4-7. 1 Kings 10:14. f 3. 2 Kings 25:16. Jer. 52:20. g That is, masons and carpenters. See on 2-4. h 28:5. 31:3-5. 35:32-35. 1 Kings 7:14. h See on 3,14. i Josh. 1:2,5,9. 7:10. Judg. 4:14. 18:9,10. 2 Chr. 20:17. 1 Cor. 15:58. Eph. 5:14. Phil. 2:12,13. 4:13. k 1 Sam. 17:37,20. 13. l 28:21. 29:26. Rom. 16:23. Phil. 4:3. 3 John 8. m Judg. 6:12-14. Rom. 8:31. n See on 9. 28:12. Deut. 12:10,11. Josh. 24:23. 1 Sam. 7:1. Acts 9:31. o Deut. 20:4. Josh. 10:12. 1 Sam. 25:28. 2 Sam. 5:19,20. Ps. 44:1-5. p 16:11. 28:9. Deut. 4:29. 32:46,47. 2 Chr. 30:3. Dan. 9:3. Hag. 1:5. marg. Acts 11:23. q See on 16. a. 60:1. Acts 22:16. r 1 Kings 8:6,21. 2 Chr. 5:7. 6:11. a See on 7. 1 Kings 5:3.

or in his poverty. He had set out in life very poor; he had passed through a constant succession of trials and troubles, not only before he came to the kingdom, but during his whole reign; and all his prosperity was the result of the Lord's singular kindness, in making him a gainer by all the attempts of his numerous enemies.—He seems also to speak of his preparation as a small matter, whether compared with the greatness of the Lord to whom it was dedicated, or with his own obligations to him. (Notes, 29:10-19.)

V. 15-19. Marg. Ref. Notes, 28:20,21. 29:2-9,21-25.—Set your heart, &c. (19) Earnestly seize the present opportunity, and make it your grand concern to seek and serve the Lord in all respects, as well as to build the temple. (Notes, Ec. 9:10. Is. 55:6,7. Matt. 6:33,34. John 12:34-36.)

Practical Observations.

V. 1-10. When the grace of God possesses the heart, a man's falls and mistakes will eventually be overruled to form him to such a humble and watchful frame of mind, as will exceedingly increase the simplicity, purity, and activity of his zeal in the service of God.—The most eminent servants of the Lord are apt sometimes to abate their diligence; and alarming providences often concur with the warnings and rebukes of the Scripture, to stir them up to greater earnestness; especially when they are reminded of the approach of death, and perceive that much remains to be done, and that probably they have only a short time in which to do it.—When the Lord refuses to employ us in those kinds and in that measure of service to his church, which we desired and hoped to perform; we must not on that account yield to indolence or discouragement. But we should be doing what we can, in a subordinate sphere, and upon a smaller scale; and rejoice in affording any little assistance to those who are honoured with more extensive usefulness. The "spirit that is in us," indeed, powerfully "lusteth to envy;" but we must seek unto him, who "giveth more grace," that this evil may be mortified and subdued.—We are not likely on earth to witness those glorious times which are foretold in the Scriptures, when Satan shall no more deceive the nations, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" yet, it is possible that we may be, as it were, collecting materials for that work. Whatever is done towards rendering the word of God more generally known, understood, and attended to, in the world, is like bringing a stone, perhaps an ingot of gold, towards erecting the edifice. Whatever tends to bring the rising generations, in succession, acquainted with the gospel of Jesus Christ, in its purity and energy, is, as it were, enlisting soldiers for that decisive conflict, in which the armies of Christ shall obtain most glorious victories. These considerations should encourage us, when we are grieved that we see no more fruits of all our labours. Much good may appear after our death, which was hidden from us, "lest we should be exalted above measure." "Let us not then be weary of well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."—Above all, they who are aged, and expect shortly to be removed to a better world, should diligently instruct, encourage, charge, and caution those, who are young and inexperienced, and who are likely to succeed them in their work. The service is arduous

CHAPTER XXIII.

David makes Solomon king, 1. The Levites are numbered, and classed for different services, 2-6. The sons of Gershon, 7-11. Of Kohath, 12-20. Of Merari, 21-23. The several officers of the Levites, 24-32.

SO when David was ^{old} and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

2 ¶ And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

3 Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was ^{thirty} and eight thousand.

4 Of which, ^{twenty} and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the Lord; and six thousand were officers and judges.

5 Moreover, four thousand were porters; and four thousand praised the Lord with the instru-

a 29:23. Gen. 25:8, 35:29. 1 Kings 1:1. Job 5:26. b 28:5. 29:22-25. 1 Kings 1:33-39. c 13:1. 29:1. Josh. 23:2, 24:1. 2 Chr. 34 29 30. d Num. 4:2, 3, 23, 30, 35, 43, 47. e Num. 4:48. f 23-32. g 6:48. 9:28-32. 29:20-27. h Or, overseer. Neh. 7:11-9:22. Acts 20:29. g 26:28-31. Deut. 16:18, 17:9-10. 2 Chr. 19:5. Mal. 2:7. h 9:17-22. 15:23, 24. 16:38. 28:1-12. 2 Chr. 8:14, 35:15. Ezra 7:7. Neh. 7:73.

and important, being intimately connected with the honour of God, and the salvation of souls; and "who is sufficient for these things?" Indeed, all our sufficiency must be of God. He allots various services to his people; and that which qualifies for one kind of usefulness, may unfit for another; we should then all acquiesce in his will; and fill up our proper place for the common benefit, as the members do in the human body. (*Note, Rom. 12:5-8.*) But peace is in its own nature preferable to the most successful wars; and the shedding of human blood, though sometimes necessary, should always be done with great reluctance, and thought of with horror: for even when the Lord commanded it, he was pleased to speak of it, as "shed in his sight," and as what he had no pleasure in beholding. We should therefore be far more ambitious of the honour of giving rest and quietness to those around us, than of the conqueror's applause. "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." (*Notes, Matt. 5:9. Jam. 3:17, 18.*)—Among other unspeakable advantages of public peace, this is peculiarly important, that it affords the fairest opportunities of executing useful designs to promote true religion: and then we should be active and earnest to seize the favourable opportunity, by forming or assisting every design of general utility. (*Note, Acts 9:31.*) But especially peace among Christians is conducive to this most desirable end; which is grievously counteracted by the animosities, divisions, and vehement controversies, which, alas! prevail and are multiplied. Did all real believers "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and to strive together for "the faith of the gospel," such effects would follow, as seem at present to exceed our largest expectations or conceptions. (*Note, and P. O. Eph. 4:1-6.*) The work is, however, in the hands of "the Prince of peace;" may he compose all our differences, and build the spiritual temple so magnificent and glorious, that the fame of it may be spread into all countries, till all the nations of the earth become his willing subjects, and live in love and peace with each other!

V. 11-19. Even the young, the weak, and inexperienced, when called forth to service by the Lord, may expect that he will be with them; and that he will give them upright, zealous minds, with true wisdom and understanding, and then cause them to prosper in their work.—No abilities or diligence can render us durably and extensively useful to others, if we do not take heed to our own conduct, that it be regulated according to the word of God. While we trust in his grace and mercy, and obey his commandments, we need fear no difficulties or opposition; the things which seem to be against us will "work together for our good;" we should then be "strong in the Lord," and of good courage, and not dread or be dismayed at the prospect of any temptations, troubles, or persecutions, which may meet us in the way of our duty.—In such an age and nation as this, we of course enter in many respects into the labours of others: but to all the preparation hitherto made in any place, we shall find it requisite to add far more; for much, very much remains to be done to render us "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (*Note, Tit. 2:14.*) All our advantages, and all the promises of the gospel, are intended to encourage our activity, and not to excuse our sloth. And, whether we seek our own salvation, or that of other men, we must "arise, and be doing."—The whole weight of public services should not be laid upon those who sustain public characters. Others are commanded to assist them in proportion to their talents and abilities: and they are exhorted to set their hearts and souls thus to seek and serve the Lord, that the good works, which have been devised, may be completed without needless delay. Thus nobles, senators, magistrates, and indeed every subject in his place, should concur with the king, in every scriptural measure for stopping the progress of immorality and profaneness, and for promoting the fear of God, and a regard to his truths, ordinances, and commandments: first they should lead the way by a good example; then they should proceed to employ their authority and influence, to give effect to such endeavours: and finally, they should seek the blessing of God upon them by fervent

ments which I made, said David, to praise there with.

6 And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi, namely, Gershon Kohath, and Merari.

7 ¶ Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei.

8 The sons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zethiam, and Joel, three.

9 The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Hazael, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan.

10 And the sons of Shimei were Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei.

11 And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the

i 6:31-48. 9:33. 15:16-22. 16:41, 42, 25:1-7. 2 Chr. 20:19-21. Ps. 67:7. j 1 Kings 10:12. 2 Chr. 29:25, 26. See on Am. 6:5. k 21 hr. 8:14, 29:25, 31:2. 33:10. Ezra 6:18. l Heb. distans. 24:1, 25:1. 1. 6:18. Gershom. Ex. 6:16 -23. Num. 26:57, 59. m 6:17-20. 15:7, 28:21. o Ex. 6:17. Edoni. Shimi. o 15:18, 20, 21. p 6:33, 34. 15:7, 11, 17. q 11. Zizah. r 10. Zina.

prayers. Thus likewise, the leading persons in congregations should second to the uttermost the labours of the minister for the good of souls: their unanimity, forbearance, and cordiality, their pious examples, family religion, and earnest prayers, should never be wanting, that they may add weight to his exhortations, strengthen his hands, encourage him in his arduous work, and bring a blessing upon it. Yet, alas! how contrary is the conduct of too many, who would be thought friends to the gospel! In the church, in their families, and in their worldly concerns, they act as if they meant to counteract the labours of ministers; to weaken their influence, to discourage their hearts, to prejudice men's minds against the blessed truths which they preach, and to embolden all around them to disregard their warnings and exhortations!—But surely, if "the Lord indeed be with us," and has given us rest from our enemies; we shall set our hearts and souls to seek him, and by every means in our power, to glorify his name, and promote the peace and prosperity of his church.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. David named Solomon his successor.—If this transaction preceded his last sickness, and Adonijah's usurpation, that usurpation was thus rendered more inexcusable: for it is evident that David acted as a prophet, as well as with the full concurrence of his people. (*Notes, 29:21-25. 1 Kings 1:5, 6. 2:15-18.*)

V. 2-6. The ark being now stationed at Jerusalem, the place of the temple appointed, and great preparations made for the building of it; (16:1. 22:1-4, 14.) David proceeded to reduce the whole service of the priests and Levites to method, which seems before to have been conducted with less regularity. The Israelites had been greatly increased; and we may suppose that, towards the close of David's reign, the occasional sacrifices were far more numerous than they had been. The priests and Levites also were greatly multiplied; and it was of importance to make every thing ready for conducting the service, with proportionable splendour and solemnity, as soon as the temple was finished. David therefore began his arrangements with numbering the Levites, from thirty years of age, as in the time of Moses: but it does not appear, that such as were above fifty years old were omitted. (*Notes, 24-28. Num. 4:3. 8:24-26.*) The priests, who were very numerous, were not included in the sum total here mentioned; so that this tribe had increased in greater proportion than the others.—Twenty-four thousand Levites were employed to "set forward the work of the house of the Lord;" (4) that is, to assist the priests in every thing pertaining to the sacrifices, and in removing from the temple and its courts whatever might be polluting and offensive; that the whole service might be performed with expedition and exactness, and every thing preserved entirely clean and beautiful. (28) It is also probable, that, while the temple was building, they were employed in superintending the workmen. They served in rotation by courses; and it may be concluded, that every week a thousand came in, and a thousand went out. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Kings 11:5-9.*) Doubtless it was also intended, that they should be instructors of the people, in their several districts, when not employed at the sanctuary. (*Notes, Num. 35:2-8. 2 Chr. 30:21, 22.*) Six thousand were employed as magistrates, in the different parts of the country, and perhaps they likewise acted in rotation. (4) Four thousand kept the doors of the sanctuary, that no unclean or improper person might enter the courts; that no disturbance might be made, to interrupt the sacred services; that none but priests might go into the temple; and that no one might rob the treasures there deposited: and four thousand were appointed as singers and musicians, to keep up that part of divine worship continually. (*Marg. Ref.*)—These also were divided into twenty-four courses, and changed weekly. (9:25.)

V. 7-23. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 6:16-48. Ex. 6:14-25. Num. 3:4. 16:1-4. Aaron, &c. (13) 6:49. Notes, Ex. 28:1. Num. 6:23-27. 16:5-7, 35-50. 17: 18:1-6. Moses, &c. (14)* As the sons of Moses were excluded from the priesthood evidently with Moses's most cordial and disinterested concurrence, and, as it appears from the history by their own also; no other person, not of Aaron's race, or of *us. any*

second: but **J**ash and Beriah ^{had} not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to *their* father's house.

12 ¶ The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

13 The sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses: and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever.

14 Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.

15 The sons of Moses were, Gershom, and Eliezer.

16 Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief.

17 And the sons of Eliezer were, Rehabiah the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah were very many.

18 Of the sons of Izhar; Shelomith the chief.

19 Of the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

20 Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second.

21 ¶ The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar, and Kish.

22 And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their brethren the sons of Kish took them.

23 The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

24 ¶ These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of their

fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the Lord, from the age of twenty years and upward.

25 For David said, The Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever;

26 And also unto the Levites: they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.

27 ¶ For by the last words of David, the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:

28 Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

29 Both for the show-bread, and for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;

30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even;

31 And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths, in the new-moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the Lord:

32 And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the Lord.

* Heb. did not multiply sons. a See on 6:2. Ex. 6:18. Num. 3:27. 26:58. t See on 6:3. Ex. 6:20. 13:37. 26:59. a Ex. 28:1. Num. 18:1. Ps. 99:6. 106:16. Acts 13:2. Rom. 1:1. Gal. 1:15. Heb. 5:4. x Ex. 29:33—37, 44. 40:9—15. Lev. 10:10, 17. 16:11—19, 32, 33. 17:2—6. Num. 18:3—8. y Ex. 30:6—10, 34—38. Lev. 10:1, 2. 16:12, 13. Num. 16:16—18, 33—40, 46, 47. 2 Chr. 26:18—21. Luke 1:9. Rev. 8:3. z Lev. 9:23, 24. Num. 6:23—27. Deut. 21:5. a See on Deut. 33:1. Ps. 90: title. b 26:23—25. c Ex. 3:2. 4:20. 18:3, 4. d 25:30. Shubnel. 1 Or the first. 26:25. 1 Heb. were highly multiplied. e 24:22. Shelomoth. 26:26. f 12. 15:9. 24:23. g 6. See on 6:29, 30. 24:26—30. h Ex. 6:19. Mahali. 12:4. 23:5. i Or, kinsmen. k Num. 35:6. l 124:30. Jeremoth. m Num. 10:17, 21. n Num. 1:4. 2:2. 3:15, 20. 4:34—49. o Num. 1:2, 18, 22. 3:47. p 3:27. Num. 1:3, 4. 8:24. Ezra 3:8. q See on 22:18. 2 Sam. 7:1, 11. 11 Or, and he dwelleth in Jerusalem, &c. 1 Kings 8:13, 27. Ps. 9:11. 68:16, 18. 132:13, 14. 135:21. Is. 8:3.

account reasonably think of intruding into that sacred office. (Note, 6:48.)

V. 24—28. (Note, 2—6.) The work of the Levites was by no means so laborious at this time, as when the tabernacle was carried by them, along with Israel, in their journeys; and perhaps numbers of the young Levites, being out of employ, contracted bad habits or set bad examples: therefore David, as a prophet, ordered this change. Twenty-five years of age had been the earliest term of their entering upon their probationary services, but now they were to be employed from twenty years old: and, as a matter of importance, David confirmed it with his last words. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.)

V. 29. Marg. Ref. Notes, 9:31—33. Ex. 25:23—30. Lev. 2:4—8. 24:5—8.—All manner, &c.] Those Levites, who acted as magistrates, (4) had the inspection of weights and measures of every kind, that no fraud might in this way be committed. Honesty is nearly connected with piety; and therefore the Levites, being sufficiently numerous, were employed to superintend the former as well as the latter. (Notes, Deut. 25:13—16. Prov. 11:1. 16:11. 20:10, 23. Am. 8:4—10. Mic. 6:10—15.) They probably kept standard-weights and measures at the temple, by which all those allowed in traffic, were tried and approved: and from this “the shekel of the sanctuary,” took that name. (Note, Ez. 45:10—12.)

V. 30—32. The Levites assisted the priests, in offering the sacrifices; though some parts of their service were performed by the priests alone. (Notes, Lev. 1:5—9. Num. 8:19—26. 18:2—6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we be prepared for death, having accomplished our measure of services, and seeing others raised up to succeed us in the church or the community, according to our several situations, we surely may be “full of days,” whatever our term of life may be: and satisfied with living in this world of sin and sorrow, of vanity and temptation, we may rejoice to leave all below, and even to be absent from our bodies, that we may go to heaven and be present with the Lord. (Notes and P. O. 2 Cor. 5:1—8.)—We should be thankful, in declining years, to be eclipsed by men of real integrity, piety, and useful endowments, who are coming forward upon the stage of action: yet, we should still endeavour to do all we can to promote the common cause of religion; and sometimes the sagacity and experience of old age, when incapable of much bodily exertion, may suggest and effect more real good, than the vigour and activity of youth.—The increase of ministers is of great importance, provided they be men of God, zealous

for his glory, and earnestly seeking the salvation of souls. In this case they will desire employment, and in one way or other will be usefully active.—But it is expedient that every one should know his proper place, to help forward the work of the house of the Lord; to promote equity and justice; to instruct the people in the truths and precepts of God's word, to take care that his ordinances be duly administered; and to excite and assist the people in his sacred worship.—Every method should be used to prevent the irregularity, indolence, and worldly lusts, of this order men, whose example, influence, and conversation are more useful, or more pernicious, than those of any other; and who are commonly either better or worse employed, than the other orders in society.—Though it is generally inexpedient, that the more arduous part of the sacred ministry should be performed by very young men; yet those who are intended for this service, ought by no means to waste their youth in inactivity or dissipation; but to employ their time in preparatory and initiatory studies and exercises.—A constant succession of religious duties, stated or occasional, public or private, must engage the true minister's attention, day by day continually: and if a man cannot take pleasure in such employments, he must soon be weary o the work, as a drudgery, and will either neglect it, or attend upon it unwillingly, for the sake of his wages. (P. O. Acts 6:1—7. Notes, 1 Tim. 4:12—16.) A new heart, a spiritual mind, which delights greatly in God's commandments, is the first and most essential qualification for the ministry; as indeed it forms the great distinction between the true Christian, and all other men in the world. To the spiritual man every successive service will yield renewed satisfaction; and he will be unwearied, and always abounding and delighting in the work of the Lord; being never so happy, as when employed for such a good Master, in so pleasant a service. With him the work itself, and the success of his labours, are the principal objects: the emolument or maintenance, (though he has a right to it, and perhaps cannot live without it,) is a very subordinate consideration: nor will he much regard whether he be called to take the lead, or whether he keep the charge of others who are placed over him, provided they do not mind his hands or impede his usefulness. (Notes, 1 Tim. 3:1—7. 1 Pet. 5:1—4.) These are indeed “men of God.” may he supply his church with numbers of them; in the place of those hirelings, who have in all ages swarmed in the professing church, to the scandal of religion and the ruin of their own souls! Such ministers as have been described, will be accepted and useful in the most obscure situations; and will subserve the interests

CHAPTER XXIV.

The priests are divided by lot into twenty-four courses, 1-19. The rest of the Kohathites, and the Merarites, are divided in like manner, 20-31.

NOW these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. ^bThe sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

2 But ^cNadab and Abihu ^ddied before their father, and had no children: therefore ^eEleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.

3 And David distributed them, both ^fZadok of the sons of Eleazar, and ^gAhimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

4 And there were more ^hchief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar ⁱaccording to the house of their fathers.

5 Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another; for ^jthe governors of the sanctuary, and governors of the house of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

6 And Shemaiah the son of Nathaneel ^kthe scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and before the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one principal household being taken for Eleazar and one taken for Ithamar.

7 Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah,

8 The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9 The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin,

10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah,

11 The ninth to Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah,

12 The eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,

13 The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeah,

14 The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,

15 The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Apshe,

16 The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkeel,

17 The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul,

18 The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah.

19 These were the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the Lord, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.

20 ¶ And the rest of the sons of Levi were these: Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.

21 Concerning Rehahiah: of the sons of Rehahiah, the first was Isshiah.

22 Of the Izharites; Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.

23 And the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.

24 Of the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.

25 The brother of Michah was Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; Zechariah.

26 The sons of Merari were Mahli, and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.

27 ¶ The sons of Merari for Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibrî.

28 Of Mahli came Eleazar, who had no sons.

29 Concerning Kish: the son of Kish was Jerahmeel.

30 The sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites after the house of their fathers.

31 These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.

a 23:6. Marg. b 6:3. Ex. 6:23, 28:1. Lev. 10:1-6. Num. 3:2, 26:60. c Ex. 24:1, 1:9. d Lev. 10:2. Num. 3:4, 26:61. e Ex. 29:9. Lev. 10:12. Num. 16:39, 24:1, 15:7. f 6:31. 6:4-8, 50-53, 12:27, 23, 15:11. 16:39. 2 Sam. 20:25. 1 Kings 2:35. 1 Sam. 21:2, 22:9. 2 Sam. 8:17. h 15:6-12, 16. i Num. 25:11-13. 1 Sam. 1:20-28. k See on 23:24. 1 Josh. 18:10. Prov. 16:33. Act. 1:26. m 9:11. 2 Chr. 35:8. Neh. 11:11. Matt. 26:3, 27:1. Act. 4:1, 5:24. n 1 Kings 4:3. 2 Chr. 34:13. Ezra 7:6. Neh. 8:1. Matt. 8:19. 13:32, 28:1, 2. o Heb. House of the father. d 23:24. o 1:10. Neh. 12:19. Joiazib. p Ezra 2:36. Neh. 7:39.

of morality most effectually, as well as promote the spiritual worship of God through Jesus Christ. And should they leave their families in poverty and obscurity, after their decease: this circumstance will be a testimony before the world of their disinterestedness; and the Lord will surely provide for their wants, as far as is truly good for them. He advances, and he abases, as his infinite wisdom sees good, whatever may be our cares or desires. May we then seek and serve him uprightly, and leave all the rest to his disposal, by faith in his word and resignation to his righteous will!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1-4. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 10:1-5. Num. 18:7.*) It may be supposed, that the house of Ithamar, in consequence of the sentence denounced against it in the days of Eli, had decreased in numbers and eminence, because Zadok was constituted high priest: (*Notes, 1 Sam. 2:30-36. 3:11-14. 1 Kings 2:26, 27, 35.*) so that there were twice as many flourishing families and principal persons in the line of Eleazar, as in that of Ithamar. 'To avoid all confusion, now that they were much increased, David distributed the priests as he had done the Levites, into several courses; which, no doubt, was by a divine direction, as well as the other. . . . He appointed . . . sixteen courses of the sons of Eleazar, under as many heads of their families; and half as many of the posterity of Ithamar.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5. *Governors, &c.]* Or, principal ministers in holy things, and rulers in behalf of God, or superior magistrates. (*Marg. Ref. m.*)

V. 6. The regulation of these courses of the priests was made by casting lots, before the king and all the chief persons in the land, in a most solemn manner; and a record was made of the transaction, to prevent any future contest. First, one household was taken of Eleazar's race, and then one of Ithamar's till sixteen had been completed; after which the remaining eight of Eleazar's sons, were arranged according to the order in which their lots came forth.

V. 7. It was thought, by the Jews in after ages, a great honour to be descended from Jehoiarib. The Maccabees

1:10. q Ezra 2:39. 10:21. Neh. 7:35. 12:15. r Neh. 12:17. Miniamin. s Neh. 12:4, 17. Luke 1:5. Abia. t Ezra 2:36. Neh. 7:39. 12:10. u Neh. 12:10. x Ezra 2:37. 10:20. Neh. 7:40. y 2:35. 2 Chr. 25:4, 8. 1 Cor. 14:40. z See on 1:1. Heb. 7:11. a 6:18. 23:12-14. b 23:16. 26:24. Shebuel. c 23:17. d 26:25. Jeshiah. e 23:18. Ex. 6:21. Num. 3:19, 27. Ezerahites. f 23:18. 26:26. Shelomoth. g 23:19. 26:31. Jeriah. h 23:20. Micah. i 23:20. Jeshiah. k 15:18, 20. l 6:19. 23:21. Ex. 6:19. Num. 3:20. m 23:22. n 6:47. 23:23. o 5:6. Num. 26:56. p 25:3. 26:13.

were descended from him; (1 Mac. 2:1-4.) and Josephus thought himself noble, because he sprang from the first of these twenty-four courses.

V. 10. *Abijah.]* The courses of the priests, established by David, were continued, with some alterations, till the days of Christ: these records must therefore have been very useful to the Jews, after their return from the Babylonish captivity. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, Ezra 2:36-39. Luke 1:5-7.*)

V. 19. *Under Aaron their father.]* All the priests were considered as Aaron's successors, and as filling up his place, in whose person the whole priesthood was originally vested, and from whom it was derived to his posterity.—These arrangements having been made by David, acting under the direction, and according to the commandment given by Moses concerning the priesthood; the courses of the priests attended, each during one week at a time, for the ordinary services; though at the great festivals, and on other public occasions, numbers of the rest would be present and assist.

V. 20-30. (*Marg. Ref.*) These persons seem to have been the heads of those twenty-four thousand Levites, who in twenty-four courses waited on the priests in their ministrations. (23:4.)

V. 31. *The principal, &c.]* The whole company being ranged, according to their families, into the proper number or divisions, the order of their courses was assigned them by lot, without respect to rank or seniority.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will certainly perform all his promises and threatenings; and if they do not take effect suddenly, and with observation, they will do it gradually and silently.—Sin ruins men's characters, comforts, and families; and will destroy the immortal souls of all those, who do not obtain salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.—In all cases we ought to act with exact impartiality, as far as we are able; and when human prudence fails of discerning a reason of preference, where it must be given; it is right, in one way or other, to refer the determination to the Lord.—Much wisdom and

CHAPTER XXV.

The names and offices of the principal singers and musicians, 1-7. They are divided by lot into twenty-four courses, 8-31.

MOREOVER David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of ^aAsaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with ^bharps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was:

2 Of the sons of ^aAsaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and ^cAsarelah, the sons of Asaph under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied according to the order of the king.

3 Of ^aJeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; ^dGedaliah, and ^eZeri, and ^fJeshaiah, Hashabiah, and ^gMattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, "to give thanks and to praise the LORD.

4 Of ^aHeman: the sons of Heman; ^hBukiah, ⁱMattaniah, ^jUzziel, ^kShebuel, and ^lJeremoth, ^mHananiah, ⁿHanani, ^oEliathah, ^pGiddalti, and ^qRomanti-ezer, ^rJoshebekashah, ^sMallothi, ^tHothir, and Mahazioth:

5 All these were the sons of Heman ^uthe king's seer in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And ^vGod gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

6 All these were under the hands of their father ^wfor song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, ^xaccording to the king's order to ^yAsaph, Jeduthun, and Heman,

7 So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.

8 ^zAnd they ^{aa}cast lots, ^{ab}ward against ^{ac}ward, as well the small as the great, ^{ad}the teacher as the scholar.

9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who, with his brethren and sons, were twelve:

10 The third to ^{ae}Zaccur, ^{af}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

11 The fourth to ^{ag}Izri, ^{ah}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

12 The fifth to ^{ai}Nethaniah, ^{aj}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

13 The sixth to Bukiah, ^{ak}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

14 The seventh to ^{al}Jesharelah, ^{am}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

15 The eighth to ^{an}Jeshaiah, ^{ao}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

16 The ninth to ^{ap}Mattaniah, ^{aq}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

17 The tenth to ^{ar}Shimei, ^{as}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

18 The eleventh to ^{at}Azareel, ^{au}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

19 The twelfth to ^{av}Hashabiah, ^{aw}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

20 The thirteenth to ^{ax}Shubael, ^{ay}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

21 The fourteenth to ^{az}Mattithiah, ^{ba}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

22 The fifteenth to ^{bb}Jeremoth, ^{bc}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

23 The sixteenth to ^{bd}Hananiah, ^{be}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

24 The seventeenth to ^{bf}Joshebekashah, ^{bg}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

25 The eighteenth to ^{bh}Hanani, ^{bi}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

26 The nineteenth to ^{bj}Mallothi, ^{bk}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

27 The twentieth to ^{bl}Eliathah, ^{bm}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

28 The one and twentieth to ^{bn}Hothir, ^{bo}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

29 The two and twentieth to ^{bp}Giddalti, ^{bq}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

30 The three and twentieth to ^{br}Mabazioth, ^{bs}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

31 The four and twentieth to ^{bt}Romanti-ezer, ^{bu}he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

CHAPTER XXVI.

The divisions of the porters, 1-12. The gates assigned to them by lot, 13-19.

The Levites who had the charge of the treasures, 20-28. Those who were officers and judges, 29-32.

CONCERNING the divisions of ^athe porters: Of the ^bKorhites was ^cMeshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of ^dAsaph.

2 And the sons of ^eMeshelemiah were, ^fZechariah the first-born, ^gJediel the second, ^hZebadiah the third, ⁱJathiel the fourth,

30, t 23, u 25, x 27, y 29, z 31, a 24, b 26, c 28, 30, d 21-9, 1 Sam. 9:9, t Or, matters, e 28:5, Gen. 33:5, Ps. 127:3, 1a, 8:18, f 2:3, g 1-3, 15:22, 23:5, Ps. 68:25, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, h Heb. by the hands of the king, 2, marg. h See on 1-4, i See on 24:5, Lev. 16:8, 1 Sam. 14:41, 2 Prov. 33, Acts 1:26, j 24:31, 26:13, 16, Neh. 12:24, k 15:22, 2 Chr. 23:13, l m 2, 16:41, 2 Chr. 28:14, n 1:11, Jer. 43:15, 12:15, 18:21, o Wit, Shimei, mentioned 17, m Ps. 92:1, Jer. 33:11, n 6:33, 15:17, 19, 16:41, 42, Ps. 88: title, o 13, p 16, q 18, Azareel, 24:21, r 20, 24:20, Shubael, a 22, 24.

13 The sixth to Bukiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

14 The seventh to ^{he}Jesharelah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

15 The eighth to ^{he}Jeshaiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

16 The ninth to ^{he}Mattaniah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

17 The tenth to ^{he}Shimei, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

18 The eleventh to ^{he}Azareel, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

19 The twelfth to ^{he}Hashabiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

20 The thirteenth to ^{he}Shubael, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

21 The fourteenth to ^{he}Mattithiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

22 The fifteenth to ^{he}Jeremoth, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

23 The sixteenth to ^{he}Hananiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

24 The seventeenth to ^{he}Joshebekashah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

25 The eighteenth to ^{he}Hanani, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

26 The nineteenth to ^{he}Mallothi, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

27 The twentieth to ^{he}Eliathah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

28 The one and twentieth to ^{he}Hothir, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

29 The two and twentieth to ^{he}Giddalti, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

30 The three and twentieth to ^{he}Mabazioth, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

31 The four and twentieth to ^{he}Romanti-ezer, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

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27 The twentieth to ^{he}Eliathah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

28 The one and twentieth to ^{he}Hothir, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

29 The two and twentieth to ^{he}Giddalti, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

30 The three and twentieth to ^{he}Mabazioth, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

31 The four and twentieth to ^{he}Romanti-ezer, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

13 The sixth to Bukiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

14 The seventh to ^{he}Jesharelah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

15 The eighth to ^{he}Jeshaiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

16 The ninth to ^{he}Mattaniah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

17 The tenth to ^{he}Shimei, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

18 The eleventh to ^{he}Azareel, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

19 The twelfth to ^{he}Hashabiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

20 The thirteenth to ^{he}Shubael, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

21 The fourteenth to ^{he}Mattithiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

22 The fifteenth to ^{he}Jeremoth, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

23 The sixteenth to ^{he}Hananiah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

24 The seventeenth to ^{he}Joshebekashah, ^{he}, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.

4 Moreover the sons of 'Obed-edom were, Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nathaneel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for 'God blessed 'him.

6 Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they were 'mighty men of valour.

7 The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men, Elihu and Semachiah.

8 All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obed-edom.

9 And 'Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.

10 Also 'Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Sinri the chief, (for *though* he was not the first-born, yet 'his father made him the chief;)

11 Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.

12 Among these were the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* 'wards one against another, to minister in the house of the Lord.

13 ¶ And they cast lots, 'as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate.

14 And the lot eastward fell to 'Meshelemiah. Then for 'Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward.

15 To Obed-edom southward; and to his sons, the house of 'Asuppim.

e 15:18, 21, 24, 16:5, 33. f 13:14. * That is, Obed-edom. g 8, 12:28, 2 Chr. 26:17. Neh. 11:14. 1 Tim. 6:12. 2 Tim. 2:3. h 1:14. i 16:38. k See on 5:1, 2. l See on 25:3. m Or, *as well for the small as for the great*. 23:31, 25:3. m 1. Meshelemiah. n 2. f Heb. *gatherings*. 17. o 10:11. p 1 Kings 10:5. 2 Chr. 9:4. q 12, 25:8. Neh. 12:24. r 9:24. 2 Chr. 8:14. s Num. 26:11. Korah. t 24, 29:26—30, 22:3, 4, 14—16. 28:12—19, 29:2—8. 1 Kings 14:26, 15:18. Mal. 3:

portion as they are properly disposed: yet we should apply our minds to instruction, that we may become "workmen that need not be ashamed," as capable of performing our several duties with propriety and readiness.—Human prudence must regulate certain circumstances relative to religious worship; and every society, larger or smaller, should order such matters for themselves, to the best of their judgment: but unless the Spirit of God put life and fervour into our devotions, they will, however appointed, be a lifeless, worthless form.—We should all be ready to give or to receive instructions, without self-preference, or accounting ourselves degraded; for in God's sight the teachable scholar is nearly as honourable as the able instructor.—It is pleasant to receive all our temporal and domestic comforts, as given unto us of God, and then to devote them all to his service: and it is a singular mercy to have a large family, all employed and accepted by him. But whether our children and connexions be few or many, may we and they be all his, and meet in his temple above to sing his praises for ever! Whatever Providence may allot us here, may this be the lot and portion of our inheritance hereafter!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. *Marg. Ref. Note*, 23:2—6, v. 5.—*Asaph*.] Not Asaph the chief musician, who was of the family of Gershon; (6:39—43.) but another Asaph, of the sons of Korah, called also Abiasaph. (6:37, 9:19.)

V. 4, 5. (*Marg.*) The numerous and prosperous family of Obed-edom was the effect of the divine blessing, by which 'his reverential regard to the ark was recompensed. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. 6:10—13.)

V. 6—12. *Marg. Ref.—Mighty men, &c.* (6) The porters, and treasurers of the temple, had occasion for strength and valour, both to oppose such as improperly attempted to enter the courts or sanctuary, or to raise any disturbance there; and also to guard the sacred treasures of money, vessels, flour, frankincense, wine, and oil, there deposited: and of which some of them were appointed to keep an account. (20. *Notes*, 9:27—30.)—Josephus speaks of the gates of the temple being so massy, as to require twenty persons to open or shut them: this too would find employment for the strength of the porters. The temple indeed was not yet built; but David had received from the Lord a pattern of what it was to be, and he arranged every thing with reference to 't. (*Notes*, 28:11—18.)—It is supposed, that the families of the Levites succeeded to the lot of their fathers, whether as singers, porters, or whatever was the service assigned

16 To Shuppim and 'Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the 'causeway of the going up, 'ward against ward.

17 'Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and towards Asuppim two and two.

18 At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar.

19 These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of 'Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

20 ¶ And of the Levites, Abihah was over the 'treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the 'dedicated things.

21 *As concerning* the sons of 'Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gershonite, were 'Jehieli.

22 The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* 'over the treasures of the house of the Lord.

23 Of the 'Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites:

24 And 'Shebuel the son of Gershon, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures.

25 And his brethren by 'Eliezer; 'Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and 'Shelomith his son:

26 Which Shelomith and his brethren were 'over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the hosts, had dedicated.

27 Out of the 'spoils won in battles did they dedicate, 'to maintain the house of the Lord.

28 And all that 'Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish; and 'Abner the son of Ner, and 'Joah the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated *any thing*, it was under the hand of Shelomith and of his brethren.

29 ¶ Of the 'Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons

10. § Heb. *holy*. 26—28, 18:11. 1 Kings 7:51. 2 Chr. 31:11, 12. e 6:17. *Libni*. 23:7. § 23:8, 29:8. *Jehiel*. y 20. Neh. 10:38. z 23:12. Num. 3:19, 27. a 23:15, 16, 24:20. *Shebuel*. b 23:15. Ex. 18:4. c 23:17. d 23:18. e 16:11, 22:14. 29:2—9. Num. 31:50. f Heb. *batles and spoils*. f 2 Kings 12:14. Neh. 10:32—34. g 1 Sam. 9:9. h 1 Sam. 14:47—51. 17:55. i 2 Sam. 10:9—14. k 23:23, 12:18.

them; and this from one generation to another, without passing from one company to another. 'They were distributed into courses, as the priests and Levites were; and these were principal commanders over them: being the more illustrious of their brethren, and therefore particularly named.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 13. The porters seem to have been divided into courses, by a different method than the other Levites. The several families or divisions of them cast lots, at which gates they should keep ward; and then the individuals of those divisions attended in rotation; but whether the order, in which they thus followed each other, was determined by lot, or by agreement, it does not appear.

V. 14. *A wise counsellor.*] It seems that Zechariah, being renowned for his wisdom, was preferred to be the king's counsellor. The office of porter in the temple was a place of great trust, and therefore honourable.

V. 15. 'Asuppim' signifying *gatherings*: it is supposed that the house of Asuppim was a building erected to contain the money that was collected, for the use of the sanctuary, with the vessels employed in the sacred services.

V. 16—23. *Marg. Ref.—Ward against ward.* (16) *Marg. Ref.* Their stations were opposite to each other; as the north to the south, &c.—*Eastward were six, &c.* (17, 18.)

'Among the porters there were four and twenty, according to the rest of the courses; six on the east side, four on the north, four on the south; at Asuppim, two and two, (four in all,) four on the west, and two at Parbar.' *Kimchi in Bp. Patrick*.

V. 24—27. 'These are the only persons among the descendants of Moses, who are mentioned as appointed to any office of honour and distinction. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 18:11, 22:6—14.)

V. 28. *Samuel, &c.*] It had been customary from the time of Abraham, (*Notes*, Gen. 14:18—10, 28:20—22,) and probably from the beginning of the world, for persons to dedicate a portion of their gains to the service of God, as an acknowledgment that all came from him: but it is uncertain whether Samuel, or the other persons here mentioned, had an expectation of a temple being built, for which they desired to make preparation.

V. 29. (*Marg. Ref. Note*, 23:2—6.)—*The outward business &c.*] These Levites seem not to have performed any service within the precincts of the sanctuary: and their employment on that account may be called "the outward business." In general, it may be supposed, that, as well as the other

were for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges.

30 And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all the business of the Lord, and in the service of the king.

31 Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead.

32 And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.

CHAPTER XXVII.

David's twelve captains, one for each month, 1-15. The princes of the twelve tribes, 16-22. The numbering of the people was hindered, 23, 24. David's several officers and counsellors, 25-34.

NOW the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers, and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course, were twenty and four thousand.

2 Over the first course for the first month, was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

3 Of the children of Perez, was the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.

4 And over the course of the second month was Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course was Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise were twenty and four thousand.

12 Chr. 34:13. Neh. 11:16. m 23:4. 2 Chr. 19:8-11. n 23:12, 19. * Heb. over the charge. o 23:18. Jerim. p 29:27. 1 Kings 2:11. q Josh. 21:39. r 1s. 16:9. r 6-9. s 15:12. 23:24. 24:31. t 12:37. u 2 Chr. 19:11. + Heb. thing. v 13:1. Ex. 18:25. Deut. 1:15. 1 Sam. 8:12. Mic. 5:2. b 2:1. 2 Chr. 17:12-19. 26:11-13. c 1 Kings 5:14. d 1 Kings 4:7, 27. e 11:1. 2 Sam. 23:8. Adino the Ezrite. f Gen. 39:29. Num. 35:20. Pharez. g Gen. 49:8-10. Num. 7:12. 16:14. h 11:12. 2 Sam. 23:9. Dodo. i 18:17. 1 Kings 4:4. * Or, principal

Levites, they were expected to be instructors of the people in the law of God: and in particular they were made magistrates of different orders, to administer justice to the people. As the Levites were more numerous than could be employed in the sanctuary; and as they ought to be, and had opportunities of being, better acquainted with the law than the other Israelites; they were appointed to this service, along with the elders of every tribe. (Note, 2 Chr. 19:5-11.) From these, the scribes, lawyers, or doctors of the law, mentioned in the New Testament, seem to have arisen. As the office of the magistracy reaches only to the regulation of the outward conduct; whilst the ministry of the word forms the means of regulating the mind or judgment, with the conscience and affections of the heart; the former may in this sense also be called the outward business. The lawyers above mentioned made the whole of religion a mere outward business; and they have always had abundance of disciples in this respect. (Notes, Matt. 23:25-28. Luke 11:37-41.)

V. 30-32. Hebron was first assigned to the priests; (Note, Josh. 21:11, 12.) but it was afterwards occupied by Levites, perhaps as tenants whilst the priests were but few. The Levites here mentioned, it seems, lived there, till they had acquired the name of Hebronites, and then removed over Jordan into the land Gilead. But being sought out, they were appointed judges, and officers, for various purposes, civil and ecclesiastical, superior and inferior, on each side Jordan, in two divisions: though the larger proportion was assigned to those who lived east of that river; perhaps because, being more remote from the sanctuary and the seat of government, they needed more attention to keep them to their duty, both to God, and to the king. (Marg. Ref.)

Fortieth year. (31) It is generally thought that most or all of these regulations were made in the last year of David's life: but, though this be uncertain, they were certainly arranged towards the close of his reign.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The blessing of God renders individuals happy, and families flourishing: and those, who have been faithful in a little, will be made rulers over many things.—Wisdom, courage, strength of faith, holy affections, and constancy of mind in our duty, are requisite for every station. But those, who minister in the house of the Lord, and are required, without respect of persons, to prevent the profanation of holy things, have peculiar need of these qualifications. They are the porters of the spiritual house, and the “stewards of the mysteries of God;” a charge is committed to their trust, infinitely more valuable than all the treasures of the temple; and they

5 The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

6 This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course was Ammizabad his son.

7 The fourth captain for the fourth month was Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

8 The fifth captain for the fifth month was Shamuth the Izrahite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

9 The sixth captain for the sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

10 The seventh captain for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

11 The eighth captain for the eighth month was Shibbeai the Hushathite, of the Zarithes: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

12 The ninth captain for the ninth month was Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

13 The tenth captain for the tenth month was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarithes: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

14 The eleventh captain for the eleventh month was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

15 The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

offer. 1 Kings 4:5. k 11:22-25. 2 Sam. 22:20-23. 111:26. 2 Sam. 2:19-23. 23:24. m 11:27. Shammoh the Hararite. 26:29. 2 Sam. 23:25. Shammah the Harodite. n 11:28. 2 Sam. 23:26. o 11:27. p 2 Sam. 23:26. Faltite. q 11:29. 2 Sam. 21:13. r Num. 26:20. s 11:34. Ahoahite. 3 Sam. 23:27. Anetothite. t 11:30. 2 Sam. 23:28. u 11. x 11:31. 2 Sam. 23:30. y 11:30. Heldai. 2 Sam. 23:29. Heleb. z 4:13. Judg. 3:9.

need to be watchful and faithful. (Notes, Matt. 24:45-51. Mark 13:33-37. Luke 11:35-46. 1 Cor. 4:1-5.) Their office requires them “rightly to divide the word of truth,” and to administer divine ordinances according to it; that the hungry souls may be fed and feasted from the provisions of the Lord's house; and that he may be glorified by their spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to him through Jesus Christ. Great integrity, firmness, and discretion, are necessary to do this according to the mind of the great Master of the family, and to prevent abuses, and prostitution of sacred ordinances to secular purposes, by ungodly men. From these sacred treasures, “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” all our wants are supplied: but receiving from his fulness, and being victorious over our enemies by his grace, we must give him the glory, and endeavour to dispose of the whole of our abilities and substance according to his will; allotting a proportion to maintain the expense of his worship, as well as to provide for the poor. Many unbelievers, however, join in these external services, and we must not in any degree rest our hopes of salvation on them.—The work of the minister requires the whole man: internal renovation is immediately its object; and the outward business of external order in society properly belongs to the magistrate. These services are therefore best preserved distinct; yet particular circumstances may warrant exceptions. However, both magistrates and ministers should concur in leading people, by different means, to fear God, and honour the king, and to do justice, and show kindness to their brethren.—It is very wrong for able men to get out of the way, when their help is wanted: but they should be sought out, and set to work: and as our end approaches, we should be more earnest to render our last services to mankind.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1-15. When David was not actually engaged in war, twenty-four thousand men seem to have been continually kept under military discipline. These were exchanged every month for others; so that two hundred and eighty-eight thousand men were, every year, exercised as a regular militia; but they were not kept from their other engagements, more than a month at one time. These were mustered from all the tribes of Israel, under commanders, called “captains of the companies, that ministered to the king by course.” (28:1.) All the twelve captains are named among David's mighty men. (Marg. Ref. 11:10-47. 2 Sam. 23:8-39.) The word translated priest, and applied to Benaiah, evidently means, and should be rendered, Ruler, or officer. (Marg.) Asahel, whom Abner slew, is numbered among these captains, and upon his death, his son

16 ¶ Furthermore over the tribe of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites *was* Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah:

17 Of the Levites, *Hashabiah* the son of Kemuel: *of* the Aaronites, Zadok:

18 Of Judah, *Elihu*, one of the brethren of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

19 Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel:

20 Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:

21 Of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, *Iddo* the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner:

22 Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.

23 ¶ But David took not the number of them (from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said *He* would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah *began* to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel: neither *was* the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.

25 And over *the* king's treasures *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over *the* storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, *was* Jehonathan the son of Uziah:

26 And over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground *was* Ezri the son of Chelub:

27 And over the vineyards *was* Shimei the Ramathite: over *the* increase of the vineyards for the wine-cellars *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite:

28 And over the olive-trees and the sycamore-

trees that *were* in the low plains *was* Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil *was* Joash:

29 And over the herds that fed in *Sharon was* Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds *that were* in the valleys *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai:

30 Over *the* camels also *was* Obil *the* Ishmaelite: and over the asses *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite:

31 And over the flocks *was* Jaziz the Hagarite. All these *were* the rulers of the substance which *was* king David's.

32 Also Jonathan David's *uncle* *was* a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni *was* with the king's sons:

33 And *Ahitophel was* the king's counsellor: and *Hushai the Archite was* the king's *companion*:

34 And after Ahitophel *was* Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and *the* general of the king's army *was* Joab.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

David assembles the chiefs of Israel; shows them how his purpose of building a temple had been disclosed, and relates the LORD'S special favour to him; and his promises to Solomon, 1-5. He charges Solomon to know and serve God, and to build the temple, 9, 10. He gives a pattern for the form of the several parts, (as God had showed it to him,) and gold and silver for the materials, 11-19. He encourages Solomon with the assurance of help, both from God, and from his people, 20, 21.

AND David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men unto Jerusalem.

2 Then David the king stood up upon his feet,

a 25:30. b 12:27,28. 24:4,31. c 1 Sam. 16:6. 17:13,29. *Eliab.* d 1 Kings 4:14. e 1 Sam. 14:50,51. 2 Sam. 3:27,37. f Num. 1:18. g Gen. 15:5. Heb. 11:12. h 21:11-17. 2 Sam. 24:1-15. *Hab. ascribed the number.* i 2 Kings 18:15. j 2 Chr. 16:2. k Gen. 41:48. Ex. 1:11. l 2 Chr. 26:10. Jer. 41:3. m 5:16. n Job 1:3. *which was of the vineyards.* 1 Kings 4:7. m 5:16. n Job 1:3.

succeeded him: hence we learn, that this order was at least begun to be established before David ruled over the whole land. (Note, 2 Sam. 2:18-23.)—Joab was the commander in chief. (34)

V. 16-22. These persons, called "the princes of the tribes," (28:1.) seem to have been *civil* rulers over their several tribes, not entirely unlike the lord-lieutenants of counties in England.—Gad and Asher are not mentioned, probably because they were joined to the neighbouring tribes, Elihu, or Elijah, was David's elder brother. The Levites had a prince, or rulers, as the other tribes had; and the family of Aaron, as distinguished from the rest, had Zadok, for their ruler, or prince. The son of Abner was, probably, advanced upon his father's death, as an expression of David's neglected concern for that event. (Notes, 2 Sam. 3:26-29.)

V. 23, 24. It seems probable, from this passage, that Joab began, by David's order, to number the children, as well as the grown men, but was prevented from finishing the account. (Notes, 2 Sam. 24:1-9.) The numbering of the effective men might have been deemed politically expedient: but ostentation alone could dictate the numbering of minors and infants; especially as God had pronounced the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, innumerable. (Marg. Ref.)

An account of the number, as far as he went, was given by Joab to the king; but the king, being sensible of his error, would not have it recorded in the public registers of the kingdom, as other things of daily occurrence were. Bp. Patrick.

V. 25-31. (Marg. Ref.) This account mentions only such persons, as filled up useful or useful stations; not any superfluous officers, retained merely to make a show of magnificence. Luxury, ambition, and venality have multiplied these attendants on courts; and selfish opposers will so impede the most unexceptionable measures of government, in limited monarchies, that without a number of retainers whose interest it is to support the crown, the public business must move heavily, if it could at all proceed. Yet ancient simplicity was preferable to modern refinement; and the useful productions of the earth, to all the devices of luxury and indulgence. (Notes, 1 Kings 4:2-19. 2 Chr. 26:10.)—These officers are called "the stewards over all the substance and possessions of the king." (28:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The prudent management of secular affairs is conducive to the interests of godliness; provided it be kept in its proper place, and the favour and glory of God have a decided preference. In the kingdoms of this world, habitual readiness for war forms a better security of peace, than any treaties or alliances: in like manner, nothing so much encourages Satan's

e Gen. 47:6. p 2 Sam. 13:3. 21:21. *Nepheus.* q Or, *secretary.* r 2 Sam. 15:32. 16:16. s 2 Sam. 16:17. Ps. 55:13. Zech. 13:7. t 11:8. u 23:2. Josh. 25:2. 24:1. v 27:16-22. g 27:1-15. d 27:25-31. *Or, cattle.* h Or, *and his sons.* i 27:32-34. j Or, *cunuchs.* f 11:10. k. g Gen. 48:2. 1 Kings 1:47.

assaults, as our unwatchfulness; and while we stand armed with "the whole armour of God," in the exercise of faith and preparation of heart for the conflict, we shall certainly be safe, and probably enjoy inward peace.—When we have exposed ourselves to wrath and chastening for our sins, we ought humbly to confess them and to desist from them: this will not make atonement for our crimes; but it is a preparation of heart from the Lord, for receiving the atonement made by the Saviour, and making suitable returns for it.—Usefulness is the proper standard of valueableness; and he who estimates by this rule, will give the word of God, the salvation of Christ, and true religion, a decided preference to all other things, because infinitely more useful.—Well-chosen counsellors prove the wisdom of princes: yet, some will be found wise men and scribes, and eminent for worldly policy and plausibility, who are in fact very wicked characters. But the faithful, the upright, and godly, should be our friends and chosen companions; and no king will be well advised in all things, or in those of the greatest importance, who does not make the testimonies of God "his delight and his counsellors;" however he may be surrounded by powerful family connexions, faithful friends, and able politicians.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. This transaction seems to have occurred in the time of David's last sickness; which, notwithstanding remissions, he was aware would terminate in death. He therefore summoned the several descriptions of men, which were mentioned in the preceding chapter, and which formed a convention of the states, or representatives of the people; that he might declare to them the will of God as revealed to him, and engage them to a hearty concurrence in those public measures, which, in obedience to that will, he had resolved on.—Princes. [Note, 27:16-22.—Captains, &c.] 'That is, those great commanders of 24,000 apiece, mentioned in the beginning of the foregoing chapter. . . The commanders of every one of those thousands, with the centurions, who commanded the several companies, consisting of a hundred.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, 27:1-15.)—Stewards, &c.] Note, 27:25-31.—Many of the chief priests and Levites generally resided with David at Jerusalem; but it is not expressly said, that they were present on this occasion.

V. 2. David, finding himself able, and being animated by the solemn occasion, stood up on his feet, to express his earnestness in this address, and his affection and respect for the people; and especially as intending to honour the Lord, by whose authority and commission he spake. Moses and Joshua had, just before their death, assembled the people for similar purposes. (Deut. 31:28-30. Notes, Deut. 32:45-52. Josh. 23: 24:)—David used the most endearing language

and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: *As for me, I had in my heart to build a house for rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:*

3 But God said unto me, "Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed blood."

4 Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Israel:

5 And of all my sons, (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

6 And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.

b 11:1-3. Deut. 17:15, 20. Ps. 22:22. Heb. 2:11, 12. 17:1, 2. 2 Sam. 7:1. 1 Kings 8:17, 18. k 6:31. Ps. 132:3-5, 8, 14. 1 Ps. 99:5. 132:7. 1s. 66:1. Lam. 2:1. Acts 7:49. m 18:7-11. 22:2-5, 14. n 17:4. 22:8. 2 Sam. 7:5-13. 1 Kings 8:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. Heb. blood. o 1 Sam. 16:6-13. 2 Sam. 7:6-16. Ps. 78:68. 22:8, 16-27. p 5:2. Gen. 49:8-10. n 17:4. 22:8. 2 Sam. 7:16. 1 Sam. 16:12, 13. Ps. 18:19. 147:10, 11. s 3:1-9. 14:4-7. t 22:9, 23:1. r 1 Sam. 16:12, 13. 2 Chr. 1:8, 9. Ps. 72:1. 1 Chr. 1:1. 9:6, 7. u 17:11-14. 22:10. 2 Sam. 7:13, 14. Zech. 6:12, 13. Heb. 3:3-6. y Heb. 4:5. z Ps. 89:23-37. 132:12. 1 Jan. 2:44. a 22:13. 1 Kings 8:12, 13. 9:4, 5. 11:9-13. 1 Heb. 4:10. Josh. 1:6, 7. 1 Kings 8:61. 11:4. c Deut. 4:6. Matt. 5:16. Phil. 2:15, 16. Heb. 12:1, 2. d Deut. 4:28. 29:10, 15. Acts 10:33. e Ps. 119:4, 10, 11, 27, 33, 44. Prov. 2:1-5. 3:1. f Deut. 4:1. 5:32, 33. 6:1, 2.

in this parting interview, begging their attention, as his "brethren and his people."—The ark is here called "the footstool of our God." Heaven, where the Lord unveils his glories, is his throne; the earth is his footstool; and the place of the ark was, as it were, the centre of that footstool, where the gracious presence of God on earth was chiefly displayed, and before and toward which all his people worshipped. (Marg. Ref. l. Notes, Ps. 99:5. 1s. 66:1, 2. Lam. 2:1.)

V. 3. Notes, 22:6-10. 29:1. 2 Sam. 7:1-11. 1 Kings 8:15-21.

V. 4-6. Notes, 1 Sam. 16:6-11. 2 Sam. 7:12-16. 12:24, 25. 1 Kings 1:5, 6, 15-18.—For ever. (4) That is, permanently in his posterity, and to the end of the world, yea, to eternity, in Christ, of whom David and Solomon were remarkable types.—It was not known till David's time, from which family in Judah the Messiah would descend. (Notes, Gen. 49:8-10.)

V. 7, 8. David had committed several great transgressions, and he every where speaks the language of conscious sinfulness. Yet the people had been preserved from idolatry, and retained in the worship and service of God, during his whole reign; and at this time they, as well as Solomon, appeared well disposed to true religion. If therefore they continued constant, "as at that day," to keep the Lord's commandments and judgments; their national covenant remaining unviolated, would secure their possession of Canaan and other important advantages. Yet they were exhorted not only to "keep," but "to seek for, all the commandments of the Lord;" that they might know them more exactly, and perform them more entirely. David therefore exhorted the princes to engage themselves to this, as "in the sight of all Israel, even the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of their God," who was especially present in that solemn assembly; that they might be the more impressed, and that their example might have a salutary effect on others also.—"It is not enough to know the will of God, if we do not keep it; that is, observe his commands, and live in the practice of our duty. But that we may know it, it is necessary to seek it; that is, to inquire after it and to study the laws of God: for no man, as Grotius here observes, shall be excused by a supine ignorance." Bp. Patrick. It is as necessary to pray humbly and continually for divine teaching, in "seeking the commandments of God," as to study the laws of God, and search the Scriptures: for proud, and learned, and self-wise error, will no more excuse a man, than a supine ignorance. (Notes, Prov. 2:1-9.)

V. 9. The being and perfections of God are made known by his works, and by his word: and we ought diligently to seek the knowledge of him from both these sources. That discovery of some of the divine perfections, which may be made by studying the works of creation and providence, may be naturally delightful to man; because it gratifies his love of knowledge, and excites his surprise, without affronting his pride, alarming his conscience, or offending his prejudices. But revelation gives us the whole character of God, as connected with his natural perfections, and mysterious subsistence: and this not only in plain declarations, but in an historical and prophetic view of his providential government of the universe; in his holy law "the ministration of condemnation and death;" and in his blessed gospel, "the mi-

7 Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.

8 Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God: for that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

10 Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

[Practical Observations.]

11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof,

g Deut. 4:35. 1 Kings 8:43. Ps. 9:10. Jer. 9:24. 22:16. 24:7. 31:34. Hos. 4:1, 6. John 8:55. 17:3. Acts 17:23, 30. Rom. 1:28. 1 Cor. 15:34. 2 Cor. 4:6. h Gen. 28:13. Ex. 3:16. 15:2. 1 Kings 3:6. Ps. 18:2. 89:26. 129:9, 17-19. 1 Kings 8:61. 2 Kings 20:3. 22:2. Ps. 101:2. John 1:47. k 2 Cor. 8:12. 9:7. 1 Pet. 5:2. 129:17. 1 Sam. 16:7. 1 Kings 8:39. Ps. 7:9. Prov. 17:3. Jer. 11:30. 17:10. 20:12. John 2:25. 20:17. Acts 1:24. Heb. 4:13. Rev. 2:23. m Gen. 6:5. 8:21. Deut. 31:21. Ps. 139:2. Ez. 38:10. n 2 Chr. 15:2. Prov. 2:1-6. 1s. 45:19. 55:6, 7. Jer. 29:13. Matt. 7:7, 8. Jam. 4:8-11. o Deut. 31:16, 17. 1 Kings 9:6-8. Ezra 8:22. 1s. 1:28. Heb. 10:38, 39. p 6:22, 16-19. 1 Tim. 4:16. q 19. Ez. 26:40. 26:30. 89:42, 43. 2 Chr. 3:5. Ez. 45:10, 11. Heb. 5:5. r 1 Kings 6:5. 2 Chr. 3:4. Ez. 40:8, 9, 15, 48, 49. s 1 Kings 6:16-20. 2 Chr. 3:5-10. Ez. 41:13, 14. Heb. 9:2-5.

nistration of righteousness and of the Spirit." (Note, 2 Cor. 3:7-11.) This knowledge of God the natural man cannot receive. (Note, 1 Cor. 2:14-16.) It implies the infinite justice and holiness of God, and the entire apostasy, rebellion, pollution, and misery of man; and shows every person on earth to be a criminal condemned to everlasting punishment, from which he cannot be delivered, except by the unmerited mercy of the Father, through the atonement of the Son, and by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit. All men therefore oppose, neglect, or pervert this knowledge of God, except as they are taught by him. Some notions of these things may be attained by an unhumiliated sinner; but he does not see them as they really are, according to their nature and value; and his ideas no more agree with the true meaning even of his own words, than the words of a man born blind do with his ideas, when he speaks about light and colours. This knowledge therefore will have no effect, unless a bad one, on the state of his heart, and the conduct of his life. But where God is truly known, he is also feared, believed, trusted, loved, worshipped, and obeyed, in proportion to that knowledge. Self-abasement, hatred of sin, indifference about worldly objects, and general benevolence from the purest principles, will uniformly attend and grow with it; and all true religion may be resolved into it. (Notes, Ps. 9:7-12, v. 10. 9:1. 14-16. Jer. 24:7. 31:33, 34. Matt. 11:27. John 17:1-3. 2 Cor. 4:3-6.)—This knowledge of God is, under the inward teaching and illuminating influence of the Spirit of truth, received by faith simply crediting "the testimony of God," and diligently appropriating the information which he communicates in Scripture. As far as required, it regulates the understanding, judgment, conscience, will, affections, and all the powers and operations of the soul; and consequently, all the intentions, dispositions, words, and actions. It brings a man acquainted with God in Christ, as a Father and Friend, in a way of experience and communion. It discovers what we may expect from him, and what he must approve or abhor in us; and consequently what is requisite to his saving sinners in a way that is honourable to his own great name, and to our being capable of happiness in his favour and service. Thus we learn the inestimable value of the Saviour's atonement, and of the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, and are influenced to walk conscientiously in all his ordinances and commandments. "It brings a sinner to his proper place, at the foot of the cross, and prostrate before the mercy-seat of a forgiving God; as a poor, helpless, lost sinner, an ignorant child, a humble suppliant, a condemned criminal, deserving nothing but wrath, yet expecting every thing needful or desirable, from the infinitely free mercy and grace of God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Having been forgiven much, and receiving much, the pardoned sinner learns to love much; and experiencing the blessed effects of this knowledge of God on his own soul, he declares its excellency to others, that they too may seek and find so inestimable a treasure.—Thus David had known the Lord; and having for many years feared, trusted, loved, and worshipped him, he was about to remove to that better world, where knowledge, holiness, love, and felicity are perfected: but before he departed, he desired to give it, as his dying counsel to his beloved Solomon, to cultivate the acquaintance of so kind, merciful, faithful and powerful a Friend; (Note, Job 22:21-30.) and to "serve him with a perfect heart and a willing

and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat,

12 And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasures of the house of God, and of the treasures of the dedicated things :

13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

14 He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service ; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service :

15 Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof : and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.

16 And by weight he gave gold for the tables of show-bread, for every table ; and likewise silver for the tables of silver :

t 9:26-29, 26:20-27, Luke 21:1. u 1 Kings 6:5,6,10. 2 Chr. 3:9. Neh. 10:38, 30:13,5. Jer. 35:2. Ex. 41:6, &c. x Ex. 25:17-22, 40:21. 1 Kings 6:19, 2 Chr. 5:7. Heb. 9:5. Heb. that were with him by. y 26:26-28. 1 Kings 14:26, 15:18, 2 Kings 16:8, 18:15. z 24:1, &c. 25:1, &c. a 9:29, Ezra 8:25-30, 33. b Ex. 25:31-39. 1 Kings 7:49. 2 Chr. 4:7. Zech. 4:9,3,11-14. Rev. 1:12, 20:2,1. c Ex. 25:23-30. 1 Kings 7:48. 2 Chr. 4:8,9. d 1 Sam. 2:13,14.

mind," or inward delight. But he also reminded him at the same time of the Lord's heart-searching knowledge, and of his justice and holiness, as well as of his mercy. (*Marg. Ref. 1.*) A formal service therefore would not profit ; if he sought God in a proper manner, he would be found of him ; but if he finally renounced his service, he would " cast him off for ever," notwithstanding all his former kindness to him.

V. 10. Solomon was thus exhorted to be very circumspect, and attentive to the directions and commandments of God, in that important service to which he was called ; yet not to be discouraged respecting it. " Being a young man, he might be discouraged from undertaking so great a work : but he bids him go about it strenuously, because God had chosen him to do it." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 11-13. David was divinely instructed, probably by immediate revelation, or else by some prophet, (perhaps Nathan,) in what form the temple was to be built, and how to regulate every thing respecting it, and its chambers, and courts, and treasures. (*Notes, 9:22, 15:16, 16:1-3, 23:-26*.) "The LORD made him understand it in writing by his hand upon him." (19) And in what way soever this writing was made and sent to him, he gave it to Solomon just before his death : so that nothing was left even to " the wisdom of Solomon," but all was done by rule, even to the quantity of metal used in each vessel. (*Notes, 14-18*.) Moses had been instructed in the same manner in erecting the tabernacle. For both the tabernacle and temple were typical of Christ, and heavenly things. (*Notes, Ex. 25:9,40, 31:6*.)—In vain do men of opposite sentiments contend for such uniformity in the circumstances of our worship, under the New Testament ; seeing it is manifest, that exact, precise, and express rules are no where to be found, in respect of every particular.—It is, however, most evident, that to model divine ordinances according to man's imagination, would have been the height of presumption even in Solomon himself.

V. 14-16. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings, 7:48-51*.) The candlesticks of silver, and tables of silver, are not elsewhere mentioned, and it is not known to what use they were put. The former . . . (the candlesticks of silver) " were lesser, to be carried in their hands from place to place, as there was occasion." *Bp. Patrick.* It seems there were in the temple several tables of gold for the show-bread, and the vessels belonging to that part of the stated service. (*Note, 2 Chr. 4:19*.)

V. 17. The word, rendered basins, seems to be derived from the atonement made by the blood of the sacrifices, which was received into them till it was sprinkled. (*Note, Num. 7:13,14*.)

V. 18. Above the ark, between the cherubim, the glory of the Lord appeared, as a mighty warrior riding in his chariot of war, to the assistance of Israel his people. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 25:10-21*.) As the cherubim of gold made by Moses were joined to the mercy-seat, which covered the ark ; it has been thought, that Solomon was directed to make two additional cherubim, after the same pattern. These must, however, be distinguished from those made of olives covered with gold. (*Note, 1 Kings 6:23-28*.) And it is not absolutely certain, that amidst the many removals of the ark which had taken place, the cherubim had not been separated from it ; and whether Solomon did any thing more than make two others in the stead of them.

V. 19. (*Note, 11-13*.) This comprises all the particu-

17 Also pure gold for the fleshhooks and the bowls, and the cups : and for the golden basins, he gave gold by weight for every basin ; and likewise silver by weight for every basin of silver :

18 And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight ; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

19 All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.

20 ¶ And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong, and of good courage, and do it : Fear not, nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee ; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

21 And behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God : and there shall be with thee, for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful man, for any manner of service : also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.

2 Chr. 4:20-22. e Num. 7:13,14. 1 Kings 7:48-50, 10:21. f Ex. 30:1-10, 1 Kings 7:48. g Ex. 25:13-22, 1 Sam. 4:4. 1 Kings 6:2-30. Ps. 18:10, 68:17, 80:1, 99:1. Ex. 1:15-24, 10:2, &c. h 11:12. Ex. 25:40-30. 1 Ex. 1:3, 3:14, 22. k 10:22,13. Deut. 31:7,8. Josh. 1:6-9. 1 Cor. 1:14. 1 Ps. 27:12, 14, 41, 10:13. Rom. 8:31. m Josh. 1:5. Heb. 13:5. n 21:25-29. o Ex. 31:3. p Ex. 35:23,26,33, 36:1-4. Ps. 110:3. q 22:17-18. Th. 3:1.

lars mentioned in the preceding verses.—"God made him to understand all this so plainly and distinctly, as if it had been written on his mind, as the ten commandments were upon the tables of stone in the mount." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 20, 21. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 10*.) There appeared, in all the several orders of men, a very promising disposition to harmony among themselves, and loyalty to their prince ; and David foresaw that God would dispose them to cordial obedience to Solomon, though a younger brother, and in his youth.—"This was one reason, no doubt, of calling this assembly together, that they might be engaged to be aiding to Solomon, in promoting so pious a work." *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. While life continues, it is desirable to spend it in promoting the peace, prosperity, and spiritual good, of those who may remain behind. (*Notes, Ec. 9:10, 2 Pet. 1:12-15*.)—To treat inferiors with condescending respect and affection, is the way to gain love, without losing any due honour : and to address subjects as rational creatures, showing them the propriety and advantage of proposed measures, and persuading them to a willing concurrence, is far preferable to the exercise of despotic authority. Indeed kings and their meanest subjects are all brethren in fallen Adam : and believers, on a throne or in a cottage, are all brethren in Jesus Christ, and should mutually seek each other's welfare.—In that monarchy, which God established in Israel and sanctioned by his approbation, we see no traces of the *unalterable right of primogeniture*, or of ruling with absolute authority. Rather we perceive a resemblance of that limited, moderate, and equitable authority, which a kind Providence has established over these kingdoms ; for which we can never be sufficiently thankful, and for the continuance of which to our latest posterity, we should most fervently pray. The wickedness of man indeed, and the experience of ages, have taught the friends of liberty to secure that blessing by many regulations, which were not thought of, nor needful, in the happy days of " the man after God's own heart ;" and prudence dictates the general expediency of hereditary succession. Yet surely the conduct of David at the beginning, in the middle, and at the close of his reign, greatly resembled that of a British monarch meeting his Parliament, and doing all things by their concurrence and assistance.—It may be comfortable to us in a dying hour, to recollect the plans which we had framed to promote true religion, though we have been unable to accomplish them : from hence we may infer, that we are the chosen and called of God ; as such designs prove, that he has given us a heart to account his service a delightful privilege, and to long and love to be employed in it. But, in the nature and measure of our services, we must learn acquiescence in his will, whose choice of us is the source of all our grace, comfort, or usefulness : he was pleased to make us Christians, or ministers, and to employ us in various ways ; but he does not generally acquaint us with the reason of it. Happy are they, whom he has " chosen in Christ . . . unto the adoption of children unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (*Note, Eph. 1:3-8*.) from their almighty Father they will " receive a kingdom that cannot be moved," and he will establish it to them for ever. And it will be manifest, that this is their felicity, by their constancy in keeping his commandments, and doing their proper work in his church, after the example and by the grace of the Saviour. Let us then " give diligence to make our calling

CHAPTER XXIX.

David shows the princes and people what treasures he had prepared for the building and service of the temple, 1-5. After his example, and at his exhortation, they offer liberally, 6-9. He adores and blesses God, and prays for the people and for Solomon, 10-19. The people worship, sacrifice, and feast with joy; and then make Solomon king the second time, 20-22. He reigns in majesty and prosperity, 23-25. David's long and prosperous reign, and happy death, 26-30.

FURTHERMORE David the king said *unto* all the congregation, Solomon my son, *whom* alone God hath chosen, *is yet* young and tender, and the work *is* great; *for* the palace *is* not for man, but for the **LORD** God.

2 Now *I* have prepared *with* all my might for the house of my God *the* gold *for things* to be made of gold, and the silver *for things* of silver, and the brass *for things* of brass, the iron *for things* of iron, and wood *for things* of wood; *onyx-stones*, and *stones* to be set, glistening stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble-stones in abundance.

3 Moreover, because *I* have set my affection to the house of my God, *I* have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, *which* I have given to the house of my God, *over* and above all that *I* have prepared for the holy house,

4 *Even* three thousand talents of gold, of the *gold* of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses *withal* :

5 The gold *for things* of gold, and the silver *for things* of silver, and for all manner of work *to be made* by the hands of artificers. And *who*

then *is* willing to consecrate his service this day unto the **LORD**?

6 *¶* Then *the* chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly,

7 And gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.

8 And they with whom *precious* stones were found gave *them* to the treasure of the house of the **LORD**, by the hand of *Jehiel* the Gershonite.

9 Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with *perfect* heart they offered willingly to the **LORD**: and *David* the king also rejoiced with great joy.

[Practical Observations.]

10 *¶* Wherefore *David* blessed the **LORD** before all the congregation: and David said, *"Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever.*

11 Thine, O **LORD**, *is* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and *the* victory, and the *majesty*: for *all that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; *thine is* the kingdom, O **LORD**, and thou art *exalted* as head above all.

12 Both *riches* and honour *come* of thee, and thou *reignest* over all; and in thy hand *is* power and might; and in thy hand *it is* to make great, and to *give* strength unto all.

a 28:1,5. b 28:5,6. 1 Kings 9:19-20. c 22:5. 1 Kings 3:7. 2 Chr. 13:7. Prov. 4:3. Jer. 1:6,7. d 30:10. 2 Chr. 2:4,5. e 28:3-5,14-16. f 2 Chr. 31:20-21. Ps. 9:10. 2 Cor. 8:3. Col. 3:23. 1 Pet. 4:10,11. g 28:14-18. h Gen. 2:12. Ez. 29:20. 39:13. Job. 28:16. Is. 54:11,12. Rev. 21:18-21. 1 Pe. 2:6; 2:4. 84:1,10. 122:1-9. k 21:24. Prov. 3:9,10. 122:4,5,14-16. m 1 Kings 9:28. n Ex. 15:10. 35:5. Job. 28:10-14. o Ex. 28:14-6. 2 Chr. 6:13,16. 7:15,16. *¶* Heb. To all his hand. o 37:1. 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13 Now therefore, our God, ^awe thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

14 But ^awho *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should ^bbe able to offer so ^cwillingly after this sort? for *all* things *come* of thee, and ^dof thine own have we given thee.

15 For ^awe are strangers before thee, and sojourners, *as were* all our fathers: *our* days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none ^babiding.

16 O LORD our God, ^aall this store that we have prepared to build thee a house for thy holy name *cometh* of thy hand, and *is* all thine own.

17 I know also, my God, that thou ^atriest the heart, and ^bhast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, ^cin the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with ^djoy thy people, which are ^epresent here, to offer willingly unto thee.

18 O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, ^akeep this for ever ^bin the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and ^cprepare their heart unto thee.

19 And ^agive unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do *all these things*, and to build the palace, *for* ^bthe which I have made provision. [Practical Observations.]

20 ¶ And David said to all the congregation,

n Ps. 105:1, 106:1. Dan. 2:23. 2 Cor. 2:14, 8:16, 9:15. 1 Thes. 2:13. o Gen. 32:10. 2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Cor. 15:9, 10. 2 Cor. 3:5, 12:9-11. p Ps. 115:1. Rev. 4:10. ^a Heb. retain, or, obtain strength. q 9. Phil. 2:13. Jam. 1:17. r Gen. 2:23. Ps. 59:1-12. Rom. 11:26. 1 Cor. 16:2. s Heb. of thy hand and of thee. t Ps. 32:2, 119:19. Heb. 11:13-15. 1 Pet. 2:11. u Job. 14:2. Ps. 90:9, 102:11, 144:4. Ec. 6:12. Jam. 4:14. ^a Heb. expectation. u 14. 2 Chr. 31:10. Ps. 24:1. Hos. 2:8. Luke 19:16. v 28:9. Dent. 8:2. 1 Sam. 16:7. 2 Chr. 31:10. Prov. 16:2, 21:2. Jer. 17:10. Heb. 4:12. Rev. 2:23. y Prov. 11:29, 15:9. John 1:47. z Acts 24:16. 2 Cor. 1:12. 1 Thes. 2:10. a 9. Philom. 7:30. b Heb. found. c Heb. 3:6, 15:45. Matt. 22:32. Acts 3:13. d Dent. 30:6. Ps. 51:10, 119:116, 117. Jer. 10:23, 39:30, 40. Phil. 1:6-11. 1 Thes. 3:11, 12. Heb. 13:21. d 28:9. Gen. 6:5. Ps. 119:113. ¶ Heb. establish. Ps. 10:17. 2 Thes. 2:11.

own proper good. (3) סֵלָה rendered a peculiar treasure, Ex. 19:5. special. Dent. 7:6. jewels, Mal. 3:17. (Note, Tit. 2:14.) —The chief, &c. (6) Notes, 27:28:1.

With perfect heart, &c.] (9) 'This is the virtue which St. Paul calls ἀκαρπία, singleness of heart; which hath respect purely to the service of God, the honour of religion, and the good of the church: 2 Cor. 8:2. 9:11, 13.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Cor. 1:12-14.) Eph. 6:5-9.—'It was a singular comfort to him,' (David,) 'in his old age to see the people so well disposed, and his exhortation so effectual upon their hearts.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 10-19. Instead of boasting of these extraordinary oblations; (Note, Num. 23:4-6.) David gave solemn thanks to the Lord, with much enlargement of heart and copiousness of expression.—'LORD, God of Israel, our Father,' may mean, either the 'God of our father Israel, or Jacob,' (18) or 'JEHOVAH our Father, the God of Israel.' In this last view, the words may be considered as the first instance in Scripture, of God being addressed in prayer, as 'Our Father.' (Note, Matt. 6:9.) This is properly the language of the Spirit of adoption. (Note, Rom. 8:14-17.) As king of Israel David was become great, powerful, and honourable; he had obtained victories, taken immense spoils, and been crowned with royal majesty; but what was all this, before him who 'inhabitieth eternity,' and filleth immensity, and is undervied and independent of all; who possesses immutably every glorious and adorable perfection, and exercises almighty power and absolute universal authority; and who, victorious over all his enemies, reigns in majesty which exceeds all description or imagination! for his 'is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever, Amen.' (Note, Matt. 6:13.) From this God alone, David had received his wealth, his honour, and power; this he acknowledged with grateful praise; but, contemplating the infinite glories of his great Benefactor, and then turning his thoughts to himself and his people, the comparison affected him with a deep conviction of their meanness, weakness, and unworthiness; and he could not but wonder, that the glorious God would condescend to notice such indigent and sinful creatures. 'LORD,' says he, 'what are we, that we should offer so willingly after this sort?' Their existence was derived from God: he had graciously given them these treasures, and had disposed their hearts willingly to make this use of them; so that in every way the whole praise belonged to him. 'In the Targum it is thus paraphrased, *Who has given us such plenty, that we are able to offer these gifts*. He should have added, and also given us a heart to part with them for thy service.

The highest satisfaction was, that God had bestowed upon him a heart, to do what he had done, willingly, with a sincere respect to the service of God, and not out of vain glory.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, Ps. 110:3.) As for David and his people, they were strangers and sojourners; *dying*, because *sinful* creatures. Though settled and prospered very greatly in Canaan, they still were strangers before God, and sojourners,

'Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD, and the king.'

21 And they ^asacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel:

22 And did ^aeat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king ^athe second time, ^band anointed him unto the LORD to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest.

23 Then Solomon ^asat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and ^bprospered; and ^call Israel obeyed him.

24 And ^aall the princes, and the mighty men, and ^ball the sons likewise of king David, ^csubmitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

25 And the LORD ^amagnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and ^bbestowed upon him *such* royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

26 ¶ Thus David the son of Jesse reigned ^aover all Israel.

27 And the time that he reigned over Israel was ^aforty years; seven years reigned he in

2:15, 17. 1 Pet. 5:10. a 28:9. Ps. 72:1, 119:80, Jam. 1:7, f. 2, 22:14. g 16:36. 2 Chr. 20:21. Ps. 134:2, 135:19-21, 146:1, 2, 148:13, 14. &c. h Gen. 24:26, 48. Ex. 4:31. Ps. 29:1, 95:6. f. Ex. 14:31. 1 Sam. 12:18. Prov. 24:21. 1 Pet. 2:17. k 1 Kings 8:62-65. 2 Chr. 7:4-9. Ezra 6:17. l 1 Lev. 23:13. Num. 15:5, 7, 10. m Ps. 24:11. Dent. 12:7, 11, 12, 15:14-17. 2 Chr. 7:10. Neh. 8:12. Ec. 2:24. 3:12, 13. 8:15, 9:7. 1 Tim. 6:17, 18. n 23:1. o 1 Kings 1:35-39. p 1 Kings 2:35. q 17:11, 12, 28:5. Ps. 132:11. Ja. 9:6, 7. r 22:11. a Ec. 8:2-5. Rom. 13:1. c 22:17, 23:21. u 9:5-9. 1 Kings 1:50-53, 23:25. ¶ Heb. gave the hand under. Gen. 34:2, 47:29. 2 Chr. 30:8. marg. Ex. 17:18. z Josh. 9:7, 4. 2 Chr. 1:1. Job 7:17. Acts 19:17. y 1 Kings 3:13. 2 Chr. 1:12. Ec. 2:9. Dan. 5:18, 19. Heb. 2:9. z 18:14. Ps. 78:71, 72. a 3:4. 2 Sam. 5:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:11.

as really, (though in rather a different sense,) as their fathers were, when they dwelt in the promised land in tents, or wandered in the desert. (Notes, Ps. 39:12. Heb. 4:3-11. 11:13-16. 1 Pet. 2:11.) Indeed all that treasure, which they gave to the Lord to build his temple, was his own before; if they had attempted to keep it, death would soon have removed them: so that the only use which they could make of it, to their own real advantage, was thus to consecrate it to the service of him who gave it, and whose gracious acceptance of their oblation would add still more to their obligations. At the same time David was conscious of his own uprightness and willingness in this oblation, as in the presence of that heart-searching God who 'hath pleasure in uprightness,' and with great joy he beheld his people showing every token of the same disposition. He well knew, that this, as far as genuine, was the effect of a sacred influence from God upon the heart, 'preventing them, that they might have a good will': and he most fervently prayed, that it might be evermore kept there, by the same grace working in them when they had that good will; and that the Lord would prepare the hearts of them all, but especially the heart of Solomon, for himself; and that he might accomplish the arduous important service before him.—Such is this address of David to the LORD God of Israel; and nothing on this side heaven can be conceived more humble, pure, evangelical, spiritual, devout, or exalted, than the praise, adoration, gratitude, confidence, love, zeal, and philanthropy, which it breathes throughout.—None abiding. (15) No expectation. (Marg. Notes, Ps. 39:7, 8. 62:1, 2, 5-7.)

V. 20. David, having concluded his act of worship, called upon the people to bless the LORD with him: and when they had rendered their adoring praises and thanksgivings unto God, they performed obedience to their aged and pious king. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 21-25. Besides the burnt-offerings, which were entirely consumed on the altar, numerous the peace-offerings were sacrificed, on the flesh of which the assembled multitudes joyfully feasted. (Notes, Dent. 12:5-7. 1 Kings 8:63-65. Neh. 8:10-12.)—Solomon had been hastily, and by a few persons, anointed king, during Adonijah's usurpation; (Notes, 1 Kings 1:38, 39.) but he was at this time anointed in a more solemn and public manner. As Abiathar was removed from the high priesthood, and Zadok substituted in his place, after David's death; it has been thought, that the second anointing of Solomon was also subsequent to that event. (Note, 1 Kings 2:26, 27.) He was anointed unto 'the LORD to be the chief governor,' and 'he sat on the throne of the LORD.' For the LORD was in an especial manner the king of Israel; the princes received their authority from him by peculiar designation; and they were expressly required to support his worship and law. They also were all types of Christ, who 'sat down with his Father on his throne.'—We may suppose that every kind of personal accomplishment united with justice, wisdom, and prosperity, in that royal majesty which

Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

28 And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

29 Now the acts of David the king, first and

e Gen. 15:15, 25:8. Job 5:26. Prov. 16:31. Acts 13:36. e 93:1. Gen. 35:22. d 1 Kings 11:41, 14:29. Heb. 11:32, 33. * Or, history. Heb. words.

the Lord bestowed upon Solomon, and by which he magnified him in the sight of all Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26—28. (*Marg. Ref.*) When we read the eleventh chapter of the second book of Samuel, and the sequel of that melancholy narration, we could scarcely expect to behold David appear so illustrious in his closing scene, in which every thing heavenly and excellent is combined; and the people seem to have considered him with a veneration and affection, which language fails to express. But his repentance had been as remarkable as his sins; and his conduct, during his afflictions, and towards the end of his life, seems to have had more effect on his subjects, than all that they had before witnessed.—It is indeed hard to say, which shines the brightest in this chapter, the *rising*, or the *setting sun*: but it is better to rise behind clouds, and to be much obscured in the course of our lives, and to set, like David, with splendour; than with Solomon to rise very bright, and shine very splendidly, and then to set behind an almost impenetrable cloud. (*Note, 1 Kings 11:42, 43.*)

V. 29, 30. It is plain from these verses, that the contemporary prophets were the historians, or annalists, of God's people; and that they left far more copious records of public transactions, both in respect of Israel and the adjacent countries, than have come down to us. (*Note, 2 Sam. 23:1.*)—Learned men may indeed regret the loss of these histories; but God knows better than we, what was most fit to be preserved for the use and benefit of his church. *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9. The due support and scriptural promotion of religion, is always more important, and in many cases more arduous, than the administration of civil government: because the honour of God, and the most essential interests of immortal souls, are concerned in it; compared with which all other interests are trivial. They alone, whom the Lord hath chosen for such a work, will prosper in it; and it is the duty of all to assist by every proper means in their power.—Strong affection to God, and to all that relates to him for his sake, will constrain men to the most disinterested, self-denying, and liberal services; and they will never think that they have done, or can do, enough to promote his glory; but, with all their might, will abound in every good work, and make more and more preparation for the carrying on of the same great and holy design. (*Note, 2 Cor. 5:13—15.*)—Those who would excite others to consecrate their service to the Lord, either in feeding his poor children, or in spreading his truth and supporting his worship, must set the example: and then a hint from them will go further, than a laboured and eloquent oration from a man, who persuades others to those things, which he himself evidently does not practise.—Our holy joy in God will commonly bear proportion to the willingness, uprightness, and liberality, with which we devote our all to him: and that rejoicing is peculiarly pure and heavenly, which springs from beholding those whom we greatly love, giving evidence of their real devotedness to God, and their delight in his ways. (*Notes, Phil. 4:14—20. 1 Thes. 3:6—10. 2 John 4. 3 John 1—4.*) The bodily pain and infirmities of age, and the chilling hand of death, while they dispose us for all other enjoyments, or separate us from them, cannot preclude or extinguish this, which emulates that of angels, who "rejoice over one sinner that repenteth."

V. 10—19. Those, who are most "zealous of good works," will never boast of them, or trust in them. Sensible of their indigence as creatures, and conscious of their guilt and defilement as sinners, they will allow that "it is of the Lord's mercies they are not consumed." To them it appears an unspeakable favour, that a holy God will accept any worship or service from such polluted creatures; they know that all their ability of every kind is from him; and they account it their chief pleasure, honour, and privilege to be employed by him, who needs not and cannot be profited by their services. They are conscious that their best needs forgiveness, falls infinitely beneath his glorious majesty, and is utterly unworthy of his acceptance, "whose is the kingdom, and who is exalted as Head above all." "In like manner, we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things: referring every good thought, good purpose, good work, to his divine grace, from whom we receive it; beseeching him, as David doth, ... to preserve it in us." *Bp. Patrick.* Thus our best and most useful works will terminate in admiration of his inconceivable majesty, goodness, power, and holiness; in unfeigned praises and thanksgivings; and in the deepest self-abasement before him. This is genuine grace: but when we are proud of our services, (which we are very prone to be,) what is it, but sacrilegiously to rob God of what belongs to him alone, and sacrifice it to the most hateful of our own lusts? We may indeed "rejoice in the testimony of our consciences," when we have acted with "simplicity and godly sincerity," in the presence of that God who trieth the heart, and hath pleasure in uprightness; (*Note, 2 Cor. 1:12—14.*) and should joyfully

last, behold, they are written in the 'book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer,

30 With all his reign, and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

e 1 Sam. 9:9 f 2 Sam. 7:2—4, 12:1—7. g 21:9—11. h 2 Kings 10:34, 14:28. i 1 Au. 2:21.

observe the indications of the same disposition in others: but we must remember, that this also is the gift of God, and that we can no more offer the sacrifice of a broken heart, or a thankful heart, than we can present ten thousands of bulls and goats, except as we give unto him his own, which he has previously conferred upon us. All comes from him, and to him belongs "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever."—While we bless the Lord for putting good desires into our hearts, or the hearts of others, we should never forget to pray to him to preserve and fix them there, and to bring them to good effect.—When we feel that there is no abiding for us on earth, but that we are departing as a shadow, and following our fathers, who have been strangers and sojourners before us; we should be peculiarly fervent in our prayers that those who are to succeed us, or whom we consider as having profited by our instructions, may have their "hearts prepared unto the Lord," and disposed for the work to which they are called. Parents and ministers also, when they perceive any of their children or people under serious impressions, should "travail in birth for them till Christ be formed in them," by earnest constant prayer, that "the Lord would keep for ever in the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts," those good desires which he has excited, "and prepare their hearts unto himself." (*Notes, Gal. 4:17—20. Col. 2:1—4.*) We should also call upon them to pray and to bless the Lord for themselves; and when our examples prove that we are deeply in earnest in these great concerns, we may hope that our exhortations will have a permanent and most beneficial effect.

V. 20—30. They, who render God the honour due unto his name, will seldom fail duly to respect those, who have been the instruments of his kindness to them, or to honour those whom God has placed in authority over them.—All our obedience and communion with God must have a believing reference to that one great sacrifice, which infinitely more honours his law and justice, than all the oblations which shadowed it forth to ancient believers; thus, peace with him, peace of conscience, and gladness of heart will make sacred ordinances pleasant to us; and even render our ordinary meals subservient to our spiritual improvement and the honour of God; while they are attended with gratitude, temperance, liberality, and a heavenly mind. These are the pleasures and employments which add dignity to prosperity, rank, and eminence for wisdom; which adorn every personal accomplishment, and increase the enjoyment of sprightly youth and vigorous health. These are essential to that royal majesty, which God bestows on those whom he loves: and without these there can be no durable prosperity, honour, comfort, or usefulness. Unless we have some acquaintance with these pious exercises, riches, honour, and prosperity only render "the king of terrors" more tremendous; but these are sufficient to deprive death of his sting: and when we read or hear of one, who has been taken away from the midst of such employments, we readily conceive of his soul, as escaped out of prison, mounting up to heaven, and joining immediately with ineffable delight in the worship of angels. May we "die the death of the righteous, and may our latter end be like his!" Blessed be God, the chief of sinners may hope for such a glorious exit, when brought to repent, and to flee for refuge to the Saviour's atoning blood. Nay, even those who have grievously sinned, after a long profession of godliness, to the triumphing of the wicked, and so as to bring on themselves the most severe and complicated chastisements, may possibly retrieve all; may have their broken bones made to rejoice; may recover "the joy of God's salvation;" may "have their lips opened to show forth his praises, that sinners may be converted unto him;" and may regain the entire confidence of those, who had been the most stumbled by their fall. (*Notes, Ps. 51: title. 11—13.*) But this cannot be done without deep humiliation before God and man, resigned patience under correction, and redoubled watchfulness and diligence in the Lord's ways. Let us then mark the difference between the spirit and character of the man after God's own heart, living and dying; and those of such worthless professors, as resemble him in nothing but his sin, and who apologize for their crimes by his example. Let us also compare him with those presumptuous cavillers, who profanely carp at the blemishes in illustrious scriptural characters; but never raise their minds to an idea of such exalted excellency, piety, and philanthropy, as David showed. We cannot too closely imitate the general example of this most eminent saint; but let us watch and pray, lest we be overcome by temptation and overtaken with sin, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of our own consciences: and if we have offended, let us copy his example of repentance and patience, still hoping to close our days like him, and having "served our own generation by the will of God," to fall asleep, with the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Amen.

THE SECOND BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

THIS book is a continuation of the history begun in the former book. It in some respects coincides with the books of Kings. But here, the histories of Judah and Israel are carried on together; as those of England and Scotland are by some of our historians: here, the affairs of Judah are more fully and distinctly recorded, while those of Israel are only mentioned occasionally, when required by the main subject; as an English historian would sometimes digress concerning the affairs of France or Germany, in elucidating his narrative. 'There are several things contained in this book, of which no mention is made there,' (in Kings,) 'particularly in the history of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah: and many other things there mentioned, are here more fully and clearly explained, as will be observed in the acts of Abijah, Asa, Joash, and other kings of Judah.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The history opens with the accession of Solomon, and contains a narrative of the several kings of his race, who reigned in succession, till the Babylonish captivity; and it concludes with an intimation of Cyrus's decree for the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple, about four hundred and eighty years after.—Besides the additional practical instruction here afforded, especially in respect of the different effects of piety, or profaneness, in the affairs of nations favoured with revelation; this history throws great light on the prophetic writings, which can by no means be well understood without constantly adverting to it. The prophecies contained in it either were fulfilled soon after they were spoken, or coincide with those before considered: and it is not always easy to determine concerning subsequent scriptural references, whether they relate to this book or to the books of Kings.

B. C. 1015.

CHAPTER I.

Solomon established as king, calls on his nobles and people, to join in sacrificing at Gibeon, 1—6. The Lord appears to him there by night, and allows him to choose what blessing to ask: he asks wisdom, and is promised also riches and honour, 7—12. Solomon's forces, riches, and commerce, 13—17.

AND Solomon the son of David ^awas strengthened in his kingdom, and ^bthe Lord his God *was* with him, and ^cmagnified him exceedingly.

² Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, ^dto the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, ^e'the chief of the fathers.

³ So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at Gibeon; for there *was* ^fthe tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses, ^gthe servant of the Lord, had made in the wilderness.

⁴ But ^hthe ark of God had David brought ⁱup from Kirjath-jearim to *the place which* David had prepared for it: ^j'for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

⁵ Moreover, ^kthe brazen altar, that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, ^l'he put before the tabernacle of the Lord; and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.

⁶ And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the Lord, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered ^ma thousand burnt-offerings upon it.

⁷ ¶ In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, ⁿ'Ask what I shall give thee.

⁸ And Solomon said unto God, ^o'Thou hast showed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me ^p'to reign in his stead.

⁹ Now, O Lord God, ^q'let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people ^r'like the dust of the earth in multitude.

^a 1 Kings 2:12, 45. ^b Gen. 21:92, 39:21. ^c Ex. 3:12. 1 Chr. 17:8. Matt. 28:20. ^d 1 Chr. 22:25. Phil. 2:9—11. ^e 29:20. 30:2, 34:29, 30. 1 Chr. 13:1, 15:3, 28:1. ^f 29:1. ^g 1 Chr. 15:12, 24:4, 31. ^h 1 Kings 3:4. 1 Chr. 16:39, 21:29. ⁱ Ex. 26:1, 36:40, 2:34. Lev. 1:1. ^j Deut. 34:1. ^k 2 Sam. 6:17. 1 Chr. 13:5, 15:25—28. ^l 1 Chr. 16:1. Ps. 132:5, 6. ^m Ex. 27:1—8, 38:1—7. ⁿ Ex. 31:2. 1 Chr. 2:19, 20. ^o Heb. *was there*. ^p 1 Kings 3:4, 8:65. 1 Chr. 29:21. Is. 40:16. ^q 1 Kings 3:5—15. Prov. 3:5, 8. ^r Matt. 7:7, 8. Mark 10:38, 37, 51. John 16:23. ^s 1 John 5:14, 15. ^t 2 Sam. 7:8, 9. 12:7, 8. 22:51, 23:1. Ps. 86:13, 89:20—28, 49, 18, 53:3. ^u 1 Chr. 28:5, 29:23. ^v 2 Sam. 7:12—16, 25—29. 1 Chr. 17:11—14, 23—27.

NOTES.—**CHAP. I. V. 1. Note, 1 Chr. 21:1—25.**
V. 2. This seems to have taken place a short time after David's decease; when Solomon, being established in his kingdom, convened his chief men, and spake to them concerning the solemn sacrifice in honour of God, which he purposed to offer.

V. 3—6. *Notes, Ex. 40:1—33. 2 Sam. 6: 1 Kings 3:4, 8:4. 1 Chr. 16:37—43. 21:28—30. 22:1.*

V. 7—12. *Note, 1 Kings 3:5—14.—This was in thy year.* (11) This does not occur in Kings: and it implies that the request of Solomon, as arising from a spiritual judgment and heart, was peculiarly acceptable to that God, who searches, regards, and demands the heart. God promised

B. C. 1015.

¹⁰ 'Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may ¹¹'go out and come in before this people: ¹²'for who can judge this thy people, *that is so* great?

¹¹ And God said to Solomon, Because ¹²this was in thy heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, ¹³'that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

¹² Wisdom and knowledge ¹³is granted unto thee; and ¹⁴I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, ¹⁵'such as none of the kings have had that *have been* before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

¹³ ¶ Then Solomon came *from his journey* to the high place that *was* at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and ¹⁴reigned over Israel.

¹⁴ And ¹⁵Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

¹⁵ And ¹⁶the king ¹⁷made silver and gold at Jerusalem ¹⁸as *plenteous* as stones, and cedar-trees made he as ¹⁹the 'sycamore-trees that are in the vale for abundance.

¹⁶ And ¹⁷Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

¹⁷ And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt, a chariot for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty: and so brought they out *horses* for all ¹⁸the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their ¹⁹'means.

38:6, 7. Ps. 89:35—37, 132:11, 12. ¹ Heb. *much as the dust of the earth*. Gen. 13:16, 22:17. Num. 23:10. ² Ps. 119:31, 73. Prov. 2:9—5, 3:13—18, Jam. 1:5. ³ Num. 27:17. Deut. 31:2. 2 Sam. 5:2. ⁴ 2 Cor. 2:16, 3:5. ⁵ 1 Sam. 16:7. 1 Kings 8:18. 1 Chr. 28:9, 29:17, 18. Acts 5:4. ⁶ 1 Kings 3:28. Prov. 14:8, Jam. 3:13, 17. ⁷ Matt. 6:33. Eph. 3:20. ⁸ b 9:22. 1 Chr. 29:25. ⁹ Ec. 2:9. ¹⁰ c 3. ¹¹ d 1 Kings 4:24, 25. ¹² e 9:35. ¹³ Dent. 17:16. ¹⁴ 1 Kings 5:26, 10:26. ¹⁵ 12:9, 27. 1 Kings 10:27. Job 22:24, 25. Is. 60:17. ¹⁶ Heb. *gave*. ¹⁷ g 9:27. Is. 9:10. Am. 7:14. ¹⁸ Heb. *the going forth of the horses which was Solomon's*. ¹⁹ 9:28. 1 Kings 10:23, 29. ²⁰ h 2 Kings 7:6. ²¹ Heb. *and*.

Solomon all the things which he had not asked, except the life of his enemies: but he was to be a peaceable king, a type of the Prince of peace. (12)

V. 14—17. *Notes, 1 Kings 10:24—29.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
The presence and blessing of God gives strength, honour, happiness, and stability; and to whom he has given much, from them he requires the more.—It would be a comely sight to the spiritually minded, to behold kings with their nobles, and the chief estates of their dominions, assembling together for the purposes of religious worship, stirring up each other by the fervency of their devotions, and giving evident demonstrations how generally and deeply their hearts were engaged

CHAPTER II.

Solomon purposes to build the temple, and a palace, 1. His workmen, 2. He sends to Hiram for skilful artificers, and for timber, 3-10. Hiram's friendly answer, 11-16. Solomon employs strangers, as labourers and overseers, 17, 18.

AND Solomon ^adetermined to build a house ^bfor the name of the LORD, and ^ca house for his kingdom.

2 And Solomon ^dtold out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.

3 ¶ And Solomon sent to ^eHiram the king of Tyre, saying, 'As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him a house to dwell therein, *even so deal with me.*

4 Behold, ^fI build a house to the name of the LORD my God, ^gto dedicate it to him, and ^hto burn before him ⁱ'sweet incense, and for ^j'the continual show-bread, and for ^k'the burnt-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on ^l'the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This is ^man ordinance for ever to Israel.

5 And the house which I build is ⁿ'great; for ^o'great is our God above all gods.

6 But ^p'who is ^q'able to build him a house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him? ^r'who *am* I then, that I should build him a house, ^s'save only to burn sacrifice before him?

7 Send me now therefore a man ^t'cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill ^u'to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, ^v'whom David my father did provide.

8 'Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, ^w'and ^x'algum-trees, out of Lebanon; for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and behold, my servants ^y*shall* be with thy servants,

1 Kings 5:5. b Deut. 12:5, 11. 28:38. 1 Kings 8:18, 20. 1 Chr. 22:10. Matt. 6:30. c 1 Kings 7:1. 9:1. d 18. 1 Kings 5:15, 16. e 1 Kings 5:1. *Hiram.* 2 Sam. 5:11. 1 Chr. 14:1. g 1. 1 Kings 5:18. h 1 Kings 8:63. i 1 Chr. 30:7. Heb. *increase of spices.* k Ex. 25:30. Lev. 24:5-8. l Ex. 24:35-42. Num. 28:34, 39-41. m Lev. 23: Num. 28:29. n 9. 1 Kings 9:9. 1 Chr. 29:1. Ez. 7:20. o Ex. 15:11. 1 Chr. 16:25. Ps. 86:8, 9. 135:5. 145:3. 146:6. p 18. 1 Kings 9:27. 18: 66:1. Acts 7:48, 49. 1 Heb. *hath retained, or, enjoyed strength.* q 12. Ex. 31:2. 2 Sam. 7:18. 1 Chr. 29:14. 2 Cor. 2:16. Eph. 3:7. r Deut. 12:5, 6, 11, 14, 26. s Ex. 31:3-5. 1 Kings 7:14. 18: 23:25, 29. 60:10. t Heb. *grave gratings.* u 1 Chr. 22:15, 16. v 1 Kings 5:6. x 1 Kings 10:11. *almug-*

in the sacred services. Alas! even in Christian countries such scenes are seldom, if ever, exhibited! But the example, the influence, and the exhortations of princes, who greatly fear and love the Lord, and who are eminent for piety and wisdom, may effect very great things; especially when one succeeds to another, walking before God, in the steps of his predecessor; and those, who love the truths and service of God, should unite in praying, not *formally*, but *ferently*, for aid in authority; that, being enriched with grace and wisdom, they may become instruments of extensive good to their dominions.—To us the desires of men's hearts can only be known by their habitual conduct; but in themselves they as certainly distinguish characters, as actions do; and if the Lord see that it is in our heart to desire wisdom and grace, more than riches, honour, or pleasure, he will delight to fulfil all our mind. His promises should form the rule and measure of our prayers; and when they respect any important end, they may be pleaded as engaging him to grant all things requisite in order to it.—To know and to do our duty in the station of life assigned us, to the glory of God and the benefit of our connexions in society, requires much wisdom, and is one principal exercise and evidence of it; and if we humbly feel our need of this wisdom, and faithfully ask it of God, he will give it liberally, and not upbraid our former folly. (*Note, Jam. 1:5-8.*)—Those secular employments, which are commenced by the worship and service of God, are likely to be well managed and to be prosperous; and as he "gives grace and glory; so he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly."—But alas! prosperity is always dangerous, because our hearts are extremely deceitful; and it is with great propriety, that we pray, 'in all time of our wealth, . . . Good Lord deliver us,' from pride, ostentation, indolence, self-indulgence, and a worldly mind. Let us then improve our present talent, seek heavenly blessings, and be contented without those great things, which men generally covet, but which commonly prove fatal snares to their souls.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 5:13-18.*

V. 3-10. We have here a more particular account of

9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build *shall* be ^{wonderful} great.

10 And, behold, ^aI will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand ^bbaths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.

11 ¶ Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, 'Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.

12 ^cHiram said moreover, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, ^d'that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, ^e'endued with prudence and understanding, that might build ^fa house for the LORD, and a house for his kingdom.

13 And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, ^g'of Hiram my father's;

14 'The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, ^h'skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.

15 Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, ⁱ'which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants:

16 And ^j'we will cut wood out of Lebanon ^k'as much as thou shalt need; and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to ^l'Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.

17 ¶ And Solomon ^m'numbered all ⁿ'the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel, ^o'after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found a hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred.

18 And he set ^p'threescore and ten thousand of

trees. q Or, *alghummim.* r Heb. *great and wonderful.* s 7-21. 1 Kings 9:8, 9. 1 Kings 5:11. Luke 10:7. Rom. 13:7, 8. z 1 Kings 7:26, 38. Ezra 7:22. a 9:8. b 7:7, 8. 1 Kings 10:9. c 1 Kings 5:7. 1 Chr. 29:20. Ps. 72:18, 19. Luke 1:68. 1:1 et. 1:3. d Gen. 1:2. Ps. 33:6. 132:5. 124:8. 135:5. 145:5, 6. Jer. 10:11. Acts 4:24. 14:15. Col. 1:16, 17. Rev. 4:11. 10:6. e Heb. *knowing prudence.* f 1:10-12. d. 1:6. g 1 Kings 7:13, 14. g 7. Ez. 31:3, 4. h 10. 1 Kings 5:11. i 1 Kings 5:8, 9. j Heb. *according to all thy need.* k Heb. *Japho.* Josh. 19:46. Ezra 3:7. Jon. 1:3. Acts 5:36. 10:32. l 2. 8:7, 8. 1 Kings 5:13-16. 9:20, 21. m Heb. *the men the strangers.* n 1 Chr. 22:2. m 2.

Solomon's message to Hiram, (or Hiram,) king of Tyre, than was before given; (*Notes, 1 Kings 5:1-11.*) and it appears, that he thought it no impropriety to speak freely and particularly on religious subjects, in treating with a heathen prince about secular business. On the contrary, he laboured to give him very high and honourable thoughts of Israel's God, as great above all gods; and as one whom "the heaven of heavens could not contain;" he particularly explained to him his intentions in building a temple to the name of the Lord; viz. that it was to be the stated place of those instituted ordinances, which were required by the law of God, given to Israel; that he might not misapprehend him, as if he supposed that JEHOVAH could be circumscribed in a temple, like the idols of the heathen: and he represented to him his own inability and unworthiness for such a service, except as mercifully assisted and accepted in it, by that gracious God, who had chosen him for the work. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. The just sentiments contained in these verses, with the pious and benevolent spirit which they breathe, leave no doubt, that Hiram was himself a spiritual worshipper of the true God. (*Note, 1 Kings 10:6-9.*) 'He . . . owns the God of Israel to be JEHOVAH, the Maker of heaven and earth. . . The Israelites, . . . when they would distinguish him from idols and creatures, . . . confess him to be the Creator of the world. . . And . . . he' (Hiram) 'congratulates the Israelites on the happiness they enjoyed under such a king, which was the effect of his love to God and his church.' *Victorinus Strigelius in Ep. Patrick.*

V. 13. *Of Hiram my father's.* Or, *Hiramabi.* It seems that this man, being the most eminent in his line of business, was called *father*, or *my father Hiram.* King Hiram called him so, and Solomon did the same. (*Note, 4:16.*) For it is evident that the artist's name is here meant, and not that of the king's father.

V. 14-16. *Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 7:14.—My lord David.* (14.) An honourable title given by Hiram to David, expressive of his veneration and affection for him: for, probably, he had derived his knowledge of the true God, and

them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a-work.

CHAPTER III.

The place of the temple, and the time when the building of it was begun, 1, 2. The dimensions and ornaments, 3-7. Those of the most holy place, 8-10. The cherubim placed in it, 11-13. The veil, 14. The two pillars, 15-17.

THEN ¹Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the thrashing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2 And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

3 ¶ Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God. The length by cubits after the first measure was threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.

4 And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height was a hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

5 And the greater house he ceiled with fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm-trees and chains.

6 And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty; and the gold was gold of Parvaim.

7 He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and he graved cherubims on the walls.

8 ¶ And he made the most holy house, the length whereof was according to the breadth of the

house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold amounting to six hundred talents.

9 And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10 And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image-work, and overlaid them with gold.

11 And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.

12 And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house; and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub.

13 The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward.

14 ¶ And he made the veil of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon.

15 ¶ Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.

16 And he made chains, as in the oracle, and put them on the heads of the pillars; and made a hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains.

17 And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

a 1 Kings 6:1, &c. b Gen. 22:14. * Or, which was seen of David. c 2 Sam. 24:18-25. Ararat. 1 Chr. 21:18, 22:1. d 1 Kings 6:1. e 1 Chr. 28:11-19. f Heb. founded. 1 Kings 6:23. g 1 Kings 6:15-17, 21, 22. h 1 Chr. 28:11-19. i 1 Chr. 28:11-19. j 1 Chr. 28:11-19. k Ex. 26:1. l 1 Kings 6:35. m Ex. 26:33. n 1 Kings 6:19, 20. Heb. 9:3, 9.

his holy worship, from his intercourse with David, to whom on that account he looked up, as to a superior.

V. 17, 18. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Kings 5:13-18. 9: 20-22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought always to attend to the work of God, in decided preference to our own indulgence or accommodation: and our hearts should be resolved for every service, that we may endure hardship, struggle with difficulties, and not yield to weariness or discouragement.—The greatest monarchs on earth are as nothing, in comparison with the God of heaven; and they should deem it their highest honour to be his servants, and to speak of his glorious majesty.—The genuine love of God, abounding in the heart, infuses the savour of piety into the ordinary concerns and converse of life. Indeed, we should be neither afraid nor ashamed, to embrace every opportunity of speaking honourably of him, and of impressing the minds of men with a deep sense of his majesty and excellency, and of the importance of his favour, worship, and service. (Note, Ps. 119:46.)—It is a great part of our wisdom towards them that are without, so to explain our meaning in every doctrine and ordinance, and so to guard our discourses about them, as may best prevent misapprehension or prejudice: and the neglect of this rule is not boldness or faithfulness, as some well-meaning zealots suppose, but indiscretion and folly.—In pleading the cause of God and religion, we should always speak humbly of ourselves; but, unless we be humbled, our temper and conduct will betray the hypocrisy of our self-abasing language. May the Lord himself therefore “clothe us with humility!”—Possessions, endowments, or royal authority, are given men for the sake of others; and a wise and pious king is an evidence of the Lord’s special love to the people. Who then can express the greatness of his love to his people, in giving them his only begotten Son, to be their Prince and Saviour! It is also a great mercy to have children endued with wisdom and understanding; and we should all desire to be blessings to those among whom we live, that they may bless God for us. We ought also to praise him for those blessings which are exclusively bestowed on others: and it is pleasant to observe how the friendship of pious men becomes the means of bringing those who were far off, to know, love, and worship our God and Saviour. Let us then be unwearied in spreading the knowledge of his name and truth; and let us devote our several talents to his service; endeavour to be helpful to one another in this good work; and be thankful that poor heathens, and even the meanest slaves, may be usefully and acceptably employed by our great and gracious Lord!

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. (Notes, Gen 22:2.

10:19. m 1 Kings 6:23-28. n Or, moveable work. o Or, toward the house. Ex. 25:20. p Ex. 26:31-35. Matt. 27:51. Heb. 9:2, 10:20. q Heb. caused to ascend. r 1 Kings 7:15-24. Jer. 52:21-23. s Heb. long. t 1 Kings 6:21. u 1 Kings 7:30. v 1 Kings 7:21. w That is, He shall establish. x That is, In it is strength.

1 Chr. 21:18-30, 22:1.) It is thought, that the temple and its courts were situated, partly in the lot of Judah, and partly in that of Benjamin. (Notes, Deut. 33:12. Ps. 78:67-69.)—Began to build, &c. (2) Note, 1 Kings 6:1.

V. 3, 4. “The first measure” seems to mean the original plan. “He projected the sanctuary, and the oracle, both together; and in their first description they were to be in length sixty cubits: that is, forty for the sanctuary, and twenty for the most holy place.” Bp. Patrick. The height of the porch is not mentioned in Kings; but the description given of the temple, in the exposition, takes in this account. (Notes, 1 Kings 6:2, 3. 1 Chr. 28:11-13, 19.)

V. 6-8. (Marg. Ref.) It is not known on what account the gold here mentioned, is called gold of Parvaim; that word not elsewhere occurring in Scripture: probably it was brought from a place so called.

V. 9. Some by the word rendered “the upper chambers,” suppose the ceiling of the most holy place to be meant; but perhaps some of the upper chambers, on the outside of the temple, were thus decorated; the lower being used for more common purposes. (Notes, 1 Kings 5:5-10.)

V. 10-13. The meaning of the word rendered “image-work,” (10) is not well known; but it implies something highly ornamented.

V. 14-17. Notes, 1 Kings 6:23-28. 7:15-22.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Proper instructions, well understood, enable us to go about our work, without hesitation or uncertainty, and to proceed in it with confidence and comfort. Blessed be God, the sacred Scriptures are sufficient to render “the man of God thoroughly furnished for every good work;” and all our mistakes and embarrassments, in matters of importance, arise from not knowing the Scriptures, or not attending to this our heavenly rule. Let us then search them daily; and beseech the Lord to enable us to understand, believe, remember, and obey his whole word; that our way may be made plain before us. Let us endeavour, that all our works may be begun, continued, and ended in him; let us seek his grace to adorn our souls with the beauties of holiness, and his strength to establish us in faith and steady obedience, and to prosper our labours for his glory. Beholding God in Christ, his true Temple, infinitely more glorious than that of Solomon, may we too become “a spiritual house,” “a habitation of God though the Spirit,” and “a holy priesthood,” that here on earth we may begin to join the worship of cherubim and seraphim before the throne; and at length in his courts above, sing “praises to him, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.”

CHAPTER IV.

The altar of brass, 1. The molten sea supported by twelve oxen, 2-6. The lacera, candlesticks, and tables, 6-8. The two courts of the temple, 9, 10. The vessels, furniture, and instruments of brass, 11-18. Those of gold, 19-22.

MOREOVER, he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof; and ten cubits the height thereof.

2 Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.

3 And under it was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about; ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast.

4 It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.

5 And the thickness of it was an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths.

6 He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt-offering, they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.

7 And he made ten candlesticks of gold according to their form, and set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.

8 He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left; and he made a hundred basins of gold.

9 Furthermore, he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors with brass.

a 15. Ex. 27:1-8. 1 Kings 6:22,64. 2 Kings 16:14,15. Ex. 43:13-16. b Ex. 30:18-21. 1 Kings 7:23-25. Zech. 13:1. 1 S. 3:7. Rev. 7:14. * Heb. *Asaph* was a *temple*. c Ex. 1:10. 1 H. 1 Con. 5:9. 10. Rev. 1:12. d Matt. 13:18. Eph. 2:21. Rev. 21:14. e Matt. 25:10. 26:61. 27:10. f 1 Kings 7:23-25. g Ex. 30:18-21. 1 Kings 7:23-25. h Ps. 51:2. 1 Cor. 6:11. 1 Jo. 1:7. i Heb. *hachash*. j Lev. 1:9,13. Ex. 40:28. h 2. Ex. 29:4. Heb. 9:14. Rev. 1:5,6. 7:14. 1 Kings 7:49. 1 Chr. 28:15. Zech. 4:2,3. 11-14. Matt. 5:14-16. John 8:12. Rev. 1:20. k Ex. 25:31-40. 1 Ex. 25:32-30. 37:10-18. 1 Kings 7:48. 1 S. 25:6. Ex. 44:16. Mal. 1:12. 1 Cor. 10:21. s Or, *bowl*. Jer. 32:18,15. Zech. 14:20. m 1 Kings 6:36. 7:12. n 1 Kings 7:39. o 1 Kings 7:40,45. p Or, *bowl*. q Heb. *finished*

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. This altar is not mentioned in the book of Kings. It was four times as long and four times as broad, and above three times as high, as that made by Moses; (Notes, Ex. 27:1-8. *Exra* 3:2,3. Ex. 43:13-17.) and it formed a scaffold, above eleven yards square, and five yards high.—It might be supposed that the Israelites, now that they were settled, multiplied, and enriched in Canaan, would bring far more numerous sacrifices, than they could have done in the wilderness; and the altar was formed accordingly, to be capable of containing many more. As it was so high, all the worshippers in the most distant parts of the courts of the temple, might behold, and be affected with, this representation of the Lord's wrath against sinners, and his way of showing mercy through the sufferings of the promised Saviour. This was continually shadowed forth, by the innocent animals consumed by the fire which came down from heaven, while the guilty offerers were spared. (Notes, Gen. 4:3-5. *Lev.* 1:4.)

V. 2-6. Notes, 1 Kings 7:23-39. Jer. 52:17-23. Zech. 13:1. *Tit.* 1:1-7.

V. 7. *Form.* Either the form, in which Moses had been taught to make the golden candlestick for the tabernacle; (Notes, Ex. 25:31-39. 1 Kings 7:48-51.) or, according to the pattern which David gave him. (Notes, 1 Chr. 28:11-19.)

V. 8. *Marg. Ref. Note,* 1 Kings 7:48-51.

V. 9. *Note,* 1 Kings 6:36.

V. 10-12. *Marg. Ref.—Pommels.* (12) Or *Globes.* These are called *bowls*. 1 Kings 7:41. Perhaps they were globes placed above the chapters, which were seen through the ornaments with which they were decorated. (Note, 1 Kings 7:15-22.)

V. 16. 'Some think, Solomon calls him his father, out of great respect to him, or because he was the inventor of all this excellent work, as in Gen. 4:20,21. *Bp. Patrick.* (Note, 2:13.)

V. 17, 18. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 19. It is probable, that but one table was used for the show-bread: but the rest might be placed near it, for other

10 And 'he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

11 And Huram made the pots, and the showels, and the basins. And Huram finished the work, that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God;

12 To wit, the two pillars, and the pommels, and the chapters which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapters, which were on the top of the pillars;

13 And four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapters which were upon the pillars.

14 He made also bases, and lavers made he upon the bases;

15 One sea, and twelve oxen under it:

16 The pots also, and the showels, and the fleshhooks, and all their instruments, did Huram his father make to king Solomon, for the house of the Lord, of bright brass.

17 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zeredathah.

18 Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for the weight of the brass could not be found out.

19 And Solomon made all the vessels that were for the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables whereon the show-bread was set;

20 Moreover the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner before the oracle, of pure gold;

21 And the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, made he of gold, and that perfect gold;

22 And the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold: and the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and the doors of the house of the temple, were of gold.

to mnte. p 3:15-17. q 1 Kings 7:41. r Ex. 28:33,34. 1 Kings 7:42. Cant. 4:13. Jer. 52:23. * Heb. *face* of the. s 1 Kings 7:27-43. t Or, *caldrons*. 6 2-5. u 11. Ex. 27:3. 38:3. Zech. 14:20,21. x 1 Sam. 2:13,14. 1 Chr. 28:17 y 1 Kings 7:13,14,45. *Hiram*. z 2:13. 11 Heb. *made bright*, or, *scoured*. 12 Heb. *thickness* of the ground, s 1 Kings 7:46. *Zorhah*. h 1 Kings 7:47. 1 Chr. 22:3,14. Jer. 52:20. g 36:10,15. 1 Kings 7:48-50. 2 Kings 23:13,25,13-15. *Ezra* 1:7-11. Jer. 28:3. 52:18,19. *Pan*. 5:2,3,23. d 26:16-18. Ex. 30:1-10. 37:25-29. Rev. 8:3. 9:13. e Ex. 25:23-30. *Lev.* 24:5-8. 1 Chr. 28:16. f 7. Ex. 25:31-37. g Ex. 27:20,21. h 1 Kings 6:5,16,17. 8:6. Ps. 28:2. 1 S. Ex. 25:31 37:20. 1 Kings 6:16,23,35. 11 Heb. *perfection* of. k Ex. 37:23. 1 Kings 7:50 2 Kings 12:13. 25:14. Jer. 52:18. m Or, *bowl*. n 1 Kings 6:31,32.

purposes; or, perhaps some of the tables, as well as of the other vessels, were kept against future emergencies. (Note, 1 Chr. 28:15,16.)

V. 22. *The inner doors, &c.* *Marg. Ref. Note,* 1 Kings 5:31-35.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The furniture of the temple, compared with that of the tabernacle, plainly instructed God's ancient people, that his church would be gradually enlarged, and his worshippers immensely multiplied: and, blessed be God, in the person, sacrifice, and offices of Christ, there is an abundant sufficiency for any multitudes, however large, who can ever come to the Father through him.—May the preaching of the gospel hold him forth, as crucified for sinners, to all the nations of the earth; and may his Spirit prepare the hearts of all the inhabitants, to welcome his salvation, for all things else are now ready. Whilst we thus pray for others, may we be found humble penitents, by faith beholding Jesus as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" may we daily wash our souls, and our services, in that "fountain which he hath opened for sin and for uncleanness;" may we find continual access to the Father, through our heavenly Advocate, and receive continual supplies of his Spirit: may we walk in the light of his word, steadfast upon the provisions of his house, and be "constrained by his love, to live no longer to ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again."—Nothing can be too precious to be consecrated to his service; but he will not reject the meanest abilities, the feeblest endeavours, or the most trivial oblations, which are offered in faith and love: yet he requires the very best of our affections and of all we have; and he will much more readily bear with external meanness in our services, than with an insincere heart, however covered with specious and pompous professions and performances. The nearer we approach him in privilege and external worship, the more holy we should be; (Note, *Lev.* 10:3.) and the nearer we really approach to him in knowledge and communion, the more holy we shall become: till at length faith shall be changed for vision, and we shall be made perfectly and eternally like him, and fitted for the full

CHAPTER V.

The temple is finished, and the dedicated treasures deposited in it, 1. The ark is brought into the most holy place, 2-10. While the Levites sing praises to God, a cloud fills the temple, 11-14.

THUS all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

2 ¶ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

3 Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which was in the seventh month.

4 And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark.

5 And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle; these did the priests and the Levites bring up.

6 Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

7 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims:

8 For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

9 And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.

10 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

a 1 Kings 7:51. 1 Chr. 22:14, 24-28. b 1:2. 1 Kings 8:1-11. 1 Chr. 28:1. c 1 Chr. 15:12, 25-31. 29-26. d 1:1. 2 Sam. 6:12. 1 Chr. 16:1. e 2 Sam. 5:7. f 7-10. 1 Chr. 23:31-36. 1 Kings 8:2. g Num. 4:15. Josh. 3:6, 6:6. 1 Kings 5:3. 1 Chr. 15:12-14. h 1:3. 1 Kings 8:4-6. 1:2 Sam. 6:13. 1 Kings 8:5. 1 Chr. 16:1, 2, 29-31. k 2 Chr. 5:7-9. 1 Kings 6:23-28. 8:6, 7. 1 Ex. 25:12-15. 37:3-5. Num. 4:6. 1 Kings 8:9. * Or, they are there: as, 1 Kings 6:8. a Ex. 31:18. 32:15, 16, 19, 34:1, 40:20. Deut. 10:2-5. Heb. 9:4. * Or, where, a Ex. 15:5. 24:7, 8. Deut. 29:10-11. Jer. 31:31-34. Heb. 8:6-13. * Heb. found. a 29:15, 31. 30:15, 17-20. Ex. 19:10, 14, 15. Job 1:5. q 35:4. 1 Chr. 24:1. * 29:25. 1 Chr. 15:16-22. 16:4-6, 41, 42, 23:30, 25:1-7. Ezra 3:10, 11. 1 Chr. 6:33, 39, 25:6. Ps. 50: 62: 88: *ruks*. 1 Chr. 15:27. Rev. 15:6. 19:8. u Ps. 92:3. 139:3. 150:3-5. x Num. 10:1-5. Josh. 6:6-20. 1 Chr. 15:

fruition of his favour and glory. (Notes, 2 Cor. 3:17, 18. 1 John 3:1-3.)

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1. Notes, 2 Sam. 8:9-11. 1 Kings 7:48-51, v. 51. 8:4. 1 Chr. 26:28. 29:3-9.

V. 2-5. Marg. Ref.—Levites. (4) Perhaps the Levites, of the family of Kohath, carried the ark into the courts of the temple, and then the priests conveyed it into its proper place. (Notes, Num. 4:6-18. 1 Kings 8:1-3.)

V. 6. (Note, 1 Kings 8:5.) The observation of Victorinus Strigelius upon this history is very pious: That nothing is more lovely in human things than such concord, as here appeared among all orders of men; both of teachers and learners, magistrates, soldiers, and people, who were all combined to promote the honour and service of God. Such unity ought to be studied by Christian people, that we may be all one, as our Saviour prayed. Bp. Patrick.

V. 7-10. Note, 1 Kings 8:7-9.—Unto this day. (9) That is, The day when these events were recorded; not the day when these extracts were made, after the captivity.

V. 11. So great a multitude of sacrifices were to be offered on this occasion, that the whole body of the priests, who were capable of service, were employed at once; and not only those who attended in their courses.

V. 12, 13. (Marg. Ref.) These particulars are not mentioned in Kings. (Notes, Lev. 23:24-25. Num. 10:2-10. Josh. 6:3-16. 1 Chr. 15:17-24. 16:4-6. 25:1-6.)—It is remarkable, that the Lord took possession of his temple by the cloud, at the moment when, with one consent, the Levites were singing the praises of his everlasting goodness and mercy. (Notes, 7:1-3. 20:21-25. Ezra 3:8-11. Ps. 136: 1-3. Jer. 33:10, 11.)

V. 14. Marg. Ref. b-d. Note, 1 Kings 8:10-14.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The gracious presence of God renders his ordinances far more glorious, and is more essential to their efficacy, than any conceivable external order or magnificence: and he is as really present with two or three humble worshippers in a

11 ¶ And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place; (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:

12 Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets;)

13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that when the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;

14 So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.

CHAPTER VI.

Solomon blesses the people, and praises God, 1-11. His prayer at the dedication of the temple, 12-39. He concludes by earnestly entreating the Lord's special presence and blessing, 40-42.

THEN said Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

2 But I have built a house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

3 And the king turned his face and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood.

4 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying,

5 Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build a house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel:

24:16,6. y Ps. 95:1,2. 100:1,2. Is. 52:8. Jer. 29:39. Acts 4:32. Rom. 15:6. Rev. 5:8-14. z Ps. 68:25,26. a 7:3, 2:21. 1 Chr. 16:34, 41. Ezra 3:11. Ps. 136:1, 6. Jer. 39:31, 1. b Ex. 40:31,53. 1 Kings 8:10-12. c 7:2. 1 Tim. 6:16. d Ex. 40:35. Is. 6:1-4. Ez. 10:4. Rev. 15:8. e Ex. 20:21-24-15-18. Lev. 16:2. f Tent. 4:11. 1 Kings 8:12. Ps. 18:9-11, 97:2. Nah. 1:3. Heb. 12:18. b 2-4. 6. 2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Kings 8:13. 1 Chr. 17:12. 22:10, 11. 28:6, 20. Is. 152:5, 13, 14. Jer. 1:1-3. He. 9:11, 12. Rev. 21:3. c 1 Kings 8:14. d 29:29. Josh. 22:6. 1 Chr. 16:37-41. 1 Chr. 17:2. Luke 21:51. e 1 Kings 8:14. Neh. 8:5-7. Matt. 13:2. f 1 Kings 8:15. 1 Chr. 29:10, 20. Ps. 41:12. 68:4-35. 72:18, 19. Luke 1:38. Eph. 1:3. 1 Chr. 17:12. Ps. 138:1, 2. Matt. 24:35. Luke 1:70. h 2 Sam. 7:5, 7. 1 Kings 8:16. i Ex. 20:24, 23:21. Deut. 12:5, 11. Dan. 9:19. k 1 Sam. 20:24. 13:13, 14. 15:23. 2 Sam. 7:15, 16.

mean and obscure corner, as with tens of thousands assembled with every possible accommodation, or every kind of solemn grandeur and magnificence. (Notes, Matt. 18:19, 20. John 4:21-24.) Yet, on some occasions, the concurrence of vast multitudes, under the direction of pious princes, has been made extensively useful to mankind, and greatly honourable to God and honoured by him.—The eye of our faith must, in every service, be primarily directed to the atoning sacrifice of Christ: but in subordination to it, our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving are peculiarly well pleasing unto God; if the harmony of our voices, or musical instruments, is really accompanied with the sweet melody of a humble and grateful heart.—All the divine perfections are glorious in themselves: but the Lord's goodness and ever enduring mercy are peculiarly endearing to the broken-hearted, humble penitent; and he especially delights in the exercise and in the glory of his mercy, in harmony with his wisdom, truth, and justice, through the merits of the Saviour. This should encourage all who feel their need of abounding mercy; being conscious that their sins have greatly abounded.—The ministers of God should always be ready, both in body and soul, for every service, ordinary or extraordinary: and it has a very unfavourable appearance, even in the eyes of men in general, when they manifest an unwillingness, or even backwardness, to exceed that measure, which entitles them to their emoluments. (Note, Mal. 1:9-11.)—When the worshippers of God are of one mind, as well as in one place, they may expect his more immediate presence and blessing: if he take possession of our hearts to sanctify them, he will exclude whatever interferes with his design of filling them with his glory; and though darkness now rests upon our views of heavenly things, yet, in the temple above, the Lord himself will be our everlasting Light—and we shall know even as we are known. (Notes, Rev. 21:22-27. 22:2-5.) May he prepare us for that land of perfect knowledge, purity, and felicity!

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1-3. Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Kings 8:10-14.

6 But I have ¹chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have ²chosen David to be over my people Israel.

7 Now ³it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel:

8 But the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thy heart to build a house for my name, ⁴thou didst well in that it was in thy heart.

9 Notwithstanding, thou shalt not build the house; but ⁵thy son, which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

10 The LORD therefore hath ⁶performed his word that he hath spoken; for ⁷I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, ⁸as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel:

11 And in it have ⁹I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Israel.

12 ¹⁰And ¹¹the stood before the altar of the LORD, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and ¹²spread forth his hands,

13 (For Solomon had made a brazen ¹³scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of ¹⁴the court; and upon it he stood, and ¹⁵kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.)

14 And said, ¹⁶O LORD God of Israel, there is no god like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which ¹⁷keepest covenant, and ¹⁸showest ¹⁹mercy unto thy servants that ²⁰walk before thee with all their hearts:

15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and ²¹spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as ²²it is this day.

16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, ²³keep with thy servant David my father, that which thou hast promised him, ²⁴saying, ²⁵There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way ²⁶to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

17 Now then, ²⁷O LORD God of Israel, ²⁸let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

18 But ²⁹will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, ³⁰heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee: ³¹how much less this house which I have built!

19 ³²Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, ³³O LORD my God, ³⁴to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee:

112:13. Ps. 48:1, 78:58-70, 132:13, Is. 14:32. m 1 Sam. 16:1. Ps. 89:19, 20. 2 Sam. 7:2, 3. 1 Kings 5:3, 8:17, 1 Chr. 22:7, 28:2. o 1 Kings 8:18-21, Mark 14:8, 2 Cor. 8:12. p 2 Sam. 7:12, 13. 1 Chr. 17:4, 11, 12. q See on 4. r 1:1. 1 Kings 2:12, 3:6, 7. 1 Chr. 29:15, 2:18, 19. s 1 Chr. 28:5. t 1:1. Ex. 40:20. 1 Kings 8:9, 21. Heb. 9:4. u 1 Kings 8:22. 2 Kings 11:14, 23:8. Ps. 139:5. v Ex. 9:23, Job 11:13. Ps. 28:2, 68:4, 68:31, 141:2, 145:5. Is. 50:15. 1 Tim. 2:8. y Neh. 8:4. z Heb. the length thereof. 3c. z 1 Kings 6:36. 7:12. a 1 Kings 8:54. Ezra 9:5. Ps. 56:6. Dan. 6:10. Luke 22:41. Acts 20:36. 21:5. b Gen. 32:30, 35:10. c 3:15. 1 Kings 8:23, 18:36. 1 Chr. 29:10, 20:12. Ex. 15:1, 2 Sam. 7:22. Ps. 86:8, 89:6, 8. Jer. 10:6, 16, 1 Thes. 7:9. Neh. 1:5. Ps. 39:26. Dan. 5:4. Mic. 7:13-20. Luke 1:72. e Ps. 107:17, 18. Luke 1:50, 54. 55. f Gen. 5:24, 17:1. 1 Kings 3:6, 1:22. Luke 1:6, 1 Deut. 2:12. g 2 Sam. 7:12. 1 Kings 8:24. 1 Chr. 22:9, 10. h Ex. 39:37, John 15:14, 15. 17:18. 2 Sam. 7:12-18. 1 Kings 2:4. Ps. 132:12. i Heb. There shall not a man be cut off. k Ps. 28:3, 119:1. 14:14. Ex. 24:10. Is. 41:17, 45:3. m 2 Sam. 7:25-29. Jer. 11:5. n 1 Kings 8:27. Ps. 113:5-8. Is. 57:15, 66:1. Acts 7:48, 49, 17:24. o 3:6. Ps. 139:7-10. Jer. 23:24, 2 Cor. 12:2. p 32:15. Job 4:19, 9:14, 25:4-6. Matt. 7:11. q 1 Kings 8:29. Ps. 74:20, 130:2. 1 an. 9:17-19. Luke 18:1-7. r Ps. 4:1, 5:1, 2:10-1-3. John 7:20. 16:9. 1 Kings 8:29, 30. 2 Kings 19:17. Neh. 1:6. Ex. 34:15. 16. Ps. 26:2. Col. 2:9. 1 Or, in this place. Dan. 6:10. s Heb. pray. u 39. Job 22:14, 44:4. Ps. 123:1. Ex. 5:2. Is. 57:15. Matt. 6:9. x Ps. 139:3, 130:3-4. Is. 43:25. Dan. 9:19. Mic. 7:18, 19. Matt. 6:12. y 1 Kings 8:31, 32. z Heb. and he require an oath of him. Ex. 22:11. Lev. 5:1. Prov. 30:9.

V. 4-11. Note, 1 Kings 8:15-21.—Neither chose I, &c. (5) The judges and Saul were chosen by God, for a season, to be rulers of Israel; but not to establish a permanent and hereditary authority over that people, as was the case with David.—Jerusalem. (6) This is not found in Kings.—Jerusalem was expressly marked out, by the building of the temple, to be the centre of the worship of Israel; as the Lord had before spoken by Moses. (Marg. Ref. l. Note, Deut. 12:5-7.)

20 That ¹thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest ²put thy name there to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth ³toward this place.

21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall ⁴make toward this place: hear thou from ⁵thy dwelling-place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, ⁶forgive.

22 ⁷If a man ⁸sin against his neighbour, ⁹and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and ¹⁰the oath come before ¹¹thine altar in this house:

23 Then hear thou ¹²from heaven, and do, and judge ¹³thy servants, by ¹⁴requiring the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by ¹⁵justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

24 ¹⁶And if thy people Israel be ¹⁷put to the worse before the enemy, ¹⁸because they have sinned against thee, and ¹⁹shall return and confess thy name, and ²⁰pray and make supplication before thee ²¹in this house:

25 Then hear thou from the heavens, and ²²forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land ²³which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

26 ²⁴When ²⁵the heaven is shut up, and ²⁶there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet ²⁷if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and ²⁸turn from their sin, when ²⁹thou dost afflict them:

27 Then hear thou from heaven, and for give the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, ³⁰when thou hast taught them the ³¹good way wherein they should walk; and ³²send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

28 ³³If there be ³⁴dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, ³⁵locusts, or caterpillars; if ³⁶their enemies besiege them in the ³⁷cities of their land; ³⁸whatsoever sore, or whatsoever sickness ³⁹there be:

29 Then ⁴⁰what prayer, or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall ⁴¹know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall ⁴²spread forth his hands ⁴³in this house:

30 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and ⁴⁴render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for ⁴⁵thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:)

31 That they may ⁴⁶fear thee, to walk in thy ways, ⁴⁷so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

32 ⁴⁸Moreover, concerning ⁴⁹the stranger, which is not of my people Israel, but ⁵⁰is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and ⁵¹thy

x Num. 5:19-22. Matt. 23:18, s 21. h Num. 5:27. Prov. 1:31. Is. 8:11. Rom. 2:9. d Deut. 25:1. Prov. 17:15. Is. 30:1, Ex. 18:20. Rom. 3:10. ¹ Or, de œmir ten. Lev. 26:17, 37. Deut. 28:25, 48. Josh. 7:8. 1 Kings 8:33, 34. Ps. 44:10. d Josh. 7:11, 12. Judge. 2:11, 14, 15. 2 Kings 17:7-18. e Lev. 26:40-42. Deut. 4:29-31. 30:1-6. Neh. 1:8, 9. Prov. 28:13. Jer. 3:13, 13. f Ezra 9:5, &c. Neh. 9:1, &c. Job 6:8, 44: Dan. 9:19. ² Or, toward 20. g Ezra 1:1-6. Ps. 108:41. Jer. 33:6-13. h Jer. 13:15. Ps. 65:6. Josh. 21:43. i Lev. 26:19. ³ Deut. 11:17, 28. 23. 1 Kings 17:1. Luke 4:25. k Is. 50:1, 2. Ex. 14:13. Am. 4:1-9. Rev. 11:6. 1 Jer. 14:1-9. Jer. 1:13-20, 2:15-17. m Prov. 28:13. Ex. 18:27-32. n 33:12, 13. Hos. 5:15, 6:1. o 1 Kings 8:35, 36. Ps. 23:4, 5, 12, 94:12, 119:88. Mic. 4:2. John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁴ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. Ps. 68:9. Jer. 14:22. Job 2:23. Zech. 10:1. Jam. 5:17, 18. r Lev. 26:15, 25, 26. Deut. 28:1-61. Ruth 1:1. 1 Kings 8:37-40. 2 Kings 6:25-29. 8:1. s Ex. 10:12-15. Luke 14:7, 2:25. Rev. 9:3-11. t 12:5-15, 20:9-13. 24:1. Heb. 26:25. Deut. 28:52-57. ⁵ Heb. land of their fathers. u 1 Kings 8:57, 33. s Ps. 33. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁶ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. 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Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. Job 37:11-14. 12:15, 50:15, 91:15. v Prov. 14:10. e 12:13. Is. 1:15. ⁹ Or, toward. s Ps. 18:20-26. Jer. 17:16. Ex. 18:30. Matt. 16:27. h 1 Kings 8:39. 1 Chr. 28:9. 29:17. Ps. 11:4, 5. 1 Kings 2:25. Heb. 4:1. Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷ Heb. all the days which thou live upon John 8:45. p 14. q 20. ⁸ Or, toward 20. r 1 Kings 18:40-45. 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Rev. 2:23. c Ex. 20:20. 1 Sam. 12:24. Job 28:28. Ps. 128:1, 130:4. Acts 9:31. ⁷

mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm; if they come and pray in this house;

33 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name.

34 ¶ If thy people go out to war against their enemies by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name;

35 Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

36 ¶ If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;

37 Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity,

g. Is. 66:20, Zech. 14:16-17, Acts 2:10, h. 1 Sam. 17:46, 2 Kings 19:19, Ps. 22:27, 67:2, 137:4-5, Is. 11:10, 49:6, 54:1-3, Rev. 11:15, * Heb. thy name is called upon this house. Num. 6:27, 1 Kings 8:46, 1 Dent. 20:1-4, Josh. 1:2-5, 1 Kings 8:44-45, k. Num. 31:2-6, Josh. 8:1-8, Judg. 1:1-2, 1 Sam. 15:13, 18, 14:9-12, 18:31, 20:6-13, 32:20-21, m. 6, 1 Kings 8:13, Is. 14:32, Dan. 3:52, Ps. 34:15, Is. 37:17-19, c. Ps. 17:1, 31:2, 116:2, * Heb. of this place, d. Ps. 132:8-10, 16, e. 1 Chr. 28:2, f. Josh. 3:13, 6:4, 5, Ps. 110:2, Rom. 1:16, g. Is. 59:16-18, 61:3, 6, 10, Rom. 13:14, Gal. 3:27, Eph. 4:22-24, Rev. 19:24-24, h. Heb. 9:25, Is. 65:18, Phil. 3:3, 4:4, 1 Kings 1:34, Ps. 2:2, Is. 61:1, k. 12:21, 1:53:3, Acts 13:34.

Is. 5:9, 20:21, Jer. 31:18-20, 33:34, 32:37-41, Ez. 36:25-32, Mic. 7:14-20, Zech. 12:9-14, 13:1.—Bethink themselves. (37) Notes, Ps. 119:57-63, v. 59, 60, Ez. 18:28, Hag. 1:5-11, Luke 15:17-19.

V. 41, 42. These concluding words are not in the book of Kings; but are taken, with some variation, from the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, which probably was composed with reference to the removal of the ark at this time. (Notes, Ps. 132:1, 7-9.)—The temple was called the resting place of the ark, because it there had a permanent settlement. The temple likewise typified the human nature of Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" the ark typified his meritorious obedience and sufferings, by which the holy law was magnified, and through which believing sinners approach, and hold communion with a reconciled God. The ark, the sacramental pledge of JEHOVAH's strength engaged for Israel's help, would not avail without his actual presence. This might be expected, and indeed would be visible in its effects, if "his priests were clothed with salvation," or righteousness. If they were partakers of salvation in their souls, and brought forth the fruits of it in their holy lives and conversation; then, their example, instructions, and ministrations, would be greatly blessed, and made very successful. Those who, as penitent believers, have obtained mercy, and are separated from the love and spirit of the world, by the influences of the sanctifying Spirit of God, are *saints*. Their edification, comfort, and joy, in subserviency to the glory of God, and in connexion with the conversion of sinners, form the great object of religious ordinances; and the faith and piety of ministers, the purity and solemnity of their services, and the flourishing of true religion, cause them "to rejoice in goodness," even the goodness of the Lord; by enlarging and gratifying all their holy, pious, and benevolent affections.—These seem, therefore, the blessings peculiarly intended; though the outward protection and prosperity, of both priests and people, were also implied.—Solomon further prayed, that God would not reject his prayer, which he made for a blessing on that work to which he had called him, and for which he had caused him to be "anointed;" for that would be "to turn away his face," and to send him away ashamed and discouraged. But in this, he was a type of, and probably had reference to, the promised Messiah. He also entreated the Lord, to remember the mercies which he had promised to David, and through him to his people and posterity; and to continue and perfect them. This also may be applied to the mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ and of God the Father through him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-17. It is a great mercy to be enabled to go through important services to the church, in simple obedience, and in dependence on the Lord; and to witness the accomplishment of them, with humble gratitude to the Giver of both the will, the ability, and the success; adoring his power, faithfulness, and goodness in every part of it, without expressing self-importance or self-complacency. For pride and ostentation, if allowed to intrude, rob God of his glory, and mar the acceptance, or the comfort, of the most useful and excellent undertakings. Here then the main guard should be placed, by those who are employed as instruments for the good of others:

saying, 'We have sinned, we have done amiss and have dealt wickedly:'

38 If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name;

39 Then hear thou from the heavens, *even* from thy dwelling-place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

40 Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.

41 Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

42 O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.

30:1-3, Luke 15:17, * Heb. bring back to their heart, t. Fern 9:6-7, Neh. 1:6, 9:26-30, Job 33:23, Ps. 106:6-12, Jer. 3:12-14, 31:18-20, Dan. 9:5-11, Luke 15:18, 19, u. 16:6, 30:2-6, Jer. 29:12-14, Hos. 14:1-4, Joel 2:12, 13, x. 33:11-13, Dan. 9:3-4, y. 34, * Or, right, 35, Zech. 1:15, 16, 2 Ps. 25:18, Mic. 7:18-20, a. Ps. 7:3, 13:3, 22:1, 2, 88:1, b. 7:15, 16:9, 1 Kings 3:52, Ps. 34:15, Is. 37:17-19, c. Ps. 17:1, 31:2, 116:2, * Heb. of this place, d. Ps. 132:8-10, 16, e. 1 Chr. 28:2, f. Josh. 3:13, 6:4, 5, Ps. 110:2, Rom. 1:16, g. Is. 59:16-18, 61:3, 6, 10, Rom. 13:14, Gal. 3:27, Eph. 4:22-24, Rev. 19:24-24, h. Heb. 9:25, Is. 65:18, Phil. 3:3, 4:4, 1 Kings 1:34, Ps. 2:2, Is. 61:1, k. 12:21, 1:53:3, Acts 13:34.

this, this above all the rest, should dictate their constant prayers; and all, who wish success to their attempts, should join in prayer for them, that they may be kept humble, and rendered more and more humble, in proportion as they are honoured by God for usefulness.—When a good work is well finished, it is not done with: when the sermon is preached, the letter written, or the book sent to the press, or even well received by the public, its real utility depends on the Lord's subsequent effectual blessing. It ought therefore to be dedicated to him, committed to his hands, and his blessing sought upon it; and in this case we may confidently expect, that the fruit, which by his grace we have produced, will remain for the durable good of many, when we are gone to our home, "the rest reserved for the people of God." (Note, Ec. 12:2-7.)

V. 18-42. The more we know of God and religion, *spiritually and experimentally*, the more humbly we shall think of ourselves and of all our performances; the more reverentially we shall adore the infinitely glorious God, and the more entirely we shall trust to his covenant of mercy and grace, made with believing sinners in Jesus Christ.—We may and ought, unworthy as we are, to expect large answers to all our prayers, which we present for ourselves and others, through the Saviour's intercession. They are greatly favoured who have pious friends to pray for them; and it is an inestimable mercy for us all, that "we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous," who is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only; but for the sins of the whole world." (Note, 1 John 2:1, 2.) Yet this will not prevent the destruction of any who never pray for themselves; not that the Saviour pleads in vain, but that the event shows he does not intercede for them. (Notes, John 10-10, 21.)—In times of prosperity, personal or public, we should expect adversity, and pray with reference to it; and in seasons of deep distress and temptation, we ought still to hope and pray for deliverance and comfort.—Blessed be God, sinners of every description, when they bethink themselves, and humbly pour out their prayers, in dependence on the Saviour's merits, may be assured of forgiveness, acceptance, and all the blessings of salvation.—JEHOVAH has made our nature his resting place for ever, in the person of Emmanuel; and through him he dwells and delights in his church of redeemed sinners. May all his ministers, of every name, be clothed with righteousness and salvation; may all his saints be made joyful in his goodness; may the numbers of both be continually increasing, till the boundaries of his church extend as wide as those of the human species! May the hearts of the writer and of every reader become his resting place; may Christ dwell in us by faith, casting out every idol, cleansing us from all filthiness, consecrating us as his temples, and shedding abroad his love in us: may the Father look upon us, in and through his Anointed, whose face he never turns away, and whose petitions meet with no repulse; and may he remember and bless us in all things, according to his mercies to sinners through him. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-3. Fire, descending and consuming the sacrifices, was the customary token of the divine acceptance. This represented the righteous displeasure of God against man's sin, as the cause of the suffering

CHAPTER VIII.

The cities built by Solomon, 1-6. The remnant of the devoted nations are subjected to tribute, and the Israelites are lodged in honourable services, 7-10. Pharaoh's daughter removes to her house, 11. Solomon's daily sacrifices, and those on festival days, 12, 13. He appoints the priests and Levites to their services in order, 14, 15. The work of the house of God is finished, 16. Solomon's navy brings gold from Ophir, 17, 18.

B. C.] AND it came to pass ^{at the end of 992.} twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD, and his own house,

2 That the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.

3 And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.

4 And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store-cities, which he built in Hamath.

5 Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;

6 And Baalath, and all the store-cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot-cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

7 As for all the people that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of Israel,

8 But of their children who were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute until this day.

9 But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but they were men of war, and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots, and horsemen.

10 And these were the chief of king Solomon's officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

a See on 1 Kings 9:10. b See on 1 Kings 9:11-13. c Num. 13:1, 34:9. 2 Sam. 8:3. 1 Kings 11:23-25. 1 Chr. 18:3. d 1 Kings 9:17-19. e Josh. 16:3-5. 1 Chr. 7:24. f Josh. 19:44. 1 Kings 9:18. g 4:17-12. 1 Kings 9:19. h 1:14. 1 Kings 10:26. i Heb. all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build. 1 Kings 9:19. Ex. 2:10. 1 Kings 7:2. (Ant. 4:8.) j See on 1 Kings 9:20-22. k Gen. 15:20-21. Dent. 7:1. 1 Judg. 1:21-38. f. 16:34. m 2:17, 18. 1 Kings 5:13, 14. n Ex. 19:5-6. Lev. 25:39-46. Gal. 4:2-31. o 1 Sam. 8:11, 12. p 18. 1 Kings 5:16. 9:23. q 1 Kings 3:1, 7-8. 9:24. r Heb. voliness. Ex. 3:5. 20:43. Ez. 21:2. 2 Pet. 1:18. r 4:1. 1 Chr. 28:11. Ez. 8:16.

faith, the divine Saviour agonizing and dying for man's sin, will, by that view, find his godly sorrow enlarged, his hatred of sin increased, his soul made more watchful, and his life more holy; and they are speculating hypocrites, who profess to expect salvation by the cross of Christ, while the world has their hearts, and sin is allowed in their habitual conduct.

—The Lord's ready answers to our prayers should animate us to repeat, with deeper reverence and more lively gratitude, our praises of his mercy.—The most endearing displays of the love of God, rightly understood, speak terror to hypocrites and presumptuous offenders; but the most tremendous discoveries of his righteous vengeance need not discourage the upright, humble believer.—Every token of his favour should enlarge our hearts in his service: and those who are inspired with zeal for his glory, and who taste the joy of his salvation, will never think too much time or expense can be bestowed in communion with him and his saints, provided other duties be not neglected.—In the best state of nations favoured with revelation, there has hitherto been a succession of prosperity, ingratitude, corrections, repentance, forgiveness, renewed mercies and prosperity, and renewed ingratitude and forgetfulness of God. Yet the Lord delights in those places, where his ordinances are maintained and attended on, in some measure of purity and consistency. But in cases of apostasy, or general profaneness, or hypocrisy, he will glorify his justice by tremendous judgments upon those who have thus abused his mercies, and forfeited their privileges, making them a warning to others, if not an infamy among the heathen. Let us then stand in awe of him; watch against all sin; and copy the examples of the most approved of his saints, in the brightest parts of their characters.

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-3. Perhaps Hamath-zobah had revolted; but Solomon regained possession of it. (*Notes, 2 Sam. 8:3-11. 1 Kings 9:12, 11-14. 11:23-25.*)

V. 4-6. *Note, 1 Kings 9:15-22.*

V. 7-9. *Notes, 1 Kings 5:13-18.*

V. 10. Three hundred overseers, omitted in one place, are added in another, completing the same number. (*Compare 2:18. 1 Kings 5:16. 9:23.*)

V. 11. Pharaoh's daughter is supposed to have been a proselyte to the true religion; but she was of heathen extraction, and perhaps attended by many who were not proselyted. (*Notes, 1 Kings 3:1.*) If there were no open idolatry or

11 ¶ And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David, unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come.

12 ¶ Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch,

13 Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

14 ¶ And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: the porters also by their courses at every gate; for so had David the man of God commanded.

15 And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures.

16 Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was perfected.

17 ¶ Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Elath, at the seaside, in the land of Edom.

18 And Hiram sent him, by the hands of his servants, ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon.

Judg. 2:17. s Ex. 29:38-42. Lev. 23: Num. 28: 29: Fr. 4:17. 46:7-15. t See on Ex. 23:14-17. Dent. 16:16. 1 Kings 9:25. u 5:11. 23:4. 31:2. 1 Chr. 24:1-19. Luke 1:5-8. x 35:10. 1 Chr. 6:31, 32, &c. 15:16-22. 16:4-6. 23:24-20-31. 25: Ezra 6:18. y See on 1 Chr. 26:1-19. i Heb. so was the commandment of David. z 2 Sam. 23:2. 1 Chr. 28:19. Acts 13:22, 26. u See on Dent. 33:1. 1 Kings 15:19. b See on 20:19. Ex. 38:43. c 1 Kings 7:51. 1 Chr. 9:20. 26:20-26. d 1 Kings 5:18. 6:7. e 20:36. Num. 33:35. Ezion-geber, 1 Kings 9:26. 22:48. f Dent. 2:8. 2 Kings 14:22. 16:6. Elath, g 9:10, 13. See on 1 Kings 9:27, 28. 10:22. Hiram.

profaneness in her court, there might be many things inconsistent with spiritual religion; and Solomon did not think it right, that she should reside where the ark had been situated, and so near to the continual temple-worship. Perhaps he wanted resolution wholly to suppress all that he did not entirely approve.

V. 12-15. Solomon exactly adhered, both to the law of Moses, and also to all David's regulations: not only because he was his father, but because he was "a man of God," and acted by his authority in forming them. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 1 Chr. 23:26.*)

V. 16. *Note, 1 Kings 6:7.*

V. 18. *Ships, &c.* The materials perhaps were ready prepared, and the workmen sent, that the ships might be constructed there; for vessels could not sail from Tyre to Ezion-geber, or Elath: as there was no communication by water between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, on which these sea ports were situated. (*Note, 1 Kings 9:26-28. 10:22.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Some difficulty or conflict must be expected in every state on earth; but those whom the Lord loveth, will prevail; and in heaven their peace will be perfect and eternal.—We shall never be satisfied with our possessions, enjoyments, or achievements, unless we limit our desires by the precept and the providence of God: yet he indulges his people in things indifferent, as far as this is consistent with their real good.—His 'service is perfect freedom;' all else is bondage; but if we, poor condemned criminals and strangers, are brought nigh, pardoned, and employed by our merciful Lord, we shall surely render him our tribute of praise and grateful obedience, though the lowest and most laborious service in his house be allotted to us.—It is hard to keep up a proper distinction between things sacred and common, in the palaces of the great, or in the courts of kings; and it sometimes requires more wisdom and resolution to govern a large family in the fear of God, without conniving at evident evil, than it does to govern a large kingdom with reputation, and in prosperity; (*Note, 1 Tim. 3:4, 5.*) and the difficulty is increased, when by any means a man has got a hindrance, instead of a helper, in the wife of his bosom. But the truths, worship, and honour of God, should be nearer our hearts than any relative comforts: and we ought to offend or grieve any one, rather than

CHAPTER IX.

The queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon; her admiration of his wisdom, and magnificence; her presents and return, 1-12. Solomon's annual revenue in gold, 13, 14. His golden shields and chariots, 15, 16. His ivory throne, and rich vessels of gold, 17-21. The honour paid him by other kings, 22-24. His stalls, horses, and chariots, 25. The extent and wealth of his dominions, 26-28. He dies, and is succeeded by Rehoboam, 29-31.

AND when the queen of ^bSheba heard of ^athe fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon ^dwith hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and ^ecamels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, ^eshe communed with him of all that was in her heart.

2 And Solomon ^btold her all her questions: and ^cthere was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

3 And when the queen of Sheba had ^bseen the wisdom of Solomon, and ^cthe house that he had built,

4 And ^athe meat of his table, and ^athe sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; and his ^acup-bearers also, and their apparel; and ^athis ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; ^athere was no more spirit in her.

5 And she said to the king, *It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom:*

6 Howbeit ^aI believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen ^ait: and behold, ^athe one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: *for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.*

7 *Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.*

8 *Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.*

9 And ^ashe gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and ^bof spices great abundance, and precious stones: hebra was there any such spice, as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

10 And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir, brought ^aalgum-trees and precious stones.

11 And the king made ^aof the algum-trees

^aterraces to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and ^alamps, and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.

12 And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba, ^aall her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides ^athat which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

13 ^aNow ^athe weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and three score and six talents of gold:

14 Besides ^athat which chapmen and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia, and ^agovernors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

15 ^aAnd king Solomon made ^atwo hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of beaten gold went to one target.

16 And three hundred shields ^amade he of beaten gold: three hundred *shekels* of gold went to one shield. And the king put them ^ain the house of the forest of Lebanon.

17 ^aMoreover, the king made ^aa great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

18 And ^athere were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, ^awhich were fastened to the throne, and ^astays on each side of the sitting place, and ^atwo lions standing by the stays:

19 And ^atwelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

20 ^aAnd all ^athe drinking vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of ^apure gold: ^anone were of silver; ^ait was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to ^aTarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ^aivory, and apes, and ^apeacocks.

22 And king Solomon ^apassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 ^aAnd all the kings of the earth ^asought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that ^aGod had put in his heart.

24 And they brought ^aevery man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

a See on 1 Kings 10:1, 2. Matt. 12:42. Luke 11:31. b Gen. 10:28, 25:3. c 1 Kings 4:31. d Ps. 49:4, 78:2. Prov. 1:6. Matt. 13:11, 35. e Ps. 72:10, 11, 15. 60:6. f 9. Matt. 2:11. g 1 Sam. 1:15. Ps. 142:2. Matt. 12:34. h Prov. 13:20. Mark 4:11, 34. Luke 15:15. i 1 Kings 3:12, 4:29. Col. 2:3. Heb. 4:12, 13. j See on 1 Kings 10:1, 4. Acts 11:23. k 3:4. 1 Kings 6:7. m 1 Kings 4:22, 23. Prov. 9:5. John 6:53-57. n 1 Kings 10:5. Luke 12:37. Rev. 3:30. o Or, butlers. Neh. 1:11. o 23:13. 2 Kings 16:18. 1 Chr. 9:18. Ez. 44:3, 46:2. p Ps. 119:31. 143:7. Cant. 5:8. Dan. 10:17. Rev. 1:17. q Heb. word. See on 1 Kings 10:6. r Or, capings. q John 20:25-29. r See on 1 Kings 10:7. Ps. 31:19. Zeck. 9:17. 1 Cor. 2:9. 1 John 3:2. s 5. 1 Kings 4:31, 34. Cant. 5:9-16. 1 Deut. 8:32, 9. 1 Kings 10:8. Ps. 27. 4. 8:10-12. Prov. 3:13, 14, 8:34. 10:31, 13:20. Luke 10:39-42. 11:28. u 1 Chr. 29:10, 20. Ps. 72:18, 19. 2 Cor. 9:12-15. x 2 Sam. 15:25, 26. See on 1 Kings 10:9. Ps. 18:19, 22:8. Is. 42:1, 62:4. y 2:11. Dent. 7:8. 1 Chr. 17:22. z 2 Sam. 8:15, 23:3. Ps. 72:2, 99:4. Is. 9:7. 11:5. 52:1, 2.

disobey God and grieve his people, by allowing his ordinances to be profaned.—In all things, which are *expressly directed* in Scripture, our religious diligence should be exactly regulated by it: every part of the Lord's service should be attended to, in due succession, order, and proportion; and then we should not find any vacant time lie heavy upon our hands.—In beginning and conducting every undertaking, we should keep the end in view: and from our entrance upon life we should look forward, and be preparing for the close of it; that then we may have peace, and a happy entrance into a better state. Nor ought we to allow ourselves in any pursuit or indulgence, which interferes with that grand object. Thus, "known unto the Lord are all his works from before the foundation of the world;" every thing respecting his spiritual temple was planned and determined, before he began to work; and "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."—As men risk much, and undergo great hardship, in obtaining an earthly treasure; may we remember "how much better wisdom is than gold;" and, leaving the children of this world to contend for its toys; may we, as the children of God, "lay up our treasure in heaven, that where our treasure is, there our hearts may be also."

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1.—11. (Notes, 1 Kings 10:1-12.) "The hard questions she came to ask, were not the curious inquiries into the secrets of natural things, or new political matters, but about things pertaining to piety and the

Jer. 33:15, 16. Heb. 1:8, 9. a 24. 1 Kings 9:14, 10:10. b See on 1 Gen. 43:11. Ex. 30:34. c See on 1:18. 1 Kings 9:27, 28. 10:22. d 1 Kings 10:11. amug. trees. e Or, stags. Heb. hishayans. e See on 1 Kings 10:12. 1 Chr. 23:5, 25:1. Ps. 92:3, 139:3-5. f 1 Kings 10:13. Ps. 20:4. Eph. 3:30. g 1 Kings 10:14, 15. Ps. 68:25, 72:10-15. h Or, capings. h 19:10. See on 1 Kings 10:16, 17. i 1 Kings 7:2. k See on 1 Kings 10:18-20. Ps. 45:8. Rev. 20:11. l Heb. hands. l Gen. 49:10. Num. 23:24, 24:9. Rev. 5:5. m Matt. 19:28. Rev. 21:12. n 1 Kings 10:21. Esth. 1:7. Dan. 5:2, 3. o Heb. shut up. p Or, there was no silver in them. o 37:14, 2:22. Jer. 31:5. q See on 1 Kings 10:22, 22:45. Thershid. r Or, elephants' teeth. q Job 39:13. r 1:12. 1 Kings 3:12, 13. 4:30, 31. 10:23, 24. o 89:27. Matt. 12:42. Col. 2:2, 3. s 6, 7. 1 Kings 4:34. Is. 11:2, 10. t 1:10-12. See on 1 Kings 3:28. Prov. 2:6. Dan. 1:17. 2:21-23. 5:11. Luke 21:15. 1 Cor. 1:30. 12:8. Eph. 1:17. Jam. 1:5, 16, 17. 3:17. u 9. 1 Sam. 10:27. 1 Kings 9:14, 10:10, 25. Job 42:11.

service of God. For our Saviour saith, she came to hear "the wisdom of Solomon," and should therefore rise up in judgment against that generation, which would not learn of him. And in 1 Kings 10:1, it is said, the fame that she heard of Solomon was "concerning the name of the Lord," which moved her to this journey.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The throne upon which Solomon reigned, was the throne of God: for he was God's vicegerent, and thus "king for the LORD his God," to promote his glory and support religion. (Note, 2:11, 12.)

V. 12. (Note, 1 Kings 10:13.) "In 1 Kings 10:13, ... the words are, 'besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty,' ... here explained to have been done, to requite her for the great presents she made to the king.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 13-21. Notes, 1 Kings 10:14-22.—*Apes, &c.* (21) The imports here mentioned indicate, that prosperity had enervated the minds of Solomon and his subjects, and led them to love things curious and uncommon, though useless in themselves: and indeed the East Indian trade has helped to render every nation luxurious and self-indulgent, which has prospered in it, from the beginning to this day.

V. 22-28. Notes, 1 Kings 4:21. 10:23-29.

V. 29-31. Solomon's apostasy and idolatry are not at all hinted at in this narration: and this forms a cogent argument, that, being repented of and forgiven, they would never be remembered against him to his condemnation; though they

25 And Solomon had ^{four} thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot-cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 ¶ And he reigned over all the kings, from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

27 And the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones; and cedar-trees made he as the sycamore-trees that are in the low plains in abundance.

28 And they brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

29 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

30 And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

31 And Solomon slept with his fathers, ^{975.} and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER X.

The Israelites, at Shechem, make Rehoboam king; and with Jeroboam require him to lighten their yoke, 1-5. Rehoboam, rejecting the advice of his father's counsellors, and consulting with the young men, answer a very ruinous, 6-15. The ten tribes revolt, kill Hadadram, and drive away Rehoboam, 16-19.

AND Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him king.

2 And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king, heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.

3 And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came, and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

4 Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

5 And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

6 ¶ And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak

good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.

9 And he said unto them, What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?

10 And the young men that were brought up with him, spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day.

13 And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men,

14 And answered them after the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 So the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was of God, that the Lord might perform his word, which he spake by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 ¶ And when all Israel saw that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? and we have none inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: and now, David, see to thine own house. So all Israel went to their tents.

17 But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then king Rehoboam sent Hadoram, that was over the tribute; and the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

z 1:14. Dent. 17:16. 1 Kings 4:26. 10:25. y 1 Kings 4:21, 24. Ps. 72:8-11. i 1:14. Rev. 19:16. * That is, Euphrates. Gen. 15:18. Ex. 23:31. Josh. 13:2-7. z 20 1:15. 1 Kings 10:27. Job 22:24, 25. † Heb. gave. a 1 Chr. 27:28. Ps. 75:4. Is. 9:10. Am. 7:14. Luk. 19:1. b 25. 1:16. 1 Kings 10:25. Is. 2:7, 21:1. c See on 1 Kings 11:41, 42. ‡ Heb. words. d 2 Sam. 7:1-3. 12:15. 1 Kings 1:8, 10, 11, 22-27, 32-36. 1 Chr. 23:29. e 1 Kings 11:29, 14:2. 12:15. 13:22. g 1 Kings 11:42, 43. h See on 2 Sam. 7:12. 1 Kings 1:21. 2:10. a 1 Kings 12:1. 1 Chr. 3:10. Matt. 17:1. Jeroboam. b Gen. 12:6. Sirhen. 37:12. 13. Jos. 20:7, 24:1. Jud. 9:1. c 1 Kings 4:1. 1 Chr. 12:38. d 1 Kings 11:29, 22:40. 12:2. e 1 Kings 12:3. f 1 Sam. 8:11-13. 1 Chr. 12:4. Is. 47:6. Matt. 11:29, 30. 23:4. 1 John 5:3. g Ex. 13:14. 2:23. 1 Kings 4:20, 25, 9:22. h 1 Kings 12:1. Prov. 3:28. i Job 12:13. 22:7. Prov. 27:10. Jer. 42:2-5, 20. k 2 Sam. 16:20. 17:5, 8. 1 Kings 12:7, 8. Prov. 15:1. m Gen. 49:21. 2 Sam. 15:2-6. n 25, 17:5, 8. 2 Sam. 17:14. Prov. 1:25, 9:9. 19:20. 25:12. ‡c. 10:2, 3, 16. o 6. 2 Sam. 17:5, 8. Kings 22:6-8. p See on 4. q 2 Sam. 17:7-13. Prov. 21:30.

Is. 19:11-13. r 1 Kings 12:10, 11. Prov. 10:14. 13:16. 14:16. 18:6, 7. 23:27, 29. 29. s See on 4. 13:16. Heb. Indef. t Ex. 13:14. 5:5-9, 18. 1 Sam. 8:18. Is. 47:6. 59:8. Jer. 23:14, 14. Matt. 11:29. u Luke 10:19. Rev. 6:3, 10. v 5. 1 Kings 12:12-15. y Gen. 42:7, 30. Ex. 10:28. 1 Sam. 25:10, 11. 1 Kings 20:6-11. Prov. 15:1. a 8. b 22:4, 5. Prov. 12:5. Dan. 6:7. c See on 10, 11. Prov. 17:14. Ec. 2:19. 7:8. 10:16. Jam. 3:14-18. 4:1, 2. d 53:16-20. Deut. 2:30. Jud. 14:4. 1 Sam. 2:25. 1 Kings 22:30. Acts 2:23. 4:28. e See on 1 Kings 11:30-39. John 12:37-39. 19:24, 35-36. f See on 9:29. g 2 Sam. 20:1. 1 Kings 12:16, 17. h 1 Sam. 20:27, 30, 31. 22:7, 9, 13. i 2 Sam. 7:15, 16. 1 Kings 11:13, 34-39. 1 Chr. 17:14. Ps. 2:1-6. 76:10. 89:29-37. 139:17. Is. 9:6, 7. 11:1. Jer. 33:20, 21, 25, 26. Jer. 37:34, 42. Am. 9:11. Luke 1:32, 33. 19:14, 27. Acts 2:30. 1 Cor. 15:23. Rev. 22:16. k 19. Jud. 8:35. 2 Sam. 15:13. 16:11. Job. 6:56. 7:33. l 11, 1. 1 Kings 11:36. 12:17. m 1 Kings 4:5, 14. Adoniram. 12:18. Adram. n 24:21. Acts 7:57, 58. † Heb. strengthened himself.

were in one place recorded for a warning to others in all future ages. (Notes, 1 Kings 11:)

In the book, &c. (29.) It appears by this, that the prophets ... were also historians, who gave an account of what passed in their times: out of whose work this short history was extracted. . . These three did not join to make one book, but severally and distinctly gave an account of such things as occurred to their knowledge; out of which, it is probable, Ezra took many things which he hath supplied in this book. Sp. Patrick. (Murg. Ref. Preface to 1 Kings. Notes, 1 Kings 11:41. 14:19. 1 Chr. 29:19, 20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In proportion as we possess true wisdom, we shall perceive its excellency, and labour to obtain an increase of it: and in the same proportion we shall become more indifferent about worldly wealth, and more liberal in our use of it to good purposes, if God has bestowed it upon us. For true wisdom and happiness are inseparably combined: but no such alliance is formed between riches and the enjoy even of this present life. (Note, Luke 12:15-21.) It is therefore far more desirable to be connected with those who can teach us wisdom, than with those who can give us wealth: let us then acquaint ourselves with the divine Saviour, that, becoming his disciples and servants, we may "find rest for our souls;"

and we shall in that case see more glory, experience more pleasure, and appropriate more riches, than our hearts can previously conceive. He will and can "do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think;" and the meanness of his servants will be great above all the ungodly princes of the earth: nor can they be separated from him though, while present with the body they are absent from the Lord, as to the full and immediate enjoyment of his presence and communion with him. Next to this, let us value the acquaintance of those who love and serve him, that we may hear the wisdom that "God hath put into their hearts;" and let us follow them as far as they follow Christ, but no further, whatever may be their reputation in the church.—Seeing God buries in the depth of the sea the sins of his believing servants, we should be tender of their reputations, as well as careful to avoid their mistakes and faults.—As to worldly grandeur, what is it, that we should covet it? Neither authority, wealth, magnificence, nor reputation for wisdom, can ward off the stroke of death, or prepare us for it, or reconcile us to it. But "thanks be to God, who giveth victory" to the true believer, even over this dreadful enemy, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

NOTES.—CHAPTER X. V. 1-19. Notes, 1 Kings 4:1, 11:1-8, 34-40. 12:1-20.

19 And 'Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

CHAPTER XI.

Rehoboam, preparing to reduce Israel, is forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah, 1-4. He builds and fortifies several cities, 5-12. The priests and Levites, being cast off by Jeroboam, resort to Jerusalem, attended by other pious Israelites, 13-17. Rehoboam's wives and children, 18-23.

AND when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin ^aa hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

2 But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah ^athe man of God, saying,

3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: ^areturn every man to his house: ^afor this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

5 ¶ And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah.

6 He built even ^aBeth-lehem, and ^aEtam, and ^aTekoa,

o 15. 13:8-7. 1 Kings 12:19, 20. 2 Kings 17:21-23. y 5:9. Josh. 4:9. Ezra 9:7. a See on 1 Kings 12:21. b Pa. 38:10, 16. Prov. 21:30, 31. c 12:7, 15. 1 Kings 12:22-24. d 8:14. See on Deut. 33:1. 1 Sam. 2:27. 1 Tim. 6:11. e Gen. 4:9. Ez. 24:4. 2 Kings 17:34. Phil. 3:5. Rev. 7:8-8. f Gen. 13:8. 2 Sam. 2:26. Acts 7:26. 1 Cor. 6:5-8. Heb. 13:1. 1 Pet. 3:8. 1 John 3:11-13. g 10:16. 1 Kings 22:36. h See on 10:15. Gen. 50:20. 1 Kings 11:22-28. Hos. 8:4. 12:5-7. 10. 28:9-15. 13:5-6. 14:8-7. 16:6. 17:12. 26:6. 27:4. Is. 22:8-11. k Gen. 35:19. 1 Sam. 17:12. Matt. 2:5, 6. 1 Judg. 15:8. 1 Chr. 4:32. m 20:20. l 2 Sam. 14:2. Neh. 3:5, 27. Jer. 6:1. Am. 1:1. n Josh. 15:58. o Josh. 15:35. Szech p Josh. 12:15. 15:35. 1 Sam. 22:1. 2 Sam. 23:13. Mic. 1:15. q 1 Chr. 18:1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The wisest of mere men in some things act imprudently, especially when, by sin, they provoke God to leave them to themselves: nay, the most equitable princes may be betrayed into partial, oppressive, or unwarrantable measures; and this is the general consequence of being drawn, by their favourites, or their passions, into lavish expenses. Thus, some cause of complaint must exist in every kingdom, of which turbulent and ambitious men will avail themselves. (Note, 2 Sam. 15: 1-6. P. O. 1-12.) For, while we all need so many allowances for ourselves, we are naturally indisposed to make allowances for others. Indeed, very many would be dissatisfied, even if God were to place over them perfectly wise and righteous governors: for do they not murmur against his own most righteous dispensations? Do they not regard his holy law as a heavy yoke, a grievous servitude? and are not they ungrateful for his manifold goodness? Nay, the very kingdom of the Prince of peace, though his throne is established in mercy, does not give satisfaction. Numbers "I will not have him to reign over them;" numbers of his professed subjects neglect his service because they think him an austere Lord; numbers renounce their professed subjection to him, and prefer the yoke of sin and Satan; and alas! the impatience, the negligence, the reluctance to his service, which most if not all Christians at some times discover, evince that they want somewhat to be eased even of his yoke. Yet, his wisdom, righteousness, truth, goodness, and mercy are infinite; "his yoke is easy and his burden light;" and the whole blame of our uneasiness rests upon ourselves alone. This reflection should teach us to "abhor ourselves," and to pray continually, "Turn thou me, and so shall I be turned." And, being so culpable ourselves, we should learn to bear with the perverseness of others, and to prefer lenient to violent measures; and experienced to inexperienced counsellors. But nothing manifests greater folly than affronting, menacing language, when united with indecision and weakness in perilous circumstances.—No man can bequeath his prosperity, any more than his wisdom, to his heirs: though our children will generally be affected by our conduct. Let us then seek those good things which will be our own for ever; and implore the blessing of God upon our posterity, in preference to wealth or worldly exaltation: let us lay our account with vicissitudes and vexations on earth, and with fickleness and ingratitude from man: and let us learn to depend on the power, faithfulness, and love of that God, who, in correcting his children, or punishing his enemies, will never fail of performing his largest promises to those who trust in him.

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1-4. Note, 1 Kings 12:21-24.

V. 5-12. (Marg. Ref.) The Lord did not permit Rehoboam to wage war against the newly erected kingdom of Israel; yet it was allowable and prudent for him to take all proper measures, for the defence of his remaining dominions: this he did by repairing and fortifying several cities, to obstruct the entrance, or retard the progress, of Jeroboam and his troops, in case he should attempt an invasion.—Perhaps he was become weary of his young counsellors, and

7 And ^aBeth-zur, and ^aShoco, and ^aAdullam, 8 And ^aGath, and ^aMareshah, and ^aZiph, 9 And Adoram, and ^aLachish, and ^aAzekah, 10 And ^aZorah, and ^aAijalon, and ^aHebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin, fenced cities.

11 And he fortified the strong-holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.

12 And in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

13 ¶ And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts.

14 (For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD.)

15 And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.)

16 And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

17 So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong,

Josh. 15:11. a Josh. 15:34. 1 Sam. 23:14, 19. Pa. 54: little. 1. 32:9. Josh. 10: 5:11. 15:45, 29. a Josh. 15:33. Zorah. 18:41, 42. Aijalon. x Gen. 23:2. Num. 13:22. Josh. 14:14. 20:7. 2 Sam. 2:11. y 22. 17:15. z 26:14, 15. 29:5. 1 Sam. 13:19, 22. a See on 1. Heb. presented themselves to him. b Num. 35:2-6. Josh. 21:20-42. 1 Chr. 6:6-8. c 1 Lev. 27:30-34. Num. 18:31-38. d 13:9. 1 Kings 12:25-35. 13:33. e Lev. 17:7. 1 ent. 32:17. 1 Cor. 10:20, 21. 1 Tim. 4:1. Rev. 16:14. f Ex. 32:4-8, 31. 1 Kings 12:28. 14:9. Pa. 106:19, 20. Hos. 8:5, 6. 13:2. g 15:9. 30:11, 18, 19. Josh. 22:18. h Ex. 5:21. marg. Deut. 32:46. 1 Sam. 7:34. 1 Chr. 22:19. Josh. 34:14. Pa. 62:10. 108:1. Dan. 6:14. Hos. 4:5. Hag. 1:5. marg. Acts. 11:23. 1 Deut. 12:5, 6, 11, 13, 14. 1 Chr. 16:28. 22:1. k 12:1.

disposed to hearken to more safe advisers: and his remaining subjects were very hearty and united in his interests.—Etam (6) belonged to Simeon, (1 Chr. 4:32.) and Zorah and Aijalon (10) to Dan. (Josh. 19:40-42.) So that some cities of the other tribes, beside Judah and Benjamin, remained under the government of Rehoboam.

V. 13-17. When Jeroboam had established the worship of the golden calves, in order to prevent his subjects from going to Jerusalem; (Notes, 1 Kings 12:25-33.) it is probable, that all the priests and Levites unanimously protested against his idolatry; and were therefore laid aside, to make way for a more compliant priesthood. As Jeroboam established no other idolatry than that of the calves; the language here employed teaches us, that the worship paid to them was actually rendered to devils; though he professed, and probably intended, by them to worship the God of Israel. For it was in a way which he had expressly prohibited, and which was infinitely dishonourable to him; and therefore it was acceptable to Satan alone, and his detestable associates in rebellion. (Note, Lev. 17:3-7, v. 7.)—The word rendered devils, in the texts of the New Testament referred to, is *δαίμων* demon; (Marg. Ref. e.) which often in heathen writers, has a good sense; that is, it is used for the objects of their worship: but these were evil spirits; and the word has always a bad meaning in Scripture, and denotes abominable idols, and evil spirits as worshipped under their names. Holy angels are never called demons.—It is not certain whether Jeroboam had deprived the priests and Levites of their dues, to maintain his new priesthood: but it seems, that for the present, they might have retained their cities, suburbs, and possessions, if they would have remained inactive; yet, their situation would have been extremely ensnaring and perilous, and it afforded them little or no prospect of usefulness. In the days of David and Solomon, they had become generally attached to the worship of God at the sanctuary, as well as to the royal family of Judah: and, as a body, they seem to have been more pious and zealous, than at any other period: they therefore magnanimously determined, with one consent, to desert their cities and possessions, and entirely to leave the apostate Israelites, thus "shaking off the very dust of their feet for a testimony against them."—Jeroboam probably was glad to be rid of them: but they were cordially welcomed by the king and people of Judah; and doubtless were provided for among their brethren, whose emoluments must thus have been greatly reduced. It is probable, that scarcely any either of the priests or Levites remained behind on this occasion, for we read nothing of them in the subsequent history of Israel. This must be allowed to have been as noble a testimony for the cause of God, against apostates and idolaters, as any history has recorded of a whole body of professed ministers.—Along with them numbers of the pious Israelites left their estates, and came to unite with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. They might bring away with them many of their effects: and, as the land afforded room enough for them, their numbers and treasures greatly strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and rendered it almost equal in force to that of Israel. But the chief advantage was, that nearly all the true religion of the nation was concentrated in that divi-

three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

16 ¶ And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, and Abihai the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse:

19 Which bare him children, Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.

20 And after her he took Maachah the daughter of Absalom: which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.

21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and three-score concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and three-score daughters.)

22 And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren: for he thought to make him king.

1:1-12, 7:17-19, 8:13-16, Hos. 6:4, Matt. 13:20, 21. m 1 Sam. 16:6, 17:13, 23. 1 Chr. 2:13, 27:19, Elihu. a 21. 13:2, Michaiah the daughter of Uriel. o 1 Kings 15:2, Abishalom. p 12:16, 1 Kings 15:1, Abijam. Matt. 1:7, Abin. q 23, Deut. 17:17, Judg. 8:30, 2 Sam. 3:2-5, 5:13, 1 Kings 11:3, 1 Chr. 3:1-9, Cant. 6:8, 9. r Deut. 21:15-17. 1 Chr. 5:1, 2, 29:1. a 10:8-15, Luke 18:8, 21:3. Gen. 25:6, 1 Kings 1:5, 6. u 11. * Heb. a multitude of wives. See on 21.

sion of it. Accordingly, for three years the kingdom of Judah was greatly strengthened; while the king and the people in general adhered to the worship of God, as in the days of David, and in the best times of Solomon; but afterwards matters took another turn.—It is not probable, that Solomon would have been thus joined with David, as the good pattern which Rehoboam and his subjects followed, if he had persevered and perished in his apostasy.

Jeroboam and his sons. (14) 'His sons were his principal counsellors, and assistants in the change he made in religion.'

Bp. Patrick.

V. 18-21. Rehoboam imitated his father in multiplying wives, but not to the same enormous excess: and he does not appear to have married any heathen women.

Daughter of Eliab. (18) Eliab was David's eldest brother; yet more than eighty years had elapsed, since David, at the age of thirty, began to reign. Abihai must, therefore, have been granddaughter, or great granddaughter to Eliab, and this shows the latitude in which the words *son and daughter* are used in Scripture, for a descendant, even after several intervening generations. (Note, Ruth 4:18-22.)

The daughter of Absalom. (20) It is said of Abijah, that 'his mother's name was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.' (13:2.) Gibeah belonged to Benjamin, and probably Absalom, here mentioned, was a Benjamite. (Note, 1 Kings 15:1-3.)

V. 22, 23. Rehoboam acted from partial affection, and by his own authority, in advancing Abijah above his elder brethren; whereas, God himself chose Solomon to be king in preference to David's other sons. (Note, 1 Chr. 29:1.) It is probable, that Rehoboam's conduct gave umbrage to his other sons; and that he dispersed them, in the fenced cities, in honourable and affluent situations, to prevent their uniting against Abijah: but perhaps he also confided in them to retain these cities in their duty, and to defend them against the common enemy. Whatever were his motive, it was deemed good policy by his contemporaries.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is commonly more prudent to manage moderate possessions well, than to risk losing them by grasping at greater advantages: and when an egregious error has exposed us to some heavy loss, it is generally wisest to sit down by it, lest we be betrayed into still more fatal mistakes.—It is in vain to contend with the purpose of God, when he makes it known unto us; and, as his word declares that none shall enjoy durable peace in the practice of wickedness, it is madness to expect it; yet, by this rule of judgment, what a world of madness and folly do we live in!—Even those who are destitute of true faith and grace, frequently pay some regard to the word of God, and, for a time, are restrained by it from actions, to which they are inclined, and do many things which are disagreeable to them: and even this temporary faith, and external obedience, are often recompensed with temporary and external advantages.—In seasons of prevailing ungodliness and public disturbances, the ministers of religion will be exposed to peculiar trials; as they must either act contrary to their consciences or expose themselves to great loss and peril. This is the time, when God puts the sincerity of their faith and love to the proof: on these great occasions, he peculiarly calls upon them to bear testimony to his truth, and to protest at all events, against enormous evils, by whom whomsoever patronised. As connivance and silence in such a case are very criminal: so it is peculiarly honourable to God, and convincing to the consciences of men, when they readily renounce their secular interests, and stand up boldly for the cause of God, without regarding consequences: nor will such behaviour ever lose its reward.—It may be their duty to retire from such places as will not receive their testimony, where they can do no good, where their temptations are great, and where they

23 And he dealt wisely, and dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired many wives.

CHAPTER XII.

Rehoboam forsakes God, and Shishak king of Egypt invades Judah, 1-4 Rehoboam and his princes, being warned by Shemrah, humble themselves, and, though spoiled, are not destroyed, 5-12. Rehoboam's reign and death, Abijah succeeds him, 13-16.

AND it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him.

2 And it came to pass, that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the Lord,

3 With twelve hundred chariots, and three score thousand horsemen: and the people were

a 13:1, 17. b 26:13-16. Deut. 6:10-12, 8:10-14, 32:15, 1 Kings 9:9. Jer. 2:31, Hos. 13:1, 6-8. c 11:3, 1 Kings 12:17, 14:22-24, 2 Kings 17:19. Hos. 7:10, 11. Mic. 6:16. d See on 1 Kings 11:40, 14:25, 26. e 7:19, 20, 36:14-19. f Judg. 23:15, 1 Chr. 23:9. Neh. 9:26, 27. Ps. 106:43, 44. Is. 63:10. Jer. 2:19, 44:22, 23. Lam. 5:15, 16. f Judg. 4:13. 1 Sam. 13:5. 2 Sam. 10:19.

may be exposed to still fiercer persecutions: and in that case no possessions or connexions ought to be regarded.—When the ministers and ordinances of God are driven from any place, it is time for them, "who set their hearts to seek the Lord," to come out and be separate, that they may not be seduced to have fellowship with the worshippers and servants of Satan. Trials of this kind, serve to separate the chaff from the wheat; and indeed untried faith is not much to be depended on: but when we have been proved, and it appears, that we are willing to renounce our worldly interests, as far as called to it, for the sake of Christ and the gospel, we have got one good evidence that we are truly his disciples.—Those ministers should be welcomed and encouraged, who evidently prefer their work, with a good conscience, to their possessions; and if things were as they should be, their more affluent brethren would readily share their emoluments with them, if they saw them destitute.—It is genuine policy for any kingdom to entertain such as are willing to leave their estates and native country, purely for conscience's sake; for they will prove the strength and bulwark of the state, which gives them a comfortable asylum. But "I-chabod, the glory is departed," may be written on that kingdom which drives them away, by superstitious or idolatrous impositions, and by persecutions.—Nothing can injure us, while we keep close to the worship and service of God: but without true faith and grace, all apparent zeal and external profession will at length wither. Yet many deem themselves good and righteous, because they are not so faulty, in the best part of their character, as some eminently godly persons were in the greatest blemishes of their lives!—It is indeed well, when those, who begin foolishly, grow wiser by experience: but alas! that wisdom is of little value, which is engrossed by the care of secular interests, to the neglect of the immortal soul, through the indulgence of worldly lusts, and departing from the living God.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1. Rehoboam's religion seems to have proceeded wholly from his fears of being given up into the hands of Jeroboam: when therefore he was become so strong, that, as he supposed, he had nothing to apprehend from that quarter, he became openly rebellious and idolatrous. (Note, 1 Kings 14:22-24.) The leading men also and the bulk of the nation, so generally and openly renounced the worship of God at the temple, that it was adjudged a national apostasy.—The ten tribes had before apostatized with Jeroboam; and when Rehoboam, with Judah and Benjamin, followed their example, "all Israel," as a nation, "had forsaken the law of the Lord;" and the pious remnant formed only a few exceptions to the general rule.

V. 2. (Note, 1 Kings 14:25-28.) It is probable, that Shishak was of another family than Pharaoh, whose daughter Solomon had married; and was excited to this invasion by the reports of the immense treasures, which that prince had collected at Jerusalem, with the division in his dominions, and the weakness of Rehoboam's administration. But the Lord gave him power to execute his rapacious purposes: which he would not have done, if the people had not transgressed against him.

In the fifth year.—[Their apostasy was in the fourth year; ... therefore God speedily corrected them, that he might reduce them to his service, before they were settled in their impiety.] *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3, 4. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Lubims were the inhabitants of Lybia, adjoining to Egypt on the west: the Sukkims are supposed to have been the people called Troglodytes, because they dwelt in caves, (*τρογλαις*): and the Ethiopians, probably, were the inhabitants of Ethiopia to the south of Egypt.—It is likely that several of Rehoboam's sons were slain, or taken captive, by Shishak, when he took the cities in which they governed. (Note, 11:22, 23.)

V. 5, 6. While the king and his nobles were consulting

without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkims, and the Ethiopians.

4 And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

5 ¶ Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

6 Whereupon the princes of Israel, and the king humbled themselves; and they said, The Lord is righteous.

7 And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

8 Nevertheless, they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

9 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all; he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

f 14.9. Judg. 6:5, Rev. 9:16, h 16:3. Ex. 30:5, Nah. 3:9, i 14:12, 16:8. Is. 43:3, Dan. 11:43, Nah. 3:9. *Cushim*. Heb. Gen. 10:6-8, k 11:5-19, Is. 36:1. Jer. 49:1, 2 Kings 18:17, Is. 3:8, 10:11, m 11:2. 1 Kings 12:22, n See on 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

what measures to adopt, in this dangerous extremity, and perhaps were about to surrender to the conqueror; the prophet, in a few words, reminded them, that Shishak's power over them was the effect of the Lord's righteous indignation, who was contending with them for their apostasy. The time and circumstances indeed of their affliction evidently proclaimed this truth, yet they had not before attended to it: but this message had an immediate effect upon them; for they humbled themselves, and acknowledged the justice of God in their punishment. (*Marg. Ref. p.*) An external reformation, and a regard to the worship at the temple, during the remainder of Rehoboam's reign, followed this humiliation; but it went no further, at least with him.

V. 7-11. (*Notes, Judg. 3:1, 2. 1 Kings 21:27-29. Ps. 76:10.*) It is probable, that Shishak had intended to give up the city to be plundered by his army; but God suddenly disposed him to greater moderation and clemency than could possibly have been expected from such a man in his circumstances. So that he contented himself with emptying the treasures of the temple and of the king, and carrying away the golden shields which Solomon had made for magnificence rather than for use. (*Notes, 1 Kings 10:16, 17. 14:25-28.*) and he did not proceed to rob the temple of its sacred vessels. Neither did he deprive the inhabitants of their private property; but perhaps he exacted a sum of money, in token of their becoming his servants. He was, however, permitted thus far to prevail, that Rehoboam and his subjects might experience the different effects of keeping close to the worship of God, as in the prosperous days of David and Solomon; and of renouncing his service, and in consequence being reduced under the power of the conqueror, and preserved from entire ruin, merely by his unexpected clemency on their unreserved submission. 'He resolved to let them feel the difference between him, and all other lords and masters: and how much more happy they were while they continued to worship and serve him, than when they fell under a foreign yoke.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12. *Things went well.* Or, "yet in Judah there were good things" (*marg.*) that is, there were a number of true believers, spiritual worshippers, and servants of God, especially such as came out of Israel; for whose sake Rehoboam and the kingdom were spared: so that we read no more of Shishak, who, by one means or other, was kept from coming to extort any further tribute or services from them. (*Notes, Gen. 32:6-28. 33:4.*)

V. 13. *The city, &c.* It was a peculiar honour conferred on Rehoboam for his father's sake, and his greatest advantage, that he reigned in that city which the Lord had chosen as the place of his temple, and instituted worship; (*Marg. Ref. d, e.*) but it seems to be here mentioned as an aggravation of the guilt of his ungodliness.

V. 14. Rehoboam's religion was a reluctant, formal service; his heart was not engaged; he never called upon "all that was within him to praise the Lord," and he did not desire

10 Instead of which, king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.

11 And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard-chamber.

12 And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well.

13 ¶ So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for Rehoboam was one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah, an Ammonitess.

14 And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.

15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

16 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

18:15, 16. 1 Sam. 1:10. y 9:15, 16. 1 Kings 10:16, 17. x 1 Kings 14:27, 28. Lam. 4:1. n 2 Sam. 8:18, 23:3. 1 Chr. 11:25. Cant. 3:7, 8. b See on 6, 7. Lam. 3: 22, 33, 42. l Or, yet in Judah there were good things. 19:3. Gen. 18:24. 1 Kings 14:13. Is. 6:13. c 13:7. 1 Kings 14:21. d See on 6:6. Ps. 45:1-3. 78:68, 69. e Ex. 20:24. Deut. 12:5, 11. Ez. 48:35. f Deut. 32:3. 1 Kings 11:1. Neh. 13:1, 26. g 11:16. 19:3. 30:19. 1 Sam. 7:3. 1 Chr. 29:18. Ps. 78:8. i Heb. 13:1. Ps. 57:7, 78:37. 1 Cor. 15:38. 16:13. h Ps. 105:3, 4. Is. 45:19. 55:6, 7. Matt. 7:7. i 9:29. j Heb. words. k 5. 1 Kings 12:22. l 13:22. m 1 Kings 14:30. n See on 1 Kings 14:29-31. o 13:1. 1 Kings 14:31. Abijah. 1 Chr. 3:10. Matt. 1:7. Abia.

that preparation of an humble, believing, and pious disposition of heart, which is requisite in order to worship God spiritually and with delight. This was the source of his instability; and thus he was easily drawn into open ungodliness and wickedness. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. Notes, 11: 13-17, v. 16. 30:16-20, v. 19. 1 Chr. 29:10-19, v. 18. Ps. 78:9-11.*)

V. 15, 16. *Notes, 9:29-31. 1 Kings 14:30.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a very common, but most lamentable case, that men, who in distress or danger, or apparently near death, seem very much engaged in seeking God, often throw aside their religion when they have received a merciful deliverance. But the warning, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," deserves the most serious consideration of all who are tempted to such base ingratitude. (*Note, John 5: 10-14, v. 14.*) The Lord can soon arrest them by renewed afflictions; reduce them to still greater extremities; and bring trouble upon them from those quarters whence it was least expected.—Ungodly prosperity serves only to increase vain confidence, and to invite rapacity, without affording any real security; and all methods of defence prove ineffectual, when an angry God "arises to that judgment, which he hath commanded."—Every affliction has a voice, and delivers a message from the Lord; but sinners do not regard or understand: it is therefore, a singular mercy when he sends them "an interpreter," to explain the voice of his rod by that of his word. (*Note, Job. 33:19-26.*)—Humiliation before God for sin, with unreserved acknowledgments that he is just in all that he inflicts or threatens, is essential to true repentance: but this may be counterfeited both by word and deed. Yet, when there are merely external appearances of contrition, our merciful God will often grant respite, in order to encourage true penitents, by showing his readiness to forgive. This is especially the case in his dealings with sinful nations; for a general external humiliation before God, under national judgments, is a good evidence that their iniquities are not yet full; and when there is a number of true believers among them, who are protected from oppression and persecution; the Lord will grant some deliverance, and his "wrath shall not be poured out upon them" as yet.—Amidst all our abounding iniquity, impiety, and infidelity, these kingdoms seem hitherto to have been spared on these accounts: may he reform, and not destroy us!—When the Lord is pleased to show mercy, he can dispose the hardest hearts to compassion; the most rapacious, to moderation; and the most impious, to fear profaning sacred things: for he rules the impetuous lusts of men as he does the raging ocean, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." But his wrath may occasion many painful effects, when not poured out unto the uttermost. These are, however, often intended in mercy, and are of salutary tendency: for it is good to be convinced by our sufferings, short of eternal misery, that by forsaking the Lord

CHAPTER XIII.

Abijah reigns; he and Jeroboam, with all preparations, engage in war, 1-3. Abijah shows the justice of his cause, 4-12. Judah, relying on God, gains a signal victory, with immense slaughter of the Israelites, 13-19. Jeroboam dies, 20. Abijah's wives and child-en, 21, 22.

NOW in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Michaiiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. ⁴And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

3 And Abijah set the battle in array with an ^{a.c.} army of valiant men of war, *even* four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, *being* mighty men of valour.

4 ¶ And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, ^bHear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel;

5 ^cOught ye not to know, that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel ^dto David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?

6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord.

7 And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened

themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them.

8 And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.

9 Have ye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods.

10 But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business:

11 And they burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt-sacrifices, and sweet incense: the show-bread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.

12 And behold, God himself is with us for

^a See on 12:16. 1 Kings 15:1. ^b 11:20. *Manchah the daughter of Abenlom.* 1 Kings 15:2. *Abijah.* ^c Josh. 18:28. *Gibeath.* Josh. 18:16. 1 Sam. 10:26. ^d 1 Kings 15:5-7. ^e Heb. bound together. 1 Sam. 17:1-3. ^f 11:1. 14:5. 17:14-18. 26:12. 13. 1 Chr. 21:5. ^g 14:9. ^h Gen. 10:18. *Josh. 18:22.* ⁱ 15:2. ^j Judg. 9:7. 1 Neh. 5:1. ^k 1 rev. 1:29. 2 Pet. 3:5. ^l Judg. 11:21-24. ^m Jer. 27:5-7. ⁿ Dan. 4:25-32. 5:18. ^o 1 Sam. 16:1. 2 Sam. 7:12-16. 1 Kings 5:20. 1 Chr. 17:14. 28:4. 5. Ps. 89:19-37. ^p Jer. 33:21. 22:26. ^q Luke 13:31-35. 1 Lev. 2:13. Num. 18:19. ^r Ex. 43:24. ^s Mark 9:49-50. ^t m 10:19. 1 Kings 11:26. 12:20. 27. ^u Judg. 9:4. 11:3. 1 Sam. 22:2. ^v Job 30:8. ^w Ps. 26:4. ^x Prov. 12:11. 28:19. ^y Acts 17:6. ^z Tit. 1:10. ^{aa} See on Deut. 13:13. 1 Kings 21:10. 13. ^{ab} 12:13. ^{ac} Ex. 10:16. ^{ad} 1 Sam. 1:4. 1 Cor. 14:20. ^{ae} Heb. 5:12. ^{af} 11:1-4. ^{ag} r 9:8. ^{ah} Ps. 2:1-6. ^{ai} Is. 7:6, 9, 16, 27.

we are cruel to ourselves; and that his service, which is but another name for liberty, peace, and felicity, cannot be renounced, without our becoming the miserable slaves of the worst of tyrants and oppressors: and whenever the heart is truly humbled, the afflictions will be removed, or alleviated and counterbalanced by divine consolations.—Sin always debases those who commit it, robs them of substantial blessings, and substitutes a mere empty worthless show of good; and whatever else be preserved or obtained, it will ruin the immortal soul, except true repentance intervene. Unless “the heart be prepared to seek the LORD,” we must perish: and if convinced, that we are unable of ourselves to effect this preparation, let us pray fervently, according to the language of Scripture, “Turn thou me, and so shall I be turned.” “Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.” If we do this in sincerity, using the other means of grace, and watching against sin and temptation; our endeavours will not be in vain. Where these things are wanting, formality and hypocrisy form a man's highest attainments; his chief advantages prove an aggravation of his crimes; and a life of vanity and vexation will be closed by a miserable death. May we then look to our hearts, and keep them with all diligence; for the Lord especially regards them: and may we prepare our hearts unto himself, that we may serve him with perseverance and delight, while we live; possess a strong consolation and joyful hope, when we are called to walk through the valley of the shadow of death; and so have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref. Notes.* 1:18-23. 1 Kings 15:1-3.

V. 3. The kingdom of the ten tribes had been given to Jeroboam; but he and his people had, by apostasy and idolatry, merited the severest punishment, which Abijah was employed, or permitted, to execute. Rehoboam had aimed to recover dominion over all Israel; but perhaps Abijah only endeavoured to secure his own kingdom. (Note, Kings 12:21-24.)—The numbers which they brought into the field were immense; but when every man was a soldier, small kingdoms could raise very large armies upon any great emergency. Five hundred thousand had been numbered of Judah in the time of David, and it had received a great increase on the division of the kingdom; yet Israel raised an army twice as large as that of Judah, out of all their tribes. (Notes, 11:13-17. 2 Sam. 24:9. 1 Chr. 21:2-6, v. 5. 27:15.)

V. 4-12. Jeroboam seems to have been the aggressor in the war; yet Abijah had marched into his country; and from thence, whence Jeroboam and many of the Israelites could hear him, he spake to them as one who wished to bring the contest to an amicable conclusion. At least this seems to have been his ostensible design; though his speech was well suited, and probably intended, to encourage his own troops, and to dismay those of Jeroboam. Abijah bears a bad character in kings; (Note, 1 Kings 15:1-4.) yet this in

Luke 19:14-27. ^a 14:9-11. 20:6, 12. ^b Ps. 33:16. ^c See on 11:15. 1 Kings 12:28. 14:9. Hos. 8:6. ^d 11:14, 15. ^e 1 Kings 12:31-33. 13:33. ^f 1 Heb. fill his land. ^g Ex. 32:29. ^h Lev. 16:32. ⁱ 1 Chr. 29:5. ^j margins. ^k Ex. 29:1, 35. ^l Lev. 8:2. ^m Lev. 23:17. ⁿ 2 Kings 19:18. ^o Jer. 21:1. ^p Hos. 8:6. ^q Acts 19:26. ^r Gal. 4:8. ^s 11:16, 17. ^t Ex. 15:16. ^u Zech. 1:19. ^v Ex. 29:1. ^w Ex. 29:1. ^x Num. 16:40. 18:1-7. ^y See on 2:4. ^z Ex. 29:38-42. ^{aa} Ex. 30:1-10. ^{ab} Lev. 21:3. ^{ac} Num. 16:6, 7, 46, 47. ^{ad} Luke 13:3. ^{ae} Rev. 8:3, 4. ^{af} Ex. 25:39. ^{ag} Lev. 24:6. ^{ah} Ex. 25:31-39. ^{ai} 27:20, 21. ^{aj} Lev. 24:3, 4. ^{ak} Num. 26:5. ^{al} Num. 9:19, 23. ^{am} Ez. 44:8, 15. 48:11. ^{an} g Num. 23:21. ^{ao} 1 Sam. 4:5-7. ^{ap} Is. 5:10. ^{aq} Zech. 10:5. ^{ar} Rom. 8:31. ^{as} 1 Deut. 20:4. ^{at} Josh. 5:13-15. ^{au} Ps. 20:7. ^{av} Heb. 5:10.

occasion he spoke religiously; and he seems to have had a strong confidence in God, grounded on the maintenance of his ordinances, and the number of pious worshippers in his kingdom. The basis of his address was truth; but there was much false colouring in his manner of stating it, according to the too general custom of eloquent orators. For the covenant respecting the kingdom over Israel, made with David in behalf of his posterity, (except as it related to the Messiah,) was conditional; and neither Solomon, Rehoboam, nor Abijah, had been attentive to the re-stipulations. (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:12-16. 1 Kings 9:4-9. 11:9-13. Ps. 89:19-37. 132:11, 12.)—“A covenant of salt” is one solemnly ratified by a sacrifice and a feast, at both of which salt was used; that is to say, an *unchangeable covenant*: (Notes, Lev. 2:13. Num. 18:19.) but the Lord evidently did not consider himself irreversibly engaged to continue the kingdom of all Israel to David's posterity.—Jeroboam had indeed acted very wickedly in his manner of seizing and governing the kingdom of Israel: yet it had been granted to him by God himself, and Abijah never mentioned that circumstance. (Notes, 1 Kings 11:29-40.)—The persons who revolted from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king, had acted with great precipitation and ingratitude; but perhaps it was not candid to call them indiscriminately “vain men, the children of Belial.” Rehoboam had given them no small provocation; he was surely old enough to have behaved more wisely, if he had not been actuated by a proud, domineering disposition; and it was not so much owing either to his lenity, his timidity, or his weakness, that he had not prosecuted his pretensions by war; as to the divine prohibition. (Notes, 1 Kings 12:8-24.)—But Abijah's words were more forcible, when he exposed the apostasy and idolatry of the kingdom of Israel; their impiety and sacrilege in excluding the priests of the LORD from their possessions; and the shameful manner, in which any worthless man was made a priest, who could and would bring the sacrifice appointed by way of consecration; for by these crimes, Jeroboam and his subjects were drawing down the vengeance of heaven upon themselves. (Notes, 11:13-17. 1 Kings 12:26-33. 13:33, 34. 14:5-16.) But what Abijah urged, concerning the state of true religion in Judah, was not strictly just; and, as spoken by him, it savoured of ostentation. Abijah himself was not a godly man; and idolatry was evidently connived at in his days. Yet it was true, that the men of Judah had the priests, ordinances, and worship of God among them; that there were numbers of pious worshippers in the land; that theirs was the more righteous cause; that the LORD was on their side, and their Captain, while the Israelites fought against him; and that the presence of the priests blowing the sacred trumpets, according to the law was a token of his presence with them and favour to them. (Notes, Num. 10:2-10.)—The expression, “after the manner of the nations” (9) shows that the laws of Moses were not made according to the customs of the Gentiles, as many suppose; but entirely distinct from them; and that the similarity which in many instances has been traced, actually

our Captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ But Jeroboam caused man ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them.

14 And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind; and they cried unto the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.

15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand.

17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter; so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.

18 Thus the children of Israel were brought

under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers.

19 And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof.

20 Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died.

21 ¶ But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.

22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

CHAPTER XIV.

Abijah dies, and Asa succeeds him, 1. He abolishes idolatry, 2-5. Enjoying peace, he fortifies his kingdom, and establishes a large army, 6-8. Being attacked by Zerah, with an immense army of Ethiopians, he calls on God, is victorious, and acquires much spoil, 9-15.

SO Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa

arose from the idolaters, in several particulars, adopting or imitating the usages of Israel.

Zemaraim. (4) Zemaraim was a city allotted to Benjamin: but mount Zemaraim, no doubt adjacent to it, was in mount Ephraim, on the borders of the two tribes. (Josh. 18:22.)

V. 13-22. Jeroboam, like a profane politician, (Note, 1 Kings 12:26-29,) disregarded all Abijah's pleas, and rested his whole dependence on the valour of his troops, and the skillfulness of his arrangements. Whilst Abijah therefore was speaking about peace, he was preparing for action: and to make, as he supposed, sure of the event, to the superiority of his numbers he added an ambushment, that he might surround and destroy the whole army of Judah, probably intending to seize upon that kingdom also. But the people cried unto the Lord in this extremity, as expecting help and deliverance from him alone; whilst the sounding of the sacred trumpets caused numbers to shout with confidence of success: and, according to their hope, it pleased God to smite the Israelites in such a manner, that they were unable to resist or to escape by flight; and thus five hundred thousand were slain in one day, which is the largest slaughter that history records to have been ever made in any one battle. This decisive blow gave Judah so great a superiority, that it can only be ascribed to a divine interposition, that the kingdom of Israel was not entirely subverted. Many cities, however, were subdued, and among the rest Beth-el fell into the hands of the victor; yet we do not read that he removed the golden calf, and probably the city was soon after conceded to Jeroboam. That prince, however, never recovered from this blow, for the Lord soon after smote him, and he died: (Note, Acts 12:20-23.) yet Abijah died nearly two years before him, and did not long enjoy the fruits of his victory, for which he made very ungrateful returns. Though destitute of piety, he seems to have possessed great vigour and capacity. During his short reign he became very powerful; he had a very numerous family; and his ways and sayings were so remarkable as to be particularly recorded by the prophet Iddo. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. e. Notes, 1 Kings 15:1-9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. The promptness of mankind to war lamentably proclaims the depravity of our nature, and the influence that the great murderer of bodies and souls possesses over the minds of men, even in the determinations of senates and in the cabinets of kings. Nor can vainglorious commanders more delight in seeking renown, power, or revenge, by the destruction of the human species, than many of their inferiors do, inisting under their banners, seconding their aims, and rushing upon danger and death, that they may attempt the slaughter of those who never injured or even saw them. Such stubborn facts stand in the page of every history, a confutation of the absurd encomiums, which self-flattering speculators have passed upon the philanthropy of the human heart, and the sufficiency of human reason, for every purpose of virtue and religion. The annals of mankind form one continued narration of blood shed in the most wanton and unnecessary manner, in pursuit of honour and dominion, or in seeking to wrest the sword of vengeance from the hands of the Supreme Judge. The millions, who have thus perished miserably, "hateful, and hating one another," exceed almost imagination: and to crown the whole, the chief actors in this bloody tragedy have engrossed almost the whole applause of their fellow-mortals; or shared it with the poets, orators, and historians, who have excited them by infamous panegyrics to such destructive pursuits! Compare the whole with the short command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and

then bring in an impartial verdict concerning the heart of man, and the state of human nature. (Note, Lev. 19:18.)—Yet all the blood thus shed must be one day accounted for, as murder, on whomsoever that load of guilt may fall. Surely then, war should be always considered as the last resource, a desperate remedy, never to be used when the welfare of the state can possibly be otherwise secured. A righteous cause, a willingness for peace on reasonable terms, and a well-grounded confidence in God, should be considered as the grand requisites, in the management of this direful appeal to the supreme Arbiter of kings and nations.—But, it is easy to speak on these topics, without the fear of God possessing the heart. Many presume upon external privileges, who disregard his precepts; they boast of the form of godliness, without the power of it; they are justly severe upon the crimes of other men, yet they do not amend their own: but palliate the offences of their own party, while they aggravate the misconduct of their adversaries. These are not only the arts of those, who purposely frame manifestos to varnish their ambition with the show of equity; but are often employed by such as really have justice on their side, yet forget that genuine beauty is disgraced and rendered suspected, by being painted. It is obvious, however, that ungodly princes have often prospered, because their enemies have been so ill more abandoned; because they had justice on their side; because many of their subjects were pious; because more external honour was paid to the truth and ordinances of God among their subjects; or because the appeal to him, and professed reliance on him, was more openly made in the decision of the contest.

V. 13-22. The wise politicians of the world generally treat with contempt, all arguments grounded on the state of religion, and the favour of God toward his worshippers: their whole dependence is "on an arm of flesh," and if their confidence be disappointed, they ascribe it to fortune, or to the chance of war. But, the God of battles gives victory to whom he pleases: against him all courage and conduct are vain; and he will appear for those, who rely on and call upon him in the time of distress. He has often brought his people into imminent danger, in order to exercise their faith, and to put vigour into their prayers, which will be sure to terminate in shouts of victory. But, to triumph in those contests, which cause so many thousands and hundreds of thousands of the human species to expire in agony, and their immortal souls to be sent to the tribunal of God and an eternal state, can give little pleasure to a feeling heart; except as his justice, and faithful care of his people are seen and adored in them. And least of all, can success in civil wars, which are commonly conducted with the most unrelenting rancour and most tremendous slaughter, give satisfaction to any benevolent mind. Nor are the victories acquired in those fierce, though unbloody contests, which rend the church of Christ, to the disgrace of the common cause, and the joy of the common enemy, to be more rejoiced in. But to conquer our own passions, to prevail against the tempter and the world, and to overcome evil with good, are victories to be gained by faith, patience, and prayer, in which we may safely and purely rejoice. And when the conquerors and the conquered, in bloody battles, will join in execrating their own and each other's madness; "when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain;" then shall we receive the unsullied palm, the conqueror's noblest crown. Nay, death and the grave, which so dreadfully triumph over those whom the Lord smites in his anger, and so speedily wrench the prosperous from all their grandeur, will never hurt us; indeed, we shall then gain a complete victory over that last enemy, and mortality shall at length be swallowed up of life.

his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

2 And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God :

3 For ^{he} took away the altars of the strange gods, and ^{the} high places, and ^{he} brake down the images, and ^{he} cut down the groves :

4 And ^{he} commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and ^{he} to do the law and the commandment.

5 Also he took away, out of all the cities of Judah, the high places and the images : and the kingdom was quiet before him.

6 ¶ And ^{he} built fenced cities in Judah : ^{for} the land had rest, and he had no war in those years ; because ^{the} LORD had given him rest.

7 Therefore ^{he} said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us ; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built, and prospered.

8 And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand ; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand : all these were mighty men of valour.

9 ¶ And there came out against them Zerah

e 31:20. 1 Kings 15:11-11. Luke 1:75. d Deut. 7:5. 1 Kings 11:7, 8, 14 22-24. e 15:17. 2 Kings 23:10. 1 Kings 15:12-14. f 34:4. Ec. 34:13. Deut. 7:5, 25. * Heb. statues. 1 Kings 23:14, marg. g 6:25-28. 2 Kings 18:4, 23:6, 14. h 29:21, 27:30. 12:33, 16:34, 32:32. 3. Jer. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. 1 Sam. 3:13. Ezra 10:7-12. Neh. 13:19-22. Ps. 101:2-8. 1 See on 11:16, 30, 19. Is. 55:6-7. Am. 5:4. Neh. 10:38-39. Ps. 119:10. 1 Heb. sun-images. 34:4, marg. 1:32-2. 6:15-12. m Judg. 3:11, 30, 5:31. 1 Kings 5:4, 1 Chr. 22:9. n 15:15 Job 34:22. Ps. 46:9. o 32:5. Acts 9:31. p John 9:4, 12:35, 36. Heb. 13:13-15. q See on 4. 1 Chr. 28:9. Ps. 105:3, 4. Jer. 29:12-14. 1 Pet. 3:12. r See on 6. Josh. 23:1. Matt. 11:28-29. s 11:1. 3 Kings 17:14-19, 25:5. t See on 12:3, 16. 2 Kings 19:9. Is. 33:9, 10. Ec. 30:5. Rev. 16:14. u Josh. 13:48. St. 1:13. x Judg. 1:17. Zephath. y 13:14, 18:31. 32:50. Ec. 14:10. 1 Chr. 5:20. f. 25:5 34:6, 15:15, 91:15. Acta 2:21. z Lev. 26:8. Dent. 32:30, Judg. 7. 1 Sam. 14.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIV. V. 1. *The land, &c.* Abijah's vigour and success laid the foundation of Asa's peace and prosperity. Jeroboam, and his son Nadab, remained quiet during the short time which they reigned over Israel, after Abijah's victory. Baasha began to reign before the close of Asa's third year ; but though "there was war between him and Asa all their days;" (1 Kings 15:16.) it did not for some time occasion much disturbance to the peace of Judah, through the enfeebled state of Israel.

V. 2—5. Asa not only behaved so well as to approve his conduct to man, but he aimed to act as in the sight of Him, who seeth the secret intentions of the heart ; and accordingly "he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Notes, 12:14. 1 Kings 15:14, 15.) He began his reign by abolishing those idolatries, which had been connived at in the preceding reigns, especially that of the *sun-images*; (5. marg.) and by using his authority to retain the people in the worship of God at the temple, and to enforce obedience to his commandments. He afterwards carried his reformation still further; (Notes, 15:1—15.) yet at last, the high places, where JEHOWAH was irregularly worshipped, were not removed, though the idolatrous altars were destroyed. (15:17. 1 Kings 15:14.)

V. 6—8. The union of piety and prudence, in Asa's conduct, is worthy of notice and commendation. We may suppose that his army generally served in divisions by rotation, but could be marshalled all together upon occasion. (Note, 1 Chr. 27:1—15.) The number of his soldiers was great, especially that of Benjamin ; but probably many from the other tribes were numbered among them. (Note, 17:13—19.)—Because the Lord had given him rest. (6) (Job 34:29.) Various concurring events formed the second cause of this rest, both from external wars, and internal disturbances ; but the Lord, the GREAT FIRST CAUSE, directed and overruled all, to effect his own merciful purpose to Asa and Judah. This Asa saw, and piously acknowledged. (7.)

V. 9—15. It is not certain, whether the Ethiopians or Cushites of Africa, or those near Arabia, are here intended, though it is more generally thought that the latter are meant. But they who suppose the former, conjecture that Zerah had subjugated his neighbours, the Egyptians ; had taken possession of the cities and territories bordering on Egypt ; and intended still further to extend his conquests, when he had seized upon the kingdom of Judah.—Asa's army was formidable, though not equal to Zerah's immense preparations. He, however, placed no confidence in it, but relied only on the protection of God. His prayer is the genuine language of faith. He was conscious that his aim had been to glorify the Lord, and promote his worship, in the time of his prosperity ; and this encouraged him to look upon God as his reconciled Friend and Father. Having put himself and his people under his protection, he was persuaded, that none could prevail against them, without seeming at least to prevail against God. If his army had been superior to that of

the Ethiopian with a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots ; and came unto "Mareshah.

10 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephath at Mareshah.

11 And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power : help us, O LORD our God ; for we rest on thee, and in thy name, we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God ; let not man prevail against thee.

12 So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah ; and the Ethiopians fled.

13 And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar : and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves ; for they were destroyed before the LORD and before his host ; and they carried away very much spoil.

14 And they smote all the cities round about Gerar ; for the fear of the LORD came upon them : and they spoiled all the cities ; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.

15 They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.

6. 1 Kings 20:27-30. Amos 5:9, 2 Cor. 12:9, 10. n 20:12. Deut. 32:36. Is. 40:29-31. h 32:8. 1 Sam. 17:35, 36. Ps. 37:5. Prov. 18:10. Is. 26:3, 4, 41:10-14. John 14:1, 27. Rom. 8:31. c 13:12, 18. 1 Sam. 17:45-46. Ps. 30:1, 7. Is. 26:13. Acta 3:16. d Deut. 22:27. Josh. 7:9, 9. 1 Sam. 2:9. Ps. 9:10. 79:10. Jer. 1:19. Zech. 2:8. Matt. 18:18. Acta 9:4. * Or, mortal man. Is. 2:22. e 13:15, 20:22. Ex. 14:25. Deut. 28:7, 32:39. Josh. 10:10. Ps. 60:12, 136:17, 18. 1 Cor. 9:26. 15:57. f 14:25. Gen. 10:19, 20:1, 26:1. g Heb. broken. h Job 6:9. 9:4. * Thes. 1:9. h Josh. 5:14. 1 Sam. 25:28. 1 Chr. 12:22. Ps. 108:11. 17:10. 20:29. Gen. 35:5. Deut. 2:25. Josh. 2:9-11, 5:1. 1 Sam. 14:15. 2 Kings 7:6. Job 15:21. Ps. 48:5, 6. Is. 31:9. k 30:25. Judg. 14:19. 2 Kings 7:7, 8, 16. Ps. 68:12. Is. 33:23. Rom. 8:37. 1 Chr. 4:41. m Num. 31:9, 30-47. 1 Sam. 30:20. 1 Chr. 5:21.

the enemy, it could not have secured the victory ; if it had consisted of a few enfeebled, dispirited troops, the Lord could have helped by them ; for it was "nothing with him to help with many, or with them that had no power." (Notes, 20. 6—12. 32:6—8. v. 8. 1 Sam. 14:6—10.) Either way he desired to confide wholly in the Almighty, and to give him the glory of the victory. The event accorded to his faith ; the Lord fought by Asa's subjects as his host ; (13) the Ethiopians were entirely overthrown, and dispersed ; the spoil, which had been deposited in Gerar of the Philistines, and in other cities in that vicinity, was taken ; and this most formidable invasion exceedingly enriched Judah. (Notes, 16:1—10.)—Asa cried, &c. (11) "Before he began to fight, he implored the help of heaven ; which he did, I suppose, in the face of all his army, that they might look up to God, as their Strength and Salvation." *Bp. Patrick.*—Thou art our God.] "Nothing could more inspire them with courage, than to believe he looked upon their cause as his own, while they owned him for their God." *Ibid.*—Camels. (15) "The abundance of camels which they had, show they were Arabians." *Ibid.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active talents and outward success of ungodly men sometimes make way for the peace and prosperity of those, whose leading aim it is to glorify God and promote true religion ; and thus they, whose hearts are "not prepared to seek the LORD," may be serviceable to others ; but nothing will profit our own souls, except that religion, which induces us to "do that which is good and right in the eyes of the LORD." Indeed, this alone can prepare us for arduous and perilous services ; and influence us to undertake, to pursue without weariness, and by cheerful perseverance to accomplish, designs of usefulness in our various situations ; and when men in authority, or others according to the duties of their several stations, properly attempt reformation, and support the cause of true religion by scriptural means, they often find less difficulty than they expected : for they are approved even by the consciences of those men, whose sins oppose their designs.—In all our prosperity we should notice and acknowledge the hand of God : if he gives rest, none can cause trouble ; and those who uprightly seek him shall find peace and comfort. Yet, while we are in this world, we must prepare for trials and conflicts ; we can never be safe except we be watching and praying ; and though the grace of God will indeed be sufficient for his people, none of them will have any strength to spare. Our utmost watchfulness and diligence will not secure us from tribulation ; but the consciousness of having heartily served the Lord in prosperity, will turn to us for a testimony, that we are indeed his people and he our God ; and this will encourage our confidence in him in the hour of trouble and temptation. When we can clearly see that "God is for us," we shall be enabled to rest in him, and to call upon him with more vigorous faith and enlarged expectation : and then we shall perceive, that our own weak-

CHAPTER XV.

The encouraging prophecy of Azariah before Asa, 1-7. Asa puts away idolatry, assembles the people, and enters into covenant with God, 8-15. He removes his mother from being queen, for her idolatry; yet the high places are not taken away, 16, 17. He brings the dedicated things into the temple, and enjoys a long peace, 18, 19.

AND the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

2 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, ^bHear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; ^cthe LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and ^dif ye seek him, he will be found of you; but ^eif ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

3 Now for ^fa long season Israel *hath been* without the true God, and without ^ga teaching priest, and ^hwithout law.

4 But when they ⁱin their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was ^jfound of them.

5 And in those times *there was* no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but ^kgreat vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

6 And ^lnation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for ^mGod did vex them with all adversity.

7 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak; for ⁿyour work shall be rewarded.

8 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of ^oOded the prophet, he ^ptook courage,

a 20:14, 24:20. Num. 24:12. Judg. 3:7. 2 Sam. 23:2. 2 Pet. 1:21. * Heb. before Asa. b 13:4. 20:15, 20. Judg. 9:7. Ps. 49:1, 2. Is. 7:13. Matt. 13:9. Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29. 3:6, 13, 22. c 13:12, 32:8. Deut. 20:1. Jam. 4:8. d 4:15. 33:12, 13. Is. 55:5, 6. Jer. 29:13, 14. Matt. 7:7, 8. e 12:1-3. 34:20. 2 Kings 21:14. 1 Chr. 28:9. Rom. 11:1, 2. Heb. 12:25. f 1 Kings 12:28-33. Hos. 3:4. g Jer. 10:10. John 17:3. 1 Thes. 1:9. 1 John 5:20. h 17:3, 9. Deut. 10:1. Deut. 33:10. Neh. 6:9. Ez. 44:24, 25. Mic. 3:11. Mal. 2:7. Matt. 24:5. 1 Tim. 3:2. i Rom. 2:12. 7:9. 1 Cor. 9:21. j Deut. 4:29, 30. Judg. 3:9, 10. 10:10-16. Ps. 105:44. Hos. 6:1. 14:1-3. k 15. Is. 55:6, 65:12. Rom. 10:20. 1 Judg. 5:6. 1 Sam. 13:6. Ps. 121:3. l 1 Heb. before Asa. m 24:5. 12:15, 13:47. Mark 13:34. Luke 21:30, 1. Heb. before Asa. n 33:11, 35:17. Judg. 2:14. Ps. 106:41. 16. 10:6. Am. 3:6. Luke 21:24. p Josh. 1:7-9. 1 Chr. 28:20. Is. 35:3. 4. Dan. 10:19. 1 Cor. 15:13. Eph. 6:10. q Gen. 15:1. Ruth 2:12. Ps. 19:11. 55:11. Matt. 5:12, 46. 1:4, 6, 18. 10:41, 42. Luke 6:35. Rom. 4:4, 5. 1 Cor. 3:8.

ness, or the power of our assailants, is no good reason for discouragement. Improbabilities, and even apparent impossibilities, of help and deliverance, cause no difficulty to an almighty arm: and if the glory of God engage him on our side, no created power can prevail against us. Indeed, it is our duty to employ every prudent precaution, to use all proper means, and to exert the whole strength which he has given us: and in this way he commonly helps us, both in our temporal and spiritual concerns; but he can as readily work without us, as by us; and when we go forth in his name, and are disposed to give him the glory, we shall certainly have all desirable success.—Those whom the Lord smites, cannot recover their strength, nor they whom he intimidates, their courage; and all things work together for the good of those whom he favours. However he may deal with us in temporal things, if we are indeed the soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must be enriched by every conflict, and prove gainers by all our losses: and the approaching victory over our last enemy death, will make way for our entrance into "his presence, where is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore."

NOTES.—CHAP. XV. V. 1-7. (Note, 8.) The prophet met Asa and his army as they returned from their victory and triumph over the Cushites; and thus addressed them, with words of warning and encouragement.—It is not easy to determine what times or events were intended by the prophet in the following verses. Some think, that he referred to the state of Israel, in the days of the judges, when the people for a long time generally forsook, and almost forgot, the true God; the priests were not public teachers as they ought to have been, and the law was greatly neglected. (Notes, Deut. 33:10. Josh. 24:1, 2. Hos. 4:6. Mal. 2:4-9.) At the same time the people were exposed to the invasions of various enemies, who destroyed each other, yet alternately harassed and oppressed them: because, for their sins, "God did vex them with all adversity;" and consequently there was no peace to those who journeyed, or went out upon business. Now, these times of trouble and vexation seemed to be returning again, (after the prosperity and peace enjoyed under David and Solomon,) in the divisions, apostacies, idolatries, and calamities of the preceding reigns. And the people might be assured, that the Lord would deal with them by the same measure, as he had dealt with their fathers: if they forsook his worship, and ran into idolatry and impiety, they would be left to all their former miseries; but if they returned to God and served him, he would protect and prosper them: (Note, 1 Chr. 28:9.) even as when Israel under the judges, in their trouble, sought the Lord, he was always ready to remove their afflictions. This seems the most satisfactory interpretation. But others suppose, that the prophet referred to the state of the kingdom of Israel: they had rejected the true God, expelled the teaching priesthood, and cast off the law of the Lord, and their subsequent calamities were intended as a warning for Judah, yet, even whenever Israel should re-

and put away ^athe *tabominable* idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of ^bthe cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed ^cthe altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD.

9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and ^dthe strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for ^ethey fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when ^fthey saw that the LORD his God *was* with him.

10 So they gathered themselves together [B. C. at Jerusalem in ^gthe third month, in the ^hfifteenth year of the reign of Asa. 940.]

11 And they offered unto the LORD ⁱthe same time, of the spoil *which* they had brought, ^jseven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

12 And ^kthey entered into a covenant to ^lseek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul;

13 That ^mwhosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, ⁿwhether small or great, whether man or woman.

14 And ^othey sware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and ^pwith trumpets, and with cornets.

15 And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had ^qsworn with all their heart, and ^rsought him with their whole desire; and ^she was found

14. 9:17, 18. 15:58. Cal. 3:24. Heb. 6:10. 10:35. 2 John 8. r 1. a 19:11. Is. 44:14. margin. Acts 28:15. t Lev. 18:30. Deut. 27:15. Is. 65:4. Jer. 16:18. Ez. 8:10. 1 Pet. 4:3. Rev. 17:4, 5. † Heb. abominations. 1 Kings 11:5, 7. 2 Kings 23:13. n 13:19. x 4:1. 8:12, 29:18. 2 Kings 16:14. 18:22. y 11:16. 30:1-11, 25. z 1 Chr. 12:19. 1 Chr. 12:19. a Gen. 39:3. 1 Sam. 15:28. 1 Kings 3:28. Zech. 8:21-23. Acts 7:9. 10:31. b Esth. 8:9. c 14:12-15. Num. 31:28, 29. 50. 1 Sam. 15:15, 21. 1 Chr. 26:26, 27. ‡ Heb. in that day. d 1:6. 7:5. e 23:16. 29:10. 34:31. 32. Deut. 29:1, 12. Neh. 9:38. 10:29. Jer. 50:5. 2 Cor. 8:5. f See on 4. Deut. 4:29. 10:12. 1 Kings 8:48. Jer. 29:12, 13. g Ex. 22:30. Deut. 13:5. 9:15. 17:25. h 1 Kings 16:40. i Gen. 19:11. Ex. 12:29. Deut. 29:18. Job 1:3. 1:19. Ps. 115:13. Acts 26:32. Rev. 8:15. 20:12. j Heb. 5:13. 10:29. k Ps. 31:14. l 1:23, 16-21. 29:36, 26. Deut. 26:11. Neh. 8:9. Ps. 32:11. 119:111. Prov. 3:17. 2 Cor. 1:12. m Ps. 119:106. n See on 2, 4. Is. 26:8. 45:19. Phil. 1:22 o See on 4.

pent, and seek God, he would be found of them.—Others again suppose the passage to be prophetic of the Babylonish captivity, and even of the present dispersion and future conversion of the Jews, to which the words are doubtless applicable. Perhaps the prophet had some reference to God's general method of dealing with Israel in all ages, and then no wonder that his expressions are descriptive of several distinct transactions.—It is plain, however, that warning and encouragement were intended for Asa and his subjects; and the prophet's scope was to excite them properly to improve their present success, by attempting a more effectual reformation, which would assuredly be rewarded with proportionable prosperity.

V. 8. Perhaps the prophet was called Oded, as well as his father, (1) and Azariah by way of distinction: though some think, that Oded confirmed the words of his son by a prophecy to the same effect.—The work of complete reformation appeared to Asa so difficult and perilous, through the inveterate propensity of the people and of the chief persons to idolatry; that he had not courage to attempt it, till thus assured of the divine assistance and acceptance. Accordingly, when he proceeded in his work, many abominable idols were found in every part of the land: which he removed, with those that were in the cities taken from Israel: but, as the golden calf was not removed from Beth-el, it is probable, that city had been previously ceded to the king of Israel, or retaken by him. (Note, 13:13-22.) He likewise "renewed" the altar of God, in the inner court of the temple; which, it seems, had been left to go to decay, in the preceding reigns, and had not been duly repaired in the preceding years of Asa.

V. 9. Simeon, &c. The situation of this tribe, in part of the lot of Judah, (Note, Josh. 19:1-9,) had not prevented them from joining the general revolt. But at this time many of them, with numbers from the other tribes, submitted to Asa, and probably a great part of the tribe of Simeon permanently adhered to Judah.

V. 10, 11. "This seems to have been a voluntary assembly, by common agreement, rather than by the king's commandment or invitation; unless we suppose it to have been at one of the great festivals." *Bp. Patrick.*

Fifteenth year, &c. (10) It is said "The land was quiet ten years." (1) Hence it is concluded that Zerah's invasion was in the eleventh year of Asa. Yet that the sacrifices from the spoil should not be offered from the spoil taken, till the fifteenth of Asa, can hardly accord to that supposition.

The same time. (11) "In the Hebrew, 'in that day,' which the Targum takes to have been in the feast of weeks, . . . which was kept in the third month, called Sivan." *Bp. Patrick.*—Some previous appointment, however, evidently produced a much more general concourse on this occasion, than would otherwise have taken place.

V. 12-15. The people voluntarily consented to seek the Lord, each for himself and all in entire union, with all ear-

of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about.

16 ¶ And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.

17 But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

18 ¶ And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

19 And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

CHAPTER XVI.

Asa makes a league with Benhadad against Baasha, who is hindered from building Ramah; and Asa with the stones of it builds Geba and Mizpah, 1-5. Baani: the prophet reproves him for trusting in the Syrians, rather than in God, and is imp. 6-10. Asa, who at the same time oppressed some of his subjects, 7-10. Asa seeks to physicians, and not to God, 11, 12. His death and burial, 13, 14.

IN the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

*p. See on 6. Josh. 23:1. Job 34:29. q 1 Kings 15:13. * That is, grandmother. 1 Kings 15:2, 10. r 14:3-5. Ex. 52:27, 28. Deut. 13:6-8. 33:9. Zech. 13:3. Mark 3:21, 31-35. 2 Cor. 5:16. 1 Heb. horror. s See on 14:3. 34:7. Ex. 32:26. Lev. 26:30. Deut. 7:25, 26, 29:21. 2 Kings 6:2, 15:1. 14:3-5. 5. Deut. 12:13, 14. 1 Kings 3:2-4. 22:32. 2 Kings 12:9, 14:4. u 16:7-12. 1 Kings 11:4. x 1 Kings 7:51. 15:14-16. 1 Chr. 26:20-26. y 16:1. 1 Kings 15:16, 17, 32, 33. s See on 1 Kings 15:16-22. z See on 11:13-17. 15:9. 1 Kings 12:27. c 28, 21. 2 Kings 12:18. 16:8. 15:15. * Heb. Darneseek. d 18:3. 19:2. Judg. 2:2. 1s. 31:*

nestness: and also without respect of persons, to execute the law of God on idolaters; and on those who disregarded the sabbaths and solemn feasts, or refused their attendance on the public ordinances of religion. (Notes, Lev. 24:10-16. Num. 15:31-36. Deut. 13:1-11.) This covenant they entered into in the most cheerful and open manner; and every one ratified it by a solemn oath, with a loud voice, in the presence of all the people, accompanied by shouting, and the priests sounding with the sacred trumpets, and with cornets: for they were deeply impressed with the kindness which they had experienced, and great numbers were evidently very sincere and earnest in their religion. (Marg. Ref.) They reaped the happy fruit of this reformation, in the great peace which they enjoyed, without disturbance from any of their neighbours. Bp. Patrick. (Note, 1 Kings 16:23.)

V. 16. Note, 1 Kings 15:10-13.
V. 17, 18. Notes, 1 Kings 15:14, 15.—Out of Israel, &c. (17.) Some have thought that this only relates to the cities which had been taken from the kingdom of Israel: but it is probable that some high places at least were still connived at in Judah; perhaps as a human device, to render the people more willing to renounce idolatry. Yet, upon the whole, Asa meant well and did well, and was cordial in his endeavours for reformation.

V. 19. Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign: and as there were wars between Asa and Baasha, (16:1. 1 Kings 15:16, 17, 32, 33.) it seems impossible to reconcile this verse, and the date of the ensuing chapter, with the other history, except by allowing a trivial error of the transcribers, and reading the twenty-fifth, instead of the thirty-fifth, in this verse, and the twenty-sixth, instead of the thirty-sixth, in the first verse of the following chapter. This is the date which Josephus affixes to these events, and it is very probable in itself. Other ways of solving the difficulty have been proposed, but they appear liable to insuperable objections.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Prosperity and comfort should animate us to more diligent obedience; but we need the ministry of the word to remind us of our duty, when successful, as much at least as when afflicted.—The gracious tenor of the gospel authorizes us to assure sinners of every description, that if they "seek the Lord" in a proper manner, he will be found of them; at the same time all should be warned, that if they forsake the Lord, he will cast them off; and we may know that God is with us for every saving purpose, when we are conscious of trusting in his mercy, attending on his ordinances, and walking in obedience to his commandments. But, cautious fear and cheering hope must unite to render us vigilant, active, and steadfast in the ways of God.—The history of the church in all ages, and the experience of every believer, demonstrate, that vexation and distress are the never-failing consequences of negligence and sin, even to those who are not left to final apostasy; and that humiliation before God, and diligent seeking him, uniformly make way for peace and comfort. Hence the benefit of a teaching ministry, of the holy law, and of the blessed gospel. The Lord grant that all, who are called ministers, may become "apt to teach," mighty in the Scriptures, men of God, acquainted with him, his truth, and his will, and able to declare his whole counsel to the people! May he send forth such labourers into his harvest, and extend the blessing of them to the remotest nations of the earth! And may the Jews, who have been so long without the "true God and eternal life;"

2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

3 There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

4 And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Eljon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it that he left off building of Ramah, and his work ceased.

6 Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building, and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.

7 ¶ And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not re-

1-3. 2 Cor. 6:16. e Gen. 20:9, 10. Ex. 32:21. Josh. 9:19, 20. 2 Sam. 21:2. Ps. 15:4. Ez. 17:18, 19. Rom. 1:31, 32. 2 Tim. 3:3. f 1 Tim. 6:10. 2 Pet. 2:15. † Heb. armies which were his. g 1 Kings 15:20. h Gen. 14:14. Judg. 18:28. 29:30, 31. i 8:6. 17:12. 1 Kings 9:19. j See on 1. k 1 Kings 15:22. 1 Jech. 18: 24-26. Gaba 21:17. 1 Chr. 6:40. l 10:29. Zech. 14:10. m Josh. 15:38. 15: 26. 1 Sam. 7:6, 16. 10:17. Mizpah. n 19:2. 20:34. 1 Kings 16:1. o Ps. 146:3-6. Is. 31:1. 32:2. Jer. 17:5, 6. Eph. 1:12, 13. p 13:18. 52:7, 8. 2 Kings 18:5. 1 Chr. 5:20.

(Note, 1 John 5:20, 21.) without a teaching priesthood, and without him who is the true and only High-Priest of the church, whom "God hath so long vexed with all adversity," at length in their trouble, seek the Lord, be found of him, and be grafted again into their own olive-tree, from which they were broken off through unbelief!—The assured expectation of assistance, acceptance, and a gracious recompense, inspires the soul with courage and strength for present duty: and we ought to exhort and encourage one another, that we may be "strong in the Lord," and that our hands may not be weak, when we are called to arduous and perilous attempts, for the honour of God, and to promote true religion.—The way to win those, who are of the contrary party, is by showing them evidently that "the Lord our God is with us." In order to this, all abominable things must be put away, and conscientious obedience must unite with cheerful confidence in God.—Whatever the Lord gives should be employed according to his will: especially we should devote our bodies and souls unto him, according to his everlasting covenant; by accepting of his salvation, and yielding ourselves to his service. Our devotedness to God our Saviour should be avowed and professed in the most solemn and public manner. Such obligations indeed bind to no more than was before our duty: but they have a tendency to fortify the heart against temptation, to excite us in a way of remembrance to every service, and to give us a farther opportunity of watching over each other, and exhorting one another to every good work. Unless, indeed, we sincerely mean to seek and serve God with our whole heart, and our whole soul, such transactions are hypocritical. But, if we enter into these engagements with uprightness, really purposing to be helpful to others also, we may joyfully expect that the Lord will give rest to our souls.—Every public transaction should be conducted with cautious regard to peace, and to civil subordination in all things lawful, lest our good should be evil spoken of. We are not indeed called on to inflict death, or any secular punishment, on those who are guilty of impiety, apostasy, or idolatry; yet, they who neglect the great salvation of the gospel, will by no means escape a more dreadful doom.—No relative affections are to be indulged, when they interfere with our evident duty to God. But where the heart is upright, there will be peace and acceptance, though we come short of that perfection which is proposed to us, and to which we should continually be pressing forwards.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVI. V. 1-6. (Notes, 15:19. 1 Kings 16:8-14.)—Baasha seems to have meditated war against Judah from the beginning of his reign: and probably he had made some hostile attempts before; but he was not able to make any formidable attack, till the year preceding his death. At that time he so fortified Ramah, upon the frontiers of the land, that he not only prevented his own subjects from migrating into Judah, but stopped all travellers from passing: and this both hindered the Israelites from going over to the king of Judah, and was likely, it seems, to reduce him and his subjects to distress. In this difficulty, Asa distrusted his own troops, and neglected the proper means of defence; and he likewise gave up his confidence in God, and used very sinful means for deliverance. He tempted a heathen prince, with the consecrated treasures, to break a solemn league, and to turn his arms against his ally: and, by making a league with him to this effect, he became accessory to all the treachery, perjury, injustice, and cruelty of Benhadad. But, though it

lied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thy hand.

8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots, and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thy hand.

9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

10 Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison-house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.

11 And behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.

c See on 3. *r* See on 14:9-12. * Heb. in abundance. *a* See on 7. Ps. 9:9, 10, 37:39, 40. 2:20. Job 34:21. Ps. 34:15, 113:8. Prov. 5:21, 15:3. Jer. 16:17, 32:19. Zech. 4:10. Heb. 4:13. 1 Pet. 3:12. *f* Or, strongly to hold fast. *u* See on 15:17. 2 Kings 20:3. Ps. 37:37. *v* 1 Sam. 13:13. 2 Sam. 12:7-12. 1 Chr. 21:8. Job 34:18. Jer. 5:21. Matt. 5:22. Luke 1:22. 1 Cor. 15:26. *h* 12:1. *x* 1 Kings 15:32. *y* 25:16, 24:19. 2 Sam. 12:13, 21:1-14. 1s. 11:15. *j* 9:7-10. *k* 18:25. *l* 26:29, 31. *m* 11:31. *n* Luke 3:20. *o* Asa 16:32. 1 Chr. 21:8. *p* 18:25. *q* 18:25. *r* 18:25. *s* 18:25. *t* 18:25. *u* 18:25. *v* 18:25. *w* 18:25. *x* 18:25. *y* 18:25. *z* 18:25. *aa* 18:25. *ab* 18:25. *ac* 18:25. *ad* 18:25. *ae* 18:25. *af* 18:25. *ag* 18:25. *ah* 18:25. *ai* 18:25. *aj* 18:25. *ak* 18:25. *al* 18:25. *am* 18:25. *an* 18:25. *ao* 18:25. *ap* 18:25. *aq* 18:25. *ar* 18:25. *as* 18:25. *at* 18:25. *au* 18:25. *av* 18:25. *aw* 18:25. *ax* 18:25. *ay* 18:25. *az* 18:25. *ba* 18:25. *bb* 18:25. *bc* 18:25. *bd* 18:25. *be* 18:25. *bf* 18:25. *bg* 18:25. *bh* 18:25. *bi* 18:25. *bj* 18:25. *bk* 18:25. *bl* 18:25. *bm* 18:25. *bn* 18:25. *bo* 18:25. *bp* 18:25. *bq* 18:25. *br* 18:25. *bs* 18:25. *bt* 18:25. *bu* 18:25. *bv* 18:25. *bw* 18:25. *bx* 18:25. *by* 18:25. *bz* 18:25. *ca* 18:25. *cb* 18:25. *cc* 18:25. *cd* 18:25. *ce* 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18:25. *yu* 18:25. *yv* 18:25. *yw* 18:25. *yx* 18:25. *yy* 18:25. *yz* 18:25. *za* 18:25. *zb* 18:25. *zc* 18:25. *zd* 18:25. *ze* 18:25. *zf* 18:25. *zg* 18:25. *zh* 18:25. *zi* 18:25. *zj* 18:25. *zk* 18:25. *zl* 18:25. *zm* 18:25. *zn* 18:25. *zo* 18:25. *zp* 18:25. *zq* 18:25. *zr* 18:25. *zs* 18:25. *zt* 18:25. *zu* 18:25. *zv* 18:25. *zw* 18:25. *zx* 18:25. *zy* 18:25. *zz* 18:25.

answered a present purpose, it exposed him to severe rebukes, and he never prospered afterwards. (Note, 1 Kings 15:17-22.)

V. 7-10. Asa's misconduct entirely originated from unbelief. Had he relied on the Lord, he would have defended him against the Israelites, and enabled him likewise to prevail against the king of Syria, who was then in league with Baasha; by which he might have enriched his treasures, instead of emptying them to purchase his assistance. This was the more inexcusable in him, seeing he had before experienced the prevalence of faith and prayer, in his victory over the Ethiopians. (Notes, 14:9-15. 2 Sam. 12:8-10.) Indeed, Asa could not be ignorant, that the omnipresent and ever watchful providence of God notices all the wants, dangers, and trials of those, who uprightly trust and serve him; and is ever at hand to give speedy and effectual assistance to them, as the case may require. (Marg. Ref.) In this Asa greatly failed; and the prophet plainly told him, that he had acted foolishly, and therefore should have wars. His subsequent conduct seems to have without parallel in Scripture. No one decidedly pious man, as I recollect, is recorded to have so deeply resented a reproof from a prophet in the name of God, as to have used severity against him for it: yet the expressions concerning Asa's character are so strong, (14:2. 15:17.) that we must consider him as an exception: and a lamentable proof that there is no kind of sin, which a believer is not capable of committing, if left to himself: so that we must not form our judgment of men's characters from any detached actions, but the general tenor of their conduct.—In his rage he committed the prophet to prison, or rather he "put him into the stocks," for that is the meaning of the original word; perhaps excusing himself to others, and to his own conscience, by criminating the prophet as rude, intermeddling, and insolent: and perhaps, when some of the people censured his conduct, he oppressed them also, as determined to crush all opposition by violent means. It is probable, however, that he speedily released the prophet; and as he lived at least fifteen years after this event, (for so long he lived after Baasha's death;) and as we do not find that he oppressed or persecuted any person, except on this occasion; we may conclude that he repented, and adhered to the service of God to the close of his life. But, having openly dishonoured the Lord, the latter part of his reign was obscure, inglorious, and troublesome.—It is not said what wars he was engaged in; but probably they were more perplexing to him, than fatal to his people.

Lubims. (8) 'The people of Libya, or the Africans beyond Egypt.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, 12:34.) This favours the opinion that the Ethiopians, commanded by Zerah, were those of Africa, not the Cushites in Arabia. (Note, 14:9-15.)—He was in a rage with him because of this thing. (10) 'For which he ought to have thanked and rewarded him.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 12. 'Asa had the gout, which increased to such a height that he died of it, as Pelicans thinks; which was a just punishment for putting the prophet's feet in the stocks.' Bp. Patrick.—Under this execrable correction he relapsed into his former sin, of relying on man, and not on the Lord. If he consulted physicians, properly so called, his sin entirely consisted in his reliance on them, instead of seeking a blessing from God on the means which they employed. But, perhaps they were such persons as attempted, by charms, or other super-

stitious devices, to alleviate his pain: and then the thing itself likewise was exceedingly sinful. As the Lord has been pleased to throw a cloud upon his memory, we will not further attempt to penetrate it; though from the character which he bears in Scripture, it may be inferred, that he did not die without repenting of this sin also.

V. 13, 14. (Marg. Ref.) Some have considered this funeral, as an argument of the improper state of Asa's heart, even at death, supposing that he appointed it for himself, out of vainglory, and in conformity to heathen customs. Indeed, it is said, that he digged sepulchres for himself, (marg.) as Manasseh and others also did: but probably the pomp of his interment, which had nothing idolatrous or unlawful in it, was intended by the people as an expression of respect for his memory; (Marg. Ref.) for, notwithstanding the blemishes recorded in this chapter, he had been an excellent, valuable, and successful prince; and the state of Judah during his reign was most happy, compared with the distractions and miseries of Israel. (Note, 1 Kings 16:23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS. Those, who on some occasions, "being strong in faith, glorify God," and bring blessings on themselves and others by so doing; at other times show that faith is lamentably out of exercise; (Note, Gen. 12:—5, 11—16.) and whenever men waver, as to confidence in God, they grow negligent and heartless in waiting on him, and serving him, and in using proper means for their own defence or deliverance; and become ready to turn aside into by-paths, and employ sinful expedients. When once any person has set forward in this downhill road, he hurries along from one crime to another, till he falls into greater ungodliness; nor can we tell into what impiety, treachery, or injustice, we may run, if left to ourselves. Well may we then be cautioned, "while we think we stand, to take heed lest we fall;" and well may we pray, "Lord, increase our faith!"—The self-sufficient are impatient of reproof or contradiction; and then the plain language of faithful ministers appears ill nature, ill manners, impertinence, or insolence. In this case, if power unite with haughty resentment, persecution will follow: so that they are not qualified at all times to deliver the messages of God, even to good princes, who are not ready to bear the cross. For, in general, "the flatterer, who spreads a net for a man's feet," and merits execration, may more reasonably expect a reward from men; than he who most affectionately labours for their present and eternal good, but who will, when needful, speak offensive truth, unreservedly, and in plain language. (Notes, Matt. 14:3-11.)—Those, who venture to take the part of such as have thus given umbrage, must expect to share in the resentment which they have excited; for where rage prevails against the fear of God, justice and humanity will scarcely be attended to. If, however, any of the Lord's

cause he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim;

4 But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

5 Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand: and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance.

6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

[Practical Observations.]

7 ¶ Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nathaneel, and to Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.

8 And with them he sent Levites, even Sheb. c. 1. maiah, and Sthaniam, and Zebadiah, and ^{912.} Asahel, and Schemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.

9 And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

10 ¶ And the fear of the LORD fell upon all

the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats.

12 ¶ And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.

13 And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.

14 And these are the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands: Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour three hundred thousand.

15 And next to him was Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

16 And next him was Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.

17 And of Benjamin; Eliada, a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men with bow and shield, two hundred thousand.

f 2 Sam. 9:15. 1 Kings 11:6, 15:34. 2 Kings 14:8, 16:2, 18:3, 22:2. Ps. 132:1-5. * Or, his father, and of David. 14:2-5, 11. 15:8-13. g Judg. 2:11. 8:33. Jer. 2:23. h Luke 1:6. 1 Thes. 12:12. i 1 Kings 12:28, 33. 13:33, 34. 16:31-33. 2 Kings 18:15, 17:19. Jer. 3:7, 8. Hos. 4:15. k 2 Sam. 17:25, 26. 1 Kings 9:4, 5. 12:1, 13:12. 1 Pet. 5:10. l Heb. gent. 13:22, 33. 1 Sam. 10:27. 1 Kings 4:21, 10:25. Ps. 68:29. 72:10, 76:11. Matt. 2:1, 2. m 1:15. 5:27, 18:1. 32:27-29. Gen. 13:2. 26:13, 14. Deut. 8:13, 14. Job 32:12. Matt. 6:33. n Deut. 28:47. Job 22:26. o That is, was encouraged. p Ps. 18:21. 119:1. 138:5. Hos. 14:9. Acts 19:10. q 14:15. 15:17. 19:3. 20:33. 31:1. 34:3-7. 1 Kings 22:43. r Deut. 4:15. Ps. 34:11. 51:13. Ec. 1:12. 12:9, 10. Is. 49:23. s 19:3. 30:22. 35:3. Deut. 33:10.

obedience: remembering that "his eyes run to and fro, throughout the earth, to show himself strong in behalf of them," who thus trust and serve him; being an ever-present and all-sufficient Helper and Comforter. And he will especially plead the cause, and abundantly recompense the sufferings, of those who are here persecuted for righteousness' sake, and for being faithful to his truth, and in delivering his message to their fellow-sinners.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref. a, b.) It is probable that Asa had been engaged in war with the kingdom of Israel, after the establishment of Omri on the throne, though no events occurred so considerable as to be recorded.—In the cities of Ephraim, &c. (2) Note, 15:8.

V. 3. The first ways, &c.] Jehoshaphat copied the example of David, by proceeding to reform the state of religion immediately on his accession to the throne; and in his zeal for the pure, orderly, and spiritual worship of God: but he carefully avoided those sins, into which David afterwards fell. This is the common explication of the expression.—But as David's piety and zeal never shone brighter than at the close of his life; perhaps the words might as properly be read, "In the first ways, even those of David his father," proposing him as his model, and not the succeeding princes, under whom idolatry had been introduced, tolerated, or but feebly opposed; and not being satisfied even with walking in the steps of his father Asa, but aiming to reduce matters to their ancient purity.—The margin reads it, of his father, and of David; for the latter days of Asa were not so worthy of imitation as his former had been.

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref.) 'As he worshipped not the gods of other countries, so he did not join with the Israelites in worshipping God by the calves. . . Riches procure men honour, when they make such a good use of them, as he did.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 6. The heart of Jehoshaphat was lifted up, not in pride, but in courage, zeal, and vigour. By strong faith and ardent love, he was lifted up above fears and discouragements; and readily faced and endured dangers and difficulties in the cause of God. And he did not glory in his riches and honour, but in serving the Lord, and promoting his cause. (Note, 1 Sam. 2:1.)—He took away the high places in Judah; but perhaps he left them in the cities of Ephraim; or he destroyed such as were devoted to idols, but spared those in which God was worshipped. Or, he destroyed them at the beginning of his reign; but his subjects restored some of them afterwards. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 20:31-34. 1 Kings 22:41-45, v. 43.)

V. 7-9. While the priests and Levites neglected their duty, as public teachers, the people remained ignorant of the truth and law of God, and were easily seduced into superstition or idolatry: so that the reformations which took place were rather the result of authority than conviction and distinct knowledge; and thus only external and transient. Asa and his people had done well, in covenanting together to punish those who would not seek the Lord: (Note, 15:12-15.) for this was according to the tenor and intention of that introductory dispensation; under which the capital punish-

Neh. 8:7-13, 14, 9:3. Matt. 4:23. Mark 4:2. Luke 4:43, 44. Acts 1:1. a Ezra 7:1-6. Mal. 2:7. b Deut. 6:6-9, 31:11-13. Josh. 1:7, 8. 1 Sam. 15:30. 9. 28:19, 20. Luke 17-19. John 5:39, 46. Acts 13:17, 15:21, 28:23. Rom. 3:2. 1 Pet. 1:1. n Matt. 16:23. 11:1. Acts 9:40. x See on 14:14. Gen. 35:5. Ex. 15:14-16. Josh. 2:24-11. s Heb. gent. y 16:9. Ex. 34:24. Prov. 16:7. z See on 5:19. 11:8. 2 Sam. 5:2. 2 Kings 9:4. a 18:1. 1 Chr. 29:25. b 8:2-6. 11:5-12. 11:6, 7. 26:6-9. 27:4. c 3:27-29. d Or, palace. e 26:10-15. 1 Chr. 27:25-31. f Gen. 12:2. 13:16, 15:5. e See on Num. 1:2, 18. f 11:1. 13:3. 14:8. 26:13. g 1 Heb. at his hand. h Deut. 5:2, 9. 1 Chr. 29:9, 14, 17. Ps. 110:3. 2 Cor. 6:3-12. i 14:8. 2 Sam. 1:21, 32.

ment of apostate Israelites was one divinely appointed method of preserving that people from sinking wholly into idolatry, till the coming of Christ. But Jehoshaphat did better, when he added the public teaching of the people from the law of God: for this not only tended to the same object, but promoted the salvation of souls, and the increase of spiritual worshippers, who would hand down religion to their posterity. The princes were joined in commission with the priests and Levites; both to excite the latter to their duty, and to induce the attention of the people. Probably they acted as magistrates, and were men of known probity, piety, and acquaintance with the law of God; who, when they administered justice, instructed and exhorted the people, and charged them, both as a matter of conscience, and as they regarded the favour of the king, to receive and observe the instructions of the priests and Levites. The persons from among the priests and Levites, who were appointed to be the itinerant instructors, were doubtless selected, because they were known to be eminent for piety and ability. They took the book of the law with them, and read and expounded it wherever they went, grounding all their instructions upon it. It must also be supposed that these teachers were intended to excite and to strengthen the hands of the priests and Levites, who resided in the neighbourhood of the cities to which they went, and who were to be considered as the stated teachers in their several districts. (Note, 15:1-7.) It has before been shown, that the prophets in the kingdom of Israel held stated assemblies for religious worship, on the sabbath-days, and on some of their solemn feasts. (Note, 2 Kings 4:23.) And it is probable, that from this time it became gradually the practice of the priests and Levites in Judah, as far as they paid regard to their duty; but this alas, was but seldom done. Synagogues, as it appears from this history, were not yet regularly formed in Judah; and the book of the law seems to have been very scarce, and but little attended to by the people in general, or made known to them by their regular instructors. (Note, 15:1-7, v. 3.)

V. 10. The army of Jehoshaphat was indeed very formidable, (13-19.) yet it was "the fear of the LORD" that deterred his neighbours from attacking him: they were so dismayed, that they dared not to attempt any thing against one, who was so evidently favoured of God; and it is probable, the surrounding nations had observed, that Judah always prospered, when the worship of God was kept up in the land. (Notes, Ex. 34:24. Lev. 36:34. Deut. 28:3-14.)

V. 11. The Philistines had been subdued by David, and no doubt had paid him tribute; but, after a time, they seem to have again become independent: (Notes, 2 Kings 18:8.) and it is not certain, whether they and the Arabians brought these presents to Jehoshaphat, as submitting to his authority, or only as desiring to conciliate his friendship.

V. 13-19. Jehoshaphat's militia far exceeded the number that of any of his predecessors, (13.) though he did not possess much above a third of the country, over which David and Solomon had reigned. But great numbers had flocked into his kingdom from Israel, his population increased by a pecu-

18 And ^{next} him was Jehozabad, and with him a hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

19 These waited on the king, beside those, whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, and agrees to go with him against Ramoth-gilead, 1-3. The false prophets assure them of success, 4, 5. At Jehoshaphat's request Micaiah is sent for, who foretells Ahab's death, and shows that his prophets were instigated by a lying spirit, 6-22. He is reviled and sent back to prison, 23-27. A battle goes in disguise to the battle, where Jehoshaphat, in imminent danger, calls on God, and is preserved, 28-32. Ahab is slain by an arrow shot at a venture, 33, 34.

NOW Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.

2 And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and

i 2, 12. 11:12, 23. a 1:11-15. See on 17:5, 12. Matt. 6:33. b 31. 19:2, 21:6, 22:2, 3. 1 Kings 16:31-33. 21:25. 2 Kings 8:18, 26, 27. 11:1. 2 Cor. 6:14. * Heb. at the end of years. 1 Kings 17:7. Neh. 13:6. margins. c 19:2. 1 Kings 22:2. d 1 Kings 1:9. Is. 22:13, 13. Luke 17:27-29. e 1 Kings 22:4, 20-22. f Deut. 4:43. Josh. 20:8. 1 Kings 4:13. 2 Kings 9:1. g See on 1 Kings 22:4. 2 Kings

liar blessing, and no wasting wars had occurred for many years. It is probable that these troops served by rotation; (Notes, 1 Chr. 27:1-15.) and some of them might be employed in the buildings and other business, which he had in the cities of Judah. (Marg. Ref.) One of his chief officers is distinguished for having offered himself willingly to serve God, as well as his country, in that station. (16)

Much business. (13) 'To settle religion, and purge out idolatry, as well as to provide for their safety, by fortifications, and whatsoever was necessary for the public tranquillity.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. It is a signal blessing when the Lord raises up pious and able men, in church or state, to succeed one another. For often useful instruments are removed, or laid aside, at the very crisis when their preparations were completed, and their purposes in a fair way of being effected; and others come in their stead, who take a pride and pleasure in rendering their schemes abortive; and thus "one sinner destroyed much good." (Notes, Ec. 2:18-23. John 4:31-38.) It therefore behoves us all to pray for a succession of useful men, who may every one of them endeavour to complete the designs of their predecessors, and make way for the usefulness of their successors; and did all pious persons, with one accord and without intermission, unite in such prayers, in behalf of the community, the church at large, and particular congregations; they would witness blessed effects, and brighter prospects would open before us.—It is happy when prudence, vigour, and piety unite in distinguished characters; when they carefully imitate the best parts of the conduct of eminent believers, and as carefully avoid their mistakes; and when the purest ages of the church are made the models of personal religion and public reformation. Indeed, we should all study to walk in those "first ways" of Christians, when "great grace was upon them all," and not be satisfied with the current standard of modern profession: this would tend to the establishment of our hearts in peace and assurance, and to the prosperity of our endeavours to glorify God and to do good.—When faith is in vigorous exercise, and when zeal, love, and active hope render the ways of God delightful; the soul rises superior to dangers and difficulties, disregards hardships and labours, and can even rejoice in sufferings for the Lord's sake. Then low, earthly affections are subdued; the heart is lifted up above them, and soars heaven-ward, glorying in nothing but the service, truth, and favour of God, and ambitious of no other honour. This exalted piety springs from genuine poverty of spirit; and a deep sense of the condescension of the Infinite God, in employing and accepting us poor, guilty, polluted, worthless creatures, inspires the heart with renewed vigour in his service.

V. 7-19. The public teaching of the word of God forms, in all ages, the grand method of promoting the power of godliness: for by it the understanding is informed, the judgment regulated, the conscience awakened and directed, and the hopes, fears, and affections suitably excited; and, as far as the divine blessing is vouchsafed, religious worship is rendered a voluntary, reasonable, and spiritual service. Kings and princes, therefore, render a most essential service to the cause of God, when they use their influence to excite and countenance those, who "labour in the word and doctrine," and by their example and public declarations make it known, that they most approve of such as diligently attend on the instructions of such teachers. And though no violence must be done to any man's conscience, nor any one constrained to teach in contradiction to his judgment: yet surely they, who are publicly maintained as teachers of the people, may be required either to do their work, or to give place to those who will!—Notwithstanding the prejudices of mankind, and the indiscretions of individuals, an itinerant preacher, if duly qualified and sent forth, is one of the most honourable and useful characters that can be found upon earth: and there needs no other proof that, when this work is done properly and with

oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead.

3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.

4 ¶ And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day.

5 Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand.

6 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a

3:7. Ps. 139:21. Eph. 5:11. 2 John 10:11. h 34:26. 1 Sam. 23:2, 4, 9-12. 2 Sam. 2:1. 5:19, 23. 1 Kings 22:5, 6. Ps. 27:4. Jer. 21:2. Ez. 20:3. i 1 Kings 18:19. 2 Kings 3:13. 2 Tim. 4:3. j Jer. 38:14, &c. 42:2, 3, 20. k 14, 20, 21. Jer. 8:10, 11. 23:17. Ez. 13:3-16, 22. Mic. 2:11. 3:11. Rev. 19:20. l See on 1 Kings 22:7-9. 2 Kings 3:11-13.

perseverance, it forms the grand method of spreading widely, and rendering efficacious, religious knowledge, than the experience of the church in all ages; for great reformation and revivals of religion have generally been thus effected. It is especially sanctioned by the example of Christ and his apostles, and recommended as the divine method of spreading the gospel through the nations of the earth; itinerant preaching having almost always preceded, and made way for, the stated ministry of regular pastors. But it is a work which requires peculiar talents and dispositions, and a peculiar call in Providence; and is not rashly and hastily to be ventured upon by every novice, who has learned to speak about the gospel, and has more zeal, than knowledge, prudence, humility, or experience. An unblemished character, a disinterested spirit, an exemplary deadness to the world, unaffected humility, deep acquaintance with the human heart, and preparation for enduring the cross, not only with boldness, but with meekness, patience, and sweetness of temper, are indispensably necessary in such a service. They who engage in it should go upon broad scriptural grounds, and dwell chiefly upon those grand essentials of religion, in which pious men of different persuasions are agreed; plainly proving every thing from the word of God, running nothing into extremes, and avoiding all disputes, however urged to it, about the *shibboleths* of a party. In this way itinerant preaching is a blessing which all, who love the souls of men, must wish to be vouchsafed to every part of every nation upon earth. And if those who are in authority, would employ select men of known and approved piety and ability, protected and countenanced by them, to go from city to city, and from village to village, through the kingdom, teaching in every place the plain acknowledged truths and precepts of the Bible, immense good might be done. Those stated teachers, who have been grossly negligent or profligate, must either be disgraced or reformed; others might be stirred up to use greater diligence; and the instructions of stated faithful ministers would receive an additional sanction, which could not fail of producing a happy effect.—Thus it was in the days of Jehoshaphat; and thus it will be, wherever or whenever God shall please to stir up the hearts of kings, princes, and ministers, to teach the people in every part of their territories, according to the word of God. This is also the proper way of promoting public peace and prosperity; and it will prove a better protection of nations, than an increase of powerful armies or navies; yet it may very properly be connected with the ordinary methods of defence.—Persons in authority have "much business" to which they ought to attend; and they should consider that stable peace, and increasing numbers of well maintained and orderly subjects, are more honourable than the most successful wars; and whatever ability any man possesses, he should willingly devote himself to God, and serve him with all that he has.

NOTES.—CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. Affinity, &c.] Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat married Athaliah the daughter of Ahab. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:2. 2 Kings 8:18, 26.) Perhaps pride and ambition had some influence in forming this fatal union: but probably Jehoshaphat was allured to it, by the hopes of cementing a durable peace between Judah and Israel, whom he wished to consider as brethren. (Note, 2 Kings 8:18.) Ahab perceived Jehoshaphat to be so strong, that he had no hopes of prevailing against him, and therefore he courted his friendship. But this affinity was evil in itself, and peculiarly dangerous to Jehoshaphat: who, though firm and courageous in resisting and overcoming opposition and difficulties, was easily persuaded by fair words into improper compliances. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:4, 7, 29. 2 Kings 3:7.)

V. 2-6. Notes, 1 Kings 22:1.—7. We will be with thee in the war. (3) Thus Jehoshaphat expressly engaged to assist Ahab, before he proposed to inquire of God. (Note, Josh. 9:14, 15.)—Ahab entertained both Jehoshaphat and his attendants, with great splendour. . . . He caressed him to at this feast, and used such arguments, as prevailed with him to

prophet of the LORD 'besides, that we might inquire of him?

7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesieth good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imia.* And Jehoshaphat said, *Let not the king say so.*

8 And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, *Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imia.*

9 And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah, sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria: and all the prophets prophesied before them.

10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, *Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.*

11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, *Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.*

12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, *Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word, therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.*

13 And Micaiah said, *As the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.*

14 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, *Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.*

15 And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?

16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, *These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace.*

17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, *Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?*

18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; *I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand, and on his left.*

19 And the LORD said, *Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake, saying after that manner.*

20 Then there came out a spirit, and stood

before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

21 And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the LORD said, *Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out and do even so.*

22 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek and said, *Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?*

24 And Micaiah said, *Behold, thou shalt see on that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.*

25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

26 And say, Thus saith the king, *Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.*

27 And Micaiah said, *If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the LORD spoken by me.* And he said, *Hearken, all ye people.*

28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead.

29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle: but put thou on thy robes.* So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.

30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, *Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel.*

31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, *It is the king of Israel.* Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.

32 For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.

33 And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot-man, *Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.*

34 And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even; and about the time of the sun going down he died.

* Heb. yet, or, more. m 1 Kings 18:4, 19:10. n 1 Kings 18:17, 20:42, 21:20. Prov. 9:8. Jer. 18:18. Am. 5:10. Mark 6:18, 19:27. John 7:1, 13:18, 19, 24. Gal. 4:16. o Is. 39:10. Jer. 38:6, p Is. 2 Kings 9:22. Ez. 3:17-19. Acts 20:26, 27. q Prov. 35:12. Mic. 2:7. r Or, unclean. 1 Sam. 8:15. 1 Chr. 28:1. margins. Is. 39:7. Dan. 1:3, 7, 8. Heb. Hasten. 25:26. 1 Kings 22:9. s See on 1 Kings 22:10-12. Is. 14:9. Ez. 26:16. Dan. 7:9. Matt. 19:28. s29. Matt. 6:29, 11:8. s3 Or, floor. t Jer. 27:14-16. u Jer. 27:3, 28:10-14. Zech. 1:18-21. 2 Tim. 3:8. x Jer. 23:17, 25:21, 29:3, 29:21. Ez. 13:7, 29:28. y Heb. thou consume them. y 5:12, 33:4. Prov. 24:25. Mic. 3:5. 2 Pet. 2:1-3. Jude 16. Rev. 16:13, 14, 19:20. z Job 22:13. Ps. 10:11. Hos. 7:3. Am. 7:13. Mic. 2:6, 11. 1 Cor. 2:14-16. y Heb. mouth. Josh. 9:22. marg. a Num. 22:16-20. Ec. 12:12, 26, 24:13. 1 Kings 21:14. Jer. 23:28, 49:4. Ez. 2:7. Mic. 2:7. Jer. 40:27. 1 Cor. 11:23. 2 Cor. 2:17. Gal. 1:10. 1 Thes. 2:4. b 1 Kings 18:27, 22:15. Ec. 12:14. Lam. 4:21. Am. 4:4, 5. Matt. 26:45. c 1 Sam. 14:21. 1 Kings 22:16. Matt. 26:63. Mark 5:7. Acts 19:13. d Matt. 26:64. e 33:34. 1 Kings 22:34-36. Jer. 23:12. Ez. 34:5, 6, 8. Zech. 10:2, 13:7. Matt. 9:36. f Jer. 43:24. g 2 Sam. 2:7. 5:2. 2 Kings 10:3. g See on 7. 1 Kings 22:16. Prov. 29:1. Jer. 43:2, 2. ** Or, but for evil. h Is. 1:10, 23:14, 39:5. Jer. 24:19, 34:4. Am. 7:15. i 1 Kings 22:19-23. h Is. 6:1-5. Dan. 7:9, 10. Acta 7:55, 56. 1 Gen. 32:2. Ps. 103:20, 21. Zech. 1:10. k See on 1 Kings 22:20. Job 12:16. Is. 6:9, 10, 54:16. Ez. 14:9. 2 Thes. 2:11, 12. Jam. 1:13, 24. 1 Es. 19. Prov. 11:5.

undertake this expedition. What he had consented to in the midst of their merriment, he seems now to resolve deliberately. Bp. Patrick.

V. 7-13. Notes, 1 Kings 22:7-14.

V. 14-27. Notes, 1 Kings 22:15-28.

V. 28, 29. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:29, 30.) It has been thought that Ahab wished Jehoshaphat to fall by the Syrians, in expectation that the affairs of Judah would come under his management, as the father-in-law of Jehoram.

V. 30-34. Notes, 1 Kings 22:31-35.—God moved, &c. (31) In the extremity of danger, Jehoshaphat made the Lord his Refuge, who remembered his servant, though out of the path of duty; and, in answer to his prayer, inclined his pur-

suers to depart from him, by a secret but powerful influence on their minds.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Abundant riches and honour do indeed give large opportunities of doing good; but they are attended with such strong temptations, as very few who possess them are enabled to withstand. It is therefore a certain proof, that men are no well acquainted with the artifices of Satan, and the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and that they have much self-confidence, when they covet riches in order to do good; for they are far more likely to get harm by them. Among other evils, they often betray pious persons into improper marriages, for themselves or their children. It appears beneath them to

CHAPTER XIX.

Jehoshaphat, on his return, is reproved by Jehu the prophet, for joining alliance with Ahab; but commended in other respects, 1-3. He visits and reforms his kingdom; and gives a charge to the judges, priests, and Levites in the cities of Judah, and at Jerusalem, 5-11.

AND Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

2 And ^bJehu the son of ^cHanani ^dthe seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, ^eShouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that ^fhate the LORD? therefore ^gis wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

3 Nevertheless, there are ^hgood things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast ⁱprepared thy heart to seek God.

4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he ^jwent out again through the people from ^kBeer-sheba to ^lmount Ephraim, and ^mbrought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

5 ⁿ¶ And ^ohe set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city;

6 And said to the judges, ^pTake heed what ye do: for ^qye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.

a 18:31 29. 12:31 1. 1 K. 16:17 12. 16:7. 2 Sam. 1:18 9:9. 18:32. 1 Kings 21:25. Ps. 15:1. 1 Cor. 21:32. Prov. 1:1. 19:1. Rom. 1:32. Job. 5:11. 2 John 10:11. 17:87. Ec. 20:5. Deut. 5:9. 7:10. 32:31. 33:11. 41. 21:8. 56:1. 81:15. John 15:18. 23. Rom. 1:30. 8:1. Jam. 4:4. g 2:25. Ps. 90:7. 8. Rom. 1:18. 18:11. 31:32. h 17:3-6. 1 Kings 14:13. Rom. 7:18. 1 Cor. 11:30. 15:17. 16:10. 17:10. Ps. 37:7. i Heb. returned and went out. 1 Sam. 7:15-17. k Gen. 2:14. Job. 29:1. 1 John 12:15. Jude. 18:1. m 26: on 15:5-13. 29:10. 11. 1 Sam. 7:3. 1. Mal. 4:6. Luke 1:17. n 8. Deut. 16:19-20. Rom. 13:1-5. 1 Pet. 2:13. 1. o Josh. 22:5. 1 Chr. 28:10. Luke 12:15. 21:8. Acts 5:35. 22:25. p 1 Cor. 11:27. Ps. 82:1-6. Ec. 5:8. 1 Heb. matter of judgment. q Gen. 42:15. Ex. 18:21. 22.

join affinity with inferior families; but "any many mighty or noble are called;" and so they are seduced to prefer titles and estates to faith and holiness; and the effects are generally lamentable to themselves, to posterity, and to the cause of godliness.—We should follow peace with all men; but we ought to have no intimacies with the workers of iniquity; for their carresses, flatteries, and feasts, are more dangerous than their most embittered rage; and in fact they are frequently the result of politic enmity, and at best proceed from mercenary self-love. Indeed, the most enormous wickedness is often veiled under a show of piety.—A very great majority of professed ministers, in many ages and places, have been teachers of lies; who, while they acted their parts with the name of God in their mouths, have secretly been prompted by Satan, "deceiving and being deceived." We should therefore be reminded not only to "inquire of the LORD," but careful likewise by whom we inquire of him; and also that we inquire his will, before we commit ourselves, by engagements that may be contrary to it.—They who flatter the humours of the rich and great will in general be most favoured; and those who offend the pride, or disturb the consciences, of such as are strangers to the power of godliness, will be hated, and may lay their account with hard usage: nay, such pious persons as associate with ungodly people, must often witness and seem to approve of, very abominable things. The event, however, will show faithful teachers in their proper light; so that even the wicked will be constrained to allow the propriety of their conduct. In the mean time, let them go on with confidence in God, simply declaring his whole message, and patiently bearing the cross; for "great will be their reward in heaven."—Satan is allowed to deceive those, who reject the testimony of God's prophets.—No policy can avert the stroke of the Lord's vengeance, when the time arrives; nor can his people ever be destitute of a refuge. He both can and will extricate them even from those difficulties and perils, into which they have sinfully brought themselves, when they earnestly and humbly call upon him; and, as he has all hearts in his hand, he can easily rescue them in their most urgent distresses.—"O LORD God of hosts, blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee."

NOTES.—CHAP. XIX. V. 1. This peaceful return some exceeded Jehoshaphat's expectations, and was contrary to his deserts; and he was thus discriminated from Ahab to whom he had said, "I am as thou art" (18:32). Note, i Kings 22:4. "I suppose, as soon as the battle was over, he immediately went to Jerusalem, to return thanks to God for his wonderful preservation." *Bp. Patrick*

V. 2. Jehu was the son of Hanani, who was cast into prison by Asa for reproving him; (Note, 16:7—10.) yet he was not afraid of bringing a similar message to Jehoshaphat. That prince's alliance with a notorious idolater was a bad example to his subjects, which exceedingly tended to counteract his endeavours for reformation; and Ahab's expedition was undertaken in defiance of the word of God, and attended with such circumstances, as rendered Jehoshaphat excusable in helping him. For this misconduct "wrath was upon him from before the LORD;" not the wrath of an Enemy or avenging Judge, but that of an offended Father: and the fatal effects of this affinity upon his family and king-

7 Wherefore now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

8 ¶ Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

11 And behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters; also the Levites shall be officers before you. Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good.

22:28. Neh. 5:15. 18:1. 22:28. 1 Cor. 15:23. Deut. 32:4. Rom. 9:14. s Deut. 16:17. 18:1. 19. Mal. 2:16. Acts 24:34. Rom. 2:11. Gal. 2:6. Eph. 6:1. 3:1. 25. 1 Th. 1:17. 1 Th. 2:8. Deut. 16:19. 18:15. 21:15. Mic. 7:3. 17:8. 18. 17:8. 18. 18:1. 1 Cor. 23:4. 26:26. x Ex. 18:19-21. y 21:5. 25:1. z See on 7. Deut. 1:16. 17. 2 Sam. 2:1. 11. 11:1. 12:1. 13:1. 14:1. 15:1. 16:1. 17:1. 18:1. 19:1. 20:1. 21:1. 22:1. 23:1. 24:1. 25:1. 26:1. 27:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 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dom, were as awful evidences of this wrath, as could be experienced by one that did not finally perish. (Notes, 2:14, 18—20. 22:5, 7—9. 2 Sam. 12:10. 2 Kings 11:2.)—Went out to meet him.] "Before he came into the city, that being admonished by him, he might be the more affected with the mercy of God towards him in his deliverance." *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 3. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, 17:1—9.

V. 4. Jehoshaphat went no more to Samaria, but abode at Jerusalem, and in Judah, and attended to the affairs of his own kingdom. Being assured that the Lord had graciously accepted of his endeavours for reformation, he made a circuit through his kingdom to perfect that work, and to restore what had been overturned. For it seems, that the people had relapsed into idolatry, regarding his intimacy with Ahab as a kind of dispensation, to such as chose to avail themselves of it.

V. 5—11. In process of time, irregularities and abuses in the magistracy had interrupted the regular administration of justice: but Jehoshaphat carefully reduced this likewise to order; and took care that judges, and courts of justice, should be established in every considerable town, for the benefit of the neighbourhood; but with appeal to the superior courts at Jerusalem. (Notes. Ex. 23:1—3, 6—9. Deut. 16:18, 19. 17:8—13. 1 Chr. 23:2—6. 26:30—32.) In all these courts the priests and Levites were joined with the principal persons of the other tribes: for the law of God was in an especial manner the statute-law of the realm; according to which both ecclesiastical causes, or the "judgment of the LORD," the pleas of the crown, or "the king's matters," and common pleas, or "controversies," were to be determined. This settlement was completed, when the king and his attendants returned to Jerusalem from the circuit of the land; and both in the cities of Judah, and at Jerusalem, the king solemnly exhorted and charged the magistrates to do the duty of their office, in the fear of the Lord; as acting by his authority, in his presence, under his protection, copying his impartial justice and equity, and looking forward to the account which they must shortly render to him. (*Marg. Ref.* o—t. y.) "It is most agreeable to the Scripture to understand by the things of God, those which were defined by the law of God, and were to be judged of by that law: and by "the king's matters," such as not being defined by the divine law, were left to the judgment of the king; of which kind were all deliberations about what was expedient, or not expedient.... The court had different presidents, according to the nature of the causes. In things pertaining to God, Amariah the high-priest sat as the first judge; in things pertaining to the king, Zebadiah a principal person about the king... was the moderator." *Grotius*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*. "The rest" (of the Levites) who were not judges, were ministers under them, to see their sentence executed.... He bids them not be afraid of any man, for God, who employed them, would stand by them, and defend them, if they were good and upright judges." *Bp. Patrick*.—Some interpret, blood and blood, of relationship and titles to estates; but it seems rather to mean causes concerning murder, maiming, or accidentally killing any one.—The judges were required to warn the people not to transgress; lest, besides other reasons, their brethren should be involved in the consequences of their crimes.

THE LORD, who is with you in judgment. (6) What

CHAPTER XX.

Jehoshaphat, alarmed by an invasion of the Moabites, Ammonites, and others, proclaims a fast, 1-4. His prayer, 5-13. Jehaziel, the prophet, assures him of a signal deliverance, 14-17. Jehoshaphat and his people receive the promise with adoring thankfulness, 18, 19. He exhorts them to believe, and appoints singers to praise the Lord, 21, 21. The invaders destroy one another, and the people of Judah gather immense spoils, 22-25. They bless God, at Bethshelah, return in triumph, and enjoy peace, 26-30. Jehoshaphat's good reign and acts, 31-34. He joins with Ahabaziah in sending ships to Tarshish, which are wrecked, according to the prediction of Eliezer, 35-37.

IT came to pass ^aafter this also, that ^bthe children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them ^cother beside the Ammonites, ^ccame against Jehoshaphat to battle.

2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from ^dbeyond the sea on this side Syria; and behold, they be in ^eHazazon-tamar, which is ^fEngedi.

3 And Jehoshaphat ^gfeared, and set ^hhimself to ^hseek the Lord, and ⁱproclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to

n 19:15, 11, 32:1. b Ps. 83:5-8. Is. 7:1, 8:9, 10:16, 6. c 19:2, Jer. 10:24, Rev. 3:9, d Gen. 14:3. Num. 34:12. Josh. 3:16. e Gen. 14:7. f Josh. 15:62. 1 Sam. 23:29. Cant. 1:14. g Gen. 32:7-11, 24-28. Ps. 56:3, 4. Is. 37:36. Jon. 1:16. Matt. 10:23. ^h Heb. *his face*. h See on 1:15, 19:3. i Judg. 30: 2, 1 Sam. 7:6. Ezra 9:21-23. Esth. 4:16. Jer. 36:9. Joel 1:14, 2:12-18. Jon. 3:5-9. j Ps. 34:5, 50:15, 60-10-12. k 19:5. Ps. 69:35. l See on 12:13, 24:31. 2 Kings 19:15-19. m See on Ex. 3:6, 15:16. 1 Chr. 29:18. n Deut. 4:

the Talmud thus translates, '*Ye do not judge before the sons of men, but before the WORD of the LORD, and his glorious presence resides among you in the act of judgment; which is an illustrious testimony that the ancient Jews believed more persons than one in the Deity.*' *Bp. Patrick.*—Deal courageously. (11) *Notes*, Josh. 1:7. 2 Tim. 2:1, 2.—The LORD shall be with the good.] *Note*, Phil. 4:8, 9.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing but perils, wrath, and painful effects, can be expected from intimacies with ungodly men; and that in proportion to the degree of their avowed hatred to the character, worship, and service of God. We ought therefore to shun all needless familiarity with them, and to show them and all the world, our disapprobation of their principles and conduct; whatever may be their rank, abilities, or accomplishments; or however political interests or relative ties may plead for a coalition. We should indeed bear them goodwill, and be ready to relieve their distress, and to help them in their most important interests: but we ought to be cautious of involving ourselves with their secular undertakings, and still more of concurring with them in any of their sinful projects. (*Notes*, 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Eph. 5:8-14. 2 John 7-11. P. O.)—The unmerited mercies of God are often united with severe rebukes and corrections; and these again are moderated by tokens of his approbation, where our conduct has been good in his sight: for he would not have those discouraged, who "prepare their hearts to seek him," and when there are *really* good things found in us, he will mercifully forgive the evil which we allow not or repent of, and accept the good, through the Saviour's advocacy. In these things we should be followers of God: we must not "hate our offending brother, nor *suze* sin upon him; but in any wise rebuke him" (*Note*, Lev. 19:17.) and we should take more pleasure in commending what is evidently good; and bear much from those in whom "good things are found."—While ministers ought not to fear or respect the persons of men, or be intimidated by the sufferings of others in the same cause, but must deliver their whole message plainly; they should also endeavour to do it with forbearance, tenderness, and candour, which will render reproofs less offensive and more effectual. When these are prudently given and properly taken, they are not only salutary, but confer honour on both parties: (*Note*, Prov. 25:11, 12.) and when, being united with due commendations, they excite men to renewed vigilance and diligence in their proper work, they become general benefits.—The tendency of human nature to evil renders unremitting vigour necessary in all those, who would suppress abuses and effect reformation: for, on every relaxation, evils will revive and gather strength rapidly, and all will need to be done over again.—The ministry and the magistracy, when restricted to their distinct methods, may concur in promoting godliness, as well as preserving public peace: and all legal decisions should be expedited in a regular and easy method, and with little expense; that the poor may be placed, as nearly as possible, at an equal advantage with the rich, in obtaining their dues.—Magistrates are the viceregents, of the Governor and Judge of the world, and are therefore to be ^hveiled in all things lawful for the Lord's sake. (*Notes*, Rom. 13:1-7.) But there lies an appeal from their decisions to a superior tribunal; and they should be constantly and solemnly reminded, that they will be exposed to condemnation, if they do not act uprightly in the fear of God, without respect of persons, or taking of gifts. And, besides executing the laws of man impartially, it is their duty also to warn men not to trespass against the Lord, lest wrath come upon them and their brethren. (*Note*, 17:7-9.) They should therefore

ask ^ahelp of the Lord; even out of all ^bthe cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

5 ¶ And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court,

6 And said, "O LORD God of our fathers, ^cart not thou ^dGod in heaven? and ^erulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and ^fin thy hand is there ^gnot power and might, so that ^hnone is able to withstand thee?

7 ⁱArt not thou ^jour God, ^kwho didst ^ldrive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and ^mgavest it to the seed of Abraham ⁿthy friend for ever?

8 And they dwelt therein, and have ^obuilt thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

9 "If, ^pwhen evil cometh upon us, ^qas the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for ^rthy name ^sis in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

39. Josh. 2:11. 1 Kings 8:23. Is. 57:15, 16, 66:1. Matt. 6:9. o 1 Chr. 29:11, 12. Ps. 47:2, 9. Jer. 27:5-8. Dan. 4:17, 25, 32-35. p 1 Chr. 29:11, 12. Ps. 62:11. Matt. 6:13. q Acts 11:17. r 14:11. Gen. 17:7. Ex. 6:7. 19:5-7. 20:2-4. 1 Chr. 17:31-34. 2 Chr. 31:3. 33:13. Neh. 9:8. u Is. 41:8. John 11:11. 15:15. Jam. 5:22. v See on 2:4. 6:10. x See on 6:28. 1 Kings 8:33, 37. y See on 6:20. Ex. 30:24, 23:21.

take heed and deal courageously, not fearing the displeasure of man, but confiding in the protection of God, who is with them in the judgment; that he may indeed be with them for their good. May he provide increasing numbers of good ministers and good magistrates, to suppress vice, and to promote the cause of truth and holiness!

NOTES.—CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. (*Notes*, 14:1-15. 31: 20, 21. 32:4-5. 1 Sam. 7:1-7.) "The fear of the Lord had fallen upon the kingdoms round about Judah," and Jehoshaphat had so long enjoyed peace, that he seems to have neglected his military arrangements, and to have relaxed his vigilance. (*Notes*, 17:10-19.) Perhaps his enemies observed this, and thought to take advantage of it; or they had heard "that wrath was upon him from before the LORD," for uniting with Ahab. This formidable armament consisted of Moabites, Ammonites, and the allies of the Ammonites, (*Note*, 10:11) and came from "beyond the sea on this side Syria," that is the *dead sea*, or *salt sea*, which was considered as one of the western boundaries of Syria; and they were encamped in his dominions at Engedi. (*Marg. Ref.* e, f.) before he was informed of their approach, or apprised of their intentions. This would prevent his mustering all his forces.

V. 3, 4. Probably, this invasion took place not long after Jehoshaphat's return from Ramoth-gilead; and he was afraid that God was about to chastise his sin by permitting the devastation of his kingdom. To avert this calamity, "he set himself to seek the LORD." It may be supposed, that he made the best military arrangement of which the exigency would admit: but his chief preparation consisted in proclaiming a fast, and gathering his people together to ask help of the Lord.—We have in the preceding books of Scripture, read of private fasting with prayer; of "afflicting the soul" at the day of atonement; of the people's fasting at the instance of Samuel the prophet; and of their fasting by common consent: (*Notes*, Lev. 16:29-31. Deut. 9:15, 25. Judg. 20:26-28. 1 Sam. 7:5, 6. 2 Sam. 12:16.) but the fast here mentioned was observed at the proclamation of the *chief magistrate*, who acted by the authority of his station, and not by the Spirit of prophecy: and the event of this measure, both warrants civil governors in times of distress to act in this manner, and encourages them to expect the most important benefits from it. Every one was called on to humble himself before God for his own sins, and the sins of the public, as the aggregate of the whole. Thus they united in expressing their sorrow and self-discrepancy for their sins; and they publicly honoured God as the righteous Author of their calamity, and as their only Hope and Refuge in distress. All other cares being laid aside, they were at leisure to unite in uninterrupted and fervent prayers for help and forgiveness. Doubtless serious impressions would be made on many, who before had been inattentive; the pious affections of others would be revived, and rendered more fixed and lively; and in every way it would tend to the honour of God, and the good of his people.

V. 5. *New court.* It is not known what is here meant by the *new court*: but, probably, Jehoshaphat had rebuilt some of the courts, or had added one to them.

V. 6-9. After the example of Solomon, Jehoshaphat himself offered the public prayer for this large congregation, in words which proceeded from the abundance of his heart: a careful examination of the marginal references will be found the best comment on them. (*Notes*, 1 Kings 8:33-43. 1 Chr. 29:10-19.)—*Abraham thy friend.* (7) אַבְרָהָם *a lover of thee.* (*Marg. Ref.* *Notes*, John 15:12-16. Jam. 2:22-29.)

V. 10, 11. The mention of mount Seir, the country of Edom, shows what is meant in the first verse by "other beside the Ammonites."—The Moabites, Ammonites, and

10 And now behold, the children of Ammon and Moab, and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not;

11 Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

12 O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

13 And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ¶ Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation;

15 And he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat; Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.

16 To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of

the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.

18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord.

19 And the Levites of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

20 ¶ And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

21 And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever.

22 And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had

g Num. 20:17-21. Deut. 2:4, 5, 9, 19. Judg. 11:15-18. a Gen. 41:4. Ps. 74:3, 5; 127. Prov. 17:13. Jer. 18:20. b Judg. 11:25, 24. Ps. 83:3-12. c Deut. 6:35. Judg. 11:27. Ps. 76:5, 8, 19. 43:1. Is. 24:7-12. Joel 3:12. Rev. 19:11. d See on 14:11. 1 Sam. 13:8. 2 Cor. 13:9. e 2 Kings 6:17. f Ps. 25:15, 12:11. 2:123; 1:2. 141:8. Jon. 2:4. g Deut. 29:10, 11. Ezra 10:1. Jon. 3:5. Acts 21:5. Is. 58:9. 65:24. Dan. 9:20, 21. Acts 10:131. i 15:1. 21:20. Num. 11:23, 26. 24:2. k 32:7. Deut. 1:4. 90:20. 11:3. 68. Lam. 3:16. Neh. 4:14. Is. 27:1, 2. Is. 41:10-16. 1:32:8. 1 Sam. 17:37. l Heb. ascent. f Or, valley. m 22:32. Ex. 14:13, 25. n Ps. 46:10, 11. Is. 30:7, 15. Jer. 3:6. m 15:2. 32:8. Num. 14:9. Ps. 46:7, 11. Is. 8:9, 10. 41:10. Am. 5:14. Matt. 1:23. 23:20. Rom. 8:31.

Edomites, had been expressly named as nations whom Israel must not invade; and the divine admonition had been exactly attended to. (Deut. 2:4-7, 9, 19. Note, Num. 20:14-21.) Other wars indeed had brought some of them under the dominion of Judah and Israel: but it seems the superiority had been used with gentleness, and no reason had been given for this violent assault; in which, it is probable, the confederates meant to destroy the kingdom of Judah, and the house of David; as well as to expel the people of God, from that land which was "his possession," so that the war was indeed waged against the Lord himself. (Notes, Judg. 11:12-27.)

V. 12. The language of this verse is peculiarly expressive of humble, genuine faith. The appeal, as to the justice of the cause, is simply, yet emphatically, made to God; and the inability of Jehoshaphat, with the force which he had hastily collected, or indeed with any forces apart from the powerful aid of God, to resist so vast an army; the perplexity to which he was reduced; and his only refuge from despair, by firmly relying on the Almighty, and expecting help from him, as pleading his own cause in pleading theirs; are stated in the most natural and affecting manner. (Note, 14:9-15.)

—In this weak and declining condition, wherein the church now is, ... let us say daily with Jehoshaphat, "We know not what to do; but our eyes are unto thee." "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." Thou art our King and our Shepherd; we are thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm; but thy power will be perfected in our weakness. "Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name give the glory; for thy mercy and thy truth's sake." Do not remember our iniquities, but save us for thy mercy's sake; for we are brought very low.—Such addresses to God ... will illustrate this prayer of Jehoshaphat, better than the largest commentaries. Victorinus Strigelius in Bp. Patrick.

V. 13. With their little ones.] Notes, Deut. 29:10-15. 31:13. Ezra 10:1. Neh. 8:1, 2. Joel 2:15-17.—Not only the women, and the children who were grown up, attended on this occasion, but the infants also: for it is probable the people intended their presence, as a silent plea with the Lord to have mercy upon them for the sake of their helpless offspring. (Note, Jon. 4:9-11.)

V. 14-17. The Lord did not speak on this occasion by the high-priest, but by an ordinary Levite descended from Asaph, who, it is probable, was an eminently pious person. Whether he had previously been known as a prophet, or not, all present were satisfied that he spoke by the Spirit of God. He assured them of the Lord's especial interposition: for, as the battle immediately concerned his honour, it would be decided by his power. "The war is not to you, but to God." (Note, 10:11.) Without any fear of the immense multitude of their invaders, they were ordered to march forth the next day, not to fight, but to witness the salvation of the Lord

2 Tim. 4:22. p 7:9. Gen. 24:26. Ex. 4:31. q 1 Chr. 15:16-22. 16:5, 42. 23:5. 35:1-7. r Ps. 44:-49: titles. s 5:13. Ezra 3:12, 13. Neh. 12:42, 43. Ps. 81:1. 35:1-4. t 11:5. 2 Sam. 14:2. 1 Chr. 4:5. Jer. 6:1. u See on 15:1. z Is. 7:8. 26:3. John 11:40. 14:1. Rom. 8:31. y Ez. 14:31. Luke 16:31. John 5:46, 47. 13:20. z 1 Chr. 13:1, 2. Prov. 11:14. a 29:25-30. 30:21. Ezra 3:10, 11. Neh. 12:27. t Heb. praises off. b 1 Chr. 16:29. Ps. 29:2. 50:2. 50:17, 96:9. c 5:13. 73:6. 1 Chr. 16:34, 41. Ezra 3:11. Ps. 106:1. 107:1. 136:1. d Ec. Jer. 33:11. s Heb. in the time of that, &c. i Heb. in singing and praise. d Judg. 7:32. 1 Sam. 14:16, 20. 2 Kings 6:17. Ps. 35:5, 6. Is. 19:2. Ez. 38:21. 1 Or, smote one another. e Gen. 14:6. 36:8, 9. Deut. 2:5. Josh. 24:4. Ez. 35:2, 3.

with them, and his answer to their fervent prayers. (Notes, Ez. 14:13, 14. 1 Sam. 17:45-47.)

V. 18, 19. The king and his people, placing the most entire confidence in the divine promise, at once anticipated its fulfilment, and directly joined in an act of solemn adoration, and in songs of gratitude and praise for this yet unaccomplished deliverance.

V. 20, 21. Jehoshaphat seems not greatly to have regarded the arrangement of his army; for he so firmly believed the words of the prophet, that he marched forth as to a triumph, and not to a battle. Accordingly he exhorted his troops to a firm faith in God, and an entire reliance on his power, faithfulness, and covenanted mercy to his people; and a confident expectation, that all his words spoken to them by his prophets should be accomplished: for thus, and thus only, could they be established and prosper. (Is. 7:9.) Having consulted with the chief persons of the people that were with him, he also appointed singers to go before the army, "that should praise the beauty of holiness;" that is, according to some expositors, exactly as they used to do at his beautiful sanctuary. But perhaps the expression rather means, that they should celebrate the glorious excellences of God, which render him "the Perfection of beauty," and the meet object of the most absolute love, confidence, and delight of all his rational creatures; especially, as "his mercy which endureth for ever," is displayed in perfect harmony with his more awful attributes. (Notes, 5:12, 13. 7:1-3. 1 Chr. 16:28, 29. Ps. 50:1, 2. 90:13-17. 136:1-3.)

V. 22-25. Some commentators, both ancient and modern, think that angels were employed on this occasion, who came on the invaders by surprise, as from an ambushment, and slew some of them: and that the survivors supposed themselves assaulted by their confederates; and so retaliated, till they fell into utter confusion, and entirely destroyed one another.—But perhaps the Lord only left the several nations to a natural distrust and jealousy of each other: and thus some of them formed ambushments against the rest, which terminated in their mutual destruction. Or perhaps the ambushments placed against the Jews, fell by mistake on their own allies. This, however, fulfilled the purpose of God, as effectually as if he had placed the ambushments, or they had acted in obedience to his commandment. The slaughter was universal, and the spoil immense: so that this invasion served exceedingly to enrich Jehoshaphat and his kingdom. (Notes, 32:27-29. Rom. 8:35-39.)

V. 26-28. "Berachah" signifies Blessing. Having previously sought deliverance, by fasting and prayer, and received the assurance of it with grateful joy, Jehoshaphat and his army returned immediate and most fervent thanks and praise to the Lord, who had in so wonderful a manner performed his promise. They did not return every man to his own home; ... but first went back to Jerusalem to bless

ma to an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

24 And when Judah came toward the watch-tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

26 ¶ And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day.

27 Then they returned every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the fore-front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.

29 And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.

* Heb. for the destruction. f Ex. 14:30. Ps. 110:6. Is. 37:36. Jer. 33:5. Heb. there was not an escaping. Ezra 9:14. g Ex. 12:35, 36. 1 Sam. 30:19. 2 Kings 7:9-16. Ps. 68:12. Rom. 8:37. h Ex. 3:22. Num. 31:51. Judg. 8:24-29. Prov. 3:15. ¶ That is, blessing. i Ex. 15:1-19. 2 Sam. 22:1-44. Ps. 103:1, 107:21-32. Luke 1:68. Rev. 19:1-6. j Gen. 28:19. 32:30. Ex. 17:15. 1 Sam. 7:12. Is. 62:4. Acts 1:19. k 5:9. § Heb. hand. 2 Sam. 6:14, 15. Mic. 2:13. Heb. 6:20. l 1 Sam. 2:1. Neh. 12:43. Ps. 20:5, 30:1. Is. 35:10. 51:11. Rev. 19:20. m 2 Sam. 6:5. 1 Chr. 13:8, 23:5, 23:6. Ps. 57:8. 92:3. 149:3. 150:3-5. Rev. 14:2, 3. n 17:10. Gen. 36:5. Ex. 32:27. Josh. 5:1. 2 Kings 7:6. o Ex.

30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet for this God gave him rest round about.

31 ¶ And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah he was thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shihhi.

32 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD.

33 Howbeit, the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

35 ¶ And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:

36 And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber.

37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mare-shah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish."

15:14-16. Josh. 2:9-11, 9:9-11. p 14:6, 7. 15:15. Josh. 23:1. 2 Sam. 7:1. Job 34:29. Prov. 16:7. John 14:27. q 1 Kings 22:41-44. r See on 17:3-6. s See on 14:2-3, 11-13. 1 Kings 15:11. t 16:7-12. Ps. 15:21, 36:3. u See on 14:3. 17:6. x See on 12:14. 19:3. 30:19. Deut. 29:4. 1 Sam. 7:13. y See on 12:15. 13:22. 16:11. ¶ Heb. words. z 19:2. 1 Kings 16:1, 7. ¶ Heb. was made to ascend. a 1 Kings 22:48. b 2 Kings 1:2-16. c See on 1 Kings 10:22. d Tarshish. e 1 Kings 9:26. Ezion-gaber. f See on 19:2. f 16:9. Prov. 9:6. 13:20. Heb. 12:6. Rev. 3:19.

him! (the Lord) 'again for hearing their prayers, and making good his promises.' Bp. Patrick. The whole forms a most remarkable and instructive history; and no undertaking, recorded in Scripture, was entered on, conducted, and concluded, in a more unexceptionable manner.

V. 29, 30. When the surrounding nations perceived how wonderfully the Lord had destroyed this powerful armament, they dared not to attack Jehoshaphat any more; and thus God gave him rest round about, which continued during the remainder of his reign. (Note, 17:10)

V. 31-34. (Notes, 17:3. 2 Sam. 22:21-28. 1 Kings 22:41-46.) The minds of the people were not suitably prepared for the regular and cordial worship of God at Jerusalem: so that Jehoshaphat either did not dare to attempt, or was not able to effect, an entire and abiding suppression of all those high places, where God was irregularly worshipped. (Marg. Ref. u, x. Notes, 17:6. 19:2-4.)

V. 35-37. Jehoshaphat's affinity with Ahab's family drew him in to join in this traffic with wicked Ahaziah, for which he was rebuked and chastened; and afterwards he refused to join with him. Ahaziah died within less than two years after Ahab, and Jehoshaphat survived him for a considerable period. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:48, 49. 2 Kings 1:1-17. 6:16, 17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. Uninterrupted peace must not be expected in this world, even when we are most devotedly serving God. The enemies of true religion are the more exasperated by our zeal to promote it; our own miscarriages require rebukes; trials are needful to repress pride; and difficulties form the proper exercise and discovery of our faith, love, patience, and hope in God. This his honour, the edification of others, the good of our own souls, and our situation in the midst of ungodly men, all require that "in the world we should have tribulation."—In calamities or dangers, public or personal, our first business should be to seek help from the Lord. When two or three agree in doing this, that concurrence adds energy to their supplications: how much more then, when multitudes with one accord pour out their fervent supplications for the same common blessing! Hence the advantage of days appointed for national fasting and prayer. Such seasons remind the remnant of believers to unite in the same requests, as with one heart and one voice; and even the cries of unconverted men for outward mercies form an honourable acknowledgment of God, and of man's entire dependence on him; and frequently receive a gracious answer. It is therefore commendable in Christian princes to call their people to these solemn services; and it is indeed a most important part of their duty and true wisdom; but it can scarcely be supposed that the mere appointment is sufficient; unless their own example proves that they are in earnest in the sacred service, let who will be formal. It is also the duty of every individual, according to his station in the community, to concur in such pious measures, and to stir up himself and those around him, to engage cordially in them, that good impressions may be

made, fixed, or revived in the minds of men in every place.—What then shall we think of those, who call themselves Christians and patriots; yet not only neglect, but ridicule or revile, this scriptural method of seeking help in danger, from our almighty Friend, after an example so honoured by God himself? or of those, who give occasion to such reproach and contempt, by their absurd and manifest hypocrisy in these observances?—The fear of wrath, when united with a hope of mercy, excites sinners to seek the Lord in good earnest; and is often useful to quicken the believer, when his love has subsided, and he is grown slothful in the concerns of his soul. We must, therefore, first approach the holy majesty of our God, with humiliation for our sin, justifying him in all we suffer or fear, and confiding only in his mercy for acceptance, and in his power for protection. And in all ages of the church, fasting has been deemed an expedient attendant upon such exercises, on particular occasions, personal and public; being expressive of a mind abstracted from earthly things; conscious of having forfeited every enjoyment by sin; and attentive only to obtain the great objects which the soul is then pursuing.—All believers are sons of Abraham and "friends of God;" with such persons the everlasting covenant is established, and to them every promise belongs. (Notes, Gen. 12:1-3. John 15:12-16. Rom. 5:1, 2.) Even in those distresses, which are intended for the correction of their sins, when they cry unto the Lord, he will hear and help them. Their enemies are his enemies; and when they are rewarded with evil for good, he will appear for them and plead their cause. When they are the most indisposed to avenge themselves, and least able to ward off injuries, their dependence on God will become more unreserved, and their prayers more fervent; and he will no more forsake those, who "know not what to do," but look up to him alone for help; than a fond mother will desert her helpless infant, that clings to her bosom, and knows and seeks no other refuge. Indeed, this is the very frame of mind to which he designs to form his people.—The covenant is made with believers "for the good of their children after them;" and they should bring them, and the rest of their families, as soon as possible to the ordinances of God, that they may be trained up in his house, and become truly a part of his family.

V. 14-37. The Lord will surely speak peace to those, who seek him in a due manner; and when his word banishes our fears and calms our spirits, our prayers are answered in good measure, even previously to those providential deliverances, of which we have received a blessed pledge.—If our sins be pardoned, "God is for us;" and "if he be for us, who can be against us?" We need not be dismayed at the number and power of our enemies, or on account of our own weakness: "the battle is the LORD's," and the victory is sure. We have only to observe his word of command, whether he call us to labour, to wrestle, and strive; or whether it become our part to "stand still, and to see the salvation of the LORD." When victorious faith receives the promises, their accomplishment is anticipated with humble gratitude. The Christian soldier may sing his songs of triumph, when marching to

CHAPTER XXI.

Jehoshaphat dies; Jehoram succeeds, slays his brethren, and reigns wickedly.
1-7. *Evil in Lihnah revolt, 8-10. He establishes idolatry, 11. Elijah's written prophecy against him, 12-15. The Philistines and Arabians desert and plunder his kingdom, and carry off his family captive, except Jehoshaphat, 16, 17. Elijah's prophecy fulfilled in Jehoram's incurable disease and death; and he is interred without honour, 18-20.*

NOW ^aJehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and ^bwas buried with his fathers in the city of David. And ^cJehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2 And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.

3 And their father ^dgave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he was the first-born.

4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and ^eslew all his brethren with the sword, and ^fdivers also of the princes of Israel.

5 Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and ^ghe reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

6 And he walked ^hin the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab; for ⁱhe had

the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD.

7 Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, ^kbecause of the covenant that he had made with David, and ^las he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.

8 ^mIn his days ⁿthe Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, ^oand made themselves a king.

9 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

10 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did ^pLibnah revolt from under his hand; ^qbecause he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

11 Moreover ^rhe made high places in the mountains of Judah, and ^scaused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit ^tfornication, and ^ucompelled Judah thereto.

12 ^vAnd there came ^wa writing to him from ^xElijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked ^yin the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor ^zin the ways of Asa king of Judah,

^a 1 Kings 22:40. ^b 20. ^c See on 5:31. 12:16. ^d 2 Kings 8:16,17. ^e 11:23. ^f Gen. 25:26. ^g Deut. 21:15-17. ^h 17:22. ⁱ 10:10. ^j Gen. 4:8. ^k 2 Kings 5:26,27. ^l 1 John 3:12. ^m 2 Kings 10:14,17. ⁿ 1 Kings 16:45-33. ^o 18:1. ^p 22:2. ^q 2 Kings 5:18. ^r Neh. 13:27,28. ^s 12:21. ^t 1a. 7:6,7. ^u 2 Sam. 23:5. ^v Ps. 89:28-34,39. ^w Jer. 33:20-26. ^x 2 Sam. 7:12-17. ^y 1 Kings 11:33,36. ^z 2 Kings 8:19. ^{aa} Ps. 132:17,18. ^{ab} Luke 1:69,79. ^{ac} Heb. lamp, or, candle. ^{ad} Gen. 27:40. ^{ae} 2 Kings 8:20-22. ^{af} Heb. hand.

^a 1 Kings 22:47. ^b 2 Kings 3:9. ^c Josh. 21:13. ^d 2 Kings 19:8. ^e p 13:10. 15:2. ^f Deut. 32:21. ^g 1 Kings 11:31,33. ^h Jer. 2:13. ⁱ q Deut. 12:2-4. ^j 1 Kings 11:7. ^k Ps. 78:38. ^l 1a. 28:28. ^m r 1 Kings 14:9,16. ⁿ 2 Kings 21:11. ^o Hab. 2:15. ^p Rev. 2:20. ^q 13. ^r Lev. 17:7,20,5. ^s 2 Kings 9:22. ^t Ps. 106:39. ^u Ez. 16:15, &c. ^v Rev. 17:1-5. ^w 138:9. ^x Dan. 3:5,6,15. ^y Rev. 13:15-17. ^z 17:5,6. ^{aa} Jer. 36:2,23,28-32. ^{ab} Ez. 2:9,10. ^{ac} Dan. 6:5,25-29. ^{ad} x 2 Kings 2:11. ^{ae} y 17:3,4. ^{af} 1 Kings 22:43. ^{ag} z 14:2-5. ^{ah} 1 Kings 15:11

the field, or conflicting in his spiritual battles, being assured that he shall be ¹made more than conqueror, through the Saviour who hath loved him: ²and thus the joy and praise of the church militant may emulate and anticipate that of the church triumphant.—But alas! our faith is apt to waver, and then our joys decline: believers need frequent exhortations to persevering faith and hope in God; and it becomes the strong in this manner to animate the weak.—As we cannot know the truth and promises of God, except by his prophets and apostles; how can we believe in him, unless we firmly credit their infallible testimony, as recorded in the sacred Scriptures? In proportion as we expect protection in this way from God, by obedient faith, we “shall be established,” and prosper; and shall adore the beauty of the divine holiness, and the everlasting mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with thankful hearts: and the more generally and publicly this is done in any country, the greater stability and success will attend the affairs of the nation. When we thus arrange and conduct our affairs, our enemies will fall before us; our trials will prove our gain; and our very sorrows will enrich our souls with more abundant rejoicing. The advantage will be all our own; but the whole glory will be ascribed to the Lord.—We should always render our tribute of praise and gratitude for mercies received, when our hearts are impressed with a lively sense of the loving-kindness of God: as thanksgivings, for public or private benefits, grow languid by delay. But alas! we find very few who are so prompt to return thanks for favours vouchsafed, as they were to cry for relief in the hour of distress. (*Note*, and *P. O. Luke 17:11—19*.) Blessed be God, there are some honourable exceptions, whose example proves very useful.—Mercy thus sought and improved will be durable; and if God give us rest, none will dare to molest us.—But the best of men seldom shine so bright in prosperity as in adversity; and even relapses into sin may be noticed in very valuable characters, which the Lord will mark with rebukes and chastenings. Many things must also remain imperfect in the church on earth; for there are many desirable regulations which the greatest reformers have not ventured to attempt, or have not been able to accomplish: and indeed, except men’s hearts are prepared to seek the LORD, magistrates and ministers can do nothing effectual. The zealous, however, will never labour in vain. Much good will be done, though not all which they desire. God will graciously accept their endeavours; and in heaven they will be associated with “the spirits of just men made perfect,” and made like them in holiness and felicity.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXI. V. 2. The second Azariah, in the original, is called *Azariah*.—*King of Israel*. Jehoshaphat is called here “the king of Israel,” not “king of Judah,” as the whole nation sprang from Jacob, whom God surnamed Israel; and he reigned over a considerable part of it. (4. 28:19.)

V. 3. Perhaps Jehoram had acted the hypocrite during his father’s lifetime; but, even if he showed his evil disposition, Jehoshaphat, having no command from God, did not think it proper to set him aside; otherwise his brethren were better than he, more wise and more righteous. (*Note*, 13.) The succession of so wicked a king as Jehoram, to pious Jehoshaphat, was a just judgment on the men of Judah for “not having prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers,” during the preceding reigns. (*Note*, 20:31—34, v. 33.)

V. 4. On one pretence or another, Jehoram cruelly slew all his brethren, from a jealous ambition, lest they should supplant him in his authority; which was probably increased by their reputation and favour with the people; and the affluence and authority to which Jehoshaphat had raised them. (*Note*, *Judg.* 9:4—6.) He slew some of the princes also, who probably favoured them. Some think these were the magistrates whom Jehoshaphat had appointed. (19:—11.) This he did, lest they should revenge on him the murder of his brethren.

V. 5, 6. *Notes*, 18:1. 1 Kings 16:30—33. 2 Kings 8:16—18.

V. 7. 2 Kings 8:19. *Notes*, 2 Sam. 7:12—16. 1 Kings 11:11—13,34—36, v. 36. Is. 9:6,7. Jer. 23:5,6. 33:14—26. Ez. 37:24,25.

V. 8—11. (*Note*, 2 Kings 8:20—24.) Jehoram obtained some advantages over the Edomites, but could not re-establish his dominion.—Libnah seems to have revolted, because they would not submit to his idolatrous impositions.—The inhabitants of Jerusalem were induced by his persuasions to fall in with his idolatry; but the other parts of Judah were compelled to it by persecution.—All kinds of licentious and unnatural practices, to the extreme disgrace of human nature, were encouraged, and even held sacred, in the worship of these abominable idols, as may undeniably be proved even from pagan authors.

V. 12. If the account of Elijah’s translation be given according to the order of time in which it occurred, it happened before Jehoram reigned alone. (*Notes*, 2 Kings 2:11—18. 3:11,12.) But the spirit of prophecy might direct Elijah to prepare this writing before his translation, in the foresight of Jehoram’s crimes; it might be left to Elisha, or some other prophet, to transmit it to him; and coming in that extraordinary manner, it would have a peculiarly awful energy. ¹Elijah, foreseeing by the Spirit of prophecy, before he went to heaven, the wickedness of Jehoram, spake these words to one of the prophets, and charged him to put them down in writing, and to send them in a letter to Jehoram, when he grew so impious as is here related; and let him know, that Elijah commanded this writing to be delivered to him: that so Jehoram being affected with it, as if it had been sent from heaven, might be moved to repent of the evil he had done? *Bp. Patrick*.—Some, however, have not improbably conjectured, that *Elisha*, and not *Elijah*, is intended.—The opinion, found in Josephus, and elsewhere, that this letter was sent by Elijah from heaven, only shows, that the papists have not the honour of being the first inventors of such legendary tales. (*Acts* 19. 35.)

V. 13. *Better*.] Jehoram’s brethren seem to have been pious persons, and hated for the same cause as Abel was hated by Cain. ¹This seems to signify that they were pious persons, who abhorred idolatry: and therefore his sin was the more heinous, in cutting them off, proceeding from enmity to God, as well as to them? *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, *Gen.* 4. 6—9. 1 John 3:11,12.)

V. 14, 15. Many of the people had concurred in Jehoram’s idolatry; and some of them must have been instruments in his base, unnatural murders. They were therefore joined in his punishment, and he suffered by losing his subjects (*Note*, 18—20.) ¹All which calamities were the direct

13 But hast waked "in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself:

14 Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:

15 And thou shalt have great sickness, by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

^{a. c.]} 16 Moreover, the Lord stirred up ^{884.} against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians:

17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

18 And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.

19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

20 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired: how-

beit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAPTER XXII.

Ahaziah succeeds Jehoram, reigns wickedly, Jos a Jehoram king of Israel, and is slain by Jehu, 1-9. Ahaziah murders the good royal, and usurps the throne, 10. Josiah is preserved by Jehoshaphat's ath, 11, 12.

AND the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction.

5 He walked also after their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel, to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

6 And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

^a 1 Kings 16:25,30-33. ^b 11. Ex. 34:15. Dent. 31:16. 2 Kings 9:22. ^c 4. Gen. 4:10-12. 12:21,22. Judg. 9:56,57. 1 Kings 2:31-33. Is. 26:21. Hab. 2:12. 1 John 3:12. ^d Heb. stroke. Lev. 26:21. d Hos. 5:11. Mic. 6:16. e Ex. 20:6. f 18:19. Num. 5:27. Dent. 28:61. Acts 12:23. g Ps. 109:18. Acts 1:18. h 18. Dent. 28:27,35,59,67. i 33:11. j Sam. 36:19. k Sam. 24:1. l 1 Kings 11:11,23. Ezra 1:15. Is. 45:5-7. Am. 8:6. k 17:11. l Heb. carried captive. Job 5:3,4. 1 Q2:1. 24:7. m 22:1. Ahaziah. 6. Azariah. n See on 15. o 16:

the writing sent him in the name of Elijah, that he might not think they came by chance, but by the special direction of Almighty God, as a punishment of his wickedness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 16, 17. The Philistines invaded him on the west side of his kingdom, as the Arabians did on the east side.' *Bp. Patrick. (Note, 17:11.)* The spirit of these invaders was especially stirred up against Jehoram, and they do not seem to have done any great mischief to the country, or to Jerusalem. Having taken captive all his sons, except Jehoahaz, or Ahaziah, (names of similar meaning,) they put them to death. (*Note, 22:1.*)—Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, was left by the invaders; but she proved a still further curse to the family of Jehoram. It is probable that she concealed herself and her youngest son.

V. 18—20. Jehoram lived to witness the fulfilment of the other most afflictive particulars of Elijah's prophecy; and then he was seized with the predicted malady. (12—15. *Notes, Deut. 28:61. Acts 12:20—23.*) He was a young man, yet he could get no relief from the most painful and loathsome disease imaginable; and "he departed without being desired." No one regretted his death, as none had desired his recovery; but the idolaters, and even his dependents, were glad to be relieved from his tyranny: they therefore burnt no sweet spices in honour of him, and refused to bury him among their former kings. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The effects of sin may be very dreadful and durable, even when it does not prove finally destructive to him who committed it.—No means can ensure divine grace to our children; but intimate connexions with atrocious sinners almost render their ungodliness certain.—We are reminded to bless God for equitable rulers, a mild administration, and a limited and well-arranged constitution of government; and to pray for a continuance of these blessings: for, notwithstanding the most prudent regulations, we may be suddenly and irreparably bereaved of them, unless God mercifully protect us.—Ambition, envy, and jealousy destroy natural affection, and convert men into savage monsters; when they have obtained power, and are afraid of losing it, and when "there is no fear of God before their eyes." In the mystery of Providence, such persons prosper for a time, and murder much wiser and better men than themselves: but the Lord has righteous purposes in permitting these events; part of which may now be discerned, and all the rest will be discovered by the light of the eternal world.—The vilest characters are, in some way, connected in the great chain of causes and effects: and are reserved to be undesignedly instrumental in carrying on the purposes of God, and in fulfilling his promises to his church and servants: or they are spared awhile, for the sake of their relation to those, whom "he delighteth to honour." But his plan will not long require them; their measure of iniquities will speedily be full, and then all their prosperity will end in ruin and despair.—The Lord, by one means or

other, awfully reminds offenders of their guilt, and warns them of their danger: and those, who despise these admonitions, will experience the truth of them when it is too late for, if neither judgments nor respites bring men to repentance, destruction cannot be far distant.—The dreadful torments and deaths of some murderers, persecutors, and other haughty criminals, who defy human justice, proclaim, that "verily there is a God, that judgeth the world;" and show what all such enemies of God and man may expect, in the day of wrath and righteous vengeance. None need lament the departure of those who were plagues and tempters while they lived: and it may be right, in some cases, to withhold customary respect from them after their death; that other tyrants and persecutors, when surrounded by sycophants who flatter them in their crimes, may understand how they are despised and abhorred in the general sentiments of mankind. May the Lord enable us so to live, that we may have hope and comfort in the approach and agonies of death, and a joyful entrance into glory; and that our survivors may have to bless God for the benefit which they have received from us, and to regret our removal. Of this we should be ambitious, and such honour in some degree have all the saints of God.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXII. V. 1. The Arabians seem to have taken Jehoram's family captive, in the prospect of obtaining a ransom: but some band of men in their camp slew them; and thus defeated their purpose, but accomplished that of God. (*Note, 21:16,17.*)

V. 2-4. *Forty and two.* (2) As Jehoram was under forty years old when he died, it must be granted that this is an error of the transcribers, and that it should be *twenty-two*, as in Kings, (2 Kings 8:26) and in some ancient versions.—Ahaziah was born when his father was eighteen years of age, yet he had several elder brethren: so that Jehoram must have been married to Athaliah when he was very young; and this circumstance rendered Jehoshaphat's conduct in this alliance still more blameable. (*Note, 18:1.*)

V. 5. Ahaziah would not imitate his grandfather in that which was good in him; yet he followed his bad example, in joining with Ahab's son, as Jehoshaphat had with Ahab. *Bp. Patrick.*—This propensity in human nature, not only to copy bad examples, but even to select the bad part of good characters for imitation, is an awful and conclusive proof of deep depravity.

V. 6. (2 Kings 8:28,29.) The name given to the king of Judah in this verse, though in the translation the difference is not great, yet it is greater in the original, and seems to have been a distinct name by which he was known. (אחזיהו, Ahaziah; אַזַּרְיָהוּ, Azariah.)—It signifies the help of the Lord.

V. 7-9. (*Notes, 2 Kings 9:21—28. 10:13,14.*) The Lord was pleased to commission Jehu, at this crisis, in order that Ahaziah might be involved in the righteous judgment, which was executed upon the house of Ahab.—Ahaziah lay concealed in the kingdom of Samaria, though not in the city

7 And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God, ¹ coming to Joram: for when he was come, ² he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom ³ the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

8 And it came to pass, that ¹ when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

9 And ¹ he sought Ahaziah; and they caught him, (for he was hid ² in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: ³ "Because, said they, he is ⁴ the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart." So ⁵ the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

10 ¹ But when ² Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose, and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah.

11 But ¹ Jehoshabeath the daughter of the king took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a ² bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of ³ Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that ⁴ she slew him not.

12 And he was with them ¹ hid in the house of God six years: and ² Athaliah reigned over the land.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Jehoiada takes proper measures, and makes Joash king, 1-11. Athaliah is slain, 12-15. Jehoiada subverts idolatry; restores the worship of God, and places Joash on the throne, to the great joy of the people, 16-21.

AND in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiaph, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into ¹ covenant with him.

2 And they ¹ went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and ² the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

3 And all the congregation ¹ made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, ² as the LORD hath said of the sons of David.

4 ¹ This is the thing that ye shall do; ² A third

part of you ¹ entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, ² shall be ³ porters of the doors;

5 And a third part ¹ shall be at the king's house; and a third part at ² the gate of the foundation: and all the people ³ shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD.

6 But let none come into the house of the LORD save the priests, and ¹ they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they are holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.

7 And ¹ the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and ² whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

8 So ¹ the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not ² the courses.

9 Moreover, Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds ¹ spears, and bucklers, and shields, that ² had been king David's, which were in the house of God.

10 And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right ¹ side of the temple to the left side of the temple, ² along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.

11 Then ¹ they brought out the king's son, and ² put upon him the crown, and ³ gave him ⁴ the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons ⁵ anointed him, and said, ⁶ God save the king.

12 ¹ Now ² when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, ³ she came to the people into the house of the LORD:

13 And she looked, and behold, ¹ the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and ² all the people of the land rejoiced, and ³ sounded with trumpets; also ⁴ the singers with instruments of music, and such as taught to sing ⁵ praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, ⁶ Treason, treason.

14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, ¹ Have her forth of the ranges: and ² whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, ³ Slay her not in the house of the LORD.

* Heb. *trampling down*. Mal. 4:3. o 10:15. Jude. 14:4. 1 Kings 12:15. 22:20. Ps. 9:16. 16. 46:10. p 2 Kings 9:21. q 1 Kings 19:16. 2 Kings 9:1-7. r 2 Kings 10:11-14. s 2 Kings 9:27. t 1 Kings 13:32. u 2 Kings 9:28, 34. x 17:3, 4. 21:20. y 19:21, 17. z 2-4. 2 Kings 11:1, &c. a 2 Kings 11:2. *Jehoshaphat*. b Ps. 4:15. c 33:1. d 21:7. 2 Sam. 7:13. 1 Kings 15:4. Ps. 33:10. 76:10. Prov. 8:1. Eccl. 8:15. Acts 4:28. e Ps. 27:5. f Ps. 128. 73:14, 15, 19. Jer. 12:1. Hab. 1:12. g 2 Kings 11:1. h 15:12. 1 Sam. 15:3. xlv. 9:3. i Ps. 112:5. Matt. 10:16. Eze. 5:5. j 11:13-17. 1 Chr. 15:12. 21:6. k 16. 2 Sam. 5:3. 2 Kings 11:17. 1 Chr. 11:3. l 6:16. 7:18. 21:7. 2 Sam. 7:16. 1 Kings 2:4. 9:5. Ps. 89:29, 36. m 1 Chr. 9:23. 22:3. 23:3. 24:3-6. Luke 13:9. n 1 Chr. 26:13-16. o Heb. *threshold*. 1 Kings 11:5, 6. Ex. 44:2, 3. 46:2, 3. k Acts 3:2. 1 Kings 11:6.

so called. When he had seen Jehoram slain, he fled and endeavoured to conceal himself in some part of that country: but Jehu ordered him to be pursued, and at length he was taken at Megiddo, and brought to Jehu, who caused him to be put to death. His servants were permitted, however, to carry his corpse to Jerusalem, and bury him, out of respect to the memory of Jehoshaphat his grandfather; while Jehoram was left unburied, in detestation of his father Ahab's enormous wickedness.

V. 10-12. *Notes, 2 Kings 11:1-3.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No tongue can express, no imagination can conceive, the guilt and condemnation of those parents, who *counsel* their own children to do wickedly, and who thus become their murderers in the most awful sense. Yet, this fatal calamity, to families and to society, is frequently the consequence of contracting marriages with those who are irreligious and wicked. But they, who are not previously disposed to ungodliness and vice, will not hearken to such pernicious counsellors: and neither the persuasion, authority, example, nor favour, even of a parent, is to be regarded, when the will and honour of God are concerned. But when men hate the truth and service of God, they are judicially left to be seduced and deceived, till their impolicy and impiety concur in bringing destruction upon them. None can flee, or hide himself, from that evil which pursueth sinners; or from those instruments, whom God employs to execute judgment upon his enemies: and the external respect paid to them, for the sake of pious ancestors will not prevent the ruin of their own souls, or

7. 1 Chr. 23:29-32. m 2 Kings 11:9, 9. n Ex. 19:13, 13. 21:14. o 2 Kings 11:4. p 1 Chr. 24:28. q 1 Sam. 21:7. 2 Sam. 8:7. 1 Heb. *shoulder of the house*. 2 Kings 11:11. r 6:12. Ex. 40:6. Matt. 23:35. s 22:11. 2 Kings 11:12. t 2 Sam. 1:10. Ps. 21:3. 89:39. 132:18. Heb. 2:9. Jam. 1:12. 2:5. Rev. 4:4, 10. 5:10. 19:12. u Ex. 25:16. 31:19. Levit. 17:13. Ps. 2:10-12. 78:5. 1. 8:16, 20. 49:23. x 1 Chr. 10:1. 2 Sam. 5:5. 1 Kings 1:39. Ps. 89:20. Acts 4:26, 27. y Heb. *Let the king live*. 1 Sam. 10:24. 2 Sam. 15:16. 1 Kings 1:34. Matt. 21:9. z 2 Kings 11:13-16. a 2 Kings 9:32-37. a 34:31. 2 Kings 23:3. b Num. 10:1-10. 1 Chr. 15:24. c 1 Kings 1:39, 40. 1 Chr. 12:40. Prov. 11:10. 29:2. d Judg. 7:8, 18-22. 2 Kings 9:13. e 1 Chr. 15:16-22. 25:1-9. f Heb. *Conspiracy*. 1 Kings 18:24. 2 Kings 9:23. Rom. 2:12. g 2 Kings 10:25. 11:8, 15. h Ex. 9:7.

that of their families.—The most desperate and prosperous workers of iniquity, who are hardened against every natural affection, as well as all remains of the fear of God, can do no more than execute his righteous purposes: but he will not suffer his promises to be broken; and if infants, or pious persons, are permitted to be cut off in such unnatural massacres, he will set all right in the eternal world.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. (*Note, 2 Kings 11:4.*) These "chief fathers of Israel" seem to have been the descendants of those priests and Levites from the ten tribes, and pious persons, who left their cities and joined themselves to Judah, in the days of Jeroboam. (*Note, 11:13-17.*) The word "Israel," however, is sometimes used as a general term for the nation, and so applied to the people of Judah.

V. 3-10. *Notes, 2 Kings 11:5-10.—Made a covenant, &c. (3) 16. Notes, 2 Kings 11:17-20.*—"The house of the LORD," (6) must mean the inner court: for no Levites, who were not also priests, entered the sanctuary. This shows, that on some occasions, the people were admitted into the inner courts; else the injunction had been needless.

V. 11. *Note, 2 Kings 11:12.—Sons.*] Probably Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who was afterwards stoned by Joash's command, assisted in crowning and anointing him. (*Notes, 24:19-26.*)

V. 12-21. *Notes, 2 Kings 11:13-20.—His pillar at the entering in, &c. (13)* The king's pillar was at the entrance of the inner court; but the two pillars, Boaz and Jachin, stood at the porch of the temple. One of these therefore could not

15 So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the entering of the horse-gate by the king's house, they slew her there.

16 ¶ And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the Lord's people.

17 Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

18 Also Jehoiada appointed the officers of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.

19 And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in.

20 And he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the Lord: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.

21 And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Joash reigns well during Jehoiada's life, and zealously repairs the temple, 1-14. Jehoiada dies, and is honourably buried, 15, 16. Joash, seduced by his princes, turns aside to idolatry; and causes Zechariah, Jehoiada's son, to be stoned, and reproving him by the name of God, 17-21. Zechariah's dying prediction, 22. Joash is plundered by the Syrians, left sick, and then slain by his own servants, 23-26. Amaziah succeeds him, 27.

¶ **JOASH** was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Zibiah of Beersheba.

2 And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest.

3 And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.

4 ¶ And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord.

5 And he gathered together the priests and the

Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.

6 And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the Lord, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?

7 For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord did they bestow upon Baalim.

8 And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord.

9 And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high-priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord.

13 So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

14 And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels of the house of the Lord, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels for gold and silver.

h Neh. 3:28. 122:10. Judg. 1:7. Matt. 7:2. Jam. 2:13. Rev. 16:5-7. k 15:12, 14. 22:10. 34:31. 32. Deut. 5:2, 3. 29:11-15. 2 Kings 11:17. Ezra 10:3. Neh. 5:12. 13:9, 38. 10:29, &c. l Deut. 35:19-19. Josh. 24:31-25. Is. 44:5. m 34:4, 7. 2 Kings 10:25-28. 11:18. 18:4. n Deut. 12:3. Is. 2:18. Zech. 13:2, 3. o Deut. 13:5, 9. 1 Kings 18:40. 2 Kings 11:18, 19. p 1 Chr. 23:31. q Num. 26:2, &c. r Heb. by the hands of David. 29:25. 1 Chr. 25: r 1 Chr. 9:23, 24. 26: a 2 Kings 11:9, 10, 19. c 2 Kings 11:20. Ps. 58:10. Prov. 11:10. Rev. 18:20. 19:2-4. a 2 Kings 11:21. 12:1. Joash. 1 Chr. 3:11. b 25:2. 26:4, 5. 2 Kings 12:2. Ps. 75:35, 37. 106:12, 13. Mark 4:16, 17. c 17-22. d Gen. 21:21. 24:4. e Gen. 4:

as some have supposed, be the king's pillar. (*Marg. Ref. a. 1 Kings 7:21.*)—Singers, &c. (13) *Marg. Ref.* It is observable, that this particular is noted in Chronicles, and not in Kings; in which the appointment of the sacred Psalmody is not recorded. (*Comp. 1 Kings 8:1-11. with 2 Chr. 5:11-14. 1 Kings 8:62-66. with 2 Chr. 7:1-10.*)—Jehoiada, (16) Jehoiada, as priest, and probably high-priest, represented God in this solemn transaction.—The officers. (18) The arrangements made by David, as to the worship and attendance at the temple, had been wholly disregarded; but were restored by Jehoiada. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord commonly effects great and important changes by those persons whom he has furnished with wisdom, courage, piety, and integrity; and who intend to do his will and promote his glory, and not to advance their own interests.—In the greatest emergencies, care ought to be taken that sacred things be not profaned; and that every one concur in a manner consistent with his character and calling; and as ministers are by profession holy persons, they should be careful to exhibit holy examples.—Civil transactions should be managed with a regard to the word and worship of God; and while men's hearts overflow with good wishes for their princes, commendations of them, or joy in their advancement; they should remember to conduct and terminate all in thanksgivings and praises unto God. This is peculiarly becoming, when persecuting tyrants and usurpers are removed and equitable rulers come in their places; the work is the Lord's, whatever instruments he is pleased to employ. Such national mercies should be acknowledged by public reformation: and by a concurrence of all ranks, in solemnly yielding themselves up to be the Lord's people, and in establishing his worship and ordinances according to his word. Where this is neglected, the joy and singing, which takes place upon great deliverances,

19. Matt. 19:4-8. r Heb. receive. 5-7. f 29:3. 31:8, 9. 2 Kings 12:1, 5. g 2 Kings 12:6, 7. h 2 Sam. 24:3. i Ex. 30:12-16. k Num. 1:50. 17:7. 18:2. Acts 7:44. 12:17. m 29:22-24. Esth. 7:6. Prov. 10:7. 2 Thim. 2:8. Rev. 2:20. n Deut. 32:15-17. Ex. 16:17-19-21. Dan. 5:2-4-23. How. 2:3-9. o 2 Kings 12:8, 9. Mark 12:41. 1 Heb. voice. p See on 6. Matt. 17:24-27. q 1 Chr. 29:9. Is. 64:5. Acts 2:45-47. 2 Cor. 8:2. r 2 Kings 12:10-12. a 34-9-11. 1 Kings 5:15. 1 Heb. the heaving went up upon the work by their hands. Neh. 4:7. u 1 Chr. 22:5. Hag. 2:3. Mark 13:1, 2. x 2 Kings 12:13, 14. y 1 Kings 7:50. z Or, pestile. Prov. 27:22.

or the accession of kings to the throne, will commonly be short-lived, and will terminate in complaints, and discords, and calamities.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIV. V. 1-3. *Note, 2 Kings 12: 2, 3.*—*Took, &c.* (3) The Jewish expositors are of opinion, that Jehoiada took these two wives for himself, not for Joash; and they consider this as inconsistent with the character of the high-priest. But it is most obvious to understand the words for him, of Joash; and Jehoiada's advanced age, at this time, renders it highly improbable that he should take them for himself; for he must, on any computation, have been above a hundred years old, when Joash began to reign. (*Note, 15, 16.*) Nor are any sons of Jehoiada mentioned afterwards, except such as were grown up.—It is not indeed expressly said that Jehoiada was high-priest, but the way in which he is distinguished from the other priests, and the authority which he exercised, seem to put it beyond all reasonable doubt that he was.

V. 4-14. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Kings 12:4-16.*—*Hasten, &c.* (5) Things were in so bad a condition, that it required the work should be begun with speed. Yet such was the negligence of the Levites, and the backwardness perhaps of the people to part with their money, that in the twenty-third year of this king's reign nothing was done.¹ *Bp. Patrick.*

The sons of Athaliah, &c. (7) Jehoram's sons, Athaliah excepted, whether by Athaliah, or his other wives, were slain before his death. (22:1.) But either his sons by Athaliah, during his lifetime, or her sons by some other man, as many suppose, had thus spoiled the temple to consecrate its treasures to Baalim.—*All the princes, &c.* (10) The great men set so good an example to the people, that they cheerfully joined with them in this good work.² *Bp. Patrick.*

And they offered, &c. (14) It appears from this, that the daily offering, morning and evening, had been intermitted

And they offered burnt-offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada. **E. C.]** 15 ¶ But Jehoiada waxed old, and was ^{945.} full of days when he died; a hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.

16 And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.

[Practical Observations.]

17 ¶ Now after the death of Jehoiada came **E. C.]** the princes of Judah, and made obeisance ^{940.} to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them.

18 And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

19 Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them; but they would not give ear.

20 And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.

E. Ex. 29:38—42. **Num.** 28:2, &c. **a 2.** **b Gen.** 15:15, 25:8. **1 Chr.** 23:1, 3:26. **Ps.** 31:15. **c Gen.** 47:9. **2.** **90:10.** **d 1 Sam.** 2:30. **1 Kings** 2:10. **Acts** 2:22. **e 23:31** 20:21. **Neh.** 13:14. **Heb.** 6:10. **(Deut.** 31:27. **Acts** 20:23, 30. **2 Pet.** 1:15. **g 10:18—10.** 22:3, 4. **Prov.** 7:21—23. 20:19. 26:28. 29:2. **Dan.** 11:32. **h 1:13.** 33:3—7. **1 Kings** 11:4, 5, 14:9, 23. **1:19.** 29:13, 29:6. **Josh.** 23:20. **Judg.** 5:8. **2 Sam.** 21:1. **Ho.** 5:10, 11. **g 36:15.** 16. **3 Kings** 1:15. **Neh.** 9:36. **Jer.** 7:25, 26. 35:4, 5. 44:4, 5. **Luke** 11:47—51. 16:31. 20:9—15. **1 Jo.** 28:23. 42:23. 51:4. 55:3. **Matt.** 13:9, 15:16. **m 18:1.** 20:14. **Heb. clothed.** **Judg.** 6:31. **1 Chr.** 12:18. **margins.** **n 23:11.** **o Num.** 14:41. **1 Sam.** 13:14.

previously; and that it was neglected after the death of Jehoiada. (*Notes*, 23:18, 19. *Ex.* 29:38—41. *Dan.* 8:9—12. *11:31.* 12:11—13.)

V. 15, 16. Jehoiada was born in the reign of Solomon, and had lived through six successive reigns, besides Athaliah's usurpation; namely, those of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah. He was honourably interred among the kings of Judah; but the reason assigned for this extraordinary respect was much more honourable; and perhaps it was inscribed on his monument: "He has done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house." He had eminently promoted true religion, and promoted the regular worship of God, and the repairs of the temple; in which the best interests of the people were greatly concerned. He had also been exceedingly useful in preserving the line of David in the person of Joash, and in terminating Athaliah's wicked usurpation. (*Note*, 31:20, 21.)—Israel, the general name of the whole nation, is sometimes used when the kingdom of Judah is meant.

V. 17, 18. Jehoiada had acquired his influence over Joash during his childhood; and his near relation to the king, and the immense obligations, which he had conferred upon him, concurred with his age, gravity, reputation, piety, and wisdom, to support him in authority. So that, while he lived, neither Joash, nor his courtiers, ventured to follow, or even to declare, their inclinations to idolatry; but externally conformed to Jehoiada's regulations. As soon, however, as he was removed by death, they threw off the mask; and the nobles paid court to Joash, and perhaps flattered him, as at length freed from priestly dominion, tuition, grave lectures, and restraints, and as now a king indeed, and intimated, that he would have no objection to release the rigour of Jehoiada's administration, in matters of religion. Perhaps, they only proposed, that he should tolerate their sacrificing upon the high places, as more convenient and agreeable to them, than always coming to Jerusalem: but he, being won by their homage, as well as induced by his own inclinations, joined with them even in more gross and avowed idolatry; in consequence of which, they soon experienced the tokens of the divine displeasure. (*Note*, 2 Kings 12:17, 18.)

V. 19—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) Both the king and his courtiers seem to have contemptuously disregarded the warnings of the prophets, first sent to them; so that they did not honour them even with hatred or persecution. But, at length, when they were assembled on account of some festival; (for the temple was not utterly forsaken;) the Spirit of God directed Zechariah to expostulate with them respecting their idolatry. Being the son of Jehoiada, a near relation to Joash, a chief priest, if not the high-priest, he seemed to be the most unexceptionable person, who could possibly have been selected for the service; while his piety, and the meekness and reasonableness of his plain address and warning, combined in entitling him to a favourable hearing, and evidenced his admonition to be seasonable. "The Spirit of God clothed him." (*marg.*) "He had a divine motion to speak publicly to the people and to reprove them, which that he might do and be heard of, he got up into a high place, where they might all both see and hear him." *Bp. Patrick.* But all this was in vain; the enraged

21 And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord.

22 Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.

23 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.

24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash.

25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings.

26 And here are they that conspired against

2 Sam. 12:9, 10. **Zech.** 7:11—14. **p 15:2.** **Deut.** 29:25, 26. **1 Chr.** 28:9. **Jer.** 2:19. 4:15. 5:13, 25. **q Jer.** 11:19. 13:18. 38:4—6. **r Matt.** 21:35. 23:34—37. **Acts** 7:55, 59. **s Ps.** 109:4. **Luke** 17:15—18. **John** 10:29. **t Gen.** 9:5. **Jer.** 11:20. 25:14. **2 Tim.** 4:14. **Rev.** 6:5—11. 13:20. 19:2, 3. **u Heb.** in the revolution. **1 Kings** 20:23, 35. **v Deut.** 32:35. **x Kings** 12:17, 18. **x 17:18.** **Ps.** 2:10, 11. 58:10, 11. 82:6, 7. **y Heb.** *Da musak.* **y Lev.** 26:8. **Deut.** 32:30. **Isa.** 30:17. **Jer.** 37:10. **z Jo.** 9:20, 11:19. **Luke** 36:25, 26. **2 Cor.** 12:2. **Isa.** 10:6. 13:5. **Abab.** 12:1. **b 21:10.** 22:19. **c 2 Kings** 12:20. 14:19, 20. **d 21:22.** **Ps.** 10:14. **Rev.** 16:5. **e 16:12.** 20:27.

apostate, who hated reproof, ordered him to be stoned, and the unprincipled people, as if joined in a preconcerted conspiracy against God and his servants, with one accord executed the unrighteous sentence, even in the court of the temple! (23:14, 15. *Note*, 2 Kings 11:13—16.)—It is scarcely possible that a murder could contain more aggravated injustice and impiety: but the ingratitude of Joash is peculiarly noticed. Many, who have cast off all fear of God, retain some regard to their earthly benefactors; but this base man was lost to every thing, which had the least semblance of good.—Zechariah's dying words would be best rendered, "The Lord will look upon it and require it;" as a prophecy, and not a prayer (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, *Matt.* 23:29—36.) The event soon verified this prediction. (*Note*, 23:24.) It is likely that he was a younger son of Jehoiada. ... Ludovicius Capellus therefore thinks, that his brother the high-priest conniving at Joash's apostasy, this younger brother was inspired of God to reprove it, which boldness Joash and his courtiers thought they might punish with some colour, ... which they stirred up the people to chastise. ... Though Zechariah spoke by the Spirit of God, he only applied the prediction of Moses (*Deut.* 31:16, 17.) to the present time; that they might all learn to have a greater regard to Moses, and continually meditate in his law; unto which if they had attended, they would easily have discerned, who were true prophets, and who were false. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 23, 24. (*Note*, 17:18.) A small company sent by Hazael plundered Jerusalem, and sent the spoil to Hazael at Damascus. They likewise "destroyed all the princes of the people;" the very persons who seduced Joash into idolatry. (17.) So that the judgment of God executed by them, singled out the principal criminals, as appointed to death. "They executed judgment, (or judgments) against Joash" also.—That so small an army should obtain so decided a victory over all the power of Judah, and the strength of Jerusalem; showed that the punishment was immediately from God himself, who forsook them, and "delivered a very great host into the hand of the Syrians;" because they had so wickedly forsaken him.

V. 25, 26. (*Note*, 2 Kings 12:20, 21.) "Many think he was sorely wounded in the battle, which brought him into great diseases, and they increased, it is likely, by the anguish of his mind, to see his country ruined; and by the hatred and contempt into which he was fallen." *Bp. Patrick.* Joash seems to have murdered some other sons of Jehoiada, perhaps lest they should avenge the death of Zechariah.—Whether the conspirators intended to punish Joash for this murder, or were actuated by private resentment or ambition; God was pleased to use them as executioners of his righteous vengeance. They were both born of foreign women: the idolatrous kings perhaps encouraged such forbidden marriages; but in this case they proved fatal to Joash. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. *Burdens, &c.]* Either the tribute demanded by the victor; or the judgments denounced and inflicted by the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16. The best education, the most scriptural instructions, and the brightest examples, are insufficient of

nim; ² Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of ³ Shimrith a Moabitess.

²⁷ ¶ Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the Kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXV.

Amaziah at first reigns well, and justly punishes his father's murderers, 1-4. He gathers a great army, and hires, for a hundred talents, a hundred thousand Israelites against Edom; but, having paid the money, he dismisses them at the word of a prophet; and they depart in great anger, 5-10. He smites the Edomites, and exercises great cruelty towards the captives, 11, 12. The Israelites, on their return, spoil the cities of Judah, 13. Amaziah serves the gods of Edom, and rejects the admonitions of a prophet, 14-16. He challenges Jonah, who in vain warns him: he is unquieshed, and Jerusalem spoiled, 17-24. The rest of his reign, 25, 26. He is slain by a conspiracy, 27, 28.

AMAZIAH was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.

3 ¶ Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father.

4 But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall

not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

5 ¶ Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.

6 He hired also a hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.

7 But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim.

8 But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.

9 And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

* Or, Jnanchar. 2 Kings 12:21. † Or, Shomer. ‡ 2 Kings 12:18. § Heb. founding. 13. § Or, commentary. 9:29. 16:11. 20:34. ¶ 25:1. 1 Chr. 3:12. 2 Kings 14:1-3. b 14. 24. 2. 26:4. 1 Sam. 16:7. Ps. 78:37. Is. 29:13. Hos. 10. 2. Acts 8:21. * Heb. confirmed upon him. c 24:25, 26. Gen. 9:5, 6. Ex. 21:14. Num. 35:31-33. d 11:21. 14:5. 2 Kings 14:5. ver. 31, 29, 30. Ez. 18:4, 20. e Ex. 18:25. 1 Sam. 8:12. 1 Chr. 13:1. 27:1. ¶ Num. 13. § 11:1. 14:8. 17:

14-18. h 2 Sam. 12:1. 1 Kings 13:1. 1 Tim. 6:11. 2 Tim. 3:17. i 13:12. 19:2. 1 Kings 12:28. ts. 26:1-3. Hos. 5:13-15. 9:13. k 18:14. Ec. 11:9. Is. 8:9, 10. Joel 3:9-11. Matt. 26:45. l 14:11. Judg. 7:7. 1 Sam. 14:6. Job 5:18. 9:13. Ps. 20:7. 83:16-20. ¶ Heb. band. m 1:12. Deut. 8:18. Prov. 10:22. Hag. 2:3. Luke 18:29, 30.

themselves to convert the soul; they are, however, the general means by which the Lord works; and even, when not eventually successful to change the sinner's heart, they commonly produce effects salutary to the community.—Hypocrites often show extraordinary zeal for externals, but they foolishly neglect the heart.—The reluctance of men to part with their money, for pious and charitable uses, is increased by the avarice of many, through whose hands it should pass, and who basely intercept it: but exact fidelity and punctuality, in showing that it has been, or will be, expended for the end proposed, go far towards inducing men to contribute liberally in a good cause; and this alone can afford comfort upon reflection, or bring honour upon a man's character.—If we live to the glory of God, and endeavour to do good to men, especially in the great concerns of salvation; we may be satisfied that we have lived long enough, though we should die young; or we may be willing to linger out many years in infirm old age, if the Lord has any thing for us to do. But, whenever or however we pass from time into eternity, may we leave such a testimony in the consciences of our survivors, that if they were required to make an inscription for our tomb, they might be constrained to write; "He did good to Israel, both toward God, and toward his house." It is true, that many, who are over-awed by the personal qualities, the rank, or the reputation of eminent men, secretly hate their piety, and are weary of their authority. But a good conscience, the assurance of usefulness, and the approbation of God, may enable a man to disregard these painful effects of superior excellency.

V. 17-27. The authority or influence of parents, ministers, and pious friends, joined with transient serious impressions, and other incidental circumstances, may produce, and long maintain, a plausible profession of religion: but the lamp will go out when it is especially wanted; unless supplied from the oil in the vessel, the grace of God possessing the heart. (Notes, and P. O. Matt. 25:1-13.)—When a man is under the power of pride and worldly passions, he relishes those counsels, from which he has received the most important temporal advantage, and which tend to his eternal good: and then flattery, licentious liberty, arbitrary authority, and the most impious proposals, will be more welcome, because congenial to his judgment and affections. But he, who has not sense to direct his own conduct, and is too proud to take good advice, will soon be proved a fool, let who will flatter his wisdom.—"This is the love of God, to keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." Yet the yoke of external obedience is very uneasy to the carnal mind; and, in this case, men will secretly rejoice, and perhaps openly congratulate one another, upon the death of pious monitors, or even parents. But impiety brings wrath, especially when consequent to apostasy, on such as cast off the fear of God.—No caution, tenderness, or gentleness, consistent with faithfulness; no respectability of character, eminent services, or personal obligations, can secure the ministers of God from persecution, if they rouse the dormant conscience, contradict the haughty spirit, or excite disquietude in sin: and, except their word be accompanied with the converting grace of God, the sinner will rage, in proportion to his power, pride, or impiety.—Some regard to justice, decency, and gratitude, may be expected from ignorant and

profligate characters, and from infidels and heathen idolaters: but the rage of an apostate bursts all obligations and restraints; for he has so done violence to his conscience, that it has lost all its energy; and except he be restrained by human laws, every thing desperate may be expected from his resentment. The testimony of faithful ministers will, however, be accepted by God, when rejected by men; and he will recompense to them all their losses and sufferings for his sake.—Those who transgress the commandments of the Lord, cannot prosper, whatever they may presumptuously suppose; and when they forsake God, he will forsake them. Without the spirit of prophecy, we may confidently foretell that the Lord will look upon, and require, all the persecutions, slanders, mockeries, and ill-usage, which his servants meet with, except their prayers be answered, and he give the persecutors repentance and better minds.—The Lord can soon find such as will, for their own purposes, execute judgment upon murderers, and other atrocious criminals, however exalted; nor can any power avail against those, into whose hands he delivers his enemies to be punished. Then, superiority in station only ensures precedence in suffering: and how dreadful is it when a painful and miserable death transmits the impenitent rebel to a more miserable eternity! God help us to be in earnest, to take warning, to be upright in heart, and to persevere unto the end! that, having lived by faith, and in humble, devoted obedience, we may at length "die the death of the righteous, and that our last end may be like his!"

NOTES.—CHAP. XXV. V. 1, 2. Notes, 14-16. 26: 4. 2 Kings 14:1-4.

V. 3, 4. (Notes, 24:25, 26.) Even if he conspirators against Joash intended to avenge upon him the murder of Zechariah, they acted without a commission from that God, "to whom vengeance belongeth;" and were justly put to death for treason and murder. (Note, 2 Kings 14:5, 6.)

V. 5. Nearly four times as many soldiers had been numbered in the days of Jehoshaphat. (Note, 17:13-19.) The inhabitants of the land must have vastly decreased during the late reigns, in consequence of their wickedness, and as a punishment of it. But, perhaps, numbers were unwilling to enlist under Amaziah: and either he did not attempt to force them, or they found means to evade his inquiries. His army, however, seems to have been sufficiently numerous to reduce the revolted Edomites, against whom he was preparing to make war. (11, 12.)

V. 6-10. If Amaziah had previously consulted God, all the painful consequences of the measure which he adopted would have been prevented.—As a hundred talents would not divide above eight shillings apiece, among one hundred thousand men; we may suppose that it was only an earnest of their pay, or that they expected to be enriched with the plunder of the Edomites.—The kingdom of Israel was openly idolatrous, and the Lord would not have Judah join alliance with them. Perhaps the army which Amaziah had hired, was chiefly of the tribe of Ephraim; or that tribe, being the most considerable in the kingdom of Israel, is put for the whole.—As the Lord was not with the men of Ephraim, he declared by his prophet that he would not prosper Amaziah, if he employed them: and if, after this prohibition, he would persist in taking them with him, he was warned, that God would make him fall before the enemy: for he could help him

10 Then Amaziah separated them, *to wit*, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.

12 And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces.

13 But the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.

14 ¶ Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.

15 Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thy hand?

16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

17 ¶ Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face.

18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon,

saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thy heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldst fall even thou, and Judah with thee?

20 But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom.

21 So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, both he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.

22 And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.

23 And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate, four hundred cubits.

24 And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

25 ¶ And Amaziah, the son of Joash king of Judah, lived after the death of Joash, son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel?

27 Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.

28 And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

n 1 Kings 12:24. * Heb. to their place. † Heb. bent of anger. 2 Sam. 19:43. Prov. 29:22. o 2 Sam. 8:13. 2 Kings 14:7. Ps. 60: title. p 2 Sam. 12:31. 1 Chr. 20:3. q 20:10, 21:8-10. † Heb. sons of the band. r 1 Kings 16:24, 25. s 8:5. 1 Kings 9:17. t 26:23. u Ex. 20:3-5; Deut. 7:5, 25. 2 Sam. 5:21. x 7:16-17. y 19:2-20:37. 2 Sam. 12:1-6. y 24:20. Judg. 2:2. Jer. 2:5. 2 Sa. 96:5. a 11. Ps. 115:4-8. Is. 41:9-10, 46:1, 2. Jer. 10:7. 1 Cor. 8:4, 10:20, 11:16, 18:23, 26:24. 21. Am. 7:10-13. Matt. 21:23. c Prov. 9:7, 8. Is. 30:10, 11. Jer. 25. 2 Tim. 4:3. Rev. 11:10. d Ex. 9:16. Deut. 3:30. 1 Sam. 2:25. Acts 4:22. Rom. 9:22. e Heb. counselled. 18:20, 21. Is. 46:10. Eph. 1:11. e 13:2. 2 Kings 14:9-14. f 2 Sam. 2:14. Prov. 20:3. g Or, surge-hush, or thorn. Judg. 9:8-15. 1 Kings 4:33. h Heb. a beast of the field. Ps. 80:13. g 26:16.

26:25. Deut. 8:14. Prov. 12:10, 16:18, 28:25. Dan. 5:20-23. Hab. 2:4. Jam. 4:6. 1 Pet. 5:5. h Jer. 9:23, 24. 1 Cor. 1:20. i 35:21. Prov. 18:6, 20:3, 26:17. Luke 14:31. k 16:32, 27. 1 Kings 12:15. Ps. 81:11, 12. Acts 23:25-27. 2 Thes. 2:9-11. 1 Pet. 2:8. l 17. m Josh. 21:16. 1 Sam. 6:9, 19:20. ** Heb. smitten. 28:5, 6. n 1 Sam. 4:10. 1 Kings 22:36. o 33:11, 36:6, 10. Prov. 16:18, 29:23. Dan. 4:37. Ob. 3. Luke 14:11. p 21:17, 22:1. Amaziah, 22:5. Azariah, q Neh. 8:16, 12:39. r 1 Heb. the gate of it that looketh. Jer. 31:38. r 12:8. 2 Kings 14:14. s 2 Kings 14:17. Jehoahaz. t 20:34. 2 Kings 14:15. † Heb. from after. ‡ Heb. conspired a conspiracy. 24:25. 2 Kings 14:19. u Josh. 10:31. x 2 Kings 14:20. city of David.

without the aid of idolaters; and he could cast him down, though he thus made himself "strong for the battle." (Notes, Is. 8:9, 10. Joel 3:9-17.) And as for the hundred talents, which he had given to the Israelites, and could not recover, and which he was unwilling to lose; the Lord was able to give him much more than that, and, as Grotius observes, he is rich enough, who is impoverished for God's sake. *Bp. Patrick*.—Amaziah, though destitute of true faith, paid so much regard to the Lord's message, that he discharged the hired army; and they were exceedingly offended at the affront put upon them, in being sent away as the enemies of God: and perhaps also by the disappointment of their avaricious or ambitious expectations.

V. 11, 12. (Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Kings 14:7.) No limitation is given, on what account, or for what provocation, this most cruel conduct towards the prisoners of war was adopted. The enmity between Israel and Esau seems to have been reciprocal, and deeply malignant. The victorious king and his army considered every individual of Edom, as a traitor and a rebel; and so adjudged them to death, and acted according to that judgment. But their conduct was wholly inexcusable, and could only perpetuate rancour to future generations, and provoke the surviving Edomites to cruel retaliations whenever they had it in their power.

V. 13. The Israelites seem to have returned home, when discharged by Amaziah, as his powerful army deterred them from attempting revenge at that time; but when he was engaged in war with the Edomites, they took the opportunity, marched from Samaria, and plundered all the cities till they came to Beth-horon, where they slew three thousand of the inhabitants.—Amaziah had indeed dismissed these auxiliaries in obedience to God; but his savage cruelty to the prisoners of Edom, and his subsequent idolatry, (Note, 14-16.) proved that he acted by constraint or terror, when he was obedient: he therefore received for his complicated misconduct a just rebuke. Had he broken the idols to pieces, and treated the prisoners with clemency; he might have expected comfort in his success, and not experienced such painful effects from

dismissing the Israelites.—Perhaps the cities, which were destroyed on this occasion, being in the vicinity of Israel, were infected with idolatry.

V. 14-16. Ahaz, who worshipped the idols of Syria by whom he was vanquished, was not so senseless as Amaziah, who sought unto the gods of Edom, which could not deliver them from his cruelty. (Note, 28:22, 23.) Perhaps Amaziah worshipped them from fear they should owe him a spite, and contrive some mischief against him, in revenge of what he had done against the Edomites. *Bp. Patrick*. But Amaziah, who had borne with the prophet, who spoke to him concerning dismissing the Israelites, by which he lost one hundred talents, was so mad upon his idols, that he would not endure that subject to be insisted on.—He seems to have menaced the prophet with Zechariah's doom; and thus he made himself a sharer in the guilt of that atrocious murder. (Note, 24:19-22.) The prophet was a counsellor, whom the Lord had appointed him; and none of those whom he had chosen for himself gave him such honest, wise, and salutary counsel. But, as he would not hearken to it, the prophet desisted, having most solemnly warned him that the Lord had counselled to destroy him. (Marg. Notes, 17-27. Deut. 2:30. 1 Kings 21:19-23. Luke 22:21-23. Acts 2:22-24.)

V. 17-24. Notes, 2 Kings 14:8-14.—Took advice, &c. (17.) Amaziah having rejected the counsel of God, advised with his flatterers; and they counselled him to make a foolish challenge, which paved the way for his ruin, to which he had been doomed for his obstinate idolatry.—To boast. (19.) "Glory of this." 2 Kings 14:10.—It came of God, &c. (20.) The people had joined in Amaziah's idolatry; and therefore suffered through his folly and vain glory. (Notes, 14-16. 2 Sam. 24:1, 2. 2 Kings 23:26, 27.) "God binds the minds of those whom he intends to destroy for their sins." *Bp. Patrick*.—Obed-edom. (21.) Perhaps a descendant of him who received the ark in the days of David, had the charge of these treasures in the house of God. (1 Chr. 13:13, 14.)

V. 25-27. (Note, 2 Kings 14:17-20.) No intimation is given, that Amaziah repented during the whole space of the

CHAPTER XXVI.

Uzziah succeeds Amaziah, reigns well for a time, and is greatly prospered. —8. His buildings, husbandry, army, and engines of war, 9—15. Being lifted up in pride he attempts to burn incense in the temple, is opposed by the priests, and smitten with leprosy by God, 16—21. He dies, and is succeeded by Jotham, 22, 23.

THEN ^aall the people of Judah took ^bUzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

² He built ^cEloth, and ^drestored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

³ Sixteen years old was ^eUzziah when he began

^a 22.1. 33.25. ^b 2 Kings 14:21. 15:1. 1 Chr. 3:12. ^c Azariah. Matt. 1:8.9. ^d Osoze. ^e 8:17. 2 Kings 14:22. 16:6. ^f Elah. ^g 23:25. ^h Is. 1:1. 6:1. ⁱ Hos. 1:1. Am. 1:1. Zech. 14:5. ^j 2 Kings 15:2.3. ^k Jecholiah. ^l g 25:2. ^m h 24:2. ⁿ Judg. 2:7.

Lord's long-suffering. Probably he added tyranny and oppression to his idolatry: and this, with his imprudent and unsuccessful administration, rendered him so odious, that he was slain, as it appears, by the general consent of his subjects, and no one was called to account for his death.—He was, however, buried with the other kings of Judah. (*Notes*, 21:18—20. 24:15, 16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10. Many favour and support religion from motives of policy, who either do not appear, or who only appear, to be religious; but the Lord has no pleasure in dissemblers.—Traitors and murderers are sometimes so powerful, as, for a time, to set justice at defiance; but they will at length find those who are able to execute righteous vengeance upon them. In every case, however, the law of God should be adhered to, as our perfect rule of duty.—Unrepented sin will inevitably and finally ruin every one who continues in it: and in like manner it will infallibly enfeeble those nations where it prevails, and diminish their prosperity and consequence. Princes and statesmen professing Christianity, when forming alliances, or stipulating succours from foreign courts, seldom inquire, whether “the Lord be with them?” or not. Indeed, the very question would too generally excite ridicule and disgust: and yet this will be found of far greater efficacy, in the success of wars, and the prosperity of kingdoms, than the most sagacious ungodly devices. It is indeed certain, that no enterprise, public or private, should be engaged in, without seeking to know the will of God concerning it; if we would avoid those distressing consequences, which often follow from even the most politic measures. But no confederates are so dangerous as apostates.—Success cannot reasonably be expected by those, who act in defiance of the divine commands: they may be “strong for the battle,” or for the business; but, if God is pleased “to make them fall,” their strength will avail nothing; for he has power to help, and to cast down: and if men prosper in presumptuous wickedness, their success is the prelude of their ruin.—When those who have not true faith, or a spiritual mind, are convinced of the sinfulness of any part of their conduct or pursuits, they always object to self-denying obedience; and seem to say, “But what shall we do, for the hundred talents?” “What shall we do, if, by hallooing the sabbath, we lose so many good customers?” What shall we do, if we renounce this illegal traffic and exorbitant profit, to compensate so important a loss? What shall we do, if we affront our friends, obstruct our preferment, or lose the friendship of the world? How shall we maintain our families? “What shall we eat?” or what shall we drink? or wherewith shall we be clothed?” Penny and distress face us in the way which you point out to us: we are almost persuaded it is the road to heaven: but what shall we do about the expenses of the journey? Here numbers stumble and turn aside, or endeavour to quiet their conscience in a vain pretence, that such and such practices are necessary in their case; that the precept must be dispensed with: in short, their meaning is, however they may disguise it from others, and even from themselves, that by them, circumstanced as they are, both God and Mammon may be served; and that they may be Christ's disciples without “denying themselves, taking up the cross, and forsaking all for him.” But the answer to such objections is obvious: “The Lord is able to give thee much more than this,” and he has promised to “add all other things” to those “who seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” yea, to make up a hundred fold, even in this present world, all that has been conscientiously renounced for his sake and the gospel: and we are “compassed about with an innumerable cloud of witnesses” of his faithfulness to this promise. Unbelief, however, will trust the Lord no further, than it can understand in what way he will fulfil his word: but faith approves the security, and gives him full credit for his truth, power, and love; and makes every sacrifice, and ventures every consequence, in dependence on his word, and in obedience to his command. He, who in this way is reduced to poverty, is enriched for ever; and he may set down his largest losses as his most certain gains, assured, that “no good thing will the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly.”—Yet, a single instance of self-denying obedience, performed on a sudden, under some vehement impression, does not prove that a man has true faith. A person, on a sudden emotion, might cut off his hand, for any cause, and upon reflection repent of it ever after: but the deliberate daily renouncing of the world, and opposing

to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

⁴ And he did ^athat which was right in the sight of the Lord, ^baccording to all that his father Amaziah did.

⁵ And ^che sought God in the days of Zechariah, who ^dhad understanding in the ^evisions of God: and, ^fas long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.

⁶ And he went forth and ^gwarred against the

^h Hos. 6:4. ⁱ Mark 4:16, 17. ^j Acts 2:30. ^k 1 Gen. 41:15. ^l Dan. 1:17. 2:19. 5:16. 10:1. ^m Heb. seeing of God. ⁿ k 15:2. 2:2. ^o 1 Chr. 22:11, 13. ^p Ps. 1:3. ^q 12:16. ^r Ja. 14:28.

our strongest sinful inclinations, (though as painful to part with as a right hand, or a right eye,) for the sake of the gospel, and in obedience to the Saviour, forms the constant evidence of an interest in him, and all his precious promises; (*Notes*, Phil. 3:1—11, v. 7—9.) and to some measure of this temper and conduct every true believer has attained. But, the behaviour of the mere professor of true religion will frequently detect the hypocrisy of his obedience in particular instances, and justify God in punishing his other crimes, by the very consequences of that obedience.

V. 11—28. Those who are evidently and consciously *irreligious*, are yet often much offended with being treated as such: and affronted pride, united with disappointed rapacity kindles a resentment, from which the most fatal effects may be expected.—Abused mercies occasion man's most aggravated wickedness, and accelerate his ruin: so that, when we are prospered by Providence, we should be peculiarly careful, what return we make for the goodness of God, and what use we make of his bounty.—“The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel,” and none are so imperious and inhuman towards those who oppose their will, as they who dare to bid defiance to the authority of the Almighty.—The absurdities of superstition and idolatry, to which the human race has in all ages shown so strange a propensity, are as disgraceful to the understanding as to the heart: and if we did but consider how unavailing those worldly objects, which we are apt to idolize, have always proved, to the peace, safety, and happiness of their possessors; the reflection must check our eager pursuits of wealth, honour, or sensual pleasure; or at least show them to be as irrational, as the worship of useless, helpless idols.—They, who are mad upon their lusts, will not bear control or counsel: and he, who would expostulate with them for their good, may expect to be treated as impertinent, intermeddling, or insolent: especially if an inferior venture to admonish, in the name of the Lord, sinners of superior rank and station. These, indeed, seem generally to claim it as one of their prerogatives, to walk unmolested in “the broad way that leadeth to destruction,” and ridicule or menaces will be the recompense of him, who dares to warn them that it is a dangerous road. But, after all the contempt and obloquy to which such *counsellors* are exposed, the event demon-strates, that princes generally hearken to those who are far worse: and, though assuming churchmen have often disgraced their profession; yet no man, from the throne to the almshouse, will have cause to repent attending to the warnings, instructions, and counsel of the few, who honestly declare the truth and will of God, without courting the favour, fearing the frown, or respecting the person of any man. If, however, mild, serious, rational, and scriptural reproof is proudly rejected and resented, we are not required further to urge our admonitions, but must desist, by plainly giving men to understand what the consequence will be.—When the remonstrances of conscience are silenced, and the ministers of God are rejected and menaced, it is to be feared that he has determined upon the sinner's destruction; and if he also says, “Let him alone,” “my Spirit shall not always strive with him;” he will be given up to stolid delusion, to increasing vain confidence, infatuated projects, rash intermeddling, and obstinate perseverance in a course of folly, till the measure of his wickedness is filled up, and “destruction from the Almighty” comes upon him. Thus “a man's pride shall bring him low;” his ruin may be dated from his turning away from the Lord; and the longer he is spared, the more will he “treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who shall render to every man according to his works.” May the Lord preserve us from this dreadful doom, and prepare our hearts to receive his truth, to welcome his counsels and reproofs, and obediently to submit to his authority, and do his will!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—3. *Notes*, 2 Kings 14:21, 22. 15:1—7, v. 1—5.

V. 4. Uzziah, or Azariah, began his reign much better than he ended it, as Amaziah had done. But he seems to have supported the worship of God all his days; and he is never charged with idolatry, or any kind of immorality. (*Notes*, 25:14—16. 2 Kings 14:3, 4.) His reign must therefore have been very happy for his people, and favourable to the interests of religion, though the close of it proved disgraceful to himself.

V. 5. It is not known of what tribe or family this Zechariah was; though some conjecture, that he was the son of

Philistines, and brake down "the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

7 And "God helped him against the Philistines, and against "the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Mehunims.

8 And "the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and "his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt: for he strengthened himself exceedingly.

9 Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the "corner-gate, and at "the valley-gate, and at "the turning of the wall, and "fortified them.

10 Also he built towers in the desert, and "dugged many wells: for "he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vine-dressers in the mountains, and in "Carmel: for he loved "husbandry.

11 Moreover, Uzziah had a host of fighting men, that "went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains.

12 The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred.

13 And under their hand was "an army, "three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

14 And Uzziah prepared for them, throughout all the host, shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and "slings to cast stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by "cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name "spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

[Practical Observations.]

in 2 Sam. 8:1. 1 Chr. 18:1. * Or, in the country of Ashdod. 1 Sam. 5:1. 6. 14:11. 1 Chr. 5:20. 12:18. Ps. 18:29, 34, 35. Acts 26:22. o 17:11. 21:16. 20:1. Gen. 18:35. Deut. 19:15-18. 1 Sam. 11:1. q Gen. 12:2. 9 Sam. 8:13. 1 Kings 4:31. Matt. 4:24. 1 Heb. sent. r 25:23. 2 Kings 14:13. Jer. 31:38. Zech. 14:10. s Neh. 2:13. 3:13. t Neh. 3:20, 24. 1 Or, repaired. 5 Or, cut out many cities. Gen. 26:18-21. o 2 Kings 3:4. 1 Chr. 27:26-31. 6 Or, fruitful fields. 2 Kings 19:33. Is. 28:17. 7 Heb. ground. x 2 Kings 5:2. 9 Heb. the power of an army. y 11:1. 13:5. 14:8. 17:14-19. 1 Heb. stones of slings. Judg. 20:16. 1 Sam. 17:49. s 2:7, 14. Ex. 31:4. 11 Heb.

that Zechariah whom Joash murdered. This, however, would be a singular instance in Scripture, of a son called by his father's name.—He was perhaps endowed with a peculiar gift in distinguishing between those, who are actually favoured with prophetic visions, and those who only pretended to be so. (1 Cor. 12:10.) At least he was well acquainted with divine things, an intelligent, prudent, pious, and heavenly-minded man; and an instructor, or counsellor, to Uzziah, who prospered by hearkening to his admonitions; whilst Amaziah, who had scorned to be counselled by a prophet, followed advice which brought him to destruction. (Notes, 25:14-24.) Had Zechariah been spared, he might perhaps have dissuaded Uzziah from that fatal attempt, which he afterwards made. (Note, 16-23.)

V. 6-9.—These verses contain some particulars, in which Uzziah, by the special help and blessing of God, was greatly prospered, while he adhered strictly to the worship of God according to the law. (Marg. Ref.)—He demolished all the fortifications of his enemies on the frontiers, and provided his own frontiers with works, garrisons, arms, and engines of war. . . . These Mehunims were a people in Arabia deserta. Bp. Patrick. Jabneh not mentioned elsewhere, nor Gur-baal.—"He built cities about Ashdod," or "in the country of Ashdod." (Marg.)—In the days of his father, the wall of Jerusalem had been broken down "to the corner-gate." (25:23.) and Uzziah not only repaired it, but added towers and fortifications to secure it.

V. 10. Towers.] These towers seem to have been built in the desert, for the protection of Uzziah's shepherds and flocks, from the depredations of the Arabian freebooters and others, upon whom he seems to have retaliated. (11)—A prince can hardly have a more rational, inoffensive, and indeed useful recreation from public business, than these rural occupations. (Notes, 1 Kings 4:7-19. 1 Chr. 27:25-31.)

In Carmel.] "Not . . . the famous mount of that name, (for that was not in the tribe of Judah,) but a very fertile country, as the word Carmel signifies in several places. Is. 16:10. Jer. 2:7. 48:33. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Notes, 1 Sam. 25:2. 2 Kings 19:23. Is. 35:1, 2.)

V. 11-15. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 6-9. 14:6-8. 17:13-19. 25:5.)—God aided him so wonderfully in all his undertakings, that he feared no enemy. . . . How hard it is to bear great prosperity with moderation and humble thankfulness! Bp. Patrick.

V. 16-23. Uzziah had been remarkably prospered in

16 ¶ But "when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and "went into the temple of the LORD "to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And "Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were "valiant men:

18 And they "withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth "not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but "to the priests, the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; "neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.

19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censor in his hand to burn incense: and while "he was wroth with the priests, "the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense-altar.

20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself "hasted also to go out, because "the LORD had smitten him.

21 And "Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and "dwelt in a "several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

22 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, "first and last, did "Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

23 So Uzziah "slept with his fathers, and "they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

22 Sam. 8:1. 1 Chr. 18:1. * Or, in the country of Ashdod. 1 Sam. 5:1. 6. 14:11. 1 Chr. 5:20. 12:18. Ps. 18:29, 34, 35. Acts 26:22. o 17:11. 21:16. 20:1. Gen. 18:35. Deut. 19:15-18. 1 Sam. 11:1. q Gen. 12:2. 9 Sam. 8:13. 1 Kings 4:31. Matt. 4:24. 1 Heb. sent. r 25:23. 2 Kings 14:13. Jer. 31:38. Zech. 14:10. s Neh. 2:13. 3:13. t Neh. 3:20, 24. 1 Or, repaired. 5 Or, cut out many cities. Gen. 26:18-21. o 2 Kings 3:4. 1 Chr. 27:26-31. 6 Or, fruitful fields. 2 Kings 19:33. Is. 28:17. 7 Heb. ground. x 2 Kings 5:2. 9 Heb. the power of an army. y 11:1. 13:5. 14:8. 17:14-19. 1 Heb. stones of slings. Judg. 20:16. 1 Sam. 17:49. s 2:7, 14. Ex. 31:4. 11 Heb.

every thing; but pride, instead of gratitude, was fostered by it: so that, deeming himself at least as much favoured as the priests were, he thought it a reproach to him to be excluded from any part of the temple, or the worship of God.—Burning incense was the most honourable part of the sacerdotal office, and of that he became ambitious. (Note, Lev. 10:1, 2.) The law had forbidden any, but the priests of the family of Aaron, to enter the sanctuary, or to burn incense; and the fate of Korah and his company, was an awful example upon record, of the consequences to be expected from violating that statute. (Notes, Num. 16:17.) But perhaps Uzziah was tempted to disbelieve these ancient records, imagining that they had been falsified by the priests to keep up their own consequence; or that the law was now become obsolete: and he might be confirmed in this, by considering that nothing of the kind had taken place for many centuries. Thus "his heart was lifted up to his destruction;" his crime exposed him to eternal destruction, as well as present death; and though he was respited, yet his remaining days were spent, as it were, in a lingering ignominious execution.—None of the former kings of Judah had attempted to burn incense in the temple; none, perhaps, to invade the sacerdotal office in any way: though many of them had offended by forsaking the worship of God. Had Uzziah contented himself with imitating David, Solomon, and Jehoshaphat, in instructing, and praying with and for his people, he would have done commendably.—The idolatrous kings indeed burned incense to their idols, and it seems he took them for his pattern in this instance, though he would not forsake the God of Israel. (Note, Kings 13:1.)—Azariah and the other priests behaved nobly on this occasion: (Note, 2 Kings 16:10-16.) they opposed the king's design, not with violence or reproachful language, but with plain scriptural remonstrances, precepts, and counsels; and by warning him, that his attempt would expose him to disgrace from the LORD God. (Note, 1 Chr. 6:15-15, v. 10.) Yet he was insensible to their arguments, and enraged by their faithful opposition: and Josephus writes that he threatened them with death, when an extraordinary earthquake preceded his being smitten with leprosy. (Notes, Amos 1:1. Zech. 14:4, 5.) But, however that might be, when he found that this divine judgment was inflicted upon him, and was conspicuous in his forehead, he became sensible of his sin and danger, and yielded to the priests who hurried him out of the sanctuary,

CHAPTER XXVII.

Jotham reigns well and prospers, 1, 2. His building, 3, 4. He subdues the Ammonites, 5, 6. He dies, and is succeeded by Ahaz, 7-9.

JOTHAM was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

2 And ^bhe did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit, ^che entered not into the temple of the LORD. And ^dthe people did yet corruptly.

3 He built the high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of Ophel he built much.

4 Moreover ^ehe built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

5 ^fHe fought also with the king of the Am-

¹ 2 Kings 15:32-33. ² 1 Chr. 3:12. ³ Is. 1:1. ⁴ Hos. 1:1. ⁵ Mic. 1:1. ⁶ Matt. 1:9. ⁷ *Jotham* b 26:4. ⁸ 2 Kings 15:34. ⁹ c 26:16-21. ¹⁰ Ps. 119:120. ¹¹ Acts 5:13. ¹² 2 Kings 15:35. ¹³ e 23:15, 20. ¹⁴ Jer. 50:2. ¹⁵ * Or, the tower. 33:14. ¹⁶ Neh. 3:26. ¹⁷ f 11:5-10, 14, 17.

yea hastened to retreat, perhaps dreading still further judgments. It pleased God to continue this stigma upon him during the remainder of his life: and, in consequence, he was excluded from the precincts of the temple; from society, except that of the priests into whose office he had intruded; and from the exercise of his regal authority. It is not said how long this occurred before his death: but the age of Jotham, when he began to reign, implies, that it was late in Uzziah's reign, before he was smitten with the leprosy: and his reign must be considered as a very prosperous one for his kingdom. But, by aspiring after that honour which did not belong to him, he lost all his dignity and reputation, and was, in some sense, degraded beneath the meanest of his subjects, and even after his death, notwithstanding his good and prosperous reign, he was, as a leper, excluded from the sepulchres of the kings.—Yet the long-suffering of God gave him space for repentance: and his patient and quiet submission to this severe rebuke, and to all its most painful consequences, (as they must have been to so honourable and prosperous a monarch,) forms no inconsiderable proof of his repentance; and implies that his retirement was well improved, and his death happy. (2 Kings 15:1-7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-15. Wise and pious instructors are an invaluable treasure to young people; especially to those who are advanced to exalted stations, and who are generally poisoned with the flattery of interested sycophants and dependents. Yet, unless they seek and serve God from an inward principle of piety; they will at length lose, or shake off, their preceptors and their religion together.—Many have experienced, and some have confessed, that, when they paid regard to the service of God, they prospered; but that every thing went wrong, from the time they grew negligent in religion. Indeed, external prosperity does not now so uniformly attend godliness, as it did in the case of Israel: yet every undertaking will succeed with the true Christian, as far as it is good for him; and God will help and prosper him in his spiritual warfare, in proportion to the simplicity of his dependence and obedience.—No lawful business will be the worse managed, or prove less pleasant to any man, on account of his diligence in the service of God, if he have learned to arrange his temporal and spiritual concerns in due order.—It would be happy for mankind, if able and powerful monarchs took more delight, and spent more of their leisure hours, in rural occupations, which are manly, useful, and truly honourable: but hitherto man's chief ambition, exertion, and ingenuity, have been directed to the destruction of his own species! If, however, it must be a part of his occupation to invent and forge instruments of destruction, and of shortening the already contracted duration of human life; surely these should be used only in self-defence, or in avenging the turbulent spirits of those public depredators, who cannot otherwise be prevented from disturbing the world.

V. 16-23. It is written, as with a sunbeam, that prosperity is most dangerous to fallen man. Some are "lifted up" by it "to their destruction," others to their deep disgrace and lasting distress; and we have all more cause to pray to be preserved from its fascinating influence, than from the depth of poverty, or from the anguish of the severest disappointment and afflictions.—The narrow way is one and straight; but the paths of transgression are numerous and various: and new ones are continually struck out, by the perverse ingenuity and presumption of rebellious man. Extremes are on every side. To avoid enthusiasm and credulity, men become profane and infidel; and, in shunning infidelity, they rush into superstition. Those who are not chargeable with immorality or gross profaneness, may yet provoke the Lord by their hypocrisy or self-righteous pride. We are not indeed, at present, kept at that awful distance from sacred things, which the people of God formerly were: yet let us not suppose, that we are in no danger of offending in this way. The sacred ministry may be intruded into, with a presumption and impiety bordering upon sacrilege and blasphemy; while mercenary and ungodly men make those

monies, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year a hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year, and the third.

6 So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God.

7 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

9 ¶ And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

26:9, 10. ^g Josh. 14:12, 13. ^h Luke 1:39. ⁱ 20:1. ^j Judg. 11:4, &c. ^k 2 Sam. 10:1-14. ^l Jer. 49:1-6. ^m Heb. *Thus*. ⁿ Or, established. 19:3. ^o 1 Sam. 26:22, 23. 32:32, 33. ^p 2 Kings 15:36, 38.

professions, engagements, and protestations, in the presence of God, "for filthy lucre's sake," which they deride as enthusiastic or superstitious! The Lord's table may be approached in hypocrisy, pride, unbelief, and impenitency; or even as a step to preferment, by infidels and debauchees who are the slaves to every lust! and in many ways men may be guilty of most awful and presumptuous profanations. Against these abuses the ministers of God must caution all persons, however wealthy, honourable, or powerful, with plain declarations of the truths and precepts of Scripture, and solemn warnings respecting the consequences of transgression. Yet, alas! few are found, who are *valiant men*, that dare, in meekness and faithfulness, oppose the powerful who attempt the most scandalous profanations; and venture all the consequences of their displeasure in refusing to concur in them. But the Lord will assuredly stand by those few, and mark their opposers with evident tokens of his anger.—No wonder that ungodly men are so enraged at opposition from the ministers of God; for even believers at some times cannot endure it. But his rebuke brings them to themselves, and they then make haste to renounce their wayward purposes; submit patiently to his severest corrections; and are humbled for the pride of their hearts. And, whatever humiliating or disgraceful events take place; however we may be excluded from the earthly courts of the Lord, the communion of his saints, and the comforts of society; if we are brought to true repentance, and at length obtain eternal life, we shall bless God for the whole. (Notes, and P. O. Dan. 4:28-37.) But the Lord always resists the proud; and contempt, either on earth or in hell, is the never-failing consequence of self-confidence and arrogance. When, however, the Lord sees good to throw prosperous and useful men aside, as a broken vessel; if he raises up their children, or other able persons, to fill their places, that the community be not losers, they may rejoice in renouncing all worldly concerns, and in employing the remnant of their days in preparing for death and heaven.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.* 2 Kings 15:32-36.—*He entered not.* (1.) Jotham imitated his father in the best part of his conduct; but did not attempt to enter the temple, or to burn incense, as Uzziah had done. (Notes, 26:4, 16-23.)—*The people did yet corruptly.* [They offered incense in high places; (2 Kings 15:35.) and as some think committed idolatry.] *Bp. Patrick.* The general character also of the people, as to unrighteousness, fraud, oppression, and other crimes; as well as their ungodliness, hypocrisy, or idolatrous worship, seems to be implied.

V. 3. *Ophel.* This seems to have been a cliff, or high rock, where a tower and wall were built to fortify the city. These Jotham greatly strengthened and improved.

V. 4. 'He took care to fortify his kingdom strongly on all sides, against his enemies.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is probable that at the end of three years, the Ammonites recovered strength, and refused to pay the tribute.

V. 6. It has been observed, that most, if not all, the pious kings of Judah, have some evil thing laid to their charge; but Jotham has not; except as "the people did corruptly," and the high places were not demolished.

V. 7. It is supposed, that Jotham's deeds so attracted attention, that they were recorded in the Chronicles of Israel, as well as in those of Judah; though but little has been transmitted to us concerning him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The severest judgments of God have mercy connected with them, either to the persons themselves, or to others, who thence learn caution and circumspection.—It ought to be the constant aim of every one of us, to imitate the faith, piety, equity, kindness, self-denial, patience, and meekness, of those servants of God with whom we are acquainted, and of whom we read or hear; and carefully to avoid their failings and the sins into which they have been betrayed: but the reverse of this is general, and natural to mankind.—If we would attain to eminence in godliness or usefulness, we must diligently "prepare our ways before the LORD our God."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Ahaz reigns very wickedly, 1-4. He is defeated with terrible slaughter of his army by the kings of Syria and Israel, 5-7. The Israelites lead to Samaria an immense number of captives, 8. The people are induced, by the remembrance of a prophet, and the interference of the princes, to treat them kindly and send them home, 9-15. Ahaz, attacked by the Edomites, and Phisitians, sends to the king of Assyria, but receives no benefit from his assistance, 16-21. In his distress he adds to his idolatries, 22-25. He dies, and is succeeded by Hezekiah, 26, 27.

AHAAZ was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:

2 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

3 Moreover, he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

4 He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And

a 2 Kings 16:1, 2. 1 Chr. 5:13. Is. 1:1. 7:1-12. Hos. 1:1. Mic. 1:1. Matt. 1:9. Ahaz. v. 17-3. c 21:5. 32:3, 4. 1 Kings 16:31-33. 2 Kings 10:26-28. d Ex. 34:17. Lev. 19:4. e Judg. 2:11, 12. f Or, offered sacrifice. 12 Kings 25:10. Jer. 7:31, 32. 19:2-6, 13. g 33:6. 1 Lev. 18:21. 2 Kings 16:3. Ps. 106:37, 38. Jer. 2:34. Ez. 16:20, 21. Mic. 6:7. h 33:2. Deut. 12:31. i 1 Lev. 26:30. Deut. 12:2, 3. 2 Kings 16:4. k 36:5. Ex. 20:2, 3. 12:24. 33:11. 36:17. Judg. 2:14. 2 Kings

acting habitually as under his inspection, and depending on his assistance and merciful acceptance, from love to his name and zeal for his glory.—Many pious men have not fortitude or vigour to combat the difficulties, which must be expected by those who attempt reformation, in opposition to inveterate prejudices, errors, superstitions, and immoralities; yet all in public stations should remember, that this is incumbent upon them, and forms that improvement of their talents which God requires. They should therefore “arise and be doing,” according to the duties of their situations, “and the LORD will be with them for good.”—But even when the most unexceptionable example is united to the most strenuous and persevering endeavours, the success of pious reformers will not answer their desires and expectations. Many of “the people will stiffen to corruptly,” and, in righteous displeasure against those who hate to be reformed, the Lord often prematurely removes wise, prosperous, and pious rulers in church or state; and sends others, whose follies and vices severely punish a people, who did not value their mercies till they were withdrawn from them.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1-4. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2 Kings 16:3, 4. Lev. 20:2-5. Matt. 5:21, 22, v. 22.

V. 5. JEHOVAH was ‘the God of Ahaz,’ as his Creator, Upholder, and Governor, as Ahaz was born among the professing and covenant people of God, dedicated to him by circumcision, and educated in a religious manner; as he reigned over Judah, where alone the worship of God was instituted; and as he was bound by every obligation to serve and obey him. But he was not ‘the God of Ahaz,’ as he is the God of true believers, according to the covenant of grace; he was not Ahaz’s Portion and Salvation: nor was Ahaz the Lord’s servant and worshipper, for he was a most wicked apostate and idolater. In short, he had not the privilege of having “the LORD for his God,” his “Shield and exceeding great Reward;” but he had the guilt of violating the strongest obligations to his service; and of continuing impenitent and ungodly, in the midst of every advantage and means of grace. Had he been born and educated a heathen, he might perhaps have escaped remarkable judgments; but as he was an apostate, “the LORD his God” delivered him to be punished, into the hands of the Syrians and Israelites. (Notes, 2 Kings 16:5-9.) His people also were involved in the same guilt, and in the same punishment. They did corruptly under pious Jotham: for their correction Jotham was removed, and wicked Ahaz succeeded; and his idolatry and enormous crimes were punished by dreadful havoc made among his subjects. Thus, the sins and sufferings of kings and people resemble the case of the human body; in which the head must share the sufferings of the members, and the members those of the head, by reason of that unity which subsists between them. (Note, 2 Sam. 24:1, 2. P. O. 1-9.)

V. 6-8. This is the greatest slaughter of the men of Judah that we read of. (13:17.) And as they were “all valiant men,” and Israel was not in a very prosperous state, the defeat of Judah with such tremendous slaughter must be ascribed to some supernatural terror or confusion. “Because they had forsaken the LORD,” who therefore forsook them, and took away their courage, that they could make no resistance.” Bp. Patrick. Ahaz himself escaped; but he had a son and two of his chief officers slain, one of whom was next under him in authority; and an immense spoil, and multitude of prisoners, were collected from the defenceless country by

he also was delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maasiah the king’s son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah that was next to the king.

8 And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria. [Practical Observations.]

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded: and he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven.

10 And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen

16:5. Is. 7:1, 6. † Heb. Darnasek. m 2 Kings 16:27, 37. Is. 7:4, 5, 9. 9:21. n 13:17. ‡ Heb. sons of snail. o 15:2. Deut. 6:14, 15. 28:15, 25. 29:24-28. 31:16, 17. 32:30. Josh. 22:15. Is. 24:5, 6. Jer. 2:19. s Heb. the second to. t Deut. 28:25, 41. u 14:1. Acts 7:26. 13:26. v 19:1, 2. 23:15, 16. 1 Kings 20:13, 24, 32. 2 Kings 20:14, 15. a 5 Judg. 3:8. Ps. 69:26. Is. 10:5, 47:6. Ez. 25:12, 15, 26, 2. Ob. 1-16. Zech. 1:15. 1 Gen. 11:4. Ezra 9:6. Rev. 18:5. u Lev. 25:39-46.

the rapacious victors. It does not appear, however, that Jerusalem was taken by them. (Notes, Is. 7:1-9.)

V. 9-11. The Lord, provoked with Judah’s idolatries, had delivered them into the hands of their still more idolatrous brethren, who had shown the most exorbitant rage and cruelty in destroying them: and, as if this had been a small thing, they proceeded to gratify their inhuman avarice, by seizing all the women and children, to sell them, or to keep them for slaves. But, if the Lord had so severely punished their offending brethren of Judah, could the men of Israel expect to escape his fierce indignation? Were there no sins among them to provoke his displeasure? Rather, were they not already abundantly sufficient, without augmenting them by this iniquitous and cruel treatment of the women and children, who had never injured them? Or, could they hope for the mercy of God, if they neither showed mercy nor justice to their brethren? They were therefore required to set the captives at liberty; because they themselves were exposed to the fierce wrath of God. This was the Lord’s message to the conquerors by his prophet; and it naturally leads us to consider some questions concerning slavery.—Let it then be remembered, that there do not at present subsist any such distinctions between nations, as God for wise reasons, was pleased, for a time, to establish between Israel and the Gentiles; but every man is now our neighbour, and in one sense our brother; our fellow-man, if not our fellow-Christian.—They indeed attempt too much who argue, that slavery in all cases is contrary to scriptural principles; and this has given its advocates some advantage in the controversy. But no man, well acquainted with the word of God, needs fear to maintain, that the modern slave-trade stands in diametrical opposition to both the law and the gospel; as well as to the true interests of mankind. Who can possibly hold his unoffending brother in bondage, for his own gain, without violating the rule of doing to others, as he would that they should do unto him, and as he might fairly expect that they should do unto him? (Note, Matt. 7:12.) Suppose that an African should kidnap the son of an English merchant, carry him to Africa, and, pretending property in him, should sell him for a slave; and so he should be sold from one to another for life, and his children after him. Suppose that Africans gave such prices for Englishmen, as encouraged them to steal and sell one another, till it became a regular trade; would not free-born Britons execrate buyers, sellers, stealers, and all concerned in such a traffic? Those who have forfeited their lives by crimes against the state, have also forfeited their natural right to liberty; and might justly be sold for slaves, by public authority, declaring the crimes for which they were thus punished. Some other criminals, and some kind of fraudulent debtors, might be sold for a limited time, consistently with equity. Perhaps some prisoners taken in battle, in those wars, which are evidently undertaken by all concerned in them, from avarice and cruelty, might thus be punished, without transgressing the law of God; for the policy of it forms quite a distinct question. But to seize, enslave, and sell a fellow-creature, who has, by no criminality known to us, or cognizable by us, merited so severe a treatment, must in all cases be contrary to the law of “loving our neighbour as ourselves.” The poor Africans cannot be proved to be either criminals, debtors, or prisoners taken in rapacious or revengeful wars, waged by them against those who enslave them; on the contrary, they appear generally to be persons, who have been

and bondwomen unto you: *but are there* *not with you, even with you, sins against *the Lord your God?

11 Now hear me therefore, and *deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for *the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you.

12 Ther certain of *the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, *stood up against them that came from the war.

13 And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the Lord *already*, ye intend to *add more to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and *there is* fierce wrath against Israel.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil, before the princes and all the congregation.

15 And the men which were *expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil * clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and *gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and car-

ried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, *the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

16 ¶ At that time *did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

17 For again *the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away *captives.

18 The *Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken *Beth-shemesh, and *Ajalon, and *Gederoth, and *Shocho with the villages thereof, and *Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.

19 For *the Lord brought Judah low, *because of Ahaz king of Israel: for he *made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord.

20 And *Tilgath-pileser king of Assyria came unto him, and *distressed him, but strengthened him not.

21 For Ahaz *took away a portion out of the house of the Lord, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

22 ¶ And *in the time of his distress did he tres-

α Jer. 25:39, Rom. 12:20, 21. 1 Pet. 4:17, 18. γ 5. z Is. 58:6, Jer. 34:14, 15. Heb. 13:1—3. a Ezra 10:14. Matt. 5:7, 7:2. Jam. 2:13. b 1 Chr. 28:1. c Jer. 28:6, d Num. 22:14. Josh. 22:17, 18. Matt. 23:32, 35. Rom. 2:5. e 12. f Job 31:15, Is. 58:7. Matt. 25:35—45. Acts 9:39. 1 Tim. 5:10. Jam. 2:15, 16. 1 John 3:17, 18. g 2 Kings 6:22. Prov. 25:21, 22. Luke 6:27. Rom. 12:20, 21. h Deut. 31:3. Judg. 1:16. i 2 Kings 16:5—7. Is. 7:1—9, 17. k 25:11, 12. Lev. 25:13. * Heb. a *captivity*. 1 Ez. 16:27, 57. m Josh. 15:10. 1 Sam. 6:9, 13.

n 11:10. Aijalon. o Josh. 15:41. p Josh. 15:48. Socoh. q Judg. 14:1. Timnah. r Deut. 28:43. 1 Sam. 2:7. Job 40:12. Ps. 106:41—43. Prov. 29:23. Mic. 6:15. t 21:2. u Gen. 37:11. Ex. 3:17, 18. 16:15. x 2 a Num. 15:29, 16:7—10. Tiglath-pileser. 1 Chr. 5:26. Hos. 5:14. y 2 Kings 17:5. Is. 7:20, 30:3, 16. Jer. 2:37. z 12:9. 2 Kings 18:15, 16. Ps. 20:25. a 33:12. Ps. 30. Is. 1:5. Ez. 21:13. Hos. 5:15. Rev. 16:9—11.

kidnapped from their relatives, or bought of them; or taken prisoners in wars, excited on purpose to supply that infamous market. If any of them be criminals, the European merchants know it not: they have no authority from either God or man to be their executioners; and their descendants certainly are not criminals. Were it indeed true, (which is far from being the case,) that if not bought by the Europeans, they would be slain by the conqueror; we need only answer, "You must not "do evil, that good may come." If you have no other way of rescuing them, you had better leave them to fight their own battles, and treat their captives as they please, without interfering: and you certainly would do so, if *avarice* were no more concerned in the business than *humanity* is.' It is true, that the Scripture throughout speaks of slavery as actually existing: but the *judicial* law was very distinct from the *moral* law, as has before been shewn. (Note, Ex. 21:1—6.) Like other municipal laws, it aimed to prevent those evils which originated from abuses and human passions, and which could not be terminated except by constant miracle; as in the case of divorces. The apostles and evangelists were *preachers*, not *legislators*; they were not empowered to subvert the foundations of civil government throughout the world; and they found slavery universally and inseparably interwoven with them. Every one must therefore perceive what confusion, what reproach, and what additional enmity to Christianity, must have been occasioned by such an attempt. They indeed laid down the principles, which, when reduced to practice, will infallibly annihilate slavery: and, taking things as they then stood in civil society, they taught all Christians how to accommodate themselves to their stations, consistently with their profession, even if they were slaves, and slaves in a heathen family.—The question is, therefore, to be decided not by *facts*, but by *The Moral law of God*, and the tendency of the *GOSPEL*. The practice could not then be regularly opposed, without creating convulsions in society; nor can it ever be successfully rectified by *preachers*; it is the work of enlightened, humane, and pious *legislators*.—Individual believers under both dispensations possessed slaves: they took matters as they were; and treated their slaves with such equity and humanity, as rendered it a kindness to them, to take them out of ungodly families. And a pious West Indian who laments the enormities which he cannot but witness, arising from this unnatural trade, and who sincerely wishes and prays for its entire abolition, may, in the mean time, deem it better, quietly to set his neighbours an example of treating slaves with brotherly lenity and kindness, conducive to their real happiness, than indiscriminately to liberate them: when perhaps it might occasion fatal effects upon the minds of the other planters and their slaves; if this were done by an individual, in opposition to all his neighbours, and without the interference of legal authority. When strangers are brought so far from home, and are not able to return, a truly pious and humane man may render the yoke tolerable to them. But, who had a right by compulsion to bring his unoffending brethren so far from their native land? And what proportion do pious and humane persons in most communities, bear to those of an opposite character? A succession of very wise and good kings, if that could be ensured, might render even absolute monarchy a blessing. But while mankind are what they are, men of reflection, and lovers of their brethren,

will never be friends to despotism in kingdoms, or in families: and absolute monarchs and the holders of slaves, (except of such as are condemned by an equitable sentence, to that condition, as the punishment of their crimes,) will ever be justly exposed to the determined opposition of mankind, even when they do not merit detestation by any direct abuse of power.

V. 12—15. It is remarkable that Pekah is not mentioned in this transaction concerning the prisoners: but probably he was at the head of the army, when the prophet addressed them. (6)—The courage of these princes, who ventured thus determinedly to oppose the whole army, insolent with victory and enriched with booty, was admirable and highly commendable, and their arguments were cogent, and coincided with the message of the prophet. The apostasy, idolatry, and recent cruelty of Israel rendered their trespass very great: and if they reduced the captives to slavery, it would add still more to their sins, and hasten the execution of the fierce wrath of God upon them.—The compliance of the army, in leaving both the captives and the spoil, to the disposal of the princes, was very wonderful and perhaps unparalleled in history; and the humane treatment, and the carrying back of the captives to their brethren, deserves all possible applause.—The prophet's remonstrance had for the time its full effect: but alas! both princes and people still cleaved to their idols, and went on in their other sins. (Marg. Ref.) * What might not these great men have done, to bring them to repent of their idolatry, if they had been truly religious and exerted their authority? *Bp. Patrick*. The narrative also shows, that even Israel, amidst all their idolatries and iniquities, had not forgotten, and were not disposed to question, the divine authority of the law of Moses.

V. 16—18. (2 Kings 16:7—9.) 'This is the first time that we read of the king of Assyria, excepting 2 Kings 15:19, where Pul king of Assyria is mentioned as a powerful prince, who invaded the Israelites. Before his time, we read nothing of the Assyrian monarchy, which grew by degrees to its greatness from small beginnings. . . . If their large empire had been of long standing, we should in all probability have heard of them before this time, as we do often afterwards.' *Bp. Patrick*. (Note, 2 Kings 15:19, 20.)—*The Philistines*, &c. (18) Marg. Ref. 26:6. Notes, 2 Kings 18:8. Is. 14:28—32.

V. 19. *He made Judah naked*.] The Lord himself was the glory and defence of Judah: but Ahaz, by seducing his subjects from his worship and service, had degraded them, stripped them of all their ornament, deprived them of all their protection, and left them defenceless and contemptible in the hands of their feeblest enemies. (Marg. Ref. Note Ex. 32:25.)

V. 20, 21. (Note, 2 Kings 16:7—9.) Tiglath-pileser 'did come to his assistance against the king of Syria, . . . he took Damascus, carried the people captive, and delivered Ahaz from the power of the Syrians. . . . But this did Ahaz little good; for he . . . rather weakened him by exhausting his treasures, and by destroying Samaria, whereby the way was opened to invade his country the more easily in the next reign. Thus many countries, in latter ages, by calling in the assistance of some foreign prince against their enemies, have been overthrown and conquered by those who came to their help.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 22, 23. *This is that king Ahaz*. (22) This is the

pass yet more against the LORD: *'this is that king Ahaz.*

23 For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, *'Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.*

24 And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and sent in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

25 And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.

26 ¶ Now the rest of his acts, and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, *even in Jerusalem:* but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

b Euth. 7:8. Pa. 52:7. c 25:14. 2 Kings 16:12, 13. * Heb. *Darmesek*. d Hab. 1:11. e Jer. 44:15-18. f Jer. 44:20-23. g 2 Kings 16:17, 18. 25:13. &c. h 29: 1. i 33:3-5. Jer. 2:28. Hos. 12:11. Acts 17:16, 23. j Or, *offer*. k 20: 24. 27:2-9. Jer. 2:19, 20. 12:20. 26:23. 33:20. l Sam. 2:30. Prov. 10:7. a 1 Kings 18:1-3. 1 Chr. 3:13. Is. 1:1. Hos. 1:1. Mic. 1:1. Matt. 1:9, 10. *Ezek. king*. b 26:5. Is. 8:2. c 28:1. 34:2. 2 Kings 18:3. d 34:3. Ec. 9:10. Matt.

notorious offender, who grew more outrageous in his idolatry and impiety, amidst his distresses! That abandoned prince, who disgraced the house of David, and accelerated the ruin of Judah! Who foolishly sacrificed to the gods of his enemies, supposing that they had smitten him; instead of humbling himself before the Lord, who had used the Syrians as his instruments for his correction! That Ahaz, who acted in a manner which tended to ruin himself, his family, and his kingdom; and persevered in it so obstinately, that he provoked the Lord to cut him off by a premature death, in the full career of his wickedness! (Note, 25:14-16.)—A most monstrous stupidity, to imagine they had any power over him, who could not defend themselves from Tiglath-pilezer.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24-27. Notes, 21:18-20. 29:3-7. 2 Kings 16: 10-20.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. Those who succeed eminently wise and pious men in the same important station, seldom enter into their views or imitate their conduct, in "doing that which is right in the sight of the LORD;" nay, frequently they seem ambitious of being as opposite to them as possible; especially when they run into wickedness, after having received a pious education. (Note, 2 Kings 21:3.)—When sinners "like not to retain God in their knowledge," he gives them up to the lusts of their own hearts, to perpetrate every thing horrible and unnatural; and when such monsters of iniquity are advanced to thrones, it is evident, that the Lord intends by them to punish a guilty land, by involving their subjects in the consequences of their crimes and follies. They, therefore, who are groaning under the oppression of cruel tyrants, or suffering from the effects of their infuriated counsels, are called on to humble themselves before God for their own sins, to submit to his justice, and to seek deliverance from his mercy. On the other hand, if we are governed with equity and clemency, and live in peace and prosperity, through the prudent and successful administration of our rulers; we should bless God for his mercies, and show forth our gratitude in our daily conduct: and it is the constant duty of us all to pray for those who are, or shall be, placed over us, that they may be the instruments of God's goodness and mercy to us, and not of his wrath.—Tempters and examples of iniquity are often employed as scourges; and the sentence, which God righteously denounces, man may unrighteously execute.—It is a lamentable reflection, that so many thousands of lives are sacrificed to the mad passions of potent individuals, who themselves escape: but they that thus are cut off, are sinners, and are punished for having forsaken or offended God.—The combined effects of several depraved passions is very dreadful: when revenge is satiated, avarice or ambition may take the reins; and if power be not wanting, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the helpless, will be oppressed, crushed, and enslaved without redress: while the oppressor will rejoice in growing rich by these detestable measures. But the Lord beholds and disapproves; and, in one way or another, he will plead and revenge the cause of the oppressed.

V. 9-27. It is happy when the authority of God's word, or the exhortations of his ministers, deter men from persisting in mercenary cruelties; or excite legislators and princes to put a stop to their iniquity. If the oppressed have provoked God to deliver them up into the hand of their oppressors; should not these remember, that "there are with them also sins against the LORD?" Even rigorous justice towards an offending brother, is a grievous offence, in one that only

CHAPTER XXIX.

Hezekiah reigns well, opens the doors of the temple, and exhorts the priests and Levites to prepare every thing for the worship of God, 1-11. They sanctify themselves, and cleanse the temple and its vessels, 12-19. Hezekiah offers solemn sacrifices; and the Levites show more zeal than the priests, 20-36.

¶ HEZEKIAH began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.

3 ¶ He, in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.

4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street,

5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites; Sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.

6 For our fathers have trespassed and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our

6:33. e 29:24. 2 Kings 16:14-18. f 32:5. Neh. 3:29. Jer. 19:2. g 35:8. Ez. 19:10, 15. 1 Chr. 15:12. h 16:34-35. i 36:25. Matt. 21:12, 13. j Cor. 3:16 17. k 2 Cor. 6:16. 7:1. Eph. 5:26, 27. l 29:2-4, 23-25. 34:21. Ezra 5:12. 9:7. Neh. 9:36, 32. Jer. 16:19. 44:21, 22. Lam. 5:7. Dan. 9:8, 16. Matt. 10:37. 23. 30-32.

lives and hopes through the mercy of God. (Notes and P. O. Matt. 18:23-35.) But for those, who have deserved the heavy wrath of God for their own sins, to injure and cruelly entreat their unoffending brethren, must "add exceedingly to the fierce wrath of the LORD that is upon them." If "he shall have judgment without mercy, who has showed no mercy," what will be his doom, who has been guilty of the most flagrant injustice to the inoffensive stranger, merely because he had it in his power to oppress him! Surely, in such a case, while the ministers of the gospel warn, exhort, and beseech the oppressors to deliver the captives up, whom they have taken of their brethren: the legislators and rulers of every state should peremptorily refuse admission into their dominions, to those bondslaves, whom men have so unjustly reduced under their subjection. For we have offended against the Lord already, and this connivance must add still more to our sin and to our trespass, till fierce wrath come upon the nation. Nay, if the poor captives, who have been violently torn from their native country, and who have no power to return to their beloved relatives, could, when dismissed and kindly treated, be carried back again to them, it would be a conduct becoming the disciples of Christ; it might tend to render the name of CHRISTIAN respectable in those distant regions, where the cruelty, treachery, and avarice of those who bear it have rendered it odious; and thus at length prepare the way for the propagation of the gospel among these poor benighted heathens. And, instead of injuring the interests of the community, or of any individuals; (except the most atrocious of the oppressors, who have no right to be considered;) we may venture, upon general scriptural principles, to foretell, that above all other measures, it would tend the most effectually to the lengthening of our tranquility and prosperity. (Note, Dan. 4:27.)—But if those, who commiserate their oppressed fellow-creatures, long to see their grievous servitude terminated, they must unite in prayer for the divine blessing upon the exertions of those, who honourably stand forth in this benevolent cause. For, except the Lord touch the hearts of such as are to decide upon it, every exertion will be in vain.—When sinners are left to their own hearts' lusts, they grow more and more callous, and desperate in wickedness; and "trespass yet more and more" in their distress, as if in defiance of God; seeking redress in their miseries, from those sins whence all their sufferings spring, and which will terminate in their ruin and in that of all who adhere to them. For when God casts down, none can raise up; and all helpers will increase distress, instead of affording deliverance.—The progress of wickedness and misery is often rapid: and it is awful to reflect upon the case of one, who has "trespassed more and more," and added one impiety to another, and done all in his power to lead others into the same destructive courses; being at once "driven away in his wickedness," into the eternal world. (Note, Prov. 14:32.) Yet, even this apparent severity of God, against the ring-leaders in iniquity, proves mercy to thousands, when righteous and useful persons are raised up in their stead.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXIX. V. 1, 2. Notes, 2 Kings 18:1-3.

V. 3-5. 'This demonstrates his great piety and zeal for God, that he began so soon to reform religion. . . . The surest way to establish himself, he thought, was to establish true religion; though he ran a great hazard in attempting the abolishing idolatry, which had been confirmed by some years' prescription.' *Bp. Patrick.* It seems that he public worship at the temple was entirely suppressed and prohibited during the

God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs.

7 Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.

8 Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.

9 For lo, your fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this.

10 Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

11 My sons, be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.

12 ¶ Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari: Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites: Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:

13 And of the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

14 And of the sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

R. Jer. 2:13, 17. 1 Jer. 2:27. Ez. 8:16. * Heb. given the neck. m 28:24. Lev. 24:2-9. 2 Kings 16:18. n 24:18. 24:25-25. 36:14-16. Deut. 28:15-20. t Heb. commotion. o Lev. 25:32. Deut. 28:59. 1 Kings 9:8. Jer. 18:16. 19:8. 25:19, 18. 29:18. p 28:5-8. 17. Lev. 26:17. q 6:7, 8. r 15:12, 13. 23:16. 34:30-32. Ezra 10:3. Neh. 9:38. 10:1. &c. Jer. 34:13, 18. 50:5. 2 Cor. 8:5. s 2 Kings 23:35, 26. t Or, decided. Gal. 6:7, 8. u Num. 3:6-9. 8:6-14. 18:2-6. Deut. 10:8. 6 Or, offer sacrifice. Num. 16:35-40. 18:7. v Ez. 6:16-25. Num. 4:2, &c. 1 Cor. 6:16-18. 15:5. 23:12-20. x 1 Chr. 6:19, 44. 15:6. 23:21-23. y 1 Chr.

latter years of king Ahaz. (7. 28:24. 2 Kings 16:17, 18.) The only reason advanced for a contrary opinion, is this: it is not said, that the sacred fire on the altar of burnt-offering was extinguished, or that it was rekindled by fire from heaven, as at the dedication of the temple. If, however, the service was not totally put a stop to, the people in general were shut out from attending.—Hezekiah must have witnessed this impiety of his father, with deep regret and indignation: but immediately upon his succession to the throne, he threw open the doors of the temple, and proceeded to re-establish the worship there, as in the days of David. Yet the priests and Levites delayed to do their duty, till excited to it by the king. Perhaps, Urijah was still the high-priest; (Note, 2 Kings 16:10-16.) the chief priests were infected with idolatry, and disaffected to the service of God; and their inferiors, even if well disposed, might be held back by the authority of the leading men, till required and authorized by Hezekiah.—Sanctify, &c. (5.) Personal repentance, and purification from legal and moral defilements, were requisite in the priests and Levites, before they could, according to order, proceed to purify the temple. (Marg. Ref. g, h.)—Much rubbish, dirt, and rust, would be contracted, through disuse and neglect, in the temple, the courts, and the sacred vessels; but the idolatry with which they had been polluted, and the altar, made after the model of that which Ahaz saw at Damascus, formed by far the worst filthiness, from which they needed to be cleansed.

V. 6, 7. (Marg. Ref.) Our fathers, &c. (6.) When the honour of God was concerned, Hezekiah did not hesitate to criminate those who had gone before. He did not indeed directly mention Ahaz, his father, because that was not needful; and the neglect and base compliances of the priests and Levites, had greatly contributed to the wickedness of the king and his nobles. (Notes, Matt. 10:37-39. 2 Cor. 5:16. P. O. 1 Pet. 1:17-21, latter part.)

Turned away, &c.] This seems to signify, that Ahaz brought in a way of worship directly contrary to the law of God, which commanded them to worship toward the ark, which was placed in the west. But he ordered that they should turn their backs upon that, . . . and worship toward the east, where he had set his altar. And at last he shut up the doors of the temple, that they should not worship there at all. Bp. Patrick. (Note, Ez. 8:16.)

V. 8, 9. The defeat and dreadful slaughter recorded in the foregoing chapter seem here referred to, as the effect of some extraordinary terror from God on the minds of the Jews; and the Edomites and Philistines had been successful, because God had employed them as the weapons of his indignation. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. Notes, 28:6-8, 16-19.)

V. 10, 11. (Notes, 2 Sam. 7:1-3. 1 Kings 8:15-21. t Chr. 28:2.) He foresaw there was immediate destruction impending upon the whole nation for their iniquities, unless

15 And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD to cleanse the house of the LORD.

16 And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron.

17 Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD, in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the show-bread table, with all the vessels thereof.

19 Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and behold, they are before the altar of the LORD.

[Practical Observations.]

20 ¶ Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

21 And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded

6:17, 20, 21. 15:7. 23:7-11. s Lev. 10:4. Elzaphan, 1 Chr. 15:8. a 1 Chr. 6:39. 15:17. 25:2. b 1 Chr. 6:33. 15:19. c 1 Chr. 25:1, 3, 6. d 5. e 1 Or, in the business. 30:12. f 1 Chr. 23:28. f 3:8. 5:7. Ez. 25:33, 34. 1 Kings 6:19, 20. Heb. 9:2-3, 23, 24. g Ez. 36:29. Matt. 23:27. h 15:16. 2 Kings 23:4-6. John 18:1. Cedron. i 7. 34. 1 Kings 6:3. 1 Chr. 28:11. k Ez. 12:2-8. l 14:1, 7. m 4:8. 13:11. n 28:24. o Gen. 22:3. Ez. 24:4. Josh. 6:12. Jer. 4:3-4. p Num. 23:1, 14, 29. 1 Chr. 15:26. Ezra 8:35. Job 42:8. Ez. 45:23. Jer. 23:14. Num. 15:22-21. 2 Cor. 5:21.

they did heartily and speedily repent of them. . . . Therefore this good king thought it absolutely necessary forthwith to make a thorough reformation, and engage the whole nation in a solemn covenant to worship God purely. Thus Conradus Pellicanus' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 15:12-15. Deut. 29:10-15. Josh. 24:25-27. 2 Kings 11:17-20. 23:3. Neh. 9:38. 10:1, 28-39.) Hezekiah attempted to prevail with the priests and Levites to attend to their duty, by argument and affectionate exhortation, and not by compulsion. This condescending address assured them of his readiness to support and protect them, as a father would do his obedient children. He warned them not to be deceived; for God would certainly call them to a strict account, if they neglected the work to which he had chosen them: or he exhorted them not to be remiss, when extraordinary exertions were become absolutely necessary.

Be not now negligent. (11.) מִתְחַלְחֵל: "Be not deceived." Marg. Do not err: "do not persist in that error; in which you have neglected that worship of God, to which you were chosen." Junius in Robertson.

V. 12-19. All these leaders in the work were Levites of the different families of that tribe: (Marg. Ref. u-c.) not the chief in rank, but the most eminent for zeal and diligence. The high-priest is not mentioned. Some of the other priests concurred, and cleansed the inside of the sanctuary, whither the Levites might not enter.—When the ark was to be removed, and on other necessary occasions, the priests might enter the holy of holies, though not at other times. (Note, Num. 4:5).—Ahaz died about the close of the year; and Hezekiah had given timely orders to the priests and Levites, for them to begin this work with the new year. It is surprising that Ahaz did not cut in pieces all the tables of show-bread, and the other golden and silver furniture of the temple; but merely cast them aside.

According to the commandment of the king, &c. (15.) When Ahaz commanded Urijah contrary to the law of God, both he, and the priest who obeyed his impious command, acted most wickedly. (Note, 2 Kings 16:10-16.) But the priests and Levites acted right, in proportion as they obeyed "the commandment of the king by the words of the Lord." Hezekiah properly improved his talent, without intermeddling out of his province; and they as properly yielded obedience.—Why should not the case be the same, under the Christian dispensation? Was Hezekiah's interposition any part of the ritual law of Moses, which Christianity has superseded? (Note, 30:12.)

V. 20. Perhaps Hezekiah arose earlier on that day than common, that he might set the people an example of earnestness in the service of God. He would not lose a day, nor an hour, after the temple was ready, before he opened the solemn worship of God, by sin-offerings and other sacrifices. (Notes, Ps. 119:57-61. Matt. 6:33, 34.)

the priests the sons of Aaron to offer *them* on the altar of the Lord.

22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

23 And they brought forth the he-goats for the sin-offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them:

24 And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt-offering and the sin-offering should be made for all Israel.

25 And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar. And when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.

28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished.

29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him, bowed themselves, and worshipped.

r Lev. 1:5, 4:7, 16:34, 8:15, 19:24. Heb. 9:21, 22. * Heb. near. s Lev. 1:4, 4:15, 24. t Lev. 6:30, 8:15. Ex. 45:15, 17. Dan. 9:24. Rom. 5:10, 11. 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. u Lev. 2:7, 2:17. v Lev. 2:17. Lev. 4:15, 8:2. x 1 Chr. 9:33, 35, 16:32, 16:4, 1:42, 25:1-7. y 8:14, 35:15. 1 Chr. 23:25, 28:12, 19. z 2 Sam. 24:11. 1 Chr. 21:9, 29:29. a 2 Sam. 7:2-4, 12:1-7. b 30:12. t Heb. by the hand of the LORD, by the hand of his prophets. c 1 Chr. 23:5. Am. 6:5. d 5:12, 13. Num. 10:10. Josh. 6:4-5. 1 Chr. 15:24, 16:6. e 8:13, 9:8, 5:6, 15:13. f Heb. in the time. g 7:3, 20:21, 23:15. Ps. 135:1. h Heb. hands of instruments. i Ps. 63:24-26. Rev. 5:8-14. j Heb. song. Ps. 89:15. k Heb. found.

V. 21-24. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Lev. 1:5-9*).—One bullock was appointed for a sin-offering for the high-priest, and one for the whole congregation; but on this extraordinary occasion, when so many and great enormities had been committed, multiplied atoning sacrifices were offered. (*Notes, Lev. 4:13-21. Num. 15:22-29*). The ceremony of the king and the congregation laying their hands upon the head of the goats, expressed their confession of guilt, and the substitution of the guiltless animal to suffer in their stead; which prefigured him who bare our sins in his own body on the tree. (*Notes, Lev. 1:4. 16:20-22*). It is not, however, here stated, that the prescribed rules, respecting the sin-offerings, for the priest, the ruler, or the nation, as to carrying the blood into the most holy place, and burning the bodies without the camp, was observed. Perhaps this was not done: and in that case, these sin-offerings must be considered as in some respects different from those prescribed in that part of the law. (*Notes, Lev. 4:3-7, 11, 12. 6:30. Heb. 13:9-14, vv. 11, 12*).—The word here rendered *he-goats*, (21) is not used in Scripture till after the captivity, and learned men think that this is one proof that Ezra compiled these books. —The burnt-offering and the sin-offerings were presented, not only in behalf of the kingdom of Judah, but for all Israel, even the ten tribes, which were at this time governed by Hoshea. Hezekiah seems in this to have had respect to the plan which he afterwards proposed, and which is recorded in the ensuing chapter, namely, of uniting the whole nation of Israel in celebrating the passover, and in the worship of God.

V. 25-30. The temple-psalmody was regulated with the concurrence of these other prophets, as well as by the appointment of David. (*Notes, 23:11-21, v. 13. 1 Chr. 9:22. 15:16. 16:6. 15:6. 25:1-8. Ezra 3:8-11. Ps. 33:2, 3. 81:1-5. 95:1-6. 104:6*).

The priests with the trumpets. (26) The blowing of trumpets by the priests, on various occasions, and in particular over the sacrifices, was a part of the ritual law of Moses, and is here exactly distinguished from the psalmody instituted by David and the prophets. (*27, 28. Notes, 5:12, 13. 13:4-12, v. 12. Num. 10:2-10, v. 10. P. O. 1-10. —Asaph the seer.* (30) *Notes, Ps. 73: title. 74: title.*

V. 31, 32. As the burnt sacrifices were wholly consumed on the altar, the offering of them evinced greater zeal and liberality, than the oblation of peace-offerings, a great part of which was eaten by the offerer and his friends. (*Notes, Lev. 1:3*).—Comparing the sacrifices offered on this occasion, with those of Solomon when the temple was dedicated: (7:5)

0. Note, 1 Kings 8:63-65.) though here it is said the

30 Moreover, Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have "consecrated yourselves unto the Lord, come near and bring sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the Lord. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank-offerings; and as many as were of a free heart, burnt-offerings.

32 And the number of the burnt-offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt-offering to the Lord.

33 And the consecrated things, were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

34 But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt-offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

35 And also the burnt-offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace-offerings, and the drink-offerings for every burnt-offering. So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order.

36 And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

g 20:10. 1 Chr. 29:20. Ps. 72:11. Rom. 14:11. Phil. 2:10, 11. h 2 Sam. 23:1, 2. 1 Chr. 16:7-36. i Ps. 32:11, 33:1, 95:1, 2, 100:1, 2. 149:2. Phil. 4:4. ** Or, fluted your hand, 19:8. k Lev. 1:3. l 1 Chr. 7:12. m Lev. 1:3, 23:38. Ezra 1:4. n 1 Kings 3:4, 8:63. 1 Chr. 29:21. Ezra 6:17. o 31. p 5:30, 16:17. q 35:11. Num. 8:15, 19:13, 36:7. t Heb. strengthened them. r 20:3. s 1 Chr. 29:17. Ps. 7:10. t 92. u Ex. 29:13. Lev. 3:15, 16. x Gen. 35:14. Lev. 23:13. Num. 15:5, 7, 10. y 1 Chr. 16:37-42. Ezra 6:18. 1 Chr. 14:40. z 1 Chr. 29:9, 17. Ezra 6:22. 1 Thes. 3:8, 9. a 30:12. 1 Chr. 29:16. Ps. 10:17. Prov. 16:1. b Acts 2:41.

burnt-offerings were in abundance; we may form some idea, how greatly the riches and prosperity of the kingdom of Judah were diminished; or, how greatly the general spirit of piety had declined. (30:24.)

V. 33. It is probable, that the consecrated things denote the peace-offerings and thank-offerings.

V. 34. It does not appear that any idolatrous priests were punished: but perhaps some were disgraced and excluded from attendance; while many neglected to sanctify themselves, being averse to the sacred service. It was therefore deemed more proper, that upright and duly sanctified Levites should flay the sacrifices, than unclean or profane priests. This is considered by many as irregular, but it is no where prohibited. Indeed, before the Levites were given to the sons of Aaron, it is probable, that they who brought the sacrifice both slaughtered and flayed it; (*Notes, Lev. 1:5-9*). afterwards these services seem to have formed a part of the ministry assigned to the Levites, at the will of the priests; but at length it became customary for the priests to perform them. The Levites might not in any case sprinkle the blood, burn the fat and flesh, or approach the altar.—The Levites were men of greater integrity than the priests: at least there were more men of zeal found among them, that readily offered themselves to the service of God. See 30:17. Bp. Patrick.

V. 35. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 36. The great and sudden change produced in the conduct of the people; and the alacrity with which they concurred in measures, to which much opposition had been expected, evidenced that "God had prepared" them; and Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced in it, as a token that he would prosper them in endeavouring a more complete reformation. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 30:12*.) God "had given this good mind to them, to join so forwardly in this reformation. "For the thing was done suddenly;" which argued a divine motion, whereby they were excited without long persuasions. Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-19. The removal of a single individual of very bad character, from any public situation, and the succession of a wise and pious person in his stead, may be productive of most important and extensive good effects; for authority, influence, and example, give such energy to the attempts of princes and nobles, that the consequences of their conduct are beyond all calculation. What an honour is it to be employed in diffusing piety and felicity through whole kingdoms! But how dreadful will be the condemnation of those, who spread guilt and misery in so extensive a manner!—Whether a godly man inherit a kingdom, or an estate; whether he change his station in society or his place of abode, or be removed to a

CHAPTER XXX.

Hezekiah proclaims a solemn passover to be kept in the second month, and calls on both Judah and Israel to unite in celebrating it, 1-5. His message to the Israelites, and the reception with which it met, 6-12. A great multitude, having destroyed the altars for idolatry in Jerusalem, prepare to keep the feast, 13-16. Hezekiah prays for those who are not ceremonially clean, and is graciously answered, 17-20. They keep the feast fourteen days with great joy, 21-25. The priests bless the people, 27.

AND Hezekiah sent ^a to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters ^b also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come ^c to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, ^d to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.

2 For ^e the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover ^f in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it ^g at that time, ^h because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing ⁱ pleased the king and all the congregation.

5 So they ^j established a decree ^k to make pro-

a 11:13,16. b 10:11,25:7,35:6. Hos. 5:4,7:8,9,11:8. c Deut. 16:2-6. d Ex. 12:3-20. 1 Cor. 5:7,8. e 1 Chr. 13:1-3. Prov. 11:14,15:22. Ec. 4:13. f Num. 9:10,11. g Ex. 12:8,18. h 29:34. i Heb. was right in the eyes of. 1 Chr. 13:6. j Ezra 6:1. Eccl. 3:12-15,8:8-10,9:20,21. Dan. 6:8. k 24:9,26:22. Lev. 23:24,1 Vn. 4:1, &c. l 1 Judg. 20:1. m 35:18. n Job 9:25. Est. 3:14. Jer. 51:31. † Heb. the hand of the. o Is. 55:6,7. Jer. 4:1. Ez. 33:11. Hos.

new situation in the church; his *first actions* will be of considerable importance, and often leave an abiding impression: and regulations may frequently be then made without difficulty, before different habits and expectations have been formed; which would afterward become almost impracticable. — Even in that nation, in which God had appointed that apostates and idolaters should be punished with death, the most effectual revivals of true religion were produced by example, exhortation, and encouragement: and if it were in the hearts of kings and rulers, thus to join themselves in covenant with the Lord, and zealously to stir up all orders of people to do their duty, by earnest persuasions and affectionate exhortations, without using violence, or imposing on men's consciences; many would be excited willingly to coöperate in their pious designs, and to “come according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD.” (Notes, 10,11, 30:12.) Happy and honourable will they be, who shall thus become “nursing fathers” to the church, not by bribes and preferments, but by countenancing those who zealously labour to promote acknowledged truth and practical godliness, even though not all exactly in the same way.

V. 20-36. The nominal ministers of religion have, in all ages, been lamentably backward, in labouring and venturing to promote the cause of God: and the higher their dignities, and the greater their *emoluments*, the more evident, alas, frequently, has been their aversion to the *work* of the ministry. Too generally indeed the infidelity and impiety of all orders in the community are justly chargeable upon the vices, the supineness, or the insufficiency of the stated ministers. Instead of exhorting all others to do their duty, no exhortations have been found effectual, to induce them to attend to their own: nay, they have often been found disposed to overawe and browbeat their inferior brethren, who were willing to “labour in the word and doctrine;” and to supply their lack of service, that immortal souls might not perish for want of instruction. But if the honour of a parent is not to be regarded, where the glory of God is concerned, such clergymen, however dignified, must not expect to be treated with respect, when the very existence of true religion is at stake: and the reputation of the clerical function must be supported by the holy lives, superior knowledge in divine things, and unwearied labours of the clergy: or else it will sink into neglect and contempt. The true minister of Christ, however, should take heed first to himself and then to his ministry. His own conscience, heart, and life must first be purified, by repentance and faith in the divine Saviour; and then he may hope to prosper in endeavouring to convert others also, and to promote the pure and spiritual worship of God. — In all reformation, personal or public, we must first be convinced in what particulars we have done wrong, and then consider how we may do better. Neglect of God and omission of duty lead to more direct impiety and iniquity; and our own transgressions prepare us to become tempters and seducers of others. Thus religion is run down, and the wrath of the Lord comes on apostate professors of the gospel, and on apostate nations. In returning to him, therefore, we must renounce our sins and begin to practise neglected duties, to use the means of grace, and to watch against the wickedness of the heart. We, indeed, have no occasion for multiplied sacrifices; as the one atonement of Christ is sufficient for all who rely on it: but we need repeated confessions of guilt, constant humiliation before God, and application to the Saviour's blood, for forgiveness and acceptance: we need to maintain daily communion with our reconciled Father through Christ, and to receive continual communications from him: and we should present our spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and devote our time, talents, and substance,

clamoration throughout all Israel, ^l from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: ^m for they had not done ⁿ it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

6 So ^o the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes, throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, ^p turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you that are ^q escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

7 And be not ye ^r like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, ^s who therefore gave them up to desolation, ^t as ye see.

8 Now ^u be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, ^v but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and ^w enter into his sanctuary, (which he hath sanctified for ever: and ^x serve the Lord your God, that

14:1. Joel 2:12,13. Jam. 4:8. p 28:20. 1 Kings 15:19,29. 1 Chr. 26:18. Is. 1:9. q Ez. 20:18. Zech. 1:3,4. r 29:8. † Heb. harden not your ear. s 36:13. Ex. 32:9. Deut. 10:16. t Heb. give the hand. 1 Chr. 29:24. marg. Ezra 10:19. Ps. 63:1. Rom. 6:13,16,19. u Ps. 63:2,68:24,73:17. v Ps. 132:14. w Deut. 6:13,17. Josh. 24:15. Matt. 4:10. John 12:26. Rom. 6:22. Col. 3:22-24. Rev. 7:15.

yea, our bodies and souls, with a free heart, as sacrifices acceptable to the Father through the Redeemer's name. To these things we are encouraged by the joyful sound of his gospel: when we abound in these sacred exercises, according to the commandment of the holy prophets and apostles of Christ, we shall be enabled, though in ourselves most miserable sinners, to “rejoice in the Lord,” and to glory in his salvation. Those ministers, who are most diligent in preparing for their work, and in performing it, will eventually be most employed and honoured, even though inferior in external distinctions; and slothful disqualification will never excuse any man's negligence before God. But he alone can prepare the heart of man for vital godliness: when much real good is effected in a little time, the glory must be ascribed to him; and all who love him, or the souls of men, will rejoice. If we would have such blessings, we must make it our constant prayer to him, thus to “prepare our hearts” and those of others: for when he works, great things may *suddenly* be effected. The Lord grant, that none called ministers may be negligent; but that they may all act as chosen by him, to stand before him, and to serve him; and zealously do his will, that his wrath may be turned from them, and from others on every side, by his blessing upon their labours, and in answer to their fervent prayers and supplications!

NOTES.—CHAP. XXX. V. 1. The other tribes of Israel were as much bound to obey the law of Moses, as Judah and Benjamin were; but Hezekiah had no authority over them. Yet the circumstances, in which they were placed, encouraged him to address them by letters, with an amiable and pious invitation; which implied, that they might attend at the temple with perfect safety, though they were not his subjects. (Notes, 1 Kings 12:26-29. 2 Kings 17:18,19-12.) — Ephraim and Manasseh, as principal tribes, seem to be put for the whole kingdom of Israel.

V. 2-4. Hezekiah and his counsellors justly concluded, that the regulation of the fourteenth day of the second month, which had been made for individuals, who were hindered from eating the passover at the appointed season, might, in their present circumstances, be extended to the whole congregation. (Notes, Num. 9:6-14.) — A sufficient number of the priests had not been duly sanctified, to prepare the temple for that ordinance at the stated time, or to officiate in it; the people, long dissuaded from attendance, were not generally assembled; those who were present seemed well disposed to celebrate that solemn and significant ordinance; and it might have an abiding good effect, if the favourable opportunity were seized. (Notes, 35:1-19. Ex. 12:3-27.) For these reasons, it was determined to summon the people to attend, and to keep the passover in the second month.

V. 5. *As it was written.* It is probable that the passover and the other solemn feasts, were sometimes totally omitted for many years together; at other times very carelessly attended, and by very few persons, compared with what the law required: and the ten tribes had never been accustomed to repair to Jerusalem, since the division of the kingdom. (Notes, 25:27, 11:13-17. 1 Kings 12:26-32.)

V. 6-9. Hoshea was king of Israel at this time, and it does not appear, that he attempted to hinder his subjects from resorting to Jerusalem to worship, if they chose it. (Note, 2 Kings 17:2.) — In the preceding reign, Israel had made a most dreadful slaughter of the men of Judah: yet Hezekiah considered the Israelites as brethren, and greatly desired to bring them back, by kind treatment, to the religion of their fathers; therefore he sent his proclamation, or letters, into the parts of the land belonging to the ten tribes, as well as throughout his own dominions. — The word rendered “posts” signifies *winners*: for men were then, and still are in

*the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.

10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless, divers of Asher and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

12 Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD.

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.

14 And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron.

15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the LORD.

16 And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.

17 For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD.

18 For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one.

19 That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.

20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

[Practical Observations.]

21 And the children of Israel that were pre-

x 28:11, 13, 29:10. 2 Kings 23:26. Ps. 78:49. y 7:14. Lev. 28:40—42. Deut. 30:2—4. 1 Kings 8:50. Ps. 108:46. z Jer. 29:12—14. 31:37, 28. a Ex. 34:6, 7. Ps. 56:1, 11, 17. 78. Mic. 7:18. b 15:2. c 1s. 55:7. Ez. 18:20—22. c Jer. 18:17. d 6. Ecd. 3:11. 8:10, 14. Job 9:25. e 38:16. Gen. 19:14. Neh. 11:39. Job 12:4. Luke 8:53. 16:14. 22:63, 64. 23:35. Acta 17:32. Heb. 11:36. f 18:11, 16. Acta 17:34. g 12:6, 7, 12. 33:12, 15, 23, 31, 37. Ez. 10:5. Lev. 26:41. Dan. 5:22. Luke 13:11, 16, 14. Jam. 4:10. 1 Pet. 5:6. h 29:36. 1 Chr. 28:18, 19. Ezra 7:27. Ez. 110:3. Jer. 32:39. Phil. 2:13. 2 Thes. 2:13, 14. 1 Deut. 4:5, 6. 1 Thes. 4:2. 29:25. Acta 4:19. k See on 2. 128:24. 34:4, 7. 2 Kings 18:22. 23:12, 13. 1s.

many places, trained, and kept on purpose, to convey despatches speedily by running.—Even then, the Israelites were but a remnant, which had escaped from the ravages of Pul and Tiglath-pilezer: and far heavier judgments awaited them for their apostasy and idolatry; which could not be averted, except by turning again to the God of their fathers. Hezekiah, however, most affectionately and plainly, cautioned them not to copy the crimes of their fathers and brethren, whose miseries they had witnessed: he warned them not to be "stiff necked," or obstinate in rebellion: (Note, Deut. 10:16.) and he exhorted them to "yield themselves unto the LORD," that is, to yield the victory to him, to submit to his authority, to lay down their rebellious arms, to implore mercy, and to become his servants. (Note, Rom. 6:12, 13.) He entreated them also to "enter into his sanctuary, which he had sanctified for ever," that is, to renounce their idolatries and self-invented worship, and to resort to their sacrifices to the temple at Jerusalem, and there to keep the solemn feasts.—The temple was not only the centre of God's worship, and the pledge of his gracious presence with his people; but likewise the type of those spiritual blessings which are from everlasting to everlasting upon all true believers.—Hezekiah also encouraged those whom he addressed, to hope from the abundant mercy and grace of God to the penitent, that if thus they turned to him, the fierceness of his wrath would be turned away from them; and even to expect the restoration of their brethren and children, who were already in captivity: for God, having all hearts in his hand, could and would make the enemies of those who pleased him to be at peace with them, and to show them compassion. In this, he evidently referred to the promises contained in the books of Moses. (Marg. Ref. y—b.) It is observable, that these letters carefully avoided all mention of the claim of David's family to dominion over all Israel; and of former injuries and quarrels, or whatever could give any shadow of offence, either to the prince or his subjects, except in the immediate concerns of religion.

V. 10, 11. The nation of Israel was almost ripe for destruction; and it is by no means wonderful, that most of them insulted and mocked the messengers, who carried these faithful exhortations and invitations: indeed we may rather wonder, that they met with no harsher treatment. Some, however, out of the several tribes were prevailed on; and, humbling themselves for former sins, resorted to Jerusalem; so that Hezekiah's pious design was not ineffectual, though not so successful as he had wished it to be.

V. 12. The language of this verse is entitled to special attention. "The commandment of the king and his princes, by the word of the LORD, act with ready and general obedience from the men of Judah, because 'the hand of God was to give them one heart to do it.'" If the rulers had commanded any thing contrary to the word of the LORD, or beyond it, in affairs of religion; it would have been a misapplication of their authority: but, as they required nothing but what God had expressly enjoined, they duly improved their talent; and the people, by the grace of God, knew and performed their duty.—It does not appear, to me at least, that

2:18—20. m 15:16, 29:16. 2 Sam. 15:23. John 18:1. Cedron. n 29:34. Ez. 16:61—63. 48:10, 11. o 24. 5:11. 29:15, 34. 37:16. Ex. 19:10, 22. p 35:10, 15. q Heb. standing. r 2 Kings 11:14. r See on Deut. 33:1. s 33:10, 11. Lev. 1:5. Heb. 11:28. t 29:34. 35:3—6. u Ex. 12:6. x See on 11. y Num. 19:20. 1 Cor. 11:28. z Ex. 12:43, &c. a Gen. 20:7, 17. Job 42:8, 9. Jam. 5:15, 16. 1 John 5:16. b 2:21. Ex. 34:16—20. Num. 14:18—20. Ps. 25:8. 36:5, 6, 8, 119:63. Dan. 9:19. c 19:3, 20, 33. 1 Sam. 7:9. 1 Chr. 29:18. Ezra 7:10. Job 11:13. Ps. 10:17. Prov. 23:26. d Lev. 12:4. 15:31—33. 21:17—23. 23:6, 6, Num. 9:6. 19:13—20. e Ex. 15:26. Ps. 103:3. Jam. 5:16. f Heb. found.

Christianity has at all altered the duty either of rulers or subjects in this respect. (Notes, 29:10, 11, 12—19, v. 15.) "There was a marvellous unanimity in Judah, who were so obedient to the motions of the divine grace, (without which so great a charge could not have been made,) as generally to comply with the king's proclamation, made with the consent of the princes. They looked upon it as a divine command, which was brought to them by that authority: and it appeared so to be, by the mighty power of God, which wrought their hearts to a cheerful obedience." Bp. Patrick.

V. 13. The emphatical language here used fully proves, that the concourse of people to celebrate this passover, was exceedingly great, compared with all other instances with which the writer was acquainted. (Note, 35:18, 19.)

V. 14. The people assembled at Jerusalem some days before the passover; and they employed the intermediate time, in clearing the city of altars for idolatry, and from other abominations. This was an excellent preparation for the solemn ordinance, which they were about to celebrate. (Notes, 2 Kings 23:4—23.)

V. 15. The zeal and earnestness of the king, the princes, and the people in general, made the priests and Levites ashamed of their supineness, and stirred them up to prepare themselves, and attend on their work: "they blushed to see the people so forward, and themselves so negligent." Bp. Patrick. "The hand of God" was in this also, or they would have been the more irritated, as examples in ancient and in modern times abundantly prove. (Notes, 12. Matt. 21:14—16, 23—27.)

V. 16—20. (Marg. Ref.) Either the Levites, or the offerers, might receive the blood of the victims; but the priests alone might sprinkle it.—It is evident from this passage, that, in ordinary cases, the persons who brought the paschal lambs slew them; or this exception would not have been stated: and it is at least probable, that the case was at first the same with other sacrifices. (Notes, 29:34. Lev. 1:5—9.)—But many of the ten tribes, having come at a short warning, and being destitute of instruction, were ceremonially unclean, and therefore not regularly prepared to eat the passover. (Notes, Num. 9:6—14.) Yet it would have greatly discouraged them, had they been excluded from that sacred ordinance, to which they had been invited: they appeared sincere and earnest in returning to the Lord, and there was a prospect of important usefulness. They were therefore allowed to eat the passover, when the Levites had killed it for them, notwithstanding their ceremonial disqualification, and Hezekiah, sensible that there was danger in this deviation, earnestly prayed to the good and merciful LORD, "to pardon every one that prepared his heart to seek ... the LORD, ... though not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." (Marg. Ref. a—d.) To this prayer the Lord granted a favourable answer, "and healed the people." Perhaps he had visited them with some sickness for their irregular attendance, which he then graciously healed. (Note, 1 Cor. 11:29—34.) Or, he gave peace to their consciences, and healed their souls.

V. 21, 22. The sacrifices, psalmody, and worship of the

sent at Jerusalem kept 'the feast of unleavened bread seven days, with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, *singing* with loud instruments unto the Lord.

22 And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught "the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace-offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.

23 And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness.

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the con-

gregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.

27 ¶ Then the priests the Levites arose, and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling-place, even unto heaven.

f. Ex. 12:15, 13:6. Lev. 23:6. Luke 22:17. 1 Cor. 5:7,8. g. 26:7,10. Deut. 12:7,12. 16:14. Neh. 8:10. Acts 2:46. Phil. 4:4. h. See on 20:21. 29:25-27. * Heb. instruments of strength. Ps. 150:3-5. † Heb. to the heart of all. 32:6. 1s. 40:1. Hos. 2:14. margins. 115:3. 17:9. 35:3. Deut. 33:10. Ezra 7:10. 25. Neh. 8:7,8. 9:3. 2 Tim. 4:2. k Prov. 2:6. 7:8.6. John 17:3. 2 Cor. 4:6. Phil. 3:8. l Deut. 26:3-11. Ezra 10:11. Neh. 9:3. m See on 2. n 7:9. 1 Kings 8:65.

people, were accompanied by the reading and expounding of the law: and some of the Levites were employed to instruct the people in the good, the profitable, and pleasant knowledge of the Lord: (*Note, 1 Chr. 28:9.*) and the king peculiarly noticed and encouraged them in this useful work, which was very much wanted. (*Notes, 15:1-7, v. 3. 17:7-9. Deut. 31:10-13. Ezra 7:6-10. Neh. 8:1-9,18. 9:1-3. 13:1-3.*) This would excite others to apply themselves to the study of the law, that they too might be qualified for this service.—By "making confession," may be meant, either confessing their sins, or acknowledging the unmerited goodness of the Lord, or both combined.

V. 23-25. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 29:31,32.*) This passover must have been not long before the time of harvest: but the hearts of the people were so enlarged with holy affections, that they were neither weary of the sacred service, nor in haste to return to their secular business. (*Notes, Ex. 23:14-18. Lev. 23:10-21. Deut. 16:9.*) "They did not observe other seven days of unleavened bread, but offered sacrifices with praises and thanksgivings, and feasting, seven days." *By Patrick.*—The people in general, and those who came out of the kingdom of Israel, would be unprepared for the expense attending these sacrifices: and therefore both Hezekiah and his princes liberally gave cattle for sacrifices: in which no doubt they acted properly, and should be imitated according to the nature of the Christian dispensation, by princes and nobles, liberally supplying what is wanting to support the worship of God, and to make glad the hearts of their poorer brethren. (*Notes, Ez. 45:16,17.*) The example had also a salutary influence on the priests, who sanctified themselves, to take their part in the service.—Probably, "the strangers that came out of the land of Israel," as distinguished from "the congregation of Israel," were not Israelites by birth, but circumcised proselytes.

V. 26. The observance of this passover, and the solemnities that attended it, were attended with great joyfulness of heart, and crowned with a peculiar blessing: many of the priests and people were brought to a serious sense of religion, and an important revival was introduced among them; even superior to any which had taken place since the days of Solomon: and in no instance had seven additional days been added to the time assigned to any festival, since the dedication of the temple by him. (*Notes, 1 Kings 8:63-66.*)—As this occurred in the first year of Hezekiah's reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years, it must be supposed that he witnessed the effects of so good a beginning, to the end of his life. It was done suddenly, but, by the grace of God, it was done effectually.—Doubtless, the passovers and other solemn feasts were kept up, and attended to, during this reign, though not in so remarkable a manner as this first passover.

V. 27. This seems to have closed the solemnity, in a most suitable and impressive manner; and the fervent prayer of the priests was heard in heaven, and graciously accepted. (*Notes, Num. 6:23-27.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. Favourable opportunities of fixing good impressions ought by no means to be neglected: and it is better that *circumstantial* irregularities should be admitted, than that divine ordinances should not be observed, or substantial usefulness prevented.—When duties have been long omitted, the time ought to be more carefully redeemed, that no further delays may be occasioned: former negligence, though it cannot be excused, may be forgiven; but persevering ungodliness will infallibly end in destruction.—We ought to embrace every proper opportunity of addressing men upon their eternal concerns, and of engaging as many as possible in the service of God: and we may employ arguments and persuasions with those, over whom we claim no authority. Injuries or enmities, however many or great, should not render us indifferent about the salvation of any man: no expense or labour ought to be regarded in our endeavours to do good: nor should we be discouraged by the prospect of the neglect, contempt, or even rage, of the very persons, whose happiness we are seeking. Numbers may and will "laugh us to

scorn;" but several will be humbled and benefited: and perhaps were success was least expected, where impiety and profligacy were most notorious, and among those who appeared ripe for destruction. Such attempts should be made in plainness, meekness, and affection; all reproaches and upbraidings, and every thing assuming, or needlessly offensive, should be avoided; important and undeniable truths and duties should chiefly be insisted upon: and the conscience and passions, especially hope and fear, should be vigorously addressed. The consequences of impetent rebellion against God should be solemnly stated, and contrasted with the happy effects of returning to him by humble, penitent faith; and the whole enforced by arguments deduced from fact and experience. Addresses to this effect are peculiarly seasonable, while men are suffering for their crimes; and still deeper miseries present themselves to their view, from which they have no prospect of deliverance, but by the merciful interposition of God. And when, among their acquaintance and relatives, the prosperity of eminently pious persons can be compared with the misery of those who are notoriously profligate; the argument thence deduced, for repentance and returning to God, will have peculiar energy: for even the irreligious must see the absurdity of copying the wicked examples of fathers or brethren, who have been evidently ruined by their vices. But the rich mercy of God forms the grand argument, by which to enforce repentance on the sinner's conscience. "There is forgiveness with him," and "plenteous redemption" in the Saviour's blood; and we are under a dispensation of mercy. Nothing but stiffnecked, obstinate, impenitent wickedness can run us. The chief of sinners, "who yield themselves to the Lord," shall certainly be saved. Let them therefore trust in his mercy, attend upon his ordinances, and join themselves to his people, that they may serve him; and then the fierceness of his wrath will turn away from them; but not otherwise. To this "we should exhort one another daily, lest any of us be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin:" to this we should invite and persuade all others without exception, as far as we are able; for "him that cometh" to the Saviour, "he will in no wise cast out;" but "will grant" unto all who believe in him "that being delivered from the hand of their enemies, they may serve him without fear, in righteousness and true holiness, before him, all the days of their life;" and the covenant made with them will prove for the good of their children and brethren also.—Oh, that messengers were sent forth to carry these invitations to every city and village, through our land, and every land! It is true, the Lord alone can render them effectual; but he works by the word of his ministers, and also by the commandment of kings and princes, when it accords with his word.—Faith comes by hearing; and true religion has uniformly flourished, in proportion to the measure in which faithful, scriptural preaching has abounded. In general, persons of wealth or authority might be instrumental in promoting this faithful preaching of the word of God, if they had the inclination, and were willing to bear the expense of it; nor can superior rank enjoy a higher privilege. All who are employed in such a work, should do it with their might; and neither be discouraged nor exasperated by opposition or reproach; and they will find at length that "their labour was not in vain in the Lord."

V. 13-20. When we are humbled for our transgressions, and declare war against all our idols, expecting and seeking forgiveness and salvation only through the atonement of Christ, we become welcome communicants at the Lord's table. The unhumiliated and impenitent indeed, the man who lives in known sin, and he who comes "trusting in his own righteousness," instead of the manifold and great mercies of God, may presume to commemorate the death of Christ; but he is an intruder, who comes to the marriage-feast, without the wedding-garment. (*Note, Matt. 22:11-14.*) Yet when the sinner has indeed begun to prepare his heart to seek the Lord; though his views be feeble, obscure, and in many things erroneous, and his approach be not exactly

9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

10 And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store."

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the Lord; and they prepared them,

12 And brought in the offerings and the tithes, and the dedicated things faithfully: "over which Cononiah the Levite was ruler, and Shimei his brother was the next."

13 And Jehiel, and Azariah, and Nahath, and Asabel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabab, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahathi, and Benaiah, were overseers under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, "at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God."

14 And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, was over the free-will offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the Lord, and the most holy things.

15 And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and She-

caniah, in the cities of the priests, in their set office, to give to their brethren by courses, "as well to the great as to the small:"

16 Beside their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, even unto every one that entereth into the house of the Lord, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses;

17 Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges, by their courses;

18 And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness:

19 Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, which were in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

20 ¶ And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God.

21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

¶ 25: 17. 1 Kings 2:35. 1 Chr. 6:8, 14. Ez. 44:15. x Prov. 3:9, 10. Hag. 2:19, 19. Mal. 3:11. 1 Tim. 1:5. 2 Kings 4:13, 11. Matt. 15:47. Luc. 4:18. 1 Cor. 12:3-7. 29:5, 23. Lev. 27:2, 2, 15. Deut. 28:1. Prov. 10:2. 2 Cor. 9:11. * Or, storehouses. Neh. 10:38, 39. 13:12, 13. a See on 1 Chr. 26:20-26. 1 Heb. at the hand. b 11. See on 30:12. c See on 1 Chr. 9:11. 24:5. Neh. 11:11. d 1 Chr. 25:12, 13, 17. e Lev. 22:15, 22, 23. Num. 26:39. 1 Pet. 12:4, 17, 16, 10. Eze. 14:3, 5, 7, 45. Ps. 112:103. f Lev. 2:10. 6:16, 17, 7:1-6. 10:12, 13, 27, 28. 1 Heb. at his hand. 13. marg.

the Lord, who had given them the power and inclination to bring such abundance. (Notes, 1 Chr. 29:10-19. 2 Cor. 8:1-5, 16-24. 9:8-15.) "They gave thanks to God, who had given them such plenty of good things, and had likewise given them a heart to offer it plentifully." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9, 10. The king and the princes supposed, from the abundance which they beheld, that the priests, who had the superintendence of the business, had preserved the whole; and they inquired, wherefore they had not distributed the oblations of the people. But it was answered, that the Lord had blessed the people with such an abundant increase, that all this was left, after the priests and Levites had been sufficiently provided for! (Notes, Hag. 1:5-11. 2:15-19. Mal. 3:7-12.) The disinterestedness of the priests was highly commendable; for they might easily have enriched themselves, without being suspected; and the whole transaction enlarges our idea of the blessing which had attended the preceding solemnity: for before this, the priests seem to have been generally very careless and ungodly. (Notes, Mal. 1:9-14.)—It is probable, that Azariah was the chief priest, under the high-priest, and nearly related to him. (13. 1 Chr. 6:13, 14.)

V. 11-14. (Neh. 10:37-39. 12:44. 13:5, 9. Notes, 1 Kings 6:5-6. Neh. 13:10-14.) Hezekiah commanded "to build new storehouses; . . . because there was not room enough wherein to lay all the offerings and tithes, and other dedicated things." As he took care, they should all be faithfully laid up, so he set trusty persons to see that they were no less faithfully preserved, for their proper uses." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15-19. The priests and Levites, as they attended in their courses, had a certain portion allotted to them, according to their office and charge. The sons of the priests, who attended with them, as it seems, from three years of age, to learn the work of the sanctuary, previously to the time of their officiating, had a provision made for them. A list was taken of the wives, and of the other children, of the priests and Levites, and a proportionable allowance was assigned them: as also to those, who were excluded or excused from attendance; and for all of those who were absent from the temple, employed as magistrates and teachers in their several districts. Thus none appropriated an exorbitant proportion, and none wanted a suitable provision: "for in their set office, they sanctified themselves in holiness;" they separated themselves from other employments, and devoted themselves to serve God in their proper office, in a holy and believing expectation that he would provide for them; (for so the words seem to mean:) nor were they disappointed. And this regular provision kept them from the temptation of entangling themselves in worldly cares and employments, to the neglect of their ministry. "This seems to be a reason, why such care was taken of their wives and children; because their husbands were wholly given up to the service of God, and could not follow any other employment, whereby to provide for the maintenance of their families." *Bp. Patrick.* (Marg. Ref. Notes, Neh. 13:10-13. 2 Tim. 2:7.)

V. 20, 21. The general conduct of Hezekiah was good in

g Josh. 21:9-19. 1 Chr. 6:54-60. 6 Or, trust. 1 Chr. 9:22. marg. h 1 Chr. 25:8. 1 Lev. 21:20, 22. k Num. 3:15, 20. 4:28, 42, 45. 17:2, 3. Ezra 2:59. 1 Num. 4:8, 24. 1 Chr. 25:24, 27. m See on 2. 1 Chr. 24:30-31. 25:25. 1 Or, trust. 15. 1 Chr. 9:22. margine. n Is. 5:16. Rom. 15:16. e 15. Lev. 25:34. Num. 55:2-5. 1 Chr. 6:54, 60. p 12-15. 28:15. q 1 Kings 15:5. 2 Kings 20:3, 22, 2. John 1:47. Acts 24:16. 1 Thes. 2:10. r Deut. 6:5. 10:12. 1 Kings 3:4. 1 Chr. 22:13. Ec. 9:10. Jer. 29:13. s 14:7, 20, 20. 26:5. Josh. 1:7. 1 Chr. 22:13. Ps. 1:3. Matt. 6:33.

itself; he acted with equity and impartiality towards all his subjects in these regulations, and strict attention to the laws and institutions previously established. His heart also was upright in the sight of God; and in all that he attempted, to establish the worship of the Lord, and to obey and enforce the observance of his law, seeking his favour and glory, he was earnest and hearty, and single in his aim and dependence; and he was prospered accordingly. What a commendation was this as given by God himself! What a happy instrument was this pious king of good to his people! and what an encouraging and worthy example is this for princes, magistrates, ministers, and Christians to imitate!

PRactical OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. The finishing of one duty should form an introduction to the beginning of another; and he, who "delighteth greatly in God's commandments," will not complain of this as a weariness.—Public ordinances, and divine consolations, should stir up men to cleanse their hearts, houses, or shops, and every thing in which they are concerned, from the filthiness of sin, and the idolatry of covetousness; and to exhort and excite others to do the same, by every method, consistent with relative duties and the peace of society.—The subsequent improvement of solemn ordinances, is of the greatest importance to personal, family, and public religion. It is then our business to meditate on, and reduce to practice, what we have learned; to express our pious affections in every kind of good work; and to take care that the vigour of them do not subside, through unwatchfulness, neglect of prayer, or worldly indulgences. Inattention to these duties renders the private conversation and behaviour of most, who profess the gospel, inconsistent with their public profession, and apparently religious affections: their growth in grace is thus prevented, and religion does not appear so venerable by far as it otherwise would do.—Examples should concur with exhortations or injunctions, whether men act as magistrates or ministers: and this will give them greater effect, in many cases, than menaces, coercive measures, or severe rebukes. Those, who would have others expend their wealth in useful works, ought to take the lead: nay, the easiest method of enforcing the laws, and prevailing with others to pay their dues, is often found to be by receding from personal claims, and joining liberality with justice, in the magistrate's own conduct.—The proper use of superior riches is, to do superior good with them; and if this were generally understood and believed, the most blessed effects would be produced.—Every exercise of human authority in the church of God must be regulated and bounded by his law, and must enforce obedience to it, and not make additions to it, or alterations in it.—While ministers ought to attend upon their proper work, in their several places; they should be encouraged in it, and not constrained or tempted to neglect it, by the want of a suitable maintenance for their families; or made uneasy and distressed in attending on it: nor should any excuse be afforded to those, who by choice leave the word of God for secular engagements.—A man is never impoverished by prudent liberality, in works of piety and charity: indeed, this is

CHAPTER XXXII.

Sennacherib invades Judah; and Hezekiah fortifieth Jerusalem, and encourages the people, 1-8. Sennacherib's blasphemous messages and letters, 9-19. Hezekiah and Isaiah pray for deliverance: an angel destroyeth the Assyrian army; and their king, when returned to Nineveh, is slain by his sons when worshipping his idol, 20, 21. Hezekiah prospers and is renowned, 22, 23. Ishki acknowledges his prayer, and is miraculously recovered; his heart is lifted up, he is unrepentant towards himself, 24-25. His riches and works, 27-31. His unrepentance in respect of the goodness done to him by the king of Assyria, 32. He does his money in investment, and Sennacherib succeeds him, 33-34.

AFTER these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.

2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,

3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him.

4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?

5 Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying,

7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him:

a 20:1,2. 2 Kings 18:13. Is. 36:1, &c. b 2 Kings 15:19. 17:6. 18:11,19,20. Is. 7:17,18. 8:5-8. 10:5-8. Hos. 11:5. * Heb. break them up. Is. 10:7-11. 37:24,25. Mic. 2:13. † Heb. his face is to war. 2 Kings 12:17. Luke 9:51,53. c 30:2. 2 Kings 18:20. Prov. 15:22. 20:18. 24:6. Is. 40:13. Rom. 11:34. d 2 Kings 20:15. 22:8-11. e 30:30-31. † Heb. overhauled. ‡ See on 1. 2 Kings 18:9. 13:19. 17:1. Is. 10:9. § 2 Kings 3:9,16,17. 19:21. h 12:1. 14:5-7. 17:13,2. 23:31. 26:8. Is. 22:8. 10. 1:25,26. ‡ 2 Kings 25:4. Jer. 39:4. † Job. 9:6. 2 Sam. 5:9. 1 Kings 9:24. 11:37. 2 Kings 12:20. § Or, sword, or teapoon. 26:14,15. m 17:14-19. 1 Chr. 27:3,4. &c. n Ezra 10:9. Neh. 8:1-3,16. † Heb. to their heart. 30:22. Gen. 34:3. Is. 40:2. marg. o Deut. 31:6,7,23. Josh. 1:6-9. 1 Chr. 23:10. Is. 53:4. Dan. 10:19. Zech. 8:9,23. Eph. 6:10. 2 Tim. 2:1. p 30:15. 2 Kings 18:30. 19:7. q 2 Kings 6:16. Rom. 8:31. 1 John 4:4. r Job 40:9. Jer. 17:5. s 13:12. 14:11. Is. 46:7,11. Is. 8:10. 41:10. Acts 18:10. 2 Tim. 4:17,22.

the way to ensure the blessing of God on his substance and his labours. (*Marg. Ref.*) And when the portion, which is due to the ministers of religion, and to the poor, is conscientiously rendered to them, it shall be recompensed as if it were a free-will offering.

V. 11-21. A proper use of authority, joined with a good example, and convincing arguments, will induce many to do their duty in those things in which they before were entirely negligent: but, whatever means are used, when men abound in good works, we should bless the Lord for it; and due commendation should not be withheld from them.—Disinterestedness, impartiality, and frugality, are requisite in those who have the management of public charities, or other public funds: for when proper care is taken of the sums already contributed, and they are evidently expended for the sole purpose intended, encouragement is given to further contributions.—It would tend greatly to the welfare of the church, if ministers were provided for, with some degree of equality, proportioned to their diligence, their families, and their necessary expenses: and it is a shameful abuse, that funds anciently appropriated for the maintenance of the clergy, are in a great measure applied to aggrandize those who do very little for them; whilst the real labourers in the vineyard are scarcely kept from starving, and leave no provision for their families when taken from them. Legislators should rectify such abuses. But the faithful servant of God needs not be discouraged: let him study to live, and to preach, according to the word of truth, and “give himself wholly” to his work; and let him do it in faith, and the Lord will not suffer him to want; yea, he will provide for his children after him. But all pious men are not able to go on comfortably in this manner; and it is a grievous thing, that their spirits should be depressed, and their hands weakened, in their work, on this account; but it is still far worse, when they are tempted to leave their proper employment, to earn a morsel of bread for their wives and children. May the Lord raise up in every nation zealous men, who in such matters, and in all others, will “work that which is good, and right, and truth, before the LORD;” and who will do their utmost, “with all their hearts in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments,” to seek the honour of the Lord—

(800)

8 With him is an arm of flesh; but *with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

9 ¶ After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that were at Jerusalem, saying,

10 ¶ Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?

11 I do not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, *the Lord our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

12 Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places, and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?

13 Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of my hand?

14 Who was there among all the gods of those nations, that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of my hand?

15 Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of my hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of my hand?

16 And his servants spake yet more against

t 20:15. Dent. 20:1,4. Josh. 10:42. † Heb. leaned. 15. 20:20. Is. 36:18. u See on 2 Kings 18:17. Is. 36:2. x Josh. 10:31. 12:11 15:39. Is. 37:8. Mic. 1:13. * Heb. dominion. y See on 2 Kings 18:19. Is. 36:4. † Heb. strong-hold. ‡ See on 2 Kings 18:27. Is. 36:12,15. § 15. 2 Kings 19:10. Ps. 3:2. 11:1-3. 22:8. 42:10. 71:11. Matt. 27:43. b See on 31:1. 2 Kings 18:24,29. Is. 36:7. c See on Deut. 12:13,14,26,27. d 4:1. Ex. 27:1-8. 30:1-6. 40:26-29. 1 Kings 7:48. e 2 Kings 15:29. 17:5,6. 19:11-13,17,18. Is. 10:9,10. 37:12,18-20. Dan. 4:30. 37. † See on 19. 2 Kings 18:33-35. 19:15,19. Ps. 115:3-8. Is. 44:8-10. Jer. 10:11,12,16. Acts 19:28. 1 Cor. 8:4. § See on Is. 10:11,12. h Ex. 14:3. 15:9-11. Is. 42:8. i See on 2 Kings 18:29. 19:10. k 11. 1 Kings 22:22. Is. 36:18. Acts 19:26. Gal. 1:10. l Ex. 5:2. Dan. 3:15. John 18:10,11. m Job 15:25,26. Ps. 73:9.

Whether we have few or many talents, may we thus improve them, and encourage others to do the same: we shall then assuredly be prospered in some measure; and shall obtain that “honour which cometh from God,” being graciously addressed by him with, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Most of the transactions, recorded in the preceding chapters, took place in the first year of Hezekiah's reign: and from that time he proceeded to establish and complete his reformation, without any very memorable occurrences, till his fourteenth year, in which Sennacherib's first invasion occurred. (*Marg. Ref. Note, 2 Kings 18:13-16.*)

V. 3, 4. (*Marg. Ref.*) The brook here mentioned, is supposed to have been Kidron, or Cedron, called also “the upper water-course of Gihon.” (30) Through subterraneous or concealed channels, Hezekiah brought the waters of this rivulet into the city, to supply certain pools there formed for the use of the inhabitants. Or, by some means, he turned or concealed the course of it, in order that the Assyrians might be distressed for water, if they undertook the siege of Jerusalem.—“The kings of Assyria” had, during several successions, been formidable enemies to Israel and Judah: and this measure was intended, not only for a present defence against Sennacherib, but also as a security against future invasions of him or his successors. (*Note, Is. 22:8-14.*)

V. 5-8. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 20:14-19. 2 Kings 6:15-17. 1 John 4:4-6.*) These measures seem to have been adopted, and this most encouraging exhortation given, at the approach of Sennacherib's first invasion: and the people in general had a strong confidence, that the Lord would deliver them according to the word of Hezekiah. “They relied on what he said, as if it had been spoken to them by God himself.” *Bp. Patrick.* Some, however, seem to have confided rather in their fortifications.—Yet Hezekiah himself was afterwards induced to submit to Sennacherib, and pay him tribute; on this he departed, but not long after he renewed his attempts. (*Note, 2 Kings 18:13-16.*)

V. 9-16. *Notes, 2 Kings 18:17-25.—That he abide in the siege, &c. (10) Or “in the strong-hold in Jerusalem.” Marg.—How much less, &c. (15) This haughty conqueror*

the LORD God, and "against his servant Hezekiah.

17 He "wrote also letters "to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, "As the gods of the nations of *other* lands have not delivered their people out of my hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of my hand.

18 Then "they cried with a loud voice, in the Jews' speech, unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, "to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

19 And they "spake against "the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, *which were* "the work of the hands of man.

20 And for this cause "Hezekiah the king, and "the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, "prayed and cried to heaven.

21 ¶ And "the LORD sent an "angel, which "cut off all the mighty men of valour, and "the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned "with shame of face to his own land. And when "he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels "slew him there with the sword.

22 Thus "the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all *other*. and "guided them on every side.

23 And many brought "gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and "presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that "he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

[Practical Observations.]

a. c.] 24 ¶ In those days "Hezekiah was sick to "the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he "gave him a sign.

25 But Hezekiah "rendered not again according to the benefit *done* unto him; for this heart

was lifted up: "therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

26 Notwithstanding, "Hezekiah humbled himself for the "pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them "in the days of Hezekiah.

27 ¶ And Hezekiah had "exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself "treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for "precious stones, and for spices, and for "shields, and for all manner of "pleasant jewels:

28 "Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and "stalls for all manner of beasts, and "cotes for flocks.

29 Moreover, he provided him cities, and "possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for "God had given him substance very much.

30 This same Hezekiah also "stopped the upper water-course of "Gihon, and brought "it straight down to the west side of the city "of David. "And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

31 ¶ Howbeit, "in the business of the "ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of "the wonder that was *done* in the land, God "left him, to try him, "that he might know all *that* was in his heart.

32 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his "goodness, behold, they are written "in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and "in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

33 And Hezekiah "slept with his fathers, "b. c. and they buried him in the "chiefest of the "sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem "did him honour at his death: "and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

n John 15:21. o See on 2 Kings 19:14. Neh. 6:5. Is. 37:14. p See on 2 Kings 19:32, 28. Is. 10:15. 37:23, 24, 25, 26. Rev. 13:6. e 2 Kings 19:12. r 2 Kings 18:26. s 2 Kings 19:13. t 2 Kings 19:14. u 2 Kings 19:15. v 2 Kings 19:16. w 2 Kings 19:17. x 2 Kings 19:18. y 2 Kings 19:19. z 2 Kings 19:20. aa 2 Kings 19:21. ab 2 Kings 19:22. ac 2 Kings 19:23. ad 2 Kings 19:24. ae 2 Kings 19:25. af 2 Kings 19:26. ag 2 Kings 19:27. ah 2 Kings 19:28. ai 2 Kings 19:29. aj 2 Kings 19:30. ak 2 Kings 19:31. al 2 Kings 19:32. am 2 Kings 19:33. an 2 Kings 19:34. ao 2 Kings 19:35. ap 2 Kings 19:36. aq 2 Kings 19:37. ar 2 Kings 19:38. as 2 Kings 19:39. at 2 Kings 19:40. au 2 Kings 19:41. av 2 Kings 19:42. aw 2 Kings 19:43. ax 2 Kings 19:44. ay 2 Kings 19:45. az 2 Kings 19:46. ba 2 Kings 19:47. bb 2 Kings 19:48. bc 2 Kings 19:49. bd 2 Kings 19:50. be 2 Kings 19:51. bf 2 Kings 19:52. bg 2 Kings 19:53. bh 2 Kings 19:54. bi 2 Kings 19:55. bj 2 Kings 19:56. bk 2 Kings 19:57. bl 2 Kings 19:58. bm 2 Kings 19:59. bn 2 Kings 19:60. bo 2 Kings 19:61. bp 2 Kings 19:62. bq 2 Kings 19:63. br 2 Kings 19:64. bs 2 Kings 19:65. bt 2 Kings 19:66. bu 2 Kings 19:67. bv 2 Kings 19:68. bw 2 Kings 19:69. bx 2 Kings 19:70. by 2 Kings 19:71. bz 2 Kings 19:72. ca 2 Kings 19:73. cb 2 Kings 19:74. cc 2 Kings 19:75. cd 2 Kings 19:76. ce 2 Kings 19:77. cf 2 Kings 19:78. cg 2 Kings 19:79. ch 2 Kings 19:80. ci 2 Kings 19:81. cj 2 Kings 19:82. ck 2 Kings 19:83. cl 2 Kings 19:84. cm 2 Kings 19:85. cn 2 Kings 19:86. co 2 Kings 19:87. cp 2 Kings 19:88. cq 2 Kings 19:89. cr 2 Kings 19:90. cs 2 Kings 19:91. ct 2 Kings 19:92. cu 2 Kings 19:93. cv 2 Kings 19:94. cw 2 Kings 19:95. cx 2 Kings 19:96. cy 2 Kings 19:97. cz 2 Kings 19:98. da 2 Kings 19:99. db 2 Kings 19:100. dc 2 Kings 19:101. dd 2 Kings 19:102. de 2 Kings 19:103. df 2 Kings 19:104. dg 2 Kings 19:105. dh 2 Kings 19:106. di 2 Kings 19:107. dj 2 Kings 19:108. dk 2 Kings 19:109. dl 2 Kings 19:110. dm 2 Kings 19:111. dn 2 Kings 19:112. do 2 Kings 19:113. dp 2 Kings 19:114. dq 2 Kings 19:115. dr 2 Kings 19:116. ds 2 Kings 19:117. dt 2 Kings 19:118. du 2 Kings 19:119. dv 2 Kings 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supposed that JEHOVAH was even inferior to the gods of the nations! Probably he grounded this notion on the inferiority of Judah, in extent and population, to many of the kingdoms which he had subdued; especially as he was master of almost the whole land already.—"If the LORD had a mind to help them, he would have them believe, that he was not able; because no gods had been able to deliver those that worshipped them, from his power." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—22. *Notes, 2 Kings 18:26—35. 19.—God of Jerusalem.* (19) Sennacherib called JEHOVAH "the God of Jerusalem," either because that city alone remained in the hands of his worshippers; or because Hezekiah, by abolishing the high places, seemed to have confined to Jerusalem alone, the worship of his God, which before had been spread over the land.

V. 23. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Is. 60:4—9.*

V. 24—26. (*Notes, 2 Kings 20: Is. 38: 39:*) These events are supposed, by many learned men, to have been previous to Sennacherib's first invasion, as evidently occurring in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. (*Note, 2 Kings 18:13. 20:1.*)—The princes and the people of Judah, as well as the king, had been very ungrateful for their many mercies: and when "Hezekiah was humbled for the pride of his heart," and had received Isaiah's alarming message, it is probable he made open confession of his offence, and called upon the people to join with him in solemn humiliation and prayer on that account. It may, however, be doubted, whether the ambassadors from the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem before Sennacherib's last invasion of the land; as the treasures, which Hezekiah showed them, seem to have been obtained by the result of that invasion, and the presents, which were afterwards brought to him. (*Note, 27—29.*)—This chapter is in great measure an abridgment of those chapters in the Second of Kings, and in the prophecy of Isaiah, which are referred to.—*Gave him a sign.* (24) Or, "wrought a miracle for him." *Marg.*

V. 27—29. The riches, here spoken of, seem to have arisen, in great measure, from the immense spoil found in the

Luke 17:18. p 31. 25:19. 26:16. Deut. 8:12—14, 17. 2 Kings 14:10. 20:13. Ez. 25:2, 5, 17. Dan. 5:20, 23. Hab. 2:4. 2 Cor. 12:7. 1 Tim. 3:6. 1 Pet. 5:5, 6. 1 Jo. 1:6. 3 Jo. 1:1. 1 Sam. 17:10, 25. Neh. 6:9. 1 Sam. 13:17. 1 Chr. 21:12—17. r 35:12, 13, 23, 24, 27. Lev. 26:40, 41. 2 Kings 20:19. Jer. 26:18, 19. Jam. 4:10. s Heb. lifting up. 34:27, 28. 1 Kings 21:29. See on 2 Kings 20:16—18. Is. 39:6—8. t 1:12. 9:27. 17:5. u 1 Chr. 27:25, &c. || Heb. instruments of desire. x 26:10. y 1 Kings 4:26. z 2 Sam. 7:8. a 26:10. Heb. 13:2—6. 1 Chr. 27:28—31. Job 1:3. Ez. 42:12. b 25:9. Deut. 3:18. 1 Sam. 2:7. 1 Chr. 29:12. Prov. 10:22. 1 Tim. 6:17, 18. c See on 4. Is. 29:9—11. d 1 Kings 13:38, 45. e Josh. 1:7, 8. f 1 Kings 1:1—8. g 2 Kings 20:12, 13. Is. 39:1, 12. h Heb. interpreters. i 2 Kings 20:8—11. Is. 39:8. h Jude. 16:20. Ps. 27:9. 51:11, 12. 119:116, 117. John 16:5. 1 Cor. 22:1. i Job 1:12. 2:3—5. Ps. 139:1, 2, 23, 24. Prov. 17:3. Eccl. 19:9. Mal. 3:2, 3. 1 Pet. 1:7. k Deut. 8:2, 13, 3. l Heb. kindness. m 20:21. n 1:36—39. m 2 Kings 18:20. n Heb. 1 Kings 1:21. 2:10. 11:43. n 1 Chr. 18:12. o 16:14. Gen. 50:10, 11. Num. 20:29. Deut. 34:8. 1 Sam. 2:30. 25:1. Prov. 10:7. p See on 33:1, &c.

Assyrian camp. (*Notes, Is. 33:2—6, 23, 24.*) *Storehouses, &c.* (28) *Notes, 26:10. 1 Chr. 27:25—31. Job 1:3, v. 3. 42:10—17. v. 12. Prov. 27:23—27. Ec. 5:9—12.*

V. 30—33. *Marg. Ref. Notes, 3, v. 4. 2 Kings 20:20, 21.—The princes.* (31) "The princes of Babylon sent to inquire of the wonder that had been done in the land;" but it is not certain, that the Chaldeans observed any change in the motion of the heavenly bodies. The report of the miracles which attended Hezekiah's recovery, might suffice for that purpose. Yet, in Isaiah it is said, "The sun returned, &c." (*Note, Is. 38:8.*)—The Lord on this occasion withdrew from Hezekiah the immediate efficacy of his grace, and left him to follow the dictates of his own natural propensity, "to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." "The omniscient God before knew the whole; but, having by the trial made the case evident, he thus pointed it out to Hezekiah, and to all succeeding ages, for their humiliation, warning, and instruction. (*Notes, Deut. 8:2, 3.*) For it here appears undeniable, that the best of men, if left to themselves, are prone to pride and ostentation, to idolize themselves and their fellow-creatures, to withdraw their dependence from God, to rob him of his glory, and to be ungrateful for his mercies. (*Note, 2 Cor. 12:7—10.*) "God suffered him to behave according to his own inclinations, without any special motor from him; that Hezekiah might know, he was not so strong as he imagined, if he were left to himself without God. . . . God made proof of Hezekiah, as he had done of many other good men, whether he would entirely obey him or not. . . . God no doubt . . . saw the pride and vanity that lurked in Hezekiah's heart; which was hid from every one but God himself, who now suffered him to discover it for his humiliation." *Bp. Patrick.—They buried, &c.* (33) *Notes, 16:13, 14. 21:18—20. 24:15, 16.*

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Manasse, reigns long, is very wicked, multiplies idolatries, corrupts the people, and rejects the admonitions of God, 1-10. He is carried captive to Babylon; he humbles himself greatly before God, with earnest and fervent prayer; and is restored to his kingdom, 11-13. He fortifies his dominions, and restores the worship of God, 14-17. His acts and prayers, 18, 19. He dies, and Amon succeeds, who reigns wickedly, and is murdered, 20-24. The people slay the murderers, and make Josiah king, 25.

MANASSE was ^{twelve} years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:

2 But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

3 ¶ For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped as ^{the} host of heaven, and served them.

4 Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be forever.

5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

6 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments,

and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

7 And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:

8 Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.

9 So Manasse made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

10 And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and

a 32:33. 2 Kings 21:1. 1 Chr. 3:13. Matt. 1:10. Manasse. b 34:12. Ec. 10:16. Is. 34:12. c 28:33. 35:14. Lev. 15:21-30. 20:23:23. Dent. 12:31. 18:9-14. 2 Kings 17:11, 15. 21:2, 9. Ezra 9:14. Ps. 106:35-40. Ez. 11:12. d Ec. 2:19. 9:18. e Heb. returned and built. f 30:14. 31:1. 32:12. 2 Kings 18:4. 21:3. g 32:2-4. Judg. 2:11-13. g Dent. 16:21. 1 Kings 14:23. Jer. 17:2. h Dent. 4:19. 17:3. 2 Kings 23:5-11. Jer. 8:2. 19:13. Zeph. 1:5. Acts 7:42. i 15:23. 2 Kings 21:4, 5. Jer. 7:30. k 6:6. 7:16. 13:29. Dent. 12:11. 1 Kings 8:29. 9:3. l 4:9. Jer. 32:34. 35. Ez. 8:7-18. m 28:3. Lev. 18:21. 20:2. Dent. 12:31. 18:10. 2 Kings 21:6. 23:10. Jer. 7:31, 32. Ez. 37:37, 39. n Lev. 19:26. 20:6. Dent. 18:10-14. 1 Sam. 15:23. 2 Kings 17:17. Is. 47:9-12. Gal.

5:20. o 2 Kings 21:6. 23:24. 1 Chr. 10:13. Is. 8:19. 19:3. p 2 Kings 21:7, 8. 23:6. q See on a. 1 Kings 8:29. Ps. 132:13, 14. r 6:6. 1 Kings 8:44, 48. 11:13, 32. Ps. 78:68. s See on 2 Sam. 7:10. 1 Chr. 17:9. t See on 7:17. 22. Dent. 23:1-14. 30:15-20. Is. 1:19, 20. Ez. 33:25, 26. u Dent. 4:40. 5:1. 31-33. 6:1. 8:1. 27:26. Luke 1:6. Gal. 3:10-13. x See on Lev. 8:9. 10:11. y 1 Kings 14:16. 15:26. 2 Kings 21:16. 23:26. 24:3, 4. Prov. 29:12. Mic. 6:16. z See on 2. 2 Kings 21:9-11. Ez. 16:45-47. v Lev. 18:24. Dent. 2:21. Josh. 24:8. 2 Kings 17:38-11. b 36:15, 16. Neh. 9:29, 30. Jer. 25:1-7. 44:4, 5. Zech. 1:4. Acts 7:51. e Dent. 28:36. d Is. 10:8. 36:19. h Heb. which were the king's. i Neh. 9:32, 37. Is. 5:28. 20. 7:18-20. f 1 Sam. 13:8.

permitted, under certain restrictions, to assault us.—It is very lawful and proper to employ prudent precautions and means of defence; and to be united and vigorous in every advisable measure, when there is a prospect of danger or difficulty: but it is seldom that men attend to these things, without confiding in them. We should therefore encourage ourselves and each other, to trust wholly in the Lord: and if he is for us, there will be more with us than with our foes; should all the men on earth, and all the legions of fallen angels, combine and actually approach to assault us. What need then have we to fear the strongest arm of flesh, when we have the "LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles?" These are words, that may safely be rested upon, by all who "repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Yet such a confidence will excite the contempt and reviling of idolaters, infidels, and other proud, ungodly men; those who venture to do their duty, in defiance of the persecuting rage of some powerful king, professing to rely on the Lord of hosts, will be deemed obstinate and infatuated: and in various difficulties, it will be inquired, whether "they will be persuaded to give themselves over to die by famine and thirst." The more undaunted any one is, while trusting the Lord in the path of duty, the more will some impious wretches rail, blaspheme, menace, boast, and triumph; especially when grown insolent by success, and intoxicated with absolute authority. But let the oppressed and insulted believer pray earnestly to the Lord, that he may not be driven from his confidence. In due time it will appear, that "none ever hardened himself against God and prospered;" and that none were ever confounded who put their trust in him. For, as the power and justice of God are displayed in the destruction of his enemies; so, his rich and free mercy are glorified in the salvation of his people.

V. 24-33. Alas! how seldom do we in any good degree render to the Lord according to his benefits! None, who know themselves, and watch over their own hearts, will venture to cast a stone at Hezekiah; but they will all, one by one, depart convicted in their consciences of similar guilt, and crying out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"—If we be not left to expose our foolish and wicked pride before the world, the Lord sees and abhors the risings of it in our hearts, and might justly pour out his wrath upon us: yet, if humbled for this pride of our heart, he will forgive us and continue to bless us. But we ought to watch and pray always, that we may not "enter into temptation," and that God would not leave us to ourselves: we ought to repress every vain-glorious thought, and to welcome even afflictions and severe rebukes, and painful conflicts and temptations, when they keep us from being "exalted above measure." Blessed be God, death will soon end the believer's conflict; then every sin will be abolished, and he may safely be trusted with the most glorious exaltation and uninterrupted felicity; and will no more, to all eternity, be tempted to intercept the least mite of that revenue of praise, which belongs to the God of his salvation.

While we are here, we ought to honour those to whom honour is due, though they be far from perfect: and we may well respect the memories, and should imitate the example, of those who have been pious and useful in their generation:

for, a short time may perhaps awfully convince survivors, that the loss of them was far greater, than at first could be at all supposed.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1-5. (Notes, 2 Kings 21:1-5.) Perhaps Hezekiah named his son Manasseh from the circumstance, that many of the tribe of Manasse had come at his invitation, to attend the passover. (Note, 30:1.)

V. 6-8. Manasseh seems to have studied to find out what God had forbidden in his law, that he might practise it. Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Kings 21:6-8.)—A carved image, the idol, &c. (7) "A graven image of the grove," 2 Kings 21:7.

V. 9, 10. (Notes, 2 Kings 21:9, 10.) "A most prodigious change from the height of piety in his father's time, into the sink of impiety in this! ... Victorinus Strigelius, ... professor of theology at Heidelberg, left this remark in his lectures on this place, near a hundred and forty years ago." (that is, soon after the establishment of the reformation in Germany.)—"Now we have the word of God abundantly in all wisdom, and pious princes patronise both those that preach, and those that learn the gospel. But this plenty of the word we now enjoy, (I tremble to speak it, but I must speak it, because it will come to pass,) shall be taken away and that sad mournful time will come, when the public assemblies of the church shall be scattered, and a few pious souls shall meet with fear in a corner, to communicate among themselves the fragments of the heavenly doctrine, and give God thanks for these remainders." Which we have seen fulfilled in that country, and in France, and other places. Bp. Patrick.—This apparent prophecy seems to have been merely a presage grounded on the vicissitudes of things, especially in respect of religion, and the tendency of prosperity to induce carnal security.

V. 11. There is not the least intimation, in the Second Book of Kings, either of Manasseh's captivity, or of his repentance: and it might have been concluded from the narrative there given, that he persevered in his career of impiety and iniquity, with impunity, till his death. Here, however, we find a most instructive view of his latter years; and this very man became as eminent an instance of the power, riches, and freeness of divine mercy and grace, as any recorded in the Scripture.—When he and his people had long disregarded the admonitions of the prophets, and added persecutions, and multiplied murders, to their other crimes; (9, 10. Notes, 2 Kings 21:16. 23:26, 27.) "the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria." We are not informed what devastations these invaders made in Judah and Jerusalem: but Manasseh, being either vanquished or intimidated, attempted to conceal himself in a thicket; where, being discovered, he was taken prisoner, loaded with fetters, and sent to Babylon. God, in his providence, gave the Assyrians the power and opportunity of making this invasion, and he left them to follow their own ambition, or other worldly motives; and he also gave them success, in order to chastise Manasseh's enormous wickedness.—Many suppose, that Esar-haddon, having got possession of Babylon, and entirely changed the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel, about the same time sent to invade Judah.

bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

12 And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

13 And prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.

14 Now after this, he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish-gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.

15 And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.

16 And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel.

17 Nevertheless, the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only.

18 ¶ Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh,

2 Kings 23:33-35; Job 36:8-11. Ps. 107:10-12. * Or, chains. h 28:32. Lev. 26:39-42. Deut. 4:30, 31. Jer. 31:18-20. Hos. 5:15. Mic. 6:9. Luke 13:10-18. 18:19. Ps. 50:15. Acts 9:11. k See on 29:5. 119:23. 32:26. Ex. 10:3. Luke 13:15. Jam. 4:10. 1 Pet. 5:5-6. m Ezra 8:23. Job 22:27. 33:16-30. Ps. 32:3-5. 36:15. Is. 55:6-9. Jer. 29:12, 13. Matt. 7:7, 8. Luke 23:42, 43. John 4:35. n Ezra 7:27. Prov. 16:7, 31. Matt. 6:33. o Deut. 29:6. Jer. 46:10. Jer. 24:7. Dan. 4:34, 35. John 17:3. Heb. 8:11. p 32:5. q 33:30. 1 Kings 13:33, 35. r Neh. 3:3. 12:39. Zeph. 1:10. 1 Or, the tower. 27:3. Neh. 3:26, 27. s 11:11. 12:17, 19. t See on 3-7. 2 Kings 21:7. Is. 2:17-21. Ez. 18:20-22. Hos. 14:1-3. Matt. 3:8. u 29:19. 1 Kings 18:30. v Lev. 3:1, &c. x Lev. 7:12-18.

and carried Manasseh captive to Babylon, in the twenty-second year of his reign. But the Scripture does not mention the date of this event, nor the name of the Assyrian king; and from the scriptural description of Manasseh's reign, as exceedingly wicked, it seems highly improbable, that he lived above thirty years after his repentance and reformation, as upon this supposition he must have done. 'This was three and thirty years before his death, as the Jews make account. ... But both Kimchi and Abarbanel confess, that this relies upon a weak foundation; as doth the other thing that he was carried away in the twenty-second year of his reign.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 12, 13. When Manasseh was deprived of his authority and liberty, and secluded from his evil counsellors and companions, and from all his pleasures; in chains, and in a prison; without any other prospect than of ending his days in that wretched situation; he had leisure to reflect on what had passed. He would then, no doubt, recollect the honour, prosperity, and great deliverances, with which his father had been favoured; his own good education, with the instructions and warnings of the prophets; and his atrocious, multiplied, and daring crimes: and he would remember that his miseries had been foretold by his faithful monitors. Thus, by the special grace of God, his solitude and affliction brought him to view his own conduct and character in another light than he had done before; and he began to pray for mercy and deliverance, "humbling himself greatly before the God of his fathers." (Note, Luke 15:17-19.) He confessed his sins, condemned himself, and was covered with shame before God, abhorring his crimes, and loathing himself for them, as guilty of most aggravated ingratitude, impiety, and iniquity; yet still hoping to be pardoned, through the abundant mercy of the Lord, who had always, in the days of his ancestors, shown himself ready to forgive repenting rebels. These humble supplications the Lord graciously accepted; and he inclined the king of Assyria to liberate his prisoner, and to reinstate him in his authority. "Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God," alone able to punish, or to deliver: he likewise became acquainted with him as a God of salvation; and learned to fear, trust, love, and obey him. (Note, 1 Chr. 28:9.)

V. 14. Marg. Ref.

V. 15-17. It is evident that Manasseh, on his return from Babylon, entirely renounced all idolatry; and set himself to suppress it in his kingdom, to revive the worship of God at the temple, and by his example and authority to prevail with the people to attend on it. These were "fruits meet for repentance."—It has indeed been asserted, that his public reformation was very imperfect, and that he did not show the zeal and vigour, which a true penitent ought to have done. It does not however, appear, from this short account, that he was remarkably deficient. He would have done better, if he had demolished the idols, instead of casting them out of the city. But he totally suppressed all open

and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel.

19 His prayer also, and how God was entreated of him, and all his sin, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled: behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers.

20 ¶ So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

21 ¶ Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem.

22 But he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them;

23 And humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.

24 And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

25 ¶ But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

y 9:14, 4. See on 50:12. Gen. 18:19. Luke 22:32. z 15:17. 32:12. 1 Kings 22:43. 2 Kings 19:4. a 20:34. 32:32. See on 1 Kings 11:41. b See on 12:13, 19. c 10. 1 Sam. 9:9. 2 Kings 17:13. Is. 29:10. 30:10. Am. 7:12. Mic. 3:7. d See on 1 Kings 14:19. 15:31. e 11:12, 19. Prov. 15:8. Acts 9:11. f See on 1-10. g See on 12:30, 31. 36:12. Jer. 44:10. Dan. 5:22. h Or, Hosai. i See on 32:33. 2 Kings 21:18. l 2 Kings 21:19-25. 1 Chr. 3:14. Matt. 1:10. m 1. Luke 12:19, 20. Jam. 4:13-15. k See on 1-10. 2 Kings 21:1-11, 20. Ez. 30:18. l See on 1, 12, 19. Jer. 8:12. § Heb. multiplied trespasses. 28:22. 2 Tim. 3:13. n 24:25, 26, 25:27, 28. 2 Sam. 4:5-12. 2 Kings 21:23-26. Ps. 55:23. Rom. 14:22. n Gen. 9:5, 6. Num. 35:31, 33. o 26:1. 36:11. p See on 34:1.

idolatry; and it might arise from other causes than Manasseh's want of zeal, that the high places were not removed. The inveterate habits of the people; the powerful opposition of that party, which had concurred in his former idolatries, and of the nation in general; and the weakness of his authority, through ill success, and the power of the Assyrian monarch; would occasion obstacles, which he might not be able to overcome. (Notes, 142-5. 17:6. 20:31-34, v. 33. 1 Kings 15:14.) But there is not the most remote intimation, that God did not accept his endeavours. Yet the opposition or hypocrisy of the people, who had readily concurred in his iniquities, but refused to imitate his repentance, prevented it from being a national blessing, as his crimes had formed and occasioned a load of national sin, "which the Lord would not pardon." (Notes, 2 Kings 23:26, 27. Jer. 15:2-4.)

V. 18, 19. The repeated mention of Manasseh's prayer, "and how God was entreated of him," and of his being humbled, are well worthy of our notice. This humble, supplicating frame of mind forms, as it were, a crisis in the sinner's case; and from the moment that he is brought into it, he enters upon a new state, and commences a new life, however wicked he before has been. (Marg. Ref.) The prayer, contained in the Apocrypha, and ascribed to Manasseh, probably was composed long after: but no doubt he prayed continually and fervently, for all the blessings and mercies which so atrocious a sinner needed; and with particular confessions of his sins, and with all that unstudied copiousness, which a burdened conscience, a broken heart, trembling fears, wavering hopes, and fervent desires, will invariably dictate. (Notes, Job 33:19-30. Acts 9:10-14, v. 11.) 'As if he had said, How he continued to pray till God was entreated of him.' Bp. Patrick.—Instead of "the seers," (19) the marginal reading is Hosai, and some suppose it to have been the name of a prophet in those days.

V. 20. Note, 2 Kings 21:18.

V. 21-25. (Note, 2 Kings 21:20-24.) As soon as Manasseh was dead, Amon re-established all his father's idolatries; either bringing back those images which had been thrown aside, or forming others of the same kind. Perhaps he flattered himself, that he too should live many years; and should repent in his old age, if that were necessary, and so at last be saved, as his father was supposed to have been. But whatever warnings or convictions he had, he never "humiled himself" in true repentance; but "trespassed more and more." Or, "this Amon multiplied trespass." (Marg.) He was therefore soon cut off in his sins, and made an example of just severity; and placed as a beacon, to warn all men not to draw perverse conclusions from the example of the Lord's patience and mercy to Manasseh, and thus encourage themselves in impenitent wickedness. (Notes, Dan. 5:18-24. P. O. 18-31. Luke 23:39-43.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. It would be extremely distressing to pious parents, magistrates or ministers, if they could foresee the

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Josiah reigns well, and destroys idolatry both in Judah and Israel, 1-7. He provides for the repair of the temple, 8-13. Hilkiah finds the book of the law, and reads it before the king; who is greatly alarmed, and sends to the destruction of Jerusalem, but not till after Josiah's death, 23-28. He causes the law to be read in a solemn assembly, and renews the covenant between God and the people, 29-33.

JOSIAH was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right nor to the left.

3 ¶ For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he be-

gan to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

4 And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.

5 And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

6 And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about.

7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images

1 Kings 13:2, 2 Kings 22:1, 1 Chr. 31:11, Jer. 1:2, Jer. 1:11, Matt. 1:11, 1:12, 1:13, 2:14, 2:15, 2:16, 2:17, 2:18, 2:19, 2:20, 2:21, 2:22, 2:23, 2:24, 2:25, 2:26, 2:27, 2:28, 2:29, 2:30, 2:31, 2:32, 2:33, 2:34, 2:35, 2:36, 2:37, 2:38, 2:39, 2:40, 2:41, 2:42, 2:43, 2:44, 2:45, 2:46, 2:47, 2:48, 2:49, 2:50, 2:51, 2:52, 2:53, 2:54, 2:55, 2:56, 2:57, 2:58, 2:59, 2:60, 2:61, 2:62, 2:63, 2:64, 2:65, 2:66, 2:67, 2:68, 2:69, 2:70, 2:71, 2:72, 2:73, 2:74, 2:75, 2:76, 2:77, 2:78, 2:79, 2:80, 2:81, 2:82, 2:83, 2:84, 2:85, 2:86, 2:87, 2:88, 2:89, 2:90, 2:91, 2:92, 2:93, 2:94, 2:95, 2:96, 2:97, 2:98, 2:99, 2:100, 2:101, 2:102, 2:103, 2:104, 2:105, 2:106, 2:107, 2:108, 2:109, 2:110, 2:111, 2:112, 2:113, 2:114, 2:115, 2:116, 2:117, 2:118, 2:119, 2:120, 2:121, 2:122, 2:123, 2:124, 2:125, 2:126, 2:127, 2:128, 2:129, 2:130, 2:131, 2:132, 2:133, 2:134, 2:135, 2:136, 2:137, 2:138, 2:139, 2:140, 2:141, 2:142, 2:143, 2:144, 2:145, 2:146, 2:147, 2:148, 2:149, 2:150, 2:151, 2:152, 2:153, 2:154, 2:155, 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'into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, ^{he} returned to Jerusalem.

^{B. C. 7.} 8 ¶ Now in ^{the} eighteenth year of his ^{624.} reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he ^{'sent} Shaphan the son of Azabiah, and ^{'Maaseiah} the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the ^{'recorder}, to repair the house of the ^{Lord} his God.

9 And when they came to ^{'Hilkiah} the high-priest, ^{'they} delivered the money ^{that} was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of ^{'Manasseh} and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and ^{'they} returned to Jerusalem.

10 And they put ^{it} in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the ^{Lord}, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the ^{Lord}, to repair and mend the house :

11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they ^{it}, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to ^{'floor} the houses which ^{'the} kings of Judah had destroyed.

12 And the men did the work ^{'faithfully} : and the overseers of them ^{'were} Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set ^{it} forward; and ^{'other} of the Levites, ^{'all} that could skill of instruments of music.

13 Also ^{'they} were over ^{'the} bearers of burdens, and ^{'were} overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: and of the Levites ^{'there} were ^{'scribes}, and ^{'officers}, and ^{'porters}.

14 ¶ And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the ^{Lord}, ^{'Hilkiah} the priest found a book of ^{'the} law of the ^{Lord} ^{'given} by ^{'Moses}.

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the ^{Lord}. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And ^{'Shaphan} carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to ^{'thy} servants, they do ^{it}.

17 And ^{'they} have ^{'gathered} together the money that was found in the house of the ^{Lord}, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.

18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. ^{'And} Shaphan read ^{'it} before the king.

* Heb. to make powder. p 31:1. q Jer. 1:2,3. r 2 Kings 23:12,14. Jer. 26:24. 23:10, 33:10, 33:11. Jer. 21:1. 29:21,25, 37:3. 2 Sam. 3:16. 20:24. 1 Chr. 18:15. u 14:15, 18:20, 22. 2 Kings 22:4. 23:1. v See on 24:11-14. 2 Kings 22:5-7. Phil. 4:8. y 30:10, 18:31:1. z 7. a 2 Kings 12:11, 12:14, 22:5, 6. Ezra 3:7. Or, ^{'rafter}. b See on 33:4-7, 22. c 2 Kings 12:15, 22:7. Neh. 7:2. Prov. 28:20. 1 Cor. 4:2. d 1 Chr. 6:31. e 15:16-22, 16:4, 5, 41, 42, 23:5, 25:1, &c. f 2:15, 9:10. Neh. 4:10. g Ezra 7:6. Jer. 6:8. Matt. 26:3. g 19:11. 1 Chr. 23:4. 26:29, 30. h 14:1. 1 Chr. 17:15, 18:38, 42, 26:1, &c. Ezra 7:7. i See on 2 Kings 22:8. Deut. 31:24-26. k 12:1. 31:4. 35:26. Ezra 10:7. Ps. 1:2. Is. 5:24. 30:9. Jer. 8:8. Luke 2:39. j Heb. ^{'the} hand of ^{'Moses}. Jer. 8:35. 10:11. 25:46. l See on 2 Kings 22:9, 10. m Heb. ^{'the} hand of ^{'thy}. m See on 8-10. n Heb. ^{'poured} out, or, ^{'melted}. n 12:19. Josh. 1:8. Ps. 119:46, 77-99. Jer. 36:20, 21. ¶ Heb. ^{'in} it. o Rom. 3:20. 7:7-11. Gal. 2:19. 10:13. p 2 Kings 19:1. 22:11, 19. Jer. 36:22-24. Joel 2:13. q 2 Kings 22:12. Jer. 26:24. 40:6, 9, 14. r 2 Kings 22:12. Achobor. Jer. 36:22. s 2 Kings 22:12.

affairs, he began to worship God publicly, and propounded David unto himself for his pattern. When he was twenty years old, he began to bring others to the true religion, by reforming abuses in the worship of God. ^{Bp. Patrick}.—Something was attempted in the twelfth year; (which was before Jeremiah began to prophesy; but probably not much was effected till the eighteenth. (Notes, 2 Kings 22:3-7. 23:4-23. Jer. 1:1-3.) Yet the land was purged from its grosser abominations, before the repairing of the temple; but it is uncertain whether this extended to the land of Israel, or whether that be spoken of by anticipation; but it is plain that Josiah had authority over the country of the ten tribes, and the inhabitants of them.

V. 8-13. 'When he was twenty-six years old he proceeded further, having disposed the people to offer freely toward the reparation of the house of God.' ^{Bp. Patrick}. (Notes, 2 Kings 12:4-16. 22:3-7.) They returned, &c. (9) These Levites seem to have gone through the land, soliciting contributions for repairing the temple, even from ^{'the} remnant of Israel; and they returned to Jerusalem when they had completed that business.—The temple began

19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard ^{'the} words of the law, ^{'that} he rent his clothes.

20 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and ^{'Ahikam} the son of Shaphan, and ^{'Aldon} the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and ^{'Asaiah} a servant of the king's, saying,

21 Go, ^{'inquire} of the ^{Lord} for me, and for them ^{'that} are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: ^{'for} great is the wrath of the ^{Lord} that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the ^{Lord}, to do after all that is written in this book.

22 And Hilkiah, and ^{'they} that the king ^{'has appointed}, went to Huldah ^{'the} prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of ^{'Hasrah}, keeper of the ^{'wardrobe}, (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the ^{'college};) and they spake to her to that effect.

23 And she answered them, Thus saith the ^{Lord} God of Israel, ^{'Tell} ye the man that sent you to me,

24 Thus saith the ^{Lord}, Behold, ^{'I} will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, ^{'even} ^{'all} the curses that are written in the book, which they have read before the king of Judah:

25 Because ^{'they} have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore ^{'my} wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and ^{'shall} not be quenched.

26 And ^{'as} for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the ^{Lord}, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the ^{Lord} God of Israel, ^{'concerning} the words which thou hast heard;

27 Because ^{'thine} heart was tender, and thou didst ^{'humble} thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and ^{'didst} rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard ^{'thee} also, saith the ^{Lord}.

28 Behold ^{'I} will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave ^{'in} peace, ^{'neither} shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.

29 ¶ Then ^{'the} king sent, and ^{'gathered} together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

30 And the king went up into the house of the ^{Lord}, and all the men of Judah, and the inha-

Asaph. t Ex. 18:15. 1 Sam. 9:9. 1 Kings 22:5-7. Jer. 21:2. Ez. 14:1, &c. 20:1-7. n 28:6. 33:11. 2 Kings 17:6, 7. 22:13. Is. 37:2-4. Jer. 42:2. x Lev. 26:14, &c. Deut. 28:15, &c. 29:18-28. 30:17-19. 31:16-18. 32:15-25. Rom. 4:25. y Ps. 15:20. Jude. 1:4. Luke 1:41-45. 2:36. Acts 21:9. z See on 2 Kings 22:14. ^{'Hilkiah}. * Heb. ^{'sorrowful}. * Heb. ^{'school}, or, ^{'second} party. a See on 2 Kings 22:15-20. Jer. 21:3-7. 37:7-10. h 36:14-20. Josh. 23:16. 2 Kings 21:12. 23:26, 27. Is. 5:4-6. Jer. 6:19. 19:3, 15. 35:17. 36:31. c See on 21. d See on 12:2. 15:2. 33:3-9. e 2 Kings 24:3, 4. Is. 2:8, 9. Jer. 15:1-4. e Is. 42:25. Jer. 7:40. Lam. 2:4. 4:11. Nah. 1:8. Rev. 14:10, 11. f 2 Kings 22:17. g See on 14:7, 20. 20:48. Mark 9:43-48. g 21:23. h See on 2 Kings 22:18, 19. Ps. 34:18. 51:17. Is. 57:15. 66:2. Ez. 9:4. 36:26. i See on 32:26. 33:12, 19. Jam. 4:6-10. k See on 19. Jer. 36:23, 24. 1:35, 24. See on 2 Kings 22:10. Is. 57:1, 2. Jer. 15:1. Ez. 14:14-21. m Ps. 37:37. n 1 Kings 21:29. 2 Kings 23:19-18. 39:8. o 1 Sam. 12:23. 1 Chr. 29:2, &c. Mark 14:8. p 30:2. 2 Kings 23:1-8.

to go to decay during the idolatries of Manasseh: and the wicked reign of Amon, and the long minority of Josiah, rendered it much in need of a thorough repair.

All that could skill, &c. (12) It seems, that the Levites, who attended by courses, in the intervals of their proper work, assisted by turns in superintending the workmen; nor were those excepted who were employed in psalmody: thus they became doubly useful, and saved the expense of other overseers. (Notes, 1 Chr. 23:2-6.)

V. 14-19. (Note, 2 Kings 22:8-11.) 'Both priests and people omitting the reading of the law, both publicly and privately, (for the public omission caused a private neglect,) no wonder, that upon finding the book of the law, and hearing it read, they were startled at it, as if one were risen from the dead.' ^{Capellus} in ^{Bp. Patrick}. (Notes, 1:7-9. Deut. 17:18. 31:10-13. Josh. 1:8. 8:30-35.)

V. 20-28. Notes, 2 Kings 22:12-20. Jer. 3:6-11.—All the curses, &c. (24) This confirms the opinion, that the twenty-seventh, and following chapters of Deuteronomy were first read to Josiah.

V. 29-32. Notes, 2 Kings 23:1-3.—Read, &c. (30

bitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord.

31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, or perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.

32 And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel, to serve, even to serve the Lord their God. And all his days they departed not from following the Lord, the God of their fathers.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Josiah causes a solemn passover to be celebrated, 1-19. He is slain in battle against Pharaoh-necho, 20-24. Great lamentations are made for him, 25. His acts and goodness, 26, 27.

MOREOVER Josiah kept a passover unto the Lord in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.

2 And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord.

* Heb. from great even to small. 15:12, 13, 18:30. Deut. 1:17. Job 3:19. q 6:1, &c. 17:7-9. Deut. 17:18-20. Neh. 8:2-5. Ec. 1:12, 12:9, 10. r 15:18, 19, 24. Ex. 24:7. 2 Kings 23:21. Jer. 31:31, 32. s 6:13, 2 Kings 11:14, 23:3. Ez. 4:2. v 23:16, 29:10. Ex. 24:6-8. Deut. 21:10-15. Josh. 24:25. Neh. 9:8, 10:29. Jer. 50:5. Heb. 8:5-13. u 15:12, 13. See on 31:21. Deut. 6:5. Luke 10:27-29. x 14:4, 30:12, 33:16. Gen. 18:19. Ec. 8:2. t Heb. found. 29:29. v Jer. 3:10. z See on 3-7. 2 Kings 23:4-20. a See on 1 Kings 11:5-7. b Josh. 24:31. t Heb. from after. a 30: 2 Kings 23:21-23. b Ex. 12:6. Num. 9:3. Deut. 16:1-8. Ezra 6:19. Ez. 45:21. c 23:3, 31:2. Num. 18:5-7. 1 Chr. 24: Ezra 6:18. d 29:5-11. 31:2. 1 Chr. 22:19. e 17:9, 30:22. Deut.

Notes, 17:7-9. Neh. 8:1-9, 18. 9:3. 13:1-3. Rom. 3:19, 20. 7:19-12.—Covenant. (31) Notes, 15:12-15. 2 Kings 11:17-20. Neh. 9:1, 33. 10:1-17.—He did not compel them, but they offered themselves freely, upon his persuasion, to renew their covenant with God, and promised to be firm to it; which perhaps, at that time they really resolved, though they soon revolted. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 33. While Josiah lived, the people were restrained from open idolatry: yet we learn from the prophets, especially Jeremiah, that, at this very time especially, they were ripening for destruction, by their hypocrisy and iniquity. (Notes, Jer. 3:6-11. 4:14. 25:3-7. Zeph. 1:1-8.)—Though he suppressed all external idolatry, yet in their hearts they strongly inclined to it, and often practised it, as appears from Jer. 3:10. 25:3, 4, &c. *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Several years of our lives must pass before we become capable of performing useful services: our earliest youth should therefore be dedicated to God, that we may not waste any of our remaining span. Happy and wise are they, who seek the Lord at a period of life when others are pursuing sinful pleasures, contracting bad habits, forming ruinous connexions, and making work for bitter repentance; either gracious repentance in this world, or that which is attended with despair in the regions of misery. None can express the anguish which is prevented by early piety, and its happy consequences.—If we would be useful, we must first "take heed to ourselves;" and when we are established in faith and grace, we shall be fitted for instruments of good to others. In this important work we must expect many opposers, and but few cordial helpers: and the more we look into the world, the church, or our own hearts, by the light of God's word, the more evidently shall we see how very much reformation and renovation are every where needed. (P. O. Ez. 8:1-6.)—The suppression of gross abominations makes way for the pure administration of God's ordinances; and when the filthiness and idols are cleansed out of our hearts, the Lord will prepare his temple there, and graciously come and dwell in it.—Liberality, integrity, and diligence are commendable in every work, but especially in whatever relates to the worship and service of God, and all undertakings immediately connected with it.—When God enables us to act conscientiously, according to our present knowledge, he will in due time give us still further and clearer views of his truth. (Notes, Hos. 6:1-3. John 7:14-17. v. 17.) The more we become acquainted with the Scripture, the more evidently shall we perceive our own guilt and danger: but if this discovery produces godly sorrow, contrition, humiliation, and further inquiries after the will of God, an answer of peace may be expected: while all the curses, which he has denounced, will fall upon the impenitent workers of iniquity.—Though we cannot prevent the ruin of sinners in general, or

3 And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the Lord, Put the holy ark in the house, which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build: it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the Lord your God, and his people Israel.

4 And prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son.

5 And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the families of the fathers of your brethren, the people, and after the division of the families of the Levites.

6 So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

7 And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance.

8 And his princes gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover-offerings, two thousand and six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel his brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jeiel, and Joza-

33:10. Neh. 8:7, 8. Mal. 2:7. f 8:11, 34:14. g See on 5:7. h Num. 4:15-49. 1 Chr. 23:28. i Num. 8:19. 16:9, 10. 2 Cor. 4:5. k 1 Chr. 9:10-34. Neh. 11:10-20. l 1 Chr. 23:26. m 8:14. n Pa. 134:1, 135:2. o Heb. house of the fathers. t Heb. sons of the people. u 30:15-17. Ez. 12:31, 32. Ezra 6:20, 21. p 29:5, 15, 34. 30:15-19. Gen. 39:2. Ex. 19:10, 15. Num. 15:11-20. Job 1:5. Pa. 51:7. Joel 2:16. Heb. 9:13, 14. q 30:24. Is. 33:8. Ez. 45:17. r Heb. offered. l 1 Kings 8:63. r 1 Kings 8:63. 1 Chr. 29:30. s 39:31-33. 1 Chr. 29:6-9, 17. Ezra 1:6. 2:68, 69. 7:16. 8:25-35. Neh. 7:70-72. Pa. 6:12. Acts 2:14, 45. 4:34, 35. s Heb. offered. l 12 Cor. 9:12. 9:7. u 34:14-20. x 1 Chr. 9:20, 21, 4, 5. Jer. 29:25, 26. Acts 4:1. 5:26.

of collective bodies, we should endeavour by our examples, prayers, instructions, and the regular use of authority, in domestic, or in public life, to engage as many as we possibly can to return to God, and walk before him, by trusting his promises and obeying his commandments.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXV. V. 1-3. Note, 2 Kings 23:21-23.—Taught, &c. (3) The Levites, by courses, served the priests at the sanctuary, as their primary employment: but when at home in their several cities, they were the stated teachers of the people. (Marg. Ref. e. Notes, 17:7-9. 30:21, 22. v. 22.)—Put, &c.] It is probable, that the most holy place had gone to decay, through neglect; and that while it was cleansed and repaired, the high-priest had committed the ark to the custody of some Levites of the family of Kohath who had been set apart and sanctified for that service: but when it was carried again into its place, they would be at liberty for other services, to the glory of God, and the benefit of his people.

V. 4. The regulations formed by David, and established by Solomon, concerning the courses of the priests and Levites, were committed to writing, and preserved for them to refer to continually. (Notes, 8:12-15. 1 Chr. 23:26-6.) Josiah, in like manner as Hezekiah had done, required the priests and Levites to attend to their several duties, and encouraged them in so doing; but he neither added, nor altered, nor retrenched anything thing; he merely enforced what had been established in the law, and in the regulations made by David and the contemporary prophets. (10:16.) "The commandment of the king... was by the word of the Lord." (Note, 31:12.)

V. 5. The meaning of this verse seems to be, that the Levites should be as exact, in ascertaining to what family, or subdivision of a family, every man belonged, as those of the other tribes were: that each might know and do his proper work, with as much certainty and accuracy, as the others knew what lands belonged to them by inheritance. Some, however, suppose, that only the arrangement of the Levites at this time is intended; and that they were directed to stand in regular order, according to their families, to receive the paschal lambs, which their brethren of the other tribes would bring, according to their families, one for each household. (6:10, 11.)

V. 6. Notes, 30:16-20. Ex. 12:3-10, v. 6. Lev. 1:5-9.

V. 7-9. The people at this time were neither very rich, nor very zealous, and the ordinances were expensive. That this therefore might not prevent their attendance on this solemn service, the king provided, at his own expense, an immense quantity of cattle suited to the solemnity; and after his example, the nobles, and the chief of the priests and Levites, liberally assisted their poorer brethren.—According to the calculation, that not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty persons, were to join for one lamb or kid, the num-

bad, chief of the Levites, 'gave unto the Levites for passover-offerings five thousand *small cattle*, and five hundred oxen.

10 So the service was prepared, and 'the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.

11 And they killed the passover, and 'the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites 'flayed them.

12 And they removed the burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, 'as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen.

13 And they roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance: but the *other* holy offerings 'sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and 'divided them speedily among all the people.

14 And afterwards they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: 'because the priests the sons of Aaron were *busy* in offering of burnt-offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.

15 And the singers the sons of Asaph were in their place, 'according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and 'the porters waited at every gate; they might not depart from their service; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.

17 And the children of Israel that were 'present

* Heb. offered. Is. 1:10—15. Jer. 3:10. 7:21—23. Mic. 6:6—8. y 4.5. 30:16. Ezra 6:18. 22:22—24. 30:16. Lev. 1:5, 6. Num. 18:3, 7. Heb. 9:21, 22. a 29:31. b Lev. 3:3, 5. 9—11, 14—16. c Ex. 12:8, 9. Deut. 16:7. Ps. 22:14. Lam. 1:12, 13. d Lev. 6:24. Num. 6:19. 1 Sam. 2:13—15. Ez. 46:20—24. i Heb. made them run. Rom. 12:11. e Acts 6:2—4. i Heb. station. 199:25, 26. 1 Chr. 16:41, 42. 23:5. 25:1—7. Ps. 77:38. 88:1—19. 28:14—19. § Heb. found. h 30:21—23. Ex. 12:15—20. 13:6, 7. 23:15. 34:18. Lev. 23:5—6. Num. 28:16—25. Deut. 16:3, 4, 8. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. 130:5. 2 Kings 23:21—23. k 30:26, 27. || Heb. house. l 2 Kings

bers given on this occasion, would suffice for above four hundred thousand persons, young and old: besides those given for peace-offerings and other sacrifices. (Notes, 30:23—25, v. 24. 1 Kings 8:63—65.)—*Rulers of, &c.* (8) The heads of the several courses of the priests, or the captains of the temple. (Marg. Ref. x.)

V. 10, 11. 4—6. Notes, 29:34. 30:16—20, vv. 16, 17.

V. 12. The Levites separated, as speedily as they could, the parts of the peace-offerings, which were to be burnt, from the rest, and added them to the other burnt-offerings; that the remainder, together with the paschal lambs, might, without delay, be prepared and distributed as the occasion required. (Notes, Lev. 3.)

V. 13—17. (Notes, Ez. 12:3—10, v. 8, 9. 1 Sam. 2:13—16. 1 Chr. 25:1—7. Ez. 46:19—24.) The priests were so fully employed, that they could not prepare the passover lambs for themselves; but the Levites, who were not otherwise engaged, prepared for them and for their brethren, who were occupied in other services; that all might be ready at the appointed hour.—The singing and music continued till all the sacrifices were offered, that is till night. . . . And their brethren, who were not singers, took care to provide for them their portion, when they had done. *Bp. Patrick.*—According to the commandment, &c. (16) Note, 4.

V. 18, 19. Hezekiah's remarkable passover seems to have been celebrated with greater fervency of devotion; but this of Josiah was far more regular, and in more exact conformity to the law; it was attended by very great multitudes, and the liberality of the king in furnishing the paschal lambs was without example. (Notes, 30:2—5, 16—27.)—Nothing is recorded on this subject, from the time that Israel obtained possession of the promised land: (Note, Josh. 5:10.) But even this passover, under Josiah, which exceeded all for several centuries, seems to have been very deficient as to genuine devotion.

V. 20—24. Josiah lived thirteen years after the remarkable passover before recorded, and zealously supported the worship of God to the end of his life. (Notes, 1—3, v. 3. 34: 33. 2 Kings 23:26, 27.) But the nation was all the while 'opening for destruction; and was adjudged unworthy of so pious and excellent a prince.—Josiah's conduct at the close of his life has been treated with great severity by most commentators: and he has been charged with engaging in an unjust war, and disregarding the express command of God; which may in great measure be ascribed to the groundless censure passed on him by the apocryphal Esdras, 'Not regarding the words of the prophet Jeremy, spoken by the mouth of the LORD.' (1 Esdras 1:28.) But the Scripture

kept the passover at that time, and 'the feast of unleavened bread seven days.

18 And 'there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; 'neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept. [Practical Observations.]

20 ¶ After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, 'Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against 'Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, 'What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the 'house wherewith I have war: for 'God commanded me to make haste: 'forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.

22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, 'but disguised himself that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from 'the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of 'Megiddo.

23 And 'the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore 'wounded.

24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in 'the second chariot that he had; and 'they brought him to Jerusalem, and 'he died, and was buried 'in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And 'all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

25 And 'Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and

23:29. Pharaoh-nechoh. Jer. 46:2. m Is. 10:9. n 2 Sam. 16:10. Matt. 8:29. John 2:4. ¶ Heb. house of my war. o 2 Kings 18:25. Is. 36:10. p 25:19. q 18:29. i Kings 14:2. 22:30. r 21. 18:4—6. Josh. 8:14. s Judg. 5:19. 2 Kings 9:27. 23:30. Zech. 12:11. Meridon. Rev. 16:16. Armageddon. 138:33. Gen. 49:23. 2 Kings 9:24. Lam. 3:12, 13. ** Heb. made sick. l Kings 22:34. 2 Kings < 25. u Gen. 41:43. x 2 Kings 23:30. y Ps. 36:6. Ec. 8:14. 9:1, 2. ¶ Or, among the sepulchres. 34:28. z Zech. 12:11. a Jer. 2:12.

no where condemns him. (Note, 2 Kings 23:29, 30.) Pharaoh, in marching his army through Josiah's territories, against his will, certainly committed an act of hostility. It is evident that Josiah was in possession of the whole land, and not of Judah only: (34:6.) and probably he held the northern parts of it as a grant from the king of Babylon; and was not only in alliance with him, but bound to guard his frontiers against hostile invaders. Doubtless the kings of Judah had been in some measure dependent on the kings of Assyria and Babylon, from the time of Manasseh's captivity and release. Pharaoh declared indeed by his ambassadors, that he did not mean to attack Josiah, but to march against a power with which he was at war. He was, however, in the heart of Josiah's kingdom before he sent this embassy, and he avowed his intention of attacking his ally: and therefore Josiah may fairly, on both accounts, be justified from the charge of *unjustly* meddling with a war that did not belong to him; for no king upon earth would think it *unjust* to declare war against another prince, who should forcibly march an army into his dominions, in order to attack another prince who was in alliance with him. It is true the ambassadors assured Josiah that "God had commanded Pharaoh to make haste;" and said, "Forbear thee from meddling with God who is with me, that he destroy thee not;" and he is therefore said, "not to have hearkened to the words of Necho, from the mouth of God." But Necho produced no proof, that he was a prophet of JEROBOAM, and Sennacherib had used similar language to Hezekiah, who had paid no regard to it. (Note, 2 Kings 18: 25.) The word used by Necho, (אֱלֹהִים) may signify *gods*, or *idols*: and critics have noted, that the expression "from the mouth of God," is no where used in the Hebrew Bible, for a revelation from the true God; but that it is always "from the mouth of the LORD."—It is not indeed at all probable, that God had commanded Pharaoh-necho by Jeremiah, or by any other prophet, to undertake this expedition: for in that case Josiah would doubtless have been informed, and have submitted. And if Pharaoh had received any monition in a dream or vision, which he concluded to be from the God of Israel, (and so meant something more, than his own auguries and superstitions;) Josiah might not give credit to his testimony, in matters so closely connected with his own interests.—Josiah, however, seems to have been guilty of precipitation, in not inquiring of the Lord when thus warned, before he proceeded to attack so formidable an enemy: his premature and violent death might therefore be a rebuke for his rashness; but it was chiefly a judgment on a hypocritical and wicked generation. Whatever sin Josiah committed, he doubtless repented of it: and the final state of one, who *repenteth*

all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance, in Israel: and behold, they are written in the Lamentations.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his goodness, according to that which was written in the law of the LORD,

27 And his deeds, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Jehoiakim succeeds Josiah, but Necho carries him into Egypt; and makes Jehoiakim king, 1-4. He reigns wickedly and is put in chains by Nebuchadnezzar, who carries some of the sacred vessels to Babylon, 5-7. Jehoiachin is made king, who in a short time is carried captive to Babylon, with other of the sacred vessels; and Zedekiah succeeds, 8-10. He reigns very unjustly, despises the warnings of Jeremiah, and rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, 11-13. The sins of the priests and people cause the utter destruction of Jerusalem, and the desolatiⁿ of the land, for seventy years, 14-21. Cyrus's proclamation for rebuilding the temple, 22, 23.

THEN ^athe people of the land took ^bJehoiakim the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.

2 Jehoiakim was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

3 And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.

4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his

b Job 3:8. Ec. 12:5. Jer. 9:17-21. Matt. 9:23. * Heb. kindness. 1:20. 22:32. c 20:34. d 21:27. 25:26. 25:32. 32:32. 33:19. 2 Kings 10:34. 16:19. 20:20. 21:25. a 26:1. 33:25. 2 Kings 23:30. b 2 Kings 23:31-34. 1 Chr. 3:15. Jer. 22:11. c 26:11. * Heb. rem. read him. 2 Kings 23:35. † Heb. mutilated. c 2 Kings 23:34-35. 1 Chr. 3:15. d Jer. 22:10-12. Ez. 19:3-4. e 2 Kings 23:36-37. Jer. 22:19-19. 25:21-23. 35:1, 27-32. f 2 Kings 24:1, 2, 5, 6. Ez. 19:5-9. Dan. 1:1,

bitually lives a life of repentance, faith, and obedience, cannot be affected by the manner in which he is suddenly taken away.—The second chariot seems to have been one that waited for him in case of necessity; into which he was removed, the other being perhaps covered with blood.

V. 25-27. Though the people would not imitate Josiah's eminent piety, and disliked his reformation; yet they highly respected his character, and were sensible that they had sustained a very great loss. 'Whosoever they mentioned any calamity, they mentioned that as the greatest that had befallen them.' *Ep. Patrick*.—The book of Lamentations of Jeremiah was written on another occasion: (*Preface to Lamentations*) and what that prophet composed on the death of Josiah has not come down to us. But both the prophet and the people took several methods of doing honour to the memory of their prince; and of perpetuating the lamentations made on the account of his death; it is probable by an annual commemoration of that fatal event. (*Note, Jer. 22:10-12.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-19. Extensive good may be done by persons in authority, who spare no labour or expense, in promoting the honour of God; and who unite their example and influence with most zealous endeavours, to excite and encourage other members of the community to do their duty.—Even those who teach others, and are "holy to the LORD," not only by office, but in their hearts and lives, need to be repeatedly exhorted and charged to serve God and his church, with increasing zeal and persevering diligence; and when one service is finished, to proceed with alacrity to another.—God alone can efficaciously sanctify and prepare our hearts for his holy worship; but the blessing must be sought, for ourselves and others, by attending to our several duties; and ministers should always sanctify themselves, before they attempt to prepare the people for the ordinances of God. In this way revivals of religion are both manifested and forwarded; and sacred ordinances at once honour the Lord, and become 'means of grace' to the souls of men. The support of them, in an orderly and public manner, must always be attended with expense; and the multitude of the poor will often be unable to defray it. On this account religion will, in some places and at some times, be neglected, to the discouragement of many, and the ruin of far more: it then becomes a noble generosity for kings, princes, rulers, and wealthy persons, to step forward and to communicate liberally to the assistance of the poor, that they may not want "the Bread of life" for their souls; and God will honour those who thus honour him. None, however, are more bound to liberality in such cases, than the superior clergy, who enjoy large revenues appropriated to the maintenance of religion: for surely they ought willingly to assist their poorer brethren, who commonly do a great proportion of the work, without even a decent provision for themselves and their families! Were these things duly attended to, the service of God might be prepared, and his ordinances conducted, in harmony and to edification: while mutual love would be cemented; discouragements and temptations to envy, discontent, and revilings, would be obviated; and the affluent might expect to enjoy their abundance, in reputation, beloved by their inferiors, with the blessing of God, and to his glory: while the whole would cause numbers

brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoiakim his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

5 ¶ Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seven years in Jerusalem: and he did that which ^{d, c.} was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. ^{607.}

6 Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

9 ¶ Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.

10 And when the year was expired, the king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Heb. 1:5-10. † Or, chains. g Ezra 1:7-11. Jer. 27:16-18. 28:3. Dan. 5:2. d 2 Kings 24:5, 6. 11 Chr. 3:16, 17. Jeconiah. Jer. 22:24, 28. Coniah. Matt. 1:11, 12. Jeconiah. k 2 Kings 24:8, 9. 5 Heb. at the return of the year. l 2 Kings 24:10-16. 25:27-30. Jer. 29:2. Ez. 1:2. † Heb. vessels of desire. 7. Jer. 27:16-22. Dan. 6:2, 3. m 2 Kings 24:17. Mattaniah. 1 Chr. 3:15, 16. Jer. 37:1.

to pray for each other, and "to abound in many thanksgivings unto God." (*Notes, 2 Cor. 9:6-15.*)—Those who are continually so taken up in the work of God and his church, that they cannot attend to their secular interests, ought particularly to be provided for by their brethren who have more leisure. In all things indeed we need reciprocal assistance; and they, who are much employed in the public exercises of religion, should be cautioned not to neglect their own souls, and the private exercise of meditation and communion with God.—Alas! how are the ordinances of God disregarded, or formally attended on! The church in its best days has fallen short hitherto of what it ought to be at all times: our most religious hours, in public or private, need forgiveness; and the mercy of God, through the Saviour's atonement, must still be our only plea, to the close of our days.—Very great exertions are requisite to produce even an outward attendance to religion: and after all, except we depend entirely on divine grace, the most excellent means and instruments will be ineffectual, and serve only to demonstrate the strength of man's depravity, and the justice of God in the sinner's condemnation: and abused mercies will after a time be withdrawn.

V. 20-27. No man suffers or ever will suffer, who has not merited his sufferings; yet public persons are often laid aside or removed, to punish the wickedness of the community: and even their indiscretions, contrary to their general character, and the fatal consequences of them, may be permitted as a national judgment.—We are not bound to believe all those who profess to speak by the authority of God: but it is always right to act with caution, to search the Scriptures, to seek the Lord's direction by prayer, and to consult wise, experienced, and pious friends; that we may discover as far as possible, what is the truth and will of God concerning us, and that we may not be found in any instance to fight against him. Men seldom prosper in those measures which are unadvisedly adopted; and those, who are honoured with great usefulness, should be doubly circumspect in their conduct, and careful of their lives; because so many are interested in them.—Believers, however, even when taken away by a sudden or premature death, are removed to a better world; and their survivors should honour them, notwithstanding their imperfections; and will frequently perceive that they have great cause to mourn for them. (*Note, Is. 57:1, 2.*) Yet many join in lamenting the death, and commemorating the goodness, of useful men, who neither regard their admonitions, nor imitate their examples. And many mourn over their own calamities, who do not repent, and forsake those sins, which have provoked God to inflict them. Yet this alone can avert still more tremendous judgments.

NOTES.—CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1-7. *Notes, 10. 2 Kings 23:29-34. 24:1-7. Jer. 22:10-12. Ez. 19:2-14. Dan. 1:1, 2.*

V. 8. *Abominations, &c.] Notes, Jer. 22:13-19 26:16-24. 36:20-32.*

V. 9. *Eight.]* Either this is an error of the transcribers, which is most probable; or Jehoiachin reigned ten years with his father, which is very unlikely; for at his death he was eighteen years old. (*2 Kings 24:8.*)

V. 10. Jehoiakim probably died towards the close of the year: and soon after the entrance of the new year, Nebu-

11 ¶ Zedekiah *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

12 And he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the Lord his God, and *humbled not himself* before Jeremiah the prophet *speaking from the mouth of the Lord*.

13 And he also *rebelled* against king Nebuchadnezzar, *who had made him swear by God*: but he *stiffened his neck*, and *hardened his heart* from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.

14 ¶ Moreover, *all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much* after all the abominations of the heathen; and *polluted the house of the Lord* which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

15 And *the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending*; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place:

16 But they *mocked the messengers of God*, and *despised his words*, and *misused his prophets*, until *the wrath of the Lord* arose against his people, *still there was no remedy*.

17 Therefore *he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary*, and had *no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age*: he gave *them all into his hand*.

n 2 Kings 24:18—20. Jer. 52:1—3. o 22:26. 33:12, 19, 23. Ex. 10:3. Dan. 5: 22, 23. Jam. 4:1. 1 Pet. 5:6. p Jer. 21:1, &c. 27:12. &c. 28:1, &c. 34:2, &c. 37:2, &c. 38:14. &c. q 35:22. r 2 Kings 24:20. Jer. 52:2. Ex. 17:1—20. Jer. 9:15, 19, 20. 2 Sam. 21:2. 2 Kings 17:14. Neh. 9:16, 17. Is. 48:4. u Ex. 3: 15, 32. 9:17. Neh. 9:28. Rom. 2:4. Heb. 3:3, 13. z 2 Kings 16:16—16. Ezra 9:7. Jer. 5:5. 7:13—15. 38:4. Ez. 2:2, 6, 28—29. Dan. 9:6, 8. Mic. 3:1—4, 8—11. 7:3. Zeph. 3:3, 4. y 28:3. 33:9. z 33:4—7. Ez. 3:5—16. a 24:18—21. 33:10. 2 Kings 17:13. Jer. 53:4. 28:5. 33:15. 44:4, 5. * Heb. *the hand of his*. † That is, *continually and carefully*. b Jude. 10:16. 2 Kings 13:23. Hos. 1:8. Luke 19: 41—44. c 30:10. Psa. 35:16. Is. 33:22. Jer. 5:12, 13. 20:7. Luke 18:32. 22:63, 64. 23:11, 36. Acta 2:13. 17:32. Heb. 11:36. d Prov. 1:25—30. Luke 16:14. Acta 13:41. 1 Thes. 4:8. e Jer. 32:3. 38:6. Matt. 5:12. 21:34—41. 23:34—37. Acta 7:52. Jer. 74:1. 79:1—5. g Prov. 6:15. 29:1. † Heb. *healing*. h 33:11. Deut. 58:49. i 2 Kings 24:2, 3. Jer. 15:3. 32:42. 40:3. Dan. 9:14. j 2 Kings 25:1, &c.

chadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive, and carried him to Babylon, with many other prisoners, and many of the vessels of the temple. (Notes, 2 Kings 24:8—16. 25:27—30. Jer. 22:24—30. 24:1—7. 28:2—4. 29:2. Ez. 1:1—3.)

V. 11, 12. (Notes, 2 Kings 24:17—20. 25:1—7. Jer. 21: 22:28—30. 27:28—34. 37:38.) The people *still entertained false prophets*, . . . who *“saw visions of peace”* for Jerusalem, when there was *no peace?* (Ez. 13:16.) . . . *‘that is, made the people believe Jerusalem should not be taken, and so hardened their hearts in their obstinate wickedness.’* Bp. Patrick.

V. 13. *Swear, &c.*] Nebuchadnezzar had placed Zedekiah on the throne, requiring him to swear allegiance to him by the God of Israel. Having received his authority in this manner, and holding it by such a tenure, he could not revolt from the king of Babylon, without perjury, treachery, and injustice: and in his case the impolicy of his conduct was equal to his impiety, and made way for the punishment of it. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Josh. 9:19, 20. 2 Sam. 21:1—3. Ez. 17: 12—21. 21:25—27.) *‘His wickedness was so great, that God gave him up to commit this further crime of perjury to his own ruin.’* Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Kings 24:20. 25:6, 7.)

V. 14, 15. (Marg. Ref.) The Lord acted towards Judah, as a man would do, who had the welfare of his son much at heart, and would lose no time, but meet him with warnings as soon as he began to turn aside; missing no opportunity and sparing no pains: for God had compassion on the people; and proceeded, as if reluctantly, to execute vengeance, and to give up Jerusalem, and the temple, to the rage of heathen conquerors. (Note, Jer. 25:3.)

V. 16. Notes, Jer. 2:26—30. 11:18—23. 18:18—23. 20:1—6. 26:10—24. 32:2, 3. 36:5. 37:11—21. 38:1—6. 43:3—7. Lam. 3:52—57. Matt. 5:10—12. 21:33—39. 23:29—39. Acta 7:51—53. 1 Thes. 2:13—16.—No remedy, &c.] It no longer consisted with the honour of God to protect so wicked a people, who professed to be his worshippers, and who encouraged themselves in sin by a presumptuous confidence in him. It was become necessary to display the glory of the divine holiness and justice, in bringing signal miseries upon them: and this he did, by giving them up to their own inflated counsels, and the imbibed resentment of their cruel invaders. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. It is probable that numbers of the Jews, when the city was taken, fled into the courts of the temple, as to a sanctuary, or sacred refuge; but they were slain there by the naughty victors. (Notes, Ez. 9:5—11. Luke 13:1—3.)

V. 18—20. Notes, 2 Kings 25: Jer. 39: 52:

V. 21. The law concerning the sabbatical year seems to have been almost entirely neglected, from the first entrance

18 And *all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon*.

19 And *they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof*.

20 And *them that had escaped from the sword* carried he away to Babylon; where *they were servants to him and his sons* until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

21 To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate he kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years*.

22 ¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, *that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,*

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, *‘All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.’*

Jer. 39:1, &c. 52:1, &c. k Lev. 26:14, &c. Deut. 28:15, &c. 29:18—28. 30:18. 31:18—18. 32:15—28. Ez. 7:13—15. 15:21. Lam. 2:21, 32. 124:21. Lam. 2:20. Ez. 9:5—9, 7. Luke 13:1—2. m Jer. 28:50. Psa. 74:20. n 7:10. 2 Kings 25: 13—17. Jer. 27:18—22. 52:17—23. Dan. 5:3. o 2 Kings 20:13—17. Is. 39:6. Zech. 1:6. p 2 Kings 25:9. Psa. 74:4—8. 79:1, 7. Is. 64:10, 11. Jer. 7:14. 52: 18. Lam. 4:1. Mic. 3:12. Luke 21:6. q 2 Kings 25:10, 11. Jer. 52:14, 15. 6 Heb. *the remainer from the sword*. r Jer. 28:47, 48. Jer. 27:7. s 22:2. Ezra 1:1, &c. t Jer. 25:3—11. 26:12, 17. 27:12, 13. Dan. 9:2. Zech. 1:4, 6. u Lev. 25:4—6. 26, 34, 35. Zech. 1:12. x Ezra 1:1—3. y Dan. 10:1. z 21. Jer. 25:12, 14. 29:10. 32:42—44. 33:10—14. Heb. 10:23. z 21:16. 1 Sam. 25:19. 1 Kings 11:14, 23. 1 Chr. 5:26. Ezra 1:5. Is. 13:3—5, 17, 18. 45:1—5. Hag. 1:4. b 24:9. 30:5. c Psa. 75:7. Dan. 2:21, 37. d 3:5. 5:16, 23. d is. 44:28—28. e 1 Chr. 22:16. 29: 5. Ezra 7:13. Zech. 2:6, 7. Rom. 8:31.

of Israel into Canaan; so that when the land had many sabbatical years together during the captivity, these bore a near proportion to those in which the law had been violated. Yet this intimated, that it was not to be given to another people, because the Israelites would be reinstated in it. (Notes, Ez. 23:10—12. Lev. 25:1—7. 26:31—35.)—The seventy years here mentioned may either be computed from the first captivity in the fourth year of Jehoiachin, to the first year of Cyrus the Persian; or from the later and more complete desolations of the land, to the finishing of the temple, in the sixth year of king Darius, as the land was gradually desolated, and gradually re-peopled. (Notes, 2 Kings 24:1, 3—16. Dan. 1:1, 2.)

V. 22, 23. Marg. Ref. Note, Ezra 1:1—4.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16. When the wickedness of nations provokes God to remove wise and pious princes, and to advance others of a contrary character; avowed impiety and desolating judgments may be expected to come in like a flood, and to bear down all before them. Indeed Providence often raises up such wicked rulers, one after another, to scourge a guilty land; and then every change proves a step towards more complete destruction.—Inflated counsels and treacherous measures concur in bringing ruin upon those, who, in proud contempt of God, reject the warnings of his ministers from his word; and who thus *“stiffen their neck, and harden their heart from turning unto the Lord.”*—Yet he would not punish whole kingdoms for the impiety of their rulers, as did not the people also transgress very much: but when nations, favoured with his word and ordinances, become so corrupt, that nobles, priests, and people imitate, and even exceed, the abominations of the heathen; and add the shameless profanation of things most sacred, and the most obstinate contempt of his holy word, to all their other crimes; what can be expected but miseries as remarkable as their wickedness? And when the mockery and persecution of his ministers is added to all the rest, the *“wrath of the Lord will arise against such a people, till there be no remedy.”* He indeed delights in mercy, and is glorified by the repentance of sinners, and by pardoning and saving the penitent. The whole plan of redemption, the warnings, invitations, and entreaties of his word, and his long-suffering towards us, prove his rich compassion and love: but these endearing attributes are exercised in exact consistency with his justice, holiness, and truth, and according to the counsel of his infallible wisdom; and when no means, mercies, or warnings are effectual to bring sinners to repentance, there is no remedy, but he must vindicate the honour of his despised authority, patience, and mercy, in their condign punishment.—Nothing, except obsti-

naïve impenitent unbelief and iniquity, can ruin our souls; but nothing can save those who persist in rejecting the salvation of the gospel: for the honour of the truths and ordinances of God, demands the destruction of men, who disgrace them while they profess to glory in them. Yet the ministers of the gospel must not yield to despondency or resentment, however disappointed, mocked, or misused: they must copy the patience and forbearance of the Lord; and spare no pains, and leave no proper method untried, to bring sinners to repentance.

V. 17—23. The instruments of divine vengeance against devoted nations are of themselves disposed for their bloody work; and the Lord arms them with power, and gives up the objects of his righteous indignation into their hands.

Then, no age or sex, no sacredness of place or character will move compassion; but all will be involved in one common calamity: and the abused privileges, in which hypocrites confide, will both add to their guilt, and enhance the poignancy of their sufferings. Yet all the miseries of this life are temporal; but the punishment of the wicked in another world is eternal.—Even the circumstances of severe calamities often forebode and make way for their removal. When the executioners of vengeance have cut off the more desperate transgressors, and the rest are humbled by means of their sufferings, and for their sins; the Lord “stirs up the spirit” of some instrument of his mercy, who patronises the afflicted, and becomes their deliverer: and “the gates of hell shall never prevail against his church.”

THE BOOK OF EZRA.

It is generally agreed that Ezra wrote this book, and also the preceding books of Chronicles. It is likewise recorded by the Jewish writers, that he revised all the preceding parts of Scripture, and published a correct copy of the whole: and indeed this account appears highly probable. He is not called a prophet, in the sacred Scripture: yet there can be no doubt, that he performed these services under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; as no distinction is made in the New Testament between one part and another of that volume, which was then called “The Oracles of God,” and as such sanctioned by our Lord and his apostles. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah confirm the history contained in the former part of this book: and as Ezra alone records the rebuilding of the temple; whatever in the New Testament relates to the temple, as then standing, is in some sense a sanction to the authenticity of the narrative: though I do not recollect any express references to it except in the genealogies. Neither does the book appear to contain any direct prophecies: but it is written in so pious a strain, and so much in the manner of the other Scriptures, that it has strong internal evidences of divine inspiration. As express mention is made in it of Jeremiah’s prophecies, and plain intimations are given of Isaiah’s extraordinary prediction concerning Cyrus; (1:1—4.) it is evident that the writings of these prophets were then extant: and the constant reference to the law of Moses and the preceding histories in this book, and that of Nehemiah, proves the same respecting them.—Ezra was peculiarly had in honour by the ancient Jews, and is so by the modern: and to this we must ascribe the forgery of several other books, under his name, especially the two apocryphal books of Esdras, or Ezra; for forgeries they undoubtedly are, and of a much later date than the authentic record of Ezra.—This history opens with the proclamation of Cyrus, the return of a company of Jews, and their attempts to rebuild the city and temple, and to re-inhabit the land: it proceeds to record the opposition with which they met, the delays this occasioned, and how, after a time, they in part succeeded. At length, about seventy-eight or seventy-nine years afterwards, (concerning the most of which nothing is recorded,) Ezra himself arrived with a commission, and large powers and grants, from Artaxerxes, and with many attendants: and the narrative closes with an account of the sin of the Jews in marrying heathen wives; Ezra’s grief, humble confession, and prayers on that account; and his pious endeavours to separate his people from idolaters.—In this and the subsequent history, the Jews no longer appear as an independent prosperous nation, governed by kings of their own race: but a small remnant, returned from captivity, by the favour of the Persian kings, and under their protection and dominion; and struggling, often feebly, with many difficulties and enemies: yet, in this condition, they were enabled to re-establish the worship of God at the temple in Jerusalem, to which they outwardly adhered till the coming of Christ; being effectually cured of gross idolatry, though in other respects, exceedingly prone to disobedience.—During the captivity nothing is recorded of the history of Israel, except what may be collected from the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel: and exceedingly little is contained in the Scripture of their condition, during 536 years, till the birth of Christ, compared with the regular history given of the nation from the days of Moses to the captivity. The old dispensation was about to expire and make way for Christianity; the Spirit of prophecy was about to be withdrawn for a season; and the people had so often and so flagitantly violated their national covenant, that they were not honoured and noticed as they had been in former ages.

CHAPTER I.

Cyrus issues a proclamation, allowing the Jews to go up to Jerusalem and build the temple; and exhorting those who stayed behind to assist them, 1—4. Many prepare to return, and others contribute to the expense, 5, 6. Cyrus restores the vessels of the temple to Sheshbazzar, 7—11.

NOW ^ain the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD ^bby the

^a See on 2 Chr. 36:22, 23. ^b Jer. 25:12—14. 29:10. 33:7—13. ^c 5:13—15. 6:22. 7:27. Ps. 106:46. Prov. 21:1. * Heb. *caused a voice to pass.* Matt. 3:1—3.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1—4. (2 Chr. 36:22, 23.) Nebuchadnezzar reigned, after the first captivity of the Jews in the fourth year of Jehoiaikim, forty-five years. (Note, 1 Kings 24:1.) His son Evil-merodach was slain by Neriglissar, his brother-in-law, after he had reigned two years; and probably Jehoachin died before him. (Note, 2 Kings 25:27—30.) After four years Neriglissar was slain in battle by Cyrus: after a few months Belshazzar, the son of Evil-merodach, mounted the throne; and at the end of seventeen years he was slain in Babylon by Cyrus. (Dan. 5.) Then Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede, the uncle and father-in-law of Cyrus, succeeded to the throne of all these kingdoms; and after two years he died, and left the whole of them to Cyrus, who, in the first year after his predecessor’s death, proclaimed liberty to the captive Jews. This is the first computation of the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. (Note, 2 Chr. 36:21.)—As Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius the Mede, and of Cyrus the Persian, there can be little doubt, that he was instrumental in procuring this extraordinary proclamation in favour of the Jews: and probably he showed that prince the prophecy of Isaiah, which was known to have been long extant, and in which he was predicted by name, and his successes were described; and by which he was appointed to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple; and also those of Jeremiah, which foretold the exact duration of the

mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms

John 1:23. ^d 1 Kings 8:27. 2 Chr. 2:12. Is. 66:1. Jer. 10:11. Dan. 2:28. 5:23. e Jer. 27:6, 7. Dan. 2:37, 38. 4:23, 32. 5:19—21.

captivity. (Notes, Is. 13:17. 21:1—5. 41:25. 44:25—28. 45:1—6. Jer. 25:10—13. 27:4—9. 29:10. 50: 51. Dan. 1:17—20. 6:25—28.) The prophecy of Isaiah was delivered about 120 years before the temple was destroyed; and about the same time before the birth of Cyrus. These predictions, set before Cyrus, by a person of Daniel’s venerable age, and high reputation for wisdom and eminent station, seem to have produced in the mind of this prudent and humane conqueror, a conviction that the God of Israel was the true God, and that the captive Jews were his chosen people, and Jerusalem the place where he was especially pleased to be worshipped. Thus “THE LORD stirred up his spirit” to issue a proclamation, which was publicly made known in every place, by heralds appointed for that service, and also committed to writing; that the Jews were now set at liberty, and should be protected, in returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple.—In this proclamation Cyrus called the God of Israel, “JEHOVAH, the God of Heaven,” and avowed that he was “THE GOD,” in contradistinction to all others that were so called. He acknowledged, that he had received his dominions from JEHOVAH, whether acquired by inheritance or conquest. These, being far superior to any other empire then in the world, (as comprising the dominions of the Medes and Persians increased by those of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and others,) were called in the customary style. * all the king-

of the ea th; and the hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? this God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the freewill-offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.

[Practical Observations.]

5 ¶ Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.

6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold,

with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.

7 ¶ Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.

9 And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basins of gold, silver basins of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

f Is. 44:26—28, 45:1, 12, 13. g Josh. 1:9. 1 Chr. 28:20. Matt. 28:20. h Deut. 32:31. Dan. 2:47. 6:26. Acts 10:36. 17:16—18. Acts 24:17. 3 John 6—8. i Heb. 1:13. Rom. 9:25. 10:1. Gal. 6:2. 12:68—70. 1 Chr. 29:3, 9, 17. k 1. 2 Chr. 36:22. Neh. 2:12. Prov. 16:1. 2 Cor. 8:16. Phil. 2:13. Jam. 1:16, 17. l 1 Thes. 5:14. 2 Tim. 2:19—21. m 5:14, 6:5.

n 2 Kings 24:13. 25:13—16. 2 Chr. 36:7, 10, 18. Jer. 27:21, 22, 28:3—6. Dan. 1:2. 5:3, 23. o 11. 5:14, 16. Hag. 1:14, 2:2—4. Zech. 4:6—10. p Num. 7:13, 19. 1 Kings 7:50. 2 Chr. 4:5, 11, 21, 22. 24:14. Matt. 13:3 q Matt. 10:29—31. r Rom. 9:23. 2 Tim. 2:19—21. † Heb. transportation. Matt. 1:11, 12.

doms of the earth." And he declared that "the LORD had charged him, to build him a house at Jerusalem." Some think that this was done in a vision vouchsafed to him; but probably it was his inference from Isaiah's prophecies. He also wished the Jews success in the name of the Lord, and in some sense prayed for his powerful and favourable presence with them. And he exhorted others, in every place, to help those who went upon this undertaking, with such things as were needful for their expenses, and for accomplishing their pious intentions. Some interpret this as an order to the rulers of the provinces, to supply them from the public revenues: (Notes, 7:16—28.) others suppose that Cyrus allowed the Jews to collect voluntary contributions from his subjects at large; and some confine it to the Jews, who did not go up to Jerusalem, who were exhorted to assist their brethren that did. Without such assistance, many, that "remained in any place," waiting an opportunity of going up to Jerusalem, would have been eventually hindered.—Besides affording assistance to the Jews for their journey; the people in general were allowed, and even reminded, to send oblations for the temple, which was about to be built at Jerusalem.—By this decree the Jews, who had been held in bondage and captivity, were virtually released, provided they chose to engage in this enterprise. Any attempt of this kind would previously have been punishable as rebellion; but now, the government being favourable, their opposers would be restrained, and many would readily help them on that account alone.—As the kings of Persia still retained the sovereignty of the land, it could be no real impolicy to encourage the people to re-inhabit and cultivate a fertile territory, which had long lain desolate. But this measure was so contrary to the ancient prejudices and superstitions of these kings, that it was probably dictated by conscience, and a sense of duty to the God of heaven: though we find nothing in the subsequent history of this prince to favour a conclusion, that he really renounced idolatry, and became a true worshipper of JEHOVAH. The proclamation, however, was honourable to God; and would encourage the Jews to adhere to their religion, and be more zealous for it; and perhaps induce many of the Gentiles to respect, and even to embrace it.

V. 5, 6. Some readers may perhaps wonder, that, on this proclamation of Cyrus, the Jews did not assemble in one body, and directly go and take possession of their ancient inheritances: but a little reflection shows the matter in another light.—The city and temple lay a heap of ruins, and it would cost immense labour and expense to rebuild them. The land was either wholly desolate, or occupied by encroaching neighbours; and in either case, it would require much time and labour to procure for themselves habitations and provisions. The journey was long, arduous, and perilous, to those who were attended with families and substance: (Note, Gen. 31:23, 24.) and many enemies would endeavour to plunder them by the way, as far as they dared and were able. (Notes, 8:21—23. Neh. 2:7.) None of the Jews had seen Jerusalem or the temple, except such as were considerably above fifty years of age; at which period of life the spirit of enterprise commonly begins to decline: and those, who had merely seen it as children, would have little stimulating recollection of it. Few were attached to the temple by true piety: and most of them wanted even that attachment, which men naturally feel for the land of their nativity; having been born in the places, where they were then settled. Some persons of true and eminent piety were so situated, that they did not think it their duty to remove; as Daniel in the court of Cyrus; others would be hindered by the infirmities of old age, and the peculiar circumstances of their families and connexions. In short, the difficulties, hardship, and peril were manifest; the success of the attempt would be doubtful to all, but those who were "strong in faith;" its temporal advantages were remote

and precarious, and not worth the venture; especially to such as had obtained comfortable settlements or occupations, in the land of their captivity. Even the spiritual advantages would appear to the pious mind, more intended for posterity than for that generation; and to engage in it, in this view, would require vigorous faith, lively hope, and an active zeal for the honour of God, and the benefit of his church, and establishment of his worship, in ages to come.—We may conclude, that in consequence of the captivities, many Israelites, and some of the Jews, were finally incorporated with the heathen, among whom they dwelt: yet these calamities seem to have had a very good effect on considerable numbers.—The chief fathers of Judah and Benjamin, who had the greatest influence in their tribes, first moved in this undertaking; and they were joined by the leading men among the priests and Levites, which doubtless rendered the design more honourable: and thus a considerable number were encouraged to attend them, whilst others both assisted them, and sent valuable oblations for the intended temple.—Many more returned, than we read of being carried away captive: (Notes, 2:64—67. Jer. 52:28—30,) but as the land had been utterly desolated, all the surviving inhabitants must have been driven into other countries, and most of them into those lands, which had been subject to the kings of Babylon, and which were now fallen under the dominion of the kings of Persia: and doubtless many of the ten tribes accompanied the Jews at this time. It is, however, evident that a great majority even of the latter, chose to continue in the settlements which they had there gained; some of them afterwards returned, but very many never did; and immense numbers of Jews were from that time dispersed, in every city and country, over all that part of the world. So that the new settlement, in Judea and at Jerusalem, formed but a small part of that people, as they continued to be distinguished from other nations; for they still increased and multiplied very rapidly, according to the promise of God to their fathers.—It is worthy of observation, that no Jews, who chose to go, were excluded by Cyrus's proclamation: yet the language of the sacred historian implies, that none would actually have gone, if He who "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus," had not also "raised the spirit of the people," to avail themselves of this permission: the original words are the same in both clauses. This transaction, (as Archbishop Usher has particularly observed,) furnishes a most striking illustration, or, as I would rather say, representation, of the way in which the gospel is proposed to sinners, and embraced by believers. It is in general set before the ruined descendants of Adam; with the Saviour's most solemn assurance, that "him who cometh . . . he will in no wise cast out." Yet "no man can come unto him, except the Father draw him." On one pretence or other, all who are left to themselves "neglect so great salvation," and are justly condemned. But God, by his preventing grace, "stirs up the spirits" of some, who thus thankfully embrace the proffered blessing, and are mercifully saved.

V. 7—11. Some of the vessels of the temple had been cut in pieces by the victors: (2 Kings 24:13.) but the most valuable had been providentially preserved through all the succeeding revolutions, and were now ordered by Cyrus to be restored to Sheshbazzar; and so were at last brought back to Jerusalem and again employed in the service of the sanctuary.—It is generally agreed, that the ark was lost or destroyed, when the temple was burnt; and it is likely, that by the absence of it, and the visible glory, God would signify, he was withdrawing his presence from that house of stone, to dwell in the temple of Christ's body, who offered himself to God, and thereby put an end to these figurative sacrifices. Bp. Patrick. The knives were used for slaying and preparing the sacrifices, as the original word signifies, and the vessels, for receiving the blood, for the meat-offerings,

CHAPTER II.

The principal persons who returned from Babylon, 1, 2. The number of the several families which accompanied them, 3—35. The priests, 36—39. The Levites, 40—42. The Nethinims, 43—54. The children of Solomon's servants, 55—60. The priests who could not show their pedigree, 61—63. The sum total, with their retinue, 64—67. Their oblations towards the temple and its service, 68—70.

NOW these are ^athe children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, ^bwhom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city ;

2 Which came with ^cZerubbabel : ^dJeshua, Nehemiah, ^eSeraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel :

3 The children of ^fParosh, two thousand a hundred seventy and two.

4 The children of ^gShephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

5 The children of ^hArah, seven hundred seventy and five.

6 The children of ⁱPahath-moab, of the chil-

a 5:8. b 2. c Neh. 7:6. Eath. 1:1. 2:8, 11. 8:9. Acts 23:34. b 2 Kings 24:14—16. 25:11. c Chr. 36: Jer. 39: 52: c 1:11. Sheebazzar. Neh. 7:7. Hag. 1:12, 14. 2: 2, 4, 21. Zech. 4:6—10. Matt. 1:12, 13. Zerubbabel. d 3:8, 9. 4:3. 5:2. Hag. 1: 12, 14. 2:4. Zech. 3:13, 8, 9. Joshua. e Neh. 7:7. Azariah. Nahamani. Naamian. Misparith. Nehum. f 8:3. Pharoah. 10:23. Neh. 7:8. g 8:18. Neh. 7:9.

and other similar purposes. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The sum total of the vessels here stated far exceeds the particular account given of them : but it is supposed, that many spoons, tongs, and other instruments of service, not before numbered, were included.—Sheshbazzar may signify *joy in tribulation* ; and it is supposed that this name was given, by the kings of Babylon, to the same person whom the Jews called Zerubbabel, which signifies *a stranger at Babylon*. He was the grandson of Jehoiachin by Salathiel, and the heir of the house of David : as such he was regarded by the conquerors ; he possessed authority over the captive Jews ; and he was authorized, and willingly undertook, to lead those back, who now returned to rebuild the city and temple. (*Marg. Ref.* o. 2:2. 3:2, 8. 5: 14—16. *Note, Jer. 2: 21—30.*)

Sheshbazzar. (8.) ששבר. This name appears to be compounded of שש, *fine linen*, and צר, *in affliction*.—The wearing of fine linen and white garments was an expression of rejoicing.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4. As the architect progressively executes every part of the plan, which he had delineated for his intended structure, till the whole is completed ; so God in his providence performs in due order all the prophecies of his word : a great proportion of his grand design has already been accomplished, and revolving ages will hasten the performance of all the rest, in the appointed periods.—Difficulties, which to us appear impossibilities, form no obstruction to Omnipotence. The Lord our God turneth the hearts of kings, as he does the rivers of waters, which way he pleases : (*Note, Prov. 21:1.*) he subverts the deep-laid foundations of mighty empires, and establishes others in their room ; he lays aside the executors of his vengeance, when their work is done, to make way for the instruments of his mercy ; he gives, as he sees good, abilities, success, and authority ; and then secretly disposes men's minds to fulfil his word and do his will, and overrules every thing for the benefit of his church, and of those who trust in him.—When he has work to do, they, whom he has chosen to perform it, find their minds enlarged to entertain noble designs ; and, forgetful of their former habits, maxims, and superstitions, they serve his cause with all the authority which he has conferred on them. Even they, who live and die strangers to the power of true religion, have often received deep convictions of “his eternal power and Godhead,” and of their obligations and accountableness to “the God of heaven ;” and under these convictions, they have made public and honourable confessions to him, have shown for a time a regard for his authority, and have done many and great things for his cause and people ; speaking the language of piety, and being very useful to his worshippers ; and yet at last they have returned into their former idolatry or ungodliness ! (*Notes, 7:11—18.*)—If such things have heretofore been done in fulfilling former prophecies ; the Lord is equally able and faithful to provide for the ruin of every antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and the calling of all the Gentiles into his church.—In every useful undertaking, all should endeavour to be helpful ; and it bodes well, when princes and ministers of religion take the lead, and give the example, in arduous and self-denying services. Some may be useful by their labours, some with their substance, and all by their prayers, to the common cause of truth and righteousness : and whatever is done *willingly*, and from love to God and his people, will be graciously accepted.

V. 5—11. No time should be lost in setting about those duties which belong to us in our several stations : and in stirring up others to abound in love and good works, we should give them an example.—That which is devoted to the service of the Lord, is intrusted to his protection : and he will espe-

cially keep and preserve those, whom he has “purified unto himself to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

7 The children of ^jElam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

8 The children of ^kZattu, nine hundred forty and five.

9 The children of ^lZaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

10 The children of ^mBani, six hundred forty and two.

11 The children of ⁿBebai, six hundred twenty and three.

12 The children of ^oAzgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.

13 The children of ^pAdonikam, six hundred sixty and six.

14 The children of ^qBigvai, two thousand fifty and six.

15 The children of ^rAdin, four hundred fifty and four.

16 The children of ^sAter, of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

h Neh. 6:18. 7:10. [652.] i 8:4. 10:20. Neh. 7:11. [2818.] 10:14. k 8:9. l 8:7. 10:26. Neh. 7:12. m 10:27. Neh. 7:13. [845.] n Neh. 7:14. o 10:34. Neh. 7:15. Binual. [648.] p 8:11. 10:28. Neh. 7:16. [608.] q 8:12. Neh. 7:17. [2322.] r 8:13. Neh. 7:18. [867.] s 8:14. Neh. 7:19. [3067.] t 8:6. Neh. 7:20. [655.] u Neh. 7:21.

cially keep and preserve those, whom he has “purified unto himself to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Even the very hairs of their head are all numbered ; and whatever tribulations they may pass through, no true believer shall perish ; but they shall all be forthcoming, at that day “when the Lord shall make up his jewels.”—Salvation is fully prepared in Jesus Christ ; “all power in heaven and earth is given unto him ;” the proclamation of the gospel is general to every creature. But pride, worldly lusts, and unbelief, render us averse to the gracious proposal : and it would be made in vain, did not the Lord raise up the spirits of a remnant, “according to the election of grace,” to renounce all for the sake of Christ and his salvation. Those who prefer carnal things to the eternal blessings which he confers, will find, that their pride and love of sin aggravate, and do not excuse, the guilt of their unbelief. Those, who feel a willingness to accept of what they have heretofore neglected, may come with encouragement : for Jesus “will in no wise cast them out.” And if by grace have been enabled to receive this salvation, and to bring forth the fruits of it ; while we take the comfort of it, we shall give him the glory, and offer our fervent prayers, that others also may “be made willing in the day of his power.”

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. *Province, &c.* (*Marg. Ref. a.*) This terms seems to denote Judea, as now become a province of the Persian empire.—Some of the same persons returned, who had been carried captive, and the children or descendants of the others.

V. 2. These were the chief fathers, who were next in authority to Zerubbabel, and assisted him in this expedition. Jeshua, or Joshua, was the high-priest, the grandson of Seraiah, who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Kings 25; 18, 21. Comp. 1 Chr. 6:14, 15. with *Note, Hag. 1:1.*)—Nehemiah and Mordecai were not the same persons of whom we afterwards read, who bore these names ; for they lived many years later. (*Neh. 1:1. Esth. 2:5.*)—As these persons renounced many advantages, and encountered many hardships and dangers, in attempting to rebuild the temple and city, and resume possession of the promised land ; it was proper that their names should be recorded, as a mark of honourable distinction to them and their descendants. “Their land and their cities had been laid so desolate, . . . and were infested also by such bad neighbours, that it was a great piece of generosity in these men to return thither ; and their names are recorded to the eternal honour of them, and of their posterity ; they being the first planters of this country, after it had been laid waste.” *Bp. Patrick. The people of Israel.* “They who were called “the children of the province” before, are now called “the people of Israel.” for from him they were derived, though most of them were of the tribe of Judah.” *Bp. Patrick. (Note, 1:5, 6.)*

V. 3—29. The Register, in the book of Nehemiah, answers to this here given in so many particulars, that there can be no doubt that the same is meant in both places. In general, the names and the numbers of each family are nearly the same ; and the sum total is computed in both exactly alike. Yet there are several considerable variations, in names and numbers, which cannot be readily and satisfactorily accounted for. The most material of these are marked in the margin.—It is probable, that Ezra, when he wrote his history, many years after the return of the Jews to Babylon, copied this register from the public records without alteration.—Some think, that several who had their names inserted in the register, altered their minds, or died before the company arrived at Jerusalem ; and that others came forward, so as to complete the same number in all. (*Notes, Neh. 7:5, 73.*)—The word *children* is sometimes used for the descendants from the several heads

- 17 The children of ^aBezai, three hundred twenty and three.
- 18 The children of ^aJorah, a hundred and twelve.
- 19 The children of ^aHashum, two hundred twenty and three.
- 20 The children of ^aGibbar, ninety and five.
- 21 The ^bchildren of Beth-lehem, a hundred twenty and three.
- 22 The men of ^aNetophah, fifty and six.
- 23 The men of ^aAnathoth, a hundred twenty and eight.
- 24 The children of ^aAzmaveth, forty and two.
- 25 The children of ^aKirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.
- 26 The children of ^aRamah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.
- 27 The men of ^bMichmas, a hundred twenty and two.
- 28 The men of Beth-el and ^aAi, two hundred twenty and three.
- 29 The children of ^bNebo, fifty and two.
- 30 The children of Magbish, a hundred fifty and six.
- 31 The children of the other ^aElam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.
- 32 The children of ^aHarim, three hundred and twenty.
- 33 The children of ^aLod, ^aHadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five.
- 34 The children of ^aJericho, three hundred forty and five.
- 35 The children of ^aSenaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.
- 36 ¶ The priests: the children of ^aJedaiah, of the house of ^aJeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.
- 37 The children of ^aImmer, a thousand fifty and two.
- 38 The children of ^aPashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.
- 39 The children of ^aHarim, a thousand and seventeen.
- 40 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the children of ^aHodaviah, seventy and four.
- 41 ¶ The singers: the children of ^aAsaph, a hundred twenty and eight.
- 42 ¶ The children of ^athe porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, in all a hundred thirty and nine.
- 43 ¶ The ^aNethinims: the children of Ziba,

- the children of ^aHasupha, the children of Tab-baoth,
- 44 The children of Keros, the children of ^aSiaba, the children of Padon,
- 45 The children of ^aLebanah, the children of Hagabah, the children of Akkub,
- 46 The children of Hagab, the children of ^aShalmai, the children of Hanan,
- 47 The children of Giddel, the children of Gabar, the children of Reaiah,
- 48 The children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the children of Gazzam,
- 49 The children of Uzza, the children of ^aPaseah, the children of Besai,
- 50 The children of Asnah, the children of ^aMehunim, the children of Nephusim,
- 51 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,
- 52 The children of ^aBazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,
- 53 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of ^aThamah,
- 54 The children of Nezhiah, the children of Hatipha.
- 55 ¶ The children of ^aSolomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of ^aPeruda,
- 56 The children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,
- 57 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of ^aPochereth of Zebaim, the children of ^aAmi.
- 58 All the ^aNethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, were three hundred ninety and two.
- 59 And these were they which went up from Tel-melah, ^aTel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, and Immer: but they could not show their father's house, and their ^aseed, whether they were of Israel:
- 60 The children of ^aDelaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.
- 61 ¶ And of ^athe children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai: which took a wife of the daughters of ^aBarzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name:
- 62 These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: ^atherefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.
- 63 And the ^aTirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with ^aUrim and with Thummim.

^a Neh. 7:23. [324.] ^y Neh. 7:24. *Hariph*. x 10:33. Neh. 7:92. [328.] ^a Neh. 7:25. *Gileon*. ^b 1 Chr. 2:50-52. c 2 Sam. 23:28. 1 Chr. 2:54. Neh. 7:26. [188.] ^b 1 Chr. 4:9. d *Bus*. 21:18. Neh. 7:27. ^e 10:30. Jer. 1:1. 11:21. c Neh. 7:28. *Beth-azmaveth*. ^f Josh. 9:17. Neh. 7:29. *Kirjath-jearim*. g Josh. 18:24,25. Neh. 7:30. h 1 Sam. 13:5,23. ⁱ 10:28. *Michmas*. Neh. 7:31. i Gen. 12:8. *Hai*. Josh. 7:2. 8:9,17. Neh. 7:32. [123.] k Num. 32:3. Deut. 32:49. Neh. 7:33. ^l 15:12. Jer. 48:1,22. ^m 17. Neh. 7:33. ⁿ 10:31. Neh. 7:35. ^o Neh. 6:2. 7:37. 11:34,35. ^p Or, *Hadid*, as in some copies. q 1 Kings 16:34. Neh. 7:36. p Neh. 7:38. [3930.] q 1 Chr. 9:10. 24,7. r 3:9. Neh. 7:39. s 10:20. 1 Chr. 24:14. Neh. 7:40. [10:22. 1 Chr. 9:2. Neh. 7:41. u 10:21. 1 Chr. 24:8. Neh. 7:42. s 3:9. Judah. Neh. 7:43. *Hodevah*. y 1 Chr. 6:39. 15:17. 25:12. Neh. 7:44.

of families: at other times for those, whose ancestors belonged to the cities mentioned in connexion with them.

V. 30. The children of Magbish are not named in Nehemiah.

V. 35. It is uncertain whether Senaah be the name of a person, or a place; but the greatest number of persons stated in the whole register are called the children of Senaah.

V. 36-39. Above four thousand priests went up to Jerusalem on this occasion; which was a very great number, in proportion to the rest of the company; yet only four, out of the twenty-four courses instituted by David, seem to have returned: at least only four of the persons, after whom the courses were first named, as here mentioned; namely, Jedaiah, Immer, Harim, and Pashur, who was the son of Malchijah: (1 Chr. 9:12. 24:7-9,14.) and his name appears to have stood in the public records, as head of his course, instead of his father's. The priests, however, were afterwards divided into twenty-four courses, under the ancient names, in order to preserve regularity in their ministrations.

V. 40-42. The very small number of Levites, compared with the multitude of priests, who returned from Babylon, is very remarkable. Perhaps during a course of years, having no employment in their appropriate services, they generally

[148.] ^a 1 Chr. 26:1, &c. Neh. 7:45. [139.] ^a 1 Chr. 9:2. Neh. 7:46-56. 10:28. b Neh. 7:46. *Hasupha*. c Neh. 7:47. *Sia*. d Neh. 7:48. *Lebana*. *Hagaba*. e Or, *Shalmai*. f Neh. 7:51. *Paseah*. f Neh. 7:52. *Mehunim*. *Nephusim*. g Neh. 7:54. *Bazlith*. h Neh. 7:55. *Tamah*. i 1 Kings 9:21. k Neh. 7:57. *Perida*. l Neh. 7:58. *Jania*. m Neh. 7:59. *Pochereth*. n Neh. 7:59. *Ammon*. o 7:7. Josh. 9:23,27. 1 Chr. 9:2. Neh. 7:60. p Neh. 7:61. *Tel-harsa*. *Addan*. q Or, *pezzizim*. q Neh. 7:62. [1612.] r Neh. 7:63,64. s 2 Sam. 17:27. 19:31-39. 1 Kings 3:7. t Lev. 21:21-23. Num. 3:10. 16:40. 18:7. s Neh. 7:65. 8:9. 10:1. u Lev. 2:3,10. 6:17,29. 7:16. 10:17,18. 22:2,10,15,16. Num. 18:9-11,19,32. x Ex. 28:30. Lev. 8:8. Num. 27:21. Deut. 33:8. 1 Sam. 28:6.

entered on other occupations; and felt little inducement or inclination to leave them, in order to be the assistants of the priests, in the present desolated condition of Judah and Jerusalem. But it may be supposed, that the priests, having a more sacred and honourable office, were reluctant to be deprived of it, and more ready to resume the exercise of their ministry.

V. 43-54. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, s.20. 1 Chr. 9:2.)

V. 55-58. These were persons descended from the remains of the devoted Canaanites, who had been brought into bondage by Solomon; (*Notes*, 1 Kings 9:20-22.) and so their posterity were employed in menial services, perhaps about the sanctuary, along with the Nethinims; and though both the Nethinims and "the children of Solomon's servants," were of Gentile extraction, and not admitted to the privileges of Israelites; yet they seem to have been more ready to return to Jerusalem than the Levites were.

V. 61-63. Either Habaiah, or Koz, being of the sacerdotal family, had married one of Barzillai's daughters; and his posterity perhaps thought their descent from him, more honourable than their priestly character, and so neglected to preserve their genealogy. Yet, on their return from captivity, they desired to be admitted to the service of the sanctuary: but, not being able to trace their genealogy, they were

64 ¶ The whole congregation together *was* forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore.

65 Besides their servants and their maids, of whom *there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there were* among them two hundred singing-men and singing-women.

66 Their horses *were* seven hundred thirty and six; their mules, two hundred forty and five;

67 Their camels, four hundred thirty and five; their asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

68 ¶ And *some* of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord which *is* at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to set it up in his place:

69 They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work threescore and one thousand

drams of gold, and five thousand pounds of silver and one hundred priests' garments.

70 So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

CHAPTER III.

The Jews reassemble at Jerusalem, build an altar, offer sacrifices, keep the feast of tabernacles, and prepare to rebuild the temple, 1-7. Under the direction of Zerubbabel and Jeshua the foundation is laid, amidst the rejoicing of some and the weeping of others, 8-13.

AND when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel *were* in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.

2 Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offer-

68 Neh. 7:66-69. Is. 10:20-22. Jer. 23:3. 2 Is. 14:1, 2. e. Ex. 15:20-21. 2 Sam. 19:85. Neh. 7:71. Ps. 68:25. 148:12, 13. Ec. 2:8. Jer. 9:17, 18. Matt. 9:23. 1 Ex. 45:5, &c. 29. 36:3. Num. 7:3. &c. 1 Chr. 29:5-17. Neh. 7:70. Ps. 110:3. 21:1-4. 2 Cor. 8:3, 12. 9:7. c. 3:3. 1 Chr. 21:18, 22:1. 2 Chr. 3:1. d. 8:25-34. 1 Kings 7:51. 1 Chr. 22:14. 26:20-23. Neh. 7:71, 72. e. 6:16, 17.

excluded by the Tirshatha, (that is, the governor, or Zerubbabel, Neh. 8:9.) until a high-priest should arise with Urim and Thummim, who might, by immediate revelation from God, decide upon their case. (Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. 28:30.) But such a high-priest was not vouchsafed under the second temple. The Jews generally acknowledge, that there was no Urim and Thummim under the second temple; and even they that say there was, (because it was necessary the high-priest should have his garments complete,) yet say, there was no answer from God given by it.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 64. The number of the several families amounts only to twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; and those in Nehemiah to thirty-one thousand and eighty-nine; yet the sum total is in both said to be forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, besides their servants. (Neh. 7:66, 67.) The surplus are supposed to have been priests and Levites who could not produce their genealogy, and Israelites from the other tribes, who accompanied their brethren of Judah and Benjamin. 'It is remarkable that the two accounts' (of Ezra and Nehemiah) 'agree in the total amount; and the sum of the numbers, as separately detailed, will correspond, if to the 29,818, specified by Ezra, we add the 1765 persons reckoned by Nehemiah, which Ezra has omitted: and on the other hand, to the 31,089 enumerated by Nehemiah, add the 494, which is an overplus in Ezra, not noticed by Nehemiah: both writers including in the sum total 10,777 of the mixed multitude, not particularized in the individual detail. . . . Prideaux attributes the difference to alterations made by Nehemiah, in compliance with changes, that had happened since the departure from Babylon. . . . The accounts unquestionably agreed, when they were received into the canon, except where there might be some cause for variation; and probably the differences that now exist have originated in the carelessness of the copyists.' Grey's Key.

V. 65. Among the servants *were* "two hundred singing-men and singing-women," (or two hundred and forty-five, according to Nehemiah,) who probably were employed in families, to assist their mournings, or their thanksgivings. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 66, 67. How exceedingly reduced and impoverished does Israel appear in this narrative, compared with the condition of the nation in the days of David and Solomon!—The number of asses, compared with that of the horses, shows in how general use asses were at that time; but horses as belonging to the patriarchs or their descendants, are not mentioned, till the time of David.

V. 68-70. Under the divine protection this company arrived safe at Jerusalem, without any memorable occurrence. They found the city and all around it in ruins, and it seems the neighbouring cities totally unoccupied. These they rebuilt as well as they could, and dwelt in them for the present. (Notes, 1 Chr. 9:2. Neh. 7:73.) But the house of God chiefly occupied their thoughts; and it seems that their obligations to it were made, before they separated to seek habitations or subsistence. The whole amounted to nearly eighty thousand pounds sterling, besides the priests' garments; which was a considerable sum for them to contribute in their present poverty: (Note, Neh. 7:70-72.) but probably their brethren who stayed behind, contributed part of it; as the sacrifices and the burning of incense at the temple, were for the benefit of those who worshipped at, or towards, that typical residence of the God of Israel. (Notes, 1 Kings 8:28-30. Dan. 6:10, 11.) 'By this it appears, that the Jews were not such poor slaves in Babylon as wrought for their . . . masters, but had liberty to trade, and get riches for themselves; some of them being advanced to considerable offices in the king's court.' Bp. Patrick.—The whole history shows, that they were not reduced to personal slavery.—Every thing seems to have been conducted with much harmony and regularity. The foundation of this poor common-

wealth was laid in a marvellous concord. . . . They had one heart and soul like the first Christians, without which unity no people can be preserved. And that it may be cherished, they must avoid those things that destroy it, which are (as Joseph Wolphius here observes) principally . . . self-love, and meddling in other men's matters.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord will honour those, who renounce their own ease or interest for the sake of his service and glory; and all, who avail themselves of the proclamation of liberty and salvation sent in the gospel, have their names recorded in the book of life; whilst others shall be written in the dust of oblivion or disgrace. Those orders of men, which have on one occasion been most zealous in the cause of God, may at another time become most negligent; and the reverse is often exemplified; "for the first shall be last, and the last first." (36-42. 2 Chr. 29:34.)—Those who are ashamed of religion, or undervalue their external relation to God, in times of reproach, persecution, or distress; will have no benefit from it, when it becomes honourable and profitable: and they who have no evidence that they are, by regeneration, and adoption, spiritual priests unto God through Jesus Christ, have no right to the peculiar comforts and privileges of Christians. But there are many cases of which we cannot judge, but must leave them to be determined at the second coming of our High-Priest, whose illuminations and perfections are unchangeable and eternal.—Those who "seek first the kingdom of God," his favour, and his glory, will have all things else added to them: they will readily offer according to their ability for the house and service of God: and "where there is a willing mind it is accepted, according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." (Notes, 2 Cor. 8:1-5, 10-15, v. 12.)—Sin always impoverishes and degrades both individuals and societies; but that poverty and degradation are often sanctified, and finally promote their true interest and honour.—Our gracious Lord will carry us through those undertakings, which are entered on according to his will, with an aim to his glory, and in dependence on his assistance; and then we shall be made superior to all difficulties, hardships, and dangers. Thus they, who at the call of the gospel, renounce sin, and return unto the Lord, shall be guarded and guided through all the perils of the way; and arrive safe at those mansions, which are prepared for them in the holy city of our God.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. It is probable, that the Jews began their journey in the beginning of the spring; and that they did not reach Jerusalem till three or four months after. (7:9.) They employed a short time in providing habitations and necessities for their families; and then they all met together in the seventh month. This was the season of the first solemnities which occurred after their arrival. On the first day the feast of trumpets was kept; the great day of atonement followed on the tenth; and the feast of tabernacles began on the fifteenth. All these they seem to have observed with great devotion. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Lev. 23:24-43.)

V. 2, 3. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 1:7-11. 2:2.) The Jews built the altar upon the same foundation, and therefore of the same size, with that of Solomon. Probably it was formed of rough stones, with a large hearth of brass on the top. (Note, Ex. 20:21-25, v. 24, 25.) So large an altar, built all of brass, would have cost a sum far beyond their present circumstances. (Note, 2 Chr. 4:1.)—The fear of the tribes or nations around them, whom the people knew to be their enemies, did not induce them to take arms, or to erect fortifications, but to prepare an altar and to offer sacrifices; by which they put themselves under the immediate protection of the Almighty God. (Notes, Josh. 5:2-10.)—They began by offering the daily burnt-offerings, morning and evening, which constituted the principal part of the stated worship required by the law. (Note, Ex. 29:38-41.)

ings thereon, 'as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 And they set 'the altar upon his bases; 'for fear was upon them, because of the people of those countries; and they offered burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, even 'burnt-offerings morning and evening.

4 They kept also 'the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered 'the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, 'as the duty of every day required;

5 And afterward offered 'the continual burnt-offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that 'willingly offered a freewill-offering unto the LORD.

6 From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD. But 'the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid.

7 They 'gave money also unto the masons, and to the 'carpenters; and 'meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of 'Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 ¶ Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began 'Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the

remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from 'twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.

9 Then stood Jeshua 'with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of 'Judah, 'together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, 'with their sons and their brethren the Levites.

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they 'set the priests in their apparel with 'trumpets, and the Levites 'the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, 'after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And 'they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; 'Because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people 'shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, 'because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 But 'many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, 'when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy;

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people 'shouted with a loud shout, and 'the noise was heard afar off.

e Ex. 20:24, 25. Dent. 12:5-7. 2 Chr. 6:6. Ps. 78:68. 12 Chr. 4:1. g 4:11-16. 8: 21, 22. Ps. 47:12. 1 Chr. 15:16, 17. 2 Chr. 29:25-26. 1 Chr. 23:16. Lev. 23:34-35. Num. 14:17. Zech. 11:16-19. John 7:2, 37. k Num. 39:12-18. l Heb. the matter of the day. Neh. 5:43. Jer. 52:34. marg. 1 Chr. 29: 38-42. Num. 28:1-14. 1 Chr. 29:13. m Lev. 1:3. Dent. 12:6, 17. 2 Chr. 29:31, 32. n Heb. the temple of the LORD was not yet founded. o 2 Kings 12:11, 12. 23:5. 2 Chr. 24:12, 13. 1 Chr. 29:11. p 1 Chr. 29:11. 2 Chr. 29:10-15. Ezr. 27:17. Acts 12:20. q 2 Chr. 2:16. Jon. 1:3. Acts 10:5, 6. q 6:8-5. r See on 2. s Num. 4:3. 1 Chr. 23:24-32. t 2:40. Holiviah. Neh. 7:43.

V. 4. (Notes, Num. 29:12-37. Neh. 8:14-18.) The sacrifices appointed on the several days of the feast of tabernacles, were numerous; and the observance of it seems to have been greatly neglected: yet the returned captives strictly complied with the requirements of the law, 'which put this poor people to great expenses; but their piety was now such, that they valued nothing so much as the service of God.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 5, 6. Some of the people had come to Jerusalem and had prepared the altar, before the first day of the seventh month. And the rest being assembled as one man, they then began their solemn worship, with the daily sacrifices, those appointed for the new moons, and those for the feast of trumpets, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles. Besides those sacrifices which were expressly appointed, many 'willingly offered freewill-offerings unto the LORD.' (Marg. Ref.)—Until the temple was completed, it is likely they had erected a tabernacle near the altar, in which the sacred vessels and treasures were deposited and guarded. (Note, 1 Chr. 9:19, 21.)

V. 7. It seems, that the Jews were authorized by Cyrus to cut as much timber in Lebanon, as they wanted: but the Zidonians and Tyrians would expect to be paid for their labour; and they would prefer corn, wine, and oil, to money.—'According to the grant that they had of Cyrus,' 'who commanded, I suppose, those of Tyre and Zidon to assist them.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 4:4-6. 6:4.)

V. 8-11. The people did all that they could, during the winter, in making preparations for building the temple; for immense labour must have been requisite, in clearing the ground for the foundation, as well as in providing materials. In the second month, however, of the second year, or in a little more than a year after they left Babylon, Zerubbabel and Jeshua, having appointed the priests and Levites to attend in their courses, laid the foundation of the temple, with songs of praise and thanksgiving to the LORD. (Notes, Num. 10:2-10, v. 10. 1 Chr. 16:37-43. 23:2-6, 24-28. 2 Chr. 5:11-13. 34:8-13, v. 12.)—Thus after their long afflictions, they were encouraged again to sing, 'The LORD is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel,' even as the prophet Jeremiah had foretold. (Note, Jer. 33:11.)

Jeshua, &c. (9) 'Not Jeshua the high-priest before mentioned, but another Jeshua, who was a Levite, mentioned 2:40.—'The sons of Judah,' who is called there Hodaviah.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 12, 13. The Jews, who had heard of the temple and its solemn worship, and the blessing and comfort which it had been to their fathers, but had never seen it, were elated with joy that they were once more to have a temple, as the symbol of the LORD's presence with them, and his favour to them, and expressed their joy and thankfulness, by loud acclamations. On the other hand, the old men, who remembered the splendour of the former temple, (which had now been destroyed about fifty-three years,) were led by the recollection of past

prosperity, to give vent to their regret in copious tears and loud lamentations. By this they undervalued their present mercies; and it was the more reprehensible, as the priests and Levites, and chief persons, led the way in this unseasonable sorrow, so as to discourage their brethren, and interrupt their fervent praises. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Zech. 4:8-10.)—The temple itself is supposed to have been rebuilt of the same dimensions as before; but probably it was formed chiefly with the old stones dug out of the ruins, and with inferior workmanship; and it was not overlaid with gold, as Solomon's temple had been: neither was it, for a long time at least, surrounded with such magnificent out-buildings. Moreover, the ark of the covenant, the tables of the law, and the mercy-seat, were irrecoverably lost; and it is uncertain whether any thing was substituted in their stead: no visible glory, it is said, now appeared in the most holy place; there were no answers by Urim and Thummim; and no fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices, but common fire was used for that purpose. (Marg. Ref.) These and other circumstances seemed to indicate, that the LORD was not with them as in times past; but they really showed, that the types were waxing old, and ready to vanish away, by the coming of the great Antitype. (Notes, Jer. 3:16-18. Heb. 8:7-13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is true wisdom to prefer the service of God to our most urgent temporal concerns.—The greater difficulties, and the more formidable enemies, we are exposed to, the more evidently we need the friendship and assistance of God; and we should be proportionately earnest and constant in seeking and serving him, according to his word, through the great atonement of our heavenly Advocate.—These, who rule over others, should go before them in every good work: and we should worship the LORD in respect of outward things, according to what our circumstances will permit, though we cannot attain to all that is desirable. That which is expended in obedience to his commandment, will never impoverish us or our families: we should therefore rather save in any thing, than grudge the expense of works of piety and charity, which is like sowing the seed of a future harvest. (Notes, Prov. 11:24, 25. Ec. 11:1, 2. Luke 6:37, 38. Acts 11:27-30. P. O. 19-30, latter part. Notes, 2 Cor. 9:6-15. P. O. 8-15.)—Every day brings its peculiar duties: these will not be grievous, but pleasant, to the true and consistent servant of the LORD; and when zeal and love prevail, he will be looking out for opportunities of usefulness, and cheerfully bringing his freewill-offerings.—Unanimity, activity, and promptitude, in contriving and executing good designs, will surmount many difficulties, and perform great things in a little time; especially if all orders in society concur in their proper places.—The trumpet of the gospel not only warns the sinner to flee from the wrath to come, but animates the believer to his 'work of faith and labour of love.'—Every recent token of the loving-kindness of the LORD should remind us to celebrate his former goodness and mercy, and to anticip-

CHAPTER IV.

The adversaries of the Jews offer to join in building the temple; and, being rejected, they endeavour to hinder the work, 1-6. They write to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, 7-10. A copy of their letter, 11-16. The answer of Artaxerxes, who decides that the work shall be stopped, 17-22. The Jews are compelled to cease from building, 23, 24.

NOW when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

2 Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

4 Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,

5 And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

a 7-9. 1 Kings 5:4, 5. 1 Chr. 22:9, 10. Neh. 4:1-11. Dan. 9:25. 1 Cor. 16:9. * Heb. some of the transportation. 1:11. marg. 6, 16, 19, 20, 10:7, 16. Dan. 5:13. b 1:3. 2:2. 3:2, 12. c Prov. 2:23-26. 2 Cor. 11:13-15. Gal. 2:4. 2 Tim. 3:8. 2 Pet. 2:1, 2. d 2 Kings 17:24, 27-33, 41. e 10. Ananias. f Neh. 19:37. f Gen. 10:11. Pa. 73:8. Is. 37:37. Assyria. Hos. 14:3. Ananias. g Neh. 2:20. John 4:22. 23. Acts 8:2. Rom. 9:4, 5. h 1:1-3. 6:3-5. 2 Chr. 35:22, 23. Is. 44:28. 45:1, 4. Matt. 10:16. 1:33. Neh. 6:9. Is. 35:3, 4. Jer. 38:4. k Neh. 4:7, 8, 11. 1 Pa. 2:1, 2.

pate future blessings: for, notwithstanding our chastisements and distrustful murmurs, "the LORD is good, and his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel." The conviction of this truth, and the consideration of our own unworthiness, should enlarge our hearts with hope and gratitude, at every renewed token of his favour; and render us joyful at our work, and even amidst our trials. But we are too prone to bemoan lost comforts, disappointments, and scanty possessions; to give way to discontent, impatience, and distrust; and thus to mar our own enjoyment of present mercies, to interrupt the joy of others, and to refuse our God the praise and thanksgiving due unto his name. Against this propensity we should continually watch and pray. Even when we compare the present low state of true piety, and the small success of the gospel, with those primitive times when "great grace was upon all" the company of believers, and "the LORD daily added to the church such as should be saved;" or when we lament declensions in congregations, churches, or nations; we should be careful not to undervalue the present goodness of our God; to "despise the day of small things;" or to weaken our own hands, and discourage the hearts of others, in seeking a more signal and effectual blessing.—In this world, however, joys and sorrows will be blended, for it is a mixed state: hereafter there will be a complete separation; in one place there will be "fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore;" in the other there will be eternal weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. May "Jesus deliver us from the wrath to come," and prepare us for his glorious and eternal felicity; "that where he is, there we may be also."

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. (Note, 2, 10.) The Cushites, or Samaritans, who had been planted in the land of Israel by Esar-haddon, had perhaps encroached upon the countries belonging to the Jews; and doubtless they were envious of the favour shown them by the king of Persia: and thus they took occasion to become their determined enemies. But they were chiefly influenced by the enmity which "the seed of the serpent" bears to the true church of God; arising from contrariety of character, and hatred to the holiness of God, as displayed in his holy law, ordinances, truths, and people. And they might also fear, lest the establishment of the true worship of JEHOVAH should expose their spurious religion to disgrace. (Notes, 2 Kings 17:24-28, 41. Neh. 13:23-30.)

V. 2. "This people no doubt were desirous to partake of the privileges, which were granted to the Jews by the king of Persia. . . . Though they worshipped God, yet they joined other feigned gods with him, and therefore could not be admitted into communion with them at the temple." *Bp. Patrick*.—The Samaritans professed to worship the God of Israel: yet they were not guided by his word, but by their own imaginations, devices, or traditions, in the service which they rendered to him; and they worshipped with him their tutelar deities: so that their religion was a mixture of idolatry, superstition, and ignorance; far worse at this time than it was when our Lord himself declared that "they knew not what they worshipped." (Notes, John 4:19-27.)

V. 3. The Samaritans were neither Israelites by birth, nor yet true proselytes; so that the law of God forbade all

6 And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

[Practical Observations.]

7 ¶ And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.

8 Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort:

9 Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites,

10 And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time.

11 ¶ This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants, the men on this side the river, and at such a time.

12 Be it known unto the king, that the Jews

Nah. 1:11. Acts 2:1. m 21. 5:5. &c. 6:1, &c. + Heb. Ahasuerus. n Matt. 27:37. Acts 24:5-9, 13. 25:7. Rev. 12:10. ¶ Or, in peace. § Heb. societies. 9:17. 5:6. o 2 Kings 18:26. Is. 39:11. Dan. 2:4. ¶ Or, secretary. q 2 Sam. 8:17. 20:25. 2 Kings 18:18. ¶ Chal. secretary. p 2 Kings 17:24, 30, 41. q 5:6. 6:6. Apharsathchites. r Esth. 1:2. 2:3. Dan. 6:2. s Gen. 10:22. Is. 21:2. Jer. 25:25. 49:31. Ez. 32:24. Acts 2:9. t 1. 2 Kings 17:24, &c. u 11, 17. 7:12. ¶ Chal. Cheeneth.

coalition with them: neither were they included in the decree of Cyrus. Probably, the rulers of the Jews perceived, that they only meant to insinuate themselves, in order to obtain pre-eminence, foment dissensions, introduce their idolatries and superstitions, prejudice the minds of the people against their rulers; and in short to seize the temple, when built, for their own use; or to retard, injure, and put a stop to the work. It was, however, plain, that they did not mean to unite cordially with them, in the worship of the true God alone, according to his written word; and therefore nothing but mischief could have resulted from so unnatural an alliance, which they decidedly declined.

V. 4-6. This opposition of the Samaritans is supposed to have begun soon after the foundation of the temple was laid. During the remainder of the reign of Cyrus for almost five years, however, they did not openly oppose a work which that prince had commanded; but they discouraged the people, and perhaps intercepted their materials for building; and by bribing counsellors to oppose their application to the ministers of Cyrus, for supplies or protection, they greatly obstructed the design. This would be more easily done, as it is probable that Daniel, the powerful friend of the Jews, died about this time. (Note, Dan. 6:25-28.)—Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, called here (as it is probably supposed) Ahasuerus, reigned above seven years; and was a very impolitic and wicked prince: but regard to his father's memory, it may be supposed, prevented his attending to the accusations brought by the Samaritans against the Jews. *Darius*. (5) Notes, 5: &c.

V. 7-9. Upon the death of Cambyses, Smerdis the Magian usurped the throne: and as no other king reigned in Persia, after Cambyses, and before Darius Hystaspis, under whom the temple was finished, he must be the Artaxerxes here mentioned. (Note, 6:13-15.) unless, as some think, Artaxerxes is only another name for Ahasuerus. To him, however, the rulers of the Samaritans wrote a letter, which Ezra seems to have copied from the records of Persia. (Marg. Ref. o.) It was written at first in Syriac, or Chaldee: but perhaps it was entered into the records in Persian; so that Ezra, when he extracted it, again translated it into Syriac; and therefore it stands in the original Scriptures in that language, as does all that follows to the end of the sixth chapter.—Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel seem to have been the principal persons who counselled the people to send this letter; and Rehum and Shimshai, it is probable, drew it up.—*The Dinaites*, &c. (9) These nine nations came out of Assyria, Persia, Media, Susiana, and other provinces of that vast empire; who with one consent joined in this letter, or petition. *Bp. Patrick*. (Marg. Ref. p-s.)

V. 10. *Ananias*, &c.] Probably Ananias was the name by which Esar-haddon was known, in the eastern parts of the Assyrian empire: (2 Kings 19:37.) or as some think, he was a great captain, employed by Esar-haddon in this transaction.

At such a time.] The date of the letter seems to have followed in the records; but it was omitted by the transcriber, as it were with an *et cetera*.

V. 12. *The rebellious*, &c.] (Marg. Ref. v, x.) After God in his righteous judgments had reduced Judah to subject

which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jerusalem, building ^{the} rebellious and ^{the} bad city, and have ^{set up} the walls thereof, and ^{joined} the foundations.

13 Be it known now unto the king, that if this city be builded, and the walls set up ^{again}, then will they not ^{pay} toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the ^{revenue} of the kings.

14 Now because we ^{have} maintenance from ^{the king's} palace, ^{and} it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king;

15 That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records and know that ^{this city is} a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have ^{moved} sedition ^{within} the same of old time: ^{for} which cause was this city destroyed.

16 We certify the king that, if this city be builded ^{again}, and the walls thereof set up, by this means ^{thou shalt have} no portion on this side the river.

17 ¶ Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their ^{companions} that

dwelt in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, ^{Peace}, and ^{at} such a time.

18 The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me.

19 And ¶ I commanded, and ^{search} hath been made, ^{and} it is found that this city of old time hath ^{made} insurrection against kings, and ^{that} rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

20 There have been ^{mighty} kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all ^{countries} ^{beyond} the river: ^{and} toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

21 ¶ Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until ^{another} commandment shall be given from me.

22 Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: ^{why} should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

23 ¶ Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before ^{Rehum}, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, ^{they} went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by ^{force} and power.

24 Then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem. ¶ So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of ^{Darius} king of [B. C. 522.

v 15, 19. 2 Kings 18:20. 24:1. 2 Chr. 36:13. Jer. 52:3. Ez. 17:13-19. Luke 23:2-5. Acts 24:5. 1 Thes. 3:2. 1 Pet. 2:13-15. x Ps. 46:1, 2. Is. 1:21-23. Luke 13:34. * Or, finished. Neh. 1:3. Dan. 9:25. 1 Chal. ^{sounded together}. y Neh. 5:4. Ps. 2:2. 119:89. 1 Chal. ^{give}. z 7:24. Matt. 9:17:25. Rom. 15:6, 7. * Or, strength. ¶ Chal. ^{are salted with the salt of the palace}. 1 Tim. 6:10. a Ez. 33:31. John 12:5, 6. 19:12-15. b 12. Neh. 2:19. 6:8. Esth. 3:5-8. Dan. 6:1-13. Acts 17:6, 7. 1 Chal. ^{made}. * Chal. ^{in the midst thereof}. c Jer. 52:3. Ez. 4:6. Mic. 2:1. Rom. 3:15. ¶ Chal. ^{arm and power}. p Neh. 6:3, 9. Job 20:5. 1 Thes. 2:18. q 5:5, 6; 6:1. Hag. 1:15.

Luke 10:5. Acts 23:25. Rom. 1:7. f 10, 11. ¶ Chal. ^{by me a decree is set}. g 15: 16, 17. 6:1, 2. Deut. 13:14. Prov. 25:2. h 2 Kings 18:7. 24:20. Ez. 17:13-19. ¶ Chal. ^{lifted up itself}. i 1 Kings 4:21. 1 Chr. 18:3. Ps. 72:8. k 16. Gen. 15:18. Josh. 1:4. l 1 Chr. 18:6, 13. 19:19. 2 Chr. 9:14, 23, 24. 17:11. 28:7, 8. ¶ Chal. ^{Make a decree}. m 13. Esth. 3:8, 9. 7:3, 4. n 9, 17. o Prov. 4:16. Mic. 2:1. Rom. 3:15. ¶ Chal. ^{arm and power}. p Neh. 6:3, 9. Job 20:5. 1 Thes. 2:18. q 5:5, 6; 6:1. Hag. 1:15.

tion under the kings of Babylon, the Jews certainly showed a very obstinate and treacherous spirit of rebellion; they created their new masters a great deal of trouble, and they provoked them to their own destruction. But in so doing, they transgressed the commandments of their law, by violating their own solemn oaths and engagements. (Notes, 13-16. 2 Kings 24:1, 20. 25:6, 7. 2 Chr. 36:13. Ez. 17:15-21.)—No attempt at this time had been made to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem; and the Samaritans were not in reality so much displeased at any thing, as at the building of the temple, though they artfully avoided the mention of it: and the letter also contained a most direct false accusation. "When it is said, there was an order from the king, that this city should not be built, and accordingly the work was stopped, it is thus expressed, ver. 24, "then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem." . . . Thus wicked men compass their ends by lies and fallacies, with which they prepossess men's minds against the truth. Bp. Patrick.

V. 13-16. David and Solomon had reigned over all the countries from the river Euphrates, to the river of Egypt: but this was long before the commencement of the Babylonish, or Persian monarchies. And after the death of Solomon, their successors had been confined within much narrower limits. The Samaritans, however, aimed to insinuate a jealousy into the mind of the king of Persia, that the Jews intended to claim and seize upon all those regions, and hold the whole, as independent on the kings of Persia; than which nothing could be more groundless and absurd. All their offence seems to have been, that they had prepared to defend themselves against their enemies, whilst acting under the authority of Cyrus. The Samaritans cloaked their slander and enmity, under the fair pretence of fidelity and gratitude to the king of Persia: the ruling persons among them were maintained by revenues from the court of Persia; and it was not meet for them to see the king's dishonour, and the loss which would accrue to him, if the Jews were allowed to go on with their undertaking. (Notes, 53-17.)

We have maintenance, &c. (14) "We are salted with the salt of the palace." Marg.—It seems, they received their stipend in salt, from whence it was called a salary. Bp. Patrick.

Fathers. (15) So they called the kings, who had reigned before Artaxerxes, over those countries.

V. 17-24. The king of Persia found by the records, that Jerusalem had been the seat of government for powerful princes, many ages before; and that afterwards rebellion and sedition had been made in it: and, as thus much was true in the letter of the Samaritans, full credit was given them for all that they advanced, concerning the progress and intentions of the Jews, and the consequences of their proceedings; though nothing could be more improbable, false and malicious! A commission therefore was sent back, in which the temple was not mentioned; for though that created the jealousy in the minds of the Samaritans, it was little regarded by the king of Persia; (Note, 12.) but they were ordered "to cause them to cease" this was sufficient for their purpose; and without delay they forcibly put a stop to the work.—The usurpation of Smerdis did not continue a whole year; so that if he be intended, their commission was soon vacated; but the Jews,

being greatly intimidated, and not so zealous as they had been, the work ceased till the second year of Darius, who, having assisted in killing the usurper, was advanced to the throne in his stead. (Note, 51, 2.) It is very observable, that in neither of their letters, nor in the king's answer, there is one word of the command which Cyrus gave; nor any thing said of the building of the temple, which was the great thing in which they were employed, and the building of which could be no damage to the king. Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. Every vigorous and successful attempt to revive or promote true religion, will excite the opposition of Satan, and of "the children of disobedience" in whom he works. Indeed all ungodly men despise or hate holiness: yet they, who do not profess much regard to religion, commonly treat pious persons with mere neglect or ridicule; but hypocrites and heretics have always been the most unwearied and cruel enemies of the true church of God. The labours and lives of his servants undermine their reputation, affront their pride, and expose their hypocrisy: and their enmity is thus imbibed by envy and resentment. Sometimes indeed they seem desirous of being admitted to the fellowship of believers; and avow themselves to be of the same sentiments, and to be minding the same things. But they only want to insinuate themselves, that they may gain pre-eminence, and manage every thing for their own purposes. These "false brethren, unawares crept in, bring in privily damnable heresies," form parties and excite contentions; introduce their own coalition between the world and religion; mislead and prejudice some and pervert others; lessen the influence of pious persons, and render the minds of the people disaffected towards them. And while their lives disgrace the cause, their insinuations "eat as doth a canker," till an internal decay corrodes the very vitals of piety, in every church where they obtain admission, and preserve their authority or influence. Let then all the friends of truth and holiness beware of such characters, and let them withdraw from them; "by their fruits ye shall know them;" and let no plausible pretences, or hopes of support from their superior rank or wealth, bribe Christians to admit them "to build with them," unless they mean to build a Babel, instead of a temple. It is true, if you will not have their friendship, you must expect their bittered resentment, which is more dreaded, but is far less dangerous. By insinuations, objections, and discouragements, they weaken the hands of the Lord's people, and induce them to suspect or dislike their faithful ministers, or their lawful rulers; and by slanders and reproaches, they attempt to prejudice others against them. But it is no wonder, that we cannot enumerate all their practices, when they have the old Serpent for their prompter, and spare neither trouble nor expense, nor crimes of any kind, to accomplish their designs. For the same part is acting over and over again, from age to age, with only circumstantial variations; and the less we are aware of it, the more we are in danger of being injured by it.

V. 7-24. The gates of hell, in directly assailing the church of Christ, often labour to excite rulers to suppress his truths and ordinances, by statutes and penal sanctions. To this end ungodly men bestow great pains to obtain the ear of

CHAPTER V.

Zerubbabel and Jeshua, excited by Haggai and Zechariah, begin again to build the temple, 1, 2. Tatnai and Shethar-boznai are not able to hinder them, 3-5. A copy of their letter to Darius, 6-17.

THEN the prophets, ^aHaggai the prophet, and ^bZechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that *were* in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, *even* unto them.

2 Then ^crose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and ^dJeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them *were* the prophets of God helping them.

3 ¶ At the same time came to them ^eTatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, ^fWho hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?

4 Then said we unto them after this manner, ^gWhat are the names of the men that ^hmake this building?

5 But ⁱthe eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and ^jthen they returned answer by letter concerning this matter.

6 ¶ The ^kcopy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-

a Hag. 1:1, &c. b Zech. 1:1, &c. c Mic. 5:4. Hag. 1:2-8. Zech. 1:3-4. 4:6-10. Hag. 1:12-15. e Zech. 6:11. Joshua-Josedech. f 6:14. Hag. 2:4-9. 20-23. Zech. 3:4. 7. 2 Cor. 1:24. g 6:6, 13. 7:21. Neh. 2:7-9. h 9:1. 13. Matt. 23:2. Act. 4:7. 1:10. i Chal. build. k 7:6, 23. 8:22. 2 Chr. 16:9. Pa. 53:18. Hag. 1:15. 2:1. 1 Pet. 5:12. 1:6-12. m 4:11, 22. n 4:9. Apharsachites. 6:6. ¶ Chal. in the midst whereof. o 4:17. Dan. 3:9. 4:1. 6:21. John 14:27. 2 Thes. 3:16. p 2:1. Neh. 7:6. 11:3. Esth. 1:1, 22. q 1:2, 3. 6:10. 7:23. Deut. 10:17. 32:31. Pa. 145:3. Dan. 2:47. 3:26. 4:2, 34-37. 6:26. ¶ Chal. stones of

princes. If they find them disposed to countenance pious Christians, they use deceitful methods to poison their minds with prejudices and suspicions. But when weak and wicked kings succeed to the thrones, which have been filled by wiser men; these slanderers venture to speak more plainly: and professing great loyalty and attachment, and even pleading the ties of gratitude and conscience, they pour in their false accusations, and petition for leave to persecute.—It is an old slander, that “Jerusalem is a rebellious and bad city,” and that the prosperity of the church would be injurious to kings and provinces: for “the Accuser of the brethren” knows how prevalent such considerations are with the princes of this world. Yet nothing can be more false: for true godliness teaches us to honour and obey the king; to “submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake;” to pay tribute, and “to render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar’s;” to be upright, peaceable, and blameless; and even to fulfil the oath or engagement which we have entered into to our own hurt; it admits of only a single exception; namely, where the command of God requires one thing, and the law of the land another, we must “obey God rather than man,” and patiently submit to the consequences.—But it must be allowed, that ambitious and turbulent men have often disgraced the cause of God, by their usurpations, seditions, rebellions, treacheries, and perjuries: real Christians also have been seduced into inconsistent practices: and “oppression” which “maketh a wise man mad,” has sometimes excited them to use unwarranted weapons. A few instances of this kind, *standing on record*, while the blameless lives and patient sufferings of thousands are unnoticed and forgotten, serve through revolving ages as a pretext, by which malignant enmity misleads worldly policy. All who love the gospel, should therefore walk circumspectly, avoiding all appearance of evil, especially in this particular, lest the church of God and posterity should suffer through their misconduct: for the whole body will be condemned without a hearing, if only a few individuals act improperly. (Note, Rom. 13:1, 2.)—Indeed we cannot behave so quietly, and endeavour to serve God and to promote religion so unexceptionably, but our endeavours will be ascribed to ambition or avarice, and we shall be suspected of harbouring the basest intentions. For kings and princes are seldom able to discover the truth in such cases, even when disposed to inquire after it. Surrounded with flatterers and interested dependents, they must see with other men’s eyes, and receive every information, concerning those whom their courtiers dislike, with a false colouring: and as they are too generally careless about religion, if not prejudiced against it, Satan and his emissaries seldom find much difficulty, in using them as the tools of their persecuting enmity. These considerations should teach us to count our cost; that we may be prepared for all events, and not be too easily discouraged or made remiss, as we are apt to be, upon every appearance of opposition: they should excite our gratitude for our peculiar privileges in this favoured land, and teach us to place our dependence on that God, who has all hearts in his hands, and not on the mutable decrees of princes and senates. We should

boznai, and his companions the ^aApharsachites, which *were* on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

7 They sent a letter unto him, ^bwherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, ^call peace.

8 Be it known unto the king, that we went into ^dthe province of Judea, to the house of ^ethe great God, which is builded with ^fgreat stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.

9 Then asked we those elders, *and* said unto them thus, ^gWho commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?

10 We ^hasked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that *were* the chief of them.

11 And thus they returned us answer, saying, ⁱWe are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, ^jwhich a great king of Israel builded and set up.

12 But ^kafter that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, ^lhe gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.

13 But ^min the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God.

rolling. Mark 13:1, 2. r 3, 4. s 4. t Josh. 24:15. Pa. 119:46. Jon. 1:9. Matt. 10:32. Luke 12:8. Act. 27:23. Rom. 1:16. Gal. 6:14. u 1 Kings 6:2. 7:2 Chr. 3:4. 5: x 2 Kings 21:19-15. 2 Chr. 34:24-25. 36:16, 17. Neh. 9:36-27. 1a. 59:1, 2. Jer. 53:29. Dan. 9:5. y Deut. 28:15. &c. 29:24-28. 31:17. 32:30. Jnlg. 2:14. 4:2. 6:1. 1 Kings 9:6-9. 2 Chr. 7:19-22. Pa. 106:40. z 2 Kings 24:10. &c. 25:1, &c. 2 Chr. 36:5, &c. Jer. 39:1. &c. 52:1, &c. Dan. 1:1, 2. a 1:1-4. 6:3-5. 1a. 44:28. 45:1.

also be in haste to seize on every opportunity of doing good; even as the adversaries of the church do in their mischievous devices; for, as we receive all from our wise, gracious, and righteous God; it is not meet that we should quietly witness his dishonour, or neglect any method by which we may glorify his name, and promote his cause in the world.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. A great part of the book of Haggai, and the former part of Zechariah, refer to the events here recorded, and the reader will find it worth while to compare them with the history.—The Jews resumed their work about fourteen years after the first opposition, given to them by the Samaritans; but within two or three years after they had been compelled to desist entirely from it. In the mean time they had rebuilt their own houses, without being in the least molested. It may be supposed that they had an altar and tabernacle, and kept up their stated worship; but they were persuaded, that it was not yet time to build the temple. For this neglect the Lord corrected them, and reproved them by the prophets, who came to “prophecy even unto them,” or rather “against them.” Their remonstrances excited the rulers and the people to resume the work; and their subsequent encouraging prophecies greatly helped them in accomplishing it. (Notes, Hag. 1: Zechar. 3:1-7. 4:4-10.)

V. 3. It is probable, that the governors of Samaria had been changed, on the accession of Darius, for men of greater temper and impartiality. The “companions” here mentioned with the governors, seem to have been some of the chief persons of the nation, who formed the council. Excited, however, by the envy and jealousy of the Samaritans, they interfered, as soon as the Jews resumed the building of the temple.—*This wall.* The wall about the temple seems to be meant. (Notes, Neh. 1:3. 2:12-16. 4:1-3. Dan. 9:25-27.)

V. 4. Then, &c. It is uncertain whether these are the words of the governors of Samaria inquiring of the Jews the names of their rulers, who presided over the work; (10) or those of the workmen referring the inquirers to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, for information.—Ezra may fairly be supposed to have inserted the words of the record without alteration: so that the first person plural neither proves that he was then at Jerusalem; nor yet that he was not the writer of the history, as some learned men have argued.

V. 5. (Marg. Ref.) The Lord so watched over his people, that the Samaritans, though full of enmity, were restrained from using violence to obstruct the work: and he gave them so many encouragements, in his providence and by his word, that they were not terrified from proceeding; till at length the matter having been referred to Darius, a favourable answer was obtained. (Notes, Hag. 2:3-19. Zechar. 1:12-21.)

V. 6-17. It is probable, that this epistle likewise was copied from the public records, and interpreted into the Chaldee language: but it forms an entire contrast to the malevolent, slanderous, and disingenuous letter of the foregoing chapter. (Notes, 4:10-16.) It fairly stated facts to the king; and the writers merely desired to know his pleasure, after proper search had been made. The ingenious account,

14 And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor;

15 And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place.

16 Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.

17 Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

CHAPTER VI.

Darius finds the decree of Cyrus, confirms it, allows out of his revenues the expenses of building the temple, and denounces penalties on all opposers.
1-12. The temple is finished and dedicated, and the passover is celebrated with great joy, 13-22.

THEN Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon.

2 And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written:

3 In the first year of Cyrus the king, the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices,

h 1:7-10, 6:5. 2 Chr. 36:7, 18. Dan. 5:2-3. e 7:27. Prov. 21:1. d 16:1, 11. e Hag. 1:14, 2:2, 21. * Or, deputy. Acts 13:7, 12. f 1:2, 3:3, 6:3. g 14. h 2, 3, 8, 10. Hag. 1:12-14. 2:18. Zech. 4:10. 16:15. k 4:15, 19. 6:1, 2. Prov. 25:2. 16:3-5. e 4:15, 19. 5:17. Job 29:16. Prov. 25:2. Chul. books. Ps. 40:7. Jer. 36:2-4, 20-23, 29, 32. Ez. 3:8, 3:1. Rev. 5:1. 1 Chul. note to descend. * Or, at Ecbatana, or, in a coffer. h 1:1-4. 5:13-15. 2 Chr. 33:22, 23. e Deut. 19:5, 6, 11. -14. 2 Chr. 2:6. d 1 Kings 6:2-3. 2 Chr. 3:3, 4. Ez. 4:13-15. Rev. 21:16. e 1 Kings 6:36. f 7:20-23. Ps. 68:29. 72:10. Is. 49:23. 60:6-10. Rev. 12:16.

also, which the Jews gave of their nation, and the cause of the calamities that had befallen them, (which Tatnai and his associates faithfully stated to Darius,) is worthy of observation and of imitation.

Sheshbazzar, &c. (16) Hence it is evident, that Zerubabel and Sheshbazzar are only two names of the same person. (Notes, 1:7-11. Zech. 4:4-10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The enemies of the church are active, powerful, and malicious, and alas, its friends too often dispirited and negligent: yet the Lord will not suffer his cause to be run down, but will raise up instruments to revive and carry on his work.—It especially belongs to the office of the ministers of God to warn, exhort, encourage, and direct all orders in society to attend to their several duties: when this is properly performed, it will be found the most effectual means of forwarding reformation, and the power of godliness: and humble and pious men, in the most exalted stations, will think themselves helped, by the faithful labours and animated remonstrances of those, who really declare to them the word of God.—While professed Christians are satisfied with forms, and attentive mainly to their secular interests and accommodations, opposition may seem to be slain: but when they bestir themselves to do the work and seek the glory of God, it will soon be found that it was not dead, but merely asleep. Nothing, however, can harm those whom the Lord protects, or cause the work of those to cease whom he employs. He finds other employment for some opposers, he restrains others by the moderation of their superiors: some are removed by death, or by revolutions in governments; and others are softened or changed; as it seems good to him, “who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”—There are men who have no true religion, yet are possessed of equity, candour, and generosity: and these qualities entitle them to our respect, though they will not justify them in the sight of God.—A fair statement of facts forms the honest man's best method of pleading a good cause.—The servants of the God of Heaven need not, and must not, be ashamed of so great and good a Master; and it seems at first sight strange, that they should ever be tempted to so preposterous a crime.—Those religious peculiarities, which ignorant slanderers deem novel or singular, may boast an antiquity beyond all other sentiments or observances in the world; and have been maintained by the wisest, greatest, and most excellent men who ever lived upon earth.—While we continue in this world, we shall always have to confess, that our sins have provoked the God of hea-

and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits;

4 With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house:

5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.

6 Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence:

7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build this house of God in his place.

8 Moreover, I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered.

9 And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail:

10 That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

11 Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down

g 1:7, 8. 5:14. Jer. 27:16, 18-22. Dan. 1:2. 5:2. h 2 Kings 24:13. 25:14, 15. 2 Chr. 36:7, 10, 18. Jer. 52:19. § Chal. go. [5:3. || Chal. their societies. 5:6. k Gen. 32:28. 43:14. Neh. 1:11. Ps. 76:10. Prov. 21:1, 30. Is. 27:8. Acts 4:26-28. Rom. 8:31. ¶ Chal. by me a decree is made. [4. 4:16, 20. 7:15-22. Ps. 68:29-31. Hag. 2:8. * Chal. made to cease. 4:21, 23. 5:5. m Lev. 1:3-5. 10:9, 9. Ps. 50:3-13. n Ex. 29:38-42. Num. 36:28. o Lev. 2:1 & c. Num. 15:4. & c. 1 Chr. 9:29. p Lev. 2:13. Mark 9:49. ¶ Chal. rest. Gen. 8:21. Lev. 1:9, 13, 17. Eph. 5:2. q 7:23. Jer. 29:7. 1 Tim. 2:1, 2. r 7:26. s Ezech. 5:14. 7:10.

ven unto wrath; and that all our sufferings spring from this source, and all our comforts from his unmerited mercy.—We ought fully to acknowledge the favours which we have received from man: but should generally be silent as to the ill-treatment that we have met with. Even when we are exposed to censure, whilst the blame belongs to others: except the honour of God and the gospel requires it, it is seldom useful to vindicate ourselves.—The faithful worshippers of God are generally traduced, before they are persecuted: yet their cause demands nothing more than an impartial hearing to obtain a favourable decision; and many princes have persecuted more from misinformation and slanderous misrepresentation, than from malice.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The decree of Cyrus in favour of the Jews had been a matter of great notoriety, and not more than sixteen years had elapsed since it had been granted: but in the changes which had taken place, and the multiplicity of affairs which occurred continually in the government of so vast an empire, it is probable that its purport had been forgotten. When, however, it could not be found at Babylon, Darius, unwilling to decide in this cause, without clear evidence, ordered it to be searched for at Achmetha, afterwards called Ecbatana, the chief city of Media; and there it was at length found, having probably been laid up in that city by Cyrus's orders.

V. 3. (Marg. Ref.) Some suppose that Cyrus did not allow the Jews to build the porch of the temple more than sixty cubits high, lest they should fortify it as a citadel; and that the sixty cubits in breadth included the chambers on each side the temple. Perhaps he permitted them to build the temple itself sixty cubits high and sixty wide, as well as sixty long; but they chose to build it of the same dimensions as their former temple: for it is generally agreed, that thus it was at last builded; and it is clearly proved, that the porch was raised to the same height. (Notes, 1 Kings 6:3, 4. 2 Chr. 3:3, 4.)

V. 4. Expenses, &c.] It is likely that the Jews had been deprived of this advantage, by the counsellors who were hired against them. (Notes, 3:7. 4:4-6.)

V. 5. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1:1-4, 7-11.

V. 6-12. Darius, in order to ingratiate himself with his subjects, showed respect to the memory of Cyrus in every thing; and this might induce him to be more favourable to the Jews, when the decree of Cyrus was produced. But he seems to have been deeply convinced, that the God of the Jews was the God of heaven, who ought to be worshipped

from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let this house be made a dunghill for this.

12 And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. ¶ Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily.

14 And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

s. c.] 15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

16 ¶ And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,

17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month.

20 For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

21 And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat,

22 And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

* Chal. destroyed. t 2 Kings 9:37. 10:27. Dan. 2:5. 3:29. u Ex. 20:24. Deut. 12:5, 11. 16:2. 1 Kings 9:3. 2 Chr. 7:16. Ps. 132:13, 14. x Ps. 5:10. 21:8. —10. Is. 60:12. Zech. 12:2-4. Acts 5:38, 39. 9:5. Rev. 19:14-21. y Esth. 3:14, 15. 8:1. z 13. Eccl. 9:10. a 4:9, 23. 5:6. b Esth. 6:11. Job 5:12, 13. Prov. 20:28. c 3:8. d 4:3. e 5:1, 2. Hag. 1:12-14. 2:2. g Eccl. 2:3. 4:1. h Zech. 4:9. i 1. Is. 44:28. Hag. 1:3. j Chal. decree. k 3. 1:1-4. 4:24. 5:13. h 7:3. l Esth. 3:7, 13. 8:12. 9:15, 17, 19, 21. m 1 Chr. 9:2. Neh. 7:73. j Chal. zone of the transpiration. See on 4:1. l 1 Kings 8:63. 2 Chr. 7:9. John 10:22. m 3:11, 12. Deut. 12:7. 1 Chr. 15:28. 2 Chr. 7:10. 30:23, 26. Phil. 4:4. n 8:35. Num.

7:2, &c. 1 Kings 8:63, 64. 1 Chr. 16:1-3. 2 Chr. 7:5. 29:31-35. o Lev. 4:3, 13, 14, 22, 23. 2 hr. 29:21-23. p 1 Kings 18:31. Luke 22:30. Rev. 7:4-8. 21:12. q 1 Chr. 23:-26. 2 Chr. 35:4-5. r Chal. according to the writing. Num. 3:6, 8, 9, &c. r 16. s Ex. 12:6. &c. Josh. 5:10. 2 Chr. 30:35. t 2 Chr. 29:34. 30:15-17. u Ex. 12:21. 2 Chr. 35:11. Heb. 7:27. x 9:11. Num. 9:6, 7, 10-14. Is. 52:11. Ez. 39:25. 2 Cor. 6:17. 7:1. y Ex. 12:47-49. Ps. 58:5. z Ex. 12:15-20. 13:6. 7:2. 2 Chr. 30:21. 35:17. Matt. 26:17. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. a 7:27. Prov. 16:7. 21:1. John 19:11. b 2 Kings 23:29. 2 Chr. 33:11. Zech. 10:10, 11.

according to the law of Moses. His steady intention that sacrifices should be offered, at his expense, at Jerusalem, "of sweet savours to the God of heaven;" that the people of God "might pray for him and his sons;" and the expression, "the God, that hath caused his name to dwell there," (12) show, that he had been instructed in several important truths of genuine religion, and had a conviction of his dependence upon God, and entertained high and honourable thoughts of him, and that he regarded the prayers of his worshippers, as efficacious. (Marg. Ref.) The account indeed given of this transaction by the apocryphal Esdras is absurd, and inconsistent with facts; for Zerubbabel had been long at Jerusalem, before Darius granted this decree. (1 Esdras 4:13-63. 5.) But probably some pious Jews had access to the king, who had so explained the matter, as to give him these favourable sentiments, and to dispose him to the service assigned him by Providence. He thought that the continuance of his life and the prosperity of his family, might be secured by the prayers of the Jews: but he seems not to have considered his future and unspeakably more important interests; and it does not appear, that his convictions had any abiding effect upon his own mind or conduct.—Knowing also the envy and malice of the adversaries of the Jews, Darius denounced a most dreadful punishment against those who should any more molest them; and he concluded his decree, with a most remarkable, and almost prophetic, execration against all kings and people, who should attempt to alter or destroy the temple, after it was built. (Marg. Ref. x. Note, Zech. 14:1-3.) Thus the Samaritans, by opposing the Jews, most effectually served their interests; their governors, perceiving the king's inclinations, zealously concurred; and so the work was speedily completed.

V. 13-15. If we allow a year for the message of Tatnai to the court of Darius, the search made among the records, and all delays and obstructions: for the granting of the decree, and its publication in Judea; it will appear, that it was published just seventy years after the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans.—Zechariah, who prophesied at this time, mentions, that the people had kept annual fasts for the ruin of the city and temple, during seventy years; (Notes, Zech. 7:1-7.) and this absolutely fixes these events to the time of Darius Hystaspes; for no other Darius reigned in Persia till many years afterwards.—The historian inserts the name of Artaxerxes with those of Cyrus and Darius, as concurring in this work: (14) for though the temple was built before Artaxerxes came to the throne; yet probably it received great accessions of splendour and convenience, under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah, whom he patronised. (Notes, 7:1-5. Neh. 1:1.)—The temple was finished in rather more than four years after the Jews returned to the work, when excited to it by Haggai and Zechariah; (Note, 5:1, 2.) in something more than two years after the decree of Darius had been published; and in about twenty years after the Jews returned from captivity. Cyrus reigned seven years; Cambyses, or Ahasuerus, seven; Artaxerxes, or Smerdis, one; and it was finished in the sixth of Darius. (Notes, 3:8-11. 4:4 -6, 17-24.)

Through the prophesying, &c. (14) "Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah" . . . directed and encouraged them in their work; representing to them, it is likely, the wonderful goodness of God, who had inclined the heart of the king of Persia to be so highly favourable to them. Bp. Patrick.

V. 16, 17. (Notes, Num 7:1-14. 1 Kings 8:63-66.) The tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the priests and Levites, which had constituted the kingdom of Judah, formed also the bulk of the people after the captivity. But numbers from the other tribes had been incorporated with them in the reign of Rehoboam, and afterwards; and many returned with them from Babylon, probably some of all the other tribes. As the nation sprang from the twelve sons of Jacob, and some of the descendants of each remained; they were still considered as consisting of twelve tribes, and called "the children of Israel," and a sin-offering was offered up for each of them. Doubtless the same reference to the twelve tribes took place in respect of the show-bread, and the writing of their names on the high-priest's garments and breastplate, as when they had been united under one government. (Marg. Ref. n, o.)

V. 18. Moses had given laws, concerning the ministry of the priests and Levites, with reference to the place which God would choose to place his name there; and subsequent events had proved Jerusalem to be that chosen place; but the courses of the priests and Levites were appointed by David. (Marg. Ref. Note, 3:8-11.)

V. 19-21. It is probable, that the Jews who returned from their captivity had observed the passover, before the temple was finished; but not in so regular and solemn a manner, as at this time. (Notes, 2 Chr. 30:35.)—Separated. (21) Including such as had been fully proselyted to their religion.

V. 22. Of Assyria, &c.] Darius, reigning over the country of Assyria, is here called "the king of Assyria;" though the Persian monarchy had succeeded to the monarchies both of Assyria and Babylon.—The pious acknowledgment of God in all these transactions, as influencing the king to be kind to the Jews, and as thus making them joyful, is highly rational: though it has now almost sunk into disuse, even among professed Christians! (Notes, 7:27, 28. 2 Kings 5:1. Prov. 21:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. Nothing but impartial and diligent investigation can give truth and innocence a decided advantage against lies, malice, and perjury: and much injustice may be committed merely through the indolence and inattention of magistrates.—Enmity or rapacity often intercepts the favours which were intended for the people of God: but when his plan requires the interposition of princes, he can easily dispose them to use all diligence, to exert their authority, and to expend their treasures, in supporting his cause; and, for a time, these things have often been done by those who would not give him their hearts, and never became his true worshippers! (Note, 2 Cor. 8:1-5.)—Did kings know their true interests, even in this world, they would support the worship of God, and give liberty and protection to his people, that

CHAPTER VII.

Esra's genealogy from Aaron, 1-5. He goes up to Jerusalem, 6-10. A copy of Artaxerxes's favourable commission to him, 11-26. He blesses God for putting this into the king's heart, 27, 28.

NOW after these things, in the reign of ^aArtaxerxes king of Persia, ^bEsra the son of ^cSeraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of ^dHilkiah,

2 The son of Shallum, the son of ^eZadok, the son of Ahitub,

3 The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth,

4 The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,

5 The son of Abishua, the son of ^fPhinehas, the son of ^gEleazar, the son of Aaron the ^hchief priest :

6 This Esra went up from Babylon; and he was ⁱa ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given : and the king ^jgranted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.

7 And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the ^kNethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of ^lArtaxerxes the king.

a 12:21. b 1:4. Neh. 2:1. b 10. 8: 9: 10: Neh. 8:2-9. c 2 Kings 25:18. 1 Chr. 6:4-14. 8:11. Neh. 1:11. Jer. 32:21-27. d 2 Kings 22:4, 8. 2 Chr. 34:9, 15. e 2 Sam. 8:17. 1 Kings 2:35. f Ex. 6:25. Num. 25:7-13. 31. 6. Josh. 22:13, 31. Judg. 20:28. 1 Chr. 6:4, 50-52. Pa. 106:30, 31. g Lev. 10:8, 12, 16. Num. 3:32. 20:25-28. 27:2. 31:31, 54. Josh. 14:1. 21:33. 1 Chr. 24:1-5. h 2 Chr. 19:11. 26:20. 11:12, 21. Pa. 45:1. Matt. 12:52. k Neh. 8:4, 9, 13. 12:26, 36. Jer. 8:8. 1 Cor. 1:20. 1 Deut. 4:5. 28:1. Matt. 28:20. l Cor. 15:1. 1 Thes. 4:1, 2. m 1:1-26. n 9:28. 6:22. 8:13, 22, 31. Gen. 32:28. Neh. 1:10, 11. 2:8, 12, 18. 4:15. Is. 50:2. 58:1. o 8:1-14. p 2:40, 41. 8:15-20. q 1 Chr. 6:31. & 25:1-8. r 2: 42. 1 Chr. 9:17, &c. Neh. 7:45. s 24: 2:43, &c. 8:20. Neh. 7:46, &c. 10:28.

acceptable services might be rendered to his name throughout their dominions, and that many prayers might be daily offered up for them. We ought indeed to "pray for kings, and all in authority," whatever be their character and conduct; yet we are very apt to be remiss and formal in this service; till encouragement enlivens our desires and expectations: but when princes decidedly favour the cause of truth and righteousness, the hearts of pious Christians are enlarged with hopes, and they pray for them with greater earnestness. Their lives are then looked upon as a public advantage; and their persons, families, and undertakings, as well as their immortal souls, are daily recommended to the favour and blessing of the Almighty, by those "effectual fervent prayers of righteous men which avail much."—Such as interrupt and injure the worshippers of God, when protected by the civil government, are desperate rebels both against God and the king; and even tolerating laws will be insufficient for the protection of the harmless servants of God, if the executive power do not vigorously interpose, to punish such as *illegally* assault them. But the protection of God can alone be entirely depended on; and he will at length awfully destroy those persecutors who attempt to destroy his people, however powerful or numerous they may be.

V. 13-22. When the Lord turns the hearts of princes, to strengthen the hands of his servants in their work; inveterate enemies will be over-awed; indifferent persons will become helpers; the commandment of the king will be regulated by the commandment of God; and good designs, which had been long interrupted, will be speedily completed.—The revival of public ordinances, where they had been obstructed, should excite our rejoicing, because honour is thus ascribed to the Lord, and benefit accrues to the souls of men. Nor can the consideration of former sorrow, or of present meanness and poverty, mar the believer's joy in communion with his gracious God and Father.—When sinners are redeemed from the bondage of Satan, and separate themselves from the filthiness of their wicked connexions and practices; when they humbly seek the Lord, depending by faith on the atonement of the great Redeemer, attending on his ordinances, and observing his commandments, according to the duty of their place; they are children of captivity, who are set at liberty; and they shall be made joyful by his salvation; they shall be feasted at his table, and enjoy the light of his countenance, and he will be glorified in them, and rejoice over them to do them good for ever.—As nothing contributes more to the conversion of sinners, and to the purity and prosperity of the church, than the holiness and faithfulness of ministers; let us all unite in daily prayers to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that all those who bear that sacred character may *live and preach* according to his holy word, and rightly and fully administer his holy sacraments.

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1-5. Artaxerxes, here mentioned, was evidently a different person from Darius. (6:14.) Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, cannot be intended; for he reigned only twenty-one years; but Nehemiah, who was contemporary with Esra, mentions the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes. (Neh. 5:14.) Artaxerxes Longimanus, the son and successor of Xerxes, must therefore be meant.

8 And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which *was* in the seventh year of the king.

9 For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him.

10 For Esra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

[Practical Observations.]

11 ¶ Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Esra the priest, the scribe, *even* a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.

12 Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Esra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.

13 I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

14 Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to inquire concern-

t 11, 12. 6:14. 8:1. Neh. 2:1. * Heb. *was the foundation of the going up.* v. 6. Neh. 2:18, 18. x 1 Sam. 7:3. 1 Chr. 29:18. 2 Chr. 12:14. 19:3. Job 11:13. Pa. 10: 17. 57:7. y 6. Ps. 132. 19:7. 119:96-100. z Matt. 5:19. 7:24. John 13:17. Rev. 22:14. a Deut. 33:10. 2 Chr. 17:3, 9. 30:22. Neh. 8:1-9. Mal. 2:7. Acta 1:1. 1 Tim. 3:2. 2 Tim. 4:2. b 4:11. 5:6. c 6. Matt. 23:13. Mark 7:13. d 1 Kings 4:24. 20:1. Is. 10:8. E. 26:7. Dan. 2:37, 47. 1 Tim. 6:15. Rev. 17:14. 19:16. f Or, *a perfect scribe of the law of the God of heaven, peace, &c.* e 4: 10, 11, 17. f 13:13. 6:1. 2 Chr. 30:5. E. 5:15. 9:14. Pa. 148:6. g 1:3. Pa. 110: 3. Phil. 2:13. Rev. 22:17. h Chal. *from before.* h E. 1:14.

and the seventh year of his reign was no less than seventy-nine years after the proclamation of Cyrus. The temple had been finished, and its worship restored within about twenty years: and nothing very memorable occurred during the subsequent fifty-nine or sixty years.—In all probability Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Haggai, and Zechariah were dead before this time; and the civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews remained very unsettled, until this commission was granted to Esra. (Note, Dan. 9:25-27.) Esra, was the son, that is, the descendant of Seraiah, who had been dead above one hundred and thirty years. (2 Kings 25:18, 21.) Many other persons are omitted in this abbreviated genealogy. (Marg. Ref. Note, 1 Chr. 6:4-15.)

V. 6-10. Esra had no doubt been educated to sacred learning, and had made great proficiency in it. Having, therefore, laid aside other employments and studies, and taking great delight in the Scriptures; and having an ardent zeal for the honour of God, and an earnest desire of being useful to his people: he applied himself with great assiduity to obtain the suitable qualifications. He "gave himself wholly thereunto," and was careful to do, as well as to teach others, the statutes and judgments of God. (Notes, Deut. 33:10. 2 Chr. 17:7-9. 30:21, 22. v. 22. Neh. 8:1-8. Mal. 2:4-9.) Thus he became very eminent, and waited for an opportunity of rendering important service to his people; employing himself, probably, in the mean time, in instructing the Jews at Babylon, as circumstances allowed; and, being a man of learning, ingenuity, and reputation, the king became acquainted with him; so that Esra requested and obtained from him a commission to go up to Jerusalem, that he might regulate all things which related to the worship of the God of heaven.—The language used on this subject is well deserving of our most serious attention. Every thing is ascribed to God, for his is "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever;" yet the agency of instruments and second causes is properly noticed. "God was so favourable to him, as to incline the king to give a gracious answer to his petition. Bp. Patrick. (Note, 27, 28.)—The word *scribe* here used, does not merely signify one who wrote out copies of the law, but rather an interpreter of the law. The scribes mentioned in the New Testament, professed to be interpreters of the law; but they in general "made it void by their traditions." (Notes, Jer. 8:8, 9. Matt. 13:51, 52. 15:1-14.)—Many learned men are of opinion, and indeed with good reason, that Artaxerxes was the Ahasuerus, who soon after this married Esther; and that this commission, as well as that of Nehemiah, was obtained through her influence. (Note, Neh. 2:5, 6.)—Of the priests, &c. (7) Notes, 8:1-20.—He came to Jerusalem, &c. (8) Note, 8:21-23.

V. 11, 12. Marg. Ref.—King of kings. (12) The kings of Persia had many kings tributary to them; but this title seems to savour of ostentation, as if they had authority over all other kings. (Notes, 1 Kings 20:1. Is. 10:8-11. Dan. 2:37.) The original letter is here inserted in the Chaldee language.

V. 13. The Jews, who had not taken the benefit of the proclamation of Cyrus, seem afterward to have been strained from going to Jerusalem, till this decree of Artaxerxes again allowed them that liberty. (Note, 1:1-4.)

ing Judah and Jerusalem, 'according to the law of thy God which is in thy hand;

15 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem.

16 And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the free-will-offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem:

17 That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.

18 And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God.

19 The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.

20 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure-house.

21 And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily,

22 Unto a hundred talents of silver, and to a

125:26. Deut. 17:18-19. Is. 8:20. k 1:3. 5:8. 6:12. Dan. 2:47. 6:20, 26. 16:4, 8-10. Ps. 68:29, 30. 72:10. Is. 60:6-9. Rev. 21:24-25. m 6:12. 2 Chr. 2:6. 6:2, 6. Pa. 76. 2:135-21. n 8:25-28. o 1:4, 8. 1 Chr. 29:6, 9, 17. 2 Cor. 8:12. 9:7. p See on 6:9, 10. Deut. 14:24-26. Matt. 21:12, 13. John 2:14. q Num. 15:4-13. r Deut. 12:6-11. s 2 Kings 12:15. 22:7. t 22. u 6:27-30, 33, 34. x 2 Chr. 32:19. Jer. 3:17. y 6:4, 8. z 12:13. a 16:20. 6:6. 16:10, 11. b Chal. cura. Luke 16:7. marg. c Ez. 45:14. Luke 16:6. marg. d Lev. 2:13. f Chal. Whatsoever is of the decree. 13. e 16:10-12. Zech. 12:3. f 7. 2:36-55. g 14. 1 Kings 3:

V. 14. *Seven, &c.*] Seven princes of Persia having conspired against and slain the usurper Smerdis, and thus made way for the family of Darius which afterwards filled the throne; the Persian kings ever after had seven chief princes as their counsellors, who possessed peculiar privileges, and joined with them in all public transactions. (*Note, Esth. 1:13, 14.*) 'By this commission he gave him authority to make inquisition in Judea, whether every thing there was done conformably to the law of Moses. That is, he granted to the Jewish nation... a liberty to live by their own laws, and to judge all causes according to them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15, 16. (*Marg. Ref.*) The king and his counsellors set the example to the people, of giving gold and silver on this occasion.—*Canst find, &c.* (16) That is, all the money, which Ezra could obtain by the voluntary contributions of the people, whether Jews or Babylonians. (14-16.)

V. 17, 18. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is remarkable, that a heathen prince should lay no other restriction on Ezra and his brethren, in disposing of the treasures which they collected, except that they should be employed, "after the will of their God." The whole commission implied a chartered right to the Jews of living according to their own laws.

V. 19-22. (*Note, 6:6-12.*) 'This was a wonderful large concession, that he should have whatever he desired: and that they should not make him attend upon them, and wait long for it, but furnish him immediately.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Salt.* (22) As salt was offered with every sacrifice, Artaxerxes did not limit the quantity to be supplied, lest any of the stated sacrifices should be omitted.

V. 23. 'Here Jacobus Capellus cries out in a kind of rapture, "O! words to be written upon the palaces of kings in golden letters, and engraven on the minds of all the faithful with a pen of adamant! For they express an exceeding great sense of God, and of his supreme authority, and the regard that is due from the greatest kings and potentates, to his most sacred commands." The like is not easy to be found any where.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24-26. The king likewise exempted all employed about the worship of God, from paying any kind of tax; and as the Jews were far from affluent at that time, this was a very reasonable encouragement. He also authorized Ezra, as governor over the Jews who lived west of the Euphrates, to constitute magistrates under him, as he saw good. He allowed him to provide for the instruction of the people in the law of God, and even to proselyte the Gentiles; and he empowered him to punish all who proved refractory, according to their crimes.—David, Jehoshaphat, or Hezekiah could scarcely have done more for the Jews, than this heathen prince did: except as their examples, exhortations, and prayers would have concurred, to render these external helps and regulations effectual.

hundred measures of wheat, and to a hundred baths of wine, and to a hundred baths of oil, and ^{as}al without prescribing how much.

23 Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

24 Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Netinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.

25 And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thy hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.

26 And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.

27 Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem:

28 And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

28. 1 Chr. 22:12. Ps. 19:7. 119:98-100. Prov. 2:6. 6:23. Jam. 1:5. 3:17, 18. h Ex. 18:21-25. Deut. 16:18. 1 Chr. 23:4. 2 Chr. 19:8-10. 16:6. k 10. 2 Chr. 17:7-9. Neh. 8:1-3, 7, 8. 9:3. 13:1-3. Mal. 2:7. Matt. 13:52. Mark 6:34. 16:11. Dan. 3:23, 25. 6:26. m 2 Chr. 30:12. n Ex. 21:22. Lev. 20:13. f Chal. rooting out. Pa. 52:5. o 6:22. 1 Chr. 29:10, &c. Phil. 4:10. p 6:22. Neh. 2:12, 15. 2 Cor. 8:16. Heb. 8:10. 10:16. Jam. 1:17. Rev. 17:17. q Neh. 2:8. Prov. 21:1. r Is. 60:13. s 9:9. Gen. 22:28. 43:14. Neh. 1:11. t 14. Jon. 3:7. u 6:9. 5:15. 8:18. Neh. 2:8. 2 Tim. 4:17, 18.

V. 27, 28. This pious scribe, instead of expatiating in the praises of his patron, or boasting of his own services, took occasion to bless God for "putting such a thing in the king's heart." (*Marg. Ref. p, q.*) and for all the assistance and favour shown him, by the king and his counsellors! (*Note, 6:22.*)—Whatever external decorations might be at this time added to the temple; the provision made for the orderly conducting of its sacred worship tended most effectually "to beautify it."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-10. When the Lord removes some useful instruments, he raises up others to fill their places.—Those, who desire to be "scribes well instructed for the kingdom of God," must lay aside all inconsistent pursuits and studies, and have their hearts purified from sinful passions, weaned from earthly affections, and filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men. They must "prepare their hearts" to seek the word of the Lord; that they may first understand it, then practise it, and afterwards teach it to others. In these sacred studies they should be diligent and unwearied; and meditation, prayer, and a spiritual mind will render them delightful. Thus they will become "able ministers of the New Testament," "men of God, thoroughly furnished for every good work," ready scribes, apt to teach, bringing forth out of their treasures things new and old; and, beginning with faithfulness and diligence in a narrow circle, they may in due time expect, "according to the good hand of God upon them," to be favoured with more extensive opportunities of usefulness.—But knowledge, even of the sacred Scriptures, except it be reduced to practice, and communicated to others, will become useless and worthless.

V. 11-28. The servants of God cannot vary from their rules at the instance of the greatest princes, or "teach for doctrines the commandments of men;" but they may want the countenance and external assistance of rulers, in order that they may employ their gifts, and perform their duty, without molestation and to greater advantage. And when kings will grant them protection, intrust them with authority, and bear the expenses of their useful designs; and then leave them to conduct every thing by the rule of the word of God, and according to his will, as it appears to them and their brethren; they may without hesitation avail themselves of such assistance: nay, they may properly petition for it, when there appears a prospect of success. (*Note, 2 Chr. 30:12.*) But in whatever way great and effectual doors are opened to them, they should regard men only as instruments; and ascribe it to the power and goodness of God, if princes grant their requests; bless his name for putting such a thing in their hearts; and receive a commission from man merely as an external opportunity of executing a higher commission from God, according to his instructions, and under his protection.—

CHAPTER VIII.

The names of those who joined Ezra, when he was about to go up to Jerusalem, 1-14. Firstline no Levites, he sends to Iddo, at Casiphia, and obtains some, 15-20. They observe a solemn fast, to seek of God a prosperous journey, 21-23. Ezra intrusts the sacred treasures to the priests, 24-31. They arrive in safety at Jerusalem, 31, 32. The treasures, by weight, are delivered up; and sacrifices offered, 33-35. The king's commission is produced, 36.

THESE are now "the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.

2 Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom : of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel : of the sons of David; Hattush.

3 Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharoah; Zechariah : and with him were reckoned by genealogy of the males a hundred and fifty.

4 Of the sons of Pahath-moab; Elihoenai the son of Zerariah, and with him two hundred males.

5 Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males.

6 Of the sons also of Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males.

7 And of the sons of Elam; Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males.

8 And of the sons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males.

9 Of the sons of Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males.

10 And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josiphah, and with him a hundred and threescore males.

a 1:5. 1 Chr. 9:34. 24:31. 2:32. 2 Chr. 26:12. Neh. 7:70, 71. b 2:62. 1 Chr. 4:3. 9:1. c 7:13. d 1 Chr. 6:34, &c. 24:1-6. e 1 Chr. 31:22. f 2:3. Neh. 7:8. 10:14. Parosh. g 2:6. Neh. 7:11. 10:14. h 2:15. Neh. 7:20. 10:16. i 2:7. Neh. 7:12, 24. k 2:4. Neh. 7:9. 11:4. l 2:6. Neh. 7:11. m 2:11. 10:28. Neh. 7:16. n 2:12. Neh. 7:17. o Or, the youngest son. p 2:13. Neh. 7:18. q 2:14. Neh. 7:19. r Or, Zaccar, as some read. (Neh. 10:12.) s Ex. 13:11. Ez. 1:1. 3:15. Acts 16:13. r 21:31. t Or, pitched. s 2:7, 24. t 13. 10:21.

The liberality of heathen kings, in beautifying the house of God, and supporting the expense of his worship, reproached the conduct of many kings of Judah, and of all that reigned in Israel; and it will rise up in judgment, and condemn the avarice of many nominal Christians, who refuse to employ their superfluous treasures in supporting the worship of God, and propagating the gospel in the world.—Unconverted men may perceive, that "whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven," should be diligently done; and that the neglect of his worship will bring wrath upon kingdoms, and upon the persons and families of princes. But divine faith alone, as working by love and gratitude, is capable of producing unreserved, persevering, and delightful obedience.—The exorbitant and pernicious exemptions, which ambitious ecclesiastics once claimed, have rendered magistrates reasonably jealous in this matter: but when ministers are poor and diligent, there would be a great propriety in favouring them with such exemptions, as consist with the welfare of society, and leave them to attend upon their work without embarrassing cares and distresses.—The wisdom, which God communicates through his word, is peculiarly useful in the choice of magistrates: that they may be indeed "a terror to evil-doers, and a protection to those who do well." It belongs to civil governors to enact laws, and to proportion punishments to offences for the welfare of the community, the suppression of immorality, and the encouragement of those who endeavour to obey God and the king. And when wise and just laws are enacted, and impartially executed, it should animate us to proceed in our proper work with redoubled diligence and alacrity, in full confidence that "the good hand of our God will be upon us," and prosper our attempts. But the weapons of our warfare, as Christian ministers, are not carnal: faithful preaching, holy lives, fervent prayers, and patient suffering, are the means we must use, to teach the ways of God to those who know them not, and to bring increasing numbers into subjection to the obedience of Jesus Christ. (*Notes, 2 Cor. 10:1-6.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1-14. Doubtless Ezra took proper methods of making his commission known to his brethren, throughout their dispersions: but, though extraordinary favours were granted, and the city, temple, and land were now prepared for their reception, very few were willing to undertake the journey. Most of the Jews, who remained in those countries, were either settled to their minds, or were averse to labour and peril. They probably had synagogues, where they met for public worship and instructions; and they were sensibly indifferent about the temple and its service. (*Note, 1:5, 6.*) But God, on this occasion also, raised up the spirits of a remnant to accompany his servant Ezra.—They are

11 And of the sons of Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males.

12 And of the sons of Azgad; Johanan the son of Hakkatan, and with him a hundred and ten males.

13 And of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names are these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threescore males.

14 Of the sons also of Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabud, and with them seventy males.

15 And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava; and there I abode we in tents three days: and I viewed the people, and the priests, and found there none of the sons of Levi.

16 Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men; also for Joarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding.

17 And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia, and I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.

18 And by the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and his brethren, eighteen;

19 And Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty;

u 10:39. x 11. y 1. z 18. 1 Kings 3:11. 1 Chr. 12:32. 26:14. 2 Chr. 2:12. Prov. 2:6. Dan. 2:21. 2 Tim. 2:7. 1 John 5:20. s Heb. I put words in their mouth. Ex. 4:15. Deut. 18:18. 2 Sam. 14:3, 19. Jer. 1:9. 15:19. a 2:43, 58. 7:7. b Num. 8:22-26. 18:6. 1 Chr. 23:3-6, 26-32. c 22. 7:28. Neh. 2:8. Prov. 3:6. d See on 16. Prov. 24:3. Jer. 3:15. Dan. 1:20. 1 Cor. 14:20. e Num. 3:20. 1 Chr. 6:18. f 24. Neh. 8:7. 9:4, 5. 10:12, 12:24. g Neh. 3:17. 10:11. h 1 Chr. 6:1, 16, 19.

here numbered according to the chief of the fathers, to whose families they belonged. Some of the names of these families were mentioned before; as the descendants of those who stayed behind, seem to have taken this opportunity of following their brethren. (2:2-42.) Thus we read of "the last sons of Adonikam," as no more of that family remained in the land of their captivity. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) The males only are mentioned; so that the number including the women, was double, at least, what is here mentioned.

V. 15. Ahava seems to have been the name both of a town, and of a rivulet which ran into the Euphrates, near the town. The whole company must have lodged in tents, during the journey, as well as before they entered on it.—No Levites, who were not also priests, were found among them: for Ezra himself was a priest, and we read of two other priests who had joined them. (2) A considerable treasure had been given to the temple at Jerusalem, by a Gentile king and his nobles; and yet no Levites offered themselves to take the charge of it! (7:14-19.)

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is uncertain where Casiphia lay, or who Iddo the chief was. The Nethinims are called his brethren: and, if he were one of that company, no doubt he had been advanced, on account of his extraordinary qualifications or services. Some, however, suppose the word rendered "his brethren" to be a proper name; and that, translated Nethinims, to signify appointed. They therefore render the passage thus; "I told them what they should say to Iddo and Achio, who were constituted in the place Casiphia."—It may be supposed there was at Casiphia a seminary for the education of priests, Levites, and Nethinims, over which Iddo presided: where they had the free exercise of their religion, and had so comfortable a support, that they were not inclined to remove. "It is very probable they had their synagogues, (as they had afterward in their dispersion,) or other places, where they met for religious worship. For we find the people resorting to Ezekiel in their captivity, and him preaching to them the word of God, in many places of his book. (Ez. 33:30, &c.) And Ezra in all likelihood was an instructor among them, as Joarib and Elnathan also were, and Iddo to whom these were sent." *Bp. Patrick.*—Iddo, by reason of his age, or his employment, was not desired to go, but to send proper persons for this service, which the men of understanding would duly explain to him. (16) It seems, Ezra knew that subordinate ministers especially were wanted for the service of the house of God, and was therefore the more earnest in this matter.

V. 18. "God inclined their hearts to comply with his desire." *Bp. Patrick.* Sherebiah, no doubt, was "the man of understanding" here meant; and the passage should be read,

20 Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

21 ¶ Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, 'The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.

23 So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us.

[Practical Observations.]

24 ¶ Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them,

25 And weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered:

26 I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels a hundred talents, and of gold a hundred talents;

27 Also twenty basins of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold.

28 And I said unto them, 'Ye are holy unto the Lord; the vessels are holy also; and the silver and the gold are a freewill-offering unto the Lord God of your fathers.

29 Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them, before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord.

30 So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem unto the house of our God.

31 ¶ Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

32 And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.

33 ¶ Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God, by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them was Jozabab the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites;

34 By number and by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time.

35 Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he-goats for a sin-offering: all this was a burnt-offering unto the Lord.

36 ¶ And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river: and they furthered the people, and the house of God.

117. 2:43. 7:7. 1 Chr. 9:2. 1 Judg. 20:26. 1 Sam. 7:6. 2 Chr. 20:3. Joel 1:4. 12:14-18. Jon. 3:5-10. 1 Lev. 16:29-31. 23:29. Is. 58:5. Jer. 31:8,9. 50:4,5. m Ps. 5:8. 107:2-8. 143:8-10. Prov. 3:6. Is. 30:21. 35:8. 42:16. 49:10. Jer. 10:23. n Num. 14:3-31. Mark 10:13-16. Acts 2:39. o 1 Cor. 9:15. 2 Cor. 7:14. p 7:6,9,28. 1 Chr. 23:9. 2 Chr. 16:9. Ps. 33:18,19. 34:15,22. Is. 3:10,11. Rom. 8:28. 1 Pet. 3:12. q Josh. 23:16. 2 Chr. 15:2. Ps. 21:5,9. 30:11. Zeph. 1:2-6. 1 Pet. 3:12. r Neh. 9:1. Esth. 4:16. Dan. 9:3. Luke 2:37. Acts 10:30. s Jer. 29:12,13. 33:3. 50:4,5. t 1. Deut. 4:29. 1 Chr. 5:20. 2 Chr. 33:12,13. Jer. 29:12,13. Matt. 7:7,8. u 18:19. x 33:34. 1.8. 2 Cor. 8:20,21. Phil. 4:8.

y 7:15,16. * Heb. yellow, or, shining brass. † Heb. desirable. Lam. 4:2. z Lev. 21:6-8. Dent. 33:8. Is. 52:11. a 1:7-11. Num. 4:4-15,19,20. 7:13,24. —88. 1 Kings 7:48-51. 1 Chr. 23:28. 2 Chr. 34:14. b 1 Chr. 26:20-26. Mark 13:34,35. Acts 20:31. 2 Tim. 4:5. c 33:34. d 1 Chr. 29:2,3. Ps. 122:9. Is. 60:13. e 13:21. f 22. 7:9,28. Job 5:18-24. Ps. 91:9-14. Is. 41:10-14. Acts 25:3. g 18:23. Neh. 2:11. h 26:30. 1 Chr. 28:14-18. 2 Cor. 8:20,21. 1 Neh. 10:5. i Neh. 3:4. Urijah. j Neh. 8:7. m Neh. 10:9. n Lev. 1:6. 2 Chr. 29:31,32. Ps. 66:10-15. 116:12-19. Luke 1:74,75. o 6:17. Num. 7:27. p 7:21-24. q 4:7. &c. 5:6. &c. r 6:13. Is. 56:6,7. Acts 18:27. Rev. 12:16.

"A man of understanding ... even Sherebiah." (Marg. Ref.)

V. 20. The Gibeonites were appointed to the service of the Levites in the time of Joshua: (Note, Josh. 9:27.) and some think that others (perhaps a remnant of the devoted Canaanites, or of those who were vowed to the Lord by themselves or their parents, Note, Lev. 27:2-8.) were added to them, or placed in rather a superior station, by David and his princes, and afterwards by Solomon; and that these were, strictly speaking, the Nethinim.

V. 21-23. Ezra had collected his company at Ahava, in order to enter upon a journey of several hundred miles, which they were nearly four months in completing. (Notes, 31. 7:6-10, v. 9.) It lay chiefly through the desert: and, as they were incumbered with families and possessions, they could make but slow progress, and a feeble defence in case of an assault. They carried large treasures with them, which would invite the attempts of the Arabian freebooters, and others who infested that neighbourhood. (Note, 26,27.) In ordinary cases it would have been very proper to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen for their defence, which no doubt would have been readily granted: but Ezra, in order to impress Artaxerxes with a proper sense of the power and perfections of JEHOVAH, had confidently declared to him, "that the hand of their God was upon all them for good that seek him, and that his power and wrath were against all them that forsook him." Being therefore afraid lest the king should not at once understand the distinction between *using* means, and *confiding* in them; and lest he should be led to question the power, faithfulness, and goodness of Israel's God, or the sincerity of Ezra's dependence on him; he determined to travel without a guard, except that of the Almighty, being ashamed to ask any other, after his former avowed confidence in him. Yet, lest former sins should provoke God to leave them unprotected; and in order the more solemnly and publicly to put the whole company under his gracious protection; he proclaimed and observed a fast; that they might "afflict themselves before God," in deep repentance and self-abasement. Thus humbling themselves before the Lord, and seeking his merciful forgiveness, they besought him to be the Guide and Guard of them, their families, their substance, and also of the consecrated treasures. Accordingly he was entreated of them, their enemies were restrained or disabled, and they arrived unmolested at Jerusalem.

V. 24. Sherebiah and Hashabiah, before-mentioned, (18, 19.) were descendants of Merari, the son of Levi, and not of Kohath, Aaron's progenitor; and consequently they were not priests. Either, therefore, the persons specified in this verse were priests who bore the same names; or they were the above-mentioned eminent Levites, who on this occasion were joined in trust with ten priests in the care of the sacred treasures. (30)

V. 26, 27. These treasures are computed to have been at least worth a hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides the sacred vessels, which were very valuable. The far greater part of this was offered by a pagan king, with his princes and nobles!

V. 28-30. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1:7-11. 1 Chr. 9:27-29. Is. 52:7-11. 2 Cor. 8:16-24.

V. 31. As Ezra departed from Babylon on the first day of the first month, (7:9.) and having sent to Casiphia to procure Levites and Nethinim, the company set off from Ahava on the twelfth day of the same month; it is evident that Casiphia was not far from Ahava.—It seems Ezra was aware that there were enemies who lay in wait by the way, to assault, plunder, or destroy him and his company; yet he trusted in God to protect them, and they were accordingly delivered.

V. 32-36. Marg. Ref. Notes, 2:68-70. 6:6-12. Jer. 31:8,9. 50:4-6. Zech. 2:6-9. Acts 11:27-30.—Eleazar the son of Phinehas. (33) 'The names of Eleazar and Phinehas continued through many generations among the priests, because they were two very eminent persons in Aaron's family.' Bp. Patrick.—The children, &c. (35) The company that came up with Ezra from Babylon offered these sacrifices, as expressing humiliation for sin, faith in the mercy of God through the typical atonement, and gratitude for his late mercies: this they did, not only for themselves, but for their brethren of all the twelve tribes of Israel.—They furthered. (36) The kings, lieutenants, and the governors, having received the king's commission, (Notes, 7:11-26.) furthered Ezra and the Jews in their undertakings; yielding prompt obedience to the orders of Artaxerxes.

Practical Observations.

V. 1-23. While love of the world, and fear of the cross, induce most men to neglect the salvation of the gospel; they who obey the gracious call stand recorded in the book of life, and will be honoured by God himself.—When some of a family embrace the gospel, those who linger behind may pro-

CHAPTER IX.

Esra, learning that many of the priests and people had married heathen wives, expresses great sorrow and consternation, 1-4. He prays, and makes confession of sin unto God, 5-15.

NOW when these things were done, ^athe princes came to me, saying, ^bThe people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, ^chave not separated themselves from the people of the lands, ^ddoing according to their abominations, ^eeven ^fof the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, ^gthe Ammonites, the ^hMoabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

² For they have ⁱtaken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that ^jthe holy

a 10:8. Jer. 25:10-16. b 6:22. 10:10, 11. Ex. 33:16. Num. 23:9. Neh. 9:2. 13:3. Is. 52:11. 2 Cor. 6:14-18. c Lev. 15:3, 21-30. Deut. 12:31. 18:9. 2 Chr. 33:2. Ps. 106:35. d Gen. 15:16. 19-21. Ex. 23:23. Deut. 20:17, 18. e Deut. 23:5-6. 1 Kings 11:5-7. Neh. 4:3, 7. 13:1-3. f Num. 25:1-5. g 10:18-44. Ex. 34:16. Deut. 7:1-4. Neh. 13:23, 24. Mal. 2:11. h Ex. 19:6. 23:31. Deut. 7:6. 14:

baby follow; till sometimes, in answer to fervent prayers, and by means of zealous, affectionate, persevering endeavours, the very last are brought in.—Alas! that professed ministers of religion, who ought to take the lead in every good work, are generally so backward to labour, or venture, or suffer in the cause of God; and need to be stirred up by the example and exhortations even of their lay-brethren! But such as address them on these occasions should be chief men, or men of understanding and established character; lest they should be irritated instead of being persuaded. They must not, however, be left to their negligence: and their superior brethren, having given them a good example, may send or speak to them with more authority and effect than others can, and often those who were before inattentive, will profit by meek and faithful admonitions.—When ministers for “the work of the house of our God” are raised up, who are men of piety and understanding, we should acknowledge “the good hand of our God upon us,” and give him the praise; as we ought at all times to lift up our prayers for this blessing to his church.—It is an invariable rule, that “the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and wrath is against all them that forsake him;” and we ought to live in the habitual firm belief of this, and should not be ashamed, if called to it, to avow our confidence before the greatest monarchs upon earth: but we should be ashamed to act inconsistently with these professions, or even to appear distrustful of the Lord in the path of duty. On some occasions we ought to omit those precautions for personal safety, and refuse to make that provision for our families, which in other circumstances are very lawful; lest our weaker brethren, or inquirers, should be stumbled, and so our God should be dishonoured. We have therefore great need to ask wisdom from him, that we may know how to use, or to refuse, lawful things, as expedient, or otherwise: and we shall be no losers by venturing, renouncing, or suffering for his sake; as “it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes,” or in armed hosts.—We should “acknowledge him in all our ways;” but we may especially commend ourselves and our works into his hands, when we are simply endeavouring to serve the cause of true religion. Instead of anxiously seeking help from an arm of flesh, (to which we are all shamefully prone,) when unexpected difficulties or dangers obstruct our path, we should more earnestly and explicitly commit our way unto the Lord. In such circumstances, seasons appropriated to secret or social fasting and prayer, form the most effectual method that we can take; because they best prepare our own souls properly to receive the blessing, and most immediately lead us to seek the forgiveness and mortification of our sins; which are more formidable hindrances to our success than mountains, rivers, seas, or armies of hostile invaders or assailants. Indeed few enterprises, good in themselves, finally fail of success, which are begun and conducted in this way. And when we thus humbly beseech the Lord, he will be entreated of us; and by his good hand upon us, we shall bring all our undertakings in due season to a happy termination.

V. 24-36. They should be holy persons, who have the charge of holy things. Ministers are stewards of the most precious mysteries of God; and watch for the souls of men, every one of which is more valuable than all the world: and if any are wanting through their default, they will be required at their hands. The meanest of them, therefore, needs at least as much wisdom, vigilance, integrity, fidelity, and zeal, as the chief of those who carried the vessels of the Lord. And if any of us are intrusted with the gold and silver of the freewill-offerings of our brethren; or of the princes and affluent persons of this world, for pious or charitable uses; we should “provide for things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men;” that we may be able, when required, to give a punctual account of the whole to those, by whom, or for whom, we have been employed. A clear conscience, and an evidently upright conduct, are both comfortable and reputable: yet our whole dependence for the acceptance of our persons and of all our services, must be rested on the merits and sacrifice of our great Surety: through him we must devote ourselves, and consecrate our services,

seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, ^kthe hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

³ And when I heard this thing, I ^lrent my garment and my mantle, and ^mplucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and ⁿsat down astonished.

⁴ Then were assembled unto me every one that ^otrembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished ^puntil the evening-sacrifice.

⁵ ¶ And at the evening-sacrifice I arose up from my ^qheaviness; and ^rhaving rent my gar-

2. Is. 6:13. Mal. 2:15. 1 Cor. 7:14. 1 Gen. 6:2. Neh. 13. 23, 24. k 10:18-44. Neh. 13:4, 17, 28. l Josh. 7:6. 2 Kings 18:37. 19:1. Job 1:20. Jer. 13:24. n Lev. 21:5. Neh. 13:25. Is. 15:2. Jer. 7:26. 48:37, 38. Ez. 7:13. 18. 19. n Neh. 1:4. Job 2:12, 13. Ps. 143:4. Ex. 3:15. Dan. 4:18, 8:27. o 10:3. 2 Chr. 24:27. Is. 66:2. Ez. 12:4. p Ex. 29:39. Dan. 9:21. Acts 3:1. * Or, affliction.

to our reconciled God, and then walk before him in his commandments and ordinances, as we have opportunity and ability.—“When our ways please the Lord, he maketh even our enemies to be at peace with us;” and if he disposes a few of the great ones of the earth to favour his cause; numbers will afford their external assistance, not to please God, but the prince.—If preservation in peace and safety during our journeys on earth demand our tribute of grateful praise: what acclamations of gratitude shall we raise, when the Lord has conducted us safe through the perilous and wearisome pilgrimage of life, and through the gloomy vale of death, out of the reach of all our enemies, into the regions of eternal felicity!

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. After it was known that Ezra was come to Jerusalem, commissioned by the king of Persia, to be ruler over those countries, and especially to reform the state of religion among the Jews; some of the princes informed him concerning the gross misconduct of their brethren, which they had not been able to prevent. It seems there was still a remnant of the old inhabitants dwelling in the borders of the land: (*Marg. Ref.*) and the Jews being poor and exposed, opened an intercourse with them, and with other neighbouring nations; and intermarried with them, in violation of the law. This had always proved an introduction to idolatry; and their sin was the more aggravated, and threatened the worst consequences, because the priests, whose marriages had been carefully regulated by the law, (*Notes, Lev. 21:7-15.*) and the princes, to whom it belonged to enforce obedience to it, were ringleaders in the transgression; and thus, both encouraged others by their example, and deterred such as wished to enforce the law against the criminals. (*Notes, 10:18-44. Ez. 34:11-17. Neh. 13:1-4, 23-31. Mal. 2:10-12. 2 Cor. 6:14-18.*) They had not indeed yet proceeded to direct idolatry; but they were in the direct way to it, and already chargeable with doing in some respects “according to the abomination of the Gentiles.”

Holy seed, &c. (*2 Notes, Ex. 19:6. Is. 6:13. Mal. 2:13-16. 1 Cor. 7:10-14.*) They are called a “holy seed,” because of the covenant of God with them, which made them a peculiar people, separated from all other nations. It is likely those princes, who informed Ezra of this enormous practice, had endeavoured to reform them, but could not, because they were opposed by as great men as themselves. But we must not cast away all hope, though we cannot presently reform men’s lives: the time may come, when it may be done. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3, 4. When Ezra first arrived at Jerusalem, and was received with professed cordiality; when he saw the temple prepared, and the worship regularly conducted, with apparent piety; we may suppose, that he was joyful and thankful. But having been informed of these forbidden marriages, which threatened a speedy repetition of former crimes and judgments, he was affected with deep consternation and sorrow; and he expressed his concern for the honour of God and the interests of Israel, by the customary tokens, and even by such as were used to denote the greatest indignation, terror, or distress. (*Marg. Ref. 2 Kings 22:19. Note, Josh. 7:6-9.*) This seems to have been done publicly in some place of resort; and the matter being reported, many others became suitably affected, and trembled at the words of God, because of the transgression of Israel: (*Note, Is. 66:1, 2.*) and were prepared to join in humiliation before him, and in effecting a reformation.—The Jews are here called, “Those that had been carried away;” which might remind them of the captivity from which they were lately returned, and which had been brought upon them by similar transgressions.—It is probable, that Ezra observed a profound silence for some time, which indicated that the confusion and distress of his mind were too big for utterance. (*Notes, Neh. 1:4. Job 2:11-13.*)

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref. q. r.*) It is probable that Ezra chose the time of the evening-sacrifice, to go from the place where he first showed his alarm and sorrow; and that he went up to the house of God, (10:1.) because the priests at that hour, whilst the sacrifice was offering, burnt incense in the temple, and the people met together in the courts of it to pray. (*Note, Luke 1:8-10.*)

ment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God.

[Practical Observations.]

6 And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.

7 Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.

8 And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

9 For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

11 Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness.

12 Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever.

13 And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this;

14 Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?

15 O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

q 2Chr. 6:13. Ps. 95:6. Luke 22:41. Acts 21:5. Eph. 3:14. r Ex. 9:29, 33. 1 Kings 8:22, 39, 54. Ps. 141:2, 143:6. Is. 4:15. s Job 40:4, 42:6. Jer. 3:3, 24:23. 6:15. 8:12. 31:19. Jer. 16:83. Dan. 9:7, 8. Rom. 6:21. t Gen. 13:12. Ps. 38:4. Is. 1:18. 59:12. q *Or, guiltiness.* u 2 Chr. 28:39. Rev. 18:5. x Num. 32:14. 2 Chr. 29:6. 30:7. Jer. 9:39. 34. Ps. 106:7. Lam. 5:7. Dan. 9:5. 8. Jer. 1:4, 5. Matt. 23:30. 33. Acts 7:51, 52. y Lev. 26:14. c. Deut. 4:25—28. 28:15. c. 29:22—30. 30:17—19. 31:20—22. 32:15—28. 1 Sam. 12:15. 1 Kings 9:6—9. Neh. 9:30. z 1 Kings 17:1. Is. 9:12. 25:1. 26:1. 28:1. 29:1. 30:1. 31:1. 32:1. 33:1. 34:1. 35:1. 36:1. 37:1. 38:1. 39:1. 40:1. 41:1. 42:1. 43:1. 44:1. 45:1. 46:1. 47:1. 48:1. 49:1. 50:1. 51:1. 52:1. 53:1. 54:1. 55:1. 56:1. 57:1. 58:1. 59:1. 60:1. 61:1. 62:1. 63:1. 64:1. 65:1. 66:1. 67:1. 68:1. 69:1. 70:1. 71:1. 72:1. 73:1. 74:1. 75:1. 76:1. 77:1. 78:1. 79:1. 80:1. 81:1. 82:1. 83:1. 84:1. 85:1. 86:1. 87:1. 88:1. 89:1. 90:1. 91:1. 92:1. 93:1. 94:1. 95:1. 96:1. 97:1. 98:1. 99:1. 100:1. 101:1. 102:1. 103:1. 104:1. 105:1. 106:1. 107:1. 108:1. 109:1. 110:1. 111:1. 112:1. 113:1. 114:1. 115:1. 116:1. 117:1. 118:1. 119:1. 120:1. 121:1. 122:1. 123:1. 124:1. 125:1. 126:1. 127:1. 128:1. 129:1. 130:1. 131:1. 132:1. 133:1. 134:1. 135:1. 136:1. 137:1. 138:1. 139:1. 140:1. 141:1. 142:1. 143:1. 144:1. 145:1. 146:1. 147:1. 148:1. 149:1. 150:1. 151:1. 152:1. 153:1. 154:1. 155:1. 156:1. 157:1. 158:1. 159:1. 160:1. 161:1. 162:1. 163:1. 164:1. 165:1. 166:1. 167:1. 168:1. 169:1. 170:1. 171:1. 172:1. 173:1. 174:1. 175:1. 176:1. 177:1. 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V. 6. Ezra was not personally guilty in this matter: but he spake and acted, as the representative and the mouth of the whole people; being a member, and in some respects the head, of that body which had thus violated the covenant of God. (Notes, Dan. 9:3—20.) He came to establish the civil and ecclesiastical state of the nation, "according to the good hand of his God upon him;" and he was ashamed and blushed, when he considered the rebellious and ungrateful conduct of that people, whose cause he had to plead continually before the Lord. Indeed the former crimes of Israel were like an inundation, which being swelled by their present transgressions, would flow even over their heads, and entirely overwhelm them: or they formed an enormous pile, which, increasing by continual accessions of presumptuous rebellion, reached even to the heavens, to call down the vengeance of God upon them. The people it may be supposed, persuaded themselves, that as they were free from idolatry, and adhered to the worship at the temple, all was very well and commendable among them; that their deviations as to these marriages were excusable, if not justifiable by necessity or policy; and that on the whole they might expect the favour and protection of God. (Notes, Rom. 7:9—12.) But the vehement language of this eminent man was well suited to give them a very different view of the case; and to convince them that they were abominable in the sight of God, and in danger of his severest vengeance: and it loudly called on them all, especially the criminals, to humble themselves before God in deep repentance.—Grown up unto the heavens. This signifies, the high presumption and insolence of their wickedness. Bp. Patrick.

V. 7. (Marg. Ref.) As it is, &c.] Jerusalem and the temple had been rebuilt, and a remnant had returned from captivity: but the nation in general was in a dependent, impoverished, and abject state; in comparison with that prosperity which their fathers had enjoyed in the times of David and Solomon, and which they had forfeited by their sins: (Note, Neh. 9:36, 37.) and the bulk of it yet remained in a state of captivity and dispersion.

V. 8. A remnant of the Jews had now occupied Jerusalem and Judea for nearly eighty years; having thus had a revival for a comparatively little space from the state of national death, as it were, which had continued during the captivity: (Notes, Ez. 37:11—14.) and it might have been supposed, that the miseries of their ancestors would have effectually deterred them from imitating their crimes: yet in so short a time, they had made considerable progress in the very same path; and in case they proceeded in that way, a speedy period would be put to this reviving of their prosperity. (Note, Ps. 85:1—8.)—A nail given them in the Lord's holy place, seems to signify, that the rebuilding of the temple formed a sure ground of confidence in the Lord, whilst they adhered to his service, and rested all their hopes and dependence on him. (Marg. Ref. Note, Is. 22:20—25.)

V. 9. Notes, 7:11—28.—A wall, &c.] The temple, being

the pledge of God's presence among them, was as a wall, by which the Jews were effectually secured from their enemies; unless they provoked him to desert them. Jerusalem was not at this time surrounded with a wall. (Notes, Neh. 13:212—16. 3:41—3. Dan. 9:24—27.) The Hebrew word (גדר) doth not properly signify a wall, but a hedge or fence, such as were made for the folds of sheep. Whereby Ezra expresses, (as Huetius well notes), the singular care of God of them; who being "the Shepherd of Israel," had brought them back into their ancient folds, wherein he preserved them safe, even when they had no wall to defend them, under the powerful protection of the king of Persia. Bp. Patrick.

V. 10—12. (Marg. Ref.) What shall any one say for such a wretched people as this, who had no regard to their prophets, nor to Moses himself, who had charged them to have nothing to do with the people of Canaan? Can we expect less than utter destruction of this small remnant, when, after all the punishments he hath inflicted upon us for our sins, and his ceasing to punish us, and rescuing us in this manner from our captivity, we return to those sins which are so odious to him, because so expressly against his commandments? Bp. Patrick.—Nor seek their peace, &c. (12) The Israelites might seek the conversion of the heathen, or do them acts of common humanity: but they must not interfere with them, nor seek their peace or prosperity in the land of Canaan, whilst they continued idolaters. (Note, Josh. 23:11—13, v. 13.)

V. 13, 14. Both the judgments and mercies, experienced by the people, aggravated the guilt of their transgressions, which would now speedily fill up their measure of iniquity, and bring final and total ruin upon them, except they took warning in time. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15. Though the Jews had endured many and heavy sufferings, yet they had been punished less than they deserved; for they had broken their covenant, and merited utter ruin. (13. Note, Lam. 3:21—23.) Whatever therefore should hereafter befall them, the Lord would be righteous in his dealing with them: and if they were yet spared, it would be entirely the effect of his mercy.—Thus Ezra closed his address, without adding one petition to his humble confessions. He knew not what to say, to ask, or to do. He could say nothing to excuse his people; he was sure they could not stand in judgment before God. He dreaded the consequences; yet he had not given up all hopes. His own mind was affected, and his manner could scarcely fail to affect others: and by this abrupt conclusion, as one who was assured that the righteous Lord would do what was right, he referred the whole matter to him, to do what was good in his sight. (Notes, 10:1, 2. Josh. 7:5—9. 2 Sam. 24:12—14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5. Where a profession of godliness is made by great numbers, in a way which appears satisfactory to those who behold it as at a distance; the eye of God often perceives, and careful investigation may frequently detect, very

CHAPTER X.

The people weep with Ezra, 1. Shechaniah proposes that the people should disperse their venial wives, and encourages Ezra to attempt this; who requires the priests, and others, to engage by oath so to do, 2-5. By proclamation he assembles the people, who promise to comply, 6-14. The measure is regularly carried into execution, 15-17. The names of those who put away their strange wives, 18-19.

NOW when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.

2 And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra,

a Dan. 9:3, 4, 5. Acts 10:30. b Lev. 25:40, 41. Ps. 33:5. Hos. 14:2. 1 John 1:8. Neh. 9:38. 10:29, &c. 1 Heb. bring forth. 1 2 Chr. 80:12. in 9:4. 2 Chr. 34:21, 27. Ps. 119:59, 120. Is. 66:2. Ez. 9:4. n Deut. 7:2, 3. Josh. 23:12, 13. o Neh. 8:14. 13:1-3. Is. 8:20. p Josh. 7:10, &c. 1 Chr. 22:16, 19. Ec. 9:10. q Mark 13:34. r Josh. 1:16-18. 1 Chr. 28:10, 21. s Is. 35:3, 4. Heb. 10:24. 12:12, 13.

shameful practices: and those useful designs, which are undertaken with great pleasure and sanguine hopes, will seldom be completed without many anxious and painful sensations. Those who deal in frivolous, slanderous, and malicious informations, are justly the objects of public execration: but when a pious regard to the honour of God, and a disinterested concern for the benefit of the community, induce men to give information of gross and flagrant abuses, to those who are authorized to repress them; they perform a most useful and honourable service: and even princes may glory in such an employment, though the criminals will generally hate and revile them for it. (Note, Gen. 37:2.) Men, who pride themselves in being free from gross iniquities, often venture into the very path which leads to the commission of them: and even the miseries of sinners in the ways of vice fail to deter the spectators from copying their examples.—If we would, as the servants of God, “a holy seed,” devoted to him by solemn covenant, be preserved from the abominations of the wicked, we must separate from their society, and break off all connexions with them: and intermarriages, between his people and ungodly persons, have in all ages been a successful device of Satan, to prevail against the cause of truth and righteousness, and to produce apostacies, superstitions, idolatry, or impiety.—Too often, through the artifice of the enemy, they, who should warn or restrain others, sanction transgression by their own example, and by protecting the criminals from censure or punishment. Indeed formalists of every description make light of alliances or intimacies with those who are ungodly, and explain away the exhortation to “come out from among them and be separate:” but those who are best acquainted with the word of God, with the human heart, and with the history of the church, and who have the most affectionate regard for the souls of men, view the subject in another manner. They mourn over such transactions, and forebode the worst of consequences from them; and are constrained most solemnly to express their concern and consternation. But alas! the evils, which are allowed and pleaded for, by many who profess to be “the holy seed,” may well excite our astonishment as well as deep regret; and we ought to show our abhorrence of their abominations in the most earnest and decided manner. When this is done by those who are had in reputation for piety or wisdom, it will excite the attention of others, and cause them to tremble at the words of God, because of the transgression of the people: and this will produce greater watchfulness, lead to self-examination and humiliation, and subvert the purposes of reformation.—Silent grief and astonishment sometimes form the most expressive protestation against enormous crimes: and when men speak on such occasions, it may be more effectual to address themselves to God, than to the offenders.

V. 6-15. Whatever may afflict our hearts, we must not yield to inactive despondency, but arise from our heaviness, to spread our sorrows before the Lord, with humble and reverent devotion.—In confessing the sins of churches, or nations, all who form a part of them should bear a share: for every individual has, one way or other, added his transgressions to the aggregate of guilt: and all are interested in the event, and stand related to such as have committed those crimes, from which they have been preserved.—We should endeavour to affect ourselves and others with the greatness and heinousness of our sins: for often, when we think little of our transgressions, they have grown up even to the heavens, and are ready to overwhelm us with the vengeance of the Almighty.—National guilt accumulates from age to age, whilst children copy the iniquities of their fathers. Hence spring all our miseries: yet the Lord “punishes us less than our iniquities deserve:” and no past or present sufferings will exempt us from greater in future, unless “we repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”—Every respite, and every degree of former mercies and privileges, should be thankfully received: but they all say to us, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” Even the gospel and the ordinances of God, which are “a nail in his holy place,” on which to suspend all our hopes and interests; and which are given us to lighten our eyes, and to deliver us from our bondage, and to be a reviving to our souls, will only aggravate the doom of those who rest in them, and go on in their

we have transgressed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.

3 Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.

4 Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.

Is. 55:6, 7. Jer. 3:12, 13. 1 John 1:7-9. 2 Kings 11:17. 2 Chr. 28:10. 34:31, 32. Neh. 9:38. 10:29, &c. 1 Heb. bring forth. 1 2 Chr. 80:12. in 9:4. 2 Chr. 34:21, 27. Ps. 119:59, 120. Is. 66:2. Ez. 9:4. n Deut. 7:2, 3. Josh. 23:12, 13. o Neh. 8:14. 13:1-3. Is. 8:20. p Josh. 7:10, &c. 1 Chr. 22:16, 19. Ec. 9:10. q Mark 13:34. r Josh. 1:16-18. 1 Chr. 28:10, 21. s Is. 35:3, 4. Heb. 10:24. 12:12, 13.

sins.—In this world God afflicts sinners, yet spares them, that his goodness may lead them to repentance: he corrects, but he does not utterly forsake, his people: he extends mercy to them, by disposing others to be kind to them: yet his favour forms their best security and comfort. But “what shall we say,” when judgments, mercies, warnings, and respites leave sinners hardened in impenitence? The case is dreadful, and it may be expected that the Lord will be angry with them, until they are consumed without remnant or escaping.—Indeed every penitent, reflecting upon his own conduct, and comparing it with his mercies, will be “ashamed and blush before God;” his mouth will be stopped, and he will not know what to say. The law is holy, just, and good: obedience would have been reasonable and profitable; his guilt is undeniable and inexcusable: the wrath of God is dreaded and deserved; he feels himself in the Lord’s hands, without plea, or power to escape. “It is of his mercies that he is not consumed,” and if he perish the Lord will be righteous: his only hope arises from a belief of abounding grace, and he casts himself before the Lord with this only plea, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”—Even the believer, though he habitually “walks in newness of life,” often breaks God’s commandments, exposes himself to rebukes and chastisements; and must come ashamed, and confounded, and blushing before God, on account of his foolish and ungrateful conduct, and again adopting the publican’s prayer. Indeed every individual in the whole church, has cause to wonder, that his ingratitude, perverseness, and folly have not wearied out the patience of God, and brought utter destruction upon him. What then must be the case of the ungodly world around us? However, though the true penitent has nothing to plead in his own behalf, the heavenly Advocate pleads most powerfully for him; and prevails in behalf of all those who unfeignedly condemn themselves, and cast themselves wholly upon the mercy of God, through his atoning blood.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1. The exceedingly deep sorrow and consternation of so eminent a person as Ezra, who had come to Jerusalem, with so ample and favourable a commission from the king of Persia, and with such pious and beneficent purposes; with his prayer, and most humble confession of deep criminality, were no doubt speedily reported all over the city; and the high esteem generally entertained of his piety and wisdom, induced the people seriously to reflect upon their conduct, and its consequences: so that numbers, of their own accord, gathered around the governor, and united with him in lamentations and humiliation before God. And, the alarm becoming general, even the women and children joined the assembly in the court of the temple; probably fearing lest the wrath of God should immediately be poured out upon them.

V. 2. Shechaniah is not mentioned among those who were guilty: but his father and several of his relations are. (Note, 20-43, v. 26.) He spoke, however, as one of the offending community, though not personally criminal; and he would not be deterred from decisive measures by regard to his nearest relatives.—Probably he observed that Ezra was too desponding, and ready to conclude that reformation would be impracticable, where so many of the chief persons were concerned. (Notes, Num. 25:4-15.) But he perceived very favourable symptoms in the case. The people were generally convinced of their guilt and danger, and the most daring criminals would not venture to oppose the general opinion of the governor and the congregation. There “was therefore hope in Israel concerning this thing,” an effectual reform might be made; and then the Lord would turn from his fierce wrath against them, as “he delighted in mercy.”

V. 3. (Marg. Ref.)—To put away, &c.] This is not any where expressly commanded in the law; yet the spirit of the precept seemed to require it. (Notes, 9:1-4. Ez. 34:11-17. Josh. 23:11-13, v. 13. Neh. 13:23-30.) The prohibition of marriages with idolaters was given to prevent temptations to idolatry; and retaining an idolatrous wife formed a continual temptation. Divorces were permitted to the Israelites, by the judicial law, to prevent worse consequences; but the seducing of a man to idolatry was the worst consequence imaginable. This measure would also tend to prevent the contracting of such marriages in future

5 ¶ Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swore.

6 ¶ Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib: and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.

7 And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;

8 And that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away.

[Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, and the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.

10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives to increase the trespass of Israel.

11 Now therefore make confession unto the

t Prov. 1:5, 9-9, 15-23, 25-11, 12, 27-9. u 8. Neh. 5:12, 10-29, 13-25, Matt. 26: 63. x Neh. 13:5. y Neh. 3:1, 20, 12-10, 22, 13-28. z Deut. 9:18. Job 23:12, John 4:31-34. a 9:4. Is. 22:12. Dan. 9:3. b 1:1. 2 Chr. 30:5. c 7:26. Judg. 2:15. 1 Sam. 11:7. d Heb. devoted. Lev. 27:28. Josh. 6:19. e Neh. 13:3. Matt. 13:17. John 9:24, 16:2. 1 Cor. 5:13. f 7:9. Ezech. 2:16. g 1 Sam. 13:17, 18. Jer. 10:10, 13. h Heb. showers. i Heb. caused to dwell, or brought back. g 9:6. Num. 32:14. Josh. 22:17, 18. 2 Chr. 28:13. Matt. 23:32. h Lev. 26:40-42. Josh. 7:19. Ps. 32:5. Prov. 28:13. Jer. 3:13. 1 John 1:7-9. i Is. 1:

6 That which was done contrary to the law of God, was looked upon as null, and therefore these were accounted no marriages; and their children . . . were not to be a part of the family, but to be put away with their mothers. . . . Being educated in superstition, they might corrupt other children. *Bp. Patrick.* It is probable, however, that none were put away, but such as continued idolaters; and that they were provided for out of the estates of those who divorced them. It does not appear, whether the children were generally sent away with their mothers, or not; but doubtless such were provided for, as were not admitted into the congregation of the Lord. (Note, 10, 11.) Under the New Testament, the marriages of believers with ungodly persons are evidently sinful, and of very bad consequence; yet when contracted they must not be dissolved. The partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles is broken down; such matters are determined by the municipal laws of every country; and divorces, except for adultery, are expressly disallowed. (Notes, Matt. 5:31, 32, 19:3-9. Mark. 10:2-12. 1 Cor. 7:10-16.)

V. 4, 5. Shecaniah's mind being more composed than Ezra's, perceived that it was a favourable crisis for action: so that he exhorted him, instead of indulging grief and yielding to heartless dejection, to arise and exercise his authority, according to the commission of Artaxerxes; and assured him of the hearty assistance of himself and others in the arduous attempt. (Note, Josh. 7:10-12.) Thus encouraged, Ezra entertained hopes of remedying the evil, and immediately engaged all present, by a solemn oath, to concur in this design.—The commission given to Ezra, supposing a full leave to the people to live according to the law, enabled him to govern them by it, yea, to swear them to observe it; for he might do whatsoever he found necessary to keep them in obedience. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 6. *He did eat, &c.* Some render the words "Until he came thither, he had neither eaten bread, nor drunk water." He had no heart to take food, till the prospect of reformation opened to him; but spent his time in fasting, weeping, and prayer.

V. 7, 8. *Marg. Ref.—All his substance, &c.* (8.) That is, his estate should be confiscated, and put among the sacred treasures, and he should be treated as a heathen, and denied the privileges of a Jew. (Marg. Notes, Lev. 27:28, 29. Josh. 6:17-19.) 'In the Hebrew devoted; which signifies, that his goods were to be so forfeited, as to become sacred to God; and so incapable to be restored to the former owner, being put into the treasury of God's house.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Doubtless, reasonable excuses would be admitted: and the punishment was only inflicted on the refractory, and those who showed a determination to oppose the measure. Ezra was authorized to punish such persons more severely; (7:26.) but he was not disposed to put any one to death, if it could be avoided.

LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

13 But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither is this a work of one day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this thing.

14 Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.

15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah were employed about this matter; and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them.

16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter.

17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month. [B. C. 456.]

18 ¶ And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives: namely,

16-18, 56:4. Rom. 12:2. Col. 1:10. Heb. 13:21. k 9:1. Neh. 13:3. 2 Cor. 6:17. 1 Deut. 7:3, 4. 1 Cor. 2:12-14. m 3:4. Neh. 13:23. Ps. 78:37, 57. n 12-44. Matt. 7:13, 14. o Or, we have greatly offended. o Deut. 17:9, 18, 19. 2 Chr. 19:5-7. 1 Sam. 25:4. Deut. 13:17. Josh. 7:26. 2 Chr. 28:10. Ps. 78:38. Is. 12:1. p Or, be turned from us, till this matter be despatched. q Heb. stood. q Neh. 3:6. 10:20. 12:33. r Neh. 11:15. s Deut. 13:14. Job 29:16. t 3:1. Lev. 21:7, 13-15. 1 Sam. 2:22-24. Neh. 13:28. Jer. 23:11, 14. Ez. 44:22. Mal. 2:8, 9. 1 Tim. 3:11.

V. 9. *For the great rain.* The periodical rains, common at that season, seem to have been more abundant than usual, and as no building could be large enough to contain the whole multitude; this providential circumstance added to their distress, and seemed an indication of the divine displeasure. (Note, Jer. 32:3.)

V. 10, 11. (Marg. Ref.) As Ezra mentions only the strange wives, and not their children, some think that the children were retained, and brought up in the Jewish religion.—"Though Shecaniah propounded the putting away the children also; (3) yet it may be thought that Ezra, to whom the matter was referred, mitigated the severity of it; because we do not read any thing of them, but only of the wives, when he came to order what should be done." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12-14. The congregation at once declared their readiness to divorce their heathen wives, in all cases where it was determined to be their duty: but the difficulties of the business would require more consideration than could be given them, in their present situation, and by a popular assembly. They therefore proposed, that the principal counsel or senate should convene at Jerusalem, who might summon before them the parties concerned, from every city, together with the judges and elders of their cities; and so deliberately investigate and decide upon every case; that the business might be settled effectually, and in an unexceptionable manner.—It would be needful to determine, whether the women had been proselyted, either before or after marriage; whether they had relapsed into idolatry, or shown a propensity to do so; or whether they had given satisfactory evidences, that they had sincerely embraced the Jewish religion. These and many other similar questions must be resolved, before sentence was denounced; and this would take up much time. The proposal was therefore very reasonable: Ezra readily assented to it, and thus the business was peaceably and happily terminated.

V. 15. Ezra and the chief persons in the nation, as forming a council, decided on the several cases brought before them; and on this ground some think, that the four persons here mentioned, and no more, opposed the measure. The words indeed may bear that sense: yet the more general opinion is, that these four men were appointed by the council, to bring the business before them in due form.

V. 16, 17. The cases, brought before the council, were either so many, or so complicated; that though they separated themselves from other employments, to attend on this exclusively, they were three months in finishing it. This took place just a year after Ezra left Babylon.

V. 18, 19. No doubt Jeshua died many years before this transaction: (Note, 7:1-5.) but his descendants had set a very pernicious example to the people. They, however, were the first to confess and forsake their sin, and also to

of the sons of ^aJeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; ^bMaaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered ^aa ram of the flock for their trespass.

20 And of the sons of ^bInmer; Hanani, and Zebadiah.

21 And of the sons of ^cHarim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziab.

22 And of the sons of ^dPashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nathaneel, Jozabad, and Elasa.

23 Also of the Levites; ^eJozabad, and Shemei, and Kelaiab, (the same is ^fKelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

25 Moreover of Israel: of the sons of ^gParosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.

26 And of the sons of ^hElam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Elijah.

27 And of the sons of ⁱZattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabab, and Aziza.

^x See on 2:2. 3:2. 5:2. 1 Chr. 6:14,15. Neh. 12:10. Hag. 1:1. Zech. 8:1. Joshua. ^y Neh. 8:4,7. ^z 2 Kings 10:15. 1 Chr. 29:24. 2 Chr. 30:8. Marg. 1 am. 5:6. Gal. 2:9. a Lev. 5:16. 6:6. b 2:37. 1 Chr. 24:14. Neh. 7:40. c 3:39. 1 Chr. 24:8. Neh. 7:42. d 2:38. 1 Chr. 9:12. Neh. 7:41. e 9:33. Neh. 11:16. f Neh. 10:10. g 2:3. Neh. 7:8. h 2:2,7,31. 8:7. Neh. 7:12,34. 12.

present a trespass-offering on that account; 'which some think all the rest made after their example.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.)*

V. 20—43. *Marg. Ref.—Jehiel. (26) Note, 2.* 'This was Shechaniah's father; though his father and kindred were guilty of this crime, which Ezra bewailed, he did not stick to speak his mind how it ought to be punished. An admirable example of zealous integrity.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 44. Providence had so ordered it, that not many of the people had children by their heathen wives. Thus the separation was more easily effected; and at the same time it was a token of the divine disapprobation of such marriages.—Perhaps these were the principal persons who were criminal; for all circumstances combine to induce an opinion, that a far greater number were concerned than those here expressed by name.—Ezra continued nearly twelve years after this in authority at Jerusalem, no doubt zealously labouring to promote a revival of true religion. And in many ways he established the ecclesiastical state of the Jews: though he seems not to have been so well qualified as his successor Nehemiah, to attend to the civil government, to defend the city and state against enemies and invaders, and to effect outward reformation by the authority of the magistrate. Accordingly he is introduced in the ensuing book, as well employed in his proper line, though superseded by Nehemiah in his civil authority. (*Notes, 1 Sam. 12:23. Neh. 8:1—8.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8. Genuine humiliation before God, and sorrow for sin, always produce "works meet for repentance." Yet they who are greatly affected with the view of the evil and aggravation of their own sins, or those of the community to which they belong, are in danger of being "swallowed up by overwhelming sorrow," and so discouraged from present duty. In this case the grounds of hope should be pointed out to them; and so rich is the mercy of God through the great Redeemer, that there is always encouragement for those who are willing to accept of his salvation: and when the most atrocious criminals humbly mourn on account of their sins, and tremble at his word, there is good reason to expect that they will obey his commands.—In order to affect others with godly sorrow and hatred of sin, or holy love and gratitude, we must ourselves be greatly affected: for evident earnestness in these important concerns is far more impressive upon the mind, by a kind of holy sympathy, than the most laboured eloquence or reasoning. Indeed the effect of such earnestness frequently bears a proportion to the rank, reputation, piety, or wisdom of him who is thus affected: so that the silent grief and contrition, or the humble prayers and confessions of one eminent person may, by the blessing of God, excite serious alarms and inquiries among great multitudes. These are critical seasons, and call for decision in proposing and executing measures of extensive and durable usefulness. Yet vehement passions in those to whom great concerns belong,

28 'Of the sons also of ^jBebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

29 And of the sons of ^kBani; Mesai, Ilam, Maluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.

30 And of the sons of ^lPahath-moab; Adna, and Chelai, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 And of the sons of ^mHarim; Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Maluch, and Shemariah.

33 Of the sons of ⁿHashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabab, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

34 Of the sons of ^oBani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau,

38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,

39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,

40 'Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

43 Of the sons of ^pNebo; Jeiel, Matithiah, Zabab, Zebina, Jadai, and Joel, Benaiah.

44 All these had taken ^qstrange wives: and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

k 2:8. Neh. 7:13. 12:11. 8:11. Neh. 7:16. m 2:10. Neh. 7:15. Binnui. n Neh. 10:4. o 2:8. 8:4. Neh. 7:11. p 2:32. Neh. 7:35. q Neh. 3:11. Malchijah. r 3:19. Neh. 7:22. s 29. t Or, Machnadebai, according to some copies. u 29. Neh. 7:33. v Prov. 2:16. 5:3,20.

are attended by considerable disadvantages; and far inferior persons may give seasonable advice, suggest suitable encouragement, or propose adequate assistance.—We cannot too solemnly engage ourselves and each other, to renounce all interests, connexions, or indulgences, which are contrary to the law of God. And when leading men set the example, and then propose the same things to others, many may be prevailed on by conviction, fear, or shame: and thus opposition will be prevented, or rendered ineffectual.—Excessive sorrow, terror, and self-abasement; and a great engagement of heart about the things of God and the eternal world, indispose us to animal recreation: so that fasting then becomes a natural expression of our feelings, as well as a suitable concomitant of our prayers and supplications.—Fervent affections should not be allowed to subside, till our most beloved sins have been renounced; and we should "know no man after the flesh," when a revival of pure religion is attempted. (*Note, 2 Cor. 5:16.*)

V. 9—44. That which must be done, should be set about without delay: they are not worthy of the privileges of God's people, who will not concur in promoting obedience to his commandments: and those deserve severe punishment from the civil magistrate, who oppose his authority, especially when he is doing his duty according to the oracles of God.—When the frowns of Providence unite with the terrors of an awakened conscience, to distress the trembling sinner, he becomes an object of deep compassion: and though no favour must be shown to his sins, much tenderness should be exercised to his person.—The most effectual divorce from lucrative or beloved sins, is generally preceded by examination and deliberation: for that which is hastily resolved, seldom proves durable.—Cases, at first sight similar, upon mature investigation appear very different: and in correcting abuses, caution and compassion should unite with impartiality and decision; that there may be no subsequent cause for reasonable complaint.—When sin is repented of and forsaken, God will mercifully forgive: but the blood of Christ, our Sin-offering, is the only atonement which takes away the guilt of it.—No apparent repentance, amendment, or restitution, will benefit those who reject this propitiation; for their self-dependence proves them still unhumiliated.—It is peculiarly afflicting to a pious mind, (though, alas! exceedingly common), to see those who fill up the most important stations in society, or the most sacred offices in the church, and who are related to the most excellent persons, leading the way, and setting the example, in the most evident violation of the divine law! But when they confess and forsake their sins, avowing publicly their dependence on the atoning blood of the Saviour; their pattern in these respects may in some measure counterbalance the effects of their former misconduct: and all the names which are written in the book of life, are those of penitent believing sinners; not of the self-righteous who think that they have no need of repentance.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

This book resumes the history of the Jews, about twelve years after the close of the book of Ezra; and contains the latest canonical records of the nation till the days of Christ; reaching down to about a hundred and ten years after the captivity. It was evidently written by Nehemiah himself, who throughout speaks in the first person; and probably it was received among the canonical Scriptures by Ezra and his assistants or successors.—Nehemiah, a Jew, the cupbearer to Artaxerxes king of Persia, hearing of the distressed state of his countrymen; in great affliction petitions him for leave to go up to Jerusalem as governor, with a commission to rebuild the walls, and to provide for the security and the prosperity of his people. Having obtained his request, he executes his commission for twelve years with great success. After which he returns to Artaxerxes, but at length comes back to Jerusalem; and employs various measures to promote the prosperity of the Jews, and the reformation of abuses.—The frequent devout ejaculations with which the narrative is interrupted, are peculiar to this pious writer: and his zeal, activity, and disinterestedness are well worthy of imitation; especially by those employed in arduous undertakings, for the good of the church or the community.—This book has many internal proofs of divine inspiration, and always has been considered by the Jews as a part of their sacred Scriptures, and indeed as a continuation of the book of Ezra: it does not, however, seem to contain any prophecies, nor is it explicitly referred to in the New Testament.

B. C. 446.

CHAPTER I.

Nehemiah, being informed of the afflicted state of the Jews, mourns, fasts and prays, 1-4. His prayer, 5-11.

THE words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chislew, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,

2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

4 ¶ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

[Practical Observations.]

5 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day

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and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

a10:1. b Ezra 10:9. Zech. 7:1. c Ezra 7:7. d Eath. 1:2. 3:15. Dan. 8:2. e 7:2. f Pa. 122:6-9. 137:5,6. g Ezra 9:8,9,14. Jer. 44:14. Ez. 6:9. 7:16. 24:26,27. h 7:6. 11:3. i Ezra 2:1. 6:8. Eath. 1:1. j 9:36,37. Pa. 44:11-14. Is. 32:9-14. k 1 Kings 9:7. Ps. 75:4. Is. 43:92. Jer. 21:9. 29:15. 42:18. 44:8-12. 12:17. 2 Kings 25:10. Is. 5:5. Jer. 5:10. 39:4. 52:14. m 1 Sam. 4:17-22. Ezra 10:1. Ps. 69:10. 102:13,14. 137:1. Dan. 9:3. Zeph. 3:18. Rom. 12:15. n 2:4. Ezra 6:11,12. Dan. 2:18. Jon. 1:9. o 4:14. Deut. 7:21. 1 Chr. 17:21. Pa. 47:2. Dan. 6:1. p Ez. 20:6. Deut. 7:2. 1 Kings 8:23. Heb. 6:13-18. q 1 Kings 8:26,29. 2 Chr. 6:40. Ps. 34:15. 130:2. Dan. 9:17,18. r 1 Sam. 15:11. Ps. 55:17. 88:1. Luke 2:37. 18:7. 1 Tim. 5:5. 2 Tim. 1:3. s Ezra 9:6,7. 10:11. Is. 64:6,7. Lam. 3:39-42. Dan. 9:4,20. t 2 Chr. 28:10. 29:6. Ps. 106:6. Is. 6:5. Lam. 5:7. Eph.

2:3. u 9:29-35. Dan. 9:5,6. x 2 Chr. 27:2. Hos. 9:9. Zeph. 3:7. Rev. 19:2. y Lev. 27:34. Deut. 4:1. 5:1. 6:1. 1 Kings 2:3. Ps. 19:8,9. 119:5-8. z Deut. 4:5. 2 Chr. 25:4. Ezra 7:6. Dan. 9:11,13. Mal. 4:4. a Ps. 119:49. Luke 1:72. b Lev. 23:33. Deut. 4:25-27. 28:64. 32:26-28. 1 Kings 9:6,7. c Lev. 26:40-42. Deut. 4:29-31. 30:2-5. Jer. 29:11-13. d 1 Chr. 16:35. Pa. 106:47. Jer. 31:10. 32:37. Matt. 24:31. e Jer. 3:14. Ez. 39:24. f Deut. 12:5,21. 1 Kings 9:3. Ezra 6:12. g Ez. 32:11. Deut. 9:25. Is. 63:16-19. 64:9. h Ez. 15:13. Deut. 15:15. Ps. 74:2. i Ez. 6:1. 13:9. Ps. 136:12. Dan. 9:15. k See on 6. Pa. 130:2. l 1 Prov. 1:29. Is. 26:8,9. Heb. 13:18. m 2:8. Gen. 32:11,28. 43:14. Ezra 1:1. 7:6,27,28. Prov. 21:1. n 2:1. Gen. 40:2,9-13,21,23. 41:9.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1. This book is here called, "The words," (or, as it may be rendered, "The actions,") of Nehemiah; that is, the history of the services which he performed to the Jewish church and state.—It is uncertain to what tribe or family Nehemiah belonged, though tradition records that he was of the tribe of Judah.—His father Hachaliah seems to have obtained a settlement in the city of Shushan, or Susa, the capital of Persia, where the kings had a royal palace; and thus his son Nehemiah became cupbearer to Artaxerxes. This was a place of great trust, honour, and emolument; and it was peculiarly desired by those who sought preferment, because it gave access to the king at those seasons of hilarity, when men are most disposed to grant favours.—Nehemiah was cupbearer to the same Artaxerxes who before commissioned Ezra. (Note, Ezra 7:1-5.)—The month Chislew coincides with part of our November and part of December.—*Twentieth year.* 2:1. Ezra 7:8.

V. 2. It is supposed, that Hanani, the brother of Nehemiah, and some other Jews, came to Shushan, in order to solicit help from the king against their enemies. (Note, 7:2,3.)—Nehemiah's station in the Persian court had hitherto prevented his going to Jerusalem: but he was an eminently godly man, and deeply concerned about the city and temple of God, and the condition of his brethren in Judea.

V. 3. Ezra's commission, and his attention, had chiefly respected the state of religion, and the re-establishment of the affairs of the Jewish church: and he was not empowered or enabled to fortify the city, or to repel the hostile attempts of the enemies of his people. It is supposed, that the Sama-

ritans, and other adversaries, not only hated the true religion, but were provoked at being dispossessed, by the return of the Jews, from the lands which they had seized upon; and as these returned Jews were but a remnant, compared with the whole nation, and in an unsettled situation, they were unable to defend themselves. The seat of government was very distant; the king's lieutenants were in general unfavourable; and probable the king never heard a full account of the injuries done them.—Either the walls had not been at all built after the captivity; or their enemies had thrown them down again, and burnt the gates with fire: and being thus defenceless and exposed, they were also insulted and reproached for their confidence in God.—Jerusalem lay without any walls or gates to defend it from injuries. . . . It was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, and the walls beaten down; therefore their meaning is, that the walls and gates lay as the Chaldeans left them, after that devastation, and were not repaired, though the temple was built again.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4. Nehemiah seems, immediately on hearing the afflicted state of his brethren, to have conceived the design of going to their relief, if he could obtain permission and assistance from the king his patron. But his first application was to that God, in whose hand are the hearts of kings. He therefore spent some days in mourning over the affliction of his people, and in humbling himself before God by fasting and prayer, in order to find mercy from him, and success in his undertaking. (Notes, Ezra 9:3,4. Dan. 9:2,3.)

V. 5-11. In the prayer here recorded, which probably formed the substance of Nehemiah's constant supplications

CHAPTER II.

Artaxerxes, observing Nehemiah and before him, asks the cause, 1, 2. Nehemiah is afraid, assigns the reason, prays, petitions the king, and obtains authority to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, 3-8. He delivers the king's letters to the governors beyond the river; the enemies of the Jews are much grieved; and he arrives at Jerusalem, 9-11. He examines the state of the walls secretly by night, 12-16. He encourages the Jews to build, 17, 18. The scorn and menaces of their enemies, and his answer, 19, 20.

AND it came to pass in the month *Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence.

a Math. 3:7. b 1:1. Ezra 7:7. c 1:11. Gen. 40:11, 21. d Gen. 40:7. e Prov. 15:13. f 1 Kings 1:31. Dan. 2:4. 9:9. 5:10. 6:21. g 1:3. Ps. 102:14. 137:6.

day and night, he adored the greatness and terrible nature of God, and his covenanted mercy to his people; (*Notes, 1 Kings 8:23, 24. Dan. 9:4. Luke 1:67-75. Heb. 6:13-15.*) thus acknowledging that if they had not provoked him to anger, by their numerous and heinous crimes; their enemies, instead of triumphing over them, would have experienced his terrible power fighting for them. But alas! Nehemiah was constrained to confess, that both the people in general, and he himself, and his father's house, were deeply guilty, and by dealing very *corruptly*, (that is, perversely, ungratefully, and deceitfully,) had given the Lord just cause to leave them in the hands of their adversaries. Yet, while he justified God in the miseries of his people, he expressed a confidence in his mercies. The nation of Israel alone professed to worship and serve the God of heaven: he had forewarned them, that if they transgressed, he would scatter them abroad among the nations; but he had also repeatedly and expressly promised, that if they returned to him, and obeyed his commandments, he would gather them again to their own land, and to his chosen city. (*Notes, Lev. 26:31-45. Deut. 4:25-31. Dan. 9:5-16.*) Now many of those, who had gone up to Jerusalem, were turned to the Lord, and "desired to fear his name:" and it might be hoped that numbers even of those, who remained in other countries, were truly penitent and uprightly obedient; among whom Nehemiah was conscious he was one. And as God had already done great things, both in former ages, and lately, in redeeming and delivering his people from their enemies; he trusted that he would compassionately hear his prayer, and the prayers of all those who were pleading with him in that behalf. (*Notes, 1 Chr. 16:34-36. Ezra 9:5-15. Ps. 74:20. 79:6-13. Is. 63:15-19. 64:6-12. Dan. 9:17-19.*)—The particular request which he made on this occasion, is remarkable: he prayed that God "would grant him mercy in the sight of this man." The mighty monarch of the Persian empire would be addressed by his flatterers, as if he were more than man; yet Nehemiah knew, that in the sight of God, he was upon a level with his meanest subjects. (*Note, 2:4.*)—A deep sense of our own unworthiness is a good qualification for the mercy we beg of God. This Nehemiah expresses very sensibly. *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-4. Eminent men of God may sometimes be found in situations, where they might be least expected: his grace will be sufficient for them, wherever his providence has cast their lot: and it is seldom advisable to leave the place, where he has blessed us, without an evident call, or a substantial reason; even though we might remove into situations, apparently more favourable to our growth in grace.—The church militant is like the bush, which burned, but was not consumed, because the Lord was there: (*Note, Ex. 3:2. P. 7-12.*) afflictions and reproaches are its portion in this evil world; its enemies often presumptuously expect finally to prevail; and its friends through unbelief are sometimes ready to fear that they will. But in the crisis, some unexpected help is afforded, and again it revives and flourishes.—No prosperity can render the real believer inattentive to the cause and people of God. (*Notes, Ps. 137:1-6, v. 6.*) The prevalence of iniquity, the decay of piety, and the ravages of persecution, whilst infidels or idolaters insult and reproach, are like "a sword in his bones." (*Ps. 12:10.*) As a member of the suffering body of Christ, he will sympathize in its affliction; but this must not suffice. (*Notes, 1 Cor. 12:12-26.*) He will be inquiring, what service he can render to the common cause, by improving his talents and the advantages of his situation. If he have no more in his power, he may lift up his prayer without ceasing for the remnant that is left: and fasting joined with supplication may well express the believer's penitent sorrow for sin, sympathy with his afflicted brethren, distress to see the cause of God run down, and earnestness in seeking help from him: so that he has no relish for common comforts and enjoyments. Such fervent, humble prayers have always been honoured with signal prevalence and success. And these seasons of humiliation are peculiarly suitable, when we are entering upon arduous or perilous undertakings for the benefit of the church.—As the people of God all over the earth form one body; it is good to inquire how our brethren fare in the most remote regions, that we may at least know in what manner we may direct our prayers and praises in their behalf, in the most appropriate manner.

V. 5-11. In all our addresses to the God of heaven we must remember his greatness and terrible majesty; that we

2 Wherefore the king said unto me, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

3 And said unto the king, 'Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 Then the king said unto me, ^bFor what dost thou make request? ^cSo I prayed to the God of heaven.

Lam. 2:9. b 1 Kings 3:5. Esth. 5:3, 5. 7:2. Mark 10:51. i 1:4, 11. 2 Sam. 13:31. Prov. 3:6.

may worship "with reverence and godly fear," and in deep humiliation before him. His infinite holiness, justice, truth, and power are terrible to all the workers of iniquity; and they would be so to us all as fallen creatures, were he not also infinitely merciful; and did he not deal with such as repent and believe the gospel, according to a new and gracious covenant. For all have broken his perfect law, in numberless instances: and indeed all are disposed to reject, oppose, or pervert his gospel. And if, by his grace, we are now true believers; we have, even since we became so, "dealt very corruptly, in not keeping the commandments of God." He therefore is righteous in our sufferings, and merciful in all our comforts. We must still come before him as sinners, pleading his gracious promises, and craving to be gathered into his church, and finally into heaven, the place where he displays those glories, which here by faith we feebly apprehend, love, and adore. In this humble, supplicating manner, we may expect all desirable success. May he then grant unto us a spirit of simple dependence on his mercy and grace, united with zeal for his glory, and affection to his people. May we endeavour to improve every talent, as those who are waiting for his coming and never tarnish or defeat the success of our endeavours, by pride and self-confidence. And may our gracious God stir up those, to whom he has committed many talents, thus humbly and zealously to serve his cause, with faith and prayer; with self-denial, promptitude, and diligence; and with simple dependence on him and devotedness to him!—When worldly men would solicit any favours from kings or nobles, they spare no pains to obtain the interposition of those distinguished persons who have influence with them: but the children of God must seek to their Father, who could at once secure to them the assistance of all the kings upon earth, if good for them; and though other means may be used, yet "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth" most of all; and, "Grant me mercy in the sight of this man," offered in faith to that God, in whose hand are the hearts of all men, will do more to ensure success, in any good cause, than all our applications to nobles and princes, to support our petitions. (*Notes, 2:4. Gen. 32:28, 29. Ezra 7:27, 28. Prov. 21:1.*)

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. About four months passed from the time when Nehemiah made his inquiry, before he presented his petition to the king; for Nisan answers to part of March and part of April. (*Note, 1:1.*) It is probable, that his turn of waiting on the king did not arrive before this: and he could not come into his presence uncalled, except at the hazard of his life; (*Note, Esth. 4:1.*) but he could approach the King of heaven at any time, and doubtless all the while continued instant in prayer. Yet, when at length he attended on his office, his inward concern was visible in his countenance, which no doubt had always before been very open and cheerful: so that the king observed it; and, not perceiving that he was ill, seemed ready to impute his melancholy to discontent or disaffection. Indeed the words rendered "sad," and "sorrow of heart," might be rendered *evil*, and *wickedness of heart*. This excited great alarm in Nehemiah; and in fact these arbitrary monarchs were generally suspicious, in proportion to their tyranny. Lest poison should be mixed with their wine, they required the cup bearers to drink before them out of the same cup: and some conjecture that Nehemiah, being oppressed with grief, had forgotten to observe this custom. Had the least suspicion, however, been excited of criminal designs, the immediate torture or execution of Nehemiah might have been the consequence: for the Persian monarchs frequently, with little ceremony, thus treated those who had before been their chief favourites. He might also fear that he should fail of his purpose, as the king seemed displeased, and no favourable opportunity for his request was yet afforded.

V. 3. Nehemiah in answering the king, testified his cordial and loyal affection, by wishing the long continuance of his life and prosperity, in the customary manner. He perhaps meant the words likewise as a prayer for his salvation; but they were not generally understood in that sense. Thus 'God save the king,' as generally used, means no more than, 'Let the king live and prosper:' but the words, when duly attended to, contain a solemn prayer to God, for his temporal preservation, and his eternal salvation. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Nehemiah said nothing to Artaxerxes concerning the religion of the Jews: perhaps, he saw that he was more regardless in that respect than formerly; (*Notes, Ezra 7:6-28.*) or: he might suppose that the king would not attend to that subject

5 And I said unto the king, 'If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the 'queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? 'So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Moreover, I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber, to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me. [Practical Observations.]

9 ¶ Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, bit grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

a Ezra 5:17. Esth. 1:19, 5:4, 7:3, 8:5. 1 Ruth 2:13. 2 Sam. 11:22. Prov. 3:1. 'He' *margin*. m 4. l:11. la. 58:12. 61:4. 65:24. m 5:14. 136:6. o 9. Ezra 6:6, 7:21. p Ezra 8:22. q 17. 3:1, &c. r 8:7. 7:2. s 18. Gen. 32:28. Ezra 5:6, 6:22. 7:6, 37:28. Prov. 21:1. la. 66:14. Dan. 1:8. Act. 7:10. 26:22. 24. &c. n 16. 7. v Ezra 8:22. 2:18. 4:1—3:7. 5:11. y la. 15:5. Jer. 48:5, 31. z 17:4. 3:22. Ec. 10:7. a 13:1. b Num. 22:34. Ps. 112:10. 122:6—9. Prov. 27:4. Ec. 25:8—8. Mic. 7:9, 10, 16, 17. Act. 4:2. 5:24. 19:26, 27. c Ezra 4:

so candidly, from a young courtier, as he had done from an aged priest and learned scribe of the law of God: and some think that he was induced to wave it, because the company present were unfavourable. He therefore represented the afflicted, defenceless state of that city, where his ancestors lay interred; and how could he but be grieved that their sepulchres should be so disgraced, or how avoid sympathizing with his distressed countrymen?—Arguments of this kind the men of the world well understand; but alas! they little feel the force of those which are infinitely more important. Some infer from the expression "my fathers' sepulchres," that Nehemiah was of the tribe of Judah; but his ancestors might have been buried in Jerusalem, if he were of the tribe of Benjamin, or of Simeon.

V. 4. Nehemiah could not, in this emergency, retire for prayer; but he lifted up his heart in a silent ejaculation to "the God of heaven," to prosper him, according to the tenor of those prayers which he had for a long time been presenting before him; and perhaps the concluding part of the prayer contained in the preceding chapter was secretly offered at this time.—"Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant *this day*, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." "In his mind he silently beseeched God to guide his tongue, and to bow the king's heart to grant his request." *Bp. Patrick*. "The God of heaven" seems to have become the usual style, so to speak, in addressing the Lord, among the returned captives; perhaps as contrasting him with the idols of the regions in which they had sojourned. (20. 1:4, 5. Ezra 5:11, 12. *Note*, Jer. 10:11.)

V. 5, 6. It is probable, that Esther was the queen who was present at this time, and that she seconded Nehemiah's request. Perhaps he had been preferred through her interest, and that of Mordecai; and her presence seems to be mentioned, as a favourable and not a common circumstance, and as an answer to his prayers.—For Mordecai's advancement preceded the commission granted to Nehemiah several years. (1:1. *Esth.* 1:3. 10:3.)—The king was not willing to be long deprived of the service of one, who possessed his confidence and affection: and we may suppose, that Nehemiah obtained leave of absence for a shorter time than he actually continued at Jerusalem; but he either returned to obtain a new commission, or had it renewed in his absence by the special favour of the king.

V. 7. (*Note*, Ezra 9:21—23.) Ezra was a priest and a scribe, though armed with civil authority; and in consistency with his character and professions, he would not require a guard. But Nehemiah went to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and to defend the Jews against their enemies; and it was very consistent with his avowed design, to petition the king, that the governors should be ordered to escort him with proper military attendants, which would afford him protection, and add dignity to his undertaking.—The king likewise ordered him a guard, till he had crossed the Euphrates. (9) for Susa was beyond that river, further to the east than Babylon.

V. 8. 'I suppose he means the forest of Lebanon, from whence he might be furnished with materials for his building.' *Bp. Patrick*. The word (פרדס) is used only in two other places, (*Ec.* 2:5. *Cant.* 4:13.) where it is rendered orchard,

11 So ¶ I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 ¶ And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon-well, and to the dung-port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

14 Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.

15 Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.

16 And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

17 ¶ Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

4, &c. d Ezra 8:32. e Gen. 32:22—24. Josh. 10:9. Judg. 6:27. 9:32. Matt. 24:11. e Ec. 3:7. Am. 5:13. Mic. 7:5. Matt. 10:16. g Ezra 7:27. Jer. 31:33. 34:10. 2 Cor. 8:16. Jon. 1:16, 17. Rev. 17:17. h 15:3, 13. 2 Chr. 26:9. 1:13, 14. 12:31. h 3:17, 1:3. Jer. 5:10. 13:13. 2 Kings 18:17. 20:20. 2 Chr. 32:30. m 2 Sam. 15:23. Jer. 31:40. John 18:1. n 13. o 12. 13:4. 79:4. 89:50, 51. Lam. 3:45. 10:2—4. la. 35:3, 4. r 1:3. 1 Sam. 11:2. Ps. 44:13. 79:4. 89:50, 51. Lam. 3:45. 46. Ez. 5:14, 15. 22:4, 5.

and the word παράδεισος, or paradise, seems to have been derived from it, yet here it must signify a forest of timber trees. The palace here mentioned seems to mean the temple, or some of those buildings which surrounded it, or 'the gates of the temple'; for though the temple was rebuilt, much might be wanting in respect of the surrounding walls and gates. Nehemiah proposed to build a house also for the governor, and to do all other things, which might place his people in a more secure and respectable situation. (*Marg. Ref.*) The good hand of my God. (8) *Marg. Ref. s. Note*, Ezra 1:6—10, v. 9.

V. 10. (*Marg. Ref.*) Sanballat is supposed to have been a Moabite, of Horonaim, a city of Moab. (*Is.* 15:5.) Tobiah was an Ammonite, and had been a slave. Moab and Ammon were subjugated and carried captive by the kings of Babylon; but it appears that they had been restored, according to the predictions of Jeremiah. (*Notes*, Jer. 48:47. 49:6.) And it is likely that Sanballat and Tobiah (as well as Geshem the Arabian afterwards mentioned) were placed by the king of Persia in authority over their own people, and over the Samaritans, or other tribes in that neighbourhood, who were general enemies to the Jews.—Sanballat and Tobiah, however, were full of malice against them; and exceedingly grieved and displeased to find that one was come from the king of Persia to protect them from further injuries; with such authority from the king, and in such favour with him; as appeared by the letters brought with him, and the guard that attended him, and the diligence of the several governors, through whose provinces he passed, to serve him. *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, 19:20. 4:1—3. 6: Ezra 4:)

V. 11. It would doubtless soon be known, that Nehemiah was come with a commission from Artaxerxes; but he did not disclose the nature of his business, till he had made previous observations, and consulted with a few select friends, in whom he could place the most entire confidence.

V. 12—16. Nehemiah seems to have used every precaution to conceal his intentions, till he had obtained the unanimous consent of the people, and they were actually employed in the work; knowing that their enemies would attempt to divide or discourage them.—We may suppose that the moon shone, when he made his observations, and that he had provided skilful guides to accompany him in this survey. Yet even they, who afterwards presided and did the work, were not at this time consulted.—The account here given is well suited to show us the ruinous and defenceless state of the city, nearly a hundred years after the return of the Jews from captivity; and Nehemiah's personal survey formed a suitable preparation to his address to the people, and would enable him to obviate any objections, and prevent any misrepresentations, which might be made.—Nothing more is known of the several places mentioned, than what may be collected from the marginal references.—*My God had put, &c.* (12) *Marg. Ref. g. Note*, Ezra 1:27, 28.

V. 17, 18. The reader will note the poetry of the language used by Nehemiah on this as well as on every other occasion, which resembled that of Ezra. (*Marg. Ref. s. in v. 8.*) When he exhorted the Jews to arise and exert themselves in rebuilding the wall of the city: he showed them that the kindness of the Persian king to him, was the effect of the power-

18 Then I told them of 'the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. 'So they strengthened their hands for *this good work*.

19 But when 'Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and 'Geshem the Arabian, heard *it*, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? 'will ye rebel against the king?

20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, 'The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but 'ye have no portion, nor right, nor 'memorial, in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III.

The names and order of those who built the walls of Jerusalem, 1-32.

THEN 'Eliashib the high-priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded 'the

See on 8. t 2 Sam. 2:7. 1 Chr. 11:10, 19:13. 2 Chr. 32:5. Hag. 1:13, 14. Eph. 6:10. Phil. 2:13. u 10. 6:1, 2. x 6:6. *Gashmu*, y Job 30:1. Ps. 44:13, 14. Jer. 20:8. Mark 5:40. Heb. 11:35. z 6:6. Ezra 4:15-16. Luke 23:2. John 19:12. Acts 21:5. s 4. 2 Chr. 23:5. Ps. 20:5, 35:27, 129:6. b Ezra 4:3. Acts 19:21. c Ex. 28:29, Lev. 2:2, 24:7, Num. 10:10. Zech. 6:14. Acts 10:4, 31.

ful interposition of God in their behalf. Thus they were animated and emboldened to undertake the work.

V. 19, 20. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem, as determined enemies to the Jewish nation, soon got intelligence of Nehemiah's designs, notwithstanding his precautions; (*Note*, 6:17—19.) and they derided the efforts of the Jews, as if the work were impracticable: nay, they represented the undertaking, as an act of rebellion against the king; though they could not but know that Nehemiah acted by his commission! They intended if possible, to frighten, to disunite, and to dishearten the people, that they might abandon the undertaking. But Nehemiah only answered, that the God of heaven would prosper his servants: but as to their adversaries, they had no portion in him, no right to interfere; nor any memorial in Jerusalem, to prove, that either by birth, or by being proselyted, they were Israelites, as the Samaritans pretended to be. He therefore, very prudently, avoided all further communication. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, 10. *Ezra* 4:3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. Unavoidable delays, when employed in fervent persevering prayer, often forward the success of pious undertakings.—Cheerfulness is in general an ornament to religion; but there are seasons for mourning when grief cannot be concealed.—“The children of this world” understand the propriety of our grieving, when we are sick and in pain: when impoverished, bereaved, or disappointed in our temporal pursuits; but they cannot conceive, why the heart should be heavy, or the countenance sad, if no outward calamity has befallen us. Yet conscious guilt, the fear or sense of the divine displeasure, the afflictions of God's people, the prevalence of impiety, and the decays of religion, are far more reasonable and important causes of grief: under which no confluence of earthly delights can afford comfort. We must, however, expect that worldly men will ascribe such sorrows to melancholy, discontent, moroseness, or even some more criminal cause: and those, who are strangers to the believer's consolations, are apt to infer from his complaints, that religion is uncomfortable, and unfits men for social life. We should therefore in general conceal our grief, or disclose it only to the Lord and to his people.—The very persons, from whose favour many advantages may be expected, are also greatly to be dreaded. Inconstancy is connected with all the partialities and affections of absolute princes; and suspicions are multiplied in proportion as power is abused. They cannot confide in those, who do not, as they think, serve them from affection: but so many causes may induce courtiers to feign attachment, that they cannot but distrust at times even their favourites. Hence often arises the speedy ruin or disgrace of those, on whom honours and emoluments have been most lavished; without any cause, but caprice or groundless jealousy. “It is therefore better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes.” (*Note*, Ps. 118:9.)—A meek and modest explanation best tends to banish groundless suspicions. Yet we should study consistency with our character, professions, and relative situations; and consider those of the person we speak to; if we would behave “with wisdom towards them that are without,” avoid giving any needless disgust, and do important good to the church of God by their means.—We must not speak falchood: but we are not bound always to speak all that we think; when a part of it will best answer every useful purpose.—Ejaculatory petitions may be presented to the Lord in any place or company, and should be intermixed with every transaction in which a Christian is engaged. They neither supersede, nor are rendered unnecessary by our more stated devotions: and the habit of thus keeping up an intercourse with Heaven, is of peculiar importance and advantage. Indeed we ought never to engage in any pursuit, in which it would be improper thus to expect and seek the divine direction, assistance, and blessing. The Lord so orders every circumstance as may best answer

sheep-gate; they ‘sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the ‘tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

2 And 'next unto him builded 'the men of Jericho. And next to them builded 'Zaccur the son of Imri.

3 But 'the fish-gate had the sons of Hassenaah build, who also laid 'the beams thereof, and set up 'the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

4 And next unto them repaired 'Meremoth the son of 'Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired 'Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana.

5 And next unto them 'the Tekoites repaired, but 'their nobles 'put not their necks to the work of their lord.

6 Moreover, 'the old gate repaired Jehoiada

a 12:10, 13:28. b 12:39, John 5:2. c 12:30. Dent. 20:5. Ps. 30: t 10. Prov. 3: 6, 9. d 12:39. Jer. 31:38. Zech. 14:10. * Heb. at his hand. e 7:36. Ezra 2:34 f 10:12. g 12:39. 2 Chr. 33:14. Zeph. 1:10. h 6: 2, 8. 16:1, 7:1. k 21. 10:5 l Ezra 8:33. Uriah. m 10:17. n 37. 2 Sam. 14:2. Am. 1:1. o Judge 5:23. Jer. 3:5. 1 Cor. 1:26. p Jer. 27:8, 12. 30:8, 9. Matt. 11:29. Acts 15:10. q 12:39.

the prayers of his people. He turns their most distressing fears into grateful praises; he exceeds their largest hopes; and even those, who know him not, will be inclined to favour his servants, “according to the good hand of their God upon them.”

V. 9-20. The enemies of the Lord must grieve, in proportion as his servants rejoice, when those in authority, and endowed with suitable qualifications, are raised up to promote the cause of truth and holiness, and the welfare of his church: for the enmity of the serpent's seed against the cause of Christ is confined to no age or nation; it springs from hatred of God himself, and is irritated in proportion as he is glorified. But we ought steadily to proceed with our proper work, possessing our souls in patience, and uniting in our conduct, wisdom, and zeal, vigilance and courage, self-denial and activity. If we even attempt any thing good, in a proper manner, “God hath put it into our hearts.” But we should first carefully consider what is most necessary to be done, both in the concerns of our own souls, and in those of the church: and investigation will generally discover a great deal which needs to be rectified.—When matters are fairly proposed, and men in authority or reputation take the lead, and animate others also, the most timid and indolent may be roused and encouraged to action. But favourable opportunities should be seized: and those who would accomplish any useful design, to rescue the church of God from just occasion of reproach, must be strengthened to endure contempt, reviling, and menaces, as well as labour and hardship. “The God of heaven” will prosper his people, and clear their characters from aspersions, as well as deliver them from affliction: but wretched are they, who have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in the new Jerusalem, the city of our God! However, we should always be ready to give a meek and reasonable answer to objectors: and, blessed be God, even despisers and revilers, while they are warned of their danger, may be invited to cease from their opposition, and to be reconciled to God: that, after all, they may have their lot among his people, and not among his enemies.

NOTES.—CHAP. III. V. 1. It is supposed that “the sheep-gate” immediately communicated with the temple: and that the cattle for sacrifices were usually brought in that way, and the priests undertook this part, as most properly belonging to them. (*Note*, John 5:2-4.) Eliashib, the grandson of Jeshua, (12:10.) was the high-priest at this time, and he, with his brethren, either his near relations or the chief priests, the heads of their several courses, rebuilt this part of the wall at their own expense; and perhaps some of them on this emergency laboured at it with their own hands. Along with the gate, they builded a part of the wall on each side. (*Marg. Ref. d*.) This was the case, it may be supposed, in other instances where the gates alone are mentioned.—Of this part alone it is said, that “they sanctified it,” which may mean, that they began the work with prayer and concluded it with praise, and thus consecrated their service to the Lord, for the security of his temple and worshippers. (*Notes*, 12: 27-43.)

V. 2-4. (*Marg. Ref.*) After all the pains, which some learned men have bestowed on the subject, which is indeed not very interesting to us, little satisfactory information can be obtained on the situation of the places mentioned in this chapter, beyond what may be collected from the marginal references.

V. 5. *Their nobles*, &c.] It seems the chief persons of Tekoa refused to give any assistance, either by their labour, their substance, or their servants. Disregarding the authority of God himself, whose work it was, no wonder that they would not submit to the commands of Nehemiah, their governor, who seems to be meant by the expression “their lord” and for this they are branded with disgrace in the word of God. (*Note*, 1 Sam. 8:6-9.)—But the inferior citizens, instead of following their example, undertook a second part,

the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

7 And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the river.

8 Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harbajah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah, the son of one of the apothecaries, and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.

9 And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem.

10 And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house. And next unto him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabniah.

11 Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahath-moab, repaired the tower piece, and the tower of the furnaces.

12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, he and his daughters.

13 The valley-gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung-gate.

14 But the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-hacerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

15 But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.

16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur, unto the place over against the sepulchres of David, and to the pool that was made, and unto the house of the mighty.

17 After him repaired the Levites, Rehun the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah, in his part.

18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavi

the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah.

19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to the armory, at the turning of the wall.

20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai, earnestly repaired the other piece, from the turning of the wall unto the door of the house of Eliashab the high-priest.

21 After him repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz, another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashab even to the end of the house of Eliashab.

22 And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain.

23 After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house. After him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house.

24 After him repaired Binnui the son of Hanadad, another piece, from the house of Azariah unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner.

25 Palai the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that was by the court of the prison. After him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh.

26 Moreover, the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the place over against the water-gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

27 After them the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel.

28 From above the horse-gate repaired the priests, every one over against his house.

29 After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer, over against his house. After him repaired also Sheamiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate.

30 After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece. After him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, over against his chamber.

31 After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son, unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner.

32 And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep-gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

r Josh. 9:3, &c. 2 Sam. 21:2. a 19. 2 Chr. 16:6. (2:8. u 31, 32. 1s. 46:6. x Gen. 50:2. Ex. 30:25. Ez. 10:1. * Or, zfg. y 12:38. z 12:17. a 32:38-30. b 10:4. c 10:5. d 11:1. 10:14. Ezra 2:8, 8:4. * Heb. second measure. e 12:38. f 14:15, 16, 17, 18. g Ex. 35:25. Acts 21:39. Phil. 4:3. h 2:13. i 11:30. Josh. 15:34. k 2:13. 12:31. 19:12, 15, 16, 17, 18. m Jer. 6:1. n 2:14. 12:37. 2 Chr. 32:30. o 9:12, 14. p 7. Judg. 20:1, 3. Mispah. q 1s. 46:6. r Shiloah. Luke 4:4. John 9:7. Siloam. * 2 Sam. 5:8, 7. s 9:12, 14. t Josh. 15:38. 2 Chr. 11:7. u 2 Chr. 16:14. Acts 2:29. v 2 Kings 20:20. 1s. 22:1. y 1 Kings 14:27. 28. 2 Chr. 12:10, 11. Cant. 3:7. z 16. 1 Chr. 23:4. a Josh. 15:44. 1 Sam. 23:1.

when they had completed that which was first allotted them. (27)—The expression "put not their necks," renders it probable, that those who were earnest in the cause, of whatever rank, assisted by their personal labours. "Well-disposed persons, though ever so great," "put their necks," that is, laboured hard, not refusing to carry burdens, &c. Bp. Patrick.

V. 6, 7. *Marg. Ref.—The throne, &c.* (7) This seems to have been some judgment-hall, to which the governors of the kings of Persia, over the country west of the Euphrates, came, from time to time, to administer justice. Probably, Nehemiah now occupied it; for his particular commission superseded their more general authority.

V. 8-10. *(Marg. Ref.)* Several persons are mentioned who built, or repaired, the wall which was over against their own houses, or chambers. *(Marg. Ref. a.)* They lived near the wall; so that this arrangement was most convenient for them: and thus at the same time they provided for their own security, and the common benefit of the city. Perhaps, where any part of the old wall remained, the persons mentioned "repaired;" where none, they "built."

V. 11. It is not known what the expression "the other piece," or, the second measure, *(marg.)* refers to.

V. 12. Several rulers of half parts of cities are mentioned. *(Marg. Ref. f.)* It is probable that two superior magistrates were placed over the principal cities, with equal authority, to reside in different parts of them.—Shallum seems to have had no sons; and his daughters, as heiresses, contributed with him to the expense of the work. Perhaps they were widows.

2. b 10:9. 12:8. c 15. d 2 Chr. 26:9. * Or, Zaccai. e Ec. 9:10. Rom. 12: 11. f 1:21. 12:22, 13:4, 23. g 4. h 7:53. Ezra 2:61. i 6:2. 12:28. k 10: 29, 30. l 10:2. m 8:4, 7. n 10:9. o 11:19, 27. p 20. q Jer. 22:14. 39:8. r 12: 39. Jer. 32:2. 33:1. 37:21. 39:15. s 4. t 7:8. Ezra 2:3. u 7:46-56. 10:28. 1 Chr. 9:2. Ezra 2:43-58. * Or, which dwell in Ophel, repaired unto. || Or, the tower. 27. 11:21. 2 Chr. 27:3. 33:11. x 8:1, 3. 12:37. y 5. z 30. a 2 Kings 11:6. 2 Chr. 23:15. Jer. 31:40. b 10:22. c 7:40. Ezra 2:37. d Ezra 10:2. e Jer. 19:2. f 21. g 4. h 8:32. * Or, corner chamber. i 11. 12:39. John 5:2. k 8:31.

V. 13-15. *Marg. Ref.—Stairs.* (15) It is probable, these stairs formed a communication between the city of David, and the other parts of Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 5:8, 7.)

V. 16. *(Marg. Ref.)* "The house of the mighty" is thought to have been a guard-chamber, where the most valiant soldiers kept guard, to defend the palace of the kings of Judah.

V. 17-20. *Marg. Ref.—Earnestly, &c.* (20) Baruch, being more assiduous than others, probably stirred them up to greater diligence.

V. 21-25. *(Marg. Ref.)* "The king's high house" (25) was, perhaps, some lofty building, from which the watchmen might make their observations.

V. 26-31. *Marg. Ref.—The Nethinims, &c.* (26) "The Nethinim, which dwell in Ophel, repaired unto the place over against the water-gate, &c." *Marg.* "The water-gate, it is likely, was that at which these lower ministers brought in water for the use of the temple." Bp. Patrick.—*The Tekoites, (27) Note, 5.—Miphkad (31) signifies judgment, visitation, or correction; and it is thought a prison was situated near this gate.*

V. 32. *Sheep-gate.* Thus the whole city was surrounded with a wall: for Eliashab began at the sheep-gate (1)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The ministers of God should always be ready to labour and venture for the good of their brethren; and those, who have the precedence in rank, ought to take the lead, in setting that good example which gives energy to their instructions.

CHAPTER IV.

Sanballat and his company are very wrath, and mock the Jews: but Nehemiah prays, and builds the wall, 1-6. He discovers that they secretly are plotting against him, and sets a watch, 7-12. He aims the builders, and gives them suitable ears and directions, 13-23.

BUT it came to pass, that when ^aSanballat heard that we build the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and ^bmocked the Jews.

2 And he spake before his brethren, and ^cthe army of Samaria, and said, What do these ^dfeeble Jews? will they ^efortify themselves? ^fwill they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they ^grevive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

3 Now ^hTobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.

4 ⁱHear, O our God; for we are ^jdespised: and ^kturn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:

5 And ^lcover not their iniquity, and let not

a 2:10, 19. Ezra 4:1-5. Acts 5:17. b Ps. 35:13, 16. 44:13, 14. Matt. 27:29. Heb. 11:36. c Ezra 4:9, 10. d 1 Sam. 14:11, 12. 17:43, 44. Zech. 12:8. 1 Cor. 1:27. ^e Heb. leave to themselves. f 12:27, 43. g 10: E. 37:3-13. Hab. 3:2. h 2:10, 19. 6:1. i Kings 20:10, 18. 2 Kings 18:23. j Ps. 123:3, 4. k Heb. despise. l 1 Sam. 17:26. Ps. 79:12. Prov. 5:31. Hos. 12:14. m Ps. 59:5-13. 69:27, 28. 109:14, 15. Jer. 18:23. 2 Tim. 4:14. n Ps. 51:9, 18. 43:23. 44:22. m. 36:11, 12. n 6:15. i Chr. 32:14, 17, 18. 2 Chr. 29:35. Ps. 110:3. 2 Cor. 3:16, 17. Phil. 2:13. Heb. 13:21. o 1. 2:10, 19. p Judg. 10:7, &c. 11:12, &c. 1 Sam. 11:2.

but especially they should teach the people, how to sanctify their secular employments, by beginning, conducting, and completing them, with prayer and thanksgiving, according to the word of God, and to his glory.—The security and prosperity of the church, in every part of the world, is the common cause of all Christians, wherever they reside; and all orders of men should assist in promoting them. No age, sex, or station of life, can free any person from this obligation: every one, in some way or other, may contribute towards it; and where "much is given, much will be required." But alas, the rich and noble generally count it their privilege to be *idle*, or *useless*; which they cannot be, without setting an example, mischievous in proportion to their influence; and no wonder that they disregard the proclamations of the prince, which call them to attend the service of God, when they disdain the yoke of the almighty Lord himself. But before him they are upon a level with the meanest of their inferiors; except that a more dreadful punishment, and deeper disgrace, await their impudent and ungrateful rebellion. Frequently the zeal and activity in the cause of God, of those in the inferior orders, expose and condemn the pride, sloth, and self-indulgence, or impiety, of those who are intrusted with more talents; and thus they whom men despise, obtain and engross that "honour which cometh from God."—If in times of prevalent ungodliness, numbers, in different stations would agree, first to look to themselves, and to reform their families as far as they could; and then to use all their influence to promote the general work of reformation, we might expect that much good would speedily be done; and though most men neglect this duty; let those who lament the triumphs of iniquity and the desolations of piety, every one "repair opposite to his own house" or "chamber;" and let all endeavour to do what they can, by their prayers, their example, the education of their children, and pious conversation, to promote and recommend that cause which they have espoused. And when such attempts are directed by men of vigour, prudence, and piety, and conducted with entire harmony, remote from envy, contention, or divisions; and when every one, beside doing his proper work earnestly, is ready to assist those who are overburdened; there is no reason to doubt of success: "for the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—May the Lord stir up the hearts of all his people, to lay aside their disputes, and to disregard their worldly interests, in comparison of "building the walls of Jerusalem," and defending the cause of evangelical truth, and vital godliness, against the assaults of avowed enemies. May those offences cease, which weaken the common cause, and expose it to reproach; and may the church of Christ thus fortified, as "a city that is at unity in itself," and adorned by the beauties of holiness, attract the attention, the admiration, and the love of beholders; the reproaches of calumniators, and dismay the heart, or repel the assaults, of every hostile invader! Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1-3. (Notes, 29, 10, 19, 20.) Sanballat, and the other enemies of the Jews, though enraged at them for undertaking to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, were restrained from openly opposing them, partly because they despised their feeble attempts. They concluded, either that they would not venture to undertake such a work; or if they did, that they would make little progress, however earnest they might be. But when they heard that all hands were diligently employed, they became very angry; yet they effected to treat the undertaking with the utmost disdain. Sanballat uttered his sarcasms before his brethren, (or the principal commanders in that neighbourhood) and the army of

their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

7 But it came to pass, that when ^aSanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and ^bthe Ammonites, and ^cthe Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,

8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

2 Sam. 10:1-5. 2 Kings 24:2. 2 Chr. 20:1. Ez. 26:9-7. Am. 1:13. q 13:23, 24. 1 Sam. 5:12. 2 Chr. 26:6-8. Jer. 25:20. Am. 1:8. 9:9. Zech. 9:5, 6. r Ezra 4:4-16. 5:8. s Heb. ascended. t Gen. 3:15. Acts 4:17, 18. 5:33. Rev. 12:13, 17. u Ps. 2:1-3. 83:4-11. Is. 9:10. Acts 23:12, 13. s Heb. make an error to it. v 1:11. Gen. 32:9-42, 28. 2 Kings 19:14-19. Ps. 50:15. 55:16-18. Luke 6:11, 12. Acts 4:24-30. x Matt. 26:41. Luke 21:36. 1 Pet. 5:8. y Num. 13:31. 32:9. Ps. 11:12. Hag. 1:2. z 2 Chr. 2:18. Ez. 29:18.

Samaria; whom he knew to be more inveterate against the Jews, than any other of the tribes under his command: but he supposed what he said would soon be reported at Jerusalem, and tend to discourage the builders. With a mixture of scorn and indignation, he inquired "what the feeble Jews were doing." Could they think of fortifying so large a city? Did they intend to complete such a work in a day, and to secure themselves from interruption, while they spent the next in sacrificing? And what would they do for materials? The stones formerly used in this work were broken in pieces, or decayed, by lying so long under the rubbish; the builders could not "revive" them, or make them new again, nor could they procure any others. With equal disdain Tobiah replied, that a wall built by them, in such haste, and of such materials, would be no security at all; for the weight of a fox running over it would break it down! But this contempt and ridicule induced them to lose the opportunity of attempting more effectual opposition.

V. 4, 5. The Jews were at this time the church of God: they were actually employed in his service: their enemies, without the smallest ground of complaint against them, despised and hated them for his sake; if they succeeded in their designs they would subvert true religion; and their condign punishment would form a salutary example to all other adversaries, and be subservient to the cause of truth and righteousness. So that, zeal for the honour of God, and love to his people, induced Nehemiah to pray, that these scornful might be exposed to that reproach which they cast on the Jews, and become "a prey to their enemies in the land of captivity;" and that their sins might not be covered, or blotted out, by the merciful forgiveness of God: seeing they had endeavoured to discourage the builders, and render them disaffected to their work; (Marg. Ref. i-1.)—Such scriptural requests are prophetic, or declaratory of the judgments of God against persecutors: and the subsequent doom of these nations was an answer to this prayer. (Notes, Ps. 69:21-28. 109:6-20.) "This prayer . . . was confirmed by the destruction of these nations by the Maccabees and their successors." Bp. Patrick.

V. 6. The half, &c.] The whole circuit of the wall was completed to half of the intended height.—Had a mind to work.] They were very much set upon it, and went about it cheerfully, notwithstanding their jeers and contempt. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. n.)

V. 7, 8. All these nations, (except perhaps the Arabians,) were subjects of the kings of Persia; and were induced by Sanballat to unite against Nehemiah and the Jews, when acting by the king's commission; so that their attempt was a conspiracy in the most criminal sense. Dreading either the resentment of the king, or the valour of the Jews; they had not hitherto dared to attack them openly, notwithstanding the greatness of their malice. (Notes, Matt. 26:3-5. Acts 23:12-22.) "The last words in the Hebrew are to make an error in it; that is, to put them by the work, or to make them not know which way to turn themselves." Bp. Patrick.

V. 9. The connexion, here marked, between the greatest simplicity and piety, in trusting God alone and seeking help from him by prayer, and the most vigilant and diligent activity in the use of all proper means, is well worthy of notice.

V. 10. Some of the principal persons among the Jews while the work was in hand, represented to Nehemiah, that the people were so worn down, and the remaining labour (especially in removing the rubbish to get materials) was so great, that their design was impracticable, and must be abandoned.

11 And our adversaries said, "They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease."

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwell by them came, they said unto us "ten times, 'From all places whence ye shall return unto us *they will be upon you.*'"

[Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with "their swords, their spears, and their bows."

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "Be not ye afraid of them: 'remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to naught, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons;

and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that "bare burdens, with those that laded, every one" with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

19 ¶ And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another."

20 In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: "our God shall fight for us."

21 So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning, till the stars appeared.

22 Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, "Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day."

23 So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing."

a Judg. 20:29, &c. Ps. 56:6. Is. 47:11. 1 Thes. 5:2. b Gen. 31:7, 41. Num. 14:22. Job 19:3. c Or, That from all places ye must return to us. d Gen. 32:13-20. 2 Chr. 32:8-8. Ps. 112:5. Matt. 10:16. 1 Cor. 13:20. 1 Heb. 1:9. The lower parts of the place. d 17:18. Cant. 3:7-8. Eph. 6:11-20. e Num. 14:9. Dent. 1:21. 20:3-4. Josh. 1:9. 2 Chr. 20:15-17. 32:7. Ps. 27:1. 46:11. Is. 41:10-14. Heb. 13:6. 1 Ps. 20:7. 77:10-20. 145:5. Is. 51:12-13. 63:1-13. r 1:15. Dent. 10:17. Job 37:22. Ps. 65:5. 66:3. Is. 64:1-3. Nah. 1:2-7. Heb. 12:20.

21, 28, 29. h 2 Sam. 10:12. 12 Sam. 15:31. 17:14. Job 5:12, 13. Ps. 33:10, 11. Prov. 21:30. Is. 8:10. 44:25. Lam. 3:37. 1 Cor. 3:19, 20. k Mark 13:34. Rom. 12:11. 1 Thes. 4:11. 123. 5:15, 16. Ps. 101:6. m 10. n Dan. 9:25. 1 Cor. 9:26. 16:13. 2 Cor. 6:7. Eph. 6:11, &c. 2 Tim. 2:3, 4, 7. l Heb. on his loins. o Num. 10:9. 2 Chr. 13:12-17. p Ex. 14:14, 25. Dent. 1:30. 3:22. 20:4. Josh. 23:10. q 1 Cor. 15:58. Gal. 6:9. Col. 1:29. r 1:12. s 5:18, 19. 7:2. Judg. 9:46. s Or, every one went with his weapon for water. Judg. 5:11.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

done at least for the present. This must have been a great discouragement to him, in conjunction with all his other difficulties and dangers. (Notes, Ps. 11:1-3. Hag. 1:2, 4.)

V. 11. Some think, that certain of the princes reported these sayings of the adversaries, in order to intimidate the builders: being themselves weary of the labour, and not cordially affected to the cause. It was not however likely, that Sanballat could introduce into the city so large a number of soldiers, as would suffice to overpower and destroy all the Jews, and stop the work; without being discovered, till he and his troops were in the midst of the builders. Indeed the conduct of those, who reported such a design, was more suited to intimidate the inconsiderate, than to convince wise men that they really expected it would be carried into execution.

V. 12. This verse is of difficult construction; which seems to have been the effect of the abrupt manner, in which the persons intended expressed their excessive terror. They lived near the hostile nations, and some of them were continually coming to Jerusalem with information, that the enemy was preparing to attack the builders from every quarter; and would certainly fall upon them, whether they continued at their work, or attempted to return home. Probably, they meant to put their brethren upon their guard; but such alarming rumours tended to intimidate them and drive them from the work. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 13-15. (Marg. Ref.) "All was at stake, therefore he exhorts them to be valiant, trusting in God, who was stronger than all their enemies." Bp. Patrick. After all the preparations which Nehemiah and the Jews had made, the conspirators did not venture to attack them: and, neither being able to surprise them, nor fright them from their design, they for the present desisted; and so the Jews returned to their work.

V. 16-18. The builders could not possibly have made any progress, if they had literally held a weapon in one of their hands. Indeed it is evident, that they wore their swords by their sides. But the expression is figurative, implying that every man was both a builder, and a soldier.—They worked, and bare arms, by turns: they wore swords at their labour, and those behind them had other arms ready, when the alarm should be given.—Nehemiah, being earnest in the undertaking, employed all his attendants in one way or other about it.

V. 19, 20. The priests were directed to blow the sacred trumpets; (Note, Num. 10:2-10.) and no doubt some of them constantly attended, one at least, in the different stations, which were selected for the purpose, to sound the alarm when needful: and this was a token that the Lord would fight for his people against their enemies. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 22. Those who lived in the adjacent cities and villages, were required to lodge, with one or more servants, in Jerusalem, to guard the work, and be ready for it in the morning; for this was to be attended to in preference even to their own families, as being more exposed to the assaults of their enemies. (Note, 11:1, 2.)

V. 23. Nehemiah and his attendants, in order that they might always be prepared against any alarm, took necessary rest by turns, in their clothes and armour: never undressing themselves, except for cleanliness, or ceremonial purification. Or as the margin renders the words, "Every one went with his weapon for water."

V. 1-12. The pious labours of those who endeavour to promote true religion, must always excite the indignation of such as are "haters of God," and of his truth and holiness: nay, in this case, the wisest and most excellent behaviour will be reproached and derided, as madness and folly.—The most sacred things may easily be represented in so ridiculous a light, as to excite profane laughter: a small measure of wit, united with competent malice, impiety, and impudence, will suffice for these pernicious and profane scoffings; and such presumptuous jesters whet one another's ingenuity, and embolden each other to the most daring blasphemies. Contempt and derision are indeed very painful to us: but they frequently prove the Christian's protection, and give him leisure to effect his designs, without more formidable opposition.—The means which he uses appear feeble to proud despisers; but, by the power and blessing of God, they produce durable and extensive effects: and all the efforts of man, seconded by the power and policy of hell, have failed, and ever will fail, to subvert the cause, which infidels have dreamed would fall of itself, or on the first assault. Ere long the church on earth will triumph over every adversary: and all believers will soon offer the sacrifice of praise, for complete and eternal victory and salvation; notwithstanding the scoffs and rage of their enemies.—When insulted or injured, let us then give up ourselves to prayer: and the supplications of believers, throughout the world, for the prosperity of the church, and the success of the gospel, will eventually be answered in the reproach and merited punishment of all impenitent opposers. So long as they reject the atonement, their sins cannot be covered; and their endeavours to hinder the progress of the gospel will provoke the Lord above all their other sins.—Those, who disagree in almost every other thing, will often unite in persecution. (Note, Matt. 22:15-22.) and that enmity, which at one time dictates contempt and derision, will at another suggest more violent and cruel measures; especially, when the servants of God are active, united, and successful. So that proud scornors are not fit to be trusted with power; whatever professions of candour they may make, or however they may plead for toleration.—When we engage in important and useful undertakings, we should expect discouragement from every quarter. For we shall be tried, not only by the anger, contempt, treachery and cruelty of enemies, but also by the inconstancy and lukewarmness of friends and helpers: and many who wish well to us will weaken our hands, by regarding and reporting the menaces, or slanders, or boastings of our adversaries.

V. 13-23. No opposition will prove any real hinderance to us in our endeavours to do good, if we be led by it to a more simple confidence in God, and to the more diligent use of proper means for obtaining success. A believing remembrance of his power, truth, and love, will prove a sufficient support in every danger; for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" and, however craftily the plots of opposers are laid, he is able to detect them, and to bring to naught all their counsels.—If our enemies cannot fright us from our duty, or deceive us into sin, or find us unwatchful, they cannot hurt us. When ministers of religion or other active instruments, add the example of diligence, courage, self-denial, and pe-

CHAPTER V.

Rephaim Jews complain of the debts which they had unavoidably contracted, and which compelled them to mortgage their lands, and even sell their children, 1-5. *Nehemiah* rebukes the rich usurers, who oppress their brethren; and obliges them to engage by oath to make full restitution, 6-13. He refuses the governor's customary allowances, and maintains great hospitality at his own charge, 14-19.

AND there was ^a great cry of the people and of their wives against ^btheir brethren the Jews.

2 For there were that said, ^cWe, our sons, and our daughters, ^dare many: therefore ^dwe take up corn for ^ethem, that we may eat, and live.

3 Some also there were that said, ^fWe have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, ^gbecause of the dearth.

4 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, ^hand that upon our lands and vineyards.

5 Yet now ⁱour flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and lo, ⁱwe bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and ^jsome of our daughters are brought unto bondage ^kalready: neither is it in our power to ^kredeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

6 ¶ And ^lI was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.

7 ¶ Then ^mI consulted with myself, and ⁿI rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto

a Ex. 3:7, 22:25-27. Job 31:38,39. 34:28. Is. 5:7. Luke 18:7. Jam. 5:4. b Lev. 25:35-37. Deut. 15:7-11. Acts 7:28. 1 Cor. 6:1-8. c Ps. 127:3-5, 128:2-4. Mal. 2:2. d Gen. 41:57. 42:2. 43:8. e Gen. 47:15-25. f Mal. 3:8-11. g 9:37. Deut. 28:47,48. Josh. 16:10. 1 Kings 9:21. Ezra 4:13,30. h Gen. 37:27. Is. 58:7. Jer. 2:5. i Ex. 21:1-11. Lev. 25:39-43. 2 Kings 4:1. Matt. 18:35. k 13:25. Ex. 11:8. Num. 16:13. Mark 3, Eph. 4:26. l Heb. my heart conceived. m Ps. 11:27. n Lev. 19:15. 2 Chr. 19:6,7. Ps. 92:1-4. Prov. 27:5. 2 Cor. 5:16. Gal. 2:11. 1 Tim. 5:20. Tit. 2:15. o Ps. 22:25. Lev. 25:36. Deut. 15:2,3. 24:10. 24:13. 24:12. 45:9. n 2 Chr. 28:9-13. Matt. 18:17. o Matt. 25:13,29. 2 Cor. 8:12. Gal. 6:12. Lev. 25:47-49. q Ex. 21:

them, ^pYe exact usury, every one of his brother And ^qI set a great assembly against them;

8 And I said unto them, We, ^rafter our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even ^ssell your brethren? or ^tshall they be sold unto ^tyou? Then ^uheld they their peace, and found nothing to answer.

9 Also I said, ^vIt is not good that ye do: ought ye not ^vto walk in the fear of our God because of ^wthe reproach of the heathen our enemies?

10 ¶ Likewise, ^xand my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: ^yI pray you, let us ^yleave off this usury.

11 ^zRestore, I pray you, to them, even this day, ^ztheir lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, also the hundredth ^zpart of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

12 Then said they, ^aWe will restore ^athem, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then ^bI called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.

13 Also ^cI shook my lap, and said, ^cSo God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and ^cemptied. And all the

16. Deut. 24:7. r Rom. 14:15. 1 Cor. 8:11. s Job 29:10. 32:15,16. Matt. 22:12. Rom. 3:19. 1 Sam. 2:24. Prov. 16:29. 17:26. 18:5. 19:2. 24:23. a 15. Gen. 20:11. 42:18. Acts 9:31. x Gen. 13:7,8. 2 Sam. 12:14. Ex. 36:20. Rom. 8:24. 1 Tim. 5:14. Tit. 2:1. 1 Pet. 2:12. y Mic. 2:1. Luke 3:13,14. 1 Cor. 9:12-18. z 2 Cor. 5:11,20. 6:1. 1 Thim. 8:9. a 7. Ex. 22:25-27. Ps. 15:5. Ex. 18:13. b Lev. 6:4,5. 1 Sam. 12:3. 2 Sam. 12:6. Is. 58:6. Luke 3:8. c 3,4. d 2 Chr. 28:14,15. Ezra 10:12. Matt. 19:21. Luke 19:8. e 10:29. 13:25. 2 Chr. 6:22. 23. 15:13,14. Ezra 10:5. Jer. 34:8-10. Matt. 26:6,3. f Matt. 10:14. Acts 13:51. 18:6. g 1 Sam. 15:28. 1 Kings 11:29-31. Zech. 5:3,4. h Heb. empty, or void.

25-27. Lev. 25:35-37. Deut. 15:2-10. 24:10-13. 2 Kings 4:1. Ez. 22:12,13. i In this extremity they appealed to Nehemiah, and he immediately determined to do them justice.

V. 6, 7. Nehemiah appears to have possessed a far more bold and eager spirit, than his contemporary Ezra. For, in a situation something similar, Ezra fasted, prayed, wept, and almost desponded: (Notes, Ezra 9:) but Nehemiah, fired with a holy indignation, united by sympathy with the poor sufferers, proceeded immediately, with all his authority and influence, to redress the grievances of his oppressed brethren; neither fearing the resentment of their powerful oppressors, nor doubting but he should be able to effect his purpose. (Notes, Job 29:12-17. 31:33,34. Ps. 82:2-4. Prov. 31:8, 9.) He did not, however, act without consideration; but, having formed his plan after mature deliberation, he first sharply rebuked the nobles and rulers, who, instead of punishing other criminals, were themselves the most notorious usurers and extortioners. And, as he feared lest they should prove refractory, he convened an assembly of the people; that perceiving how generally their conduct was disapproved, they might be shamed into proper concessions, without the necessity of direct compulsion.

V. 8. Nehemiah and Ezra, and other pious persons, had not only, with great zeal and earnestness, endeavoured to establish the security and prosperity of the nation; but they had redeemed from slavery several of the poor Jews who had been sold among the heathen. (Note, Lev. 26:47-55.) What a contrast then was the conduct of these usurers, to their disinterested and liberal love to their countrymen! Did the one company redeem their enslaved brethren, that the other might sell them again for slaves, in direct violation of the divine law? Or did they expect to sell their enslaved brethren to Nehemiah and his friends, even as the Gentiles took their money for such as they redeemed?—It was indeed impossible to reply to this animated and reasonable expostulation. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 9. When Nehemiah said, "It is not good that ye do," his words imply that they had acted very wickedly. "A soft form of speech, used when they mean it is very bad. Prov. 16:29. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. t).—The exposed and distressed condition to which sin had reduced the nation, and the recent mercies which they had received, combined to enforce it upon them, to "walk in the fear of God," lest he should give them up as a reproach to their enemies; or rather, lest the heathen, who were full of malice, should reproach them, as they justly might, for their avarice and cruelty; and thence take occasion to revile their religion, and blaspheme the name of God himself. (Marg. Ref. u, x.)

V. 10-13. Had Nehemiah, and his brethren and servants acted towards the people as these oppressors did: the authority of the Persian king would have enabled them to exact large contributions, from the rich especially. But as they, instead of such exactions, did not so much as take what was justly their due; (Note, 14:15.) surely the ^ure ought to be ashamed of extorting from the poor ^vwhat they covet ^vhave

tience, to their exhortations; others will be stirred up, who were before drawn or driven from their work.—Every true Christian is both a labourer and a soldier, working with one hand and fighting with the other, and called by the sound of the gospel, alternately to his work and to the conflict. We are widely dispersed in our several employments; but we all form one army, and must prepare to unite against the common enemy, in whatever place the assault is made. In this important cause personal and relative interests must be comparatively disregarded; or rather they are most wisely attended to, when we commit them to the Lord, and labour for the benefit of his church. While we stand armed and watching, as for the battle, we shall have the best security for peace; for Satan fears assailing the vigilant Christian: or if we are attacked, "our God will fight for us." Thus must we wait to the close of life, never putting off our armour, till our work and warfare be ended; and then we shall be crowned as conquerors, and welcomed to the rest and joy of our Lord.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. V. 1-5. It seems, that the attention of Nehemiah was interrupted, before the wall was completed, by the affair recorded in this chapter. (Note, 6:15, 16.) Amidst the depredations to which the Jews were exposed, and their attention to self defence, it is likely that tillage was in some degree neglected, and that a scarcity of corn ensued. It is also supposed by learned men, that these events occurred in the sabbatical year; which if indeed it were so, would increase the difficulties of the poor, as well as aggravate the guilt of those, who thence took occasion to oppress their brethren. The nation seems also to have been visited with scarcity for their sins. Such persons, therefore, as were in low circumstances, and had large families, were unable to buy necessary food, except upon credit, and probably at an exorbitant price; and they were compelled to raise money, by borrowing on interest, for the tribute imposed by the king of Persia. (Note, 9:36,37.) Of these difficulties the pious men took advantage, and obtaining mortgages of their lands, got them into their possession: taking usury also for the money, of one hundredth part every month, or twelve per cent. a year, as is generally supposed; which soon reduced the debtors to deep poverty; and at length to the necessity of selling into slavery their sons, and even their daughters; who would be peculiarly exposed in that situation: while there appeared no prospect of redress, no hope of redeeming either their lands or their children, no period to their accumulating distresses, except in entire and perpetual bondage. Yet they were not only of the same nature, but of the same chosen seed, the children of the covenant, equally with the more prosperous Jews. They had the same affection for their children, and accounted a numerous family a blessing, as long as they could provide for it. They had not reduced themselves to this distress by extravagance; but were necessitated to contract debts, through hard times and heavy taxes, and for necessary provisions: and the conduct of their oppressors was contrary to the letter and the spirit of the whole law. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 47:13-26. Ex. 22:

congregation sa d, Amen, and 'praised the Lord. And 'the people did according to this promise.

[Practical Observations.]

B. C.] 14 Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year, even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor.

15 But the former governors, that had been before me were bread-eaters unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but so did not I, because of the fear of God.

h Num. 5:22. Deut. 27:14-26. i 1 Chr. 16:38. k 2 Kings 23:3. Ps. 50:14. 76:11. 119:106. Ec. 5:5. l 21. m 1 Cor. 9:4-15, 18. 2 Thes. 3:9, 9. n Ezra 4:13. 14. Rom. 2:15-17. 8:15. Prov. 29:12. p Matt. 5:47. 2 Cor. 11:9. 12:13. q Job 31:23. Ps. 112:1. 149:11. Prov. 15:6. Ec. 12:13, 14. Is. 50:10. Luke 18:2-4. r Luke 9:15. Rom. 2:7. 1 Cor. 15:58. Gal. 6:9. s Num. 16:

shadow of a right to! Nehemiah therefore urged them voluntarily to leave off their usury, and to restore the lands of their poor brethren, and the increase of money and provisions, which they had exacted from them; to lend them without pledge or usury, in this time of distress; and to wait for payment till better times. This seems the immediate purport of his proposal: though probably he required the free remission of former debts, and the liberating of the children which were in bondage, as in the year of release.—His remonstrance had its desired effect, and the guilty persons promised to do so: but less they should delay, or go back from their word, he called the priests as witnesses, and bound the persons concerned with a solemn oath to perform their promise; and then with a significant action, he denounced the vengeance of heaven against every one who failed of this engagement. To this the congregation solemnly assented, and praised the Lord for sending them so just and merciful a ruler. (Notes, Jer. 34:8-22.)—Thus this matter was in one assembly amicably settled, by motives and arguments taken from true religion, and the law of God: yet one of a similar kind distracted the Roman state for ages, and the oppression was never effectually prevented! (Notes, 2 Chr. 28:9-15. 1 Tim. 6:1-5.)

V. 14-18. This passage must have been added by Nehemiah several years after the date of the transaction before recorded: for that occurred soon after he came to Jerusalem.—The former governors had received from the people an income of about five pounds a day, (as it is generally interpreted:) besides a proportion of bread and wine for their households; while their attendants (as it is too commonly the case) lorded it over the people, and increased their burdens. It is not said who these governors were. Perhaps Ezra, who seems not to have been rich, was necessitated to take sufficient for the expenses of his station; but we may be sure that he allowed of no oppression. It is probable, however, that the Persian governors west of the Euphrates were meant: for they seem to have had authority over the Jews in all civil concerns, until Nehemiah's commission was granted. But he, acting in the fear of God and from the pure motives of religion, and perceiving the poverty of the people, and the burdens in other respects laid upon them, would not receive this customary emolument; and, being very rich and liberal, he supported his dignity with great hospitality at his own expense, all the time he filled that exalted station; setting his rich countrymen an example of receding from legal claims for the public good. At the same time he spared neither trouble nor expense in forwarding the fortifications of the city; and required his attendants to assist also: and would neither himself take, nor allow them to take, any advantage of the poverty of the Jews, by purchasing estates at a low price, as they might easily have done.—In reading this account which he gave of himself, we should remember that he wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: and it was proper that his magnanimous, disinterested, and liberal conduct should stand upon record for an example to all others, what use to make of great riches; how to render authority a public blessing; and how to induce mankind to acts of justice and every good work, by taking the lead in them. (Notes, 1 Cor. 9:13-18. 2 Cor. 11:7-12, 16-20. 12:11-15.)—¹ He loved religion better than riches, and took not his own due, that the people might serve God more cheerfully. . . . They' (his servants) were constantly employed also in the same work, and received no pay for their labour, though it could not be done without neglect of his private business. . . . There is no reason to think that he speaks too much of himself and his own worthy acts; for it was no more than . . . St. Paul was constrained to speak of himself in his epistle to the Corinthians; of whom he would take nothing, that he might stop the mouths of false apostles and covetous people. Bp. Patrick.

V. 19. Nehemiah had shown great kindness to his brethren, to which they had not in strict justice any claim: and he lifted up his heart to God, when recording it, entreating him to show like kindness to him, and to remember him for good. His conduct in these circumstances evidenced that

16 Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.

17 Moreover, there were at my table a hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us.

18 Now that which was prepared for me daily was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

19 Think upon me, my God, for this good, according to all that I have done for your people.

15. Acts 20:33-35. 1 Thes. 2:5, 6. t 2 Cor. 12:16-18. Phil. 2:20, 21. u 2 Sam. 9:7, 13. 1 Kings 15:19. x Is. 32:8. Rom. 12:13. 1 Pet. 4:9, 10. y 1 Kings 4:23, 23. z 14, 15. a 13:14, 22, 31. Gen. 40:14. Ps. 2:6, 7. 105:4. Jer. 29:11. b Ps. 13:23-25. Matt. 10:42. 25:34-40.

he was a true believer: he desired no recompense from man, but confidently expected one from a merciful God: he evidently spoke and acted as one that knew himself to be a sinner; and he did not expect a recompense as of debt; but in the manner that the Lord rewards a cup of cold water given to a disciple for his sake. (Notes, 13:14. Matt. 10:40-42. Heb. 6:3, 10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-13. Every domestic or relative comfort may become to us an occasion of increasing anguish: we should not then be discontented in the want of children, or anxious about temporal things; but seek our whole happiness from God alone.—It is the peculiar duty and privilege of the poor to trust the promise and providence of God, to supply their families with food and raiment, and to be content with necessities; and of the rich, and of those who have no children, to contribute liberally to the support of their indigent brethren. But alas! too many take advantage of the necessities to which others are reduced, in order to exact of them; that they may increase their own useless abundance, or support their luxurious and extravagant expenses! They wilfully forget that the poor are of the same nature with themselves; and that they have the same wants, inclinations, natural affections, and feelings of pain and suffering. Instead of "doing to others as they would that others should do to them," they grow careless of the welfare, and callous to the miseries of their fellow-creatures; and usurp authority over them as bondslaves, in proportion as wealth, power, and prosperity increase. Every gratification is deemed requisite for the lordly oppressors; but the meanest morsel is good enough for the poor and enslaved, though far better characters than themselves. Thus men prey upon their own species, and, by "despising the poor, reproach their Maker," and aggravate, instead of relieving, those distresses which are always entitled to compassion and assistance; and especially when they are not the effect of extravagance or sloth; but of hard times, heavy taxes, large families, and debts, constituting for bare necessities. (Notes, Prov. 14:31. 17:5. P. O. 1-15, latter part.) Such conduct disgraces even human nature; but who can express sufficient abhorrence of it when adopted by professed Christians? It exposes our holy religion to the reproach, scorn, and abomination of heathens, and gives occasion to our enemies to blaspheme that worthy name, by which these selfish wretches are improperly distinguished. Thus, in all the four quarters of the globe, millions of Mohammedans and Pagans abhor Christianity, through the avarice, treachery, and cruelty of men called Christians!—Well then may the report of such crimes, and the cry of the oppressed, kindle an honest indignation in the breast of every friend of mankind, of his country, and of the gospel. Those in authority should consult with themselves, and with each other, how to redress these scandalous abuses: and if fair means will not do, rough and decisive measures should be employed, notwithstanding the clamours of interested oppressors; if princes would have the blessing of God upon their dominions. Too often nobles and rulers are the chief in such exactions; and their power and affluence seem to defy investigation, and frequently prevent or intimidate those who ought to promote the execution of justice: yet neither rank nor authority should screen them; nay, they should be first punished for an example to others: and if they disregard the rebuke of an individual, the great assemblies of nations should be convened against them. If, however, they can be shamed or persuaded into a proper conduct, harsher measures are ineligible: and when earnestness, affection, wisdom, piety, humanity, a decided example, and cogent reasonings, concur, they will sometimes produce effect beyond expectation.—In expostulating with selfish people, it is good to contrast their conduct with that of others, who are remarkably liberal and benevolent; but it is best to point out to them the example of him, who "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." When this is compared with the conduct of those who do not care how many they reduce to the most abject penury or slavery, to enrich themselves; the contrast between the Master and his

CHAPTER VI.

Sanballat and his party practise against Nehemiah, by insidious attempts, false rumours, and the hired counsel of pretended prophets, 1-14. The wall is finished, and the enemies are dishonoured, 15, 16. The nobles of Judah violently correspond with Tobiah, 17-19.

NOW it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, "Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto me, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

a 2:10, 19. 4:17. b 6. *Gashmu*. c 4:6, 7. Dan 9:25. d 3:3, 6. e 2:8 am. 3:27. 3:28. 37:12. Prov 24:34-36. F. 4. 4. 11:35. 1 Chr. 12. g 17. 12:2. 37:12, 22. Jer. 41:2. Ez. 33:31. Mic. 7:4, 5. Luke 20:19-21. h Prov. 14:15. Matt. 10:16. 1 Ez. 9:10. Luke 14:30. John 9:4. 1 Tim. 4:15, 16. k Jud. 16:6. 10:15-30. Prov. 7:1. Luke 18:5. 1 Cor. 15:58. Gal. 2:5. 12 Kings 18:26-28. 2 Cor. 2:11. 11:13-15. Eph. 6:11. 2 Thes. 2:10. m Jer. 9:3-6. 30:10. Matt. 5:11. Rom. 3:8. 2 Cor. 6:8. 1 Pet. 2:12, 13. 3:16. n 1:2. *Geshem*. o 2:19. Ezra

professed disciples, is so striking that it implies an argument which is silencing, and unanswerable on any scriptural principles. It may further be inquired, whether such oppression is good in itself, or consistent with the fear of God, regard to his authority, and his command to love our neighbours as ourselves: whether men can deny that the enemies of our holy religion do reproach us, because of such practices, and are prejudiced to their irreparable damage: and how they would approve it, if their superiors tyrannized over them, and extorted from them as they do from their inferiors; and what will become of them if God show them no more mercy than they show their poor brethren. (Note, Jam. 2:9-13, v. 13.) If our oppressors and slave-dealers were not, by habits long persisted in, more callous than these Jews, we might be encouraged to entreat and beseech them to leave off their extortion; to make restitution to the injured, and to show mercy to the poor. But alas! these methods are seldom successful! and more conclusive reasons alone prevail. This remains for the magistrate; and here the preacher must leave them. If arguments, expostulations, warnings, and persuasions will not induce them ¹⁴ to repent, and to do works meet for repentance: ¹⁵ we must "shake off the dust of our feet as a testimony against them;" ¹⁶ assuring them that God will soon shake them out from their ill-gotten treasures, and cast them down into destruction; (Note, Jam. 5:1-6.) if they continue to neglect the salvation of Christ, or refuse to imitate his example of loving-kindness and mercy: and when the righteous Judge shall denounce this tremendous sentence against them, all the multitudes of the redeemed will cry, "Amen, and will praise the LORD."—We may further observe, that wise and good men may be of very different tempers, and consequently go about the same thing in a different manner. But they should not censure each other, nor should others censure them: let them serve God according to that ability which he has given them; and let it never be supposed that one mere man is a perfect model for all others to follow.

V. 14-19. We must not do our works to be seen of men, and it is seldom expedient to speak of them ourselves. Yet we should "let our light shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify God;" (Notes, Matt. 5:14-16. 6:1-4.) and sometimes a good man may be called upon, as in his presence, and with an appeal to the consciences of many witnesses, to declare his own disinterested and upright conduct, and the motives of it, for a reproof, an instruction, and an example, to mankind. But it is *always* necessary for those to set a decidedly good example, who are bold reprovers and active reformers of others, and who speak and act with decision and sharpness against their crimes. In this case a man should give up his right, neglect opportunities of gain, be willing to labour and endure hardship without recompense, and to expend his substance in the support of a good cause. And it is not enough for public characters themselves to avoid evil, and the appearance of it: their servants and dependants must be restrained also. But the fear and love of God, and genuine love of the brethren, will influence a man to do this and much more; and will constrain him to abound in hospitality and every good work, according to the ability that God has given him. These are proper evidences and expressions of living faith; and our reconciled God will look for good, on as much as abound in these fruits of righteousness, according to all that they have done to his people.

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1-4. Sanballat and his confederates, not daring openly to attack the Jews, yet earnestly desiring to prevent the completion of the fortifications, which were daily carried on; formed a stratagem to draw Nehemiah from his station, and to slay or imprison him, when they

5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein was written, "It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. "Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, "There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, "Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

[Practical Observations.]

10 Afterward I came unto the house of She-

4:12, 15. p Luke 23:2. John 19:13. q 12:13. r 2 Sam. 15:10-12. 1 Kings 1:7, 13, 25, 34. s Prov. 26:21-26. Acts 23:15. t Acts 24:12, 13. 25:7, 10. u Job 13:4. Ps. 36:3. 38:12. 32:2. Is. 59:4. Dan. 11:27. Matt. 12:34. John 8:44. x 14. 4:10-14. 2 Chr. 32:18. y 2 Chr. 15:7. Ezra 4:1-24. Is. 35:3, 4. Jer. 38:4. Heb. 12:12. z Ps. 56:3. 68:35. 13:3. Is. 41:10. Zech. 10:12. 2 Cor. 13:9. Eph. 3:16. 5:10. Phil. 1:3. 1 Pet. 5:10. a 12. Ezra 8:16. 10:31. Prov. 11:9. Matt. 7:15.

had him in their power. They therefore, on some plausible pretence, invited him to an interview: but he was aware of their intentions; and on that account would not have gone if he had not been so fully engaged. He, however, only answered, that, being fully employed in a most important work, his presence at Jerusalem was absolutely necessary; and that the work would stop if he left it: why then should he come down, in such circumstances? This was true, and a sufficient reason: and their subsequent importunity could not induce him either to comply, or to enter into any altercation with them; as indeed it was well calculated to confirm his suspicions. (Notes, Judg. 16:6-16.) "They thought, I suppose, that if they did not take this opportunity to overthrow what he had done, before he set up the doors upon the gates, they should never be able to enter the city afterwards, He still persisted constantly to give no other answer; whereby they might understand he was resolved to finish the work."

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V. 5-9. When these most inveterate enemies had been baffled in their design, they devised a more dangerous stratagem.—Sanballat sent, under a pretence of friendship, to inform Nehemiah of a report in circulation, that the Jews were preparing to revolt from the king of Persia, and place him on the throne; and that he employed prophets, who should preach this to them, as the will of God. This *Gashmu*, or *Geshem*, (2) attested to be fact, and was prepared to prove: and, being circulated in the surrounding nations, it was likely soon to come to the ears of Artaxerxes, and to bring upon the Jews the whole weight of his indignation.—If such reports had indeed been circulated and credited, there would have been cause for alarm: for those despotic kings, upon the least suspicion, often drove their lieutenants into rebellion, as their only hope of self-preservation. But it was entirely a fiction invented to frighten Nehemiah, or render him incapable of proceeding. The letter was sent open; that the contents, being known to the people, might excite them to mutiny, or to forsake the work for fear of the Persians: (Notes, 2 Kings 18:26-35.) and the proposal of taking counsel with him, as if Sanballat and his friends were desirous of concerting measures for the common safety, was an artful device made in order to get him into their hands, that they might do him mischief. But Nehemiah, being conscious of his innocence, and satisfied that no such reports were circulated, simply denied the charge, and let them know, that he was aware that the whole was their own fiction: and, as they intended to weaken his hands from his work, he took occasion to beg of God to "strengthen his hands." The words, *O God*, are not in the original; and some interpret the sentence, as Nehemiah's resolution to proceed with increasing earnestness; but they seem rather to be an ejaculation; and the omission of the address implies the holy, yet reverend familiarity, with which this pious man communed with his condescending Father and Friend, and shows that his heart was habitually employed in thinking of his God. (Note, John 20:11-17.)

V. 10-14. Sanballat and his party being once more baffled, employed a still more subtle and dangerous expedient, suborning persons, who were reputed to be prophets, to give Nehemiah evil counsel in the name of God. The principal person concerned was Shemaiah, of whom Nehemiah seems previously to have had a good opinion. He was "shut up" in some chamber adjoining the sanctuary, probably as a token of his own fear, and a sign to Nehemiah of what he ought to do; who, perhaps being sent to, went to confer with him, as a friend and a prophet. The environs of the temple were secured by walls and gates, and a

maiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut up; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee."

11 And I said, "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

12 And lo, I perceived that ^hGod had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to their works, and to

the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

17 Moreover, in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them.

18 For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah the son of Arah; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

19 Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

^b 2 Kings 9:8. Jer. 36:5. Ez. 3:24. c Ps. 12:2. 37:12. 120:2,3. d 1 Kings 6:5. e 2 Chr. 28:24. 29:3,7. Mal. 1:10. Acts 21:30. f Job 24:13-17. John 3:20. g 3. 1 Sam. 19:5. Luke 4:13-16. Ps. 11:1,2. Prov. 28:1. Is. 10:19. Luke 13:31-35. Acts 8:1. 20:21. 21:13. Heb. 11:27. h 9. Num. 32:7-9. Ec. 10:1. Phil. 2:17-30. 1 Ez. 13:22. 1 Cor. 2:15. 12:10. k Jer. 14:14. 23:16,25. 28:15. Ez. 13:7. 1 John 4:1. l Is. 56:11. Ez. 13:19. Mic. 3:11. Acts 20:33. 1 Tim. 5:3. Tit. 1:7. 1 Pet. 5:2. 2 Pet. 2:3. Rev. 18:3. m Prov. 29:5. Is. 51:7,12,13. 57:11. Jer. 1:17. Ez. 2:6. Matt. 10:28. 2 Tim. 1:7. Rev. 21:8. n 6. Prov. 22:1. Ez. 7:1. o Jer. 18:1b. 20:10. Dan. 6:4,5. Matt. 22:15. 23:59. Acts 6:13. 2 Cor.

11:12. 1 Tim. 5:14. Tit. 2:8. p 5:19. Ps. 22:1. 63:1. q 4:4,5. 13:29. Ps. 140:5 -11. Jer. 11:20-23. 18:20-23. 2 Tim. 4:14,15. 1 John 5:16. r 1 Kings 22:22-24. Is. 9:14,15. Jer. 14:15,16. 28:1,10,15. Ez. 13:16,17. Mat. 7:15. 24:11,24. 2 Tim. 3:8. Rev. 19:20. s Ezra 6:15. Ps. 1:3. Dan. 9:25. t 4:1,2. u 2:10. 4:17. 6:12. z Ez. 14:25. Num. 33:23. Josh. 5:1. Ps. 129:2. y 3:5. 5:7. 13:25. Mic. 7:3-8. Matt. 24:10-12. * Heb. multiplied their letters passing to Tobiah. z 7:10. Ezra 2:5. a 3:4,30. b Prov. 28:4. John 7:7. 15:19. 1 John 4:5. c Or, matters. e 9:13. Is. 37:10-14. Acts 4:18-21.

gates of the city were not set up. Shemaiah therefore professed great concern for Nehemiah's safety; and counselled him to take refuge in the temple with him, lest his enemies should come and murder him by night; or that very night, as his words seem to imply. If Nehemiah had followed this advice, he would have lost his reputation for courage and confidence in God; and have appeared weak and contemptible: the people would have taken the alarm, deserted the work, and sought their own safety: the accusations of his enemies would have gained credit, even in the Persian court; and he would have appeared conscious of bad intentions. In short, it would have overturned his whole design, and given his enemies their desired advantage. (Notes, Matt. 4:1-11.) But Nehemiah soon saw through this project likewise. From the nature of the counsel, and by proper investigation, he perceived that Shemaiah was not delivering a message from God; but that he pronounced this prophecy against him, intending his ruin; having been hired by Tobiah and Sanballat, that Nehemiah might contract guilt, and expose himself to reproach.—When the rank of Nehemiah, and his authority, were considered, with his conscious integrity and professed confidence in God, and the importance of his work, it appeared very inconsistent for him to flee and hide himself. In such circumstances, even the preservation of life formed but a subordinate consideration: the support of the public cause, by an example of intrepidity, firmness, and consistency ought to be first considered. Any brave commander would venture his life, when the event of a decisive battle, and the fate of his country were at stake, and would scorn to flee at the appearance of danger: how much more then should Nehemiah venture his, for the glory of God and the benefit of his church! To take refuge in the temple in such a case, would be to prefer a disgraceful short life safety, to the most important of all causes. (Note, Acts 8:1.) Nehemiah, therefore, not only with decided firmness rejected this counsel, as inconsistent with the most evident scriptural principles: but, as Shemaiah, and Noadiah the prophetess, and the other pretended prophets, had most basely sold their services to the enemies of God and religion; he subjoins his prayers for their confusion and disappointment. (Note, 2 Tim. 4:14,15.)

V. 15, 16. This important and difficult work was completed in so very short a time, and under so many disadvantages, that even the adversaries of the Jews were convinced that God had prospered them. He had given them health, strength, courage, and unity; he had restrained their opposers and kept off interruptions; and he succeeded the whole by his blessing: so that "the work was wrought of their God." This dejected their enemies, and made them foreode the future prevalence of the Jews; but it did not allure him to desire a portion among that favoured people. (Notes, 1 Sam. 24:16-22. Esth. 6:13.)—Elul. (15) Answering to part of August and part of September, as it is supposed: for it is not elsewhere mentioned.

V. 17-19. While the wall was building, and afterwards, several of the nobles of Judah were in the interest of Tobiah, and held a traitorous correspondence with him: some of them, having joined affinity with him, had engaged others to swear to serve him, as they had opportunity. Nay, they had the confidence, or rather insolence, to report the good deeds, or supposed excellent endowments, of this bitter enemy of God and his people, to Nehemiah; either intimating to him that he ought to imitate them, or to form an alliance with so worthy a character! And at the same time they betrayed Nehemiah's measures to him. But his pious and excellent man, who had so strenuously pleaded the cause of the oppressed poor, would not, in his present circumstances, exer-

cise the authority, with which he was invested, against his own enemies in Judah, however basely they acted towards him; but persevered in serving his people, notwithstanding their treachery and ingratitude!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-9. The whole power and policy of Satan and his servants have always been directed against those, who zealously seek the welfare of the church of God; and though often baffled, they are unwearied in their projects.—The rage of persecutors, though terrible, is not so dangerous as the professed friendship of concealed enemies: so that except there is good evidence that men, who have opposed the cause of God, have truly repented, and been reconciled to him, they cannot safely be trusted, when they court the favour of his people, but should rather be suspected of some mischievous design. (Notes and P. O. Ezra 4:1-6. Notes Acts 9:10-16,23-30.) If we received no other damage from their insincere friendship, we should be taken off from our work to no purpose: we should not then suffer ourselves to be overcome by importunity; for we had better offend man by a refusal, than sin against God by compliance.—Even our common lawful business ought to have a decided preference to all matters of mere compliment: how much more then our peculiar duties as Christians, magistrates, or ministers of religion, in proportion to their importance and difficulty!—It is desirable to be constantly engaged in some useful employ; among other reasons, that we may have an answer ready for those invitations and proposals, which we cannot profitably accept, and scarcely know how to refuse. The active servant of God, may, on any such occasion, say, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to you?" And this is enough, as a reason for avoiding those circles, where no good can be got or done; and which interfere with the duties of the closet and the family, and prevent the redeeming of our time and the improvement of our talents.—The deceitful smiles of the world frequently form our first temptation in the path of duty. But if we steadfastly withstand them, and will not be diverted from our work, we must prepare for reproaches, slanders, and menaces, from the same quarter. Our firmness will be called obstinacy; our zeal, rashness; and our activity, ambition: nay, we shall be warned, that we are about to affront all our friends, and turn them into enemies; and to bring ourselves into dangers and difficulties, from which we cannot extricate ourselves, unless we follow other counsels, and act more circumspectly. The zealous servants of God have also, in every age and place, been unjustly traduced, as rebellious to the ruling powers; and their malicious enemies have often represented their own slanders, as the general sentiments of mankind. (Notes, Ezra 4:11-24. P. O. 7-24.) These misrepresentations tend to weaken the hands of the courageous; and the prejudice, alarm, and draw off such as were helpful to their pious designs. But a clear conscience, a lively faith, an assured persuasion that we are doing our duty, and a zeal for the honour of God, will carry us above all discouragements; and, being satisfied with denying the charges brought against us, it is best to persevere in our proper employment, without wasting time in altercations or self-vindication; only lifting up our prayer to God, to "strengthen our hands," and encourage our hearts.

V. 10-19. A thousand slanders will die away, one after another; while the malice of their authors will be exposed: but one real crime sometimes leaves an indelible stain upon a man's character, and obstructs his future usefulness: let us then fear the least sin far more than a calumny. But

CHAPTER VII.

Nehemiah, having finished the wall, and regulated the attendance of the Levites, commits the charge of the city to Hanani and Hananiah, 1-4. He sends a register of those who first came from Babylon, 5-7. The register is inserted, 8-69. The oblations made to the temple, 70-73.

NOW it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters, and the singers, and the Levites were appointed,

2 That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.

3 And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.

4 Now the city was large and great: but the

a 3:1, 6:15. b 3:3, 6:1. c 10:39. 11:3. 12:24. 1 Chr. 23:25. 26: 2 Chr. 31: 2, Ezra 3:8. d 1:2. e 10:23. f 2:8. g Num. 12:7. Ps. 101:6. Dan. 6:4. Matt. 24:45. 25:21. Luke 16:10-12. 1 Cor. 4:2. 2 Tim. 2:2. h 9:13. Gen. 32:18. Ex. 18:21. 2 Sam. 23:3. 1 Kings 13:12. Job 1:1. Is. 33:5.6. 113:19. Ps. 127:1. Matt. 10:16. j 3:23, 28-39. * Heb. broad in spaces. k Is. 58:12. Hag. 1:4-6. Matt. 6:33. 13:19. 6:14. m Ezra 7:27. 1 Cor. 15:10. 2 Cor. 8:5. 8:16. Phil.

those temptations are the most dangerous, which come from professed servants of God, and our own friends. When persons of this description, with apparent piety and affection, counsel the zealous to be more moderate and cautious, the diligent "to spare himself," and the bold to take care of himself: the insinuation has great effect. Our appeal, however, in this case, must be to the word of God. (Notes, 1 Kings 22:13, 14. Matt. 16:21-23.) That cannot be from him, let who will speak it, which contradicts his plain precept or truth; or which would induce us to neglect our duty, or prefer our own ease, emolument, credit, liberty, or life, to his glory and the welfare of his church, or which would persuade us to shrink from the cross, or refuse self-denial. Many such counsellors are in the pay of the enemy: for, being induced to timeserving in their own case, from interested motives, they consider the conduct of the more zealous as a reproach, and want to be kept in countenance by their example: and if we knew from what motives grave advice is sometimes given, we should understand from what quarter it came, without further information. We need not always, however, judge the adviser, but we ought in all cases, to try and prove the advice, and without scruple to reject all that is contrary to the word of God. Every man should also study consistency with his profession, former character, station, and engagements. That which is allowable in one man, may be very improper in another; and we ought to venture any thing in a good cause, trusting in the Lord, and committing ourselves to his protection. It is therefore useful frequently to inquire, 'Should such a man as I do so and so? Should I, who am a Christian, a saint, a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, a ransomed sinner, an heir of heaven; one set up to be "a light in the world," and "the salt of the earth," a preacher of righteousness, and "a steward of the mysteries of God;" should I even appear to be covetous, or sensual, or proud, or envious? Should I yield to impatience, discontent, or anger? Should I be slothful, unbelieving, or unmerciful and unkind? What effects will such conduct in me have upon others? Will not some be grieved, many misled and prejudiced; others emboldened in ungodliness and enmity to the truth? Will not this prevent the effect of my exhortation or persuasions, in my family, among my connexions, or from the pulpit?' Thus, all that God has done for us, or by us, may become an argument for watchfulness, diligence, self-denial, and perseverance.—It is also peculiarly instructive to consider, how others in similar circumstances would act. 'Would Peter or Paul have done so, to save their money, to indulge their sloth or pride, to escape a cross, a prison, or death? Do even the men of the world suffer themselves so easily to be diverted from their object, by every appearance of difficulty or peril?—In all cases indeed they, who would lead others in arduous services, must share the danger and the hardship: and this is the reason, why the enemy of souls employs so many instruments, and forms so many projects, to discourage, or bring a reproach on, the active servants of God. If the shepherd can be frightened away, the flock will be scattered.—Every success of the gospel discourages the enemies of God: and they sometimes perceive that it is his work, and yet hate it the more on that very account: but false brethren are the severest trial to the faithful servants of God. "They who forsake the law praise the wicked!" (Note, Prov. 28:4.) and those who form marriages with the avowed opposers of the gospel, will probably soon join their party, notwithstanding their present pretensions. Many leading men, yea, preachers and prophets in the visible church of God, will be found "workers of iniquity." But under every discouragement, we should "consider Jesus, who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself

people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.

5 ¶ And my God put into my heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,

6 These are the children of the province, ¶ a. c. that went up out of the captivity, of those L 556: that had been carried away, ¶ whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;

7 Who came with Zerubbabel, ¶ Joshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, ¶ Mispereth, Bigvai, ¶ Nehum, Baanah. The number, I say, of the men of the people of Israel was this;

8 The children of ¶ Parosh, two thousand a hundred and seventy and two.

2:12, 13. Col. 1:29. Jam. 1:16, 17. n 64. 1 Chr. 9:1. Ezra 2:62. o Ezra 2:1, &c. 5:8. 6:2. p 2 Kings 24:14-16. 25:11. 2 Chr. 36: Jer. 39: 52. q 12:17, 10. Ez. 1:11. Sheshbazzar. 2:2. Hag. 1:1. Matt. 12:13. Zorobabel. r Ezra 3:8, 9. 5:2. Zechar. 3:1-3. Joshua. s Ezra 2:2. See, aiah, Reeliahel. t Ezra 2:2. Mispah. u 12:3. Ezra 2:2. Rehum. x 10:14. Ezra 2:3. S. S. Pharoah. 10:25.

lest we be weary, and faint in our mind;" and who "laid down his life for his sheep;" that after his example we may persevere in our duty, amidst every danger and opposition not being overcome by the treachery, ingratitude, or perverseness of those around us, but still endeavouring to "overcome evil with good;" and "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

NOTES.—CHAP. VII. V. 1. *The singers, &c.*] This either refers to some regulations made by Nehemiah concerning the ministrations of the Levites at the temple; or to his preparations for solemnly dedicating the wall. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 12:27-43.)

V. 2, 3. It has been supposed by some learned men that Nehemiah, having finished the wall, and made other needful regulations, returned to the Persian court; but that he not long after came again to Jerusalem with a new commission: and that on this occasion he placed his brother Hanani, and Hananiah over the city, and gave them instructions how to manage in his absence. The charge, however, here given, and the service required, would be necessary even when Nehemiah resided at Jerusalem: for he could not superintend the gates and the watchmen, without being taken off from other important and numerous engagements. Doubtless Hanani was a proper person, or else Nehemiah would not have preferred him to this important trust; and his journey to Shushan, if it indeed took place, may be supposed to have been undertaken out of a zealous regard to his people and his religion: (Note, 1:2.) but of Hananiah it is expressly said, that "he was a faithful man, and feared God above many." (Notes, 5:14-18. 1 Kings 18:3, 12-16. Ps. 101:6.)—At night he charges them to stand by, and see the gates shut and barred in their presence.' *Bp. Patrick.—Ruler of the palace.* (2) 'So the house where Nehemiah dwelt is called, because he was governor for the king, and a kind of Viceroy, who did all the king's business, and here gave audience to the people, as the king was wont to do in his palace.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Note, 2:8.)

V. 4. The walls had been built upon their old foundations, in confidence that God in due time would replenish the city: but there were only a small number of inhabitants, compared with those of former ages; so that large spaces remained unoccupied. This would render it the more requisite that a strict watch should be kept, lest their enemies should scale the walls unobserved: and on the same account it was absolutely necessary that proper measures should be adopted for replenishing the city with inhabitants.

V. 5, 6. This account was taken of the people, in order to bring the tenth part of them to reside in Jerusalem. (Note, 11:1, 2.) and as it proved an useful measure, Nehemiah piously and reasonably ascribed the first thought of it to God, who "put it into his heart." (Marg. Ref. Note, Jam. 1:16-18.) In conducting this business he found the register of those who came up with Zerubbabel; which is here inserted nearly as we had it before. (Notes, Ezra 2:1-67.) Nehemiah found that list of those who came up in the first of Cyrus, as it was taken then: and . . . he called over the names of the families as they lay in order there: . . . but he took the number of them as they were now when he numbered them. Some families were now more in number than they were when that first was made, some were less; and some that were in that list were not to be found now. . . . Some . . . had come from Babel; some . . . were now gone back. *Lightfoot, as quoted by Bp. Patrick.*—As, however, the greatest part of the families consist of exactly the same number in both places; and the sum total in each, with several other particulars, entirely coincides; it can hardly be conceived that almost a hundred years should have made no greater changes.—Should any, however, conjecture, that

9 The children of 'Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

10 The children of 'Arah, six hundred fifty and two.

11 The children of 'Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred and eighteen.

12 The children of 'Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

13 The children of 'Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.

14 The children of 'Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.

15 The children of 'Binnui, six hundred forty and eight.

16 The children of 'Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight.

17 The children of 'Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and two.

18 The children of 'Adonikam, six hundred threescore and seven.

19 The children of 'Bigvai, two thousand threescore and seven.

20 The children of 'Adin, six hundred fifty and five.

21 The children of 'Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

22 The children of 'Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

23 The children of 'Bezai, three hundred twenty and four.

24 The children of 'Hariph, a hundred and twelve.

25 The children of 'Gibeon, ninety and five.

26 The men of 'Beth-lehem and Netophah, a hundred fourscore and eight.

27 The men of 'Anathoth, a hundred twenty and eight.

28 The men of 'Beth-azmaveth, forty and two.

29 The men of 'Kirjath-jearim, Chephirath, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three.

30 The men of 'Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.

31 The men of 'Michmas, a hundred and twenty and two.

32 The men of 'Beth-el and Ai, a hundred twenty and three.

33 The men of the other 'Nebo, fifty and two.

34 The children of 'the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.

35 The children of 'Harim, three hundred and twenty.

36 The children of 'Jericho, three hundred forty and five.

37 The children of 'Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one.

38 The children of 'Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

39 ¶ The priests: the children of 'Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.

40 The children of 'Immer, a thousand fifty and two.

41 The children of 'Pashur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.

42 The children of 'Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

43 ¶ The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of

Kadmil, and of the children of 'Hodevah, seventy and four.

44 ¶ The singers: the children of Asaph, a hundred forty and eight.

45 ¶ The porters: the children of Shallum the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, a hundred thirty and eight

46 ¶ The 'Nethinims: the children of Ziba, the children of 'Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

47 The children of Keros, the children of 'Sia, the children of Padon,

48 The children of Lebana, the children of 'Hagaba, the children of 'Shalmai,

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar,

50 The children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda,

51 The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of 'Phaseah,

52 The children of Besai, the children of 'Meunim, the children of 'Nephishesim,

53 The children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the children of Harhur,

54 The children of 'Bazlith, the children of Mehida, the children of Harsha,

55 The children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of 'Tamah,

56 The children of Nezhiah, the children of Hatipha.

57 ¶ The children of 'Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of 'Perida,

58 The children of 'Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel,

59 The children of Shephatiah, the children of Hatil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of 'Amon.

60 All 'the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants, were three hundred ninety and two.

61 And these were they which went up also from Tel-melah, 'Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not show their father's house, nor their 'seed, whether they were of Israel.

62 The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, 'six hundred forty and two.

63 ¶ And 'of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took one of the daughters of 'Barzillai the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name.

64 These sought their register among 'those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

65 And 'the Tirshatha, said unto them, 'that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim.

66 ¶ The 'whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore;

67 Besides 'their man-servants, and their maid-servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had

7 Ezra 2:4, 8:8, 9:6-18, Ezra 2:5, [775.] a 10:14, Ezra 2:6, [2812.] 9:4, b Ezra 2:7, 8:7, 10:26, c Ezra 2:8, [945.] d Ezra 2:9, e Ezra 2:10, Bani, [642.] f Ezra 11, [623.] g Ezra 2:12, [1222.] h Ezra 2:13, [666.] i Ezra 2:14, [12058.] k Ezra 15, [494.] l Ezra 2:16, m Ezra 2:18, [323.] n Ezra 2:17, [323.] o Ezra 2:18, 1:21, p Ezra 2:20, Gabbah, q Ezra 2:21, 22, [179.] r Ezra 2:23, Is, 10:30, Jer. 1:1, 1:21, s Ezra 2:24, Azmaveth, Josh. 9:17, Ezra 2:25, Kirjath-jearim, u Josh. 18:24, 25, v Ezra 2:26, x 1 Sam. 13:5, 23, Ezra 2:27, Is, 10:33, Michmas, y Josh. 8:9, 17, Ezra 2:28, [223.] z Ezra 2:29, a 12, Ezra 2:31, b Ezra 2:32, 10:21, c Ezra 2:34, d 8:2, 11:34, 35, 1 Chr. 8:12, Ezra 2:33, [725.] e Ezra 2:35, [3630.] f 1 Chr. 24:7, Ezra 2:36, g 1 Chr. 24:14, Ezra 2:37, h 1 Chr. 9:12, 24:9, Ezra 2:38, 10:22, 11 Chr. 24:8, Ezra 2:39, 10:31, k Ezra 2:40, Hodaviah.

some ancient copyist had inserted the wrong register, and that his mistake had been generally followed; the very conclusion would show, that such alterations are almost always liable to detection; and no reasonable man would think it the least objection to the divine inspiration of the sacred Scriptures.

3:9, Juthah, 11 Chr. 21:3, Ezra 2:41, [128.] m 1 Chr. 25: Ezra 2:42, [139.] n Lev. 27:2-8, Josh. 9:23-27, 1 Chr. 9:2, o Ezra 2:43, Hashupha, p Ezra 2:44, Sia'a, q Ezra 2:45, Hagabah, or, Hagab, r Ezra 2:46, Shalmi, s Ezra 2:49, Pasrah, t Ezra 2:50, Nephisim, u Ezra 2:52, Bazlith, v Ezra 2:53, Thammah, x 11:3, y Ezra 2:55, Peruda, z Ezra 2:56, Jaala, a Ezra 2:57, Ami, b Ezra 2:58, c Ezra 2:59, Telbaza, Addon, d Ezra 2:60, [652.] e Ezra 2:61-63, f 2 Sam. 17:27, 19:31-39, 1 Kings 2:7, g 5, 1 Chr. 9:1, i 1 Or, the governor, 8:9, 10:1, Ezra 2:63, h 1 Lev. 2:3, 10, 6:17, 10:17, 18, 21:21-23, i Ex. 28:30, Num. 27:21, Deut. 33:8, k Ezra 2:64, 11:6, 45:1, 2, Jer. 27:7.

V. 7-69. Marg. Ref. Note, 5, 6.—The Tirshatha, &c. (65) Note, Ezra 2:61-63.—The whole, &c. (66) Note, Ezra 2:64.

V. 70-72. This seems to have been a distinct oblation from that recorded in Ezra: (Note, Ezra 2:68-70.) and was probably made after the people were registered by

two hundred forty and five singing men and singing women.

68 Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six: their mules, two hundred forty and five:

69 Their camels, four hundred thirty and five: six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

70 And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basins, five hundred and thirty priests' garments.

71 And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pounds of silver.

72 And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand drams of gold and two thousand pounds of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments.

73 So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Nethinims, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities; and when the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities.

CHAPTER VIII.

The people being assembled, Ezra, with solemn worship, reads and expounds the law, 1-8. The people are greatly affected; but Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites, exhort them to joy in God, to cheerful feasting, and to liberality towards the poor, 9-12. Being instructed from the law concerning the feast of Tabernacles, they keep it with great solemnity, 13-18.

AND all the people gathered themselves together has one man into the street that

in Ezra 2:65. [200.] n Ezra 2:66, 67. * Heb. part. Ezra 2:68-70. o Num. 7:2-86. 1 Chr. 29:3-8. p 8:9. 10:1. q Ex. 12:22. 24:6. 1 Kings 7:45. 1 Chr. 28:17. 2 Chr. 4:5, 11. Jer. 52:19. r Job 34:18. Luke 5:11-4. 2 Cor. 9:12. s Ezra 2:70. 3:1. a Ezra 3:1. b Judg. 20:1-8. c 16:3-26. 12:37. d 4-9. Ezra 7:6, 11. Jer. 8:8, 9. Matt. 13:52. 23:13, 34. e 2 Chr. 34:15. Is. 8:20. Mal. 4:4. f Deut. 17:16. 31:10. Mal. 2:7. g Deut. 31:11-13. 2 Chr. 17:1-5. * Heb. understood in hearing. Is. 28:9. h Lev. 23:34. Num. 29:1-6. i Luke 4:16-20. Acts 13:15-27. 13:31. * Heb. light. Acts 20:7, 11. 25:23. k Matt. 7:28, 29. Mark 12:37. Luke 6:18. 19:48. Acts 16:14. 12:11. 1 Thes. 2:13. Heb. 2:1-3. Rev. 2:29. 3:22.

Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha or governor at this time, as Zerubbabel had been at the first return of the Jews from captivity. The principal persons also concurred with him liberally, according to their ability.

V. 73. This verse so accords with the last verse of the second of Ezra, and the first of the third, that it is doubtful whether it should be understood of the Jews who returned under Zerubbabel; or of what followed after Nehemiah had registered them. If it be taken in the latter sense; and if the events next recorded took place in the same year with the building of the wall, as probably they did; there could be no time for Nehemiah to go to Babylon: (Note, 2, 3,) for the wall was not finished till the twenty-fifth day of Elul, or the sixth month. (6:15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The active servants of God, and of his church, will never want employment; for the completion of one design will make way for the commencement of another.—The fear of God powerfully possessing the heart, produces proportionable fidelity and conscientiousness in a man's whole character and conduct: and it is happy for the community when men of this character have the charge of public affairs.—“Except the Lord keep the city,” the walls are built, and “the watchmen wake in vain;” yet in this and all other concerns, God is to be trusted in the use of prudent and proper means, and not to be tempted by the neglect of them. (Note, Ps. 127:1. P. O. Matt. 4:5-7.)—Magistrates and ministers have more extensive charges than others: but every man ought to watch over his own heart, and his own house, that sin, the worst enemy, may be kept at a distance as much as possible.—Provision is made in the gospel, and in the city of our God, for immensely greater numbers than have yet been enrolled citizens: we should therefore be devising means for replenishing it with inhabitants, as well as for building its walls.—“All holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works are from God:” to him belongs the praise: when good thoughts are suggested; we should be careful not to “quench the Spirit,” by rejecting them; (Note, 1 Thes. 5:16-22, v. 19.) and we ought continually to pray that our God would put more and more of them into our hearts, and enable us to bring them to good effect; and that he would do the same for increasing numbers. Then we might hope that many would concur in designs, as yet scarcely thought of, for propagating the gospel and promoting the salvation of souls.—The Lord delights to honour those who willingly face danger, and endure hardship for his sake: and he knows the names of all his people, and will produce the register at last. But we be to those who turn back from him, loving this present world: and happy they who willingly come to dedicate themselves, and consecrate their substance to his service and glory!

NOTES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. The feast of trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month; and the people assembled to celebrate it, though not explicitly required. (Note, Lev. 23:24, 25.)—It is probable that Nehe-

was before the water-gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.

2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

3 And he read therein before the street that was before the water-gate from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Ananiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up.

6 And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

7 Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah,

† Heb. Unvers. 110:25. 11:5. m 10:13. Ezra 10:33. e 10:7, 20. 11:7. 12:13. Ezra 10:39. p Luke 4:17. § Heb. eyes. q Judg. 3:20. 1 Kings 8:14. r 1 Chr. 29:20. 2 Chr. 6:4. Ps. 41:13. 72:18, 19. Eob. 1:3. 1 Pet. 1:3. s 5:13. Jer. 23:6. Matt. 8:13. 1 Cor. 14:16. 1 Gen. 14:22. Ps. 28:2. 68:4. 134:2. 143:2. 1 Sam. 3:11. 1 Tim. 2:9. u Gen. 24:26. Ez. 4:31. 12:27. 2 Chr. 20:18. 29:30. x Lev. 9:24. Matt. 26:39. Rev. 7:11. y 3:19. 9:4. 10:9. 12:24. z 3:17. 9:4. 10:13. a 9:4. 10:12. 12:24. Ezra 8:18. b 11:16, 19. 12:25. c 10:10, 18. d 4. 3:23. 12:41, 42. Ezra 10:32.

miah having formed a plan for their instruction from the law, called on them by this early attendance to concur in it. Doubtless the appointed sacrifices were offered; (Note, Num. 29:1-6.) but the courts of the temple not being so spacious or convenient, the congregation assembled in a broad street of the city to hear the law read and expounded: and not only the women, but even the children who were capable of understanding, attended. Accordingly Ezra the priest, being a learned and ready scribe, having long been bestowing much pains on the sacred Scriptures, and preparing correct copies of them, was called upon to take the lead in this service: and though it does not appear that the measure originated with him, yet he most cordially concurred in it. (Note, Ezra 7:6-10.) Some conjecture that Ezra had been at Babylon during the preceding events, in which he is not mentioned; and that he had lately returned: but perhaps he had been privately occupied in his own line for the good of the people, and was well satisfied to leave public affairs entirely to Nehemiah. (Note, 1 Sam. 12:23.)

V. 3. The reading and expounding continued about six hours from “the light” (marg.) till noon; and as most of the people must have stood in the open air during a great part of the time, it appears that they were not soon wearied. (Notes, 9:3. Acts 20:7-12. 28:23-29.) Indeed “the ears of all the people were unto the book of the law,” or hearkening to it with profound attention. (Notes, Luke 19:45-48, v. 48. Heb. 2:1-4.)

V. 4. “Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood,” to raise him higher than the people, that he might be the better seen and heard by them all: whence in the Hebrew, it is called a tower of wood; but was not like our pulpits, ... but large and long, that many persons might stand in it, as appears by what follows. Bp. Patrick. Beside, &c.] Some suppose that these persons, being priests or Levites under Ezra's directions, assisted by turns in the service, to prevent his being worn down with it: but others think that they were principal persons who thus showed their concurrence, by standing on his right hand and on his left: or that they were priests or Levites preparing for the same service on future occasions. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5, 6. Ezra having reverently opened the sacred volume; before he began to read first “blessed the Lord, the great God,” he gave him thanks for the good gift of his holy law, and for all his mercies; he adored his great and glorious Majesty; and he implored his blessing on the service before him. To this the people gave a cordial and repeated assent; and, prostrating themselves on the ground, added their most solemn worship. This was an excellent preparation for a due regard to the sacred Scriptures; and the example should be imitated by those who preach and expound, or read and hear the word of God.

V. 7. The persons mentioned in this verse must not be confounded with those who stood by Ezra in his pulpit or tower: for only one of the same name occurs in both places;

*Kelita, *Azariah, *Jozabab, *Hanan, *Pelaiah, and the Levites, *caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place.

8 So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.

[Practical Observations.]

9 And *Nehemiah, which *is* the *Tirshatha, and *Ezra the priest the scribe, and *the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, *This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; *mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, *Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and *send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for *this* day *is* holy unto our LORD: neither be ye sorry; for *the joy of the LORD *is* your strength.

11 So the Levites *stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day *is* holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, *because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

e 10:10. Ezra 10:23. 17:23. 10:2. 12:33. g Ezra 10:22,23. h 10:10. 110:10. k Lev 11:11. 11:11. 2:2. Matt. 3:21,22,27,28. Luke 21:27,32. Acts 8:30-35. 17:23. 28:24. 1:1. *Dr. governor. n Ezra 7:11. o 7:12. 12:11. 13:1. 2:2. 8:5. 11:1. 1:6. p 2:2. Lev 33:21. Num 29:1-6. q Deut. 12:7. 16:11,14,15. 26:14. Ec. 3:4. Mal. 2:13. r 2 Kings 22:11,19. Rom. 3:20. 2 Cor. 7:9-11. s Ec. 2:4. 3:13. 5:18. 9:7. 1 Tim. 6:17,18. 1 Deut. 26:11-13. Euth. 9:19,22. Job 31:16-18. Ec. 11:12. Luke 19:41. Rev. 11:10. u Ps. 28:7,8. Prov. 17:22. 18. 6:7,8. 12:1-2. 35:1-4. 2 Cor. 8:2. 12:8,9. x Num. 13:30. 7:8. Job 22:12. Ps. 19:8-11. 19:14,16,27,97,103,104,111,127,128,130,141,174. Prov. 2:10,11. 24:13,14. Jer. 15:16. Luke 24:32. 2 Chr. 30:23.

and, no doubt, in that instance, different men of the same name were meant. The persons here mentioned were most of them, if not all, priests and Levites: (*Marg. Ref.*) and as they "caused the people to understand the law," and were not in the pulpit with Ezra; and as it can hardly be supposed that he merely read, and that they expounded what he read: it is not unlikely that they had separate audiences in different places, where they read and expounded the law, as Ezra did in the station assigned him: for one man's voice could not reach so great a multitude. (*Note, Acts 2:14-21, v. 14.*) Perhaps different orders and descriptions of persons formed separate circles: and therefore it is added, that "the people stood in their place," as it had been appointed to each of them. "The people stood in their place," *listening both to what was read, and what was delivered as the explication of it. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 8. It is here said, "So they read, &c." which confirms the preceding supposition, there being evidently more than one reader.—The persons engaged in this service read the text distinctly, and then gave the interpretation: thus the meaning was declared to the people, with all plainness, and application to their present circumstances and conduct, for their conviction and instruction. This seems the obvious meaning of the passage. Some learned men, however, suppose, that the Jews had forgotten the Hebrew, during the captivity; and that the expo-sitors merely rendered what was read into Chaldee. *But if this were true, why did the prophets write in Hebrew after their return from captivity? and this very book shows the contrary, (13:23,24.) where the Jews' language appears to have been spoken by the people? *Bp. Patrick.* The opinion indeed is grounded chiefly on Jewish traditions, and customs introduced in later ages, and has no support in the Scriptures themselves.

V. 9. The people, when the law of God was read and explained to them, were convinced of their guilt and danger; and, with tender consciences and broken hearts, mourned for their transgressions. (*Notes, 2 Kings 22:8-11, v. 11. Rom. 3:19,20. 7:9-12. Gal. 2:17-21, v. 19.*) This was indeed a proper and highly beneficial effect of that service: but as it was a holy festival, which the Lord would have kept with joy and gladness, they were instructed by their teachers to repress their grief, and to turn their thoughts to the mercy of God, and to hope and rejoice in him.—"The Levites," as well as Ezra, "taught the people." (*Notes, 2 Chr. 17:7-9. 30:21,22. v. 22. 35:1-3, v. 3.*)

V. 10, 11. After the former part of the day had been spent in the ordinances of religion, the people were allowed, and even required, (probably by a public notice from Nehemiah, enforced by the priests and Levites,) to spend the remainder in cheerful feasting, as a representation of the believer's joy in the service of his gracious God. (*Notes, Deut. 12:5-7. Ec. 3:1-11.*) It is probable that peace-offerings had been offered, and they were now called to feast together on them; and might lawfully drink the *sweet or rich* wines, which their vineyards produced, in as liberal a manner as consisted with temperance. But then they must remember to send portions to those for whom nothing had been prepared; to the poor, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.

13 ¶ And on *the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even ¶to understand the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded ¶by Moses, that the children of Israel should *dwell in ¶booths in the feast of the seventh month:

15 And ¶that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and ¶in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto ¶the mount, and ¶fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and ¶palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as *it is* written.

16 ¶ So the people went forth, and brought *them*, and made themselves booths, every one upon ¶the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in ¶the courts of the house of God, and in ¶the street of the water-gate, and ¶in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and *sat under the booths; for since the days of *Jeshua the son of Nun unto that lay ¶had not the children of Israel ¶done so. And ¶there was very great gladness.

Prov. 2:1-6. 8:33,34. 12:1. Mark 8:33,31. Luke 19:47,48. Acts 4:1. 12:12. 1 Cor. 14:1. that they might instruct in. 7:8. Luke 24:32. 2 Tim. 2:24,25. Heb. by the hand of. a Lev. 23:34,40-43. Deut. 16:13-15. Zech. 11:15-19. John 7:2. b Gen. 33:17. c Lev. 23:4. d Deut. 16:16. e Jude. 9:48,49. Matt. 21:1. f Lev. 23:40. g Gen. 8:11. h John 12:13. Rev. 7:9. 1 Deut. 22:8. 2 Sam. 11:2. Jer. 19:13. 22:29. 2 Chr. 20:5. 33:5. 13. 9:26. 12:37. m 12:39. 2 Kings 14:18. n John 1:14. Heb. 11:9,13. o Josh. 1:11. Joshua. Heb. 4:8. Jesus. p 2 Chr. 7:9. 10:10. 13:18. Ezra 3:4. q 2 Chr. 30:26. 35:18. r 1 Chr. 29:22. 2 Chr. 7:10. 30:21-23.

(Deut. 12:13,19. P. O.) For this would distinguish their religious feasting from the sensual indulgence of carnal men, and complete the due solemnization of the holy day. They were also again reminded, not to indulge grief, on the present festival; (*Note, 1,2.*) "for the joy of the LORD was their strength." A grateful, adoring recollection of his late mercies, and his ancient distinguished favours to the nation, and powerful interposition in their behalf; with cheerful meditation on his promises and perfections, inspiring confidence, love, and zeal, and leading them to abound in joyful praises and thanksgivings; would fortify their souls to meet the dangers, encounter the difficulties, resist the temptations, and perform the duties, which still lay before them. Whereas, indulged sorrow would induce desponding fear, enfeeble their resolutions, and unfit them for labours, trials, and conflicts. (*Notes, Ps. 28:6-8. Prov. 15:13. Is. 12:1-3. 35:3,4. 2 Cor. 2:5-11. Phil. 4:4-7.*) "What Nehemiah had said to as many as could hear him, the Levites said to the rest of the people; going about, and persuading them to lay aside their heaviness, and make it a good day." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12. The people in general had not only understood from the law, the will of God and their own sinfulness, but they had learned, in some degree, the grounds of holy rejoicing in the Lord; and having begun by sowing in tears, they soon were enabled to reap in joy. (*Note, Ps. 126:5,6.*) "This was an extraordinary reason for their mirth, that they were illuminated in divine knowledge, and understood the will of God better than they did before." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13. This was no festival; but, having profited from the word the day before, the people were desirous to be further instructed: and the chief of the fathers, priests, and Levites were the most forward to request Ezra to favour them with an exposition of some other part of the law, being convinced of his superior knowledge in it. Hence it appears, that he instructed even those who assisted in teaching the people.

V. 14-16. (*Notes, Lev. 23:34-43. Num. 29:12-38. Zech. 14:16-19. John 7:2,14-17,37-39.*) It may be supposed, that Ezra selected those portions of the law, which prescribed solemnities to be observed in the seventh month: especially the feast of tabernacles, as it had not in general been duly observed, and the season was approaching for it. (*Note, Jer. 1:22-25.*)

V. 17. It is evident that this and the other solemn feasts were totally neglected, at some times, and for a long while together: yet a few instances occur of the feast of tabernacles being kept; and these words must therefore be understood of the exactness, unanimity, and joyfulness, with which it was at this time celebrated. (*Notes, 1 Kings 8:63-65. Ezra 3:4.*) "They rejoiced in the days of Joshua, that they had got possession of Canaan; and now they rejoiced that they were restored to it, and quietly settled in it." *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 1 Kings 8:66. 2 Chr. 30:26,27.)*

V. 18. The reading of the law every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles had been enjoined by Moses, but it seems not in general to have been duly attended to at this time, however, it formed a part of the daily service, through the whole continuance of the feast. (*Note, Lev. 31. 10-13.*)

18 Also "day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *was* a solemn assembly, 'according unto the manner.

CHAPTER IX.

A solemn fast is observed, 1-3. The Levites, in lending the worship of the people, piously acknowledge the manifold goodness of God to Israel, and humbly confess the sins of the nation, as the cause of their miseries, 4-37. The people solemnly covenant with God, 38.

NOW in the "twenty and fourth day of this month the 'children of Israel were assembled

a Deut. 31.10-13. * Heb. *a restraint*. t Lev. 23.36. Num. 29.35. John 7.37. e Lev. 23.34-36. 2 Chr. 7.10. h Jer. 30.25. 2 Chr. 20.23. Ezra 9.23. Esth. 4.3,16. Is. 2.12. Joel 1.13,14. 2.15-17. Jon. 3.5-8. Acts 13.2,3. d Josh. 7.6. 1 Sam. 4.12. 2 Sam. 1.2. Job 2.12. e 13.3,30. Ezra 9.2. 10.11. * Heb

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-8. Pious men of different dispositions may serve the church in their several ways. The studious may, as it were, prepare materials with which the active may work; and the active may make way for the studious, to bring forth their treasures for public use. They ought therefore reciprocally to assist each other; and to welcome such assistance, without envy, competition, or prejudice.—The public reading, expounding, and preaching of God's word has, in all ages, been the grand method of promoting true religion: they, therefore, who are eminently capable of this service, should be called forth from obscurity and retirement, and excited and encouraged to abound in it; all, of every age, sex, or rank, who are capable of understanding, should assemble to attend, and all ought to "give earnest heed to the things which they hear." (Note, 2 Chr. 17:7-9. P. O. 7-19.) Those who are in reputation should set an example of diligence in this respect, and even teachers should be "swift to hear" other ministers, especially younger ministers their approved seniors, as they have opportunity, that they may become more competent for the service.—When the value of the Scriptures, and of the immortal soul, is properly understood; and when we are earnestly engaged, and in a spiritual frame of mind; we shall not soon be weary of divine ordinances. Short sermons, therefore, or tired hearers, prove a very low state of religion: for facts demonstrate, that where the word of God is precious, even inconvenient situations and uneasy postures will be patiently endured: and when ministers, who are themselves in earnest, perceive the people thirsting for instruction, and drinking it in, they will be encouraged to proceed, and to preach as much and as often as required, so long as God gives them health for the work.—Reading and preaching should be attended with solemn worship: the perfections of our God are worthy of all adoration; his mercies call for our most grateful acknowledgment; and a sense of our own wants and unworthiness, love to his people, compassion for sinners, and regard to all orders of mankind, where they prevail, will dictate many prayers and supplications. In these services one person must speak, but all should join in their hearts, and express their solemn and cordial assent.—We cannot too humbly or reverently worship "the LORD, the great God," yet, blessed be his name, we may call him Father in filial confidence and hope.—Whenever we open the sacred volume, we should bless the Lord for that precious gift, and proceed to peruse it, with entire submission to his teaching and authority.—Ministers should endeavour to make it evident to every one, that they preach according to these sacred oracles; producing clear scriptural warrant for all their doctrine; reading the word distinctly, diligently causing the people to understand it, by familiar explanations and illustrations; and applying it in the most plain and simple manner to their hearts and consciences.

V. 9-18. The divine law, when faithfully unfolded, in its extensive demands and righteous sanction, is generally made successful by the Holy Spirit, in bringing the stout, hard, and proud hearts of sinners to tremble, to melt into godly sorrow, and to become abased before God. For it pierces the conscience, fills the soul with dismay, and thus prepares for the sweet consolations of the gospel, by which is "the knowledge of salvation, through the remission of sins." Thus the broken heart is bound up, and the sinner learns to rejoice in God our Saviour.—Both godly sorrow and holy joy are profitable, and beautiful in their season: and it is peculiarly desirable to have all our passions regulated according to the will of God, and the duty of the present occasion. Those who mourn for sin should be comforted, instructed and directed to rejoice in the Lord. This they have abundant reason to do, nover many their sins have been, when they humbly come o trust in his mercy. His salvation is perfectly free; the provisions of his grace are plenteous; "his righteousness is for ever;" his "ways are pleasantness;" his protection sure; his consolations strong; and "hope" in his mercy and of his glory "maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (Note, Rom. 5:3-5.) Joy in God, if genuine, adds strength and courage to the soul for every duty and for every trial; it inspires resolution for service, and vigour in resisting temptation; it satisfies, and sanctifies, and enlarges the heart in cheerful obedience, and in love to our brethren. Indeed, that joy is a mere counterfeit, which has not these effects: and they are ene-

with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.

2 And "the seed of Israel separated themselves from all 'strangers, and stood and 'confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 And "they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God *one* fourth part of the day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

4 ¶ Then stood up upon the 'stairs, of the

strange children, Ps. 144:7,11. Is. 2:6. Hos. 5:7. f 1:6. Lev. 2. 3, 10. Ezra 9:6,17,5. Ps. 108:6,7. Dan. 9:3-10,20. 1 John 1:7-9. g 4:7,8. 1 s. 3. 9, Or, scaffold.

mies to their own sanctification, who always indulge sorrow, even for sin, and put from them those consolations, which are tendered to them by the word and Spirit of God.—It is consistent with godliness, cheerfully and moderately to use the comforts of Providence; when they are received with thanksgiving, and "sanctified by the word of God and prayers," and by liberally communicating to the poor and needy. But those who "eat the fat and drink the sweet," and send no portion, or only scanty pittances, to those for whom nothing is prepared: have not this sanctified enjoyment of their abundance. This especially distinguishes a Christian feast, from the revellings and banquetings which are ranked by the apostles with abominable idolatries. (Note, 1 Pet. 4:3-5.)—Whatever causes a believer to rejoice, should excite him to abound in thanksgivings to God, and liberality to the poor. But his joy will not so much arise from worldly prosperity or indulgence, as from having understood the words of God, and from perceiving that sinners may hope in his mercy, and exult in the prospect of eternal glory.—Those, who have profited by the word of God, will be glad of an opportunity of hearing it on any day, as far as consistent with other duties: and when the people are so disposed, the minister is called to be "instant in season and out of season."—Some portions of Scripture are more suitable to the circumstances of our congregations than others would be, especially when they remind them of present duty. For even true Christians neglect many things, through ignorance and forgetfulness, and for want of particular instructions. But it is admirable, when they no sooner hear the command of God, than they prepare for obedience; when attending on the word excites an increasing appetite for it; and when the ordinances afford great gladness to their souls.—Yet, alas, how little have the commandments and institutions of our God been hitherto observed even among his professed worshippers! So that when individuals or collective bodies, come near the standard of his word, in the power of godliness, they become "men wondered at." But though none, from age to age, or through whole nations of professed Christians, have ever served God, as some small company may aim to do; yet if these be evidently obeying the plain meaning of Scripture, they ought not to be censured as singular, precise, or affected; but to be commended and imitated.—True religion will make us strangers and pilgrims upon earth: and those who refuse conformity to the world, and have their conversation in heaven, and their joy in the Lord, must appear strange and uncouth in the eyes of the servants of that other master, who "worketh in all the children of disobedience."

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1. No doubt the day of atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month, had been duly observed: the feast of tabernacles lasted from the fifteenth to the twenty-second day of it; (Notes, Lev. 16:29-31. 23:26-43.) and then, only one day having intervened, the people kept a solemn fast, with every customary expression of godly sorrow and humiliation. This seems to have been done, not only by the authority of the governor, but by the general approbation of the people; who, by hearing the law read and expounded, had discovered their own numerous and heinous transgressions, with those of their fathers, and of the nation in preceding ages; (Notes, 8:9-13.) and it was intended as an introduction to their solemn covenanting with God, as afterwards recorded. (Notes, 38. 10:1.) It is probable that Nehemiah had formed the plan of this from the beginning of these solemnities, and had consulted with Ezra, and other principal persons, about the best method of accomplishing his purpose; which he accordingly did with their hearty concurrence.

V. 2. Before the appointed fast began, the Israelites carefully separated from among them those strangers, or Gentiles, who either by marriage or amity were intermingled with them. This was intended as a preparation for the solemn observance: for it seems that the people had again intermarried with the surrounding nations, after Ezra had separated them from their heathen wives. (Notes, Ezra 10:1)

V. 3. The persons afterwards mentioned, (4,5.) stood up to perform the services of the day: and they spent "one fourth" of it in reading the law, (probably expounding it also, as in the former instances, Notes, 8:1-8.) and "one fourth" in confessing their sins, and in other acts of solemn worship.—Some think that six hours, (a fourth part of the twenty-four,) were at once spent in each of these sacred duties.

17 And 'refused to obey, neither were 'mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion 'appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art *sa* God 'ready to pardon, 'gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and 'forsookest them not.

18 Yea, 'when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This *is* thy god that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations;

19 Yet thou 'in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: 'the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go.

20 Thou 'gavest also thy 'good Spirit to instruct them, and 'witheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and 'gavest them water for their thirst.

21 Yea, 'forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, *so that* they lacked nothing; 'their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

22 Moreover, 'thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst 'divide them into corners: so they possessed 'the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 Their children also 'multipliedst thou, as the stars of heaven, and 'broughtest them into the land, concerning which 'thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess *it*.

24 So the children went in and possessed the land, and 'thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them 'as they would.

25 And they took 'strong cities, and 'a fat

land, and possessed houses full of all goods, 'wells digged, vineyards and olive-yards, and 'fruit-trees in abundance: so they 'did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and 'delighted themselves in thy great goodness.

26 Nevertheless, 'they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and 'cast thy law behind their backs, and 'slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and 'they wrought great provocations.

27 Therefore 'thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and 'in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest *them* from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them 'saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest, they 'did evil again before thee: therefore ledest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned and cried unto thee, thou 'heardest *them* from heaven, and 'many times didst thou deliver them; according to thy mercies;

29 And 'testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: 'yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, ('which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and 'withdrew the shoulder, 'and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

30 Yet 'many years didst thou 'forbear them, and testifiedst against them 'by thy Spirit in 'thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: 'therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.

31 Nevertheless, 'for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art *a* 'gracious and merciful God.

[Practical Observations.]

32 Now therefore, 'our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who 'keepest cove-

Num. 14:24, 11:41, 16:14. Ps. 106:24, 25. Prov. 1:24. Heb. 12:25. e Ps. 78:11, 32, 106:7, 13. Matt. 16:9-11. 2 Pet. 1:12-15. f Num. 14:4. Acts 7:39. g Num. 14:18, 19. Ps. 85:15, 130:4. Mic. 7:18, 19. * Heb. of pardons. h Ex. 54:6, 7. Ps. 78:38, 103:8-18, 145:9, 9. Joel 2:13. Rom. 9:15. Eph. 1:6, 7. 11 Kings 6:13, 8:57. Ps. 106:43-46, k Ex. 32:4-8, 31:32. Deut. 9:12-15. Ps. 106:19-23. Ps. 20:7, &c. l Ps. 106:7, 8, 45. Lam. 3:22. Ex. 20:14, 22. Dan. 9:9, 18. Mal. 3:6. m See on 12. Ex. 40:38. Num. 9:15-22. Is. 4:5, 6. 1 Cor. 10:1-2. n 30. Num. 11:17-25. 2 Pet. 1:29. Is. 63:11, 4. Ps. 143:10. Rom. 15:36. Gal. 5:22, 23. Eph. 5:9, 2 Pet. 1:21. p Ex. 16:35. Is. 5:12. q Ps. 105:41. Is. 4:17, 18, 49:21. Jer. 1:14, 17:37-39. r Ex. 16:35. Num. 11:33, 81. Deut. 2:7, 8. Jer. 1:25. s 106:18. s 106:8, 1, 25. Ps. 34:10. t Josh. 2:1-5. Ps. 78:5, 10:11. u Deut. 32:25. Josh. 11:23. v Num. 21:21-35. Deut. 2:4, 30. 31-17. Ps. 145:10-12, 17:12-22. v in 15:5, 24:17. 1 Chr. 27:23. z Josh. 1:3. &c. a Gen. 12:7, 13:15-17, 15:18, 17:8, 26:3. b Josh. 18:1. 1 Chr. 22:19. Ps. 44:2, 3. c Heb. according to their will. 2 Pet. 2:26. c Num. 13:27, 28. Deut. 3:5, 6:10-12, 9:1-3, d 35. Deut. 3:5, 10:21, 12:32. 20:8. e 1 Cor. 10:1. f Heb. tree of food. g Ex. 32:15. Ps. 65:11. Is. 6:10. Jer. 5:27, 28. Hos. 13:6. f1 Kings 8:66. Jer. 31:14. Hos. 3:5. Rom. 2:4. g Josh.

2:11, 12, 3:6, 7, 10:6, 13, 14. Ps. 78:56, 57, 106:34-40. Ex. 16:15, &c. 20:21, 23:4, &c. h 1 Kings 14:9. Ps. 50:17. Ex. 33:3-5, 11 Kings 18:4, 1, 19:10. 2 Chr. 24:20, 21, 36:16. Jer. 28:30-33. Matt. 21:35, 23:34-37. Acts 7:52. k 18, 2 Kings 21:11. Ex. 22:25-31. 1 Deut. 31:16-18. Judg. 2:14, 15, 3:8, &c. 2 Chr. 36:17. Ps. 109:41, 42. Dan. 9:10-14. m Deut. 4:29-31. Judg. 3:15, 6:8-10, 10:15, 16. Ps. 106:43. Num. 9:15. 1 Sam. 12:10, 11, 2 Kings 13:5, 14:27. Oh, 21. l Heb. returned to do evil. Judg. 3:11, 12, 30, 4:1, 5:31, 6:1. o 1 Kings 8:33, 34, 39. Is. 63:15. p Ps. 106:43-45, q 28. Deut. 4:26, 31:21. 2 Kings 17:13. 2 Chr. 24:19, 36:15. Jer. 25:3-7, Hos. 6:5, r 10:16. Ex. 10:3. Jer. 13:15-17, 49:2, 44:16, 17. Dan. 5:20. Jam. 4:6-10, s Lev. 18:5. Ex. 20:11. Luke 10:28. Rom. 10:5. Gal. 3:12. f Heb. gave a withdrawing shoulder. Zech. 7:11, 12. t See on Jer. 7:26, 17:15, u Ps. 86:15. Rom. 2:4. 2 Pet. 3:9. ** Heb. protract over them. x 20. Is. 63:10. Acts 7:51, 28:23, 1 Pet. 1:11. 2 Pet. 1:21. y1 Heb. the land of thy prophets. y1s. 5:6, 49:24. Jer. 40:23, 44:22. Lam. 2:17. Zech. 7:13. z Jer. 4:27, 5:10, 18. Lam. 3:22. Ex. 14:22, 23. Dan. 9:9. a See on 17. Ex. 34:6, 7, 2 Kings 18:23. 2 Chr. 30:9. Is. 10:3, 5, 11:5, 9, 1:15. Deut. 7:21. Ps. 47:2, 68:3, 5. c Deut. 7:9. 1 Kings 8:28. d 1 Sam. 9:4. e Jer. 7:18-20.

pointment of a captain, as it was in the case of Abraham's offering his son.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Note, Num. 14:2-4.)

V. 18, 19. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. 32:34. Ps. 106:19-23, 40-45. Is. 63:7-14. Ez. 20:11-26.)

V. 20. The Spirit of prophecy, in Moses, Joshua, the seventy elders, and the subsequent prophets, both instructed the Israelites by their ministry, and testified against them when rebellious. (30) The example, conversation, and exertions of those who partook of his sanctifying influences, tended to reform the nation: and no doubt, the Spirit of God, by his convictions, powerfully excited, in the consciences of the unconverted, a sense of guilt and dread of punishment; and in other ways strove with them. But in all these respects 'they resisted the Holy Ghost.' (Marg. Ref. n. o. Notes, Is. 63:10. Acts 7:51-53. 1 Thes. 5:16-22, v. 19. Heb. 10:28-31, v. 29.)—The unspeakable condescension and compassion of the blessed Spirit of God, in his operations upon the polluted souls of sinful men, as well as the beneficent tendency of those operations, are strongly marked in the words 'thy good Spirit.' (Note, Ps. 143:10.)

V. 21, 22. Marg. Ref. Notes, Deut. 8:2-5, 29:5, 6.—*Into corners.* (22) That is, into all the corners of the promised land, from which the old inhabitants had been driven. Some expositors think, that the situation of Canaan, as favourable to Israel's separation from other nations, being divided by seas, mountains, and deserts, from the most flourishing kingdoms in the world, was denoted by this expression. And indeed it is observable, that Jerusalem, which God chose for the metropolis of his people, was situated at a distance from the sea, and from all navigable rivers; and therefore could not become a place of extensive commerce.—Others, however, suppose, that the dispossessed nations are meant, who were driven into corners.—Heshbon being the city of Sihon,

the word should be rendered, 'even the land of the king of Heshbon.' (Notes, Num. 21:21-34.)

V. 23, 24. Notes, Josh. 3:—11. Ps. 105:42-45. Is. 63:11-14.

V. 25. (Marg. Ref. Deut. 6:10-12.) 'They were enriched with the estates of the people whom they destroyed, having houses ready built, and well furnished, together with all sorts of trees planted to their hands.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*Delighted themselves, &c.* 'Their highest pleasure indeed ought to have been, in their thoughts, how good God was unto them. But the meaning of these words is no more than this:—That God had bestowed so many blessings upon them, that they took great pleasure in the enjoyment of them.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 26-30. Notes, 2 Chr. 36:14-16. Ps. 106:34-42. Jer. 3:26-30. Ez. 16:20:28-39, 23: Matt. 21:33-39, 23:34-39. Acts 5:51-53.—*And testifiedst, &c.* (26, 29, 30.) The prophets were sent from God to explain to the people his judgments and mercies: and to testify against them, that their miseries were deserved by their sins, and that far worse would come upon them unless they turned to God with true repentance. (Notes, Jer. 26:12-15, 44:2-6. Zech. 1:5, 6, 7:4-13. Acts 20:18-21, v. 21.)—*Saviours, &c.* (27.) The deliverers, which God immediately raised up for his people, as the judges, and king David, by whom they were rescued from the miseries into which their sins had plunged them, were all types of the great Saviour, who delivers us from wrath, and from our enemies, that we may become the servants of that God whom we have offended.—*If a man, &c.* (29) Note, Lev. 18:5.—*Thy Spirit, &c.* (30) Marg. Ref. Notes, 20. 2 Pet. 1:19-21.

V. 31-35. Marg. Ref. Notes, 1:5-11. Ez. 9:7-15. Dan. 9:4-20.—'They acknowledge the justice of God in all

nant and mercy, let not all the 'trouble seem 'lit-
e before thee, that hath 'come upon us, 'on our
kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on
our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy
people, 'since the time of the kings of Assyria
unto this day.

33 Howbeit, 'thou art just in all that is brought
upon us; for thou hast done right, but 'we have
done wickedly :

34 Neither have our kings, our princes, our
priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened
unto thy commandments and 'thy testimonies,
wherewith thou didst testify against them.

35 For 'they have not served thee in their
kingdom, and in 'thy great goodness that thou

gavest them, and in the large and 'fat land which
thou gavest before them, neither turned they from
their wicked works.

36 Behold, 'we are servants this day, and for
the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat
the fruit thereof; and the good thereof; behold, we
are servants in it :

37 And 'it yieldeth much increase unto the
kings whom thou hast set over us because of
our sins: also they have 'dominion over our
bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and
we are in great distress.

38 And because of all this 'we make a sure
covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites,
and priests, 'seal unto it.

* Heb. *we are*. d Lev. 25:18, 21, 24, 28. Ezra 9:13. † Heb. *found us*.
e 2 Kings 23:23, 34. 25:7, 18—21, 25, 26. 2 Chr. 36: Jer. 8:1—3, 22:15, 19, 34:19
—22, 39:52. Dan. 9:6, 8. ‡ 2 Kings 15:19, 29, 17:3. Is. 7:17, 18. 8:7, 8. 10:5—7.
95:37. g Gen. 19:25. Job 34:23. Ps. 119:137. Jer. 12:1. Lam. 1:18. Dan. 9:7.
14. h Lev. 26:40, 41. Job 33:27. Ps. 106:6. Dan. 9:5—10. i 30. 2 Kings 17:15.

the punishments he had inflicted upon them, though heavy,
and of long continuance. For, from the highest to the lowest,
they had all done wickedly, and would not be reclaimed.
Bp. Patrick. They acknowledge also the *mercy* of God, in
that they had not been entirely consumed. (31. *Notes*, Ps.
106:40—46. *Lam.* 3:21—23.)

V. 36, 37. The situation of Israel was very different, at
this time, from what it had been under their own kings, and
in the days of their prosperity. God had for their sins set
over them the kings of Persia, who exacted from them heavy
taxes; and who had their property, liberty, and lives entirely
in their power. (*Note*, John 8:30—36.) It was very dis-
tressing for the worshippers of God, to be in slavery to the
worshippers of dumb idols: and though they had no intention
of revolting from the kings of Persia, who allowed them to
live according to their own laws, and in many respects showed
them much favour; yet they hoped, that, upon their deep
repentance, and more entire return to God, he would more
effectually deliver them from captivity and bondage, and re-
store them in du season to their former liberty, independ-
ence, and prosperity. (*Note*, 5:1—8. Ps. 85:1—8. 106:46—48.)

V. 38. 'In consideration of which, they resolved to renew
their covenant with God, of better obedience, which they
promised under their hands and seals, as the only remedy to
procure perfect deliverance. And to make it more effectual,
they . . . declare this in the presence of God, at the conclu-
sion of the foregoing confession and prayer.' *Bp. Patrick.*
(*Note*, 10:1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6. The diligent study of God's word will more and
more show us both our own sinfulness, and the plenteousness
of his salvation; and thus alternately call us to mourn for
sin, and to rejoice in him.—Seasons of comfort should remind
us of his condescending goodness, and so lead us to deeper
self-abasement on account of our crimes against him: and
thus joyful feasts and solemn fasts may properly succeed,
and prepare our hearts for each other.—Our sorrow and
humiliation for sin must be evidenced to be genuine by separa-
tion from it, and from every occasion or temptation to it.—
Every discovery of the truth and will of God should endear
to us his sacred word, and render us more unwearied in our
attendance on it, and on his worship. A few hours, or even
occasionally a whole day, cannot be too long to spend in those
exercises and meditations, which are preparations for heaven,
and anticipations of its sacred joys: yet alas, we are most of
us sooner weary in the courts of the Lord, than the trifler is
at his diversions, or even the labourer at his work!—Our God
knoweth our thoughts before we speak, and mental prayer
may suit our secret intercourse with him: but those who ad-
dress him in public, should speak audibly and with animation;
that the people may hear and be affected: and if, on some
occasions, "they cry with a loud voice unto the Lord their
God," or be more copious than usual, they cannot be censured,
without involving those who are commended in the sacred
Scriptures.—Whether we feast and rejoice, or fast and mourn
for sin, we should be ready to bless and praise the Lord our
God for his eternal excellencies; for his goodness to us as our
Creator, and the sole Author of all our temporal comforts;
and above all, "as the God of salvation," for the wonders
which he has done for his church of redeemed sinners from
the beginning hitherto.

V. 7—31. In reviewing this abstract of the Lord's con-
duct toward Israel, as a people, from the choice and call of
Abraham to the days of Nehemiah; we perceive a continued
display of his power, wisdom, truth, and love, requited by
per-evering ingratitude, and perverse disobedience. All their
distinguishing advantages originated from the Lord's choice
of them; and accorded to his gracious promises, which he
most faithfully performed. But while surrounded with the
riches of his bounty, and the demonstrations of his power
and presence; while his holy law yet sounded in their ears,
Sinai's fiery top was before their eyes, and they were guided,
guarded, sustained, and instructed by miracles; they rebelled
against God, set up idols, attempted to return to Egypt, and
rushed vehemently into their daring provocations! Yet

k Deut. 28:47. Jer. 5:19. Rom. 3:4, 5. 125. m Dent. 8:7—10. 32:12—15. n Deut.
28:48. 2 Chr. 12:8. Ezra 9:9. o Dent. 28:39, 51. Ezra 4:13. 6:8. 7:24. p 5:8.
Lev. 26:17. † Gen. 22:45. John 8:33. q 10:22. 2 Kings 23:3. 2 Chr. 15:12, 13. 23:
16. 29:10. 34:31. Ezra 10:3. ‡ Heb. *are at the eating, or, seated*. 10:1.

he did not destroy them, he withdrew not his mercies from
them, he was ever ready to hear their prayers, to pardon their
sins, and to do them good; though they still relapsed into
murmurings and provocations! The dealings of the Lord
towards them, as a nation, in their warnings, corrections,
and deliverances, throughout the whole history; and their
ingratitude, perverseness, neglect of his worship, contempt
and persecution of his prophets, relapses into idolatry and
other enormities; tended to show the riches of his goodness,
forbearance, and long-suffering, and the hardness of their
impenitent hearts. And even when at length justice de-
manded, that they should be given up into the hands of their
enemies, and their temple, city, and country desolated; his
tender mercy prevented him from utterly casting them off!
their miseries were great and terrible; but the Lord was just
in all that he had done: yea, it was of his mercies that they
were not consumed, and that a remnant had been brought
back to their own land; who soon began to show the same
spirit of unthankful and perverse disobedience.—And is not
their conduct a specimen of human nature? Our land, for
instance, has for ages been favoured with deliverances,
opportunities, and benefits, little, if at all, inferior to those
vouchsafed to Israel: and have we not copied Israel's in-
gratitude, rebellion, and iniquity? Oh, may a general
reformation, while yet we are spared, prevent our being
given up into the hands of foreign conquerors, or domestic
oppressors! (*P. O. Deut.* 32:15—35. Ps. 78:12—54. 106:
28—48. Ez. 16: 20:10—19.)

But especially we should each of us study our own history.
Let us look back to the time when we received our being,
as rational creatures, from the goodness and power of the
Lord; let us recollect the distinguishing advantages of our
infancy and childhood: then let us ask ourselves, what were
our first returns to our kind Friend and Benefactor? what
were our first thoughts, words, and works?—As our faculties
began to unfold, revolving years brought with them recent
comforts and advantages: and did they not witness increas-
ing perverseness, ingratitude, and ungodliness? Let us
divide our lives past into distinct periods, and carefully in-
vestigate the mercies and the transgressions of each, until
we have brought down the inquiry to the present hour: pray-
ing all the while, that the Holy Spirit may assist our recollec-
tion, and enable us to form a proper estimate of the Lord's
dealings with us, and our behaviour towards him; and to
deduce proper conclusions, from the whole, with suitable
affections. And if prejudice, ignorance, or self-flattery do
not blind our minds, we shall certainly see abundant cause
for deep humiliation and for admiring gratitude: and to ac-
knowledge, that all our sufferings have been justly merited,
all our comforts mercifully bestowed.—Besides the temporal
provision which we have from the Lord's bounty, (though
not by miracle;) we are favoured with means and opportu-
nities of becoming wise unto salvation, even beyond what
Israel enjoyed in their most favoured times. We have the
sacred oracles, now completed and ever at hand, to give us
light, and to show us the way in which we should go. We
have the Gospel preached among us, and the holy sabbaths
and ordinances of our God: but have we never neglected,
profaned, and despised them? We have not been without
salutary chastisements, and merciful deliverances perhaps in
answer to prayer: but have we not requited them by return-
ing unto sin? We have had, not only the testimony of God's
servants, but the strivings of his good Spirit: but have we
never hated or despised the one, and quenched the other?
nay, we are especially "under the ministration of the Spirit;"
yet perhaps have neglected to pray for his gracious influences,
and derided those who did! And have not we proudly cast
off the authority of God's law; and as proudly endeavoured
to justify ourselves before him? This I say, was the case
with us once, perhaps is so still with some who read these
observations. Yet, whilst others have been cut off, we are
spared! May this review of the Lord's mercies, and of our
sins, bring us to true repentance, and induce us to condemn
ourselves, as having imitated and vindicated all the trans-
gressors who have gone before us: may it bring us to submit

CHAPTER X.

The names of those who sealed the covenant, 1-27. The rest of the people bind themselves, 30-39.

NOW "those that sealed were, ^aNehemiah the ^bTirshatha, the ^cson of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah.

2 ^cSeraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,
3 ^cPashur, ^cAmariah, ^fMalchiah,
4 ^cHattush, ^cShebaniah, ^fMalluch,
5 ^cHarim, ^fMeremoth, Obadiah,
6 Daniel, ^fGinnethon, ^bBaruch,
7 ^cMeshullam, ^bAbijah, ^cMijamin,
8 ^cMaaziah, ^bBilgai, ^cShemaia: these were the priests.

9 And the Levites: both ^aJeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of ^aHenadad, Kadmiel;

10 And their brethren, ^aShebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Micha, Rehob, ^aHashabiah,
12 Zaccur, ^aSherebiah, Shebaniah,
13 Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.

* Heb. at the sealings. 9:38. a 9:9. † Or, governor. 7:70. Ezra 2:63. b 1:1. c 3:23. 11:11. 12:1. 13:34. d 11:12. e 12:2. 13. f 3:11. 8:4. Malchiah. g 3:10. h 12:14. i 12:2. k 3:11. l 13:4. 21. 13.3. m 12:4. Ginnetho. n 3:20. o 3:6. 8:4. 11:11. 12:13. 23-33. p 12:4. q 12:5. Miniamin. r 12:2. 8:4. Bilgai. s 3:22. 12:6. 15:42. Ezra 10:21. t 3:19. 7:43. 8:7. 9:4. u 3:16. 24. 13:3. 34. z 8:7. 9:4.5. Ezra 10:23. y 11:15. 22. 12:34. Ezra 8:19. 24. z 8:7. 9:4.

to the Lord's righteousness, to accept of his salvation, and to set our seal to his new covenant of mercy and grace: that "being delivered from all our enemies, we may serve him in righteousness before him" the remainder of our days. (*P. O. Deut. 9:32:1-14. Ps. 106:1-27. Ez. 20:1-9.*)

Even, if by the Lord's choice of us, and his grace given to us, we have on the whole been made and found faithful to him; and if his covenant have been ratified to us with all its precious promises; we shall not only have cause to adore him for these inestimable mercies, and for his Son Jesus Christ, and redemption by his atoning blood, as the Foundation of them all; but we shall, upon every review, see cause to admire his present patience and gentleness, and to lament our ingratitude and disobedience. We have been delivered from a far worse oppression than that of the Egyptian tyrant, and by a far more wonderful exertion of almighty power and love. We are guided by a superior light, sheltered by a more glorious protection, and favoured with stronger consolations, than Israel of old. We feed upon "the Bread of life, which came down from heaven, to give life unto the world;" we drink the Waters which flow from "the Rock of ages" who was smitten for us; we are clothed with the robe of righteousness and salvation; our "feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" and the good Spirit of God, is not only our condescending Instructor and Sanctifier, but our Comforter also, who deigns to make our hearts his temple! and we possess the hope and earnest of everlasting glory. But, while we rejoice in the Lord's great goodness to us, what requital do we make? We are, perhaps, kept from habitual and gross disobedience: but we are conscious how often we are setting up our idols, and in heart returning to our bondage; how often we forget him, "grieve his Holy Spirit," and neglect his service; and how often we are kept from still greater revolts by no higher motives than the terror of his judgments, and the anguish of his salutary chastisements, which yet we soon forget, when he has mercifully removed them. Were he not slow to anger and ready to pardon, he would have cast us off long ago. But our heavenly Advocate still pleads, and we are spared; and his mercies and our privileges are continued to us!

V. 32-38. On every review of our past conduct we shall find cause to lie down ashamed before God, praising his great goodness, and confessing our great unworthiness. Let us then thank him for his merciful corrections, as well as his consolations: let us renew our acceptance of his salvation, and ratification of his covenant: let us beg of him to deliver us from all other lords, that we may serve him more entirely. And let us frequently meditate on these subjects, that we may be preserved humble, thankful, and watchful; as well as be prepared for communion with him in every sacred ordinance.—It behoves all men to reflect seriously and frequently on the greatness, justice, and goodness of the Lord; to consider the terrible power of his indignation, and the infinite value of his favour. And they should remember that pride, obstinacy, and impenitence are the sins which ruin the soul; and that no former crimes can ruin the penitent believer. Let then the sinner trust in the mercy of him, who is a God of pardons, and "ready to forgive;" let the backslider repent and return to him; let the believer walk humbly with him: let the prosperous fear abusing the Lord's goodness: let the afflicted be warned to seek deliverance from the wrath to come. Let us ever remember that all our miseries are the effect of sin, and that they are all less than we deserve, though hard for us to bear: let us then pray to be delivered from "the bitter pains of eternal death;" and not

14 The chief of the people: ^aPa'osh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, ^bBani,
15 Bunni, ^cAzgad, Bebai,
16 Adonijah, ^bBigvai, Adin,
17 Ater, Hizkiah, Azzur,
18 Hodjiah, ^cHashum, Bezai,
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
21 Meshezabeel, Zadok, Jaddua,
22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anajiah,
23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub,
24 Hallohesai, Pileah, Shobek,
25 ^cRehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
26 And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,
27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.
28 ¶ And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding;
29 They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to

12:8. a 3:11. 7:8. 11-13. Zattu. b 7:15. Binnui. Ezra 2:10. c 7:16. 17. Ezra 2:11. 12. 8:11. 12. 10:28. d 7:19-21. Ezra 2:14-16. 8:14. e 7:22. &c. Ezra 2:17. &c. f 3:17. &c. g 7:72. 73. Ezra 2:70. h 9:2. 13:3. Ezra 3:12. 10:11-17. 2 Cor. 6:14-17. i 3:2. Ec. 5:2. Jer. 4:2. j 14:1. Acts 11:23. 17:34. Rom. 12:9. k 3:12. 13. 13:23. Deut. 27:15. &c. 29-12-14. l 2 Chr. 15:13-14. Ps. 119:106. Acts 23:12-15. 21. 12 Kings 10:31. 23:3. 2 Chr. 6:16. 32:31. Jer. 26:4.

forget to entreat the Lord to deliver his church from the oppression of every enemy, and to establish it in the beauty of holiness.

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1. We have several times read of the rulers, priests, and people solemnly covenanting before God, to renounce their transgressions and to adhere to his service. Such transactions were sometimes ratified with sacrifices, solemn oaths, and other expressions of the most entire consent to them: but this is the only instance met with of a covenant drawn up in writing, and ratified by the names and seals of the persons who consented to it. (*Notes, 29. Ez. 24:3-11. Deut. 26:17-19. 29:10-15. Josh. 8:30-35. 24:14-27. 2 Kings 11:17-20. 23:3. 1 Chr. 15:12-15. Is. 44:3-5. P. O. 1-5.*) No doubt this was devised, to render the transaction more affecting; and that the deed might remain as a durable testimony, under their own hands and seals, against those who violated it: the explicit ratification thus given would render the persons concerned more sensible of their obligations, and more afraid of transgression; it would fortify them against temptation, preserve them from forgetfulness, and to be a constant argument for them to insist upon in cautioning, exhorting, or reproving each other.—The same uses may be made of those professions, and of that consent to the new covenant, which are virtually made in baptism, whether personal or that of our children; and in the Lord's supper: when those ordinances are duly explained and understood, administered and attended on. (*Notes and P. O. Matt. 19:13-15. Note, 26:26-28. P. O. 26-35.*)—To this covenant the chief persons alone set their names and seals; and Nehemiah the governor first. Perhaps Zidkijah was one of the princes; but no other name is explicitly mentioned of that order.

V. 2-8. All the persons named in these verses were priests, and no doubt chief persons of that order.—It is observable that Eliashib, the high-priest, is not found among those who sealed the covenant. And it is probable, that neither he nor his sons favoured the measure. (*Notes, 13:4. 23-30.*)—But it is more surprising, that the name of Ezra is wanting. There is no reason to think that he was absent; for he was at Jerusalem both before and after this transaction: (8:1-6. 12:36.) perhaps he was confined by sickness or infirmity; or the measure so entirely originated with him, and he had bestowed so much pains in drawing up the covenant, and inducing others to consent to it, that his further ratification of it was deemed superfluous. (*Note, Deut. 38-12.*)

V. 9-17. Most, if not all, of the Levites, who led the public devotions, set their seal to the covenant; which may be admitted as a probable indication that they were earnestly and zealously engaged in that service. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, 9:4,5.*)

V. 18-27. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many of the names, here mentioned, are found among those who returned with Zerubbabe about ninety years before: so that, either the same names were preserved in the several families; or the principal descendants of these persons, when in general favourable to the measure, subscribed their family name; that is, the name of that ancestor, by relation to whom they were commonly distinguished. (*Luke 1:61.*)

V. 28. (*Marg. Ref.*) All that did not subscribe and seal, because they were too many, yet gave their consent to what the forenamed persons did: and not only the men, but their wives and their children, who were arrived at years of discretion, engaged themselves. *Bp. Patrick. All they that had separated, &c.]* It is probable, that these were

walk in God's law, which was ^{given} by Moses the servant of God, and ^{to} observe and do all the commandments of ^{the} Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes; [*Practical Observations.*]

30 And ^{that} we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons:

31 And ^{if} the people of the land bring ware, or any victuals on the sabbath-day to sell, ^{that} we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or ^{on} the holy day: ^{and} ^{that} we would leave the seventh year, and ^{the} exaction of every ^{debt.}

32 Also we made ordinances for us, ^{to} charge ourselves yearly with ^{the} third part of a shekel, for the service of the house of our God;

33 For ^{the} show-bread, and for the continual meat-offering, and for ^{the} continual burnt-offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy ^{things}, and for the sin-offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for ^{all} the work of the house of our God.

34 And we ^{cast} the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for ^{the} wood-offering, to bring ^{it} into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, ^{as} ^{it} is written in the law:

m Deut. 33:4. Mal. 4:4. John 1:7. 7:19. * Heb. by the hand of. n Deut. 5:1, 82. Ps. 105:1. Ez. 36:27. John 15:14. Tit. 2:11—14. o Ps. 8:1, 9. p Ex. 34:16. Deut. 7:3. Ezra 9:1, 3, 12—14, 10:10—12. q 13:15—22. Ex. 20:10. Lev. 23:3. Ex. 12:14—16. Jer. 17:21—22. * Ex. 12:16. Lev. 16:23. 23:9, 35, 36. Col. 2:16. p Ex. 23:10, 11. Lev. 25:4—7. 2 Chr. 31:2. 1. 5:7, 12. Deut. 15:1—3, 7—9. Matt. 6:12. 15:27—35. Jam. 2:13. * Heb. And. Is. 58:6. u Gen. 28:22. Prov. 3:9, 10. x Ex. 30:11—16. Matt. 17:24—27. 2 Cor. 8:12. y Lev. 24:5—9. 2 Chr. 2:4. z Num. 28:29. a 2 Chr. 24:5—14. b 1 Chr. 24:5, 7. 25:3, 9. Prov. 18:18.

the proselytes, who, having been circumcised, separated from their idolatrous connexions, and kept the law of Moses, and thus were numbered among the native Jews

V. 29. By the nobles, in this place, the superior persons, priests, or Levites, are evidently meant. The body of the people, who were old enough to be capable of knowing what was intended, assembled together, and signified, by some appointed token, their consent to the covenant, as in the presence of God, and under the solemn obligations of an oath, and to an awful curse, which was denounced against such as violated these obligations. (*Notes*, 5:10—13. Deut. 27:15—26.) They engaged in general to obey the whole law of Moses: and some instances were specified, in which they had been remarkably guilty, or which were peculiarly enjoining.

V. 30, 31. (*Notes*, Ezra 9:10)—It seems, that Nehemiah would not venture, in the present unsettled state of the Jews, to exercise his authority, to prevent their heathen neighbours from vending provisions at Jerusalem, or in the cities of Judah, on the sabbath: and he supposed, that by engaging the people, in this solemn manner, not to buy of them, they would be discouraged from coming. But he soon found that many evaded or violated the engagement, without regard to consequences; and he was afterwards constrained to employ coercive measures. (*Notes*, 13:15—22.)—It may be concluded from this narrative, that none of the Jews attempted to carry on trade on the sabbath; though some of them would buy of the Gentiles. This gave the latter an undue advantage, and proportionably injured the Jews. And certainly, carrying on trade is as contrary to the law of hallowing the sabbath, as any kind of labour whatever.

The exaction, &c. (31) *Notes*, 5:6—13. Lev. 25:1—7. Deut. 15:2, 3. Matt. 18:23—35.

V. 32, 33. A half shekel apiece had been collected for erecting the tabernacle in the wilderness; and that sum is supposed to have been paid from time to time, for the purchase of sacrifices, and other expenses of the stated worship. (*Notes*, Ex. 30:11—16. 2 Kings 12:4, 5. Matt. 17:24—27.) But it was now computed, that one third of a shekel apiece, or something less than a shilling of our money, annually, would suffice for these expenses. During prosperous times, the treasury of the temple, replenished by voluntary oblations, it is probable, supplied what was wanted: and on some occasions the liberality of kings and nobles rendered such contributions unnecessary: but the circumstances of the nation now required them.

V. 34. It is probable, that the wood for fuel had hitherto been provided for, out of the same fund with the sacrifices: but on this occasion it was deemed expedient to bear the expenses of it in another manner.—It seems each family engaged to send in a regular supply at an appointed time every year; and that the order was determined by lot.

V. 35—39. (*Marg. Ref.*) The priests had a tithe out of the tithe given to the Levites; and one of them was at this time appointed to see that it was regularly paid. (*Notes*, Num. 18:25—32. 2 Chr. 31:5—10. Mal. 3:7—12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V 1—29. As the creatures and subjects of the Lord, we

35 And to bring ^{the} first-fruits of our ground, and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the Lord:

36 Also ^{the} first-born of our sons, and of our cattle, as ^{it} is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

37 And ^{that} we should bring ^{the} first fruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and ^{the} tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites ^{when} the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into ^{the} treasure-house.

39 For ^{the} children of Israel and ^{the} children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where ^{are} the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and ^{we} will not forsake the house of our God.

e 13:31. Lev. 6:12. Josh. 9:27. Is. 40:16. d Lev. 6:12, 13. e Ex. 23:19. 34:26. Lev. 19:23—26. Num. 18:12. Deut. 26:2. 2 Chr. 31:3—10. Prov. 3:9, 10. Mal. 3:8—12. f Ex. 13:2, 15. 34:19. Lev. 27:26, 27. Num. 18:15, 16. Deut. 12:6. g Num. 18:9—12. 1 Cor. 9:6—14. Gal. 6:6. h Lev. 23:17. Num. 15:19—21. 18:12, 13. Deut. 18:4. 26:2. 1 Kings 6:5—10. 2 Chr. 31:11, 12. i Lev. 27:30—33. Num. 18:21, 24—32. 2 Chr. 31:6. j Num. 18:26—28. m 13:12, 1. 1 Chr. 9:26. 2 Chr. 31:11, 12. n Lev. 12:6—11, 17. 14:23—27. 2 Chr. 31:12. o Num. 18:30. p 13:10, 11. Ps. 122:9. Heb. 10:25.

are bound by his authority to obey all his commandments, and are exposed to a tremendous curse for violating them. But our offended Sovereign, in his infinite mercy, has provided a better covenant, according to which believers are delivered from this curse, and are taught and enabled to perform a new, sincere, and acceptable obedience through Jesus Christ. The word of God calls us to consent to this covenant, and to partake of its inestimable benefits. And when we humble ourselves in godly sorrow and penitent confessions of sin; when we receive the atonement and reconciliation, which the Mediator of this covenant has made by his precious blood, and seek for mercy through his intercession by fervent prayers; and when in our purposes of renewed obedience, we rely on his gracious assistance:—when these transactions have indeed taken place in secret, between God and our souls; our public sealing and ratifying the covenant at the Lord's table, or in any other solemn way, will be honourable to God, edifying to his people, and encouraging to ourselves; and we may trust in him to enable us to fulfil the engagements with acceptance. But where this preparation of heart is wanting, such public engagements are mere hypocrisy.

(*P. O. Deut.* 29:1—17. 2 Chr. 30:13—27.) This detestable evil will intrude in all great revivals of religion, after every possible precaution; and the hypocrites must be left to the judgment of a heart-searching God. But men should be warned, that those, who in baptism, or at the Lord's table, or when admitted into the ministry, or in any other way, engage for what they do not intend, or afterwards do not take care to perform, bring themselves under an additional and most awful curse: as do all, who trifle with solemn oaths, vows, or sacramental engagements of any kind; and all who despise, oppose, or pervert the salvation of the gospel.—Every one, capable of understanding, is alike required to obey the law of God; all need the mercy and grace of the gospel; all therefore should be exhorted and commanded, to set their seals to the new covenant; but those who have the pre-eminence in society, or take the lead in religious exercises, ought to set the example; and they, who are remarkably zealous to reform others, should be as remarkably zealous in every good work.—The influence and example of the great will always have a powerful effect upon their inferiors: their distinction is truly honourable, when, in following and cleaving to them, others follow and cleave to the Lord: and the Christian equality of the common people, as brethren to believing nobles and rulers, will influence them to render the more heartily "honour to whom honour is due." (*Notes*, 1 Tim. 6:1—5.)

V. 30—39. We are not sincere in covenanting with God, except we aim to obey all his commandments: for if we allow ourselves in violating one of them habitually, it is evident that we have not truly repented of our former transgressions in that particular; that we have never sought forgiveness of them in a due manner; that we do not desire the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, to mortify that peculiar sinful propensity: and consequently that we are not born of God, nor interested in the righteousness and atonement of Christ. But real believers, at least all who by a consistent conduct give satisfactory evidence that they are such, place the strongest guard where there there is the greatest danger; and ^{use} every means of

CHAPTER XI.

The rulers, with every tenth man taken by lot, and those who offered voluntarily, dwell at Jerusalem, 1, 2. Their names, 3—19. The rest dwell in the other cities, 20—26.

AND the rulers of the people dwell at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities.

2 And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

3 Now these are the chief of the province that dwell in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, to wit, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants.

4 And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son Malhalael, of the children of Perez;

5 And Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah the son of Shiloni.

6 All the sons of Perez that dwell at Jerusalem were four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.

7 And these are the sons of Benjamin; Salu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the

son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah.

8 And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight.

9 And Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer: and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city.

10 Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin.

11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the ruler of the house of God.

12 And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah,

13 And his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Ahasai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,

14 And their brethren, mighty men of valour, a hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer was Zabdai, the son of one of the great men.

15 Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;

16 And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, had the oversight of the outward business of the house of God.

a 7:4, 5. Deut. 17:8-9. Ps. 122:5. b 10:34. Josh. 18:10. 1 Chr. 26:13. Prov. 16:33. Acts 1:24. c Judg. 20:9-10. d 18. Is. 48:2. 52:1. Matt. 4:5. 27:53. e Deut. 24:13. Job 29:13. 31:24. f Judg. 5:9. 2 Cor. 9:16-17. g 7:6. Ezra 2:1. h 7:73. 1 Chr. 9:12. Ezra 2:70. 1:75-80. Ezra 2:35-38. k 1 Chr. 9:34. l Gen. 38:29. Ruth 4:18. Pharez. Matt. 1:3. Luke 3:33. Pharez. m 3:15. n Gen. 38:5.

avoiding and subduing those sins, which have the most foiled and ensnared them. Separation from intimate connexions with ungodly persons, and the conscientious hallowing of the Lord's day, are peculiarly attended to by them. They do not infringe upon the sacred rest, and they show a marked disapprobation of those who do; they carefully remove occasions of transgression, and previously so arrange every thing, as may best promote the strict observance of that holy day. Their attention to the ordinances of God is connected with justice to all men, and mercy to those who need it. They do not exact from their brethren, when it would distress them; but they trust the Lord to repay what they thus lose or expend. Though they be poor or burdened, they will find a little to spare for pious or charitable uses; that little will be accepted; and, coming from great numbers, will form large funds for useful purposes.—As the ordinances of God are the appointed means of sustenance to our souls, the believer should not grudge the expense of them. Even the poor will part with their money for bread: yet most men leave their souls to starve! But the covenanted servant of God "honours him with his substance and with the first-fruits of all his increase," and that brings a blessing upon the rest: (Note, Prov. 3:9, 10.) nor will he defraud or withhold from the ministers, who labour in the word and doctrine, their proportion of a suitable maintenance.—In short, we must render to God, to the king, to magistrates, superiors, equals, inferiors, relatives, the poor, and all men, that which is due unto them, according to the precepts of Scripture; if we would evidence ourselves to be the true disciples of Christ, and "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour;" and in these things we must persevere, exhorting one another, "not to forsake the house of our God," but to "walk before him in all his ordinances and commandments blameless."

NOTES.—CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Jerusalem at this time was not a place of trade, by which men could acquire wealth; the houses in general were not built; the adversaries of the Jews were peculiarly hostile to that city, both as the capital of the people whose returning prosperity they envied, and the place of the holy worship which they hated; so that the cities of Judah, and other situations in the country, afforded a fairer prospect of living in peace, and of growing rich. It was therefore deemed a necessary policy, to replenish Jerusalem, for the re-establishment of the Jews as a distinct nation; and for the honour of the temple, and the protection of the priests and worshippers from the invasion of their enemies. It was "the holy city," as chosen, separated, and sanctified of God, for his immediate presence and instituted worship; as a type of Christ and even of heaven; and as the place, where the greatest advantages of becoming holy were enjoyed: yet the Jews, in general, had not sufficient zeal or desire after spiritual improvement, to venture the consequences of removing thither. Some indeed willingly offered themselves to dwell there; whom their brethren commended, thanked, and prayed for; though few would imitate them. The rulers fixed their residence there, that the courts of justice, and the business connected with public affairs, might draw others; and in addition

Shelah. Num. 26:20. Shelanites. 1 Chr. 4:21. 9:5. o 1 Chr. 9:7-9. p 1 Chr. 9:7. Hodaviah—Hasenuah. q 7:39. 12:19. 1 Chr. 9:10. and Jehoiarib. Ezra 2:36. 8:16. r 12:56. s 1 Chr. 6:7-14. 9:11. Azariah. Ezra 7:1-5. t Num. 3:32. 1 Chr. 9:1. 2 Chr. 19:11. 31:13. Acts 5:34. u 1 Chr. 9:12, 13. v Or, of Haggadolim. v 1 Chr. 9:14-19. x 8:7. y Heb. were over. 1 Chr. 26:20.

to these inhabitants, one family in ten was expressly required to remove to Jerusalem; the selection of which was by lot referred to the determination of God. "They cast lots, that among ten men, it might be known whom God chose to come thither: and the lot falling by divine appointment upon such a person rather than another; no doubt, he removed the more contentedly to this city." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Lev. 16:8—10. Prov. 16:33. Acts 1:23—26.)

V. 3. Israel, in this verse, seems to mean those of the ten tribes, who went up with the Jews. These were not required to dwell at Jerusalem, but inhabited the cities and villages allotted to them. The priests, Levites, Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants likewise, were left at liberty when not attending at the temple. (Notes, 1 Chr. 9:2. Ezra 2:55—58. 7:24—26.)

V. 4—6. "Shiloni" (6) is supposed by some to mean Shelah, Judah's youngest, but only surviving son, by Shuah, the Canaanitess. (Marg. Ref. n.) If this supposition be well-grounded, his descendants seem to have been included in the four hundred threescore and eight valiant men of Perez, or Pharez; that being the principal branch of the tribe of Judah.—Many or most of these men of Judah seem to have offered themselves willingly to dwell at Jerusalem, in order to defend it: and probably they were, in general, heads of families: yet the number from this principal tribe, appears to have been comparatively small.—In Chronicles a larger number is stated; but it may be supposed, that the descendants of Zerah, (Judah's other son,) are also included, of whom no more than one is mentioned in this chapter. (24. Note, 1 Chr. 9:3—9.)

V. 7—9. The greatest part of Jerusalem was situated within the lot of Benjamin; and it is probable, the men of that tribe were most desirous of having it fully replenished.—Nearly twice as many of this tribe, (we may suppose, with their families,) dwelt there, as of Judah. (Note, 4—6.) The number does not exactly agree with that in the ninth of the first of Chronicles; though there can be no reasonable doubt that the same events are intended; but at this distance of time it cannot be supposed that such trivial variations can in all cases be accounted for; though the reason of them might be very evident to contemporaries.—From this time Jerusalem was progressively re-peopled; so that it soon became very populous, and continued to be so, till destroyed by the Romans.—Joel was the principal commander of the Benjaminites in Jerusalem: and Judah, or Hodaviah, (Marg. Ref. p.) was his deputy, or the next in authority under him.

V. 10—15. (Notes, 12:10—21. 1 Chr. 6:4—15.) Eliashib was high-priest at this time, under whom it is probable Seraiah had the oversight of all the temple-service. (11) Some think the captain of the temple held the same office. The priests, mentioned in these verses, seem to have constantly resided at Jerusalem, by their own choice; besides those who attended by rotation. (Note, 3.)

V. 16. The outward business, &c.] (Note, 1 Chr. 26:29.) These persons seem to have had the charge of providing the sacrifices and making all the other outward preparations for

17 And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of 'Zabdi, the son of Asaph, *was* the principal *to* begin the *'*thanksgiving in prayer: and 'Bakbukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.

18 All the Levites in *'*the holy city were two hundred fourscore and four.

19 Moreover, the porters, 'Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept *'*the gates, *were* a hundred seventy and two.

20 *'*And the residue of Israel, of the priests, *and* the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

21 But *'*the Nethinims dwelt in 'Ophel: and Ziha and Gispa *were* over the Nethinims.

22 The *'*overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem *was* 'Uzzi the son of 'Bani, the son of 'Hashabiah, the son of 'Mattaniah, the son of Micha. *'*Of the sons of Asaph, the singers *were* over the business of the house of God.

23 For *it was* *'*the king's commandment concerning them, that *'*a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.

24 And Pethahiah the son of 'Meshezabeel, of the children of 'Zerah the son of Judah, *was* *'*at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

25 And for the villages, with their fields, *some* of the children of Judah dwelt at 'Kirjath-arba, *and* in the villages thereof, *and* at 'Dibon, *and* in the villages thereof, *and* at 'Jekabzeel, *and* in the villages thereof,

y 1 Chr. 9:15. Zichri. s 12:31. 1 Chr. 16:44. 25:1-6. a Phil. 4:6. 1 Thes. 5:17,18. b 12:9,25. c 1 Kings 1:13. Dan. 9:24. Matt. 24:15,27,52. Rev. 11:2. 21:2. d 7:45. 12:25. e 1 Chr. 9:17-22. f Heb. *at the gates*. g 9:28,31. 2 Chr. 23:13. h 1 Chr. 10:12. i 9:14. 12:42. Acts 20:28. g 12:42. h 3:17. 8:7. 9:4,5. 10:13. 11:10. 11:12. 12:4. Ezra 8:19. k 17. 12:25,35. 13:13. 1 Chr. 9:15. 11:7. 12:46. 1 Chr. 25:1-48. m 11:16. 1 Chr. 9:28-32. n 1 Chr. 9:33. Ezra 8:8,9. 7:30-24. 1 Chr. a *a sure ordinance*. o 10:21. p Gen. 39:30. Zarah. Num. 26:20. Matt. 1:18. Zarah. q 1 Chr. 18:17. 23:28. margins. r Josh. 14:15. a Josh. 15:22. Dimonah. t Josh. 15:21. Kabzeel. u Josh. 15:26. 19:2. v Josh. 15:27. Beth-palet. y Josh. 15:28. 19:3. z Gen. 21:31. 26:33. Judg. 20:1. a Josh. 15:1. 1 Sam. 27:6. b Josh. 15:32. Rimmon. c Josh. 15:33. Zorah. 19:41. Judg. 19:25. Zarah. d Josh. 15:35. e 3:13. Josh. 15:34. f Josh. 12:15. Mic. 1:15.

the worship which the priests performed in the courts and in the sanctuary.

V. 17. (Note, 1 Chr. 9:12-18.) The time of the morning and evening sacrifices were the principal hours of prayer to the Jews, who then resorted to the courts of the temple for their devotions.—These were, it seems, preceded by the solemn praises and thanksgivings, which the Levites rendered to the Lord with music and singing. Over this sacred service, Mattaniah, as preceptor, stately presided; while the others acted under his direction. Mattaniah was descended from Asaph; and the others were descendants of Jeduthun, chief singers in David's time. (Notes, 22,23. 1 Chr. 16:37-43. 25:1-7. 2 Chr. 5:12,13. 29:25-30.)

V. 19. The children of Akkub and Talmon are numbered with the porters which came up with Zerubbabel, at least ninety years before the events here recorded. In this and a few other instances of the same kind, it must be supposed, either that the children were called by the names of their fathers; or that, having distinct names of their own, they were also honoured in their public characters, by the names of their more illustrious ancestors. (Note, 10:18-27.)

V. 22, 23. (Note, 17.) The descendants of Asaph, presided over some business relative to the temple and its repairs at those times when not employed in psalmody. And they were appointed to this service, because, it seems, the king of Persia allowed those employed in singing the praises of God a daily stipend, besides their maintenance as Levites. (Notes, 1 Chr. 9:31-33. p. 33. Ezra 7:24-26.)

V. 24. (Note, 4-6.) Pethahiah, a descendant of Judah by Zerah, probably was the king's commissioner, who received the tribute, made all payments from it, and managed all such matters, according to orders from the king. It was an advantage to the Jews to have one of their own nation in this office: and it may be supposed he was preferred to it, through Nehemiah's recommendation.

V. 25-36. No account is given of those who dwell in the cities and villages; but merely of the places which they inhabited. (Marg. Ref.) 'Some of these great towns, or cities without walls, had little villages about them; but others had only fields, and no villages in them, the country being as yet but thinly peopled.... The rest of the Levites, who were not settled at Jerusalem, were distributed among the people of Judah and Benjamin, who dwell in the forenamed towns, whom they taught and instructed in religion and good manners.' Bp. Patrick. (36)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It has in all ages been justly lamented, that men prefer their own ease and emolument to the public good; that even

26 And at Jeshua, and at 'Moladah, and at 'Beth-phetet,

27 And at 'Hazar-shual and at 'Beer-sheba, and in the villages thereof,

28 And at 'Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and in the villages thereof,

29 And at 'En-rimmon, and at 'Zareah, and a. 'Jarmuth,

30 'Zanoah, 'Adullam, and in their villages, at 'Lachish, and the fields thereof, at 'Azekah, and in the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto 'the valley of Hinnom.

31 The children also of Benjamin *'*from 'Geba dwell 'at 'Michmash, and 'Aija, and 'Beth-el, and in their villages,

32 And at 'Anathoth, 'Nob, Ananiah,

33 Hazor, 'Ramah, 'Gittaim,

34 Hadid, 'Zebaim, Neballat,

35 'Lod, and Ono, 'the valley of craftsmen.

36 And *'*of the Levites *were* 'divisions in Judah, *and* in Benjamin.

CHAPTER XII.

The priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel, 1-8. The succession of high-priests after the captivity, 10, 11. The names of some chief priests, 12-21: and of some eminent Levites, 22-25. The solemnity of dedicating the wall, 27-43. The offices and portions of the priests and Levites, 44-47.

NOW these *are* *'*the priests and the Levites that went up with 'Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and 'Jeshua: 'Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, 'Maluch, Hattush, 3 'Shechaniah, 'Rehum, 'Meremoth, 4 Iddo, 'Ginnetho, Abijah, 5 'Miamin, 'Mediah, Bilgah,

g Josh. 10:3. 15:39. Is. 37:8. h Josh. 15:35. i Josh. 18:16. Jer. 7:31. 32. 19:2,6. s Or. of. k 7:30. Gaba. Josh. 18:24. l Or. to. 17:31. Michmas. 1 Sam. 13: 11:23. Is. 10:28. m 7:32. Ai. Gen. 12:8. Nai. Josh. 8:9. Ai. n Gen. 28:19. Josh. 18:13. o 7:27. Is. 10:30. Jer. 1:1. p 1 Sam. 21:1. 22:19. Is. 10:32. q Josh. 18:25. 1 Sam. 7:17. Matt. 2:18. Rama. r 2 Sam. 4:3. s 1 Sam. 13:18. 17:31. 1 Chr. 8:12. u 1 Chr. 4:14. x Josh. 21: 1 Chr. 6:54-81. y Gen. 49:7. a 7: 7. Ezra 2:1. b 1 Chr. 3:17-19. Ezra 3:8. 4:2. 5:2. Hag. 1:1,12,14. 2:2,21. 23. Zech. 4:6-10. Matt. 11:12,13. Zorobabel. Salathiel. c 10. Zech 3:1-9. 6:11. Joshua. d 12-21. 10:2. Ezra 2:2. e 14. Melic. f 14. Shebanah. g 15. Harim. h 15. Merioth. i 16. Ginnethon. k 17. Miniamin. l 17. Moadiah.

professed Christians too commonly "seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ;" and that but few have such an attachment to holy places and holy things, as to renounce their secular pleasures or advantages for the sake of them. Yet surely, where opportunities of spiritual improvement most abound, and where Jesus, the Ruler of our holy city, especially resides, there we should delight to dwell; in preference to all interests and connexions, and notwithstanding persecutions, tribulations, perils, and losses. Otherwise, where is our "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light?" and how shall we be willing to depart hence, and be "absent from the body, that we may be present with the Lord?" For, to the carnally minded, the perfect holiness of heaven, of its inhabitants, its employments, and its pleasures, and especially of that God who there unveils his glory, would be proportionably more intolerable, than the feeble beginnings of holiness in his church on earth, which excite their disgust, their weariness, and aversion.—The remnant who now willingly offer themselves to self-denying and perilous services, from love to the church, and zeal for the glory of God, shall in the event be distinguished with peculiar honour, and are now entitled to it from their brethren: indeed many will commend and wish them well, who, alas! have not courage to imitate them.—Our habitations are allotted us by the Lord himself; and we should not be hasty in changing them, though they be in some respects incommodious, especially if convenient for attendance on divine ordinances, and giving us opportunities of doing good.—In every station in life we should "study to be quiet, and to do our own business" with diligence; and, at all times, to cast our cares on God, and make our requests known unto him, by prayer with thanksgiving. We cannot be so afflicted, as not to have cause for gratitude; nor so prosperous, as to have no need of prayer: these duties should therefore be always united. (Notes, Phil. 4:5-7. 1 Thes. 5:16-22. v. 17,18.) And to this the ministers ought to stir up the people, not only by their exhortations, but by their example likewise.—As far as the Lord sees good, he makes even strangers to protect and provide for his servants. Let us then seek first his favour and his glory; let us study contentment, patience, and usefulness in our several stations; and wait in cheerful hope for an admission into the holy city of our God above.

NOTES.—CHAP. XII. V. 1-6. It is evident that Ezra here mentioned, was not Ezra the scribe, but a priest of the same name, who came up to Jerusalem long before with Zerubbabel. Several of the names are the same with those of the priests who sealed the covenant: (Marg. Ref.) but different persons must be intended; and it is evident the

6 Shemaiah, and ⁷Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁷Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the chief of the priests and of their brethren in the days of Jeshua.

8 Moreover the Levites: ⁹Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and ¹⁰Mattaniah, which was over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren.

9 Also Bakkukiah and Unni, their brethren, were over against them in the watches.

10 ¶ And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada,

11 And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.

12 And in the days of Joiakim were priests, ¹³the chief of the fathers: of ¹⁴Seraiah, Meraiiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

13 Of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

14 Of Melicu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

15 Of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

16 Of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

17 Of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moabiah, Piltai;

18 Of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

19 And of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

20 Of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

21 Of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nehaneel.

22 ¶ The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian.

23 The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the Chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.

24 And the chief of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, ward over against ward.

25 Mattaniah, and Bakkukiah, Obadiah,

11:10, 1 Chr. 9:10, *Jehoiarib*, n 28, *Sallai*, o 1. Ezra 3:2, *Zech*, 3: p 7:43, 9:4, 10:18-13, q 11:17, 22. * That is, the psalms of thanksgiving. 24, 1 Chr. 9:33, r Ps. 134:1-3, s 26, 1 Chr. 6:3-15, t 3:1, 13:4, 7:28, u 22, 1 Chr. 9:33-34, 15:12, 24:6-31, x 1, y 2, *Maluch*, z 3, *Shechaniah*, a 3, *Rehum*, b 3, *Meremoth*, c 4, d 4, *Ginnetho*, e 4, *Minnam*, f 5, *Moadiah*, g 6, h 7, *Sallu*, i 10, 11, k 12, 13, l 1 Chr. 9:14, &c. m 8, 8:7, 9:4, 10:8-13, n 1 Chr. 23:25-26, o Deut. 33:1, Josh. 14:6, l Kings 17:24, 2 Chr. 8:14, 1 Tim. 6:11, 2 Tim. 3:17, p 9, Ezra 3:10, 11, q 8:9, 11:17-19, 1 Chr. 9:14-17, r 1 Chr. 23:32, 26:12, s 2, t 18, u Deut. 20:5, f Or, *treasuries*, or, *assemblies*, s 10, t 8:9, Ezra 7:11, u Deut. 20:5, f Ps. 30: title, x 11:20, 1 Chr. 15:4, 12:13, 26:

same names were sometimes preserved in their families. (Notes, 10:13-27, 11:19.)

V. 7. "The chief of the priests" seem to have been the heads of the courses established by David; with the next in succession to the high-priesthood, and the ruler or captain of the temple. Perhaps the twenty-four courses were not yet fully re-established. (Notes, 1 Chr. 24:6-10. Ezra 2:36-39.)

V. 8, 9. Note, 11:17. *Jeshua*. (8) *Marg. Ref.* p.—In the watches. (9) It is probable that some of the Levites, in succession, sang the praises of God in the sanctuary during the watches of the night. (Note, Ps. 134.)

V. 10, 11. Jaddua is, by most expositors, supposed to have been high-priest in the time of Alexander the great, and to have met that haughty conqueror in his pontifical habit; in consequence of which Alexander greatly favoured the Jews. (Note, Dan. 8:5-7.) It is, however, evident that he was high-priest long after the events which are mentioned at the close of this book; for Joiada then filled that office: (13:28.) and as "Darius the Persian," (22) is supposed to mean the last king of Persia, who was subdued by Alexander about a hundred years after the principal transactions recorded in this book; this verse, and the twenty-second, must have been added by another hand after the death of Nehemiah. (26)

V. 12-21. These verses contain a catalogue of the next race of chief priests, as descended from those who came up from Babylon with Zerubbabel. (Note, 1-6.)—The marginal references show the variations which occur in respect of their names.

V. 22-26. It is not easy or perhaps possible to determine, why these few names of the Levites were here inserted: but probably they were persons who greatly distin-

Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters keep ing the ward at the thresholds of the gates.

26 These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

27 ¶ And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

28 And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi;

29 Also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem.

30 And the priests and the Levites, purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

31 Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung-gate:

32 And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah,

33 And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,

34 Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah,

35 And certain of the priests' sons with trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph:

36 And his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azrael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the scribe before them.

37 And at the fountain-gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water-gate eastward.

31, 32, 2 Chr. 29:4-11, 30, Ezra 8:15-20, y 8:17, Deut. 16:11, 2 Sam. 6:12 2 Chr. 29:22, Ezra 6:16, Ps. 98:4-6, 100:1, 2, Phil. 4:4, z 1 Chr. 13:8, 15:16 28, 16:5, 42, 23:5, 25:1-6, Ezra 3:10, 11, Ps. 81:1-4, 92:1-3, 149:3, 150:3-5 Rev. 5:8, a 6:2, b 1 Chr. 2:54, 9:16, c Deut. 11:30, Josh. 5:9, 10:43, d 11: 31, Josh. 21:17, 1 Chr. 6:50, e Ezra 2:24, f Gen. 35:5, 2 Ex. 19:10-15, Num. 19:2-20, 2 Chr. 29:34, Ezra 6:51, Job 1:5, g 1 Chr. 13:1, 28:1, 2 Chr. 5:2, h 38, i 2:13, 3:13-14, k 10:2-7, l Num. 10:2-10, Josh. 6:4, 2 Chr. 5:12 13:12, m 11:17, 1 Chr. 6:39-43, 25:26, 10:11, n 24, 1 Chr. 23:5, 2 Chr. 8: 14, Amos 6:5, o Ezra 7:1, 8:1, p 2:14, 3:15, q 3:15, 2 Sam. 5:7-9, r 3:26 6:1, 3:16,

guished themselves, and were highly honoured and trusted by their contemporaries. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Darius the Persian.

(22) * This is thought to be that Darius whom Alexander conquered. ³³ *Bp. Patrick*.—David the man of God. (24) 36. Notes, Deut. 33:1. 2 Chr. 8:14, 1 Tim. 6:11, 12.—Ward over against ward. Notes, 8:9, 1 Chr. 2:58.—In their turns, one coming on when another went out, to attend in their courses, which are called wards. ³⁷ *Bp. Patrick*. (13: 30. Notes, 1 Chr. 9:23, 26:6-12, v, 12, 13.)—These, &c. (26) Note, 10:11.

V. 27, 28. Jerusalem was the holy city, and the wall was builded under the immediate superintendence and blessing of JEHOVAH: it was therefore proper that it should be dedicated to that God who was there worshipped by solemn praises, thanksgivings, prayers, and sacrifices; and thus committed to his gracious protection. (*Marg. Ref.* Notes, Deut. 20:5 —9, Ezra 6:13-18, Dan. 9:24-27.)

V. 29. *Builded, &c.* The singers had builded villages for their residence about Jerusalem: that they might be near at hand when wanted; and attend more conveniently and regularly at the temple.

V. 30. When the priests and Levites had prepared themselves by the appointed purifications, they proceeded to purify the people, the gates, and the wall; probably by sprinkling the water of purification, with suitable prayers and supplications. (*Marg. Ref.* Note, Lev. 16:15, 16. P. O. 1-19. Notes, Num. 19:.)

V. 31-43. The princes and priests were divided into two companies on the wall, Ezra going before the one, and Nehemiah after the other. (36, 38.) Thus they marched in a row opposite ways in the circuit of the wall, the priests sounding the sacred trumpets, the Levites playing upon instruments and singing the praises of God, and the people accompanying

38 And ^athe other company of them that gave thanks went ov^r against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond ^bthe tower of the furnaces even unto ^cthe broad wall;

39 And from above ^athe gate of Ephraim, and above ^bthe old gate, and above ^cthe fish-gate, and ^dthe tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto ^ethe sheep-gate: and they stood still in ^fthe prison-gate.

40 So stood ^athe two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me:

41 And the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaia, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, ^awith trumpets;

42 And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers ^asang loud, with Jezrahiah their ^boverseer.

43 Also that day they ^aoffered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for ^bGod had made them rejoice with great joy: ^cthe wives also and the children rejoiced: so that ^dthe joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

44 ^a¶ And at that time were ^bsome appointed over ^cthe chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities, the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for ^dJudah rejoiced for the priests and for ^ethe Levites that ^fwaited.

31. 1. 3:11. u 3:8. x 5:16. 2 Kings 14:13. y 9:6. z 5:3. Zeph. 1:10. 3:1. Jer. 31:38. b 3:32. John 5:2. c 3:25, 31. Heb. Jer. 32:2. d 31:32. Pa. 42:4. 47:5-9. 134: c 35. * Heb. made their voice to be heard. Pa. 81:1. 95: 1. 98:4-9. 100:1, 2. Is. 12:5, 6. e Num. 10:10. Deut. 12:11, 12. 1 Chr. 23:22. 2 Chr. 7:5-7, 10. 29:35, 36. Pa. 27:6. h 2 Chr. 20:27. Job 34:23. Pa. 28:7. 30:11, 12. 32:4. Is. 61:3. 66:10-14. Jer. 31:11. John 12:92. Is. 15:20. 3 Chr. 20:13. Pa. 148:11-13. Jer. 31:13. Matt. 21:15. Eph. 5:19. Jam. 6:13. x 1 Sam. 4:5. Ezra 3:13. 1 Chr. 13:13. 13:5, 12, 13. 2 Chr. 31:11-13. m 1 Chr. 9:26. 25:1-26. † That is, appointed by the law. ‡ Heb. the joy of Judah rejoiced. n Num. 3:10. 8:24, 25. 1 Chr. 23:28. 2 Chr. 5:11, 12. Prov. 8:

them on each side, part of them on the wall, and part, it may be supposed, by the side of it. (Marg. Ref.) When they met on the opposite side of the city, they marched in a body to the temple, and offered sacrifices and thank-offerings, with rejoicings: for God, by enabling them to rebuild and fortify the city, had made them to rejoice with great joy: so that the praises and acclamations of so large a multitude were heard at a great distance. (Notes, Ezra 3:12, 13. Jer. 31:10-14. Matt. 21:8-11.)—Zechariah (35) being descended from Asaph, of the line of Gershon, was no priest; and the word ^a“namely” is improperly added. (Marg. Ref. m.)—Man of God. (36) Note, 22-26, v. 24.

V. 44-47. The attendance and behaviour of the priests and Levites on this solemn occasion, seem to have greatly rejoiced the pious Jews. “They were so glad to see such a great concourse of them, (27, &c.) and that they performed their duty upon this occasion to the general satisfaction of all that were present; that their hearts were enlarged in love to them.” Bp. Patrick. They were therefore zealous to provide for them, that their incomes might be properly paid, and regularly and impartially distributed by persons appointed for that purpose. Thus matters were settled, as they had been in the days of David and Solomon. (Marg. Ref.) Similar regulations had been made in the days of Zerubbabel; but they were completed, and put upon a durable footing, in the time of Nehemiah. (Notes, 13:5-14. 2 Chr. 31:5-19. Mal. 3:7-12.)—The tithes were paid to the Levites, as sanctified to their use; and the tithes of them, by the Levites, sanctified to the use of the priests. (Notes, 10:35-39. Num. 18:25-32.)—“The porters ^a“kept the ward of purification,” (45) that is, duly observed the orders about purification, in not suffering any unclean person or unclean thing to come into the house of God.” Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord raises up a succession of worshippers from age to age, who honour him by their “sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.” (Note, Heb. 13:15, 16.) and who derive instruction and encouragement from the examples and actions of those who have long before entered into their rest.—The believer should undertake nothing which he cannot, and does not, dedicate to God, by seeking his direction and assistance in it and his blessing upon it; by designing his glory, and by giving praise for success in all things: and whatever he possesses he should commit to the Lord’s keeping and disposal, and use it according to his will. (Note, Ps. 30: title. P. O. Note, Col. 3:16, 17, v. 17.)—But all that we sinners do must be purified by the blood of sprinkling, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, or it cannot be acceptable unto God: and the whole church of God, which is “the lot of his inheritance,” and the object of his choice and delight, being descended from fallen Adam, must be thus purified and rendered holy unto

45 And both ^athe singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and ^bthe ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son.

46 For in the days of David ^aand Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.

47 And all Israel in the days of ^aZerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, ^b“gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and ^cthey ^d“sanctified ^eholy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified ^fthem unto the children of Aaron.

CHAPTER XIII.

On reading the law, Israel separates from the mixed multitude, 1-3. Eliashib having, during Nehemiah’s absence, prepared a chamber at the temple for Tobiah, Nehemiah on his return, being grieved and indignant, causes the chamber to be cleaned, 4-9. He reforms abuses concerning tithes and offerings, 10-14. He prevents the profanation of the sabbath, 15-22. He opposes those who had married strange wives, and drives away the grandson of Eliashib, 23-28. His other services and prayers, 29-31.

ON that day ^athey read in the book of Moses in the ^baudience of the people; and therein was found written, that ^cthe Ammonite and the ^dMoabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but ^ahired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit ^bour God turned the curse into a blessing.

3 Now it came to pass, ^awhen they had heard the law, ^bthat they separated from Israel ^call the mixed multitude.

34. Is. 40:31. Rom. 12:7. 5 Heb. stood. o 1 Chr. 25: 96. p 1 Chr. 23:28. 2 Chr. 23:6. q 1 Chr. 25:1. &c. 2 Chr. 29:30. Pa. 73:—83. titles. r 1, 12, 26. 10:35 —39. 13:10-12. 2 Chr. 31:5, 6. Mal. 3:8-10. Gal. 6:6. t Num. 18:21-29. † That is, set apart. * Heb. there was read. 8:3-8. 9:3. Deut. 31:11, 12. 2 Kings 23:2. Is. 34:16. Luke 4:16-19. 10:26. Acts 13:15, 21. 15:21. ‡ Heb. ears. a 23. Dent. 23:6-7. Is. 15:16. Jer. 48: c Ez. 35:1-11. Am. 2:1-3 b 2:10, 19. 4:3. 8:37-9. Jer. 49:1-6. Am. 1:13-15. c Num. 23:2-6. Josh. 24:10. d Num. 23:8-11, 24. 24:5-9. Ps. 109:28. Mic. 6:5. e Ps. 19:7-11. 119:9, 11. Prov. 6:23. Rom. 3:20. f 9:2. 10:28. Ezra 10:11. Jam. 1:27. g Ex. 12:38. Num. 11:4.

the Lord.—Those who would be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of believers, must begin with themselves: and when we “acknowledge God in all our ways,” he will so prosper and comfort us as often to cause us to rejoice with great joy.—If our families be trained up to join in the solemn worship of God, and in attendance on his word, we may hope that they will share our joys and privileges; and the prosperity of the church gladdens the hearts of all true believers: and in all cases where the ministers of religion generally come forward in support of pious and benevolent measures, with zeal and alacrity, to the satisfaction of all concerned; they take the most effectual method not only of doing much good, but of securing the liberal and cheerful payment or contribution for the supply of themselves and families. When their affections are thus lively, they will be disposed to love and rejoice in those ministers who are instrumental to their comfort; and to care for their suitable provision. They ought, however, to attend to their several duties, and not to be anxious about their interests; and then God will stir up the hearts of the people to supply them in a comfortable and creditable manner. This they may receive with songs of praise and thanksgiving, and need not fear sanctifying a portion even of their portion, to the more immediate service of God and the support of his cause.

NOTES.—CHAP. XIII. V. 1-3. Some expositors think that the events recorded in these verses took place several years after those related in the former chapter, and that, during a great part of the time, Nehemiah had been absent at the Persian court. But the introductory language seems rather to imply, that they occurred immediately: though the words “on that day” may be understood with some latitude, and may mean, about that time. Indeed, it can hardly be supposed, that when the gross abuses stated in the sequel of the chapter prevailed, the public reading of the law at the temple was regularly kept up, and the people zealous to reduce it to practice. It is therefore more probable that, before Nehemiah left Jerusalem, or when he was first gone, the law was publicly read and expounded to the congregation. (Notes, 8:1-8, 13-18. 9:3, 4.) At that time the passage here referred to, coming in course, excited peculiar attention; and the people of their own accord, without compulsion, but with the concurrence of the magistrates, resolved to separate from the intimate society of the mixed multitude, especially of Ammonites and Moabites, according to the meaning of the law. (Marg. Ref. a, b. Notes, Deut. 23:3-6.) Whether intermarriages with any of those nations, even when fully proselyted, or with their descendants, was, or was not, intended in the law, many instances would doubtless occur, in which a separation would be required; for probably few, in comparison of those with whom alliances had been formed, were fully proselyted.—It is supposed, that from the days of Ezra

4 ¶ And before this, ^hEliashib the priest, ⁱhaving the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, was ^jallied unto Tobiah :

5 And he had prepared for him ^ka great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, (which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters,) and the offerings of the priests.

6 But ^lin all this time was not I at Jerusalem : ^mfor in ⁿthe two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, came I unto the king, and ^oafter certain days ^pobtained I leave of the king :

7 And I came to Jerusalem, and ^qunderstood of the evil that ^rEliashib did for Tobiah, ^sin preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

8 And ^tit grieved me sore : therefore ^uI cast forth all the household-stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

9 Then I commanded, and ^vthey cleansed the chambers : and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense.

10 ¶ And I perceived that ^wthe portions of the Levites had not been given ^xthem : for the Levites

h 7. 12:10. ⁱ Heb. being set over. 12:44. 126. 6:17, 18. 7:10:39, 39. 12:44. ^j Heb. the commandment of the Levites. Num. 18:21-24. 1 Ex. 32:1. 2 Chr. 24:17, 18. Matt. 13:25. m 2:1. 5:14. ^k Heb. at the end of days. 2:5, 6. ^l Or. fearfully requested. n Ezra 9:1. o Cor. 1:11. p 1:5. Lam. 1:10. Matt. 21:12, 13. Acts 21:26, 29. p Ezra 9:34. 10:1. Pa. 69, 9. q Mark 11:15-17. John 2:13-17. ^r 12:15. 2 Chr. 29:15-19. ^s 10:37. 12:47. Mal. 1:6-14. 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. ^t Num. 35:2. u 17:25. 5:6-13. Job 31:34. Prov. 28:4. x 10:39. 1 Sam. 2:17. Mal. 3:8-11. ^y Heb. standing. y 10:37-39. Lev. 27:30. Num. 18:20-26. Deut. 14:22. ^z Or. storehouses. z 12:44. 2 Chr. 31:12-15. a 3:30. b 8:4.

and Nehemiah, synagogues were built in every part of the land where God was publicly worshipped, and his word read, expounded, or preached ; which produced very salutary effects. (Notes, 2 Kings 4:23. 2 Chr. 17:7-9.) A copy of the Scriptures then extant, was placed in every synagogue ; and the whole was divided into portions or lessons for the several days when they were accustomed to assemble for that purpose ; and probably the same became the general usage in the court of the temple. (Luke 4:16-22. Acts 13:13-15. 15:21.)

V. 4. Eliashib had before this formed an alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite, but perhaps secretly to escape censure. (Notes, 2:9, 10, 19, 20. 4:6, 17-19.) It does not appear, that the high-priest, to whom that his sons were, married to any of Tobiah's family : but he was confederated with him, and related to those who were ; and his authority over the temple and all its buildings, enabled him to commit that scandalous profanation which is next related.—The word rendered "chamber," seems to mean the out-buildings of the temple in general.

V. 5, 6. Nehemiah was first commissioned by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign ; and this journey to court took place in his thirty-second year ; so that twelve years had elapsed, concerning which we have little account : and the following events occurred after the end of those years.—When Nehemiah was gone from Jerusalem, Eliashib seems to have invited Tobiah thither : and though all Moabites and Ammonites had been publicly excluded from the congregation, according to the law of God ; yet the high-priest admitted this unprophesied Ammonite, who was as bitter an enemy to Israel as Balak or Balaam had been, even into the chambers of the temple ; casting out thence the consecrated oblations to make room for him ; (2 Chr. 31:11-13. v. 12. Notes, 10:35-39. 12:44-47. 1 Kings 6:5, 6. 1 Chr. 28:11-13.) and probably forming him a sumptuous apartment, by throwing many of them into one.—This was as great contempt of the divine law, profanation of the temple, and disgrace of the priesthood, as could well be imagined.

King of Babylon. (6.) The kings of Persia reigned over Babylon, and all the regions which had been before subject to the kings of Babylon : but their general residence was at Shushan, or Susa. (1:1) This was much more distant from Jerusalem than Babylon : but Nehemiah, most probably, journeyed thither on this occasion.

V. 7-9. Nehemiah is generally supposed to have been absent from Jerusalem only one year : but the great abuses which prevailed at his return favour the opinion of those who think that about five years intervened ; and there is nothing in the text that militates against it for the words rendered "after certain days," or, at the end of days, (6. marg.) do not necessarily signify after one year, but may denote a longer time. (Dan. 12:13. Heb.) At his return, however, he was greatly afflicted and displeased at what had taken place, and he soon exercised his authority in the most decided manner, to clear the temple from such a profanation, and to purify the chambers in the appointed and accustomed manner, that they might be restored to their proper use. (Notes, 5:6, 7. Ezra 9:3-15. 10:2.)—It is probable that Eliashib was dead before

and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.

11 Then ^acontended I with the rulers, and said, ^bWhy is the house of God forsaken ? And I gathered them together, and set them in the place.

12 Then ^cbrought all Judah the tithes of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil unto the ^dtreasuries.

13 And ^eI made treasurers over the treasures, ^fShelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe ; and of the Levites, ^gPedaiah : and ^hnext to them was Hanan the son of ⁱZacur, the son of ^jMattaniah : for they were ^kcounted faithful ; and ^ltheir office was ^mto distribute unto their brethren.

[Practical Observations.]

14 ⁿRemember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my ^ogood deeds that I have done ^pfor the house of my God, and for the ^qoffices thereof.

15 ¶ In those days saw I in Judah some ^rtrading wine-presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses ; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all ^smanner of ^tburdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath-day : and ^uI testified against them, in the day wherein they sold victuals.

** Heb. at their hand. c 10:12. d 11:22. 12:35. e 7:2. 2 Kings 12:15. 22:7. Luke 12:12. 16:10-12. Acts 6:3. 1 Cor. 4:2. 1 Tim. 1:12. [†] Heb. it was upon them. (Acts 1:35. 5:1. g 22:31. 5:19. Heb. 5:10. Rev. 3:5. [‡] Heb. kindnesses. h 1 Chr. 29:3. 2 Chr. 24:16. 31:20, 21. Ezra 7:20, 24, 27. Ps. 122:6-9. [§] Or. observations. i Ex. 20:8-11. 34:21. 35:2. Is. 59:13. Ec. 20:13. k 10:31. Num. 15:32-36. Jer. 17:21, 22, 24, 27. 12:1. 9:29. Deut. 8:19. 2 Chr. 24:19. Pa. 50:7. Jer. 49:19. Mic. 6:3. Acts 2:40. 20:21. Gal. 5:3. Eph. 4:17. 1 Thes. 4:6. Rev. 22:15, 19.

Nehemiah returned ; and that Tobiah did not choose to appear at Jerusalem to see after his furniture.

V. 10-13. As the high-priest had ventured profanely to appropriate the chambers of the temple for the entertainment of an Ammonite ; perhaps he had also sacrilegiously intercepted the revenues of the Levites for similar purposes or the people were reluctant to pay their tithes, when so bad a use was made of them, or so little care was taken of them. (Note, 12:44-47.) Thus the Levites were driven from their office, to get their living by cultivating the land, or by other secular employments ; and the temple service, especially the psalmody, was interrupted.—The rulers, who had been left in trust, ought to have exerted their authority to prevent such mismanagement ; but probably they had concurred in it, out of regard to their secular interests ; and therefore Nehemiah called them to account for this misconduct. Malachi is supposed to have prophesied about this time, and he seems repeatedly to refer to these abuses. (Notes, Mal. 1:9-14. 3:7-12.) "It is a great artifice of the devil, by his instruments to defraud the ministers of religion of their necessary maintenance, that he may thereby abolish religion itself." *Wolpius, in Ep. Patrick.* (Notes, 1 Cor. 9:7-18.) Nehemiah, however, not only recalled the Levites, but having it seems, without difficulty, induced the people to bring their tithes, he placed the distribution of them in the hands of faithful men, in whom all parties reposed confidence. (Notes, 2 Chr. 31:15-19. Acts, 6:1-6.)

V. 14. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.) It is evident Nehemiah expected that the Lord would remember his good deeds, and vouchsafe them a gracious recompense, notwithstanding defects in them, and sin in him ; after the same manner, as even the apostle Paul assures the Hebrews, that the Lord would "not forget their work and labour of love," not as claiming "a reward of debt." (Notes, 20-22. v. 22. Rom. 4:4, 5. Heb. 6:9, 10.) But it is also worthy of notice, that these "good deeds," or kindnesses, "which he had done for the house of God," consisted in using his authority to protect the ministers of religion, from those who defrauded them of their maintenance. There have been times, when enriching the clergy beyond all bounds, and without requiring them to attend on their ministry, was thought the height of piety : but it may be questioned whether rulers may not at present, as well as for some past ages, have run into the contrary extreme ; and Nehemiah's firm and prudent conduct in this respect, might be imitated with good effect by Christian princes and rulers. (Note, 2 Chr. 31:5-7. P. O. 1-10.)

V. 15-18. It can hardly be supposed, that in the course of one year of Nehemiah's absence, such gross and open profanation of the sabbath should have been introduced and become general. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 10:30, 31. Num. 15:30-36. Jer. 17:19-27. John 5:10-16.)—The Tyrians, as heathens, not regarding the sabbath, tempted the Jews to break it by trading with them. The magistrates must have been shamefully negligent, in conniving at these abuses, till they were become so notorious ; and, the nation seemed to be proceeding, in many respects, as their fathers had done, in provoking the wrath of God against them.—Fish. (16) How far the concessions made by our laws, in respect to the

16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath-day?

18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath-day.

20 So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

22 And I commanded the Levites, that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath-day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

23 ¶ In those days also saw I Jews that had

married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab:

24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

25 And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

27 Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

28 And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high-priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me.

29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

30 Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

31 And for the wood-offering, at times appointed, and for the first-fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

m Ex. 23:12. Deut. 5:14. n 11:25. 5:7. Ps. 52:12. Is. 1:10. Jer. 5:5. 13:15. 22:2. &c. Mic. 3:1-9. o Ezra 9:13-15. Jer. 17:23. 27:44. 9:22. Ezr. 2:23. 8:25. Zech. 1:4-6. p Lev. 25:18, 28. Num. 32:14. Josh. 22:17, 18. q Lev. 23:32. r 7:3. Ex. 31:14-17. Jer. 17:19-22. s See on 15. * Heb. before. t Ezra 7:26. Rom. 13:3, 4. 1 Pet. 2:14. u 7:64, 65. 2 Kings 23:4. 1 Chr. 15:12-14. 2 Chr. 29:4, 5, 24, 27, 30. Is. 49:23. x 12:10. y Deut. 5:12. z Mt. 31. 5:19. Ps. 132:1-5. Is. 38:3. 2 Cor. 1:12. 2 Tim. 2:7, 8. a Ps. 25:7. 51:1. 130:3, 4, 7. 143:1, 2. l Or, multitude. Ps. 5:7. Is. 55:7. b 10:30. Ezra 9:2, 11, 12. 10:40, 44. 2 Cor. 6:14. † Heb. made to dwell with them. c 1 Sam. 5:1. d See on 1-3.

selling some fish on the Lord's day, agree with this, or consent with hallowing the sabbath, may fairly be questioned.

V. 19. *Some of my servants, &c.* (Notes, 4:16, 18-23. 5:14-18.) Nehemiah could place more dependence in this case on his own attendants, than on the porters appointed by the nobles and rulers of Judah; who probably countenanced this profanation, in order to indulge their luxury or avarice.

V. 20-22. The merchants and dealers, from Tyre and other places, still hoped to find some opportunity of trading on the sabbath, either with the citizens or countrymen; but, as they were endeavouring to induce the Jews to break the law of God, and also that of the rulers of Judah; Nehemiah solemnly assured them, that if they did not desist, he would proceed to inflict punishment on them.—He also appointed the Levites to watch the gates, perhaps supposing they would be more regarded than his servants; and also, because he would have the watch continued, even if he should leave Jerusalem.—This reformation seems to have produced very durable effects; for in the after ages of the Jewish church, they became exact even to superstition in observing the sabbath. Probably, his other regulations were at last equally effectual; but we have no more canonical history concerning them.

Remember, &c. (22) Nehemiah had besought God to "remember his good deeds;" (14) but to show that he did not think there was any proper merit or worthiness in them, which required a reward as a debt, in justice due to them, he here explains himself; and desires to be rewarded, or rather pardoned, out of God's free goodness, according to the greatness or the multitude, of his mercies. Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 3:1. Ps. 106:1-5. 119:132. Luke 23:39-43.)

V. 23-30. Some time must have elapsed after Nehemiah's departure from Jerusalem, before the children of these marriages could betray their origin by their speech: for though the Ashdodites lived near the Jews, their language was, it seems, materially different from theirs: yet probably they were not contracted before that event, and the reform seems to have been made very soon after his return. This separation also evidently was diverse from that recorded before; (Note, 1-3.) for that was the effect of reading the law, and by voluntary consent; this by more vehement and coercive measures.—When this zealous reformer found these undeniable proofs of the people's guilt, he began without delay to put a stop to the evil. He contended, or vehemently argued, the matter, with those who were concerned; proving the criminality and the fatal effects of such marriages from the Scriptures, in an unanswerable manner. (Notes, 1 Kings 11:1-13.) He then denounced the awful curse of God upon such as persisted in disobedience, and perhaps excluded them from the congregation: he punished such as were refractory, with immediate scourging; and put others

§ Heb. they discerned not to speak. l Heb. people and people. Zeph. 3:9. e 11:17. Prov. 20:4. 5:13. Deut. 27:14-25. f Or, reviled. Luke 11:45, 46. g Deut. 25:2-3. Ezra 7:26. h Is. 50:8. i 10:29, 30. l eut. 6:13. 2 Chr. 15:12-15. Ezra 10:5. k Ex. 34:16. Deut. 7:8. l 1 Kings 11:1-8. Ec. 7:26. m 2 Sam. 12:24. n 1 Kings 13:3. 2 Chr. 1:12. o 1 Sam. 30:24. p 12:10, 22. q 3:1. q 4, 5. 6. 12-15. r 7:19. s 25. Ps. 101:8. Prov. 20:8, 26. Rom. 13:5, 6. 16:14. Ps. 59:5. 13-13. 2 Tim. 4:14. * Heb. for the defiling of. Lev. 21:1-7. u Num. 16:9. 10: 25, 12; 13. 1 Sam. 2:30. Mal. 2:4-8, 11, 12. x 10:30. y 12-2-26. 1 Chr. 23-28; z 10:34. a 14, 22. Ps. 25:7. 105:4. Luke 23:42.

of them under a disgraceful stigma, by plucking off their hair; (Note, Is. 50:5, 6.) and made them all solemnly swear to separate from their heathen wives. (Notes, 5:10-13. 10:29-31. Ezra 9:10. Mal. 2:1-16.)—Among the other examples of his impartial severity, he banished the grandson of Eliashub, who had married the daughter of Sanballat. (Notes, Lev. 21:7-15.) Josephus relates that this young man was named Manasseh, and that at his instance Sanballat and the Samaritans built their temple upon mount Gerizim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem; at which he officiated, in some measure, according to the ritual appointments of Moses. Hence schism, emulation, and rancorous enmity between the two nations, were perpetuated to future ages. The authority, which Nehemiah exercised over the priests, even the chief of them, and in requiring the ministers of religion to attend to their several duties; as well as over the people, requiring them to render the priests and Levites their dues; is no where expressly enjoined on governors, or kings, in the Mosaic law: yet as this exercise of authority was entirely limited to the things which God had commanded, he performed a good and acceptable service, and properly improved his talents. (Notes, 2 Chr. 29:3-5. 30:12.)

Remember them, &c. (29) By visiting with some evident token of his holy indignation the principal offenders in these things, the Lord would both display his own glory, and give a salutary warning to others, tending to repress such gross violations of his law; and even to bring the offenders to repentance. (Notes, Lev. 10:1-3. 21:7-15. Num. 25:11-13. 1 Cor. 5:1-5. v. 5.)

V. 31. "It becomes all men, especially those who are employed in divine things, if they have done any thing that is good, to remember it was by God's help and assistance, not by their own power: beseeching the Father of mercies, by his only begotten Son, to make it serviceable to his church, and his own good." Wolphius, in Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14. The public reading of the whole word of God, as far as it relates to our faith and practice, is of immense advantage to true religion. Though we have heard many sermons, and have the Bible in our hands, few of us are acquainted with every part of it; and many live in violation of its injunctions, through ignorance or inattention. But when those who are well disposed hear the word of God condemn any part of their conduct, they are reminded to repent and seek forgiveness, and to break off the sin, and attend to the neglected duty.—They who are unkind to the people of God, who attempt to afflict them, or who wish them evil, will be punished as his enemies; and he will turn their curses and malicious deeds into blessings to those who trust and obey him.—Alas, how prone is human nature to evil! When the restraints of influence or authority are withdrawn, men break out into those excesses of which they see and incapa-

ble; whilst the eye and authority of God are treated with almost atheistical disregard.—They who have enjoyed the highest dignities in the visible church, by *divine right*, have sometimes been equally distinguished by sacrilegious impiety; and have openly committed those crimes, which the most profane of the laity would not have ventured on without hesitation and dismay! But if sacredness of character will not restrain men from setting a pernicious example, it should not shelter them from censure, or condign punishment by the magistrate. (*Note, 1 Kings 2:26,27.*)—As nobles have too generally, in every age and country, deemed themselves privileged to disregard the divine law and many human institutions obligatory on others; magistrates and reformers need courage and resolution, as well as impartiality and integrity.—Our grief, for the sins which we witness, should stimulate us to oppose them strenuously, according to the duty of our station, and not induce us to yield to unmanly despondency.—It is not expedient, that magistrates or ministers should be long absent from their respective charges: for “one sinner” will often take advantage of their absence, to “destroy much good;” and by example, insinuation, and influence, to subvert their most useful regulations, and to render their designs abortive.—Few ministers are willing, during any length of time, to labour in their ministry, under the pressure or the prospect of indigence; but most of them will turn to more profitable occupations: so that depriving the clergy of a suitable maintenance forms one of Satan’s projects, for causing the house and ordinances of God to be forsaken. Pious magistrates should peculiarly attend to this: they should take care that the ministers of the gospel be encouraged to labour in their proper places, and that a competent provision be made for them: nor are any, except men of approved fidelity, to be trusted in such concerns.

V. 15—31. The due observance of the Lord’s day forms an important object for the attention of those who would promote true godliness: and the Christian magistrate ought to take proper measures, to prevent that sacred season from being profaned by labour, mer handise, or those occupations which subserve the luxury and pride of life. As nobles too commonly set the example both of breaking God’s commandments, and of disregarding royal edicts, in this particular; they must first be contended with, and vigorously urged to do their duty. Persons in the higher orders of society, in general, little consider the extensive effects of their misconduct: if they violate the holy day of God, others will assuredly imitate their impiety; and thus the floodgates of ungodliness and wickedness will be thrown open, which must bring the wrath of God on guilty nations. Indeed the present state of

unprincipled profligacy in these kingdoms, may be shown in great measure to originate from the relaxed sentiments which some time after the reformation began to prevail concerning the spending of the sabbath. And as these have gained ground, that holy day has gradually become more and more the time when the lower orders are let loose to corrupt one another.—It is also necessary to repeat the observation, that improper marriages have ensnared the wisest men, have always led to apostacies, and tended to the ruin of succeeding generations. The children readily imbibed the principles of the infidel or ungodly parent, and soon forget the very language and appearance of piety; or substitute a corrupt religion, in the stead of that which comes from God, and leads to him.—Mothers likewise have a very important part allotted them in forming the manners of mankind; as the care of children in their tender years is almost wholly committed to them. It is therefore of great consequence to society, that females should be educated with a view to this most momentous employment, and qualified for the discharge of their duty in it. Every wise man, in contracting marriage, should consider whether the object of his choice would be a proper person to intrust with his children’s tuition: and every mother should consider, that this is the most important part of her charge, and most of all calls for assiduity, prudence, and circumspection. (*Note, 2 Tim. 1:3—5. P. O. 3:10—17.*)—In opposing fashionable and reputable vices; conclusive arguments, vehement expostulations, apposite examples, awful declarations of the wrath of God, and solemn engagements, may have the proper effect upon some: but the magistrate must often use more vigorous measures. He must disgrace, punish, and chase away the ringleaders in iniquity, without respect of persons or families: and severity to a few will prove mercy to many. But in every thing the word of God must be our rule: the love and fear of God, our principle; and his glory, in the prosperity of his cause and the welfare of his people, our great object. Whilst we labour in this manner, we must expect the enmity and opposition of a wicked world: but we may go on with confidence in the spirit of faith and prayer. We may humbly hope, that the Lord will “remember us,” and “not wipe out our services;” that he will “spare us according to the greatness of his mercy,” accept both our persons and our defective endeavours to glorify him: and if he “remember us for good,” that will be a sufficient recompense and happiness for ever: while those who impatiently sin against him, and especially such as disgrace a sacred character and office, will be remembered for evil, to their everlasting shame, confusion, and destruction, except timely and deep repentance intervene.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

THIS book, which takes its name from the principal character introduced in it, was most probably written by Mordercat, and inserted in the canon of Scripture by Ezra and his assistants, or by their successors: but there are various opinions among learned men on this subject. The Jews have always held the book of Esther in great veneration; and as the feast of Purim (9:26—32.) is observed by them to this day, no reasonable doubt can be entertained concerning the authenticity of the narrative. It contains no prophecies, and it is not referred to in the New Testament.—It is also very remarkable, that there is no clear mention in it of any of the names, by which the God of Israel is distinguished in the sacred oracles: yet it is most evidently intended, as well as admirably calculated, to illustrate the doctrine of Providence; and the methods and instruments by which the great Ruler of the world accomplishes his purposes, both of mercy and of judgment. Perhaps this omission of the names of God was *designed*. Facts, well known, concerning the worshippers of JEHOVAH, the plot formed for their extermination, and the wonderful deliverance vouchsafed them, were thus simply stated; in order that every reader might judge for himself, whether these facts did not demonstrate, that the God of the Jews was the great Ruler of the universe. Had this conclusion been urged on the Gentiles by a despised Jew, their prejudices might have been excited: let the simple narrative then speak for itself.—Several additional chapters are found in the Apocrypha, but they never were in the Hebrew text, and the Jews never received them: they principally contain repetitions, or additions, intended to decorate the history; but which in fact destroy its simple unity and beauty: and some things in them cannot be reconciled with the times to which the history must relate.—The preceding books form a specimen of the Lord’s care of his church in Judea: this shows his favour to the nation in general. A large proportion of those, who continued in remote countries, were very blameable in so doing: yet he would not leave the nation in the hand of their enemies, or deprive them of his mercy and grace on that account.

CHAPTER I.

Ahasuerus, king of Persia, makes a royal feast, 1—9. He sends for Vashti his queen, who refuses to come, 10—12. By the advice of his counsellors, he divorces her, and asserts, by a public decree, the authority of men over their wives, 13—22.

NOW it came to pass in the days of ^aAhasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned

Ezra 4:6. Dan. 9:1. h 8:9. Is. 18:1. 37:8. e Dan. 6:1. d 2 Sam. 7:1.

NOTES.—CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. It is evident, that the events recorded in this book, took place after the complete establishment of the Persian empire; for Shushan was the royal city of Persia. (*Note, Neh. 1:1. Dan. 8:1.*) Various have been the opinions of learned men concerning

from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* ^aa hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

2 That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in ^aShushan the palace,

1 Kings 1:46. Dan. 4:4. e 2:3. 3:15. 4:16. 9:12—15. Neh. 1:1. Dan. 8:2.

the Persian king, who is here called Ahasuerus. I am, however, fully satisfied with the arguments of Dean Prideaux: and consequently suppose Ahasuerus to have been Artaxerxes Longimanus, who commissioned both Ezra and Nehemiah. The extent of his dominions, his liberality, and his

3 In the third year of his reign, 'he made a feast unto all his princes, and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

4 When he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, *even* a hundred and fourscore days.

5 And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

6 *Where were* white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble.

7 And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

8 And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

9 Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.

10 ¶ On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains, that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and

the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

12 But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him. [Practical Observations.]

13 ¶ Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

14 And the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom:)

15 What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus, by the chamberlains?

16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

17 For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

18 Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath.

19 If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written

[2:18. Gen. 40:20. 1 Kings 3:15. Dan. 5:1. Mark 6:21. g. 14. Ezra 1:2. Is. 21:2. Jer. 51:11. Dan. 5:28. 8:20. h. Dan. 3:2,3. 6:1,6,7. 11s. 39:2. Ez. 23:5. Dan. 4:30. i. Ps. 76:1—4. 145:5,12,13. Dan. 2:37—44. 7:9—14. Matt. 4:8. 6:13. Rom. 9:23. Eph. 1:18. Col. 1:27. Rev. 4:11. k. 1 Chr. 29:11,12,25. Job 40:10. Ps. 21:5. 45:3. 93:1. Dan. 4:36. 5:18. 2 Pet. 1:16,17. l. Heb. found. 12 Chr. 7:8,9. 30:21—25. m. Ex. 26:31,32,35,37. 1 Or, violet. n. 7:8. Ez. 23:41. Am. 2:8. 6:4. 1 Or, of porphyre, and marble, and niabaster, and stone of blue colour. o. 1 Kings 10:21. 2 Chr. 9:20. Dan. 5:2—4. s. Heb. wine of the kingdom. ¶ Heb. hand. p. Jer. 35:8. 51:7. Hab. 2:15,16. q. John 2:8. r. 5:4,8. s. Gen. 43:34. Judg. 16:25. 1 Sam. 23:36,37. 2 Sam. 13:28. Prov. 20:1. Ez. 7:2—4. 10:19. Eph. 5:18.

kindness to the Jews, favour the supposition. (Notes, Ezra 7:1—5,11,26. Neh. 1:1. 2:5, 6, v. 6.) The Septuagint translation calls him Artaxerxes, and Josephus calls him Artaxerxes Longimanus. See Prideaux's Connection, printed 1749, v. i. p. 361—364.

V. 3—5. It is probable that the princes and nobles from the several parts of Ahasuerus's immense dominions, were entertained in rotation, during six months, with the most studied and ostentatious display of magnificence, of wealth, and liberality, which could be conceived; and that afterwards all the citizens of Shushan, without distinction, were feasted for seven days in like manner. (Marg. Ref. Note, Matt. 14: 15—21.)

V. 6. Marg. and Marg. Ref.—The beds.] On these the guests sat, or reclined, at table. (Note, Am. 6:3—8.)

V. 7, 8. (Marg. Ref. o.) The absurd practice of urging people to drink more strong liquor than they are of themselves inclined to, has prevailed in all ages; though it is a most gross violation of common sense, freedom, and civility, as well as of morality and religion. It seems to have been devised and supported by drunkards, that the more sober part of mankind might be drawn in to keep them in countenance, by a reluctant intoxication.—The regulation enjoined by the king was very necessary in the midst of so many incentives to intemperance; and his mind, being thus made known, doubtless prevented many disorders which otherwise would have been committed.

V. 9. It seems, that the women were feasted by the queen in a more retired situation than the nobles and people, and were kept separate from the men by express appointment; which made the subsequent order of the king appear the more unreasonable. (Note, 10—12.)

V. 10—12. When the customs of the Persians relative to their women, especially the wives of their kings, are considered, this injunction of Ahasuerus must appear highly improper and inconsistent. He sent seven of his chamberlains, (which so far was honourable to his queen;) commanding her to appear in her royal attire, in order that a number of princes and nobles, who were heated with wine, might be gratified by a sight of her singular beauty! A reluctance therefore to an exhibition, so contrary to the decorum observed by her sex, became her rank and modesty; but as the king was peremptory, and every one must have known that she came at his command; it was highly imprudent in her to persist in a refusal, which could terminate only in an open contest and the most fatal effects. His anger was the more

immoderate, because his blood was heated with wine, which made his passion too strong for his reason." Ep. Patrick.

V. 13, 14. These wise men, being acquainted with the records of the kingdom, might be able to bring precedents, how former kings had acted under circumstances in any respect similar, according to the laws and customs of the kingdom; as well as to understand in general what was proper to be done in the present emergency. (1 Chr. 12:32.) And it was the king's manner, in all such matters, to confer with those who knew law and judgment.—The seven counsellors here mentioned had free access to the king, and were the first subjects in the kingdom. (Note, Ezra 7:14.)

V. 15. Some suppose, that Ahasuerus was inclined to forgive Vashti, if it might stand with the honour of his government, and the laws of the realm. But others think, that he was disposed to divorce her, or otherwise punish her; but wished to proceed against her under colour of law and justice.

V. 16—18. Memucan is mentioned last of the seven counsellors: and it is supposed he was the youngest, or last in order on some account; and that he was required to give his opinion first, that he might not previously be biassed by the sentiments of his seniors or superiors.—It is uncertain, whether Memucan really deemed the queen's disobedience a dangerous precedent, while it remained unpunished; or whether he paid court to the king, by counselling him to follow his own humour, and by suggesting a plausible reason for so doing. (Notes, 2 Sam. 14:6—22. P. O. 1—20.) He, however, argued that the queen's rank, and the notoriety and pertinacity of her disobedience, would encourage other women to despise the persons and authority of their husbands; which contempt in the women would excite the wrath of the men, and thus destroy domestic subordination and peace.—Yet if husbands had been careful not to act contemptibly, or to give foolish and improper commands, they might have ruled by reason and affection, without either such fatal consequences, or violent measures. But despotism in civil government leads to despotism in domestic life: men imagine, that there is no way to rule, but by force and terror; and thus the superior relations become tyrants, and the inferior, slaves, submitting by constraint, without either conviction or affection.

V. 19—22. By this irrecoverable edict, which was published in the various languages spoken through the immense empire of the Persians, that all might understand it, Ahasuerus's example was virtually proposed for general imitation, so that every husband was allowed to divorce his wife, if she disobeyed his command, even when evidently foolish and

among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another [†]that is better than she.

20 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published ^hthroughout all his empire, (for it is great,) ⁱall the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

21 And the saying ^{pleased} the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

22 For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, ^jinto every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, ^kthat every man should bear rule in his

own house; and that ^{it} should be published according to the language of every people.

CHAPTER II.

By advice of his servants, Ahasuerus causes fair virgins to be sought out in every province of his kingdom, that he might choose a queen, 1-8. Esther has been brought up by Mordecai, 5-7. She obtains favour with the keeper of the women; pleases the king; and is made queen, having observed Mordecai's directions, 8-20. Mordecai discovers a plot against the king; the criminals are punished; and his service is registered in the chronicles of the kingdom, 21-23.

A^F^TER these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, ^{he} remembered Vashti, and ^{what} she had done, and what was decreed against her.

2 Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, ^{Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:}

* *Heu, it goes not away.* 8:8. Dan. 6:8, 12, 15, 17. † *Heb. her companion.* 1 Sam. 15:28. 1 Kings 2:32. h *Deut. 17:13, 21:21.* i *Eph. 5:33.* Col. 3:18. Est. 3:1-7. ‡ *Heb. was good in the eyes of the king.* 13:24. Gen. 41:37. 13:12, 8:9. 1 Sam. 3:29, 4:1. k 1 Tim. 2:12. Tit. 2:4, 5. § *Heb. one should publish.*

unreasonable! But whether pride, resentment, policy, or lust, predominated in the counsels of Ahasuerus, may remain uncertain; but the Lord was thus making preparation for defeating Haman's diabolical project, long before it ever entered into his heart, and before he arrived at the height of his power and prosperity. (Notes, 3:6-15. 8:8. Ps. 75:10. Ez. 33:10.)

It should be published, &c. (22) *Marg.*—The decree runs in the Hebrew, "That every man should bear rule in his own house, and speak in the language of his people." . . . that is, he should give his commands in his own language, which every one was bound to learn. *Bp. Patrick.* It is, however, evident, that great care was taken in all these decrees, that they should be circulated in each province in the language of that province, that all might understand them. (3:17. 8:9.) How important then is it, that the word of God should be translated into every language, and circulated in that language which is best understood in every land! and that all, without exception, should be offered them in the vulgar tongue, in every country.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12. No extent of possessions or dominion can satisfy the human heart, and give contentment or felicity even in this present life. Cares, fears, and temptations are augmented by every accession; the power of doing good or harm is enlarged, and alas! the latter is generally chosen. But to whom much is given, of him will much be required" by the great Proprietor, who is continually saying to monarchs, as well as to subjects, "Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."—Ostentatious generosity and magnificence, for a man's own honour and glory, that his wealth, bounty, and taste may be admired and applauded, is a common idolatry of the great and noble; and, except grace prevail in the heart, self-exaltation and self-indulgence, in some form or other, will be the ruling principles. But indeed the honour of every endowment, possession, or achievement, of created beings, belongs solely to the underrived, unchangeable Creator: his glory, in our own true felicity and that of our fellow-creatures, should be our great end in every action; and all other considerations ought to be subordinated to it, and regulated by it.—But if the feast of an earthly monarch, when he would "show the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty," was so magnificent; what will be that feast, which the King of kings has prepared, to "show the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty," to the praise of the glory of his grace," in heaven, for ever and ever! There will be unfading splendour, inexhaustible abundance, and unalloyed pleasures, without interruption or satiety; and without danger or fear of excess: nor will there arise the least discord to mar enjoyment, through all the ages of eternity. "All things are ready" for this feast; sinners without exception are invited: may we accept the gracious invitation; seek and find the wedding-garment; and sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb!—But in all other feasts, the pleasure is greatly alloyed, and soon palls; and too generally they prove unfavourable, not only to wisdom and piety, but even to present comfort and advantage. Seldom do any frequent them, without being led into some degree of excess, injurious to their strength of body and vigour of mind. They are scenes of temptation, suited to excite man's various evil propensities. The enemy of souls will be sure to avail himself of the unguarded moments, especially of such as are in reputation for wisdom and piety; and he has artfully prevailed to render it creditable, for men to become tempters of each other to intemperance so that few public entertainments, even among professed Christians, are conducted by such good rules as this *heavenly feast*. But *real Christians* must not only shun such scenes, and separate from those who frequent them; but likewise, by warnings and exhortations, endeavour to preserve their brethren from sin: and if, by this conduct at their own tables, they incur the censure of being penurious; "the poor, whom they always have with them," afford them a fair occasion of refuting the slander. Indeed, that will go very far in hospitality to the indigent, which is quickly wasted by pampering the luxury of the affluent. (Note, Luke 14:12-14. P. O. 12-24.)—Seasons of peculiar

festivity often terminate in vexation. Wine and jovial company elate the mind, add strength to the passions, and stun the voice of reason and conscience. On such occasions caprice generally dictates the conduct; unreasonable claims are started, or projects formed; and the eagerness of men's spirits ill brooks contradiction or affront, while it disposes to give them. Thus anger is excited and exasperated; and discords, revenge, duels, and murders, are the frequent consequences of pleasurable meetings! Propriety and decorum are also often disregarded; the respect and attention due to relatives are forgotten; improper requisitions are made, by which contempt and imprudent opposition are excited; affection is suspended, during the reign of haughty resentment; and all parties forget their reciprocal interests and duties, till their reputation and peace receive such wounds, as can seldom admit of a complete cure.—Let it also be specially noted, that superiors, in all cases and circumstances, should be careful not to command what may reasonably be disobeyed; for this must weaken their authority, and prove a temptation to those over whom they rule: yet inferiors ought never to persist in a refusal, except when it is really a point of conscience towards God. (Notes, Rom. 13:1-7.)

V. 13-22. There would be safety in the multitude of counsellors, if men did but welcome plain dealing; and if the counsellors of princes did not generally consult their inclinations, rather than their interests.—Domestic subordination doubtless ought to be preserved; and the wife ought to honour and obey her own husband: yet surely this may be effected by other means, beside severe laws, divorces, and measures more pernicious than the evil which they are intended to remedy! Regard to mutual interest, comfort, and reputation, serves to keep the world in tolerable order: the prudence and affection of the husband will do great things, where properly exercised: the general regard, which the more decent members of the community have to the precepts and authority of God, has considerable effect: true grace radically cures that evil, from which domestic discord arises; and in deplorable cases where the peace of society is materially violated, the magistrate may properly interpose. All other evils arising from this source may better be tolerated, than to attempt a remedy, by making the men tyrants, and the women slaves: while it is evident that the former fail as much, and commonly far more, in the duty of their relation, than the latter. Nor should even the interests of kingdoms be promoted, were it possible, by evident injustice.—The example of the great has a very extensive effect, and they are the more deeply concerned, not to exhibit a pernicious pattern to their inferiors: but human policy sometimes overshoots its mark; and to prevent the effect of one injurious precedent, forms another of still more fatal tendency. Let us then keep to the rule of God's word, and it will guide the humble, obedient believer through all these labyrinths; and be "a lantern to his feet, and a light unto his paths." Let us be upon our guard against every incentive to our passions; watching and praying against wrath, pride, and self-will, as well as sensual indulgence. Let us learn to bridle our tempers; to conquer by yielding; and to "leave off contention before it be meddled with." And let us rejoice that the Lord reigns, and will ever rule all the madness and folly of mankind, for the purposes of his own glory, and the safety and felicity of his believing, obedient people.

NOTES.—CHAP. II. V. 1. When the vehemency of the king's anger subsided, his affection for Vashti revived; and probably he was sensible, that he had acted with precipitation and severity, and had done her injustice. But with all his power and authority, he could not again receive her into favour, without violating a fundamental constitution of the Persian government; which required that no edict, which the king had once established, should be reversed. The fatal effects of this absurd policy will be sufficiently illustrated, in the sequel of this narrative. Under colour of ascribing infallibility to the sovereign, and thus flattering his pride: this restriction perpetually exposed him, in his unguarded hours, to be deluded into the most pernicious measures; and would not so much as allow him to remedy the injustice, or impolicy, into which he had been betrayed, when reflection and expe-

3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Heghe the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them:

4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashiti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 ¶ Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem, with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

7 And he brought up Hadassah, (that is, Esther,) his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

8 ¶ So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

9 And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women.

10 Esther had not showed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not show it.

11 And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.

12 ¶ Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the ways of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women;)

13 Then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.

14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

[Practical Observations.]

15 ¶ Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

16 So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house-royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashiti.

18 Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.

e 1:12. * Heb. the hand. f 8. Hegai. g 12-14. Is. 8:18-23. h 1:21. 5:10. 2 Sam. 13:4-6. 16:21-23. 17:4. Matt. 14:6. f 3. 1:2. 5:1. k 3:9-10. 3:10. 1 Sam. 9:1. 2 Sam. 16:5. m 2 Kings 24:14, 15. 2 Chr. 36:10. Jehoiachin. Jer. 22:24-28. Coniah. 24:1. f Heb. nourished. Eph. 6:4. n Dan. 1:6, 7. o 15. Jer. 32:17-12. f Heb. fair of form and good of countenance. 1:11. p Gen. 48:5. 2 Cor. 6:18. 1 John 3:1. q 8. Hege. r Gen. 39:21. 1 Kings 8:50. Ezra 7:5. Neh. 2:3. Ps. 106:46. Prov. 15:7. Dan. 1:3. Acts 7:10. s 8:12. s Heb. her portions. t Heb. sensible of his errors. 8:3-13.

zience had made him sensible of his errors. (Notes, 8:3-13. 9:1-16. Dan. 6:12-17.) And this was the more absurd and dangerous in its nature and effects, if they may be depended on, who inform us, that the Persian monarchs, and their counsellors, commonly framed their edicts at feasts, and when they were drinking. (Notes, 3:12-15.)

V. 2-4. (8-14. * Note, 1 Kings 1:4.) It is uncertain whether this was the project of the seven counsellors before mentioned; (Note, 1:16-18.) or of some other servants, who more immediately ministered to the king's pleasures. It seems, however, to have been devised, in order to prevent him from thinking any more of Vashiti, whose restoration to favour must be guarded against, for the safety of those who had counselled the king to exercise so great severity against her: for, if he had been greatly desirous of Vashiti's company, the law of the Medes and Persians would scarcely have prevented him from recalling her. This will appear by the following instance:—Cambyses, king of Persia, having conceived a violent passion for his own sister, inquired of his counsellors whether it was lawful for him to marry her? and they, dreading the effects of his resentment if they opposed his will, answered, that there was no law in Persia, by which a man was allowed to marry his sister, but that it was lawful for the king of Persia to do what he pleased.—It must also be noted, that though the king could not legally reverse the decree which he had signed and sealed; yet he might put to death the counsellors, who induced him to ratify it. (Notes, 7:7-10. 8:8. Dan. 6:24.)

V. 5-7. Mordecai, though a Benjamite, is repeatedly called the Jew: for the whole nation was now called after Judah. (Notes, Gen. 49:8-10. 2 Kings 16:6.)—Some of Mordecai's ancestors, (probably Kish,) had been carried to Babylon with Jeconiah; (Note, 2 Kings 24:8-16.) and the family afterwards settled at Shushan. But it seems that they were diminished in number, or impoverished: so that Mordecai's own cousin had been left an orphan; and he, being older than she was, had brought her up, and in all respects behaved as a father to her. Her Jewish name was Hadassah, but the Persians called her Esther.—The conjectures of several learned men concerning her, taken from

u 7:20. Eph. 6:1. x 13:14. y Heb. the peace of Esther. Gen. 37:14. 1 Sam 17:18. Acts 15:36. y 1 Thes. 4:4, 5. z Prov. 7:17. Cant. 3:6. Is. 57:9. Luke 7:37, 38. a 4:11. Gen. 34:19. Is. 62:4, 5. b Is. 4:4. c 7. d Cant. 6:9. Acts 7:10. e 8:9. f 1:3. Ezra 7:8. f * Or, kindness. t Heb. before him. g 4:14. 1 Sam. 28:3. Ps. 75:6, 7. 113:7, 8. Ez. 17:24. Luke 1:48-52. h 1:3-5. Gen. 29:22. Jude. 14:10-17. Cant. 3:11. 5:1. Matt. 22:2. Luke 14:8. Rev. 19:9. t Heb. rest. 1:9-22. 1 Sam. 25:8. Neh. 8:12. Rev. 11:10. k 3, 4. l 21. 3:2. 3:5. 3:13

rather a slight similarity of names between the king and the wives of some of the Persian kings, mentioned in Pagan historians, seem entirely groundless: as the dissimilarity of character, and indeed all other circumstances, vastly preponderate against them.

V. 8-10. As Mordecai was so scrupulous in respect of Haman, (Notes, 3:2-5.) it has been wondered, how he could consent to Esther's becoming the wife, or concubine, of a heathen prince, contrary to the law of Moses. But it does not seem to have been left to the choice, either of Mordecai or of Esther. By a public edict, the most beautiful virgins were selected from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions; and it would have been unavailing, as well as dangerous, to have opposed the persons employed in this business. 'The word we translate "was brought," may be rendered *was taken*; and that by force, as the word sometimes signifies; and as the former Targum here explains it, *She was brought by violence*.' Bp. Patrick.—If Esther had made known her nation it might have interfered with her advancement to the rank of queen, as the Jews were generally despised; but she could not have avoided becoming one of Ahasuerus's concubines. Polygamy was connived at by the Mosaic law; so that the situation of a concubine was not deemed dishonourable, or unlawful; and in her peculiar circumstances, the ritual law of not giving their daughters to those of another nation, might not be thought obligatory.—The conduct of Providence, however, should be chiefly noticed; though it does not appear that either Mordecai or Esther could have acted otherwise, if they had been inclined.

V. 11-14. Marg. Ref. P. O. 1-14.

V. 15-17. About four years were spent before another queen was chosen instead of Vashiti: (1:3) so long a time had been employed in collecting the virgins from all parts of Ahasuerus's dominions, and in other preparations which were thought requisite.—Ezra obtained his commission in the former part of this same year, if Artaxerxes were the same as Ahasuerus: (Note, Ezra 7:6-10.) and they who think that Artaxerxes granted the desire of Ezra, through Esther's influence, suppose that Esther had been the favoured concubine of the king, residing in his palace a considerable time

20 Esther: "had not yet showed her kindred, nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

21 ¶ In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

22 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.

23 And when inquisition was made of the mat-

m 10. n 6:2. Biethana. * Heb. threshold. o 2 Sam. 4:5,6. 16:11. 1 Kings 15:23—27. 16:9. 2 Kings 9:22—24. 12:20. 21:23. Pa. 144:10. p Ec. 10:20. Acts 23:12—22. q 6:2. Rom. 11:33. r Phil. 2:4. s 5:14. 7:10. Gen. 40:19,22.

before she was publicly made and crowned queen, which was in the tenth month of the seventh year of his reign.

V. 18. *Marg. Ref. Note*, 1—3.

V. 19, 20. It is probable that a number of virgins had been collected before Vasthi was made queen; in relation to which it is here said, "When the virgins were gathered together the second time."—About this time Mordecai seems to have been appointed to some station in the service of the king: and the historian appears merely to have intended to connect the account of Mordecai's discovery of the treason, (21—23.) with Esther's advancement to be queen, as introductory to the subsequent narrative.—Esther, after her high preferment, still continued as attentive to Mordecai's command as she had been before; out of gratitude for his kindness, and confidence in his wisdom, piety, and affection. "A rare example of virtue, that she should be so observant of him when she was a queen: for most forget what they were when they are unexpectedly grown very great." *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 21—23. Many conjectures have been formed of the cause of this conspiracy, and the manner in which it was discovered; but curiosity alone is concerned in such inquiries, which after all end in uncertainty. It suffices for us to know, that a conspiracy was formed; that Mordecai detected it, and, by informing Esther, conveyed the intelligence to the king, that the criminals were convicted and executed; and that the account of it was written in the records of the kingdom. The transaction itself was nowise uncommon; but the event showed the hand of God in it, in a most remarkable manner, and for the most important purposes. (*Notes*, 6.) "Here we may see the infelicity and the danger of the most potent persons. The life of a great king depending on the fidelity of one single person, whose service was neglected by the court, though a memorial was made of it." *Pellicanus in Bp. Patrick*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14. Resolutions formed in anger, and executed without deliberation, make work for bitter recollection and repentance. A wise man, therefore, will not proceed even to punish the guilty, till passion has subsided and reason resumed her sway.—The depravity of our nature, and the fallibility of our judgment, render it indispensable to our interest and happiness, that we should be allowed to change our sentiments and conduct, and correct our mistakes. Our gracious God has mercifully placed us under a dispensation which admits of this: and though many painful effects must follow from transgression, we shall not be ruined by it, if we avail ourselves of this provision. (*Ec.* 18:30.) But while pride and obstinacy seem to arrogate infallibility, and to aspire to a dignity incompatible with fallen nature; they forfeit the real advantages of our situation, and leave a man without redress, exposed to all the fatal consequences of every false step. No one, however, should be too proud to confess that he has been mistaken: and as this would preclude the absurdity of human laws, which must never be repealed or reversed; so it would strike at the root of that self-justifying, pertinacious temper, which induces sinners to neglect the gospel, and go on in sin. But even when men are in some measure made sensible of their folly and iniquity, new projects, amusements, and gratifications are devised, to silence conscience, and to carry them forward without uneasiness in the broad road of ungodliness.—The servants of mighty monarchs, though themselves princes and nobles, have often stooped to be pimps and parasites, in order to support their present authority, to purchase impunity for past crimes, or to procure future and still greater preferment! (*P. O.* Gen. 12:10—20, latter part.) But how degrading is it to our rational nature, that numbers of able men of superior rank, as well as of inferior station, should exert all their ingenuity and assiduity in enabling an individual more devotedly to pamper those "fleshly lusts which war against the soul!" Even reason, (not to say religion,) if her voice could be heard, would command men to moderate and restrain their passions, and to teach them submission by habituating them to brook denial. But the higher human beings are advanced in authority, the lower they too generally sink into the most abject slavery to their sensual appetites: as if their superiority were intended merely as a medium for the more unrestrained licentiousness, and to enable them to be avowed in those excesses which inferior libertines indulge with a more decent reserve!—How low is

ter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the Chronicles before the king.

CHAPTER III.

Haman is advanced by the king, who commands his servants to bow down to him; but Mordecai refuses to do it, 1, 2. Haman being informed, in revenge, purposes to destroy the whole Jewish nation, 3—6. He chooses a day, by casting lots, for executing his purpose, 7. By circumventing the Jews, he obtains a decree from the king to exterminate the nation, and publishes it through all the provinces, 1—55.

AFTER these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

Deut. 21:22,23. Josh. 8:29. t 6:1,2. Mal. 3:16. a 7:6. Ps. 12:8. Prov. 29:2. b Num. 24:7. 1 Sam. 15:8. c 1:14. Gen. 41:40,55. Ezra 7:14. Lan. 6:2.

our nature sunk when these are the leading pursuits, and the highest felicity of many millions of rational creatures! when every consideration of decency, equity, and conscience; when domestic comfort, relative duties, and the natural rights of mankind; when even reputation, interest, and health; when life, and the immortal soul itself, are habitually sacrificed to such a base and hateful idol! Yet after a prostituted ingenuity has done its utmost, disappointment, vexation, and loathing must ensue: and that man most wisely consults even the enjoyment of this present life, who most exactly obeys the precepts of the divine law.—We ought also to be thankful for revelation, which is needful to teach us how to act in the common affairs of life. But without the supernatural teaching, inclining, and assisting influence of the Holy Spirit, men will not pay a due regard to that revelation: for, with the Bible in their hands, numbers deviate at least as widely from reason and Scripture, as even the Persian monarchs did; except, as the want of power, and the laws of the land restrain their licentiousness. For these laws indeed, and for many other advantages, we have great cause to be thankful: and especially, that the children of Britons are not liable to be forced into the Seraglio of any licentious ruler. Yet, alas! after all, who can bear steadily to contemplate the corrupt state of our favoured nation, in this respect, without a mixture of shame, indignant regret, and contrition?

V. 15—23. It is peculiarly useful to consider the providential conduct of God fulfilling his wise, faithful, righteous, and merciful purposes in the midst of the extravagances occasioned by the mad passions of wicked men. He "careth for his people," and he is "the Father of the fatherless:" orphans are often peculiarly favoured in his providence, to encourage us to intrust our children to his care while we live, and when we are about to die and leave them.—It is our duty, in some cases, if we are able to provide for the orphan children of our near relations; and by so doing, men often provide for their own comfort and safety, and for their families also.—The Lord not only confers personal and mental endowments, and enriches the soul with wisdom and grace; but he gives favour likewise: and, notwithstanding prejudices, and general contempt, he can, when he pleases, secure to his people the most endeared affection of those who know him not. If wealth or kingdoms were good for them, they would certainly have them; but prosperity too generally feeds the distempers of corrupt nature, and poverty and obscurity are more advantageous. Even those high stations which some few believers occupy for the good of their brethren, will be their cross, if not their snare; and their comforts must flow from the same source, and be of the same nature, with those of the poorest Christian; and are generally in more scanty measure.—We ought, however, to be passive in the Lord's hands; and only be careful to avoid sin, and to perform our duty, in whatever station we are placed.—Our profession of religion, and many things relating to it, must often be regulated and timed according to circumstances; so that we not only need to regard the advice of wise and experienced Christians, but daily to ask for that wisdom which is from above, or we shall be liable to perpetual mistakes.—It is a singular proof that men have obtained a good measure of that wisdom, when unexpected prosperity and favour leave them humble and teachable, attentive to every relative duty, grateful to benefactors, and disposed to listen to prudent and pious counsellors.—No men are exposed to so great danger from treachery, resentment, and ambition as absolute monarchs: and their servants, when really attached, often confer obligations upon them which they never can adequately compensate. But the servant of God must be faithful to every trust, and watchful for the safety and interest of those who employ him; and though he seem at present neglected, he may be remembered hereafter. However, his conscientious and upright conduct is registered in heaven, and will be graciously rewarded by his God, when all his enemies shall be driven into utter destruction. (*Notes*, *Ec.* 9:13—18. *P. O.* 11—18.)

NOTES.—CHAPTER III. V. 1. Haman is supposed to have been an Amalekite, descended from the stock of the ancient kings of that people; many of whom were named Agag. (*Num.* 24:7. *1 Sam.* 15:8.)—If his descent was generally known, his advancement, to be the king's chief minister and favourite, would be peculiarly displeasing and alarming

2 And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed, and revered Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

3 Then the king's servants which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, "Why transgress-est thou the king's commandment?"

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai: also for they had showed him the people of

Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

[Practical Observations.]

7 ¶ In the first month, (that is, the month Nisan.) in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar.

8 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

9 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten

d 2:19,21. e Gen. 41:43. Phil. 2:10. f 1. Ex. 17:14,16. Deut. 25:19. 1 Sam. 15:3. Ps. 154. g Ex. 1:17. Matt. 15:23. h Gen. 39:10. 1 Dan. 3:8,9. 6:13. k Ezra 1:3. Dan. 3:12,16-19,23-31. 6:20-23,26-28. Jon. 1:9,12. 3:9. m 1:12. Job 5:2. Prov. 12:16. 19:19. 21:24. 27:31. Dan. 8:19. n He. 8:34. Rev. 12:12-17. o Neh. 2:1. p 1:3. 2:16. q 9:24-26. Prov. 16:33. Ez. 21:21,22.

Matt. 27:35. r 9:1,5:17-19,21. Ezra 6:15. s Lev. 26:33. Deut. 4:27. 30:3. 32:26. Neh. 1:8. Jer. 50:17. 12. 6:6. 11:16. Zech. 7:14. Job 7:35. Jam. 1:1. 1 Pet. 1:1. t Ezra 4:10-15. Acts 15:20,21. 17:6,7. 24:5. 28:2. * Heb. med. or equal, for the king to, &c. † Heb. to destroy them. ‡ Heb. weigh. Gen. 23:16. u Matt. 18:24.

to the Jews; as they were expressly commanded to extirpate the Amalekites. (Notes, Ez. 17:14-16. Deut. 25:17-19. 1 Sam. 15:1-3.)

V. 2. It has been much disputed, why Mordecai so pertinaciously and absolutely refused to bow before Haman, when commanded by his prince: and many, supposing that nothing more was meant than civil obeisance, such as Joseph's brethren and the Egyptians rendered to him, and such as they suppose Ezra, and Nehemiah, and even Daniel, must have paid to the Persian kings, have ascribed Mordecai's refusal to his contempt of Haman's character, or his dislike to him as an Amalekite. But these reasons are not sufficient to justify his conduct, when the fate of the whole nation was at stake: yet he evidently acted conscientiously, and was accepted by the Lord. We must not therefore ascribe his behaviour to pride, moroseness, resentment, or envy. It is well known that the Persian monarchs required an obeisance, which even the Greeks often refused or evaded, as express adoration: and it is not at all unlikely, that Ahasuerus required a similar act of adoration to be offered to his favourite. 'To bow the knee or the body, to all great persons, was a common respect; for which there needed not a particular command, . . . with respect of Haman. . . . There was therefore some kind of divine honour intended, such as was paid to the Persian kings themselves, to whom the Greeks would not pay this sort of respect, because it was accounted divine. And the word reverence imports something beyond bowing; which was falling flat on their faces to the ground.' Bp. Patrick.—The original words may be rendered, 'they kneeled down and fell prostrate before Haman,' or, 'they worshipped him: and perhaps the two expressions are never united, except when adoration is expressly meant, and they are in this narrative uniformly united. (Matt. 4:9. Acts 10:25,26. Rev. 22:8,9).—In the apocryphal addition to this book, Mordecai is introduced as thus appealing to God: 'Thou knowest, Lord, that it was neither in contempt, nor pride, nor for any desire of glory, that I did not bow down to proud Haman: for I could have been content, with good will, for the salvation of Israel, to kiss the soles of his feet: but I did this, that I might not prefer the glory of man above the glory of God, neither will I worship any but thee.' (Esther 13:12-14.) Indeed it is most probable that the homage required by Haman was idolatrous; and we may reasonably conclude, that the king himself dispensed with the customary ceremonies, out of regard to the conscientious scruples of those few Jews, who were admitted into his presence, and whom he peculiarly favoured; but that Haman, despising Mordecai and hating his people, was not so condescending. And though we do not read that other Jews refused Haman this honour; yet numbers might be of the same opinion, who were not put to the trial, not being employed in any places of honour or profit about the king; and indeed it does not appear that Mordecai was blamed by any of them, even amidst the most imminent danger to which the whole nation was exposed. (Note, Dan. 3:1-7.)

V. 3-5. Haman seems not to have noticed Mordecai's singularity, (amidst the homage which he received from all others,) till it was pointed out to him by the other servants of Ahasuerus. These first remonstrated with Mordecai for his disobedience to the king: but when he disregarded them, they desired to know whether 'his matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.' 'He acquaints them plainly of what religion and nation he was; who might not . . . worship any but God alone.' Bp. Patrick. This proves, that he vindicated himself on the ground of his religion: and it implies, that he expected Ahasuerus would admit of this plea; which favours the supposition, that the kings of Persia had been used to excuse their Jewish servants from such obeisance as they could not conscientiously render.—It is probable, however, that these informers thought this a good opportunity of paying court to the favourite; or of obtaining Mordecai's post for some of them, or their dependants: and

they did not approve of his singularity, by which he seemed to reproach their complacency.

V. 6. A wise man would have treated this information with neglect; and had he even thought that Mordecai's conduct was the effect of pique, pride, malice, or insolence, he would have left him to his humour. But Haman was a man of a weak and vainglorious mind, and intoxicated with prosperity, as the whole history shows. Being therefore fired with indignation, that these honours were refused him by one so greatly his inferior, and having understood that the refusal was dictated by principles, which were common to all the Jews; he considered the whole nation as his enemies, and determined, if possible, to involve them all in one common destruction. (Note, Ps. 83:1-4.)—The ancient enmity of an Amalekite seems also to have revived; and perhaps he meant to revenge the quarrel of his nation, as well as the affront which he had received from Mordecai. His rank and authority, and his unbounded influence over Ahasuerus, emboldened him to expect success in the daring attempt. His self-importance made him think it a mean revenge to crush an individual who had offended him; and his pre-eminence seemed only to suggest the idea of being able to do more mischief, and diffuse more extensive misery, than an inferior could have done.—His diabolical ambition and cruelty thirsted for the extirpation of the whole people of the Jews at one blow: at least all of them who dwelt in the immense kingdom of Persia, including those in Judea, which was a province of that kingdom. (Note, Ezra 2:1.) It may therefore fairly be concluded that the device was not his own; but was suggested by that ambitious spirit, who aspires to be "the god of this world," who has been "a murderer from the beginning," and whose enmity to the "Seed of the woman," to Christ and his church, is communicated to all his children. In this view, it was a plan worthy of the vast capacity, enmity, malice, ambition, and desperation of that arch rebel, against his Maker. (Notes, Gen. 3:14,15. Matt. 4:1,2. John 8:41-47, v. 44.)

V. 7. Esther had now been queen five years; yet her nation and kindred had not become publicly known: for Haman did not suspect that the queen was a Jewess, or that Mordecai was her near relation. (Note, 7:6.) Had Mordecai been ambitious of preferment, no doubt he would have counselled Esther to make known her kindred, when she was first in high favour: but he seems to have foreseen, that she was advanced for some future service to her people, for which she ought to reserve herself. (Note, 4:13,14.)—The word "Pur" signifies the lot. Haman, having formed his project, inquired of his idols, according to his own superstition, by casting lots what day would be most propitious to its execution: for he made himself sure of the king's concurrence: and it pleased God so to order it, that the day which had the favourable token, was above eleven months distant. Haman's superstition was such, that he did not venture to execute his design till that time came: though it can hardly be supposed, but he must have perceived that many things might occur to prevent the execution of his intentions. The king might change his mind, or might die; or the Jews might take refuge in other countries, or make such preparations for their own defence, as to render the attempt most perilous, and the success of it very hazardous.—The event showed the vanity of his oracles or auguries; and illustrated the doctrine of a particular providence over all the affairs of men, and the care of God over his church. 'This whole business was governed by a wonderful providence of God, by whom these lots were directed, and not by the Persian gods, to fall in the last month of the year; whereby almost a whole year intervened between the design and its execution; and gave time for Mordecai to acquaint Esther with it, and for her to intercede with the king, for the revoking or suspending his decree, and disappointing the conspiracy.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, Prov. 16:33.)

V. 8, 9. Haman does not seem even to have mentioned

thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it unto the king's treasuries.

10 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province, according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; *in the name of king Ahas-

erus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

14 The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed.

x 8:2,3. Gen. 41:42. * Or, oppressor. 7:6. y Ps. 73:7. Jer. 26:14. 40:4. Luke 23:35. † Or, secretaries. x 1:22. 9:9. 9:27. a 1 Kings 21:8. Dan. 6:5,12,15. y 8:2,3. e 8:10,14. 2 Chr. 30:6. Job 9:25. Jer. 51:51. Rom. 3:15. d 1 Sam.

15:3. 22:19. e 8:12—14. Jam. 2:13. f 8:11. 9:10. Is. 10:6. g 8:13,14. h Prov 1:16. 4:16. 1 Hos. 7:5. Am. 6:6. John 16:30. Rev. 11:10. k 4:16. 8:15. Prov 29:2.

to Ahasuerus the name of the people, whom he purposed to extirpate; supposing that they would be sufficiently known from his description of them. He probably acted as prime minister under the king, who, like most of those eastern monarchs, giving himself up to his pleasures, left the management of his affairs almost entirely to him. Indeed the ascendancy of Haman was so absolute, that none of the other counsellors seem to have been advised with in this most important matter; and probably the proposal was made and consented to, while the king was heated with wine. (Note, 2:1.)—The laws and customs of the people of God were indeed diverse from those of any other nation: but there is no proof, that they refused obedience to the laws of Persia, except as Mordecai refused to worship Haman; for we do not find that the kings of Persia required them to worship idols, or even forbade them to observe their sabbaths, festivals, and ceremonial institutions.—It does not appear from the narrative, that the horrible cruelty and injustice of the proposal at all startled the king! Indeed Haman seems to have been more apprehensive, that he would object to the impolicy of diminishing the revenue, by decreasing the number of his subjects. He therefore offered the king ten thousand talents of silver, (about four millions sterling, if reckoned according to the talent of the Jews' Tables,) by way of compensation for the loss. But it seems, that he meant to indemnify himself out of the property of the massacred Jews: and he would engage to raise the sum at once from the execution of his project which would, as he pretended, be more than equivalent to all present or subsequent disadvantages. 'He intended not to pay one farthing of it himself, it being easy to raise it out of the spoil of the Jews' goods.' *Bp. Patrick*. Those who were employed in executing the bloody decree, were required "to take the spoil of them for a prey;" (13) out of which he would require them to pay a certain proportion to "those who had the charge of the business" of collecting the revenue, "to bring it into the king's treasuries."

V. 10, 11. Without considerable knowledge of the human heart, and the history of mankind, we shall find a difficulty in conceiving, how any prince could be induced to consent to so horrid and pernicious a proposal without objection or hesitation. It would be absurd to assign a reason for so inflated a measure. But when an arbitrary monarch has become the dupe of a wicked favourite; it has always been observed, that the first object of his life, the chief, and almost the only use, which he makes of his power, is to gratify and aggrandize him: and the lives of subjects, or the interests of empires, have, on such occasions, often been wantonly sacrificed to the avarice, the ambition, the revenge, or the caprice, of a worthless minion!—"So loath are men that love their pleasure, to take any pains to distinguish between truth and falsehood." *Bp. Patrick*.—As a token that the request was granted, Ahasuerus gave the ring, with his royal signet, from his own hand, to the enemy and oppressor of the Jews; and he also granted to him all the spoil, without making any payment into the treasury: thus Haman seemed about to obtain the most complete gratification of his revenge, ambition, and avarice. (Notes, Ex. 15:9,10. Is. 10:13—15. Luke 12: 15—21.)

V. 12—15. Haman hastened to form the grant of the king into a decree, and to publish it throughout the empire: that the sentence might be looked upon as irreversible; and that all the subjects might prepare to carry it into execution, as they valued the favour of the king, and of his minister. Thus he expected, that the hope of ingratiating themselves at court, and the enmity borne the Jews, would unite the inhabitants of every city and province, in this bloody massacre: doubtless he intended to stir them up, and lead them to the attack, by his emissaries; and, further, to encourage them, it seems probable, that they were allowed to take the whole spoil of the Jews to themselves as a prey. That his meaning might not be mistaken, he caused the edict to be drawn up with a remarkable repetition, and almost in the style of modern law; and the inhabitants of every province were expressly commanded, "to destroy, kill, and cause to perish," all the Jews,

even old men, and women, and children, in one day.—When this strange and most horrid decree was published, it caused much perplexity and consternation, not only to the Jews, but to all considerate men, especially at Shushan: for they could not but tremble for themselves, when they perceived what a bloody tyrant had possession of authority; and they must foresee, that terrible effects would follow from such a mad and rash attempt, which would render an immense number of people desperate, and drive them to the most furious courage in their own defence. 'Perhaps some of them were related to the Jews, or had made friendship with them; and therefore were much concerned at this horrid decree.'—*Bp. Patrick*. But Haman was insensible to every thing, except the gratification of his revenge: and in order to keep such reflections and reports at a distance from the king, he engaged him in pleasure and indulgence; and they sat down to drink, as perfectly unconcerned in the event!—Eleven months intervened, between the publishing of the decree, and the day appointed for carrying it into execution. 'This was not wisely projected, to let his design be known so long before it was to take effect: for the king's mind might alter, or the Jews might find some way to deliver themselves, or might steal out of the kingdom.' *Bp. Patrick*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6. The favourites of earthly princes have too often been distinguished by their folly, pride, and profligacy: but those of the King of heaven are endowed with wisdom, and grace, and prepared for usefulness in their several situations.—The vanity and comparative worthlessness of earthly dignities and possessions are shown, by their being so commonly lavished upon the basest of the human species; "God having provided better things" for the objects of his special love.—The poison of the old serpent, infused by his first temptation, "Ye shall be as gods," still rankles in the human heart; and when the pride of man is emboldened by great prosperity, it is capable of openly affecting the honour and worship, which belong to God alone! (Notes, Gen. 3:4,5. Ex. 28: 2—5. P. O. 1—10. Notes, Dan. 6:6—9. Acts 12:20—23.) We are all by nature idolatrous, and self is the most favourite of our idols: and whilst we admire and glory in our own supposed excellences, we delight that others should join the incense of their adulation; we are pleased to be treated, as if every thing were at our disposal, and within the reach of our capacity, and that all around should submit to us and bow before us. And when this vast ambition occupies a narrow mind, and the possessor climbs the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, he forgets that he is a man: and acts as if the world were made for him, and were to be governed by him; and as if all its inhabitants were created to be his slaves, and to worship at his shrine!—The desire of the favour of monarchs, and the fear of their wrath, influence most men to allow of these arrogant claims, and to conform to this strange idolatry: and those princes, who have literally demanded altars, sacrifices, and incense to their own deity, have generally met with a ready and zealous compliance from most of their subjects. But the true believer can neither obey such edicts and conform to such fashions, nor be induced, by any persuasions or menaces, to violate the law of God, or the dictates of his own conscience. He must "obey God rather than men," and leave the consequences to him; and whether "his matters will stand," and his religion excuse his disobedience to unlawful commands, in human courts of justice, or not, he will certainly be justified in so doing before the tribunal of God.—Who can know the desperate wickedness of the human heart, or prescribe any bounds to its devices! When a man possesses the dangerous privilege of doing as he pleases, without control, and with present impunity; when pride and ambition meet with an unexpected repulse, and when indignation and revenge occupy the heart; the most horrible and diabolical designs will be considered as the evidences of a noble and daring mind. In such circumstances, the infuriated wretch will think scorn of the petty rapines and assassinations of inferior villains, and become ambitious of being as much distinguished by a vast revenge, as by the

CHAPTER IV.

35—Mecani and the Jews fast, and mourn exceedingly, 1—3. Esther, sending to Mordecai the reason, is informed of the decree, and requested to assist the king for her people 4—8. She excuses herself by alleging the severity of the attempt; but being shown the consequences, she appoints a fast of three days, and consents to approach the king, though at the hazard of her life, 10—17.

WHEN Mordecai perceived ^aall that was done, Mordecai ^brent his clothes, and put on sackcloth ^cwith ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and ^dcried with a loud and a bitter cry;

2 And came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

3 And ^ein every province whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, ^fthere was ^ggreat mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and ^hsweeping, and wailing; and ⁱmany lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 ^jSo Esther ^kmaids and her ^lchamberlains came and told ^mher. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: ⁿbut he received ^oit not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, ^pone of the

a 3:8—13. b 2 Sam. 1:11. Job 1:20. Jon. 3:4—9. Acts 14:14. c 9. Josh. 7:6. 2 Sam. 13:19. Job 2:8. 42:6. Is. 58:5. Ec. 27:30. Dan. 9:3. Matt. 11:21. d Gen. 27:34. Is. 15:4. 22:4. Ec. 21:56. 27:31. Mic. 1:8. Zeph. 1:14. Rev. 18:17—19. e 1:13. f 1 Sam. 4:13, 14. 11:4. Is. 22:4, 5, 12. 37:1, 3. g Matt. 13:42. 22: 13. 25:30. ^h Heb. sackcloth and ashes were laid under many. Is. 58:5. Dan.

eminence of his rank: and what massacres and crimes will not in that case be perpetrated without remorse, and even with pride and pleasure; while immense numbers both fall victims to his fury, and are involved with him in the guilt of murder and other enormities! What cause then have we to be thankful for external restraints to our headstrong passions; and how ought we to watch and pray against pride, anger, malice, and every sinful propensity! for if left under the power of them, we cannot conceive how far they would hurry us.—Let us also remember to be thankful for a limited, mild, and equitable government; and to beg of God to extend the same blessing to all other nations; with all the blessings of our holy religion, and that liberty with which Christ makes his people free.

V. 7—15. The world, as lying in wickedness, must hate the people of God, who bear his image and do his will: but they will be peculiarly obnoxious to tyrants; as they must refuse unreserved compliance with their mandates and humours; being the subjects of another kingdom, and governed by laws diverse from, nay opposite to, their favourite maxims and pursuits. They are indeed, and ought to be, “a peculiar” and singular “people,” “not conformed to this world,” while they are dispersed in the various parts of it: and they should be willing to be treated as precise, conceited, and unpliant. But those who persuade princes, that it is not for their profit to tolerate them, and that they had better persecute, destroy, or banish them, are as much enemies to the state as to the church of God. Whatever mere professors may be, true Christians are the best subjects under every government: not only because they are more peaceable, honest, and industrious than their neighbours; and conscientiously pay tribute, and render obedience in all things lawful; but because their examples and conversation edify many, and their prayers bring down a blessing upon the land in which they live in peace. No acquisitions of wealth therefore could compensate the loss of them, even in a political view; and without bringing into the account the enormous loss of national guilt, which persecution rapidly accumulates.—The ungodly are often lavish in expenses on their lusts: and thus shame those Christians who are penurious in promoting the cause of God: they, however, frequently find means by one of their crimes to bear the expenses of the rest; and it is through defect of ingenuity or of power, if they do not always accomplish this.—Inconsiderate princes, who are the slaves of pleasure and dupes to their favourites, may, though humane in their own dispositions, become as mischievous as the most bloody tyrants; by consenting, through false accusations, to that injustice and cruelty which they would have abhorred, if they had taken the pains properly to investigate the business. Thus the most important interests of millions are sacrificed to the humour, emolument, or revenge of some worthless wretch; who regards the honour of his patron no more than he does the happiness of the people, and is as insensible to gratitude, as to compassion. But we may cease to wonder that such things have been done, when we consider how individuals, in every station of life, sacrifice their credit, interest, health, and connexions, and even shorten their lives, as well as ruin their souls, for the sake of the most contemptible gratifications: and though sensible of their danger, they have no power to resist the importunity of an inordinate, unreasonable inclination! When this becomes the case of one in authority, and unites with his other passions and partialities; intoxication and excess extinguish every remaining spark of humanity, and stupify conscience and reflection; and he and his companions will be revelling

king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was.

6 So Hatach went forth to Mordecai, unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate.

7 And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to show it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

9 And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

[Practical Observations.]

10 ^qAgain Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

11 All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever,

9:3. 1 Heb. eunuchs. 1:12. 1 Sam. 8:15. marg. 2 Kings 9:32. Is. 56:8. Acts 8: 27. h Gen. 37:35. Ps. 72:2. Jer. 31:15. i Heb. not before her. 1:10, 12. 1 Rom. 12:15. 1 Cor. 12:26. Phil. 2:4. Heb. 4:15. 13:2—15. k 3:13, 15. 12:20. 1 Tim. 6:13, 17. m Job 9:15. Prov. 16:14, 15. Ec. 10:4. Acts 12:20. n 7:3, 4. 8:6. Neh. 2:3—5. Prov. 21:1.

with unfeeling and most unseasonable mirth, while thousands are deploring the fatal effects of their pernicious counsels.—But the Lord bounds the effects of man's malice, as he does the raging waves of the ocean: even superstition, though baneful in itself, may sometimes operate as a useful restraint on those who are free from every other; and it has often so dismayed unprincipled men, in the full career of prosperous wickedness, that they have postponed their designs, till opportunity has been given to render them abortive. Thus “the counsel of the LORD shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure;” and “they that trust in him shall never be confounded.”

NOTES.—CHAP. IV. V. 1. (Marg. Ref.) Mordecai, besides giving vent to his own sorrows, by his open lamentations, and by the habit of a penitent mourner, doubtless intended to excite the attention of his people to the extent and imminence of their danger, and to the proper method of seeking deliverance. Probably, he was one of the most considerable Jews in Shushan, and immediately struck at by the decree: therefore he thus avowed his relation to the Jews, and called upon them to unite in seeking protection from God.

V. 2. Nothing was allowed to enter within the palace, which did not bear the aspect of joy and pleasure, or which could remind the king of misery or mortality. (Note, Gen. 50:4.) Thus, whatever oppressions were committed upon the subjects, all complaints were discouraged, and care was taken to prevent the king from being troubled with the report of them. Mordecai, therefore, when expressing his grief by the customary tokens, might not enter to his usual place of attendance: but he walked as near it as he could, that being noticed, Esther might hear of him; through whom he doubtless entertained hopes of deliverance. (Notes, 13:14. 2:21—23.)

V. 3. It cannot be reasonably doubted, that the fastings and weepings of the Jews were attended by constant prayers and supplications: yet all mention of them, and of the glorious God whom they worshipped, seems to have been carefully and purposely avoided, both here and elsewhere. (Preface.)

V. 4. Some of the queen's attendants were, it seems, acquainted with her relation to Mordecai; and his excessive grief being noticed, she soon heard of it. As a token of her sincere and deep sympathy with him in his sorrow, and her unabated affection for so kind a benefactor, she sent him change of raiment, according to the custom of the times; in order perhaps, that he might resume his place: but she seems not to have known the cause of his affliction; and his refusal to be comforted would lead her to conclude, that it was for some very great and terrible calamity. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5. The wives and concubines of the Persian kings were watched with such jealous strictness, that the queen herself had not liberty to go out of the precincts of the palace, to confer in person with so near a relative; nor might he have access to her, especially in mourning! So that she could only inquire the cause of his excessive sorrow, by the interposition of one of the chamberlains, whom the king had appointed to attend on her. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 6—9. (Marg. Ref. Notes, 3:2—15.) Mordecai told Hatach, in what manner Haman's revenge was excited, and of the proposal which he had made to the king of paying ten thousand talents into the treasury, if a decree might be passed for destroying all the Jews; and that such a decree had been ratified, of which he sent a copy to Esther; and he charged her to intercede with the king in behalf of her nation.

V. 11. It may be supposed, that this law was framed, under the pretext of securing the person of the king from the assaults of conspirators, and of maintaining his dignity; that

whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, *there is* none law of his to put *him* to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but

thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed and who knoweth, *whether* thou art come to the kingdom *for such a time as this*?

15 ¶ Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days night or day: also and my maidens will fast likewise: and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

o 5:1. p Dan. 2:9. q 5:2. 8:4. r 1:19. 2:14. 1 Pet. 3:7. s Prov. 24:10—12. Matt. 16:24, 25. John 12:25. Phil. 2:30. Heb. 12:3. 1 Gen. 22:14. Num. 23:22—24. Deut. 32:26, 27, 35. 1 Sam. 12:22. Is. 54:17. Jer. 30:11. 33:24—26. 46:28. Am. 8:9. Matt. 18:24. 22:2. * Heb. *respiration*. Ezra 9:9. Job 9:18. u 2:7, 15. Judg. 14:15—16. 15:6. x Gen. 45:4—8. Is. 45:1—5. 49:23. Acts 7:

20—25. y 1 Sam. 17:29. 2 Kings 19:3. Neh. 6:11. † Heb. *found*. z 2 Chr. 20:3. Is. 22:12. Joel 1:14, 15. 2:12—17. Jon. 3:4—6. a 5:1. Matt. 12:40. Acts 9:5. 27:33. b Gen. 18:19. Josh. 24:15. Acts 10:7. c Gen. 43:14. 1 Sam. 19:5. 2 Sam. 10:12. Luke 9:24. Acts 20:24. 21:13. Rom. 16:4. Phil. 2:30. ‡ Heb. *passed*

being seldom seen, he might be considered as a kind of deity: but it would serve also to protect his ministers and favourites from detection, in their oppressions or pernicious measures. For in general the king must see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and receive their reports; and if any one would venture to present to him a complaint, petition, appeal, or information, he must do it at the hazard of his life; as the king would seldom call for any person, in opposition to the advice of his counsellors and ministers. By this method the king also was excluded from liberal society and converse: so that his palace in the city, and his pavilions in the camp, became a kind of prison: and no wonder, that princes who were so immured, became morose and capricious, and prepared for every kind of tyranny and cruelty. (*Notes*, Neh. 2:1, 2. Dan. 6:6—9.)—As the law extended to the women likewise, we may suppose that this was intended to free the monarch from molestation, when his affections had been transferred from former objects to more successful rivals: for if the queen went into his presence uncalled, immediate death was the inevitable consequence, should he be displeased at her intrusion. And as Esther had not been called for during a whole month, she had some reason to fear that she had lost the king's favour; and that she should also lose her life, if she presumed to enter uncalled into his presence.—Probably, Haman had occupied the king's mind with every species of licentious pleasure, that he might think no further of the edict, which he had confirmed and published.

V. 13, 14. Mordecai represented to Esther, that in case the decree against her people should be executed, she would certainly be known to be a Jewess, and would be slain even in the king's palace, by some of the envious and malicious enemies of that nation. But, being "strong in faith," he was assured, that God would by some means deliver his people; and that, if she refused to venture her life in the cause, their *engagement* would be attended by some remarkable judgment upon her, and all her remaining relations. (*Marg. Ref. Notes*, Prov. 24:11, 12. Matt. 16:24—28.) He also suggested to her, that most probably she had been advanced to her present dignity, on purpose to be the deliverer of her nation in this perilous crisis, and in this case, her attempt would be both safe and honourable.—It is remarkable that sentiments, so replete with faith and piety, are conveyed to us, without the mention of God, or Providence. This seems to have been done intentionally. (*Preface*.)

V. 15—17. (*Marg. Ref.*) Some think that the Jews were only required to abstain from all delicacies, and to fast each day till after sunset: but perhaps on this extraordinary occasion, all, who had no hindrance that rendered it impracticable, (in which situation many must needs be found,) fasted from the morning of the first, until some time on the third day, without eating any thing. (*Notes*, Dan. 10:2, 3. Joel 1:13—15. 2:15—17. Jon. 3:5—10.) The queen herself, however, conformed to the same rule which she prescribed to others: and she had obtained some attendants, who were willing to unite with her in these exercises of devotion, though it is not probable that they were Jewesses. And when preparation had been made, by solemn humiliation before God, no doubt accompanied by fervent, united, and persevering prayer, she determined, by an heroic act of faith and love, to venture her life in the cause of her people: and if it were the will of the Lord, that she should be put to death, she was ready to acquiesce in his appointment. "This is not a speech of despondence, but of courage and resolution; being as much as to say, I am content to perish in so good a cause: and if I perish for it in this world, (as the Targum glosses,) I shall have my portion in the world to come." *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, Neh. 6:10—14. Acts 20:22—24. Phil. 2:24—30. 1 John 3:16, 17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9. Public calamities, especially those which oppress the church of God, should more affect our hearts than any private affliction: and it is peculiarly distressing to a generous mind, to be even the occasion of suffering to others.—Vain is the attempt of man to banish misery from his heart, by any of those varied devices which he tries for that purpose. A refuge from the wrath to come is indeed provided; and an effectual support under temporal afflictions, and victory over

death itself: but most men content themselves with striving to forget their misery, instead of seeking and securing happiness. Yet the approach of death, as well as its consequences, must be formidable, in proportion as it is unexpected and unprepared for.—Exalted stations, and envied distinctions, in many respects, greatly abridge the liberty of the possessors, and preclude them from the most agreeable and profitable society. Pride, envy, suspicion, and other unreasonable passions, render them slaves to cumbrous forms; and to preserve their dignity, or from fear of giving offence, they often have less opportunity of enjoyment or improvement, than their inferiors, and become the ignorant dupes of designing men in matters of the greatest importance. Too often laws also are framed in subservency to men's lusts; and under every government, the more cause is given for complaint, the less liberty is allowed to complain.—But let us rejoice that the righteous Lord reigns, and upon a mercy-seat. To him we have access at all times: his golden sceptre is ever held forth to encourage our approach: we cannot come uncalled into his presence, when we plead the Saviour's name; our danger consists in keeping at too great a distance, not in drawing too near: if he have taken us for the objects of his peculiar love, he will never cast us off; and it is our own fault if we have not daily access to him and communion with him. We never have any good reason to complain of his dispensations; though we have frequently cause to bemoan our afflictions, to deprecate the miseries to which we are exposed, and to appeal to him against our oppressors, persecutors, and tempters: and we are *charged* to present our daily petitions at his throne of grace, for the whole church of God and all the members of it, according to their several difficulties, trials, and services; as well as for the conversion and salvation of our fellow-sinners. For this purpose, we should inquire concerning the state of our brethren, how they fare, and of the cause of God, how it prospers; that we may be directed in our prayers, and in our endeavours to serve the common cause by the due improvement of our talents. And if we be thus disposed, we shall seldom want opportunities of comforting the mourners, protecting the oppressed, or succouring those who are in tribulation or necessity.

V. 10—17. As the enemies of the church are instigated by malice to be unwearied in mischief, surely we should be constrained by love to be as unwearied in doing good. But we are prone to shrink from perilous and self-denying services: and to think ourselves sufficiently excused for neglecting an opportunity of important usefulness, if we can truly say, that it would have been embraced at the hazard of liberty or life. Yet, as the disciples of him who laid down his life for us, we ought also, if properly called to it, "to lay down our lives for the brethren;" and no labour, loss, or suffering in the way, will justify us in neglecting the duty of our station. If then Christians, who are placed in exalted situations, show a disposition to consult their own ease and safety rather than the public good, they should be plainly remonstrated with and reminded that their interest and that of God's people are inseparable; that their enemies are the same: that he, who sinfully determines "to save his life, shall lose it;" that enlargement and deliverance will arise to the church of God from some quarter; that if they, from selfish motives, refuse the privilege of being his instruments, the honour will be given to others, and disgrace or ruin will come upon them and theirs, for deserting the cause when the emergency called for their interposition; that Providence has raised them to their high stations, that they may serve God, and do good to mankind; and will they then neglect the opportunity which is presented to them? that, perhaps, this was the very service for which they were raised up; and it is preposterous to fear man in doing the evident will of God. Such remonstrances, when urged by men of consistent character, have a powerful effect, in exciting the timorous and reluctant to venture in a good cause.—Those, however, who are called to stand forth boldly in perilous services, have a right to demand the united prayers of all their brethren. And, in great emergencies and adversities especially, solemn seasons of fasting, humiliation and prayer are peculiarly useful, to prepare the mind for expecting and receiving deliverance from the mercy of God, in a proper manner.—Believers may have fellowship with

CHAPTER V.

Esther, venturing unaided before the king, is graciously resolved; and, being encouraged to make her request, she invites the king and Haman to a banquet. 1-5. Being again asked what was her request, she invites them to another banquet the next day, 6-8. Haman, proud of this distinction, and elated by prosperity, is yet disquieted by Mordecai's neglect, and amidst his vainglorious complaints of it to his friends and his wife, 9-13. By their advice he erects a gallows for Mordecai's execution the next morning, 14.

NOW it came to pass *on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king ^dsat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that *she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther (the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, *What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee ^hto the half of the kingdom.

4 And Esther answered, *If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto ^kthe banquet that I have prepared for him.

5 Then the king said, *Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 ¶ And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

a 4:16. Matt. 27:64. b 1:11. 8:15. Matt. 10:16. 11:8. 1 Pet. 3:3-5. c 4:11. 5:4. d 1 Kings 10:18-20. Luke 22:80. Rev. 3:21. e Gen. 32:28. Neh. 1:11. Ps. 136:1. Prov. 21:1. Acts 1:10. 10:4. f 4:11. 5:4. g 7:2. 9:12. 1 Kings 2:20. 3:5. Matt. 20:29. Luke 18:41. h 5. Mark 6:23. 18. Prov. 28:11. k 8:15. Gen. 27:25. 28:20. Ps. 112:5. 1 Cor. 14:20. 16:14. m 3:7. 2:9. 9:12. * Heb. dc. n 6:1. k. Prov. 16:9. o Job 20:5. Am. 6:12. 13. Luke 6:25. John 16:30. Jam. 4:9. p 3:2. Ps. 15:4. Matt. 10:28. q 3:5. 1 Kings 21:4. Job 31:31. Ps. 27:3. Dan. 3:13. 19. Matt. 2:16. Acts 7:54. r Gen. 43:30. 31. 45:1. 2 Sam. 13:22. 23. Ec. 7:9. t Heb. caused his friends to come. e 6:13. t 1:4. Gen.

each other in the same duties, when not able to meet in the same place.—Those who stir up others to self-denial should set the example of it: and a winning deportment, a pious conversation, and a holy life, will generally induce others to join us in seeking the Lord, wherever we are placed. (Note, Acts 10:3-8, v. 7.) Having solemnly commended our souls and our cause to God, we may venture under his protection upon any service, without distressing fear: we are perfectly safe, if he please to preserve us; and should we lose our lives in doing his will, that loss would be our greatest gain.—Indeed all dangers are trivial, compared to the danger of losing our souls. When this is apprehended, the trembling sinner is often as much afraid of casting himself, without reserve, upon the Lord's free mercy, as Esther was of coming before the king. But let him venture, as she did, with earnest prayers and supplications, saying, "If I perish, I perish," and he shall certainly succeed in the event. And as the cause of God will at last be triumphant, it is our highest interest cordially to adhere to it, whatever cross we may be required to endure.

NOTES.—CHAP. V. 1-3. Esther, having intrusted herself to the protection of God, and put on her royal apparel, ventured into the presence of the king; most probably before the conclusion of the solemn fast and while the Jews were still engaged in prayer. Her conduct was contrary to the law of the Persians: but the king, by holding forth the golden sceptre, granted her a pardon; and by his subsequent inquiry and promise, relieved her anxiety and raised her expectations. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Gen. 32:6-8, 24-28. 33:4. Neh. 1:5-11. Prov. 21:1. Acts 9:3-6. 12:5-11.)—The apocryphal addition to this book, says, that at first the king frowned, and Esther fainted; and that God then put it into his heart to behave kindly towards her.

V. 4. It appears probable, that Esther intended to make a previous trial of the king's disposition, before she presented her important petition, which could scarcely be granted without the immediate ruin of his principal favourite. It might also be improper to make her request before the king's attendants; and she meant to do it in the presence of Haman. The delay likewise expressed her respect for the king, whom she reluctantly troubled, because the matter was urgent: and probably she well knew that blandishments, and the exhilaration of wine and feasting, disposed him to grant such petitions as he would otherwise have rejected.

V. 5-8. (Marg. Ref.) Whether Esther's courage failed her, or whether she had some good reason for this delay; the providential wisdom of God was wonderfully manifested by it, as the event sufficiently shows. There was

7 Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request is:

8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow as the king hath said.

9 ¶ Then went Haman forth that day joyfully and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

10 Nevertheless, Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.

11 And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

14 ¶ Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

31:1. Job 31:24. 25. Ps. 49:6. 16:17. Is. 10:8. Jer. 9:23. 24. Dan. 4:30. Mark 10:24. Luke 12:19. 20. 1 Tim. 6:17. u 9:7-10. Job 27:14. 15. Hos. 9:13. 14. x 3. 1. y Job 4:12. 13. 20:5-8. Ps. 37:35. 36. Prov. 7:22. 23. 27:1. Luke 21:34. 35. Thea. 5:3. z 1 Kings 21:4-6. Job 18:4. Ec. 1:2. 14. Phil. 4:11. 12. a 2 Sam. 13:3-5. 1 Kings 21:7. 25. 2 Chr. 22:5. 4. Mark 6:18-24. b 7:9. t Heb. tree c 3:8. k. 6:4. d 3:15. 1 Kings 21:7. Am. 6:4-6. Rev. 11:10. e 2 Sam. 16:21-23. 17:1-4. Mark 14:10. 11. Acts 23:14. 15. Rom. 1:32. f 7:10. Ps. 7:13-16. 9:15. Prov. 1:18. 4:16. Rom. 3:15.

also a singular providence of God in this matter, which so disposed her mind, that the high honour the king bestowed on Mordecai the next day, might fall out between this and that, and make way for her petition. . . . The Israelites were in great expectation of the issue of this feasting, and hoped to see Haman suddenly cut off; but she was resolved to turn their thoughts the right way, that is, from their own God, looking for mercy from their heavenly Father. Bp. Patrick and Targum quoted by him. (Notes, 6.)

V. 9, 10. Mordecai had before refused Haman the exorbitant honours which he claimed: but now he "stood not up, nor moved for him," which probably he had before done; for Haman's prodigious wickedness rendered him unworthy even of common respect. Mordecai would also show this base man, that, so far from abject submission from dread of his cruel revenge, he had trusted his cause with God, and did not "fear what flesh could do to him." But Haman, though full of indignant wrath, refrained himself for the present.—It seems that at the close of the solemn fast, Mordecai had hastened to put off his sackcloth, and to be found in his place (Notes, 1-3. 2:21-23. 4:1, 2.)

V. 11, 12. Haman's wife and friends must have before known all the particulars of his prosperity: but he loved, it seems, to be talking on these subjects; and the queen's invitation, which he supposed to spring from peculiar esteem and respect, was a recent distinction which greatly flattered his pride.

V. 13. The neglect of Mordecai, by Haman's own confession, more than counterbalanced all his singular prosperity, and marred all his enjoyment. His proud heart rankled with malice and impatience, because this Jew still lived, kept his place, and refused to bow unto him. The destruction of the nation was determined on at a distant day; but he thirsted for Mordecai's blood, as an anticipation of that more complete revenge.—How small a matter will spoil all the satisfaction of those, who are arrived at the top of human felicity! Immense riches, glory, and honour, gave not Haman so much pleasure, as he felt pain from one man's disrespect. Bp. Patrick.

V. 14. Zeresh and Haman's friends supposed, that being so deeply chagrined, he could not enjoy the royal banquet, if he did not previously gratify his malice by the death of Mordecai. They were confident, that at the first word the king would consent to Mordecai's execution; and they advised the immediate erection of a gibbet for that purpose, that no time might be lost; and, in order that all men might witness the death of him, who refused honour to the king's favourite, it must be more than twenty-five yards high. This cruel and

CHAPTER VI.

The king unable to sleep, orders the records of the kingdom to be read, 1: and discovering that Mordecai's service had not been rewarded, he considers how to honour him, 2-3. Haman, coming early to request that Mordecai might be named, is himself appointed to confer the highest honours upon him, 4-11. He is strictly cut down, and distressed; his friends and wife predict his ruin; and in this state of mind he is called to attend Esther's banquet, 12-14.

ON that night 'could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the Chronicles; and they were read before the king.

2 And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

3 And the king said, 'What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, 'There is nothing done for him.

4 And the king said, 'Who is in the court? (Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.)

a 5:8. Gen. 22:14. 1 Sam. 23:26, 27. Is. 41:17. Rom. 11:33. * Heb. the king's sleep fled away. Dan. 2:1. 6:18. b 2:23. Mal. 3:16. c 2:21. Bigthana. 1 Heb. thresholds. d Judg. 1:12, 13. 1 Sam. 17:25, 26. 1 Chr. 11:6. Dan. 5:7, 16, 23. Acts 28:9-10. e Gen. 40:23. Ps. 118:9. Ec. 9:15. f Prov. 3:27, 28. Ec. 9:10. g 4:11. 5:1. h 8:8-11. 5:14. 7:9. Job 5:13. Ps. 24. 33:10. i Heb. in whose honour the king delighteth. Ps. 35:27. Is. 42:1. 62:4, 5. Jer. 32:41. Matt. 3:17

foolish counsel was calculated to please Haman; and though night was approaching, the gallows was immediately prepared; but little did he dream for whom it was erected. (Notes 7: 9, 10. 9:13, 14.) 'The Jews were extremely troubled at the sight of these gallows, and all cried to God in the words of the Psalmist, 123:2, "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us." *Targum in Bp. Patrick.* The text selected is apposite; but the rest is the mere imagination of the writer.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In those things which must be done, and which require great courage, needless delays should be avoided; and it is best to proceed when our affections are lively, and our faith in exercise.—Costly or royal apparel is not the Christian's ornament, and is utterly worthless when compared with wisdom and grace; yet, on some occasions and in some stations, it may and ought to be worn. (Notes, 1 Tim. 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 3:1-4.) But it is a most deplorable evil that inferior persons will ape the fashions, and emulate the expense, of their superiors: and thus they often injure their families and creditors, or lavish that which belongs to the poor; and at the same time expose their own weakness and folly.—The best method of prevailing with men, is first to prevail with God by earnest prayer; for he can dispose the heart of any prince or persecutor, to favour his people, as far as he pleases. Yet while we trust in his omnipotent protection, we should be wise as well as courageous: and he will generally teach those who consult him, to conciliate men's affections by attention and respect, and to watch for favourable opportunities before they propose important matters. But, however largely men may profess or promise, it is best not to ask or expect too much from them.—A slight affront, which a humble man would scarcely notice, will torment a proud man even to madness, destroy all his comforts, and sometimes fill him with diabolical rage and misery. Vainglorious men delight in boasting of the commendations, honours, and favours conferred on them; each new distinction gives a momentary gratification to their vanity, and they receive every attention, as a tribute to their merit, or as homage paid to their superior talents. They invite, and even hire men, to listen to their praises; and often glory most in those things which tend to their immediate disgrace and ruin. For "vanity and vexation" are at last the inventory of all sublimary things. All "avaleth them nothing," while this is wanted, or the other wrong; a beloved child or friend is dead, or an enemy lives and prospers; while some are mounted higher than themselves, and others refuse to render them the most servile flattery, and comply with their capricious and unreasonable demands. (Notes, and P. O. 1 Kings 21: 1-7.) Prosperity increases insolence and arrogance, which stir up envy and enmity, and provoke affronts and opposition, and thus the most venomous resentments and tormenting passions are excited, and the fair edifice of fancied felicity vanishes, like the enchanted castles of romantic poets. May we then seek happiness in the favour of God, in peace of conscience, and dominion over our own spirits; and in cultivating that love, which "suffereth long and is kind, . . . envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own: is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; and which never

5 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6 So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? (Now Haman thought in his heart, 'To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?')

7 And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour,

8 'Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head:

9 And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

10 Then the king said to Haman, 'Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast

John 5:23. 1:3, 2, 3, 5:11. Prov. 1:32. 16:18. 18:12. 30:13. Ob. 3. § Heb. in whose honour the king delighteth himself. 1 Heb. Let them bring the royal apparel, whereunto the king clotheth himself. 1 Sam. 18:4. Luke 15:22. k 1 Kings 1: 33. l Heb. cause him to ride. 1 Gen. 41:43. Zech. 9:9. m Dan. 4:37. Luke 14:11. Rev. 18:7.

faith, but shall be perfected in the eternal felicity of heaven! (Note, 1 Cor. 13:5-7.)

NOTES.—CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. No reason is assigned why Ahasuerus was not able to sleep: but the Lord so ordered it, that sleep fled from him: (*marg.*) and instead of calling for the ministers of his pleasure to entertain him, he was disposed to examine the records of his kingdom! It does not appear, that he had any express intention, in having recourse to this extraordinary way of employing his sleepless hours, during the night: but the only wise God so appointed it. And he likewise so ordered it, that the reader opened the records in that part, in which Mordecai's important service was written! (Note, 2:21-23.) Had not this circumstance intervened, Haman no doubt would have prevailed in his request against Mordecai; and this would have been extremely unfavourable to the success of Esther's petition for her people, and against Haman. (Note, 5:14.)

V. 3. Instead of a reward, Mordecai, and all his people for his sake, were actually condemned to die! probably some recompense had been intended: but so unassuming a person who would not cringe and flatter, and who presented no requests for preferment, was soon forgotten by a mighty prince, surrounded by his courtiers and pleasures, and engrossed by a multiplicity of affairs. (Notes, Gen. 40:23. 1 Sam. 17:55-58. 2 Sam. 9:1. Ec. 9:13-18. Luke 17:11-19.) 'But there was a special Providence in it, that he went without a reward then, which procured it for him most opportunely at this time. It is not improbable, that, as Josephus saith, the history of some of his ancestors was read before they came to his reign; wherein was set down what services men had done, and what preferment or gifts had been bestowed upon them; which moved the king to ask, when they came to this story of Mordecai, what had been done for him.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4, 5. 'Haman came early to court, that he might gratify his revenge, and go with more pleasure to the banquet. This was another part of God's providence, to bring him so soon to court, when the king was thus disposed.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Even Haman might not enter the inner court till called for. (Note, 4:11.)

V. 6-11. We may suppose, that Haman was much pleased to be so speedily called into the king's chamber: but at his request was prevented, by his advice being asked on a very different business. Probably, the king was considering what good preferment was vacant, which might suit Mordecai, whom he should delight to honour and reward, as the preserver of his life: but he did not name the person; and Haman's thoughts were so engrossed about himself, that he could not think the king would honour any one above him, or would delight to honour any one beside him.—His excessive vanity, ambition, presumption, and ostentation, as well as the emptiness of his worthless mind, are fully illustrated by the honours which he chose, supposing them intended for himself. He must, forsooth, have the use of the king's own royal robe, and horse, and crown: one of the most noble princes must be his page, and his herald: and by proclamation it was to be made known, what delight the king had in honouring him! Perhaps Ahasuerus understood his meaning and was disgusted at his exorbitant pretensions; and while he peremptorily commanded him to do all this to "Mordecai the Jew," he could scarcely help remembering the edict, which Haman had obtained against that people. Haman, however, did not venture to object or demur; his request for leave to hang Mordecai was adjourned sine die; and he was ana-

said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: 'let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

11 Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

12 And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered.

13 And Haman told Zeresh his wife, and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, 'If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

14 And while they were yet talking with him,

came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

CHAPTER VII.

Esther, at the banquet, petitions the king for her own life, and the lives of her people; and accuses Haman as their enemy, 1-6. The king, in wrath and jealousy, condemns Haman, who is hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai, 7-10.

SO the king and Haman came to 'banquet with Esther the queen.

2 And the king said again to Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

* Heb. suffer not a whit to fall. 2 Kings 10:10. n Ezra 6:13. Is. 60:14. Luke 1:54. Rev. 3:9. o 8:15, 9:3. p 2:19. 1 Sam. 3:15. Ps. 131:1, 2. q 2 Sam. 17:23. 1 Kings 20:43. 21:4. 2 Chr. 26:20. Job 20:5. r 7:8. 2 Sam. 15:30. Job 29:14. Jer. 14:34. s 5:10-14. t Gen. 41:8. Dan. 2:12. u Gen. 40:19. 1 Sam. 28:19.

strained to become page to a man, comparatively obscure, whom he hated and contemned above all other men on earth, while this extraordinary honour was conferred on him! Imagination itself cannot devise a more painful mortification. It cannot indeed be supposed, that Mordecai was greatly pleased with this unmeaning pageantry considered in itself, which would confer no solid advantage, but expose him to great envy: yet he probably considered it as a favourable presage of Esther's success, and of the deliverance of his people from their malicious enemies.—Some learned men think, that "the crown-royal" denotes an ornament by which the king's horse was distinguished; and not the crown which the king himself wore.

V. 12. Mordecai, not elated with the honour which he had received, returned to his place and duty as if nothing had happened. (Notes, 1 Sam. 3:15. Prov. 27:20.) But Haman went home as a condemned criminal, dreading the consequences of this unexpected disaster. If Mordecai had been a person before unknown to Haman, it would have been no real degradation, to be employed in honouring him in this manner, as the preserver of the king's life; though his pride would have been mortified: but, as he was the man whom he mortally hated, and one of that nation whose destruction he had sought and confidently expected; he must conclude that this favour indicated the determined purpose of the king to prefer Mordecai; and consequently foreboded his own ruin. For in such a contest there could be no alternative between victory and destruction. (Note, Prov. 25:8-10.) The contrast also, between the object of his so early coming to the king, to request permission to hang Mordecai, and the honour which he was in consequence compelled to do him, was in itself most dismaying. *Having his head covered.* Marg. Ref. r. Note, 7:8.

V. 13. "Haman told Zeresh his wife, and his friends," who were waiting to hear what was become of Mordecai, whom they advised to get hanged on the gallows, . . . how cross every thing had fallen out to him that morning." Bp. Patrick.—The "wise men," here mentioned, seem to have been astrologers or magicians, whom he consulted on this occasion; and were probably the same persons whom he had before consulted: (Marg. Ref. Note, 37.) and perhaps they pretended to found their judgment on the principles of their art, or to consult their oracles. Yet what had been observed of the contest between Haman and Mordecai, and the sudden and rapid falls of court favourites in absolute monarchies; as well as what they must have heard of the wonderful works of JEHOVAH in behalf of his people; were sufficient to convince them, that this unexpected turn was the forerunner of more fatal consequences. But they deduced no salutary counsel from these apprehensions: and indeed their conclusions were entirely calculated to drive Haman to despair. (Notes, 1 Sam. 28:12-19.) His wife also concurred with them in opinion, that these were fatal omens; which was calculated still more to overwhelm him.

V. 14. Haman, in the anguish of his heart, seems to have neglected his appointment; and doubtless he would willingly have been excused from the banquet, to which he had expected to go so cheerfully: (Note, 5:14.) but there was no alternative; he must attend, to hear his accusation, and the judgment in consequence awarded against him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are in every thing entirely dependent upon God: nor can the whole world purchase an hour's refreshing sleep, if he be good to withhold it: from him therefore we should seek this solace to our cares, and thank him for it when we have enjoyed it. But when, by any means he withhold sleep from us, it is of great importance to employ usefully our waking hours. The cares and duties of our station in society may properly occupy our reflection, to the exclusion of those thoughts that are vain and injurious: but it is best, when we can meditate upon God, and his works, his truths, his pre-

cepts, and promises; and when we can bless him for his mercies, and pour out our hearts before him in prayer. (Notes, Ps. 77:12-12.)—The providence of God superintends the most minute concerns of men. Those actions which are the result of caprice, and appear unaccountable, fall in with his wise and gracious purposes, and "not a sparrow falls to the ground without him."—Gratitude even to man, though commended by all, is practised by very few indeed; and commonly least by those who have most in their power. Pride of rank and birth, a variety of pleasures and occupations, and the presence of agreeable flatterers, combine to induce neglect and forgetfulness of those, who have most faithfully and effectually served them; especially if obscure, modest, and unassuming. Yet thus they not only become guilty of the odious sin of ingratitude; but actually yield the superiority to the very man whom they affect to despise: for he that *confers*, is always superior to him who *receives*, an unmerited and unrequited favour.—Those qualifications which demand esteem, and those actions which merit a reward, generally meet with neglect, if they do not expose the possessors to ill treatment, in the circles of the great, and in the courts of kings.—The instruments of pleasure and amusement, who help them to forget their misery, and to waste their fleeting moments; the forward, the subtle, and the artful; and those who can sacrifice conscience, honour, and honesty, to wit, ingenuity, and politeness, have hitherto always met with most favour from the great. Let us then learn to serve a Master, who will not let the least well-meant service lose its reward.—And if any reader should recollect, that nothing has been done to requite some benefactor who aided him many years ago, let him not think that the obligation is out of date; but rather let him study how he may, effectually and without further delay, do that which should have been done long since; and delight to honour his benefactors, if he can render them no other recompense.—Pride, envy, and ambition are insatiable and every sinful passion grows more exorbitant by indulgence. When a man heartily idolizes his important self, he readily fancies that others equally admire him, and are disposed to do him all the honour which he foolishly longs after. If any one open his lips in commendation, doubtless he must be the object! if a favour be mentioned, it must be intended for him! if a preferment be vacant, *who but he* can be thought of to fill it, provided it be not beneath his acceptance!—But "before honour is humility, and a haughty spirit before a fall." both God and man delight in rendering the mortification of proud worms proportioned to their ambition: and men of this character meet with many presages on earth of that everlasting contempt and misery which await them in another world, if not redeemed from this diabolical vice. (Notes, Dan. 4:34-37. 5:18-28.) They who have flattered them in prosperity, will prove "miserable comforters" in the time of their distress: worldly pleasures will soon become tasteless, and even nauseous, to those who have a conscience burdened with guilt or appalled with terror; and even the wise men of this world have often foreseen the ruin of those, who engage in the unequal contest with the church of God.—But the depth of the believer's distress is the seedtime of his joys; and every victory and comfort is to him an earnest of his final triumph and felicity. The honour, which the Father delights to confer upon his beloved Son, is a pledge of the security and salvation of all whom he represents, and who commit their cause into his hand. Their bitterest enemies shall promote, and be constrained to witness their exaltation, and to know "what shall be done to the men whom the LORD delighteth to honour;" and how much their "eternal weight of glory" exceeds the worthless, transient honours of the world; while the sight shall increase the anguish and despair of those, who expected to be gratified in effecting their misery and destruction.

NOTES.—CHAPTER VII. V. 2-4. While the king repentedly urged Esther to make her request and, in language

4 For ^awe are sold. I and my people, ^bto be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. ^cBut if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although ^dthe enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

5 ¶ The king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, ^eWho is he, and where is he, ^fthat durst presume in his heart to do so?

6 And Esther said, ^gThe adversary and enemy ^his ⁱthis wicked Haman. Then Haman ^jwas afraid ^kbefore the king and the queen.

7 ¶ And the king, arising from the banquet of wine ^lin his wrath ^mwent into the palace-garden: and ⁿHaman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; ^ofor he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

1. 3. 9. 4. 7. 8. Deut. 28. 68. 1 Sam. 22. 23. * Heb. that they should destroy, and kill, and cause to perish. 3. 13. 8. 11. Ps. 44. 22. 33. e Gen. 37. 28—29. Deut. 28. 68. Josh. 9. 23. Neh. 5. 5. Joel 3. 8. Am. 2. 6. f 6. 3. 9. g Gen. 27. 33. Job 9. 24. i Heb. whose heart hath filled him. Acts 5. 3. j Heb. The man adversary. k 1 Sam. 24. 13. Ps. 27. 2. 139. 19—22. Prov. 24. 24. 25. Ec. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 5. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 8. l 1 Neh. 6. 15. Job 15. 21. 22. 18. 5—12. Ps. 73. 5—9. 17—20. Is. 12. 2.

more expressive than before, promised to grant it, though it were to the value of half his kingdom; (5:3, 6.) she, with the greatest modesty and respect, and in the most simple and affecting manner, besought him, that her own life might be spared, and the lives of her people, which were all involved in one common danger. Without complaining of his conduct in any degree, she stated, that she and her people had been sold as sheep for the slaughter; alluding to the money which Haman had offered to pay into the treasury for their destruction; she quoted the words of the unrighteous decree, "to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish," as proving that her life, as well as those of the other Jews, was certainly in danger: (3:13.) and she added, that if they had been only sold for slaves, she would not have interposed; though the enemy could never have made up the loss, which the king would have sustained by thus oppressing his peaceable and industrious subjects. Some interpret the last clause to mean, that if the sufferings of the enslaved Jews, though extreme and undeserved, had not been likewise detrimental to the king's interest, Esther would have held her peace. The whole speech, however, was replete with natural eloquence, and suited to affect and persuade the king.

V. 5. Perhaps Ahasuerus at first scarcely recollected his edict against the Jews, or was not aware of its consequences; or he did not immediately perceive that Esther referred to it; and therefore he could not conceive that any one could be so daring, as to attempt the life of his queen, as well as the destruction of his subjects. The language is peculiarly expressive of astonishment and indignation. "In the Hebrew words are, 'Who is he, whose heart hath filled him to do so?' A speech like that in the New Testament, (Acts 5:3.) 'Why hath Satan filled thy heart?' Made thee so daring and presumptuous." *Bp. Patrick.* (Note, Acts 5:1—11, v. 3.)

V. 6. The events, and presages, of the morning no doubt tended to increase Haman's terror on this occasion. He had found, that the king "delighted to honour" Mordecai the Jew; he now discovered that the queen was a Jewess, and strongly attached to her people; he had heard the king repeatedly promise to "grant her request to the half of his kingdom;" and he could not but be aware that his own ruin was impending.

V. 7. We may suppose, that at the moment when Esther mentioned "this wicked Haman," as the enemy of her and of her people, the whole transaction of the edict rushed into the king's mind, and appeared to him in its true colours; and that he was filled with rage, when he reflected how his worthless favourite had seduced him into a measure, calculated to ruin his kingdom, to take away the life of his beloved queen, and exceedingly to tarnish his own reputation; and that he walked about in agitation of mind, not knowing what could be done in such an emergency.

V. 8. Haman had prostrated himself against the couch, on which Esther reclined at the banquet. His only design was to deprecate, with the most abject submission, her displeasure, and to entreat her to intercede for his life. But the king, regarding him as one capable of any villany, and growing more enraged by reflecting upon his former machinations; suspected him, or professed to suspect him, of having designs against the queen's honour also.—This word sufficiently informed the attendants of the king's determination; and they directly treated Haman as a condemned criminal, who was never more to see the face of the king, or even the light of the sun, but to be hurried away to immediate death.

V. 9. Harbonah, probably when he went to call Haman to the banquet, had seen the gallows, and discovered for what purpose it was prepared. Haman had doubtless been greatly envied for his prosperity, and hated for his insolence, in the midst of all the homage which was paid him. But now that the king's mind was evidently alienated from him, the courtiers were glad to please him and the queen, by concurring in Haman's downfall.

V. 10 It is immaterial to us, whether Haman died by

8 Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon ^athe bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also ^bbefore me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they ^ccovered Haman's face.

9 And ^dHarbonah, ^eone of the chamberlains, said before the king, ^fBehold also the ^ggallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, ^hwho had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, ⁱHang him thereon.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. ^jThen was the king's wrath pacified.

4. Dan. 5. 5. 6. § Or, at the presence of. 1. 12. k Prov. 14. 19. Is. 60. 14. Rev. 3. 9. l 1 Sam. 20. 7. 9. 25. 17. Is. 11. 2. 10. Prov. 10. 12. Dan. 3. 19. m 1. 6. Is. 49. 23. n Heb. with me. n 6. 12. Job 9. 24. Is. 22. 17. o 1. 10. Harbonah. p 6. 14. 2 Kings 9. 32. 33. q 5. 14. Job 27. 20—23. r Heb. tree. r 2. 21—23. 6. 2. 9. 25. 1 Sam. 17. 31. Ps. 7. 15. 16. 9. 13. 16. 35. v. 37. 35. 36. 73. 19. Prov. 11. 5. 6. Dan. 6. 7. 24. t Judg. 13. 7. Er. 3. 13. Zech. 6. 8.

crucifixion, or was strangled, or put to death in some other way, before he was suspended on the gibbet. (Notes, Deut. 21:22, 23. Josh. 8:29. 2 Sam. 17:23. 18:9. 21:9—14, v. 9. Matt. 27:3—5. Gal. 3:10—14.) Crucifixion however seems to have been a Roman punishment; at least not to have been in use at this early period. (Note, Ps. 22:16—18, v. 16.) It is enough to know, that he suffered the punishment which he had devised for Mordecai. *Nec lex est aequior ulla, quam necis artifices arte perire sua.* "There is no law more equitable, than that the devisers of death should perish by their own art."—Thus "the righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead." (Note, Prov. 11:8.)—"In this wonderful deliverance of the Jewish nation, there was no extraordinary manifestation of God's power, no particular cause or agent, that was in its working advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature; and yet the contrivance, or suiting of those ordinary agents appointed by God, is more admirably than if the same end had been effected by means truly miraculous." *Dr. Jackson in Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The repeated promises, even of weak, mutable, and selfish men, encourage us to make our requests to them with great expectation of success: much more then should the exceedingly great and precious promises of the unchangeable God, embolden us to present many and large petitions to him, in behalf of ourselves and others, and with the full assurance of receiving far more than we ask.—If the love of life inspire such earnest and pathetic pleadings, with those "who can only kill the body;" how fervent and importunate should our continual prayers be to "Him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell!" And how affectionately should we pray for the eternal salvation of our relatives, friends, and neighbours, and all around us!—In supplicating the great men of this world, we must be very cautious not to withhold proper respect, or to give needless offence; even just complaints must be suppressed, and that asked as a great favour, which might equitably be demanded as a debt. But when we approach the King of kings, provided we come with humble reverence and uprightness of heart, we cannot ask or expect too much: for though nothing but wrath is our due, he is able and willing to "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."—Persecution is as impolitic as it is unjust: nor would the wealth of both the Indies compensate the temporal loss, which must arise to every prince, who puts to death his conscientious, industrious subjects, immures them in prisons, drives them out of his dominions, harasses them with oppressions, and tempts them to hypocrisy.—Men often commit crimes without remorse, which, when described in their nature and consequences by proper language, or pointed out to them in the conduct of others, appear most horrible and atrocious: and when they find upon reflection, the nature and effects of their own headless conduct, they are filled with anguish and remorse. (Notes, 2 Sam. 12:1—14. Ps. 51:1—6.) Yet alas! their indignation frequently falls exclusively upon their tempters or accomplices, instead of producing unreserved self-condemnation and abhorrence. But when such convictions are excited in those in authority, though they do not terminate in true repentance, they may yet produce many salutary effects, by inducing them to punish atrocious criminals, to protect the innocent, and to rectify grievous abuses.—Those who are most insolent in prosperity, are commonly the most abject in adversity: and the enemies of God shall all be brought down before his people, and made to know his love towards them. (Ex. 11:8. Is. 60:14. Rev. 3:9.)—When men have proved themselves capable of the most daring and horrid crimes; they have no reason to expect any other, but to be suspected where they are not guilty, and to have the worst constructions put upon their most innocent actions.—The favour of men is deceitful and precarious: the higher wicked ambition climbs, the more rapid and terrible will be its fall. When haughty favourites, either of mighty princes, or of fickle multitudes, begin to totter upon their slippery eminences, all hands join to hurry

CHAPTER VIII.

Haman's estate is given to Esther; and Mordecai, as her near relation, is preferred in Haman's stead, 1, 2. Esther, with tears, entreats the king to reverse the decree against the Jews, 3-6. The king authorizes the Jews to defend themselves, and sends letters to that effect, throughout the provinces, 7-14. The honour conferred on Mordecai, and the joy of the Jews, 15-17.

ON that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her.

2 And the king took off his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 ¶ And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king held out the golden sceptre towards Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king.

5 And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:

6 For how can I endure to see the evil that

a Job 27:16, 17. Ps. 39:6, 49:6-13. Prov. 13:22, 28:8. Ec. 2:18, 19. Luke 12:20. h 1:14, 2:7, 15. c 3:10. Gen. 41:42. Is. 22:19-22. Luke 15:22. d 2 Sam. 9:7-10. Ec. 2:18, 19-28. 5:13, 14. e 1 Sam. 25:24. 2 Kings 4:27. f Heb. she wept and besought him. Is. 38:3. Hos. 12:4. Heb. 5:7. f 3:8-15. 7:4. g 4:11, 5:2. h 7:3. Ec. 33:13, 16. 1 Sam. 20:29. i 2:4, 17. i Heb. device. 3:12, 13. j Or, who wrote. k Gen. 44:54. Jer. 4:19. 9:1. Luke 19:41. d 2 Rom. 9:2, 3. 10:1.

them down, either out of envy, revenge, hatred, or similar ambition: and even they, who have most carested and delighted to honour them, will often as much delight in their misery and ruin. Thus "the fear of the wicked cometh upon him," and that suddenly: he is "taken in his own net, and entangled in his own devices;" and "when he perishes there is shouting." (Notes, Prov. 10:24. i 10:11.)—At the day of final retribution, when the whole wickedness of the ungodly shall be discovered, and the justice of God displayed in their everlasting punishment; all the righteous shall joyfully exclaim, "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD!" (Notes, P. 3:20. 19:1-6.) but those who love him "shall shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father."

N. T. ES.—CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Some of Esther's attendants were acquainted with Mordecai's relation to her; (Note, 4:4.) and the king knew that he was of Jewish extraction: (6:10.) but he did not know that Mordecai was Esther's own cousin, and had been as a father to her, till on this occasion she disclosed it to him. Mordecai in consequence was introduced to Ahasuerus, and preferred by him: and as he had been so kind a friend to the queen when she was in destitute circumstances, and had also preserved the king's life, none could have fairer pretensions. The ring with the royal signet seems to have continued with Haman, as denoting the high offices which he bore under the king, till he was deposed and condemned; when, being taken from him, it was given to Mordecai as his successor. (Notes, 3:10, 11. Gen. 41:41-43. Is. 22:20-25. Jer. 22:24-27.) Haman's large estate also, being confiscated for his crimes, was given to Esther, and managed for her by Mordecai: (Notes, Job 27:13-23, vv. 16, 17. Prov. 13:22, 28:8. Ec. 2:24-26.) and if that haughty man could have foreseen these events, the prospect would have embittered his life, and even augmented the anguish of his death.

V. 3-6. Haman was dead, Mordecai was advanced, and the queen's person was protected; but the edict against the Jews remained in force, and their numerous enemies, in every province, would certainly endeavour to carry it into execution; so that Esther had not yet obtained the deliverance of her people, and that lay nearest to her heart. Probably, she was sometimes called for by the king; but to show that she was interested in the concerns of her nation, even more than in her own safety, she again ventured uncalled into his presence to plead for them. She seems to have been peculiarly earnest on this occasion; for she fell at his feet, and besought him with tears to grant her request. It may be supposed, that Ahasuerus hesitated in this perplexing case; as not knowing how to extricate himself with credit from so great a difficulty, and as reluctant to proclaim to all the world the folly into which he had been seduced. But Esther, with great discretion, avoided every intimation that the king himself had issued the decree, and expressed herself as if it had been not only Haman's device, but altogether his work, even as if the edict had been forged by him. And it had originated in his pride and revenge; his artful insinuations had decoyed the king to give an inconsiderate

shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

[Practical Observations.]

7 ¶ Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews."

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

9 Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces, which are from India unto Ethiopia, a hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

10 And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus's name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries,

11 Wherein the king granted the Jews which were

g Heb. be able that I may see. 1:7. Neh. 2:3. m 1. Prov. 13:22. n 7:10. Gal 3:13. o 3:12. 1 Kings 21:8. p 5:1, 19. Dan. 6:8, 12-15. 2 Tim. 2:19. Heb. 6:17, 18. q 3:12. r 1:12, 3:12, 13. Dan. 6:1. s 1:22, 3:12. 2 Kings 18:26. Dan. 4:1. t Cor. 14:9-11. u 1 Kings 21:8. Ec. 8:4. Dan. 4:1. u 5:13, 15. 2 Chr. 30:6. Job 9:25. Jer. 51:21. x Is. 60:6. 6:20. Jer. 2:23.

assent to it; and he had framed it in his own words, and to answer his own purposes. (Notes, 3:6-15.)—If she herself were spared, she represents to him that it would break her heart to see all her kindred, nay her whole nation, destroyed. Bp. Patrick. Her plea, and the expressions used in urging it, are peculiarly pathetic and emphatical, and suited to excite the deepest and most tender sympathy; as well as to show her fervent affection for her people, as the people of God.

V. 8. The decree against the Jews was irrevocable: (but another edict might counteract its operation, and that would also become irreversible; and Esther and Mordecai were allowed to frame one for the purpose, as explicit as they pleased: and to ratify it in the same manner. Thus, that most absurd law, or constitution, made it necessary to authorize a civil war throughout this vast empire; both parties acting by and against the king's authority, at the same time.—The maxim in our government, that 'no act can be so framed, but that the same authority which enacted it may repeal it,' is immensely more suited to the state of human nature: for no human wisdom can foresee all the effects of any regulation, till experience has evinced them. While the king had legal authority to put the evil counsellor to death, to confiscate his estate, and to prefer his most hated enemy to his high offices, so that no objection seems to have been advanced by his nobles and counsellors; he had not the legal power to revoke, or the obnoxious decree! (Notes, 2:1, 3:10, 11.)—He chose to fill his realm with blood, rather than revoke a rash decree. Bp. Patrick.

V. 9. (Notes, 1, 2, 3:12-15.) More than two months had past, since Haman's decree was framed. (3:7.) Probably Ethiopia or the south of Egypt is intended.

V. 10. These letters were sent by runners, (Note, 2 Chr 30:6-9, v. 6.) or by horsemen. The words for the other animals, on which some of the messengers rode, are unusual, and learned men are by no means agreed about the meaning of them. Probably they were derived from the Persian language, or from that of some of the eastern nations. But the greatest speed was needful in this emergency, and every method was taken to secure it. (Marg. Ref.) "He sent men on horseback, . . . and upon other creatures as swift as horses, and upon mules both young and old, according as the places were nearer or further off. So he ordered the letters to be sent with great speed by the post, which carried them from stage to stage, till they came to the place whither they were directed." Bp. Patrick.

V. 11-13. This last decree evidently showed the king's intentions, though the former edict remained in force: so that they who assailed the Jews, were, in reality, though not formally rebelling against his authority. The Jews were not allowed to assault their enemies: but they might legally assemble and combine in defending themselves, and slay any number of those who attacked them. As the children and women were included in Haman's decree, they were also mentioned in this: but the Jews did not avail themselves of the clause; neither did they take any spoil. (3:13. Note, 9:6)

in every city ^{to} gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, ^{both} little ones and women, ^{and} to take the spoil of them for a prey.

12 Upon ^aone day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, ^{namely}, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.

13 The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, ^{was} published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to ^avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out, ^abeing hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at ^aShushan the palace.

15 ^aAnd Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and ^athe city of Shushan rejoiced, and was glad:

16 The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

9:2-16. z 9:13. 9:10, 15, 16. Is. 10:6. a 9:1. Ex. 15:9, 10. Judg. 1:6, 7. b 3:13-15. * Heb. repeated. c Judg. 16:28. Ps. 37:14, 15. 68:23. 92:10, 11. 149:6-9. Luke 18:7. Rev. 6:10. 19:2. d 1 Sam. 21:8. Ec. 9:10. e 1:2. 2:3. 3:15. Neh. 1:1. Dan. 8:2. 13:1. 6:8, 11. Gen. 41:42. Matt. 6:28. 11:8. Luke 16:19. † Or, violet. 1:8. g 3:15. Prov. 29:2. h 4:1-3, 10. Ps. 30:5-11. 15:17. Ps.

10.) Haman aimed at extermination, they only at self-defence. If this edict had not been granted, the Jews would have been punishable for taking previous measures in order to defend themselves; so that they could not have engaged, with concert or prospect of success, in any measure for that purpose: and even if any had escaped the massacre they would have been exposed as criminals to the sword of the magistrate, for resisting the execution of the law. They might, and doubtless would, when rendered desperate, have sold their lives as dear as possible; but they could have had little hopes of escaping, when overwhelmed by numbers, who were countenanced by the governors in every province. But now the advantage was entirely on their side: as none who valued the king's favour would injure them; and they might prepare with union and concert to repel the assault of others, and to inflict deserved punishment on their inveterate enemies. (*Marg. Ref. e.*)

V. 14. (*Note*, 10.) Though this decree was ratified above eight months before the appointed day; yet there would be time little enough to publish it throughout all the provinces of this immense empire, considering the great distance of many of them from Shushan; and to give the Jews opportunity to prepare arms, and take proper measures for their own preservation. The king himself therefore hastened the messengers, as dreading the consequences of the former edict.

V. 15. Mordecai, being now publicly recognised as the chief minister and favourite of the king, went from the palace, arrayed according to his rank, in conformity to the customs of the country. (*Marg. Ref. f.*) It seems that the people of Shushan in general, having a better opinion of his integrity and capacity than of Haman's, were greatly pleased with the change: (*Notes*, Prov. 11:10, 11. 28:12, 28. 29:2.) though the sequel shows, that there was a strong party of rancorous enemies to the Jews residing there.—*A great crown, &c.* [*Note*, 1:8. * Not like that of the kings, but such a coronet as was worn by the peers of the realm.] *Bp. Patrik.* Perhaps it was one of the insignia of the chief minister under the king.

V. 16. *Had light, &c.* That is, *prosperity and hope*. The dark cloud which had long hung over the nation of the Jews was dispelled, and the returning favour of the king, in answer to their prayers, was a token of the Lord's care of them. So that their hopes revived, and they began, as it were, to walk in the sunshine, and were filled with gladness, and treated with respect by those who had despised them; being evidently in favour both with God and man. (*Notes*, Ps. 30:9-12. 97:11. Prov. 4:18, 19.)

V. 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) When the people saw the interpositions of Providence in behalf of the Jews, many were convinced that God was with them, and that they would certainly prevail in the contest: being therefore afraid of perishing among their enemies, and desirous of sharing the rising prosperity of his people, they embraced their religion, and united interests with them. We may suppose that some were true converts, and others only formal professors, as it commonly happens in such cases. Haman's plot, however, to destroy the Jews, was overruled to increase their numbers. (*Notes*, Zech. 8:20-23. Acts 12:1-4, 24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-6. Many of those, who most prosper in the world, would have little alacrity in their pursuits, or joy in their possessions, if they could foresee to whom their riches would devolve, and what use would be made of them. It is, how-

17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, ^a feast and a good day. And ^amany of the people of the land became Jews; ^afor the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

CHAPTER IX.

On the day appointed, the Jews, aided by the rulers, slay their enemies; and among the rest five hundred men in Shushan, and Haman's ten sons. 1-10. The king hearing this, at Esther's request, allows the Jews in Shushan to stand against their enemies on the day following, when three hundred more are slain; and on the cause Haman's sons to be hanged on the gallows erected by Haman. 11-15. The Jews throughout the provinces slay seventy thousand men. 16. They rejoice with feasting on the two following days. 1-19. These days are appointed by Esther and Mordecai as an annual feast, in commemoration of this deliverance, and called the feast of Purim.

NOW ^ain the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews ^ahoped to have power over them, (^athough it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)

2 The Jews ^agathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such ^aas sought,

15:28. 97:11. Prov. 4:18, 19. Is. 30:29. 35:10. k 9:17, 19, 22. 1 Sam. 25:9. Neh. 8:10. 1 Pa. 18:45. Zech. 8:20-23. m Gen. 35:5. Ex. 15:16. Deut. 2:25. 11:25. a 3:7, 13. 8:12. b Acts 12:11. c Deut. 32:36. 2 Sam. 22:41. Ps. 30:11. Is. 41:1-2. 60:14-16. Rev. 11:18. d 10. 8:11. e Deut. 2:30. Josh. 11:20. Is. 8:9.

ever, a good thing when, consistently with justice, that wealth, which has pampered pride and luxury, and increased insolence and oppression, is transferred to those who will improve it to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind.—No advancement should render us forgetful of our indigent relatives, or indifferent about the public good, and the peace and prosperity of the church. These especially should be dearer to us than life itself: and when we have obtained our requests for ourselves; we should be the more fervent in prayer for our brethren, and in using our influence and venturing all consequences for their good.—If we would affect others, we should study to get our own hearts suitably impressed: and in many cases, we may be more importunate in asking favours for our friends and brethren, and for the poor, than we ought to be for ourselves.—It is a good and cogent plea, when we are praying for the conversion of our children or relatives, to say, "How can I endure to see the evil that shall come upon them? How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?" And it forms an argument equally forcible, to induce us to use every means for their good, with assiduity and perseverance.—Bac examples, unjust laws, rash projects, and wicked books, often prove an extensive and durable curse to the world, when the authors of them are removed: no wisdom suffices to prevent their fatal tendency; and, as we must all be answerable for the consequences of our misconduct, this should render us very circumspect, lest our guilt should accumulate even after our death. (*Note*, Luke 16:27-31.)

V. 7-17. Every regulation in society, however apparently reasonable and beneficial, which does not advert to the fallen nature of man, will on trial be found unsuitable to his real condition, and inconsistent with his best interests: and all provisions, made to humour the ambition and passions of princes, will eventually embarrass and ensnare them. We are, however, indispensably bound to adopt every method of preventing the fatal effects of our past mistakes, or crimes even though we should be constrained to proclaim our own folly to the world: and much expedition should be used, when the lives of men are in danger, or their minds distracted with terrors.—If it was proper, that the decree of Ahasuerus should be communicated to every nation in its own language; how reasonable and necessary is it, that the holy law and gracious gospel of our God should be put into every one's hands in his own tongue!—Those who sow in tears and prayers, may expect speedily to reap with joy.—External decorations are insignificant in the judgment of the wise and pious: yet they may properly distinguish those in authority; and, while they procure them respect from the multitudes, who look no further, they should remind them of the duties to which their dignities call them. The preterm of wise and pious men ought to be matter of rejoicing to all: but the people of God have the most cause for gladness. They may expect to be delivered from the darkness of oppression, to enjoy the light of peace and prosperity; and to meet with honour, in some measure proportioned to the contempt which they before endured. And when believers "have rest, and walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they will be multiplied." Indeed, the attempts of Satan and his agents, to destroy the church by cruel persecutions, have uniformly tended to the increase of true Christians. May the Lord speedily "destroy every enemy who hath done evil in his sanctuary;" may the princes of the earth become nursing fathers to his church: may his people have "light, and joy, and honour, a feast and a good day" &c.

their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.

3 And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

4 For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.

5 Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them.

6 And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.

7 And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha,

8 And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, 9 And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,

10 The ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they; but on the spoil laid they not their hand.

11 On that day, the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king.

12 ¶ And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done.

13 Then said Esther, If it please the king, let

it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to-morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.

14 And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

15 For the Jews that were in Shushan, gathered themselves together, on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; but on the prey they laid not their hand.

16 But the other Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand, but they laid not their hands on the prey,

[Practical Observations.]

17 On the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

18 But the Jews that were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwall'd towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

20 ¶ And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far,

18:17. Ex. 23:27. Josh. 2:9. g 3:12. 8:9. Ezra 8:36. Dan. 3:2. 6:1,2. * Heb. those which did he business that belonged to the king. h 3:2-6. 8:15. 1 Josh. 6:27. 1 Sam. 2:30. 1 Chr. 14:17. Zeph. 3:19. Matt. 4:24. k 2 Sam. 3:1. 1 Chr. 11:9. Ps. 1:3. Prov. 4:18. Is. 9:7. 1 Ps. 18:34-40, 47, 48. 20:7,8. 19:26-9. 2 Thees. 1: Ps. 118:19. 1 Heb. according to their will. n See on 3:15. o 5:11. Ex. 20:5. Job 18:13, 19. 27:13-15. Ps. 21:10. 109:12,13. p 5:1. 7:4,6. Ex. 17:16.

q 15:16. 8:11. Gen. 14:23. Rom. 12:17. Phil. 4:8. † Heb. come. r 5:6. 7:2. s 8:11. § Heb. let men hang Haman's ten sons. 2 Sam. 21:6,9. Gal. 3:13. 1 2. 8:11. Ps. 118:7-12. u 10:16. 1 Thees. 5:22. Heb. 13:5. x 8:11. Lev. 26:7,8. 1 Heb. mil. y 11:13. z 12. 8:17. Deut. 16:11,14. Neh. 8:10-12. Ps. 118:14-16. Luke 11:41. Rev. 11:30. 2 Ex. 17:14. Deut. 31:19-22. 1 Chr. 16:12. Ps. 124:1-3. 145:4-12. 2 Cor. 1:10,11. b 1:12. 3:12. 8:9.

earth, anticipating the joy and gladness of heaven: and may Jesus himself reign, by the power of his grace, wherever the sun diffuses his beams; and may he fill the earth with truth and righteousness. Amen.

NOTES.—CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref. Notes, Is. 14:1-6. Rev. 11:7-12).—As the Jews were not charged with exceeding the limits, assigned them in the king's edict, it may be concluded that they assaulted none, except such as appeared in arms against them: but when they were attacked, they vigorously pursued their advantage. Neither the fear of God, nor that of the king, could overcome the desperate enmity of numbers against the Jews, whom they had hoped to extirpate; so that, perhaps urged on by the enraged friends of Haman, and all his party, they attacked them on the day appointed, in every part of the empire: yet they were every where speedily intimidated, and yielded the Jews an easy and decisive victory.

V. 3, 4. The late decree, and the report which accompanied it of Mordecai's increasing greatness, rendered all the governors afraid of offending him, lest they should fall under the king's displeasure: so that they generally assisted the Jews, which gave them a decided advantage in the bloody contest. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5-10. The sons of Haman seem to have combined against the Jews, by way of revenging their father's death; as the king and Mordecai were out of their reach. At the head of their retainers, probably, they led on the attack in the royal city of Shushan, but they were all slain, with five hundred of their party.—As the Jews professed only to defend their own lives, when they "did what they would unto those that hated them;" they would not take their spoil, or any part of it: and there is no intimation, that they injured their families, or any individual, who was not found in arms against them. (Notes, 3:12-15. 8:11-13.)

V. 13. As it cannot be supposed that Esther was actuated by revenge in this request: it is probable she had learned from Mordecai, that Haman's retainers still formed a faction, not only dangerous to the Jews, but to the state: and were prepared to renew the attack on the next day. She therefore desired, that the Jews might defend themselves, and pursue their assailants, in order that the party might be crushed or finally intimidated: and also, that the bodies of Haman's sons might be suspended on the gallows, prepared by their father; to show all persons concerned, that by assaulting the Jews, they would expose themselves to the indignation of the king. (Note, 7:10.)

V. 15. "Some that appeared against them, perhaps escaped their hands, whom they might meet withal the next day." They "in the conflict escaped by flight, and were now found out and killed." Bp. Patrick.—It does not however

appear, that they were authorized by the new decree, to slay any but those who assaulted them, or that they actually did so. Some think, that many of those slain in Shushan, and in other parts of the empire, were Amalekites, and that thus the prediction, concerning the utter destruction of Amalek, was exactly accomplished. (Notes, 3:1. Ex. 17:14-16.)

V. 16. *Seventy-five thousand, &c.* All this large number lost their lives, through the pride and revenge of one wicked man, but by their own malice and enmity to the worshippers of JEHOVAH. Thus the power and spirits of the enemies of the Jews were broken, and peace and rest were prepared for them. It is not recorded that any Jews were slain on this occasion; and probably their preservation was as remarkable as the destruction of their assailants.—They were indeed placed in the most extraordinary circumstances: but as they were sanctioned in what they did by the king's authority, and stood in defence of their own lives; as they slew none but those who attacked them, and universally declined availing themselves of the king's permission to enrich themselves with the spoil; they must be allowed to have acted in an unexceptionable manner: and were no more chargeable with the blood shed by them, than if they had been engaged in the most necessary defensive war: and indeed it was one of the most necessary defensive wars, that ever any people or nation engaged in.—Thereby we may judge what a great number of Jews still remained in other countries, and did not return to their own.... It is likely, Mordecai by his letters, had charged them not to make use of the liberty the king had given them to take the spoil; (8:11.) because they universally avoided it. Bp. Patrick.—It may be supposed, that the enemies of the Jews; in the vicinity of Judea, did not venture to assault them.

V. 17-19. Note, 21-32.

V. 20. "Mordecai wrote these things," or the history contained in this book, as the words most obviously imply; and not merely the letters afterwards mentioned, as many understand it. It is most probable, that he wrote an account of these interesting transactions, and sent it with his letters into all the provinces of the empire. This, no doubt, included Judea and Jerusalem; the inhabitants of which were as much aimed at in Haman's decree, as the Jews dispersed in other countries were.—The contrast between his style and that of Nehemiah, is very remarkable. The latter is interspersed with ejaculations and pious reflections; (Notes, Neh. 2:4. 4:4,5. 5:19. 6:5-9. 13:14,20-22. v. 22,31.) the former treats of divine things, without any explicit mention of God and religion. (Note, 4:13,14.) The different situation in which the two writers were placed, and the objects which they aimed at in writing, might have as much influence in causing this difference, as their different dispositions. Nehemiah's manne-

21 To establish *this* among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly,

22 As "the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them "from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of "sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them:

24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, "the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast "Pur, that is, the lot, to "consume them, and to destroy them;

25 But "when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device which he devised against the Jews, should "return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 Wherefore "they called these days Purim, after the name of "Pur. Therefore for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

27 The Jews ordained and took upon them,

e 3:12,13. Ex. 10:3-8. Ps. 103:2. Is. 12:2, 14:3. d Ps. 90:11. Matt. 5:4. John 16:30-32. e 19. Neh. 8:10,12. Luke 11:41. Acts 2:44-46. Gal. 2:10. f 16. 3:5-13. g 3:7. h Heb. crush. i Heb. when she came. 13:14. 7:5-10. f 11:14. h Ps. 7:16. 109:17,18. 140:9. 141:10. Matt. 21:44. i Num. 16:10. Ex. 59:11. j That is, Lot. j 20. k Deut. 5:3. 29:14,15. Josh. 9:15. l Sam. 30:25.

is in general most worthy of imitation: yet in some circumstances men are not to be censured, if they deem it expedient to imitate Mordecai. (*Preface.*)

V. 31-32. These verses contain the institution of the feast of Purim, which the Jews observe to this day. When the second decree of Ahasuerus was published, they had in every place "joy, and gladness, a feast, and a good day." (*Notes, 8:16,17.*) And when they prevailed in the contest in all parts of the empire, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, they with one common impulse observed the fourteenth as a festival, with joy and gladness. But the Jews at Shushan were, on that day likewise, engaged in conflict, and the fifteenth of the month was their day of rest and joy and festivity. (17-19.) Mordecai therefore wrote to his people in every place, proposing the observance of both these days annually, in commemoration of their deliverance, by Jews and proselytes, throughout their dispersions, and to all future generations. And upon the receipt of these letters, the Jews every where consented to the proposal. Yet it seems, that they afterwards grew negligent: and therefore a second letter was written, with all authority, by Esther and Mordecai, enjoining the observance; which was accompanied "with words of peace and truth;" (30) that is, with affectionate good wishes, prayers, and congratulations; and with wholesome counsels and instructions. The festival therefore was appointed by authority and by royal proclamation, yet under the direction and according to the mind of the Spirit of God. It was evidently proper to perpetuate the memory of so extraordinary a deliverance: and no doubt Esther and Mordecai did right in requiring the Jews on this great occasion, thus to keep it in remembrance, and transmit the memorial of it to their posterity. It was appointed that these days should be spent in feasting and joy, in hospitality and liberality to the poor. But, as the prayers, which without doubt attended the fasting of the Jews in Shushan, are not mentioned; (*Note, 4:13,14.*) it cannot reasonably be questioned but that praises and thanksgivings to God at first attended their feasting and rejoicing, though not recorded. Even to this day the Jews are used to assemble, at the time appointed, in their synagogues, to read over this book of Esther, and to perform some acts of religious worship: but the feast has long since degenerated into a season of riot and excess.—The word *Purim* signifies the lots, (being the plural of the word *Pur*,) in remembrance of the lots cast by Haman, by which the day was deferred till time was allowed for defeating the whole design, and all his tokens were frustrated. (*Note, 3:7.*) The fastings, lamentations, and prayers, which preceded the deliverance, were to be remembered with peculiar joy and gratitude. (31) Some think it was intended, that the thirteenth day should be observed as a day of fasting and prayer, as an introduction to the festival; and the Jews at present profess to observe it as such: but the decree does not admit of this construction. Finally, the decree was added to this book of Esther, in which the history of these transactions was recorded, that the institution might never be forgotten.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-16. The obstinate enemies and persecutors of the church are often left to act in the most infatuated manner; being urged on by malice, in opposition to the most evident dictates of prudence. (*Notes, Ex. 14:5-9,21-23.*) For the

*and upon their seed, and upon "all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not "fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time every year;

28 And that these days should be "remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not "fail from among the Jews, nor "the memorial of them "perish from their seed.

29 Then Esther the queen, "the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all "authority, to "confirm this second letter of Purim.

30 And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to "the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with "words of peace and truth,

31 To confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for "themselves "and for their seed, the matters of "the fastings and their cry.

32 And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

2 Sam. 21:1,2. 18:17. Is. 56:3,6. Zech. 2:11. 8:23. § Heb. pass. m Ex. 12:17. Ps. 78:5-7. 103:2. || Heb. pass. n Ex. 13:8,9. Josh. 4:7. Zech. 6:14. ¶ Heb. be ended. o 2:15. ** Heb. strength. p 20:8,10. q 1:1. 8:9. r Is. 39:8. Zech. 8:19. † Heb. their souls. a 27. t 4:3,16. Jon. 3:2-9.

records of history show, that when the enemies of God's people have "hoped to have power over them," it has generally been "turned to the contrary," and they have gained the advantage "over them that hated them." Yet, neither observation, nor experience, nor demonstration, can subdue the enmity of the carnal mind, which seizes every opportunity of exerting itself: and even the protection of the ruling powers, if not very decisive, has generally been found insufficient to repress the spirit of persecution; though men commonly fear the displeasure of a king, or of powerful courtiers, far more than the wrath of almighty God.—The aggressor is answerable for all the blood shed in unjust war; provided the advantages gained by those, who stand in their own defence in a good cause, be not pushed on with revenge and cruelty: and when *whole nations* are attacked on account of religion, they have as good a right to defend themselves, as when the assault is made on any other unrighteous pretext.—But in every case the servants of God should manifest a disposition to humanity and disinterestedness; and frequently they ought to decline advantages, which might *legally* be obtained.—Prosperous sinners often bequeath their vices and enmities to their posterity; the effects of which remain, when their ill-gotten or abused affluence is dissipated; but children will never be ruined by the crimes of their parents, unless they imitate them. (*Notes, Ex. 20:5. Ez. 18:2-4,14-17.*)—The pertinacity of some offenders renders it necessary for the most merciful rulers to use severity: and the enmity and obstinacy of wicked men will display the justice of God in their final and eternal destruction, when the whole world will know all their crimes. But what dire effects to thousands may result from one malicious, or even incautious action! (*Notes, 3:8-11.*)

V. 17-32. When the sense of recent mercies is lively in our hearts, we should hasten to pour out our praises to the Lord. Gratitude to him, when united with temperance and liberal kindness to the poor, will sanctify our rejoicing, and render a day of feasting a good day to our own souls, and to our brethren. (*Notes, Neh. 8:9-12. P. O. 9-18.*)—In reviewing our mercies, we should advert to our previous fears and distresses: we should consider, how our "sorrow hath been turned into joy;" what imminent danger of death, or destruction we have escaped; what cries, prayers, confessions, and vows we have made; and with what remarkable circumstances our deliverances have been attended, our enemies disappointed, and our comforts renewed. When our mercies are personal, we should be careful that we do not by forgetfulness lose the comfort of them, and withhold from our God the glory due unto his name. When they are very public and remarkable, rulers in church or state should unite authority, with admonitions and "words of peace and truth," to prevent the memorial of them from perishing; and that all, who shall eventually share the advantages, may join in rendering praise unto the Lord. But alas! the best institutions are liable to be perverted by human depravity: and to degenerate, not only into a form, but into an occasion of sin. Hol joy in God is supplanted by sensual indulgence and carnal mirth: under pretence of celebrating great deliverances, or even of commemorating the mysteries of redemption, professed Christians often behave, as if they were the devotees of Bacchus or of Momus; and, instead of "a good day" and a feast unto the Lord, they imitate the worshippers of the golden

CHAPTER X.

The greatness of Ahasuerus, and the advancement and usefulness of Mordecai, 1—3.

AND the king Ahasuerus ^alaid a tribute upon the land, and upon ^bthe isles of the sea.

2 And ^call the acts of his power, and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of

a 1:1. 8:9. Luke 2:1. b Gen. 10:5. Ps. 72:10. Is 24:15. Dan. 11:18. c 1 Kings 11:41. 22:39. * Heb. made him great. 8:15. 9:4. Ps. 18:35. d 2:23. 6:1. 1 Kings

cal, and "sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play!" (Note, Ex. 32:1. P. O. 1—14.) Nothing more deeply disgraces religion, or more injuriously stupefies the conscience, than such abuser. May the Lord then teach us to rejoice with that holy joy, which anticipates and prepares for the felicity of heaven!

NOTES.—CHAP. X. V. 1—3. These verses close the narrative, as it stands in the original Hebrew; and are very improperly detached from the preceding chapter. As, however, they here stand, they begin another chapter, which is continued in the apocryphal supplement to this book, and opens with the fourth verse of the tenth chapter. The nature of Ahasuerus's tribute, and the acts of his power, are not declared in the sacred Scripture; but the preference of Mordecai proved no diminution of the king's greatness, or detriment to his subjects at large; and it was peculiarly advantageous to the Jews. (Marg. Ref. f, g.) Mordecai neither concealed his religion, nor grew shy of his people, though they were generally poor and despised. His authority seems to have been durable; and he was greatly honoured by all his retainers: for he used his power to protect them and promote their welfare; and he behaved towards them with all condescension and affection.—This book is placed in our Bibles the last of the historical records of the Jews; though the events recorded by Nehemiah seem to have occurred subsequent to most, if not all, in this book. (Note, Neh. 2:6.)—However, for above four hundred years, that is, till the coming of the Messiah, the scriptural narrative of that favoured nation is suspended.—A compendious view of the most material events which are transmitted to us by other writers, is added, at the close of this book, in order to connect the Old Testament with the New.—It has been observed, that no pagan writer mentions any of the events recorded in the book of Esther; but in fact, little comparatively is known concerning the Persian kings, or the Medo-Persian empire, except as connected with the history of Greece, and as recorded by Grecian histo-

Mordecai, whereunto the king ^dadvanced him, are they not written ^ein the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?

3 For Mordecai the Jew ^fwas next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and ^gaccepted of the multitude of his brethren, ^hseeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

14:19. e Gen. 41:40. 1 Sam. 23:17. 2 Chr. 28:7. f 3:2. Rom. 14:18. g Neh. 2:10. Ps. 122:8, 9. Rom. 9:2, 3. 10:1.

rians; and it cannot be supposed, that the concerns of the Jews, as dispersed through the vast empire of Persia, would at all attract the attention of that proud people, who considered all nations, except themselves, as barbarians; and who peculiarly despised the Jews, as a bigoted and narrow-minded race; because they would not conform to any of their varied idolatries, or embrace any of their systems of skeptical philosophy.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The concerns of the despised worshippers of God are deemed more important by the Spirit of inspiration, than the greatest exploits of the most illustrious monarch upon earth.—Those who enjoy the benefits of civil government, are reasonably required to contribute to the expense of it; but it is happy for the people when taxes are imposed with justice and equality; and the advancement of wise and good men forms the most honourable part of the conduct of powerful princes.—Rulers should consult the advantage of all their peaceable subjects; but they are peculiarly required to seek the welfare of the church, by protecting it from oppression, and encouraging the worship and ordinances of God.—That greatness is truly honourable which is usefully employed: and when those fill exalted stations, who behave with humility and condescension, and who manifest a due regard to religion, and affection for their inferiors; they will be most likely to escape envy, and to be honoured and accepted by the multitude of their brethren.—Contentment, diligence, and fidelity in lower employments, form a hopeful presage of good conduct in more important and exalted situations: and though men of superior talents and excellency may for a season appear to be buried in obscurity; yet, if the Lord have work for them to do, he will bring them forth to more extensive usefulness. We should be thankful for equitable and peaceful rulers and temporal privileges; but all earthly grandeur is passing away:—may we then seek those riches and that glory, which shall endure to all eternity!

EPITOME
 OF
THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS,
 AND THE
SURROUNDING NATIONS AS FAR AS CONNECTED WITH THE JEWS,
 FROM THE CLOSE OF THE SACRED CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, UNTIL
 THE TIMES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Soon after the events, recorded by Nehemiah and in the book of Esther, or perhaps before the close of them, Artaxerxes Longimanus died, and was succeeded by Darius Nothus. (B. C. 423.) He dying, was succeeded by Artaxerxes Mnemon; (B. C. 405;) in whose time Johanan, the high-priest, murdered his brother Joshua in the temple, and the nation was fined by the Persians. After some other successions, of little consequence to the narrative, in our present view of it, Darius Codomannus, the last king of the Medo-Persian empire, ascended the throne. (B. C. 336.) During all these years the Jews were entirely a province of the Medo-Persian empire.

Xerxes, the father of Artaxerxes Longimanus, had before this unsuccessfully attempted to subjugate Greece. (*Note, Dan. 11:2—4.*) This so exasperated the Greeks, that they long meditated a design of subverting the Persian empire.—Various events, not material in this epitome, made way for Alexander the great, king of Macedon, to be appointed commander of a Grecian army, which was raised for the purpose of invading the Persian dominions. With about thirty thousand select troops, he passed over into Asia; (B. C. 334;) and with a celerity, unexampled in history, having vanquished the immense armies of Darius, in three pitched battles, the last of which was followed by the murder of Darius by his own servants, he terminated the Medo-Persian empire, and assumed the dominion over all the nations contained in it. (B. C. 330.) (*Notes, Dan. 2:39. 7:6. 8:5—7. 11:2—4.*) In a short time Alexander, having still more enlarged his dominions, died at Babylon; and after many severe and bloody contests, his empire was divided into four kingdoms, Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. (B. C. 323.) (*Notes, Dan. 7:6. 8:8.*)—The Jews, however, had little concern, for some ages, with any of these, except the kings of Syria, and of Egypt, called by Daniel, the king of the north, and the king of the south. (*Notes, Dan. 11:2—6.*) Judea lay between the dominions of the successive rulers of these kingdoms; and was, for a long time, under the power of one or the other of them; (*Notes, Dan. 11:5—20.*) and exposed to the ravages of the armies which marched through the land. At first they formed a part of the kingdom of Egypt, under Ptolemy Soter: after his death, Ptolemy Philadelphus, his son and successor, showed them much favour; and during his reign, the Hebrew Scriptures began to be translated into Greek, for the benefit of the Jews, who lived in Egypt and other places, where the Greek was known.—This translation is called the Septuagint; and by means of it, many of the learned Gentiles acquired considerable acquaintance with the Old Testament.

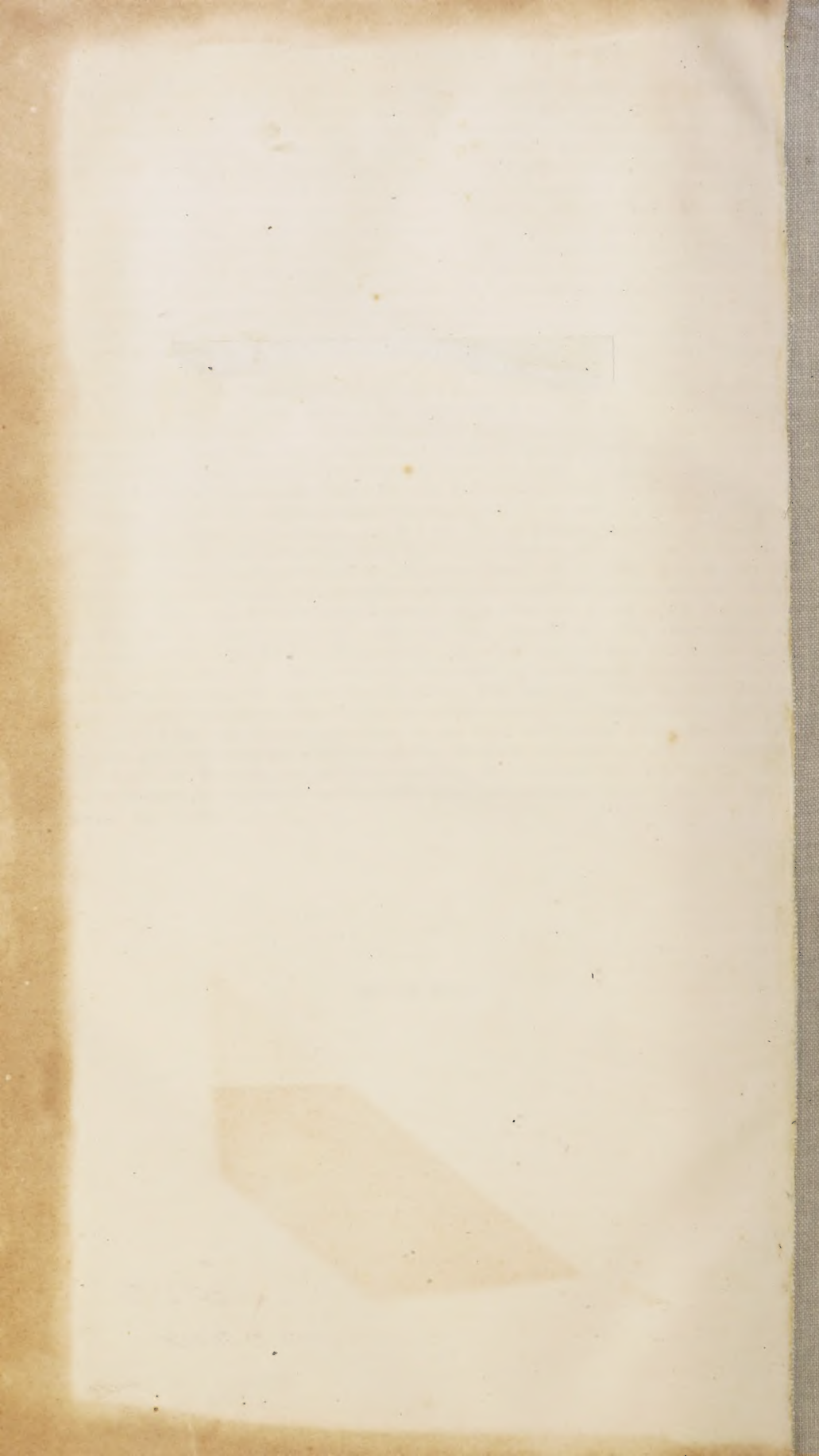
The Jews, having been cruelly oppressed by Ptolemy Philopater, (who, attempting to enter into the holy of holies, was opposed and hindered by the priests and rulers, which he indignantly resented,) revolted from him, and submitted to Antiochus the great, king of Syria. But Antiochus, having rashly engaged in war with the Romans, was vanquished, and reduced to make an inglorious peace; which gave the Romans, the fourth kingdom, their first entrance into the dominions of the Grecian empire, or the third kingdom. (*Notes, Dan. 2:39—43. 7:7,8. 11:17—19,31.*)

EPITOME OF THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

After the death of Antiochus the great, and the inglorious reign of his son, Seleucus Philopater, (*Notes, Dan. 11:20*;) Antiochus Epiphanes, called by Daniel "a vile person," succeeded, and most cruelly oppressed and persecuted the Jews, causing all the worship at the temple to cease, and even dedicating it to his own idol. (*Notes, Dan. 8:9—12. 11:21—30.*) But Mattathias, a priest, and his sons called the Maccabees, opposed him; and being wonderfully assisted and prospered, in many bloody contests, under Judas Maccabæus, the power of Antiochus was overthrown, his persecution terminated, the temple was recovered and its service restored; and Antiochus soon came to a miserable end. These events are recorded in the books of Maccabees, the first of which especially is allowed to contain authentic history. (*Notes, Dan. 11:31—35.*) From about this time, (B. C. 153,) the Jews, taking advantage of the enfeebled state of the contending kingdoms, (Syria and Egypt,) became independent under the government of the Maccabees, who united in general the high-priesthood with the sovereign authority; but without the name of king, till the time of Aristobulus, son of Hyrcanus. (B. C. 107.) This epitome must exclude the notices of the intestine contests of the different parties, among the Jews; which were many, fierce, and often bloody.

At length, however, the Romans greatly extending their conquests, the kingdom of Syria was reduced into the form of a Roman province, by Pompey the great. He not long after besieged Jerusalem; and having taken it, he entered into the holy of holies; (B. C. 63;) but after that, he never prospered. (*Note, Dan. 11:31, conclusion.*)—From this time, the Jews became dependent on the Romans.—At length Antipater, the father of Herod the great, an Edomite, by the favour of Julius Cesar, (who had prevailed against Pompey, and obtained dominion at Rome,) was made ruler in Judea. (B. C. 47.) After Antipater's death, Herod his son, called by Matthew, "Herod the king," by the favour of the Romans, and by force of arms, obtained possession of Jerusalem, and was established in regal authority; being by birth an Edomite, but proselyted to Judaism; which authority was at length confirmed by Augustus Cesar. (B. C. 30.) This dignity he maintained with great ability, but most atrocious cruelties, in his own family, as well as among others, till the birth of Christ. In this interim, he had built many cities, and almost rebuilt the temple. (*Notes, Hag. 2:6—9. Matt. 16:13—16. John 2:18—22. Acts 22:35.*) His atrociously cruel attempt to murder the infant Saviour, is recorded by the evangelist; and soon after he died most miserably. (*Notes, Matt. 2:*) After some years, in which the dominions of Herod were divided into four Tetrarchies under the sons of Herod, (*Note, Matt. 14:1,2.*) Judea became a Roman province; the sceptre departed from Judah, for Shiloh was come; (*Notes, Gen. 49:9,10.*) and under Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, in the reign of Tiberius Cesar, the successor of Augustus, the Lord Jesus was crucified.—Galilee, however, still remained under the government of Herod the Tetrarch, son of Herod the king, who beheaded John Baptist: but after some other changes, at length the whole Jewish state was subverted under Titus the son of Vespasian. (A. D. 79.)

END OF VOL. I.



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